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ETP Enters Into Partnership with Third Certification Programme

The Fairtrade Labelling Organization (FLO) and Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP) are delighted to announce a joint commitment to work together to improve the lives of tea workers and promote sustainability in the tea industry.

The ETP is a non-commercial alliance of 22 tea companies who share a vision of a thriving tea sector that is socially just and environmentally sustainable. ETP works to monitor and improve social and environmental conditions under which tea is produced and to improve the lives of tea workers.

FLO is a non-profit, multi-stakeholder organization made up of 24 member organizations worldwide. It is responsible for the strategic direction of Fairtrade, the Fairtrade standards and producer support. The FAIRTRADE Certification Mark is a registered trademark of FLO which shows that a product meets international Fairtrade standards.

The purpose of the partnership is to drive greater positive impact for tea producers. In particular, we will aim to:

- Reduce duplication of monitoring and auditing activity for producers, saving them both time and money. ETP will recognise Fairtrade certification of producers, and focus its own monitoring activity on producers that do not have another independent certification.
- Work with ETP members to facilitate work towards Fairtrade certification of producers in their supply chains, where the producers and ETP members have expressed interest
- Develop joint projects to address issues facing producers in the tea industry, and mobilise resources from ETP members and other funders for these. These have yet to be established but areas we are interested to explore together include specific support programmes for smallholders, and work on climate change impacts and adaptation for tea growers.

Why are we doing this now?

ETP's recent strategic review focused on how ETP could best build on its 12 year history of monitoring and improving conditions in the tea sector to generate more positive changes for tea workers. It concluded in an agreement to work with key certification bodies and to increase its capacity building partnerships to assist producers in managing the difficult social and environmental issues that are holding back the sustainability of the sector. Fairtrade is a key player, especially for smallholder tea growers and has a range of skills and experience that complements ETP's.

FLO's new strategic plan aims to increase positive impact for farmers and their communities, and empower producers within both their own supply chains and the global Fairtrade system. FLO is developing plans to deliver this vision for each of the major product categories, including tea. FLO has appointed a new Global Product Manager for Tea, and established a Fairtrade Tea Product Advisory Council, made up of tea producers, importers and tea packers to advise and guide this work. Partnerships with key organizations is a core element of the new strategy.

This is therefore an ideal time for FLO to be entering into a new partnership with the Ethical Tea Partnership and its members.

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