

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Fairtrade Fortnight 2022 (21<sup>st</sup> February – 6<sup>th</sup> March)**

Returns with its Choose The World You Want theme for the second year to highlight how Fairtrade is the simple choice we can all make to support farmers and workers to adapt to the effects of climate change. Fairtrade Ireland hopes people will engage with Fairtrade Fortnight once again this year, as part of their ongoing efforts to protect people and planet.

Fairtrade Fortnight, will feature around 15 virtual events designed to engage, inform, and educate people about the harmful effect of the climate crisis on farmers and food supplies.

Kicking off the two-week campaign on Monday 21st February at 12.30 with our online launch event we will be joined by a selection of guest speakers, see more [Launch Event - Choose the World You Want - Fairtrade Ireland](#).

The Climate, Environment and Fairtrade Event on Wednesday 23rd at 3pm , features small scale farmers from Honduras and Ghana and focuses on how they support sustainable farming practices even as they adapt to increasing climate impacts. [Climate the Environment and Fairtrade – Coffee and cocoa farmers set out some of the challenges they face and some of the solutions - Fairtrade Ireland](#)

A diverse range of events including dates times and registrations can be found at [Fairtrade Ireland](#)

#### **A difficult trading year in 2021**

2021 was a second difficult year for Fairtrade sales due to COVID restrictions, the resulting closures of many businesses for long periods and many supply chain problems and increasing costs for farmers and companies alike. The extra premium earned by farmers was down as a result of these problems from a high of €2.4 million in 2019 to €1.9 million last year. However, with the ongoing support of companies like Bewleys and Insomnia, both still doing 100% Fairtrade branded coffee; and ongoing commitments from retailers like Lidl, who still lead the Irish market on Fairtrade bananas and chocolate; and ALDI who saw growth of 67% with Fairtrade flowers; we expect to win these extra payments back for farmers in 2023 and beyond.

#### **We are asking the EU to be fair to small scale farmers as well as to forests in 2022!**

Changing the rules for international trade is as important as our shopping habits and we are asking Irish people to support small scale farmers who are at danger of being banned from the EU market!

Fairtrade welcomes the EU regulations on deforestation as a necessary first step towards the ending of imported deforestation. However Fairtrade is asking for improvements in key areas so that the regulations better support and protect small holders and do not further marginalise them.

In terms of any just transition, it is widely accepted that developing countries have only contributed 11% of carbon emissions since 1850 and that they should be supported to meet emission targets and adaptation strategies made necessary by the actions of others. Equally in terms of deforestation, 50% of global deforestation in the last 9,000 years coincided with European industrial development since 1900.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Our World In Data Link: <https://ourworldindata.org/world-lost-one-third-forests>

The world's forests provide for nearly four times as many livelihoods than the population of the European Union.<sup>2</sup> Fairtrade works with over 1.2 million cocoa and coffee smallholders, in over 40 countries. This is a subset of the millions of smallholder cocoa and coffee farmers who are reliant for income on selling to the European Union. The vast majority of these cocoa and coffee smallholders work on farms smaller than five hectares<sup>3,4</sup>, and are living in extremely vulnerable contexts.

In cocoa and coffee supply chains, the deforestation regulation will only meet its objective to curb deforestation if the root causes are addressed.

### **Specifically Fairtrade is asking that the EU:**

1. Clarifies the number of cocoa and coffee smallholders that stand to be impacted as well as the way the regulation will impact them before the proposal's passage causes harmful repercussions on their livelihoods. Of particular concern are those smallholders whose past actions prior to the regulatory proposal may have been legally permissible under their national laws;
2. Engages responsibly with cocoa and coffee smallholders and their cooperatives, including encouraging companies to set long-term sourcing contracts, and to invest in improvements rather than 'cutting and running' from high-risk regions;
3. Requires companies placing products on the European Union market to respect land and tenure rights of local communities and Indigenous and Traditional peoples, as well as the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC);
4. Leverages European Union Partnerships, Programmes and financial tools to help smallholder farmers comply with new EU sustainability requirements;
5. Combines traceability requirements with adequate support and safeguards on data ownership for cocoa and coffee smallholders and their producer organizations;
6. Tackles root causes of deforestation as a precondition to reduce the European Union deforestation footprint.

Peter Gaynor, Executive Director with Fairtrade Ireland, said;

*'Whether it is through letting the shops know we want them to support Fairtrade by buying the products and encouraging others to do so; or through telling our politicians that we want them to look after the most vulnerable in global supply chains by ensuring that higher standards in Europe don't mean more generations of exclusion and poverty in West Africa – getting our voices heard where it matters in 2022 is as important than it has ever been.'*

Fairtrade Fortnight 2022 will again be a virtual event with people being able to join the sessions from all over the world and the country.

For more information contact: [Melanie@fairtrade.ie](mailto:Melanie@fairtrade.ie) or call 086 456 1532

#ChooseTheWorldYouWant

#ChooseFairtrade

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission Climate Action: EU Action Forests and Agriculture web page. Link: [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/forests-and-agriculture\\_en#ecl-inpage-1686](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/forests-and-agriculture_en#ecl-inpage-1686)

<sup>4</sup> Coffee Barometer 2020. Link: <https://coffeebarometer.org/>

<sup>5</sup> German Forum on Sustainable Cocoa website. Link: <https://www.kakaoforum.de/en/news-service/country-profiles/cocoa-producing-countries/>