

## FAIRTRADE AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

In 2022 we are continuing to highlight the growing challenges that climate change brings to farmers and workers in the communities Fairtrade works with as **COP26 didn't deliver the change needed to tackle the climate crisis.**

The facts are straightforward. Farmers and workers in countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Honduras, who have done the least to contribute to climate change, are disproportionately affected by it. **The climate crisis is the biggest threat to the livelihoods of millions of small-scale farmers and agricultural workers in low-income countries worldwide.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us more than ever how interconnected we are globally. This interconnection is at the very heart of the Fairtrade message and is where your role begins. **Farmers need better incomes and financial support to adapt to changing weather patterns and change their farming methods to ensure a low-carbon economy. By choosing Fairtrade, you show solidarity with those on the frontline of the climate crisis.** You are part of the Fairtrade movement, and you have the power to drive long-term change, not only with your shopping choices but with your support in spreading the message.

### THE PROBLEM

**For generations, the exploitation of people and planet has caused extreme global inequality and a climate emergency.** Fairtrade farmers have told us that climate change is their biggest challenge right now.

They are bearing the brunt of the climate crisis in the most climate vulnerable nations. Despite contributing the least to the climate crisis, smallholders in developing countries are disproportionately affected by increasingly frequent weather events, loss of fertile soil and crop diseases. The farmers that Fairtrade works with have seen their crops of coffee, cocoa, honey, and vegetables in Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua be completely devastated. **At 1.1 degrees, current levels of global heating are causing communities to suffer hurricanes in Central America, floods and landslides in India, sweeping away people's homes, destroying entire livelihoods in seconds, while swarms of locusts affect East Africa and extreme drought continues in Southern Africa.** By 2050 as much as 50 percent of the global surface area currently used for coffee farming may no longer be suitable and many cocoa growing regions in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire – who produce over half of the world's cocoa – will become too hot to grow the crop.

**Farmers have fewer resources to adapt to changes in climate and other stresses they are experiencing every day. Yet we all rely on farmers to produce the food we need for a growing global population.** 80 percent of the world's food comes from 500 million family farms. With the continuing global COVID-19 pandemic, these communities also face rising debts, falling commodity prices and widespread shocks in the global supply chains. **These huge challenges, alongside already low incomes, mean these communities are often unable to invest in ways to adapt to the widespread effects of a changing climate, let alone clean energy and climate-smart farming methods needed to protect the planet's forests and help restore biodiversity.**

**SUMMARY:** Climate change is an immediate threat to farmers' livelihoods, and to the products we love, like chocolate, coffee and bananas. Unless we clamp down hard on global emissions, we will all suffer. As a matter of justice and a matter of science, the matter of the climate crisis cannot be delayed any longer.

## WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

The answers to climate change exist already and farmers have a big role to play. Farmers have years of experience stewarding the land they live on; farming communities in climate-vulnerable countries already have the knowledge to create solutions and to protect the ecosystems everybody relies on. What they don't have is the financial support to make those changes happen. **Climate finance and compensation for loss and damage must reach the communities most impacted by climate change who also hold solutions to farm us away from climate catastrophe.**

**Doing this properly means helping farmers and workers to adapt to the current impacts as well as supporting them to switch to low carbon production and transport. That cannot happen if we're not prepared to pay for it.** We cannot expect – and it is not fair to expect – farmers to absorb the costs of more sustainable methods of farming when they're often not even able to earn a living income or living wage and cannot even adapt to the challenges they are already seeing, because the price they receive for their produce is far too low. This needs to change – and it needs to change fast. **Change by 2050 is too late. The weather is changing now.**

Our global trading system is balanced in favour of the powerful few. Wealthy nations have done the most to create the climate crisis. They must deliver on their promise to invest in tackling climate change right now. The G7 summit in June 2021 was a missed opportunity for farmers and the planet. **Political leaders at COP26, despite some new pledges to curb emissions which revise projected temperature rises from 3.0 to 2.4 degrees, were also unable to commit to realistic targets to keep them to 1.5 degrees. Commitments to compensate impacted communities for loss and damage due to extreme weather were also notable in their absence from the final agreement.**

At the same time, the prices that businesses pay for the crops behind some of our favourite foods need to increase significantly if farmers are to escape poverty and still have the means to adapt to economic and environmental shocks. **Governments must set ambitious, science-based rules and targets that will ensure that the businesses who profit the most from global trade invest in reducing their carbon footprint, and support those experiencing the harshest effects right now.** We need businesses to go further in committing to fair pricing, long-term partnerships and investment in adaptation with farming communities as well as transparency on carbon emissions and climate risks throughout their supply chains. As global trade changes in ways we could only have imagined before the pandemic, poverty will also continue to be a key contributor to further environmental degradation as farmers are forced to make harder choices.

**SUMMARY: Farmers in climate vulnerable countries need empowerment, fair value, fair prices, and fairer trading practices to resource the investment needed for mitigation, adaptation, diversification and resilience in the face of the climate crisis. And we can't rely on global summits and governments to take action fast enough to solve the climate crisis. Ahead of COP27, we must build pressure on governments to keep 1.5 alive. By doing so, we stand in solidarity with people in climate vulnerable nations who will be most impacted by temperature rises.**

## HOW DOES CHOOSING FARTRADE SUPPORT FARMERS FACING THE CLIMATE CRISIS NOW?

Fairtrade is about social justice. **Poverty, caused in part by decades of chronic underpayment, is a root cause of inability to adapt and mitigate to climate change.** Poverty prevents smallholder farmers from developing their businesses: this fuels a vicious cycle of low productivity and declining incomes. The less farmers earn, the harder it is to secure good harvests. All this leaves them financially unable

to face up to the challenges of climate change. **Choosing Fairtrade means choosing improvements in farmers' livelihoods with collective strength through co-ops and their bargaining power, the protection of a minimum price and Fairtrade Premiums. More money means more climate resilience into the future.**

**While the money paid to farmers remains low, they will continue to struggle to cover just their basic human rights; a nutritious diet, their children's education and family healthcare, let alone find extra funds to pursue climate friendly farming, or to protect themselves and their harvests from extreme weather.** In 2019, Fairtrade launched an ambitious new living incomes campaign to lead the way to a sustainable future for cocoa farmers. A living income would provide farmers with a decent standard of living - enough to cover all their cocoa farming costs and enough to cover their basic human rights.

Fairtrade works on many levels to strengthen environmental and climate protection for farmers and workers and is committed to finding new ways to support them with the challenges of climate change. Governments can do much more to incentivise businesses to support farmers with finance, fair prices and other assistance to adapt. **The exploitative global trade system continues to give disproportionate power to wealthy nations. It's time for our politicians to recognise their responsibilities and ensure the investment reaches these communities so that they can deliver the solutions.** Fairtrade farmers are already implementing projects on climate change. They are learning to adapt, mitigate and become more resilient, working with specific groups, like youth and women and creating sustainable solutions to the climate crisis. But this can only be sustained and increased by working in partnership with them so that they can invest in the projects, training and technology they need. **This is why Fairtrade is engaged at political level and in alliances together with other civil society players for more environmental and climate protection. Politicians must listen to and respect farmers' expertise, needs and ambitions.** The people who produce our food and goods see the reality of the climate crisis every day – they must take a leading role in deciding how any investment is spent.

**SUMMARY: Our trading system is weighted against low-income farmers. The prices paid for the crops behind some of our favourite foods need to increase significantly in order for farmers to escape the cycle of poverty and still have the means to adapt climate emergencies. Now more than ever, they need fair pay, fair prices and fairer trading practices.**

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

- **Choosing Fairtrade is one simple decision UK shoppers and businesses can make to stand with farmers and workers on the frontline of the climate crisis.** Fairtrade works with farmers to strengthen environmental and climate protection, to provide resources, training and knowledge so they can face climate challenges right now.
- It's up to all of us – citizens, farmers, workers, businesses, and civil society organisations to come together to play our part in cutting emissions and build pressure for climate promises to be delivered at COP27 next year. **Join us in [Fairtrade Fortnight 2022](#) to show support for those who depend on the land – farmers, workers, miners – and join their outraged voices, by sharing their concerns and campaigning to achieve the change we want to see for the planet.** Fairtrade Fortnight 2022's Choose the World you Want festival, will continue to amplify the voices of farmers and workers, the steps they are already taking to fight the climate crisis, and highlight the role of businesses, shoppers, governments and citizens in supporting them to win the fairer future that we all know they deserve.

**SUMMARY:** Choose Fairtrade this [Fairtrade Fortnight](#) and beyond; choose to fight for climate justice, for farmers on the front line of climate change, for our planet and for future generations. Choose the world you want.