Fairtrade Australia & New Zealand (FANZ)

Promoting biodiversity-friendly production of cocoa in Papua New Guinea through Fairtrade certification

Overview
Fairtrade ANZ is a member of Fairtrade International, which works to empower disadvantaged producers and promote fairer trading conditions. Fairtrade ANZ used their grant from BACP to teach cocoa producers in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific islands how to raise their incomes by achieving Fairtrade Certification, thereby incentivizing biodiversity-friendly cocoa farming practices.

Many producer organizations struggle to achieve or maintain Fairtrade certification due to illiteracy, isolation, and poor access to information on standards. Fairtrade ANZ conducted a gap assessment to identify the main obstacles for compliance, and a review of best practices in capacity building. They worked with Fairtrade International experts to develop a producer library of interactive training tools on biodiversity-friendly farming methods and the Fairtrade system and standards.

Key materials produced
- Needs assessment and Fairtrade training materials
- Specific training tools
- Training workshop report
- Report summarizing methodology of biodiversity indicators for CocoaMAP
- CocoaMAP biodiversity indicators
The library developed includes a "Training the Trainers Manual" to guide the management teams of small producer groups in designing training events on the Fairtrade system. The manual puts special emphasis on Fairtrade Environmental Standards, which make up one third of the certification criteria for small producers. Topics highlighted include awareness, participatory assessment and monitoring of biodiversity, as well as community land use planning and management.

Next, Fairtrade ANZ staff partnered with key players in four producer organisations struggling with compliance. Working with the Nature Conservancy and the Papua New Guinea Department of Agriculture, they field-tested the manual through training workshops with environmental officers, internal control inspectors and executives of the organizations. They also met with focus groups in the organisations to develop business plans and participatory land use management plans (PLUMP). Key players then administered trainings to their own organisations, where a plan of action was discussed, modified and approved by the larger producer group.

At Fairtrade ANZ's third Fairtrade Pacific Stakeholders Workshop, more than 90 stakeholders from Papua New Guinea, Fiji, East Timor, Samoa and New Zealand took part in interactive training sessions using the newest tools from the producer library, and built connections with representatives from traders, non-profits, governments, and other organizations such as Papua New Guinea's Cocoa Board, Rainforest Alliance, and the Cocoa and Coconut Research Institute.

Overall, twelve workshops were held and attended by more than 500 farmers. The training materials created will educate more than 9,000 small producers on the connection between Fairtrade farming, responsible land use, and biodiversity conservation, allowing them to take responsibility for the protection of their own natural resources. With the Fairtrade Network of Asian and Pacific Producers now expressing interest in adapting the producer library, the impact of this grant may become even larger.

**Project objectives**

1. To facilitate access to Fairtrade certification for suitable cocoa farmer groups with the capacity to learn, innovate, and change in order to comply with the Fairtrade Standards and implement biodiversity preservation techniques.
2. Train cocoa farming groups in biodiversity-friendly farming practices to allow them to take ownership of the care of their environment.
3. Facilitate linkages between Fairtrade certified cocoa producer groups in PNG, and New Zealand, Australian and international Fairtrade buyers, thereby increasing their demand for biodiversity-friendly Fairtrade cocoa.

**Major steps taken**

In line with BACP’s Market Transformation Strategy (MTS), Fairtrade ANZ’s BACP-supported project has included the development of partnerships with government bodies to define and disseminate best practices for biodiversity-friendly cocoa practices at the farm level. Our partnership with PNG’s Department of Agriculture and Livestock allowed for a cocoa block and fermentary management component of the introductory training sessions, and Fairtrade ANZ’s recent regional stakeholders workshops strengthened communications with PNG’s Cocoa Board and prompted discussions with PNG’s Cocoa and Coconut Research Institute about the definition of a potential Memorandum of Understanding to provide joint support to PNG cocoa producers. Fairtrade ANZ’s Producer Library is made available to partner organisations, which will facilitate efforts to create a common training curriculum that espouses biodiversity-friendly production practices.
Fairtrade’s market-based development approach supports the MTS by incentivizing a conversion to environmentally-sensitive production practices while addressing in a proactive manner the major constraints to cocoa productivity, including pest and disease, soil fertility, and cocoa block management. To further the multi-stakeholder process, as a result of the BACP project Fairtrade ANZ has engaged with the Papua New Guinea office of Rainforest Alliance and the International Finance Corporation to explore potential synergies.

Fairtrade ANZ’s BACP-supported project has contributed to MTS’ long term strategy, in the following areas:

- The promotion of participatory land use planning at the farm and producer organisation level, through the development of Participatory Land Use Management Plans (PLUMPs) with the guidance of The Nature Conservancy. PLUMPs allow landowners themselves to take responsibility for the conservation of their own resources, leading to sustainable conservation outcomes.
- Building local capacity for training and auditing, through the training of producer organizations’ environmental officers and others who will serve as trainers in their own communities.
- Building institutional capacity of producer organisations to ensure farmer adoption of best practices, through training and dissemination of training materials and practical field sessions.
- Enhancing biodiversity impacts between agroforestry systems and protected areas through zoning, or land use planning, to magnify benefits.

Further, through Fairtrade ANZ’s BACP-funded project and the interactive training materials developed, interest has been expressed by the Fairtrade Network of Asian and Pacific Producers to adapt the materials to the Asian context, thus strengthening farmer uptake of the Fairtrade Environmental Standards in the Asia/Pacific region. Interest has also been expressed in other areas of the international Fairtrade system, thus there is the potential that producers in other parts of the world will also benefit from practical training resources to understand and incorporate the Fairtrade Environmental Standards to their daily farming activities, specifically those with a focus on biodiversity.

**Key results**

**Fairtrade certification & biodiversity-friendly cocoa farmer training materials developed and distributed.**

Under the BACP-funded Project “Supporting cocoa producers in PNG through Fairtrade Certification”, Fairtrade ANZ had the opportunity to strengthen its capacity building services through the launch of its producer library, which is being designed to meet the needs of small producers who are challenged by isolation and low levels of education. During the project implementation, Fairtrade ANZ assessed the certification challenges of four producer organisations, two of which are Fairtrade certified and two applicants; results concluded that members of all these organisations have a low level of awareness of Fairtrade standards and its benefits, and that the management teams of the organisations are the key to
establishing long term capacity building processes to raise awareness levels and help producers to incorporate Fairtrade standards into their daily activities.

With this in mind, Fairtrade ANZ developed a package of interactive training tools on the Fairtrade system, standards, environmental requirements and biodiversity-friendly farming methods. These materials allow the team to address a wider range of stakeholders with different capacities and needs, i.e. audiences with relatively high and low levels of literacy. Steps conducted to develop the materials within the library included a gap assessment to identify the main obstacles for compliance, a review of the lessons learned in relation to capacity building processes over the last three years of the Producer Support & Relations (PSR) project, a consultation process with producers and Fairtrade International experts to contribute to the design of the materials, and a final testing phase conducted through four sets of workshops with BACP beneficiary cocoa producer organisations in PNG.

**Training Package on Fairtrade environmental standards - including biodiversity awareness, planning and monitoring – developed.**

The main component of the training package is “The Training the Trainers Manual”, a comprehensive document that provides guidance to trainers (producer groups’ management teams) and environmental officers to conduct training events for small producers about the Fairtrade system and its environmental requirements. Within this manual, the trainer has access to proposed strategies to develop each section, so that he/she may select the sections and activities according to the needs of the audience. The manual’s exercises and annexes are based on the needs of cocoa producer organisations in Papua New Guinea. However, the basic text applies to all producers around the world, which means that the use of this manual may be replicated in other countries. The trainer should make sure that the corresponding activities are adapted to focus on the relevant producers’ organizational structure, product, and regional circumstances to best facilitate learning about the Fairtrade system.

The training package makes special emphasis on Fairtrade environmental requirements, including biodiversity awareness, planning and monitoring. The Fairtrade Environmental Standards represent one third of the certification criteria for small producers; through these, Fairtrade encourages producers to follow sustainable and responsible farming practices. Having suitable resources to facilitate the understanding of these practices in the field is the first step towards improving the business and livelihoods of target producers.
Project beneficiaries supported to develop sound business plans that endorse biodiversity protection as the basis of their development activities and the development of land use management plans.

The development of participatory business and land use management plans for the selected target producer groups met an important need for these groups in the formative years of their operations. Key to the whole process is the core idea that users must make these plans themselves so ownership and implementation of the plan is well placed from the outset.

The development of the documents was done during two visits; during the first visit, relevant data (for business plans: business description, product flow, cash flow, projections, personnel and equipment requirements, and for land use management plans: resource and land use mapping, identification of resources at risk and resources to protect) was gathered through participatory methods in focus group discussions and interviews with key players in the organisation. The information gathered was then organized in a simple format and presented to a larger audience of members and executives for debate and approval of the information and strategies contained in the plans.

Four introductory workshops on Fairtrade and biodiversity conservation

The main objectives of this training are to raise awareness among small farmers in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific islands on the connection between responsible farming and biodiversity conservation, and to strengthen the role of Fairtrade Certified farmers in responsible land use, which is the basis of the Production chapter of the Fairtrade Standards for both Small Producer Organisations and Contract Production. Follow up sessions were delivered in two-day workshops on the Fairtrade Environmental Standards, the Fairtrade system, community land use planning and management, participatory assessment, and community monitoring of biodiversity conservation.

Sessions on Fairtrade and biodiversity conservation for environmental officer and personnel in charge of environmental training

As a result of the trainings, three new Fairtrade Environmental officers were appointed, and the terms of reference for their operations were designed to meet the specific needs of each producer organisation. During the follow up visits, special focus was made on training Environmental Officers, Internal Control Inspectors and executives of the producer organizations on the use of Fairtrade ANZ’s Producer Library. From the training, they gained the skills to lend this workshop to the rest of the membership, who are commonly scattered in remote parts and separated by rugged terrain and thick forest. This final activity had as a result a plan of actions for each organisation, which outlines the implementation of the business and land use management plans and future workshops on Fairtrade Standards.
Annual Fairtrade Regional Workshop

Fairtrade Australia & New Zealand’s Producer Support and Relations team hosted its third Fairtrade Pacific Stakeholders Workshop in two events, one in Papua New Guinea which gathered Fairtrade stakeholders from PNG and East Timor; and a second event held in Fiji, gathering stakeholders from Fiji and Samoa. More than 90 stakeholders from PNG, Fiji, East Timor, Samoa and New Zealand convened in the two countries to take part in interactive training sessions focused on the Fairtrade Standards, to share their experiences, and to strengthen their organisations throughout collaboration with support organisations and fellow producer organisations. The two events provided an opportunity for producers to gain a deeper understanding of the Fairtrade system, standards, market, and benefits; to share their experience and to learn from other applicant and certified producer organisations; to use the newest tools from Fairtrade ANZ’s Producer Library, and to liaise with traders and the relevant government and non-government organisations.

Attendance at the Fairtrade NAPP board meeting

The Fairtrade Network of Asian and Pacific Producers (NAPP) is the legal representation body of Fairtrade certified producers based in Asia and the Pacific, representing their interests within the international Fairtrade system. NAPP has over 150 members, who are producers and agricultural workers located in India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Laos and the Pacific. The Fairtrade NAPP board meeting held on 18 August was attended by 18 members of the NAPP board, representing producers from India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Pacific.

Fairtrade ANZ was invited to take part in the one and a half day meeting with a one-hour speaking slot. During this hour, Fairtrade ANZ’s Producer Support and Relations Officer Sandra Mendez and BACP project beneficiary David Micah, a representative of Fairtrade certified cocoa organisation Huiwani Cooperative Society from Papua New Guinea, conducted the presentation “Fairtrade ANZ’s Producer Library”. The presentation highlighted the challenges that the training materials attempt to address, such as illiteracy, isolation, poor access to information, the lack of resources in local languages to train small farmers on the Fairtrade system (especially on environmental and sustainability standards), and the need to engage farmers, unaccustomed to an academic environment, during training events.

Project impact

The BACP-funded project entailed the design of a training program on biodiversity and Fairtrade Environmental Standards, a set of training materials to support the program and to carry out twelve workshops, which were attended by more than 500 Fairtrade farmers. Trainings were delivered in local languages and aimed at engaging Fairtrade certified and applicant farmers who are unaccustomed to academic environments and often challenged by illiteracy and lack of access to information. The project initially targeted four cocoa growing organisations, but its end result will reach more than nine thousand small producers, who are currently supported by Fairtrade ANZ in PNG, the Pacific islands and East Timor.

The BACP supported project was key to the improvement of the Fairtrade ANZ’s training resources on Fairtrade environmental requirements, which promote organic farming practices, and endorse biodiversity conservation through local legislation. The results include the development of business and land management plans with sustainable perspectives; the appointment of environmental officers in each producer organisation; the establishment of new relationships with local governmental organisations and NGOs who have the capacity to prolong the results of these activities; the initiation of conversations with
members of the international Fairtrade system to disseminate training materials in a more global scale, and the strengthening of trading relationships with local exporters.

Huiwani Cooperative Society’s David Micah aptly summarized the results of the BACP-supported project during his presentation to the NAPP board, reporting “PNG farmers struggle with information given in lecture-like sessions. Even the most educated people in my village could not find a methodology to break the barrier between information contained in texts and the farmers’ way of learning. These materials give producers the opportunity to understand the Fairtrade Standards in their own way and in an engaging manner.”

Lessons learned

Design and planning
- Fairtrade ANZ’s future project design and planning will allow for greater flexibility where possible, in order to accommodate changes in the project climate that are outside of Fairtrade ANZ’s control. For example, presenting more than one activity that could satisfy the same target, for example Deliverable 7 allowing for attendance by a project beneficiary at either the NAPP General Assembly or Board meeting.
- We will also build into the implementation plan allowances for additional time, in order to account for unintended events that can delay project delivery. For example, communication gaps with project beneficiaries and field visit delays due to severe weather or flight cancellations that can effect final delivery of business and land management plans.

Implementation and delivery
Participatory planning is most effective when users are provided the opportunity to contribute and have full ownership of the planned strategies. Understandably, this requires a process and inevitably requires ample time to facilitate such a process. To ensure a fully participatory approach, we will build into our implementation plans additional time for such activities.

Development results
Be mindful that development results take place over the long-term. Short-term project-based outputs should be focused solely on the delivery of trainings and the dissemination of tools, while long-term outcomes will be measureable in the years following the close of the project.
**Project team and partners**

Conduct a pilot project with potential project partners, to gauge in practice their organizational strengths and weaknesses, experience in the specific areas required by a potential project, their experience working with project partners, and their experience working on projects of a similar scale and focus. Be mindful of partners’ capacities and plan for ways to address any gaps that emerge.

**What worked well? What could be done differently in the future?**

*Worked well:*

- The development of training materials addressing the areas of greatest need (based on needs assessment) for producer organisations in relation to the Fairtrade Environmental Standards and specifically a focus on biodiversity
- Conducting a pilot phase of the interactive training materials, collecting feedback and improving the materials based on feedback before they were finalized
- Interactive and practical training sessions in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the PNG Department of Agriculture and Livestock
- Development of business plans and land use management plans to ensure future focus on operational activities with a biodiversity component
- Strengthening the relationship with The Nature Conservancy, particularly with their focus on land use planning, and an interest in pursuing future focus on conservation activities
- Dissemination of finalized materials during regional stakeholders’ workshops, encouraging trained farmers to on lend their learnings to other farmers in their communities

*Could be done differently:*

- A greater focus on waste management and composting, an interest that was indicated by project beneficiaries in training session feedback.
- Needs assessments should be revisited throughout the field training sessions to ensure accuracy and timeliness of information gathered, as remote information gathering causes difficulties, as was the case of one new pre-applicant organisations. This would also reinforce the participatory approach to information gathering.

**Replication opportunities**

- During the training sessions, it was identified that there was a need for a guidance document to complement A Fairtrade Story, the Environmental Poster and the Environmental Board Game. Specifically, this document should specify the connection between the situations described in the illustrations and the Fairtrade Standard they relate to. During the introductory and follow-up sessions, these connections were made by Fairtrade ANZ’s PSR team, however a trainer new to the materials would benefit from such guidance in order to clearly transmit the relevance of each illustration. This material is being developed at the time of writing and will be finalized in the months following the close of this project.
- Fairtrade ANZ’s PSR project and work plan for the next five years aims to support Fairtrade applicant and certified producer organisations in PNG and the Pacific, which will build on the capacity building efforts undertaken during the BACP-supported project.
- Fairtrade ANZ is pursuing opportunities to conduct projects similar to this BACP-supported project in order to target other key components of the Fairtrade Standards, including child protection, gender equity, and governance, as well as building on the Producer Library and partnering with organisations that can enhance the producer services portfolio.
- We will also be able to fund the attendance of at least one project beneficiary and one representative of Fairtrade ANZ to the Network of Asian and Pacific Producers General Assembly,
which is scheduled for February 2014. We will attend this meeting with the aim to replicate the presentation conducted at the NAPP Board Meeting, but also to launch the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding that is currently in development around the sharing of Fairtrade ANZ’s Producer Library with the NAPP, namely with training of trainers sessions to begin dissemination and use of the training materials developed under the BACP-supported project.

Finally, we will also be able to fund follow-up activities with Fairtrade ANZ’s Liaison Officer for Papua New Guinea, to ensure that lessons learned and next steps are implemented after the close of the project period.