

Climate Change and Consumer Behaviour Working Group Update (January 2022) Paper 8.4

1. Background

- The aim of the ACSS working group on climate change and consumer behaviour is to map emerging and potential consumer behaviour trends onto the FSA's objectives in order to inform FSA policy in the coming years.
- In the ACSS meeting on 1st December 2020, several scoping activities were proposed including engagement with the wider research community and with the FSA's Chief Scientific Advisor.

2. Members

The working group comprises of the following members:

- Julie Hill (Chair)
- Seda Erdem
- Spencer Henson
- Hannah Lambie-Mumford
- Susan Michie

3. Terms of reference: Development/consultation

The Terms of Reference have been recently revised and are as follows:

- The Climate Change and Consumer Behaviour working group is tasked with exploring consumer behaviour trends which may be motivated by climate concerns, and impact upon FSA priorities in relation to food authenticity, safety and hygiene, informed consumer choices and access to healthy and sustainable food. This last consideration has been added to meet revised FSA strategic priorities.

Approach:

- Phase 1: Commission an expert engagement workshop to identify behaviours that consumers may engage in in response to climate change concerns. This will increase understanding of the evidence base, identify priority areas for the FSA, and inform future activity of the working group.
- Phase 2: Expand on phase 1 findings and engage across the FSA to explore key responsibilities and current activities, and identify potential follow up activity for the FSA and other organisations.

4. Expert Workshop

- The workshop ran on the 18th May 2021, with 38 attendees. The first section of the workshop contained presentations from experts on topics relating to climate change's impact on consumer food-related behaviours: Food, behaviour and climate change, food safety and consumer behaviour in response to climate change, consumer packaging choices and the need for regulation of sustainable packaging for food safety
- In the second session, attendees were shown the output of a pre-workshop exercise, mapping possible behavioural trends on to FSA priority areas of food safety, food authenticity and FBO regulation. Attendees were asked to discuss prevalence of trends and impact on FSA priority areas. Some trends identified by the workshop were: Adoption of low carbon diets, the avoidance of food waste, increased consumption of alternative packaging or packaging with higher content of recycled materials and Increased use of reusable containers in food and drinks

5. Second workshop

- The second workshop will be held on 18th February 2022. The purpose of the 2nd workshop is to expand on the Phase 1 findings with engagement across the FSA and key stakeholders, to explore responsibilities and current activities aimed at mitigating these potential risks. This in turn will help to identify potential follow up activity for the FSA, including the ACSS CCCB working group and potentially other organisations. The discussion during the workshop will follow the 4 behavioural trends/ risks raised in the first workshop. These are: Avoiding food waste, increased use of alternative packaging, increased use of reusable containers to purchase food/ drink in and novel proteins increase.
- Recruitment for the second workshop is underway, key participants have been identified from relevant areas, such as the Chemical Safety Policy and Food Crime Unit.
- A write up of the second workshop is to be completed and combined with the first workshop draft report, creating one overall report summarising all CCCB WG conversations and information. This report will provide recommendations/ advice to the FSA and on the future direction of the CCCB WG. A working group meeting was held on the 12th January to finalise format and practicalities for the workshop.