

**CHOOSE THE WORLD  
YOU WANT**



# Be fair with your climate promise – invest in smallholder farmers and workers

Dear world leaders,

We write on behalf of **1.8 million Fairtrade farmers and workers** working in agriculture across the world. We grow the food eaten at the tables of people all around the world, as well as other essential produce. But our ability to do so has been badly damaged by the reckless harm done to our environment from years of broken promises concerning the climate crisis.

- **You promised to cut the emissions** that drive extreme weather, which dries up our fields one day and floods them the next. But emissions are increasing dangerously while your ambition remains too low.
- **You promised to provide climate finance**, to help us keep growing food despite the changing weather. But next to nothing is reaching us.
- **You promised to change business** from exploiter to partner. But shareholders earn billions while millions of farmers earn less than a dollar a day.

Recent months have seen crops hit hard by extreme weather, including devastating floods in Uganda,<sup>i</sup> drought in Madagascar,<sup>ii</sup> and invasions of locusts across the African continent.<sup>iii</sup> This year, Africa saw its hottest January and June ever.<sup>iv</sup> In Central America, Hurricanes Eta and Iota caused damage worth over \$2 billion in Honduras alone, with Fairtrade farmers badly affected.<sup>v</sup> New IPCC predictions are that our members in India face increases in extreme heatwaves, droughts and erratic rainfall.<sup>vi</sup> Of course, this harms our ability to grow the food that the world needs. Because our livelihoods are tied to our farm produce, poverty is once again growing amongst us. But the impact goes deeper. The damage to our land and water is increasing competition for resources, and as farmers and workers we are faced with ever-increasing social and economic tensions.

The harm falls disproportionately onto women in farming households, who are often the lowest paid, working in the most difficult conditions. Our young people do not want to remain in farming under these conditions, and who can blame them? But who will grow the world's food if a new generation does not see farming as anything other than a poverty trap?

There is another story we want to tell. On our farms across the world, you can already see the changes that are needed taking place. Tree planting is protecting cocoa from the sun in Ghana and tea from flooding in Kenya and providing bees with increased access to food in Guatemala. The Fairtrade teams in Africa and the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific, are sharing the know-how that farmers need to protect their crops.

Partnerships with our more responsible buyers are giving us the investment we need to make our farms more resilient, as well as cutting transport and farm emissions. Where Fairtrade businesses are investing properly in our future by paying fair prices and Fairtrade Premium, our resilience is already growing.

But of course, this essential work needs to be paid for. For example, planting trees amongst coffee bushes can shield them from the sun, reduce crop disease and flood damage – but it means that production costs are higher. When farmers are not even earning a living income, how can we also finance these kind of essential changes?

Change by 2050 is too late. As wealthy, high-polluting countries, you must meet your promises to pay the costs of adaptation and mitigation now. Your promise to cut carbon emissions must not be denied any longer. We will not accept 'Net Zero' commitments which ignore the emissions from transport or from the goods imported from countries including our own, or that do not result in real emissions cuts. If the international shipping industry were a country, it would be the world's seventh largest emitter.<sup>vii</sup>

We call on you to take action now:

1. **Your promise to deliver \$100bn in climate finance must be met now. It needs to reach farmers and workers directly**, so that we can plant trees, introduce more resilient crops, ready ourselves for the coming storm – and continue to grow the world's food.
2. **You must be honest about your carbon emissions, and have the courage to cut them back in line with the scientific advice**. Make sure your Net Zero commitments include targets and policies which will reduce emissions from imported goods, not just your domestic emissions,<sup>viii</sup> and make sure they are about real cuts, rather than simply buying offsets. Including aviation and shipping in your Nationally Determined Contributions is an essential step you must take. We are ready to work with our buyers to play our part, but you must lead.
3. **Future trade deals should drive trade in fair and low-carbon produce**, cutting high-carbon trade. Trade deals should be helping farmers and businesses that invest in sustainability and tackling the climate crisis, and should stop encouraging fossil fuel use and driving extractive, exploitative market dynamics.
4. **You must strengthen business regulations**, so that businesses are encouraged to invest in sustainable supply chains, pay fair prices to farmers, and take ownership of the environmental issues in their supply chains. We want to see environmental due diligence, so that businesses take action to curb deforestation – and we want to see it implemented in ways that don't leave farmers paying the bill. If necessary, you must be prepared to compel those businesses which fall short to meet their responsibilities.

COVID-19 has ravaged our world over the past two years. But its impact is nothing compared to the harm we will all experience if we fail to act on the climate crisis now. As representatives of the world's food producers, we appeal to you to seize this moment, to listen to our voices, and ensure that we can continue to feed the world.

**Signed on behalf of Fairtrade farmers and workers,**



**Mr Kouamé N'dri Benjamin-Francklin**

Producer Representative of Fairtrade Africa (FTA)

Board Member of FTA and Chairman of ECAM Entreprise Coopérative Agricole

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**Mr Miguel Munguía**

Producer Representative of Latin American and Caribbean Network of Fairtrade Small Producers and Workers (CLAC)

President of CLAC and Manager of Educe-Cooperativa

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**Mr Meher Pravakar**

Producer Representative of Network of Asia and Pacific Producers (NAPP)

Board Member of NAPP and Project Director at Pratima Organic Grower Group

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i [AllAfrica](#), July 2021

ii [The Washington Post](#), July 2021

iii [Landscape News](#), March 2021

iv [The Guardian](#), July 2021

v [ReliefWeb](#), August 2021

vi [DeutscheWelle \(Asia\)](#), August 2021

vii [Keane et al, The climate and trade nexus in Africa](#), ODI, February 2021

viii The UK included aviation and shipping within its national carbon budget in 2021