

CLAC Newsletter 4

FOURTH QUARTER 2011



**Coordinadora Latinoamericana y
del Caribe de Pequeños Productores
de Comercio Justo**

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Introduction

We've wrapped up 2011, and we have to say it's been a year of hard work at CLAC. Together with the product networks, national networks, Board members and the operations team, we have been able to successfully implement the activities in our Annual Operations Plan. Now, a new year is beginning, and it brings many challenges. In the area of communication, it is our intention to keep you well informed and to share with each of you the most important activities carried out by all of our members, as we work toward our goal of developing Small Producers' Organizations throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

In this issue of our Quarterly Newsletter, you'll find some news regarding the main events during the last three months, such as: the first International Conference of the Small Producers' Symbol; the forming of the Salvadoran Network; the Climate Change Summit; the Ecuadoran Network's Assembly; a National Workshop organized by Peru's CNCJ; and other important activities. We hope you enjoy reading the news.

CLAC's Board of Directors Meets in El Salvador

The third meeting of CLAC's Board of Directors was held in San Salvador, El Salvador on October 4-5, 2011. The chairperson's office and the executive committee presented their reports, and some important decisions related to the reports were discussed and finalized. Reports were also presented by National Networks, Product Networks and other committees.

There was also an opportunity, as is customary, for evaluating the activities in the annual operations plan, making commitments and urging full implementation of the plan. CLAC financial reports were presented, and the Membership Policy for 2012 was discussed.

As at every board meeting, membership applications submitted by different Small Producers' Organizations (SPOs) were discussed and approved.

And there was an opportunity during the October meeting to present the proposal for the cla@se platform, which beginning in 2012 will be the responsibility of CLAC's administration. In addition a representative from Irish Aid gave a presentation on results in the Central American region from a significant investment made.

There was also an opportunity to debate together with FUNDEPPO, and reach decisions oriented toward the effective functioning of the Small Producers' Symbol (SPS).



CLAC's Board of Directors is composed of 13 members, including representatives from the six product networks currently functioning (coffee, honey, banana, sugar, juices and fruits, and cacao) and representatives from Central America, South America, the Caribbean and Mexico. These members are elected in a democratic, representative manner at the Assemblies held every two years. The Board of Directors meets face-to-face three or four times a year, and more frequently by internet.

First International Conference of the Small Producers' Symbol (SPS)

The First International Conference of the Small Producers' Symbol (SPS) was held in the city of San Salvador on October 6-7.

The First International Conference marked the beginning of a new phase for the SPS. An important achievement at this conference was the creation of a strong international alliance between producers, buyers and other stakeholders, with the aim of positioning the products of organized small producers in local and international markets.



It was a positive experience with exchanges between producers and buyers. The 51 participants included producers from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Peru, and buyers from North America and Europe, including Just Us, Ethiquable, Cooperative Coffees, OPTCO and GEPA. Four businesses and organizations were given the opportunity to share their experiences, as a way of explaining why they decided to participate in the Small Producers' Symbol.

- ☰ ETHIQUABLE (France)
- ☰ JUST US! (Canada)
- ☰ CAFÉ HONOR (Honduras)
- ☰ UCIRI (Mexico)



Prior to the Conference, buyers were invited to present candidates to serve on FUNDEPPO's Board of Directors and Standards Committee. As a result of this process, the following appointments were made:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, FUNDEPPO

Nicolás Eberhart, Ethiquable, France
Representing buyers in Europe

Austin Anderson, Just Us!, Canada
Representing buyers in North America

STANDARDS COMMITTEE, FUNDEPPO

James Solkin, Santropol, Canada
Representing buyers from North America

Christophe Eberhart, Ethiquable, France
Representing buyers from Europe

* Appointments were made for a three-year period. And appointments for the Standards Committee were made for a one-year period.

More to follow....

CLAC and FUNDEPPO leaders publicly acknowledged the years of work, dedication and struggle contributed by **Isaías Martínez Morales** in favor of organized small producers. He is a member of a pioneering organization in Fair Trade: *Unión de Ejidos y Comunidades de la Región del Istmo* (UCIRI) in Oaxaca, Mexico.

For more information, visit: http://www.tusimbolo.org/pdfs/Boletin_Especial_1er_Ecuentro_SPP_Octubre_2011_vf.pdf

CLAC, FLO and FT USA panel at “Hablemos de Café”

On November 12, 2011, the traditional event organized each year by Sustainable Harvest and entitled “Hablemos de Café” took place in Acajutla, El Salvador. The organizers did well to plan a forum for addressing a timely topic of interest for everyone, specifically the decision by FAIRTRADE USA to leave the FLO system and its new vision of “Fair Trade for All.”

CLAC participated in the event, in which it



expanded upon the reasons that it does not agree with FT USA’s decision to leave the Fairtrade International system, nor with its new vision of expanding fair trade for all, including large plantations and unorganized producers. CLAC also presented its concerns not only for producers but also for the

industry, and the threat presented by the path chosen by FT USA for the system that has been created over a long period of years and with the investment of many resources. CLAC’s presentation at the Forum can be consulted at the following website:

<http://clac-comerciojusto.org/media/descargas/preocupaciones-de-la-clac-respecto-a-una-nueva-vision-del-cj-pdf-2011-10-17-09-44-59.pdf>

And those interested can listen to the presentations by panelists at the Sustainable Harvest website:

<http://www.sustainableharvest.com/relations-hip-coffee/let/fair-trade/>

First Coffee Expo in Peru

The First Coffee Expo held in Peru was a major success. Thousands of Peruvian coffee-lovers attended the event, and were able to taste and



purchase the best coffees produced in the country’s various coffee-producing regions.

The event was held on October 12-14, 2011 and was organized by the National Coffee Board, the Peruvian Coffee and Cacao Chamber and the Ministry of Agriculture, demonstrating that great things are possible when forces are united.

The objective of the event was to promote domestic coffee consumption without affecting efforts to position the nation’s coffee on international markets in Europe, the United States and Japan, and now in China as well.

Small producers' associations and cooperatives from around the country presented their coffee at the event. Participating small producers' organizations that are CLAC members included: CACVRA, CAC La Florida, CAI Naranjillo, CAC Oro

Verde, CAC La Divisoria, ACPC Pichanaki, and Central COCLA.

SPOs in El Salvador meet to establish the Salvadoran Fair Trade Network

During the last two months the APRAINORES, APECAFÉ, SIGLO XXI, JABALÍ and LOS PINOS organizations, have met on three occasions in San Salvador for the purpose of sharing a bit of the problems they faced during the month of October, after ten consecutive days of rain. All of the participants reported numerous damages for both their organizations and their members. However, they also met to speak of the importance of establishing a forum in which they can come together and work together to define shared goals for the benefit of their members. They have established a Committee for following up on the legal constitution of a Salvadoran Network, with the legal status of an "association" and with the aim of bringing together all the SPOs in El Salvador that are CLAC members. The process is at a very



exhilarating moment, since when SPOs come together, they realize the potential they have when they join forces. They become aware of the opportunities and challenges in the agricultural sectors in their countries that are worth taking advantage of, and the contexts in which it is easier to have an impact as a bloc of organizations than as individual organizations.

Climate Change Workshop in the Dominican Republic

On **November 15-16, 2011**, a Climate Change Workshop was held in Santiago de los Caballeros, on the beautiful island of the **Dominican Republic**. With this workshop CLAC has initiated a second phase in the construction of a Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean, aimed at assisting small producers in confronting the challenges they are already experiencing as a result of Climate Change. So far, these Workshops have only been held in Mesoamerica, and a strategy has now been developed for this region. The second phase is including not only the Caribbean but also South America.



Those attending the workshop included members of ASOANOR, ASOBANU, BANELINO, COOPROAGRO, ADOBANANO, FEDECARES, CONACADO and FUNGLODE. The event began with a presentation by CLAC, followed by a focus on developing a deeper understanding of climate change and its manifestations. There were also working groups in which banana, cacao and coffee producers worked to identify the challenges they are already facing, and also identify means for adaptation based on local knowledge. Also presented were

means for responding to climate change, at both the global level and at the level of each country (Dominican Republic), and means for getting involved in such a way as to have an impact in the political framework at the local level. The event also served as an opportunity for reflection by the participating organizations, as part of a platform such as the Dominican Network and within the network at the Latin American and Caribbean level.



climate change in the region.

The workshop was organized in the framework of an agreement with Irish Aid, a development organization that has added its support to the work in the area of

Strategy in response to Climate Change, developed by Fair Trade SPOs in Mesoamerica

As part of the Climate Change agenda in CLAC's Operations Plan, the Preliminary Strategy in

response to Climate Change developed by small fair trade producers' organizations was presented in Managua on November 22, 2011. This strategy is the result of a series of consultations with SPOs in Mesoamerica, including a round of five workshops covering seven countries and made possible due to an alliance between CLAC and FLO Central America, with funds from Irish Aid and Christian Aid. UCA of Managua also played a very important role in organizing this event.

This strategy identifies the problems confronted by producers of fair trade export products in Mesoamerica such as coffee, banana, honey, sugar, cacao, fruit, cotton and cashew nuts, and it proposes three objectives to be carried out in a five-year agenda:

1. Enhance the knowledge of small agricultural producers and SPOs, increasing their awareness of the new challenges resulting from climate change, and the need to improve their crops and production.
2. Strengthen the individual capacities of small producers and their SPOs, for adapting to climate change.
3. Create more dynamic political impact on the part of SPOs, and strengthen technical assistance and resource management, in order to increase the viability of adaptation to climate change in the various production systems and areas of these organizations.

The aim of sharing this strategy has been to seek strategic allies for working together to implement the actions in this document and thus provide small producers—who are those most severely affected by climate change—with a means for responding to climate change. If you would like a copy, please write the following email address to make this request: info@claconline.com.



17th United Nations Climate Change Summit (COP 17)



COP 17 was held on November 27 in Durban, South Africa. For the first time a structured Fair Trade Labeling delegation participated in a United Nations event on Climate Change, and CLAC participated in the delegation.

Participation by Producers' Networks and FLO began in Cancun in 2010, when the intention was to verify what the process was all about. This year, in contrast, we managed to participate with presentations, talks, round table discussions and a booth for presenting the experiences of producers and the harsh realities produced by climate change, destroying croplands and taking small

producer's organizations to the point of having to close their doors.

We were told that nothing could be done to reverse climate change, and thus we should make the necessary adaptation or we would die. Unfortunately, in 2011 the latter became a reality for some of our fellow producers who are in our thoughts today.

NGOs with which we identify, banks, ministries and development agencies have all been told that Fair Trade Labeling is a powerful tool for adaptation, resilience and mitigation. We have demonstrated that organization and empowerment create the foundation for any process necessary for confronting the effects

Our Producer Networks are anticipating and working toward developing enough support to be able to confront agricultural producers' needs for adaptation in developing countries, and to be able to work together with FLO in the search for the necessary resources to confront the current and anticipated impacts from the climate change phenomenon.

Meeting of the Coordination Committee of the Coffee Network in Nicaragua



On November 24, 2011 the Coordination Committee of the Coffee Network met in Managua, and reports the following:

- ✓ Compliance with the agreements reached at the last meeting on August 30 (via skype) was verified.
- ✓ TF USA is calling SPOs to offer them funding and assistance for their strengthening

of climate change—the latter of which are not only unfair, but mostly affect the weakest sectors, making it even more difficult to keep from slipping into poverty and to gain access to dignified living.

We are the frontline against climate change—and this is not only because we are those most affected, but we are also those being called upon and those who have no option but to adapt to climate change. Our organizations, our national networks, our product networks and our CLAC will provide the framework for being able to determine the common denominator for the problems we are facing and to seek our own solutions for each one of our problems.

processes—with the aim of revealing their strategies and winning over support from SPOs.

- ✓ TF USA is conducting a major communication campaign, and with support from AMSA, is promoting Fair Trade sales from groups of producers (not organizations).
- ✓ It has been agreed that efforts will continue to explain CLAC's position and promote the Symbol's position.

Situation from rains:

The countries most negatively affected by the rainy season are Guatemala and El Salvador.

In El Salvador, FLO-CA called on SPOs to assess the damages.

In Guatemala, Asobagri is the organization most negatively affected. One advantage is that the products in warehouses were insured. CLAC sent assistance to Asobagri. Organizations have suffered disasters in recent years, and it is therefore necessary to have insurance and include these costs in budgets.

Network's Next Assembly: parallel to CLAC's Assembly in November 2012 in Colombia.

Next Meetings of the Network Committee: will be at CLAC's Board of Directors meeting on January 26-27, 2012 in Chiapas; with the Coffee Networks' meeting on January 28, 2012.

Cla@se Workshop in El Salvador

On December 6-8, 2011, a workshop for preparing promoters of the Cla@se Platform took place in San Salvador. Those participating included members of the Networks and SPOs from El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.



The purpose of this event was to prepare individuals in CLAC to use and teach others how to use this learning tool, which will be transferred to CLAC for its administration in 2012. This platform was created with the aim of strengthening the management and exchange of knowledge in the Latin American region and to make it possible to increase the economic, business and financial competitiveness of small rural producers' organizations. It was possible due to support and resources from IADB-FOMIN, RAbobank and contributions from founding members, including Root Capital, Setem, Twin Trading, Earth University, CLAC's Coffee Network, Cafenica, the National Coffee Board and Coopcafé of Mexico.

Funding for the workshop was provided by Twin, with resources from Progreso, and some participants successfully obtained support from FLO Central America to cover their transportation costs.

Fourth Assembly of the Ecuadoran Fair Trade Network (CECJ) and other news

CECJ's Fourth General Assembly was held in the Portoviejo province on December 8-9, 2011. Important topics were addressed, involving the network's optimal management and governance. The following points are especially noteworthy:

- ✓ internal rules were reviewed and approved.
- ✓ The Administrative-Technical Procedures Manual was reviewed and approved, with the aim of achieving improved functioning and governance.
- ✓ The POA was developed and approved, with the following basic lines of action:
 - a) develop and strengthen the CECJ institutionally, and efficiently coordinate its work with member organizations.
 - b) implement and strengthen its administrative and accounting capacity for the CECJ's functioning and management.
 - c) The CECJ has generated policies for institutionalizing the Small Producers' Symbol (SPS)
 - d) strengthen CECJ's organizations for accessing local and international markets.
 - e) Operations Management.
- ✓ In the area of CECJ's corporate image, options for its logos and webpage have been presented, with all members committed to contributing the necessary ideas and information for their design.

Other news from the Ecuadoran Network:

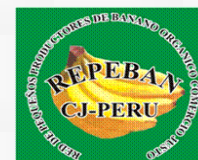
- The CEJ has a new National Coordinator, Wiliber Ibarra, who has a very strong conviction and sense of commitment to assisting small producers.
- In the area of CEJ's promotion work, Rosa Guamán, Executive Director of the "Jambi Kiwa" Producers' Organization, has participated in a tour through some European countries, where she has presented the organization's products and has made some important business contacts.
- Resources have been requested for the development of a web page, which will serve as a point of contact and a way to promote the products of CEJ organizations.
- On November 21, the COPROBICH organizations, composed of small quinoa producers, exported their new product called *Trío de los Andes* to the French market – Ethiquable for the first time. Congratulations!!!
- Jambi Kiwa is currently in a phase of organic uvilla production, and is testing dehydrated

varieties with the objective of meeting the increasing demand for this product.

- FAPECAFES is the first CEJ organization to obtain the SPS certification, and JAMBI KIWA and COPROBICH are in the process of meeting the requirements.
- With support from the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Trade and Integration (MRECI), three CEJ organizations will be creating their own web pages, and this includes the signing of an agreement for inter-institutional MRECI-CEJ cooperation in assisting all the base organizations in the area of promotion and the search for markets for the products exported by SPOs.



National Workshop: New scenarios and challenges for Peruvian Fair Trade Organizations



CNCJ-PERÚ, the National Coffee Board, APPCACAO and REPEBAN (Banana Producers' Network) organized a National Workshop on December 12-13, 2011 entitled: "New scenarios and challenges for Peruvian Fair Trade Organizations." The event was attended by over 100 representatives from the different organizations for the various products coordinated through the fair trade system. Participants came from organizations of producers of coffee, cacao, banana, sugar, mango, and many other products, and included international guests and NGOs such as Ethiquable, Oxfam Belgium, Equal Exchange and FUNDEPPO.

The workshop surpassed all the expectations of its organizers. It was an inspiring event with the conclusion that “Unity brings Strength,” emphasizing the importance of maintaining unity among small producers’ organizations in Peru and other countries in terms of objectives and strategies in response to the breaking up of the Fair Trade market.

In addition to local producers’ organizations, the Ministry of Production and the Executive Director of the Health Entity also participated. Also, the Small Producers’ Symbol had a particularly notable presence in the workshop.

It was a great fiesta for small Fair Trade producers, as they celebrated the many years of struggling together and preparations for the future.



And thus, 2011 comes to an end, with SPOs moving forward in their self-management and empowerment processes.

Here’s to 2012—a year certain to bring many successes in favor of Organized Small Producers!

Happy Holidays! and Happy New Year!

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