

# **Standards Committee Minutes**

## **Meeting 88: 23-24 March 2020**

### **Teleconference meeting**

SC members: Martin Boon, Jos Harmsen, Martin de la Harpe, Richard Kwarteng, Iresha Sanjeevanie, Emilie Sarrazin (Chair).

Apologies: Miguel Mateo Sebastian

Fairtrade International S&P: Alina Amador, Gelkha Buitrago, Yun-Chu Chiu, Kerstin Cron, Oksana Forkutsa, Ricardo Guimaraes, Eleonora Gutwein, Giovanna Michelotto, Ana Jordan Rosas, Maria Steenpass.

Contributing observers: Monika Berresheim (Manager GPPP, FI), Samantha Dormer (GPM Cocoa, FT UK), Jesse Hastings (MEL, FI), Nicole Petz (Acting COO, FI), Dario Soto-Abril (CEO, FI), Anneke Theunissen (Development Coordinator, CLAC), Ludwig Tanchot (Licensing, MH FR), Fabian Waldmeier (International Cooperation, MH CH), Jon Walker (Senior Advisor Cocoa, FI).

Full day observers: Wilbert Flinterman (Sr. Advisor Workers rights, FI).

Observers: Ute Baoum (ASM, FLOCERT), Arpana Basappa (Certification Analyst Asia & Pacific, FLOCERT), Cecile Echao (Account Development Manager, FLOCERT), Theresa Glammert-Kuhr (Scheme Management, FLOCERT), Yvonne Henkel (Certification Analyst, FLOCERT), Raissa Ladeira (Certification Analyst, FLOCERT), Lokesh M. (Regional Manager Asia & Pacific, FLOCERT), Naiga Malilo (Certification Analyst, FLOCERT), Marcela Moreno (Certification Analyst, FLOCERT), Arisbe Mendoza (MEL Director, FI), Bronwyn Page-Shipp (Regional Manager FLOCERT), Chris Schmeling (Regional Manager FLOCERT), Martin Schüller (FT Germany), Stephany Tamhouo (Certification Manager, Africa), Estera Tamošaitytė (Brand Assistant, FI), Carlos Villalobos (Regional Manager Central America, FLOCERT).

**Disclaimer:**

The Fairtrade International Standards Committee (SC) aims to reach consensus, but decisions may not always reflect the opinions of all people.

The section to introduce the topic (background information) has been written by the Standards & Pricing and may not have been discussed by the SC in full. Sections listing action points are an outcome of discussions of the SC but are not part of the decisions made.

**Item 1 – Opening**

**Agenda:** The agenda was approved and ground rules read. Additional discussion points were highlighted for the AOB session.

**Declaration of conflict of interests:**

A conflict of interest was identified for one member on the topic of election EC representative. SC members attending remotely indicated to whom they would give their proxy vote in case the communication failed.

One SC member couldn't assist because of health issues but delegated the proxy vote.

## **Item 2 – News session**

### **News from CEO:**

#### COVID-19 implications:

- All FI employees are working remotely and business travels have been cancelled.
- Except flowers, Fairtrade products are experiencing high demand in all markets, it is uncertain if this will be a trend or if demand will go down in near future.
- FI CEO alongside all CEOs in the Fairtrade System are monitoring the current situation closely in all markets and products to be ready to react accordingly.

#### Fairtrade Strategy 2020-2025:

- The final steps of the strategy are currently under development. The goal is to have the new strategy ready to be approved by the GA in June 2020.

#### Board meeting:

- A higher entry bar for producers and traders in cocoa and coffee to join Fairtrade have been approved. Work is still being undertaken by FI and FLOCERT to make this decision operational.

### **News from Acting COO:**

Recruitment processes have slowed down due to the COVID-19 crisis. However, recruitment of HR Director is ongoing.

### **News from SC:**

- Jos Harmsen was welcomed to his first official meeting as SC member.
- The FI Board re-elected Martin Boon for a third term.
- The seat for the labour candidate is still in process. A Board decision is expected to be taken in June 2020
- Changes for the ToR for the SC to give a vote to the candidate of the labour seat are also in the process.
- SC member representative of Latin America is stepping down in September 2020, therefore CLAC has launched a call for candidates.

### **News from OC:**

- The OC was informed about FLOCERT's approach and the measures that were already taken to certifying in the times of COVID-19.
- The OC made four decisions on Assurance Providers' compliance to the Requirements for Assurance Providers (RAPs) v2.0, as follows:
  - Fairtrade Label Japan was declared compliant to the RAPs v2.0, and approved as an assurance provider for Fairtrade International.
  - Two variation requests submitted by Fairtrade Label Japan were approved: Extension of the validity of the Permission to Trade for traders that had no Fairtrade transactions and stopping the surveillance and re-certification audits for low risk traders six months prior to Fairtrade Label Japan's planned transition to FLOCERT.
  - One variation request submitted by FOCERT to continue their current practise on conducting trader initial audit within six months from the application was approved. Therefore, FLOCERT is not required to conduct the initial audit for high risk traders as soon as possible after the first Fairtrade transaction.

#### **News from S&P:**

- The teams are adjusting to the mobility restrictions as individual, families and as a Team.
- S&P is developing different scenarios regarding the possible implications of the COVID-19 crisis and its impact on the Unit's work.
- Welcome to Alina Amador, new Head of the Standards Team.
- The Pricing Team is going through different changes due to promotions and parental leave of some team members.
- Recruitment of S&P Director paused for the moment due to the COVID-19 crisis but is to be activated soon.

#### **Item 3 – Q&A on project updates**

The S&P Director presented the topic and emphasized that the updates presented in the paper shared with the SC consider business as usual circumstances and not the current situation with restrictions in several localities which have been in place for few days. Therefore, it is important to consider any changes as time progresses.

In addition to what is included in the paper the following information was provided:

#### **LW in Bananas:**

A member raised concerns about consequences/disruption in their markets with the consultation on this project. Agreement was reached to start consultation on June 15th until July 31st. S&P offered to support stakeholder engagement to increase awareness about the upcoming consultation. By the end of August S&P will assess the input and depending on areas of stakeholders' agreement, it will be brought for decision in September to the SC, otherwise S&P will then assess another course of action.

The price review has been rescheduled for 2021, addressing the preference from the producers to set the prices in June. By the end of the year 2020 it will be possible to start the price review and finalize it in June 2021.

#### **Young plant material:**

There was a scheduled meeting with the European Commission on March 12<sup>th</sup>. The S&P Director was recently informed that the meeting did not take place. There are efforts to have a meeting early April but given the effect of the pandemic on the flowers sector it is likely that this will be delayed.

#### **Other questions raised by the SC:**

Are workers in SPOs a topic included in the Fresh Fruit Standard review with focus on bananas? The Standards Team has included a placeholder to work on the general topic of workers in SPOs in the 2nd half of the year. However, a pre-requisite to start a review is member's agreement on the way forward.

Is a Trader Standard (TS) review foreseen in view of the relevance of Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) topic? It was foreseen to take place in 2020, but product specific reviews linked to the regulation of new organizations in tier one products required to de-prioritize this project. There are topics included in the TS that are product specific and are tackled in the specific product review of coffee and cocoa. Transversal issues like HRDD that apply to all products are more difficult to address. With the current COVID 19 crisis we would need to assess what is the best way forward, because the priorities might change and after a mid-year review we will be able to assess changes in the workplan.

Coffee and cocoa are interlinked is there an intention to align both reviews? The timing of both products is different and that responds to sector or country specific circumstances (e.g. country elections in Côte

d'Ivoire) and for that reason is not easy to fully align. There is some input from the Coffee Standard review, that can serve as learning or input for the cocoa review. All synergies possible will be considered.

How was the work plan elaborated? Requests from members were collected and afterwards matched with priorities set in the strategy and by the Bard and the resources available.

The SC requested to have an overview of all the requests received and also a list of projects in the parking lot.

The S&P Director recognized the relevance of the SC's involvement in the work plan development and will review how to improve the process.

#### **Item 4 – Election EC representatives**

The Project Manager (PM) explained that the purpose of the session is for the SC to be able to appoint members of the Exceptions Committee (EC) for a renewed three-year term as well as to nominate a new representative of a Producer Network.

The last member joined the EC in June 2018. The term of three other members will end in March 2020. These three members represent interests of NFOs and the certification body and expressed their wish to renew their term. A representative from one of the Producer Networks was still missing. Thus after the call for candidates from Producer Networks to join the EC, one person expressed their interest to join the EC as a new member.

The SC members expressed a concern regarding the fact that a representative of consumers is still missing and also questioned the balance of the EC composition, where there are two members representing the certification body. The PM explained that the composition of the EC should be drawn from the member organizations and the EC member coming from an NFO indirectly represents interests of markets and consumers. If an external organization (e.g. civil society organization) should be added, then this would have to be factored in the ToR of EC. It was also highlighted that in general it is challenging to engage representatives from member organizations into participation in the EC.

The S&P director suggested to revise the composition of the EC and introduce relevant changes in the ToR as needed to have a more balanced composition in the mid-term while approving the current applications to the committee to guarantee its operations. The SC supported this suggestion and agreed to renew the terms of the candidates from the certification body for one year.

#### **Decisions:**

##### **Decision 1**

SC agrees to validate the extension of Andreas Hansen membership for a three-years term?

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal

##### **Decision 2**

SC agrees to validate the extension of Silke Kladt membership for a one-year term?

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal

##### **Decision 3**

SC agrees to validate the extension of Wendy Yegon membership for a one-year term?

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal

**Decision 4**

SC agrees to validate the extension of Buddika Alahakoon membership for a three-year term?

The SC voted in favour of the proposal (6 votes in favour and 1 abstained)

**Action points:**

- S&P to revise the composition for the 2021 year, to ensure more balanced representation of stakeholders in the committee. The suggestion on changes in the composition will have to be approved by the SC.
- Standard Project Manager to inform the applicants of the outcome of this decision.

**Item 5a – Sharpening the SPO Definition**

After the revised SPO standard was published in 2019, the following issues were still to be refined. The PM explained each of the topics.

1. Decrease in the share of volume sold as Fairtrade from small-scale producers from currently 66% to 50%: At least half of the volume (50%) of a Fairtrade product that an organization sells as Fairtrade per year is produced by small-scale producers.

In September 2019, CLAC approached the SC requesting to set the share of volume back to 50%, as the limitation on volumes affects small-scale producers and the overall ability of organizations to fulfil obligations and so that they are not disadvantaged vis-à-vis HL organizations that do not have any volume restriction.

2. SPO Indicator for small-scale producer farm size and maximum land size for other fruits in Brazil. It was proposed to not extend the individual SPO indicator for citrus and avocados in Brazil to other fruits in Brazil and to not set a different maximum land size for fruits other than citrus and avocados in Brazil.

As Fairtrade certification for fruits other than citrus is quite limited at the moment, and the currently certified SPOs comply with the general SPO indicator of 10ha and the maximum land size of 30ha, S&P recommends to not extend the Brazil indicator for citrus and avocados to other fruits.

3. Extend the current global individual SPO indicator for sugar to Fiji. It was suggested to set the individual SPO indicator to define a small-scale producer for sugar in Fiji at 10ha.

Most sugar farms in Fiji are still around 4-6 ha, bigger farms are the exception. Although it is the expressed wish of sugar small-scale farmers to increase their land size in the future in order to stay competitive, land sizes higher than 10ha are not the norm currently.

4. Possibility of exceptions on the maximum land size for sugar. It was proposed to include exceptions for cane sugar on the maximum land size of 30ha. The exceptions would be limited to 100ha maximum applicable to 15% of members.

As variations to the SPO definition were introduced on other levels (exceptions on the maximum land size for wine grapes and a local SPO indicator for Brazil), S&P proposes to make exceptions to the maximum

land size possible for SPOs certified for cane sugar. This would be in line with the conditions introduced for wine grapes. Exceptions are possible based on the standard requirement and there is no additional application to FLOCERT needed.

5. Interpretation Mauritius to exempt members from working on the land, if economic benefits are not enough to reach a decent living. It was suggested to issue an interpretation for sugar in Mauritius to allow members to pursue other regular economic activities beside sugar farming if their plots are too small to make a living.

S&P recommends to issue an interpretation to allow members to pursue other economic activities if their plots are too small to make a living. This means that the additional criteria that workers must work in addition to members does not apply in these particular cases. As feedback shows that at least 10ha are needed in sugar production to have sufficient income and the economic constraints are particularly severe for small-scale producers, this interpretation would be limited to members that have less than 10ha.

6. Possibility of exceptions on the maximum land size for other products. A general possibility of exceptions on the maximum land size of 30ha will not be included in the standard; instead this will be regulated via the exceptions policy.

As the requested exceptions are likely not to happen as systemic as in wine grapes and sugar, S&P considers this a good option to be as flexible as necessary for other products but also limit the scope when exceptions are used.

#### **Decisions:**

Topic 1: Share of volume sold as Fairtrade from small-scale producers

The CLAC clarified that the suggested lowering of the percentage could also only be applicable for products which are cultivated both in SPO and HL set up organizations in order to balance competition. The PM clarified that such a differentiation would make the standard more complex. The NAPP representative highlighted that Asian producers agreed with the approved percentage and could be demotivated should it change again. FTA also mentioned that in the African context, the existing percentage suited SPOs better.

#### **Decision 1**

SC agrees to reconsider the share of volume that has to come from small-scale producers and set the percentage back to 50%

The SC voted in favour of the proposal (5 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstained)

Topic 2: SPO Indicator for small-scale producer farm size and maximum land size for other fruits in Brazil

#### **Decision 2:**

SC agrees to not extend the individual SPO indicator for citrus and avocados in Brazil to other fruits in Brazil and to not set a different maximum land size for fruits other than citrus and avocados in Brazil?

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal

Topic 3: Extend the current global individual SPO indicator for sugar to Fiji

**Decision 3:**

SC agrees to set the individual SPO indicator to define a small-scale producer for sugar in Fiji at 10ha?

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal

Topic 4: Possibility of exceptions on the maximum land size for sugar

It was discussed if this could be left to be decided by each SPO. It was also mentioned that workers in SPOs should be supported more strongly.

**Decision 4:**

SC agrees to include the following requirement in the Fairtrade cane sugar Standard: For cane sugar, exceptions on the maximum land size of 30ha are possible. The exceptions are limited to 100ha maximum applicable to 15% of members.

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal. It was also agreed to include into the final wording the following 4 countries, detailing where this is applicable: Mauritius, Belize, Paraguay, and Fiji.

Topic 5: Interpretation Mauritius to exempt members from working on the land, if economic benefits are not enough

**Decision 5:**

SC agrees to issue an interpretation for sugar in Mauritius to allow members to pursue other regular economic activities beside sugar farming if their plots are too small to make a living? This means that the additional criteria that workers must work in addition to members does not apply in these particular cases. The minimum land size to apply this rule is 10ha.

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal.

Topic 6: Possibility of exceptions on the maximum land size for other products

It was mentioned that the number of exceptions granted for these issues should be monitored, tracked and evaluated by the Exceptions Committee.

**Decision 6:**

Do you agree to not include a general possibility of exceptions on the maximum land size of 30ha into the standard and regulate this via the exception policy instead?

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal.

Topic 7: Delegation of final changes

**Decision 7:**

SC agrees to the delegation of approval of non-substantive changes and final wording of the standard to the director of S&P?

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal.

### **Item 5b – Significant number of workers**

In the SPO review, a full revision of the labour conditions chapter in the SPO Standard did not take place, as there is no agreed strategy about Fairtrade's approach to workers in SPOs nor the information to understand what could be the implications of changes in the requirements. Instead, only a few changes were made touching on workers in SPOs, including changes to the definition of the significant number of workers. While the intention of the change was to ultimately include more workers in this definition, so that more workers are covered by the requirements in the labour chapter, it was brought to the attention of S&P that the change might lead to unintended consequences where eventually less workers would be covered by the definition of the significant number of workers. This might be a possibility in the case of medium to large farms within small-scale producer organizations.

S&P therefore proposed to add "or equivalent" to the given definition that says "SPOs and members that employ more than 10 workers, working for more than 30 hours per week that are present for one month or more during a year".

During the discussion it was debated to include "or regularly scheduled workers" to also include part-time workers. This was not endorsed as the impact of such a change on SPOs is not clear. Instead it was decided to take the decision only for 1 year, and to re-consider this once there is more information available. Once the data of the mapping and contextual analysis on bananas and cocoa is ready, it should be presented to the SC.

The SC highlighted the urgency to move forward on the topic of workers in SPOs.

#### **Decisions:**

##### **Decision 1:**

SC approves to set the significant number of workers to more than 10 workers, working for more than 30 hours per week that are present for one month or more during a year or equivalent.

The SC voted in favour of the proposal (6 votes in favour and 1 abstained). It was added that this decision is valid for one year.

##### **Decision 2:**

SC approves to delegate the approval of non-substantive changes and final wording of the standard to the director of S&P.

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal.

### **Item 6 – Environmental Study**

The results of the environmental study were presented. The SC recognized that in times of unprecedented climate and ecological crisis, Fairtrade will only remain competitive if its Standards address not only social issues but also strongly focus on tackling and preventing environmental problems among the producers. The results of the environmental study were shared with the SC and a set of recommendations to strengthen the Standards regarding environmental issues were delivered. Some of these recommendations are:

- Transform more environmental criteria from development into core
- Consider how standards can support POs in recording, analysing, and reporting data on environmental activities and impacts

- Offer guidance to POs in prioritizing premium projects that are economically viable but also have environmental co-benefits
- Assess and discuss advantages and disadvantages to make premium investments in environmental aspects compulsory
- More impact oriented criteria, meaning that expected outcomes should be concrete
- Producers should comply with environmental criteria at an earlier stage of the certification

**Next steps:**

All the recommendations outlined in the Environmental Study will be further analysed by SC Chair and S&P Director to draft an action plan to address environmental issues through the Fairtrade Standards. This action plan will be presented to the SC members during the SC meeting of July 2020.

**Item 7 – Cocoa FMP & FP Exchange Rates**

The Project Manager (PM) presented the topic and explained the reasoning behind bringing the topic with agility and urgency to the SC. The GPM Cocoa co-presented and explained the details on price and conversion ratios implemented up to date by FLOCERT. GPM cocoa presented to the SC the details on the current situation and the feedback from the stakeholders consulted. FTA mentioned being supportive of the proposals presented.

The intention of the project is to clarify the methodology for calculating the FMP differentials equivalent in XOF and EURs specifying exchange rates and detail the calculation to be used. The problem encountered and analysis of the proposals were presented to the SC for information/guidance in the meeting. As a next step, S&P will organise a meeting to bring consensus amongst various key stakeholders to agree on a solution which is most feasible and has the least unintended consequences. S&P will then provide additional inputs collected for Director's decision making and make sure that the key stakeholders are on board with the proposals. The Director will reach out to SC Chair or the SC as needed, and provide update in the next SC meeting. With the ambition to address the issue in the upcoming trade season while assuring relevant stakeholders are supportive of the proposal, the SC was asked to delegate the decisions to the Director of S&P. The PM also detailed the next steps, firstly bringing the decisions to the Director and subsequently publication the price announcement and development a guidance document for internal use.

**Decisions:**

**Decision 1:**

SC agrees to delegate the approval of the following decisions to the Director of Standards & Pricing:

1: To approve publishing a XOF value for the FMP differential for Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the USD-XOF exchange rate used to establish that value, starting with the trade season 1st April – 30th September 2020.

2: To approve that the published FMP differentials in USD, XOF and EUR are applicable regardless of any other exchange rate mentioned in contracts with SPOs or the exchange rate on the date of payment to SPOs.

3: To approve publishing a EUR value for the FMP differential for Côte d'Ivoire, derived from the XOF-EUR pegged exchange rate rather than the USD-EUR exchange rate starting with the trade season 1st April – 30th September 2020.

4: To approve the technical document instructing the calculation of the FMP differential.

The SC unanimously voted in favour of the proposal.

### **Item 8 – COVID-19**

Given the current Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and to support the livelihoods of farmers and workers, the SC is asked to endorse added flexibility on Premium use and decision making processes. It is proposed to issue interpretation notes to HL, SPO and CP standard applicable globally and to all products. The measures are foreseen to be temporary until end of September 2020.

The SC endorsed the proposed added flexibility for SPOs/CP as well as for HL following the principles specified below:

#### **SPO/CP:**

- FP use for COVID 19 related expenses following the guidance from WHO, including hygiene and PPE, food and essential necessities.
- Maximise the number of members and striving for all workers equally benefiting from the investments.
- GA to ratify the premium use retroactively.

#### **HL:**

- Option for 50% of FP use without requesting formally to FLOCERT and allowing food or other necessities.
- Option beyond 50% without requesting formally to FLOCERT and allowing food or other necessities. Companies to inform FLOCERT. Template to be developed and uploaded to Ecert without any additional costs.
- For hygiene awareness raising campaigns and PPF without taking away the legal responsibility of the company.
- Consultation of FPC and Trade Union/workers' representative. Beneficiaries as defined by FPC, striving to benefit all workers equally. If not possible, Trade Union/workers' representative approval is needed
- GA to ratify the Premium use retroactivity and inform workers proactively.

### **Item 9 – Pilot North to North Trade**

The main purpose of the presentation was to report and receive guidance and recommendations from the SC on how to move forward with the pilot phase from a standards perspective, particularly regarding the key topics below:

1. Vulnerability: the “disadvantaged producer” terminology used by Fairtrade isn't always understood in the French context. Mainly because of the benefit of a welfare state heritage (social security). Therefore, a method to assess vulnerability is integrated into the proposed adapted Farmer Standard, in order to be able to target those farmers identified as vulnerable. “vulnerability” is understood as a situation in which an agricultural system is exposed to a sum of external and internal shocks which could at some degree, negatively affect farmers' life's, especially their autonomy.
2. Minimum Price: Because of EU law, the principle of setting a “minimum price” in a commercial agreement is forbidden. It would be qualified as a regulation practice against the market competition principle. It means that one of the core tools of the Fairtrade current scheme has to be revised. The French Team has therefore redesigned the usual minimum price tool. The method has led to adapt the concept of the “minimum price” into a so called “recommended price” while maintaining this emblematic tool of Fairtrade.
3. Collecting Body Status: Fairtrade main focus are cooperatives. In France, cooperatives are still strong but certainly not the only way to empower farmers and workers. In the proposed Standard

Version\_draf\_0, a generic approach has been taken with obligation to comply with the principle of “one person, one voice” which implies the same level of share ownership into a private company (i.e “Biolait S.A.S” in France).

4. Fairtrade, as accelerator towards sustainable agriculture: The French Team would like to support a clear orientation in the use of the “premium” to accelerate the transition to organic certification or/and best environmental practices. Therefore, the development of the premium plan for Fairtrade Local Farmers could get a framework with a mandatory investment into “organic conversion” or “improvement of agricultural practices”. It is fully aligned with the strong expectations of French consumers and widely analyzed in all specific studies. The three key elements of those Responsible Consumption studies are: local, organic and fair.

Comments from SC members:

- Need to have more information about the collecting body concept introduced, to understand what exactly it is and how it works.
- French Team must focus on the essential issues closed to Fairtrade mission: income, prices and environment. The standards to be developed should not focus in issues that have already been addressed by government legislation in France or northern countries. These countries have already good standards and can be followed.
- French Team must be aware of the complex topics that need to be addressed in the proposal, for instance, the issue related to subsidies provided by government.
- It was noted that the definition of “recommended price” or the use of “advisory price” are all very similar to the minimum price.

**Next steps:**

SC members can submit more questions or comments about the topic via email to S&P assistant, who will share them with the French Team for their follow up.

**Item 10 – AOB**

- The SC was updated on certification in conflict affected areas, where physical access for FLOCERT auditors is limited or not safe for auditors. As part of the ‘Travel risk geographies’ pilot, which was approved by the OC and is captured in the RAPs, FLOCERT carried out several remote audits during 2019. The result of the remote audits showed that some of the compliance criteria (CC) for producers, especially the ones that require worker interviews, or physical checks could not be verified (e.g. CCs on social compliance, labour conditions or environmental requirements).

Producers in conflict affected areas, have development and market potential but their certification is challenging. Therefore, to enable certification in regions where physical access is limited, the following proposals have been put forward by the OC:

- a) Short term solution: based on findings from the pilot, FI and FLOCERT would discuss which requirements in the Standards can be remotely checked to ensure compliance and only these selected criteria will remain in the scheme. This means that producers would need to comply with certain requirements. The RAPs limits the Travel risk geographies pilot for 3 certification cycles at the moment.
- b) Long term solution: Firstly, to explore the possibility of recognising other schemes, also to gather information from the field (PNs or other NGOs) that could support the audit process. Secondly, to provide local auditors with trainings on the Fairtrade Standards, who can potentially safely access the areas in question.

As this is an assurance topic, it will be continued to be discussed within the OC and the SC will be updated as needed.

- A SC member highlighted the need to have more proactive communication on how Fairtrade is fighting fraud among certify producers and traders.
- The SC recognized the pioneer role and contribution of Bert Beekman to Fairtrade and was saddened by his departure.

**Next meeting date**

An extraordinary SC meeting (teleconference) will take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020 to address the outstanding topics of HML, Cotton Pilot and Covid-19.

**The meeting was formally closed.**