



## FRUCOM SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

12<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 16.30 -18.30 CET (Brussels) time

Electronic meeting **on zoom**

### DRAFT AGENDA

Chair: **Anna Boulova**, FRUCOM Secretary General

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| ■ Opening of the meeting, approval of agenda and minutes | 16.30-16.35<br>Chair |
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| ■ Water Footprint and Sustainable Water Use for FRUCOM products | 16. 35- 17.40 |
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**Joan Girona (PhD)** Senior Researcher at Efficient Use of Water in Agriculture Program, Institutional Delegate of IRTA in Lleida and the Pyrenees  
*Setting the scene: challenges and solutions to meeting water demand in fruit and nut production*  
[\[Presentation\]](#)

**Fraser Shilling (PhD)**, Department of Environmental Science and Policy, University of California Davis  
*Case Study: Successful approaches and lessons learnt from dried fruit and nuts in California*  
[\[Presentation\]](#)

**Ertug Ercin (PhD)** Director and senior researcher, R2WATER Research and Consultancy and member of the Water Footprint Network  
*Impact, role and future of the water footprint: policy and sustainability implications*  
[\[Presentation\]](#)

#### Discussion with members

In the exchange with members, the panellists were asked if co-products were included in their analyses (e.g., almonds hulls replace some dairy feed? Or shells from nuts or kernels from dried fruit are used for energy or other uses?)

Dr Girona explained that including co-products in the analysis could be possible but was not part of the analysis that he presented. However, whether the co-products are included or not will depend on what their value is, and their specific application. It would also be possible to add nutritional value to the analysis as well.

As to the application of the existing water footprint data to other crops in California, Dr Shilling argued it would be preferable to do California specific water footprint analysis and not extrapolate based on global averages. A California specific footprint for almonds returned a lower water footprint than the global average almond footprint – a localised footprint is better able to inform sourcing questions and to understand the impact of the crops from specific regions.

Another question for Dr Ercin was on the LCA (which looks at all inputs and outputs) vs the WFP methodology, and whether for sustainability to focus on the WFP only or the LCA? And also, whether the data from growing techniques in his presentation were based on modelling or field trials.



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Dr Ercin clarified that modelling was used in his study on the growing techniques. In terms of the methodology for the water footprint, both Dr Ercin and Dr Shilling explained that the water footprint methodology is the same as that of the LCA for any other input or parameter (e.g., for environment footprint), but in the water footprint it focuses specifically on water, and that water often gets lost in other LCAs. Dr Ercin emphasised that the water footprint's application is primarily for water resources management and is not meant to be interchangeable with other LCAs. What is key whether using one or the other LCA, is the purpose for which one wants to use the information. Dr Shilling noted that confusion can arise because they sound different (water footprint versus LCA), and the fact that LCA experts do not always recognise that the water footprint applies the same methodology.

Dr Shilling also elaborated on the California context about co-products and circularity, and how this application can be used to offset some of the water footprint.

In conclusion, Ms Boulova explained that, whilst FRUCOM does seek to highlight the positive qualities of the products of its members, the purpose of the sustainability working group is to provide members with the best information from experts and set a high bar for technical information and knowledge.

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■ FRUCOM activities

17:40 – 18:15

- Sustainability labelling: policy state of play and Eco-Score
- EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork policy state of play

**Lebo Mofolo**, FRUCOM trade and sustainability adviser [[Presentation](#)]

During the exchange with members, FRUCOM was asked what, if anything, the Commission has been doing to support the countries that would be impacted by the deforestation free regulation proposal and other Green Deal / Farm to Fork initiatives. At present, the FRUCOM products are out of the scope the deforestation free regulation proposal. Ms Mofolo explained that the regulation on deforestation-free products comes after many years that the Commission has been working with countries where deforestation is an issue of concern, to help them improve their forest governance (through forest law enforcement governance and trade treaties - FLEGT), and through other cooperation agreements. However, all support is voluntary, and third countries cannot be forced into accepting or cooperating with the Commission. Additionally, the regulation would only affect any products coming from land that was deforested or degraded after 1 January 2021.

FRUCOM members pointed that big players in the private sector have been pushing for changes to address deforestation, and it is not only the Commission who have been engaged on this, but industry has also been active for a few years (on deforestation and also in other areas such as child labour).

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■ A.O.B., conclusions and agreement on actions

18:15 Chair

■ Topics for next meetings

Ms Boulova noted again that FRUCOM members are being invited to provide feedback on:

- Their own internal application of the PEF and experiences thereof;
- Concrete contributions that can be made in relation to the eco-score, in favour of FRUCOM products;
- Other stakeholders with whom to potentially engage on the eco-score.

Ms Boulova also pointed out that, with the progress of the sustainability working group and the number of topics covered, the opportunity will be taken to review the future topics of the working group with the Chair and new Vice-co-chairs of the group Remmelt Jongkind (Princes) and Peter Thieme (Gloe & Zeitz). Members are therefore strongly encouraged to provide suggestions for future topics to be addressed by the Sustainability working group.

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Ms Boulova also thanked the FRUCOM team, and reminded the working group about the contribution of Ms Martina Zurli who has been developing, providing and promoting communications and content for FRUCOM's LinkedIn, including in support of this working group.

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**Joan Girona, IRTA:** Dr. Joan Girona of the Institute of Agroalimentary Research and Technology (IRTA) in Catalonia, Spain, where is the Senior Researcher at Efficient Use of Water in Agriculture Program. Dr Girona is a scientific researcher with more than 30 years' experience working on irrigation management, studying irrigation and the water and nutrient needs of fruit trees. His main research is focused on the study of plant-water relations and to the determine crop water requirements in deficit conditions, seasonal responses to water stress and the use of crop models. Dr Girona has collaborated with institutions and universities in the United States and Israel.

**Fraser Shilling, University of California, Davis** Dr. Shilling is the Director of the Road Ecology Center, and a faculty-member of two graduate groups at UC Davis -- the Transportation Technology & Policy group, and the Ecology Graduate Group. In addition to maintaining an active research and education program at UC Davis, he also works with local, state, federal, and international organizations to improve the use of environmental information in decision-making.

**Ertug Ercin, R2WATER** A water engineer and scientist by training, Dr. Ercin has more than 16 years of international experience in research, policy advice, consultancy and capacity building in water management and sustainability. He is specialised in water footprint, water accounting, water use and allocation, river basin management, water efficiency, water risks, the impacts of climate change and weather extremes on water resources and economies.