

# Talking Tea

News updates from the Ethical Tea Partnership  
Issue 9 | Autumn 2012

[www.ethicalteapartnership.org](http://www.ethicalteapartnership.org)



A trainer shows farmers how to install drip irrigation

## Responding to climate change through training & support

**giz** In Kenya, the climate change adaptation project with GIZ is in its second year and developments are moving quickly. All the extension staff at the five Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) factories the project is working with have been trained on climate change adaptation measures and strategies, and the training is now being rolled out to the lead farmers.

In addition, the extension officers and lead farmers have created adaptation plans ready for implementation by those farmers in their catchments. These plans are based on local conditions and outline the practices and measures that will help farmers become more resilient to changing climatic conditions.

### Good practice farming

Each project team is now working with the factories to support implementation of these plans. In addition, demonstration farms are being used to show good practice techniques such as composting, mulching, drip irrigation and shade trees. The demonstration farms are also supporting the development of nurseries for indigenous trees.

*(continues on page 3)*



Planting kitchen gardens

## Expanding our membership

2011 - 2012 has been a busy year for the ETP with four new international members joining the partnership.

In June 2012 Ostfriesische Tee Gesellschaft (OTG) was the first tea company from Germany to join the partnership, and they were followed later in the year by interTee.

In July we welcomed our first member from Australia, project t (The Bean Alliance), further strengthening our presence in the southern hemisphere.

And finally in September Ringtons, a UK-based company with a long heritage and key supplier to UK-based retailers, joined the partnership.

We are delighted to welcome all these companies to the ETP, their involvement will strengthen the partnership and increase our ability to make a positive difference.



# Director's page

I am writing this column as the ETP's new chairman, Ian Midgley, is speaking at the Indian International Tea Convention (IITC). Ian is familiar with tea supply chains from his previous role as Chief Supply Chain Officer for Unilever, during which time he chaired Unilever's Sustainable Agriculture Board; but this is his first tea convention.

Having attended the East African and Sri Lankan conventions early in my tenure at the ETP, I know the experience will give him some excellent insights, not to mention a taste of the tea sector's renowned hospitality. Watch out for Ian, Ranjan, and Diya's blogs about the key lessons they learned from the convention.



Ian Midgley at the IITC

## Increasing our influence

Ian is just one of many additions to the ETP over the past year, with new staff, members, training courses and projects all contributing to a significant expansion of the ETP's reach and remit. We are delighted that our first member from Germany was swiftly followed by another. The increased involvement in the ETP by retailers and the companies that source tea for them means we have greater influence in producer regions and along the whole supply chain.

Our producer support programmes have also grown considerably with the expansion of our agrochemical management support programmes into new countries, evolution of our health



Ian, Ranjan & Diya at the IITC

and safety training partnerships to increase the institutionalisation of good practice, and a significant increase in labour and social issues support in both Africa and Asia. This area of our work has seen a considerable boost through a new partnership with the Sustainable Trade Initiative, IDH.

## A joined up approach

These programmes have contributed to demonstrable improvements in tea producers' performance against international standards, which we witness directly through our auditing programme and the work that we do to facilitate third party certification. The ETP is now convening the Tea Standards Forum. This will help improve the consistency with which the different standards and certification programmes auditing tea producers approach common issues, thereby increasing the value of these programmes to all those working in the tea sector.

## Operating Strategically

We are also scaling up our work on the strategic issues affecting the long-term development of the sector. Smallholders are going to be increasingly important to the future of the tea sector but are often the most disconnected from the demands of the international market

and vulnerable to climate change. We are therefore building on our experience in Indonesia and Kenya and expanding our partnerships supporting smallholders to improve their productivity, quality, access to international markets, and resilience to climate change to new smallholder groups in Africa and Asia. We also continue to support knowledge transfer between regions, facilitating a number of producer good practice exchanges, and adapting training approaches to different regions.

## Focusing on the future to improve the present

At an even more strategic level, the ETP is involved in a number of partnerships looking at how the industry could develop and change over the next twenty years. These range from very big picture global scenario development projects to focused initiatives that look at how the industry is changing in individual countries and the impact on plantation communities.

Whether we are looking at how to deal with short-term challenges or the long-term picture, it is clear that there are considerable changes coming through the tea sector. At the ETP, we will continue to work with producers, packers and a range of partners to ensure that forthcoming changes impact positively on worker and smallholders' lives, livelihoods and the environment.



Sarah Roberts  
Executive Director

(continued from front cover)

The ETP/GIZ project is also making links with other development organisations and projects to increase impact:

- GIZ: energy efficient stove project
- Kenyan Institute of Organic Farming: training on best practice farming
- Tea Research Foundation of Kenya: providing access to drought and frost resistant tea clones

Finally, meetings between extension officers and the local community has led to increased engagement and understanding, and KTDA have recognised the benefits of taking a community-driven approach.

### Scaling up

On hearing about the ETP/GIZ partnership, leading UK retailer Marks & Spencer requested that the project be expanded to three KTDA factories in their supply chain as well as one coffee cooperative. The factories have been easily incorporated into the program and expansion will benefit thousands more smallholder farmers.

### Upcoming climate projects

We were recently commissioned by the International Trade Centre to develop resources that will further support Kenyan tea farmers to address climate change mitigation. Building on the climate change work with GIZ, this project is in partnership with Rainforest Alliance and the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO-Cert). As well as strengthening our current portfolio of good practice farming resources, the project will also help to align the tea sector's approach to climate change.

## Promoting safe use of agrochemicals



The ETP has been working with agrochemical experts CropLife Asia for a number of years to improve tea producers' safe handling of agrochemicals. Following successful programmes in China and Sri Lanka, we have now turned our attention to Assam. While the region has always been highly susceptible to pests and diseases, there has been a sharp rise of incidences in recent years, many of which can be attributed to changing weather conditions.



Checking a worker's PPE

This poses additional challenges for producers and with this in mind, Martin Gibson Stewardship Director of CropLife Asia visited key Indian producers at the end of 2012, accompanied by Ranjan Circar, ETP Regional Manager, India.

The aim of the trip was to gauge the specific pest challenges in Assam, assess safety standards, and the effectiveness of current approaches including integrated pest management (IPM).



IPM in use in China



IPM in use in China

IPM integrates agrochemical use into a wider range of other (more natural) activities aimed at reducing pest problems, which when managed effectively brings both environmental and economic benefits.

### Observing good practices

During the trip, Martin and Ranjan visited three estates with differing agrochemical standards, including an organic and one Rainforest Alliance certified estate. Martin interviewed management on the range of IPM systems they implement and observed worker competencies in handling, mixing and spraying agrochemicals, estate storage facilities, and disposal of spent equipment. Martin also checked spraying records, the suitability of workers' personal protective equipment, and the general upkeep and maintenance of spraying equipment.

Having looked at common challenges and the range of viable solutions, we will now work on course content for training workshops throughout 2013. As with China and Sri Lanka, the workshops will be free to producers and will help them to improve against internationally recognised standards.

# First tea sector specific vocational OHS course, Sri Lanka



Participants and project partners for the Advanced Certificate Course on Occupational Safety and Health

 Good occupational health and safety (OHS) is a fundamental part of sustainable supply chains and an area that the ETP has been supporting producers on for many years. We were therefore delighted to be approached by the development organisation WUSC (World University Services of Canada) to work with them and the Sri Lankan National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety (NIOHS), to support the development and implementation of an advanced OHS course specifically designed for the tea sector.

## About the training

NIOHS is part of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Labour, and their occupational courses are aimed at equipping staff with the knowledge

and skills to manage OHS effectively across their organisation. Aimed at mid-level management, the course comprised of 120 hours theoretical training and 120 hours on-site field demonstrations.

## Content aligned for the tea industry

ETP Regional Manager for Sri Lanka, Dushy Perera, worked closely with technical staff from NIOSH and WUSC to ensure that the course was completely relevant to conditions on tea estates, and all the training materials from the ETP's Indian OHS programme were made available.

At the start of the training, each participant identified potential hazards and risks at their respective estates. Then during roundtable discussions, the commonly identified

risks were added to a checklist to allow the course content to be aligned to their specific needs.

In October this year, at a ceremony attended by the Sri Lankan Minister of Labour, 18 employees from five Regional Plantation Companies graduated in the Advanced Certificate Course on Occupational Safety and Health for Plantations.

Jim Delaney, Programme Director, WUSC commented, "I was very impressed with the ETP's OHS materials from other countries. The ETP is committed to raising OHS standards, and this course provides a strong foundation for OHS management. Encouragingly other plantation companies have enquired about the course being run again."

## Supporting third-party certification

Over the last few years we have been supporting Tata Global Beverages (TGB) to meet its certification targets.

This work recently received a boost when TGB and the Sustainable Trade Initiative, IDH, entered a Public Private Partnership to help factories, estates, and smallholders in Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda to achieve and maintain certification.

The ETP is coordinating the

work, which will ultimately lead to an increased use of sustainable agricultural practices.

Where required, we will set up appropriate support and educational structures such as farmer field schools, and provide support services to producers to ensure they adopt good social and environmental working practices.

In Malawi and Uganda, needs assessments will be conducted

Lead farmers on Rainforest Alliance training



with smallholders at the start of the project to ensure they receive focused support.

## Expanding good practice across East Africa



The ETP Africa team's recent work with producers in Uganda highlighted a lack of experience in implementing good international standards, and found that some social and environmental systems were behind those of their Kenyan counterparts.

### Meeting international standards

Following other successful educational exchange visits, a decision was made to take 10 Ugandan factory managers to Kenya in August 2012. The trip gave them

the opportunity to see good practice first hand, so they understood what changes needed to be made in order to meet international standards.

### Good management systems

During the trip the managers visited estates and factories to see how they prepare for independent third party auditing. While the site visit gave them the opportunity to discuss good social and environmental management systems with their peers, of particular interest were the systems used to keep certified

and non-certified teas separate from one another during processing. The management team was also able to discuss differences in quality between their teas and that of their hosts', and gain an insight into how quality can be maintained during processing.

The exchange visit concluded with a trip to a tea auction where it was evident that there was a strong demand for tea meeting high quality and sustainability standards.



Uganda management visit Kenya to learn about good practice

“  
Our sincere thanks to the ETP for facilitating the trip. We will work closely with all management to ensure they implement the good practices the team learned, in order to achieve certification at the earliest time possible  
”

HR Manager,  
Rwenzori Commodities Ltd

## Supporting good human resource management in China



Over the last few years, we have focused on helping Chinese producers to improve factory health and safety and agrochemical management.

With rapid changes in the Chinese labour market, we recently started a project on Human Resource (HR) Management to help producers improve in key areas, and help ensure they stay up-to-date with local legislation.

### A more attractive industry

The project will help tea suppliers meet national and international social and labour standards, therefore making the tea industry

a more attractive proposition to workers.

### What's included?

The training covers working hours, contractual issues, hiring, grievance and disciplinary procedures, and wages and benefits. To oversee the programme, an experienced Chinese HR consultant was used to clarify national legislation and current practice, and explain how it compares to the requirements of the ETP Global Standard. The consultant spent time with different levels of factory management to identify areas of weakness. This information was then used to form the basis of

a HR toolkit, which was developed in conjunction with Twinings' Ethical Supply Chain Manager for China, and the ETP's China team.

### Additional tools

Systematic record keeping is not widely practiced in China. The toolkit therefore illustrates how this can be effectively introduced, and provides a range of practical guides and contractual templates.

We have already seen some very positive developments in the factories that have been involved in this project. Over the coming months the programme will be expanded to other suppliers of ETP members.

## Helping the Burundi tea industry grow its export market

While Burundi produces some of the best quality tea in Africa, it struggles to maintain consistency, and this could potentially prevent strong industry expansion.

During 2012, ETP member Taylors of Harrogate committed to a project, which will be coordinated by the ETP. The project aims to improve smallholder livelihoods, and the overall viability of the Burundi tea industry, through increased exports to Europe.

The project is being funded by the Department for International Development FRICH (see info box), Taylors, and the Office du The Burundi (OTB), and will work with two OTB factories, their attached estates, and 25,000 smallholder

farmers that supply them.

By providing training on quality, sustainable production and farming practices, and environmental management, it is anticipated that the two factories and their supply base will be able to supply consistently high quality tea and achieve Rainforest Alliance certification, which will open up new markets for their tea.



The Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund aims to improve the lives of farmers & workers, by increasing European imports of food from countries north of South Africa & south of the Sahara.

## The ETP Blog



Follow our work & gain on the ground insight at: <http://tinyurl.com/cd9ll8p>

## ETP Publications

Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/bwpx4cp> to download our latest materials



## Improving social issues management in Africa



We have been working closely with the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) to ensure that social issues at KTDA factories are managed appropriately.

### What's been achieved?

To date the Ethical Trading Initiative supervisor management training, which promotes equal opportunities in the work place and tackles discrimination and harassment, has been delivered at 26 KTDA factories reaching more than 150 supervisors.

### Expanding the programmes

The Sustainable Trade Initiative, IDH, recently committed to scaling up our social issues work in Africa. This will enable us to deliver the

Supervisor Management Training to every KTDA factory, as well as to private factories in Kenya, Malawi and Uganda.

In addition, the partnership with IDH will also allow us to address other social and labour issues that impact directly on workers including:

- Contractual issues
- Improving worker-management communication
- Implementing transparent disciplinary procedures

The project will also look at the relationships between smallholders and the workers they hire, to ensure that legal and contractual rights are understood by both parties. An initial assessment will be conducted at

the start of the project to determine training content that embeds good practices. The project will run until the end of 2015.



Conditions will be better in factories, estates, and for workers hired by smallholders

## Support for smallholders yields new benefits



A polytunnel with young tea bushes inside

thereby improving their livelihoods. Of his trip, Seb said, “It’s already evident that one group of farmers has improved their farming practices, and the next step is to ensure that all the farmers within the catchment adopt these methods.”

### Access to affordable tea bushes

A key need of one of the smallholder groups is access to new and healthy tea bushes for filling in gaps on their plots, or for replacing old bushes. Under the technical guidance of PTPN VI staff and the ETP’s Regional Manager for Sri Lanka, Dushy Perera, a tea bush nursery project that will supply smallholders in the Danau Kembar estate catchment is developing well with 500,000 plants showing excellent progress. The team has vigorously maintained them with regular weeding and fertiliser application, and the first batch will be ready for distribution in the next few months.

Many smallholders who had tea bushes destroyed by fire in 2009 have signed up to receive plants at a reduced price in order to increase the density of their plots. The project team, including the KUD Manunggal Cooperative, will now work with smallholders to ensure they adhere to good agricultural practices when planting the bushes so they develop into strong and productive bushes.



ETP’s Nelia Latief, inspecting leaf quality

2012 has been a difficult year for Indonesian tea farmers who have experienced some of the lowest rainfall patterns for many years. The ETP’s Regional Manager for Indonesia confirmed, “During one project meeting, many tea farmers were telling me it’s been the worst drought they’ve ever witnessed. Tea bushes are dying, their yields are low, and consequently they’re struggling to make a living.”

Encouragingly, smallholder groups that the ETP - IDH project (see info box below) is working with are seeing productivity benefits despite the dry conditions.

### Added benefits for tea farmers

In one area, under the advice of lead farmer Pak Wawan and an agronomist from the Indonesian Research Institute of Tea and Chinchona (IRTC), the smallholders have been implementing a range of good practice farming methods. The group also make sure they keep updated on the weather conditions and adapt their practices accordingly,

and have collectively purchased a power sprayer, which they use to irrigate crops during dry spells.

While the project’s main aim was to improve smallholder livelihoods from tea, it shows that good practice farming also helps to increase resilience to the effects of climate change, something that will become more of a concern in the future.

### Support from member companies

In July, Tata Global Beverages’ Tea Buyer, Seb Michaelis, visited the smallholder group supplying green leaves to the Danau Kembar estate of PT. Perkebunan Nusantara VI (Persero) in Sumatra. While at the factory, Seb advised factory management and smallholders about market requirements in terms of quality. He explained how plucking practices affect leaf quality and ultimately the price it will fetch at auction.

Seb’s advice, coupled with training on good practice farming, will help the farmers improve the quality and quantity of tea they produce,



The ETP - Sustainable Trade Initiative, IDH, three year project is helping 1,000 smallholder farmers from three co-operatives in West Java and West Sumatra to improve their livelihoods from tea.

## What's new at the ETP?

### WELCOME...

Ian Midgley as the new Ethical Tea Partnership Chairman. Ian previously worked for Unilever for 30 years in senior operations roles and was also the Chair of the Unilever Sustainable Agriculture Board. Jane Nyambura joined in 2011 as the ETP Programme Coordinator for Africa. Jane is a tea farmer herself, and previously worked at KTDA for more than 7 years. And John Qin, who has vast supply chain assurance experience, joined the ETP as Regional Manager for China.

### CONGRATULATIONS...

And welcome back to Heleen Bulckens, after the birth of her second child Elias, and Amanda Penn, who also returns after the birth of her second child Mabel.

And to Diya Sharma, who has transferred to India to continue her career with the ETP.

### AND FAREWELL...

To Hubert Chen who left his post as Regional Manager for China, in order to spend time with his wife in the US – we're sure our paths will cross again when he returns to China.



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## What's the future of the tea sector & how do we ensure it's sustainable?

The ETP is involved in a number of initiatives that are focusing on the long term future of the tea sector and key sustainability issues.

### Focusing on Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, companies are grappling with new competitors and requirements, while facing the challenges of increasing production costs and lower profitability. This will impact on the way investments are made, and in turn will affect those plantation communities whose lives are entwined with the tea industry.

Having worked in Sri Lanka for many years, we were delighted to be asked to co-convene a platform to discuss these issues, with the development organisations CARE Sri Lanka and World University Services Canada (WUSC). This multi-stakeholder workshop will set out the emerging scenarios of the tea industry from a stakeholder perspective, and will generate recommendations to improve the wellbeing of plantation communities.

### Tea 2030

We are also a partner for the initiative Tea 2030, which has similar aims on a global scale; working with a range of stakeholders, the initiative will look at how the industry can create a sustainable value chain across the entire life cycle of a tea product, from farming and processing through to consumption.

Tea 2030, which is co-ordinated by sustainability consultants Forum for the Future, and backed by key companies such as Taylors of Harrogate, Tata Global Beverages, Unilever, and Finlays, and trade initiatives such as IDH, will create future scenarios to identify risks, trends and opportunities.

The ETP's staff will carry out interviews with producers, member companies, and other stakeholders to inform the development of the scenarios. Following the analysis, the Tea 2030 project team will determine areas where additional follow-up is needed and develop key work streams.

### OUR MEMBERS

