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Call for Tender

Consultancy:

Development of a policy brief and an advocacy roadmap:

Obtaining and/or influence agro-ecologically conducive policies supporting Fairtrade banana producers in Colombia, Dominican Republic, and Ecuador in their efforts to transition to sustainable agriculture.

1. Background

Fairtrade is an alternative approach to conventional trade and is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. When farmers can sell on Fairtrade terms, it provides them with a better deal and improved their market access. Fairtrade's vision is **a world in which all producers can enjoy secure and sustainable livelihoods, fulfil their potential and decide on their future**. Fairtrade therefore works to provide small farmers from producing countries with fairer trade conditions that allow them to combat poverty, strengthen their position and take control over their lives.

Against that background, Fairtrade has developed a [policy on sustainable agriculture](#), aimed at providing clarity on its position towards our programmatic and advocacy work, and to better guide internal operations in the field of monitoring, evaluation and learning, producer support, partnership building, and strategic alliances. As stated in the policy, **Fairtrade is embracing agroecology elements as overarching set of principles to best approach sustainable agriculture under Fairtrade terms**.

As part of this policy's roll-out process, Fairtrade aims at strengthening its producer-led advocacy for agroecologically-conducive policies at key product sector/value chain level to achieve an enabling policy and regulatory environment in producing countries and / or regions ("at origin") so that producers can maintain or transition to agroecological farming practices.

Under the new European Commission Financial Framework Partnership Agreement (ECFFPA) programme, Fairtrade has received funding, to develop a series of agroecology policy briefs, stipulating advocacy asks to support the agroecology transition for priority product sectors, and operationalising those asks through a roadmap to guide the future advocacy work. These will be co-developed with producers in selected countries. In 2024, the product focus will be on banana in Colombia, Dominican Republic and Ecuador. We expect to focus this project on coffee in 2025.

Fairtrade banana sector and challenges

In the Fairtrade banana sector, there are more than 35,000 smallholder farmers and workers belonging to 256 producer organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Africa and Asia. In 2022, almost 1.5 million metric tons of bananas were produced on over 50,000 hectares, and of the total production more than 72% was produced in three



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countries only: Colombia, Dominican Republic, and Ecuador. 54% of the total Fairtrade production is certified organic, representing a high share of existing agroecological farming practices in comparison to other product sectors.

Like other agricultural export sectors, the banana sector is confronted with increasing regulatory pressure resulting from changes in EU legislation. For example, the new EU organic regulation is expected to translate into a substantial increase of organic certification costs for producers as the EU substantially changed key requirements for groups of operators and also shifted to a compliance principle instead of the equivalence principle which existed before. This could result in making it economically challenging to maintain certified organic production compliant with EU rules. In addition, new Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence legislation is likely to add to compliance costs for the sector.

Other challenges relate to threats such as extremely poor genetic variety in commercial banana production, causing the banana fungus diseases (such as TR4) to be an extremely dangerous threat. Moreover, decreasing soil health, changing weather conditions and water availability due to climate change are threatening the productivity in the sector. As a response to such challenges, Fairtrade has developed measures such as a "Productivity Improvement Program" in Fairtrade banana production which has shown good results in improving soil health besides improving water and carbon footprints. However, further investments are required to expand on those positive examples of promoting sustainable production.

Beyond that, Fairtrade has set itself ambitious goals to increase Living Incomes for farmers and living wages for workers in the sector. We also have developed methodologies to calculate the costs of sustainable production which align with internationally accepted approaches for defining living wage levels. While some successes in expanding the achievement of living wage levels have been achieved in recent years for instance in Colombia and Ecuador, wage and income gaps still exist in the sector and the work to close the gap must continue.

As LI and LW wage levels are integral part of Fairtrade policy on sustainable agriculture, transitioning to or maintaining agroecological production practices requires that the respective costs are reflected in the prices that producers receive for their sustainably produced bananas and it would be beneficial if this became a sector aspiration and supported by policy makers.

2. How will the banana advocacy brief be used?

The policy brief is a set of policy asks, targeting policymakers and enabling banana producers to maintaining agroecological farming practices (such as organic production, for example) or transition from conventional to agroecological practices. Those policy briefs will be based on a thorough analysis, including on value chain aspects and the identification of barriers to agroecological transition, including those beyond production level only, which



need to be tackled by policy and regulatory change. The advocacy roadmaps will enable banana or country networks, to set their advocacy priorities, identify advocacy opportunities, map their targets/allies/opponents, set their advocacy action plan and move to action.

Moreover, the evidence-based policy brief may be used by other Fairtrade advocacy actors to substantiate calls to action at other fora.

3. Objective of the consultancy

The general objective of the consultancy is connected with output 1 of the ECFFPA programme funding the action which reads as follows:

Output 1: The Fairtrade network strengthens its capacity to exert greater influence on legislation and public policies and private sector practices at national, regional and global levels that impact Producer Organisations

More specifically, the consultancy objective is to:

Develop a policy brief and an advocacy roadmap focusing on Fairtrade bananas, through a consultative process (e.g. workshops).

The advocacy roadmap:

- Is based on a thorough analysis of the challenges and opportunities in the banana sector and of the policy context in the countries at stake, for enabling banana producers to successfully transition to or maintain agroecological practices.
- Identifies advocacy priorities, maps stakeholders and resources, and comprises an advocacy action plan tailored to the capacity of the country/banana network that will implement it.

The policy brief is a set of key policy asks, targeting policy-makers at local, national, regional, EU and global levels aimed at policy and regulatory change relevant for banana (incl. targeting EU-Delegations or regional and international bodies)

4. Methodology

- Document review (e.g. FI policy documents and positions supported, Producer Networks strategies and plans, legislation documents, selected scientific literature)
- Interviews with selected key stakeholders and resource persons (such as Fairtrade banana producers and their networks, Fairtrade country networks, Fairtrade



- International staff, Producer Network staff, National Fairtrade Organization staff, banana buyers, traders)
- Facilitation of (a) consultative workshop(s) (ideally in-presence, or hybrid or online) with selected stakeholders, namely banana producers of selected countries, experts and resource persons
 - Travel to producer country or countries are required
 - Participation in online meetings

5. Deliverables and Milestones

Inception report

Consultative workshop

Workshop report (1 per workshop)

Draft advocacy roadmap (1 per country)

Final advocacy brief (1 per country), 10-15 pages max.

Draft policy brief (1 per country), 5 pages max.

Final workshop

(Due dates to be defined at the start of the consultancy)

6. Qualifications of the consultant (or team)

The below specified qualification criteria are deemed relevant for the professional (s) applying for the assignment:

a. *Essential:*

- Fluency in English and Spanish (equivalent to C1 level or above, according to [CEFR](#))
- Experience in desk research related to sustainable agricultural production, policy analysis, compiling policy papers and building advocacy plans
- Working experience in the Latin American and Caribbean region
- Policy and advocacy practitioners with plus seven years of working experience in advocacy work for public policy influencing
- Experience with workshop facilitation and moderation
- Good knowledge of participatory processes and tools
- Ability to present information concisely and clearly
- Demonstrable policy on research ethics, and a willingness to adhere to Fairtrade research and ethics policies

b. *Asset:*

- Professional background on tropical sustainable agriculture and export value chains, sustainable development frameworks and strong understanding of producer livelihoods and/or voluntary sustainability standard setting and certification systems



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- University degree in policy and advocacy
- Policy and advocacy work experience with relevance for Latin America and Caribbean region
- Good knowledge of Fair Trade movement and Fairtrade International as an organization, including the Fairtrade Strategy, Theory of Change, standards and producer support, and Fairtrade structures
- It would be an asset if the applicant has specific knowledge of the banana sector in Latin America.

7. Envisaged Timeline

a. Date advertised:	08.05.2024
b. Deadline for submission of proposals:	22.05.2024
c. Contracting by:	15.06.2024
d. End of contract:	16.12.2024

8. Budget

Maximum budget available is **Euro 24.000 € incl. 19% VAT** (as this is where Fairtrade International, the body commissioning this assignment, is headed)

A percentage of the available budget is funding granted by the European Commission, hence all deliverables must follow the communications guidelines of the EC.

9. Application process

Please hand in your proposal comprising of a technical and financial offer, of max. 8 pages (not including CVs) until **22.05.2024 cob CEST** to advocacy4bananas@fairtrade.net

The technical offer should clarify the consultants' understanding of the assignment, a proposal for a suitable study design including methodologies proposed, an initial workplan detailing team collaboration (if applicable).

The financial offer should include a calculation of days and staff time needed including any potential expenses (e.g. for travel, workshop)

The CV(s) of the individual consultant(s) working on the assignment (providing proof of the qualifications) should be provided in the Annex together with other relevant documentation (e.g. work examples and references, if applicable)