

What is FINE?

(FINAL VERSION – January 27, 2003)

There are many aspects of Fair Trade, which can benefit from greater co-operation and collaboration between the international Fair Trade networks. Four of these networks have their secretariats in Europe. They are:

- FLO: Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International
- IFAT: International Federation for Alternative Trade
- NEWS!: Network of European World Shops
- EFTA: European Fair Trade Association

These organisations started to meet in 1998 and , when they work together, are known by their acronym, FINE.

The aim of FINE is to enable these networks and their members to cooperate on:

- the development of harmonised core standards and guidelines for Fair Trade
- harmonisation, and increase in the quality and efficiency of, the monitoring system for Fair Trade
- advocacy and campaigning work
- harmonisation of their information and communication systems

The members of FINE agreed the following definition of Fair Trade, on which to base their work:

“Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair Trade organisations, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade”.

To them Fair Trade’s strategic intent is:

- deliberately to work with marginalised producers and workers in order to help them move from a position of vulnerability to security and economic self-sufficiency
- to empower producers and workers as stakeholders in their own organisations
- actively to play a wider role in the global arena to achieve greater equity in international trade.

FINE is an informal working group. It has no formal structure and no decision-making power. Meetings are held as required. Preparation, hosting and facilitation of the meetings rotates between members. Decisions are taken by the boards of the FINE members.

FLO International (Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International) is a network of 17 national labelling initiatives, acting under different names such as TransFair, Max Havelaar and Fairtrade Mark. Fairtrade labelling organisations exist in 14 European countries as well as in Canada, the United States and Japan.

FLO International was established in 1997 to coordinate the work of the national labelling initiatives and to ensure that the Fairtrade labelling concept and its product-related trading rules (i.e. fixed minimum prices, regulations on advance payments, etc.) are harmonized and efficiently inspected and audited all along the supply chain.

Currently, about 300 producer organizations encompassing over half a million producers in the South are FLO-certified. Moreover, FLO's product managers assist producers in responding adequately to market opportunities to sell fairtrade products, and FLO helps producers in accessing external support (expertise, funds) when needed to promote their empowerment and development.

FLO has a staff of 15 in its head office, and works with 38 inspectors and half a dozen liaison officers in the South.

Address: FLO International, Kaiser-Friedrich-Strasse 13, D-53113 Bonn, Germany

Tel: +49 228 949230, Fax: +49 228 2421713, e-mail: coordination@fairtrade.net / certification@fairtrade.net, website: www.fairtrade.net

IFAT (International Federation for Alternative Trade) is a global federation of organisations working in Fair Trade. It brings together producer, trader and support organisations from Africa, Asia and Latin America with importers, traders and Fair Trade support organisations from Europe, Japan and North America. IFAT was established in 1989. IFAT supports its members in their efforts to develop the Fair Trade market. It does so by the collection and dissemination of information, by acting as an information point and by providing advice and guidance on such issues as monitoring. The federation provides its members with special networking opportunities through the organisation of a global conference every two years and of regional/continental meetings in the intervening years. IFAT has a growing membership across 54 countries. 60 % of members are in the South. IFAT has a full-time staff of three based in the UK and one part-time staff person based in Kenya.

Address: IFAT, 30 Murdock Road, Bicester, Oxon, OX26 4RF, UK

Tel: +44 1869 249819, Fax: +44 1869 246381, e-mail: info@ifat.org.uk, website: www.ifat.org

NEWS! (Network of European World Shops) is a network of 16 national associations of World Shops in 14 European countries. It was established in 1994.

The aim of NEWS! is to promote Fair Trade in general and the World Shops in particular. It initiates, directs and promotes joint campaigns, and co-ordinates Europe-wide activities initiated by the national World Shop organisations. These activities are aimed at the media, the general public and political decision makers in Europe. NEWS! also facilitates cooperation and networking between its members by providing information and by organising a bi-annual European World Shops conference.

NEWS! represents over 2.500 World Shops in Europe.

NEWS! has a one-person staff.

Address: NEWS!, Rue de la Charité 43, 1210 Bruxelles, Belgique

Tel: +32 2 217 3617

e-mail: info@worldshops.org, website: www.worldshops.org

EFTA (European Fair Trade Association) is an association of 11 importers in 9 European countries. It was established in 1987.

EFTA facilitates the exchange of information and networking between its members through regular meetings and joint activities. EFTA plays an important role in supporting its members in their trading activities, e.g. by encouraging labour division. It also supports the members in developing a harmonized monitoring system which includes the collection of data on EFTA members' suppliers. In 1995, EFTA established an Advocacy and Campaigns office in Brussels to influence European institutions in favour of Fair Trade.

EFTA has a staff of 3 part-timers.

EFTA members trade with 225 food suppliers and 400 non food suppliers from the South.

Address: EFTA head office, Kerkwegje 1, 6305 BC Schin op Geul, The Netherlands,

Tel: +31 43 3256917, Fax: +31 43 3258433, email: efta@antenna.nl, website:

www.eftafairtrade.org

EFTA Advocacy and Campaigns Office, Rue de la Charité 43, 1210 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +32, e-mail: efta@eftadvocacy.org