

FAIRTRADE, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE SPEAKER NOTES



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You can start your presentation with a nice opening question, to spark discussion.

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All these Fairtrade farmers – in West Africa, East Africa and India – working on different crops – are seeing climate change threaten their livelihood.

1. Ebrottie, the first man, farms cocoa in Cote d'Ivoire
2. Zeddy is a coffee farmer from Kenya
3. Benny is a tea farmer from India

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One of the things we think it's really important to emphasise at Fairtrade is that farmers in the global south contributed least to the Climate Crisis, but they are being hit the hardest by it.

And this graph puts that starkly. Those above the line are the countries expected to be hit hardest by climate change, and as you can see they are disproportionately less well-off countries. Countries where Fairtrade farmers operate.

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And this graph makes a similar point but specifically about farming. Those areas shaded in red are expected to see the biggest loss of yield – what they can grow and sell – from their land due to climate change.

Again countries in what is broadly called the 'Global South' - South America, Africa, East Asia – are getting hit hardest.

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Many Fairtrade commodities in regions across the world will be affected by climate change.

This is gaining coverage in the media, with the headlines on the right becoming more common.

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So what can we do to help? The Fairtrade movement – from activists on the ground here to staff supporting farmers in the fields around the world – have three big roles to play.

Advocacy: We need to speak up so people in this country understand the terrible consequences climate change is causing others, and will cause others, overseas.



Force decision makers here – companies, politicians etc – do hear, listen, understand and act on climate crisis

Adaption: Even if we adopted radical reforms tomorrow, damaging climate change is already hitting farmers, as we've seen. So adaption is – that's making sure farmers have the resources to survive and don't lose their livelihoods –remains critical. Fairtrade's got a big part to play here too.

It may not sound as glamorous but it's vitally important. And again it's a question of inequality – in this country we'll likely see climate change less damaging to our everyday life, but we'll also have more resources to adapt and mitigate it's impact.

Our Fairtrade producer networks offer support and training to help farmers adapt to climate change. While the increased income Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium's offer give farmers and workers the ability to invest in environmentally sustainable techniques and adapt to the challenges the climate crisis is bringing.

Avoiding emissions: Fairtrade and Fairtrade farmers are also taking direct action to stop climate change.

Fairtrade Standards also require action on lowering emissions, and these have recently been strengthened in the latest update to the Fairtrade Standards.

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Speaking of the Fairtrade Standards – here's a bit on how they tackle the climate crisis

Monitoring and reducing carbon emissions – Fairtrade producers, in accordance with the Fairtrade Standards, monitor their carbon emissions and take steps to reduce them wherever possible.

Prohibition of deforestation – Deforestation is explicitly forbidden in the Fairtrade Standards. In fact, many Fairtrade Producers invest their Fairtrade Premium's in reforestation projects – both to improve their local environment and improve their soil fertility.

Tackling soil erosion – And soil erosion is major challenge posed by the changing climate. As well as reforestation and tree cover initiatives, the restrictions on harmful chemicals in the Fairtrade Standards helps protect long-term soil fertility.

Reducing water waste – Climate change could make water availability more limited in many parts of the world. So the Fairtrade Standards set out the importance of training all cooperative members how to use water sustainably. This is of course vital for continuing viability of farming and basic quality of life.

So a quick question on this one – how do we think these Fairtrade Standards link in with climate change? And how do they benefit farmers? (**Suggest talk about this to person beside them**)

Like a lot of Fairtrade Standards at first glance they may seem to be about environmental protection more generally – but there is a link there to climate change. Deforestation makes climate change worse by removing trees, which absorb carbon. Tree cover can also help

moderate increasingly erratic temperature – growing crops in tree shade and protect against extreme weather.

More heavy rains and droughts are expected with climate change in the near future, both of which damage soil quality.

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Now if Fairtrade's not yet quite well-known enough for tackling climate change, it is more well-known that it delivers a fairer deal for farmers and workers through Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium.

But these absolutely go hand-in-hand. We can't and won't have climate justice without economic justice. Or, to put it another way, we won't get a fair deal for the planet while exploiting poor farmers and workers.

The safety net of the Fairtrade Minimum Price and the Fairtrade Premium payments then are vital. The Minimum Price acts as a safety net – so farmers can plan for the future without worrying about prices crashing. And the Fairtrade Premium payment they get with their Fairtrade sales gives them the opportunity to invest in the future.

This means Fairtrade producers have more opportunities to:

- Make sensible, long-term planning that includes environment preservation
- Adopt more sustainable practices in line with the standards – no reliance on cheap but harmful pesticides. Fairtrade farmers also have a path to becoming organic certified, and a high proportion do
- Investment in training on greener farming practices generally
- Also as Fairtrade producer groups make decisions democratically, it can be easier to get full community support for environmental measures through Fairtrade

Generally farmers really care about preserving their local environment, but they can only prioritise this if they have enough income to survive and a long-term vision of their business can succeed

And to come back to the Fairtrade Premium, this is frequently invested directly in programmes that tackle or seek to mitigate climate change

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COOCAFE, a coffee producing cooperative in Costa Rica, started a Foundation, part-funded by Fairtrade Premiums, committed to reforestation, water recycling and other environmental initiatives to tackle climate change.

More info here: <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Farmers-and-Workers/Coffee/Gerardo-Arias-Camacho>

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Growing Women in Coffee project in Kenya. With the income for Fairtrade Premiums – and the new Live Fair fundraising project from the Fairtrade Foundation – women in several



coffee growing cooperatives have invested in biogas stoves so no longer need to cut down near-by trees for firewood. Lessening emissions and protecting local environment.

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Suminter India Organic Farmers, cooperative in Kerala, India, growing seeds, beans and spices. They invested Fairtrade Premium in Solar Panels, meaning halved the amount of wood they need to burn to dry seeds.

More info: <https://youtu.be/GKpGR0JT-8w>

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Fairtrade is a part of the Climate Coalition, which is a collection of organisations working together to protect the planet. Join the movement online at www.thetimeisnow.uk