

Green, climate-resilient and productive cane

Fiji roundtable for enduring partnerships, March 2023



Following the publication of the Fiji Carbon & Water (C&W) Footprint Study, Sarah Lagente, Head of Producer Support Programmes at [Fairtrade Australia New Zealand](#), organised a two-day roundtable *Enduring partnerships for evolving Green, Climate resilient and Productive cane* in partnership with the [Fiji Sugar Corporation \(FSC\)](#) and [Fairtrade International](#) on 28th and 29th March 2023.

The roundtable aimed to share the results of the study and to devise an achievable roadmap to make the sugar cane industry greener, more resilient to climate change and more sustainable. More than 50 people from the Fijian sugar cane industry participated. There were presentations by [Native](#) and the three Fairtrade certified co-ops as well as virtual contributions from [ASR Group](#) and [Czarnikow Group](#).

Opening the event, **Permanent Secretary of the Fijian Ministry of Sugar Yogesh Karan** noted the need to build the resilience of the sugar cane industry against climate change. "The industry needs to take personal ownership in mitigating their carbon footprint," he said.



Permanent Secretary Yogesh Karan © Fairtrade ANZ

This sentiment echoed on the second day by **FSC CEO Bhan Pratap Singh**, who said, "Sugar cane cultivation has to become more environmentally sustainable, more resilient to climate change and more productive. These challenges require solid partnerships. Fairtrade offers a powerful backbone to support our efforts in trying to achieve our goals."

Read the [media report here](#).



FSC CEO Bhan Pratap Singh © Fairtrade ANZ

Eric Kowalewski, Senior Consultant at [sustainable](#) - which produced the Fiji C&W Footprint study, commissioned by Fairtrade - highlighted the outcomes and presented recommendations for GHG reductions. He said there was a growing appetite for carbon emission reductions and for companies setting science based targets, and noted that there are expectations regarding - and potential willingness to support - climate action in food supply chains.

Two global sugar companies, ASR Group and the Czarnikow Group (represented by **John Ireland, Associate Director**), highlighted the common theme of the importance of GHG emission reductions in global supply chains and putting into action the recommendations of the C&W Footprint study.

Picking up on the same theme, **Nell Achtmeyer, Native's VP Project Development & Origination**, discussed potential collaboration between producers and corporate partners committed to catalysing climate action - and how that could work in the context of Fairtrade.

Finally, the Fairtrade certified co-ops presented their actions to support the sugar cane farmers in Fiji and impact of the Fairtrade Premium.



Roundtable discussions © Fairtrade ANZ

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The roundtable agreed on a roadmap – including prioritising measures to reduce climate risks such as flood mitigation, reducing GHG emissions (for example, by moving to 100 percent green cane harvesting and adapting fertilisation to increase carbon stock in the soil) – measures which will reduce emissions and improve soil health and crop productivity. Going forward, Fairtrade ANZ and its partners will support the process to ensure it benefits farmers in particular, and will set up a steering committee.

Small island states like Fiji are suffering severely from climate shocks. A joint effort is needed not only from Fairtrade and other sugar cane stakeholders in Fiji, but also from sugar buyers. The study outcomes and recommendations are therefore an invitation to support climate action and co-invest in measures to reduce GHG emissions in global sugar supply chains.

Afterwards, Fairtrade, sustainable and Native visited co-ops to see for themselves the challenges of sugar cane farming in Fiji – which include competition for land and issues around land lease; farming on challenging volcanic terrain; and labour shortages and high labour costs. Despite this, the co-ops reiterated their commitment to Fairtrade and to sustainable farming, and said how important it was for them to be involved.



LCPA honoured overseas participants with a Savu Savu / Kava ceremony © Fairtrade ANZ

Interested in the partnership? Please contact:

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"This is the first time the producers were invited to this kind of forum and allowed to contribute to the roundtable discussion regarding carbon footprint and how all of us can work together to reduce carbon footprint in sugar cane production."

- Bala Dass, sugar producer and Chairman of the Lautoka Cane Producers Association

"I was interviewed during the initial data collection, so it's great to be part of this forum where the results have been discussed. I'm looking forward working with Fairtrade and sugar stakeholders to reduce carbon footprints so our buyers can buy more Fairtrade sugar, and we the farmers can benefit from the Premium."

- Mohammed Janif, Labasa Sugar Producer Association

"This round table discussion came at the right time, because all sugar producers need to work to comply with Fairtrade Standards. Increasing productivity and eliminating trash burning with robust training and awareness will surely reduce carbon emissions by the sugar producers"

- Anish Kumar, Environment Manager, Lautoka Cane Producers Association



Visit to Fairtrade certified LCTPA co-op © Fairtrade ANZ