



Eco Food Choice Public Webinar – 2025.05.13 - Q&A report

Disclaimer: The information presented here reflects the current understanding and internal discussions within the LIFE ECO FOOD CHOICE project as of May 2025. While the content is based on publicly available data and project updates, it does not necessarily represent the official position of the European Commission or any individual project partner. Interpretations, projections, and answers may evolve as the project progresses and as additional stakeholder input is gathered. Please consult the official project website and communication channels for the most up-to-date information.

General

Q: Have you planned to share the slides after the webinar? A: Yes, we can share the slides upon request.

Q: Is there more information about the beta version methodology which is (being) developed? Can it be consulted somewhere? A: The beta-version of the Eco Food Choice method is under development and is expected to be released this summer. More information will be shared publicly later this year. Stay tuned by following our [LinkedIn page](#) and checking our central repository webpage (<https://affichage-environnemental.ademe.fr/en/food-sector/life-eco-food-choice-project>) regularly. We will also organise a public webinar next year.

Q: Would that mean that you would end up with one PEF LCA for FOOD? A: Our consortium is in close contact with the European Commission and JRC teams, and we are respectively involved in each other TAB. Our purpose is to support the PEF to evolve based on the latest scientific advances and consensus across Europe. It is indeed a possibility that our work is going to be used as a basis PEFCR transversal on food.

Q: How is your work linked to the benchmarking of sustainability performance on farms mentioned in the EU Agrifood Vision? A: The EU's Vision for Agriculture and Food does not explicitly mention the Eco Food Choice project. However, Eco Food Choice aligns with the Vision's core themes of sustainability, data-driven decision-making, and the development of harmonized standards across the agri-food sector. Our work is focused on advancing these principles through practical tools and methodologies. At this stage, Eco Food Choice is more directly connected to the ongoing reflections around the EU's Green Claims initiative.

Deployment & Partnerships

Q: Are you working with corporates? If so, is the list of members public? A: Yes. Within our consortium, we collaborate with the retail company Ametller Origen as a project beneficiary for



market testing in Spain. LIDL has also agreed to support testing activities in Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands. We maintain regular communication with private companies participating in our stakeholder committee, including Mondra, Inoqo, Colruyt, and Unilever. We have also partnered with EuroCommerce to organise webinars for retailers. We are engaging with various retailers and food service companies across Europe, particularly in the context of collective projects. In the Netherlands, we work with about 25 companies in our working group footprint. This group gives regularly feedback on our developments.

Q: What will determine the products that you will be scoring? A: Our method aims at harmonising the currently fragmented landscape of environmental scoring across Europe by providing a science-based, scalable approach. The selection of products to be scored will depend on partnerships with existing ecolabelling initiatives and retailers, enabling broad coverage across different product types. Also, voluntary adoption by food manufacturers and producers will play a key role in determining which products are assessed. The method is designed to be adaptable and accessible for use in various settings, including by brands, retailers, and potentially consumer-facing apps.

Q: How big is the interest of the private sector in a harmonized approach to eco labelling?
Are they open to provide relevant data? A: The private sector shows significant interest in a harmonized eco-label across Europe because it helps reduce consumer confusion, lowers administrative burden for reporting companies and builds trust in sustainability claims. Larger companies and retailers are generally open to collaboration, as they often have sustainability reporting systems in place. However, some companies may be more hesitant due to concerns about administrative burdens or data confidentiality. Ensuring trust and clear benefits for all stakeholders across the value chain is essential to encourage wider data sharing.

Q: Who are the key actors supporting or opposing a harmonized EU eco-label? A: Supporters include EU and national institutions and policymakers, EU-funded projects and organisations developing standardized methodologies (e.g. EIT Food with the Impact Data Alliance), retailer initiatives (e.g. the Dutch, UK, Swedish retailer initiatives), NGOs (e.g. Yuka in France), and public-private partnerships involving existing ecolabel organizations (e.g. the BRC-Mondra Coalition, the European Sustainable Food Coalition). Conversely, resistance may come from certain companies, and it is key to ensure trust and clear benefits for all stakeholders across the value chain.

Scope

Q: Did you consider whether the initiatives use artificial intelligence in their LCA modelling? A: Yes, several initiatives reported using artificial intelligence to collect product



data from various sources, including retailer databases and publicly available online information. In cases where ingredient data is missing, AI technologies are used to attempt to fill these gaps. However, the reliability of such data must be carefully assessed, as this approach is still experimental and may introduce significant uncertainty. Transparency and robust verification remain essential to ensure credible LCA results.

Q: Are beverages (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) within the project scope? A: Yes, both types of beverages are included.

Q: What is your formal reference for categories consideration? A: We have not formalised the use of a specific classification standard categorization yet. National databases like Agribalyse or the Dutch Food Database often use a national categorization which often connects directly to national consumption surveys. This allows for studies linking environmental impact with nutrition. For a method with a broader scope (e.g. EU), it makes sense to use the FoodEx food classification system, which is the food classification standard from EFSA.

Q: Why did you decide not to include social impacts (i.e. animal welfare, labour conditions) in the label? A: We agree that social impacts and animal welfare are highly relevant to consumer decision-making. However, our current goal—to develop a label that covers all environmental impacts for every individual food product in Europe—is already very ambitious. In addition, the intention of ecolabelling is to expose and inform consumers about the environmental impact of a product. That said, other aspects (social, animal welfare) do not fit with this type of ecolabelling. Life Cycle Sustainability Assessment-based ecolabelling could integrate the mentioned aspects.

Q: What are your thoughts on potential environmental trade-offs that can be "hidden" when impacts are presented in one score instead of multiple? A: The Eco Food Choice methodology is designed to carefully weigh and normalize impacts based on scientific knowledge and policy priorities, minimizing the risk of over or underestimating particular impacts. We also engage stakeholders (in particular our Technical Advisory Board) to ensure the chosen weighting reflects current scientific consensus. Also, even though a simple and aggregated approach is necessary to preferable to maximise consumer impact, we are considering the available options to provide information to engaged consumers or advanced users. This could be done, as an example, through an online platform available publicly.

Q: What are the "additional sustainability themes" you are considering? A: Agriculture is one of the sectors with the greatest impact on biodiversity, particularly through its influence on key drivers of biodiversity loss identified by IPBES, such as land-use change and pollution (through the use of pesticides, nitrates, etc;).



LCA-based (Life Cycle Assessment) scoring methods already include indicators that correspond to some of these IPBES drivers. For example:

- Land use and climate change indicators align directly with the IPBES drivers of the same name.
- Pollution-related drivers are partially covered by LCA indicators such as eutrophication, acidification, aquatic ecotoxicity, and particulate matter.

However, these existing indicators do not fully capture the complexity of biodiversity impacts. International initiatives recommend the development of new indicators and the refinement of current ones to provide a more comprehensive assessment.

The Eco Food Choice project aims to address this need by proposing an operational solution that better reflects the biodiversity impacts of different food products in its scoring system.

Q: Did you take into account IFREMER/INRAE studies on biodiversity impacts? A: Yes, we aim at proposing an approach for environmental labelling which is scalable and that takes into account the latest scientific advances. In this context, we are in regular contact with IFREMER/INRAE on the topic of biodiversity and their work is part of our references. We are also getting insights from the work done in the French ecolabelling initiative, as well as other European methods considered for use by the European Union.

Data & Method

Q: How will you ensure the most accurate primary data is used in your calculation? A:

Integrating accurate primary data is a key challenge. Verification will be essential and could be supported by a public institute tasked with developing efficient verification methods. Since broad-scale implementation is the goal, scalable and practical approaches are needed. Several initiatives incentivize data submission by assigning lower-than-average scores to producers who fail to provide data. This encourages transparency and engagement. Retailers and food service companies can also play a role by requiring data from suppliers. In the long term, regulation may be necessary to make data provision mandatory.

Q: Will you recommend a specific database for secondary LCA data? A: The project will provide recommendations on the use of secondary data, including a proposed hierarchy depending on the context. This will be included in the beta version of the methodology. However, Eco Food Choice will not develop a dedicated database covering all EU countries. Instead, the methodology will be tested in four countries using existing databases for selected product categories. Broader database development is outside the scope of this project, though other European initiatives are working on it.



Q: What functional units will you use? A: We have a dedicated work stream focused on functional units. A first proposal will be launched this summer. While we are currently looking at "kg consumed," but we are also exploring opportunities to incorporate nutritional quality.

Economic Impact

Q: Are you going to monetize the impacts? A: At this stage, it is not part of the Eco Food Choice project to make True cost accounting calculations or those type of concepts. However, the results of the we produce that results in the in the environmental impact of products can be very useful for all the type of projects that focus on True cost accounting because an important part of a true cost calculation is the calculation of the footprints. So our results will be an important input for other projects like Food Cost (www.foodcost-project.eu) and other projects that focus on monetizing footprints.

Testing

Q: Is it possible to join the on-farm sustainability measurement part of the project? A: There is a dedicated task focusing on on-farm sustainability measurement and the development of incentive schemes for farmers. This includes surveys, focus groups, and greenhouse gas emission analyses for dairy farms in Spain and Germany, in collaboration with Ametller Origen and Hochland. To be included in this part of the project, please reach out to zoe.coudert@ademe.fr to explain the contribution your organisation could bring, and we will discuss further.

Q: Will you share insights into label formats being tested? A: Yes, we will share results on the types of label formats tested at the end of 2025, following our experimental tests.

Q: You mentioned a “cost for the planet” mechanism to communicate on the environmental impact of food products with end consumers. Would the next step be including these costs into the actual price of the product to drive change in consumption patterns? A: This is not within the scope of the Eco Food Choice project. However, we are working on a “cost-like” approach, expressed as a single environmental score per kg of food. While it is not a real cost, the format mimics a price per kg to enhance consumer understanding and allow for greater differentiation within and between food categories.

Q: How will you manage "within and between" category comparisons with a visual display? A: This aspect is currently being tested. For example, we will be testing a single, unified scale—combining color coding and numerical values—to allow comparisons both within and between product categories. While a five-color scale alone may not offer sufficient granularity within



categories, adding numerical scores or expanding the color range could improve differentiation. The decision to move forward with this approach is not final, however we are planning to test it to assess consumer understanding in 2025. There are no plans to create separate scales for individual categories (e.g. meat or vegetables); all products will be rated on the same scale to support broad consumer comparison.

Q: Have thresholds for color scales been decided? A: We are working on thresholds for the purpose of experimental testing with consumers. These are intended to allow comparison of the effects between different label formats. The work on a final proposal for the grading thresholds is still ongoing within Work Package 3 (WP3).

Q: How will the label be tested? A: The testing process is already well defined. In June 2025, we will launch large-scale online experiments in France, Germany, Spain, and The Netherlands with 2,000 consumers per country. These tests will simulate shopping decisions to compare different label visuals. Insights from WP3 and market analyses have guided the label formats to be tested. This will be followed by real-life trials in supermarkets and canteens starting in 2026 to validate impacts on consumer choices.

Q: How will the retail companies participating in the point-of-sale-test in 2026 be chosen?

A: Generally, any company interested can approach us and discuss options. With Ametttler Origen being a project partner, we will extensively test the label in Spain. For international spread, we have focused on Lidl so far given their presence in all markets.

Q: All private sector labelling schemes have different visual labels - how will this match with the planned tests from WP4? A: We will not test other existing label formats. The testing will focus solely on label designs developed based on the most recent studies on label effectiveness conducted in France and Germany.