

# What measures can be taken to optimise the *decarbonisation* of the food supply chain?

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Whilst France has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels and to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, GHG emissions generated by logistics activities (beyond just freight transport and food products alone) will, according to ADEME, account for 16% of French GHG emissions in 2022, comprising four main components: freight transport within the country (73% of logistics-related GHG emissions); household journeys to shop by car (14.3%); storage via logistics facilities (5.6%); the manufacture of industrial and commercial packaging (7.2%). The agri-food sector accounts for 28% of freight transport flows in France in tonne-kilometres. How can we meet the challenge of decarbonising the food supply chain?

## *Numerous obstacles to decarbonisation*

In France, road transport and diesel dominate the collection and transport of food products, generating high GHG emissions. The delay in the electrification of heavy goods vehicles and the insufficient maturity of alternative powertrains (NGV, B100 or hydrogen) are holding back the sector's decarbonisation. Calculating logistics-related GHG emissions is complex. Furthermore, the tax system must be stabilised and clarified to enable industry stakeholders to plan for the long term. Furthermore, road transport and passenger transport have been prioritised over the past 40 years at the expense of rail and river freight transport, which suffer from ageing infrastructure. The specific nature of the products (particularly their perishability) adds to the complexity. Finally, waste and packaging emit significant amounts of GHGs: only 26% of plastic packaging is recycled. The food supply chain has thus become more complex and the distances travelled have increased, raising GHG emissions, even though local shops and distribution networks are tending to grow.

## *How can the food supply chain be decarbonised?*

In light of these findings, the EESC demonstrates that tools and scope for action exist, which in some cases do not require additional budgets. Accelerating decarbonisation is possible by activating complementary levers: pooling resources, decarbonising the vehicle fleet, developing the energy mix (particularly electrification), modal shift, optimising flows and truck loading, balanced regional planning, relocation and reindustrialisation, rationalising warehouse locations, simplification and optimisation of the supply chain, action extending to the last mile, reduction of packaging and eco-design, and waste management.

The mobilisation of all stakeholders (public authorities, businesses, consumers, etc.) will help drive progress.

**On average, the food and drink we consume involves 1,400 km of transport within France (ADEME).**

**The modal shares of rail and river freight are 9–10% and 1–2% respectively in France, compared with 15% and 7% in Europe. (SDES - SNCF - VNF)**

## What measures can be taken to optimise the decarbonisation of the food supply chain?

### Gaining a better understanding of and monitoring GHG emissions across the food supply chain

- Standardise the method for calculating GHG emissions across the food supply chain
- Carry out a detailed mapping exercise in collaboration with ADEME, CEREMA and stakeholders

### Reducing transport-related emissions: moving away from fossil fuels

- Ultimately promote and accelerate the transition to an energy mix dominated by electricity
- Create dedicated industrial sectors: the manufacture of electric batteries, lorries and inland waterway vessels
- Deploy a sufficient network of fast-charging points
- Encourage the transitional use, and ultimately for the logistics routes most difficult to electrify, of biofuels derived from waste, produced locally and without disrupting food production
- Develop infrastructure for refuelling these biofuels in a targeted and planned manner
- Modernise rail and river infrastructure, promote modal shift, and roll out a network of multimodal hubs in every region
- Make rail tolls free for the public sector
- Secure stable public funding of at least €500 million per year through a ten-year planning law to regenerate rail infrastructure dedicated to freight

### → Reducing emissions from logistics hubs and warehouses, supporting local shops

- Ensure that stakeholders comply with the requirements of the tertiary sector decree; launch programmes through the regions to optimise the location and decarbonisation of logistics sites
- Install solar panels on the roofs of new food supply chain warehouses larger than 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>, unless technically impossible
- Support local shops, short supply chain schemes and direct sales

### Reducing emissions associated with packaging production and waste management

- Making the decarbonisation of packaging a tool for regional reindustrialisation
- Stepping up the fight against food waste (compliance with obligations and raising awareness)

### Organising contractual arrangements between stakeholders in local areas to ensure greater sustainability

- Optimise logistics according to product type:
  - long-life products: allow for more flexible delivery times, reduce the frequency of restocking, consolidate and pool orders
  - products with use-by dates: reduce the number of delivery rounds and distances travelled, optimise vehicle loading
- Favour stockpiling over just-in-time supply in accounting terms and consider extending use-by dates where the actual shelf life of products allows
- Mobilise the 17 markets of national interest (MIN) to further consolidate flows and pool storage, and encourage hauliers and wholesalers to switch to other modes of transport

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