

Fairtrade Standards evolution: A risk- based approach for stronger supply chains

The world is changing and Fairtrade Standards are evolving as well.

Farmers, workers, and businesses are facing a complex range of challenges including everything from climate change and widening social inequalities to rising costs and an increasingly complex regulatory environment.

Fairtrade recognises that innovative approaches and stronger support systems are needed to respond to these issues, and that is why we are carrying out a major evolution of our standards. The new, evolved standards will be more effective and at the same time remain practical to implement and firmly grounded in Fairtrade's core principles and values.

How the evolved Standards benefit your business:

The standards evolution is designed to reduce complexity while strengthening Fairtrade's value for companies through easier implementation, clearer due diligence support, and stronger evidence for credible claims. Businesses will be able to easily demonstrate their commitments and outcomes building resilient supply chains with the following changes:

Characteristics of the current Fairtrade Standards	What to expect from the evolved Fairtrade Standards? What are the benefits?
<p>Multiple Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A range of standards developed over time to meet different product and supply chain needs. ○ Some overlapping requirements across standards. ○ Expanding requirements can increase implementation and audit effort. 	<p>Clear values and claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Single standard replacing 18 separate standards making implementation user friendly. ○ New structure will be based around 20 Fairtrade principles that support credible claims about the benefits of Fairtrade. ○ Adopt a risk-based approach to better prioritise and target implementation and auditing.
<p>Basis for strengthened impact and evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunities to strengthen the link between certification requirements, outcomes and evidence for due diligence reporting. 	<p>Enablement of better data usage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New principles-based structure that links all standard requirements to Fairtrade outcomes. ○ Certification data linked to Fairtrade principles to provide evidence on impact to support claims and due diligence reporting.
<p>Separate Due Diligence Processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recently introduced HREDD requirements are a separate process. 	<p>Enhanced Due Diligence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HREDD process fully integrated into producer compliance processes to support action on

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Businesses may need additional guidance to identify which human rights and environmental risks are being addressed. 	<p>salient supply chain risks and market demands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fairtrade Risk Map provides a credible starting point to identify supply chain risk. ○ Risk-based approach helps businesses understand which social and environmental issues are most relevant in specific products and sourcing countries.
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How evolved Fairtrade Standards will support companies with HREDD

The risk-based approach helps producers and businesses focus action where it matters most. Instead of applying every social and environmental requirement in the same way everywhere, Fairtrade will use risk information, producer self-assessments, and audit evidence to identify the most relevant risks in a specific sourcing context.

In practice, Fairtrade certification will support companies through a tailored **step-by-step approach that includes:**

- **Introducing risk management systems:** Providing information, sourcing data, support dialogue, and continuous improvement of risk management systems at the level of producer organizations.
- **Remediate:** Addressing salient issues through establishing monitoring and remediation systems and processes at the level of producer organizations.
- **Track:** Credible auditing and certification verify the effectiveness of risk management systems and the resulting risk mitigation action.
- **Communicate:** Fairtrade certification supports corporate partners in communicating about their sustainability work in a credible and legitimate manner.

The evolved standards will maintain Fairtrade's high level of assurance. Producers and traders will continue to be audited and required to comply with all certification requirements.

Fairtrade's Standards evolution is already underway. Your organisation will receive regular updates from your National Fairtrade Organisation, up until the standards are published in 2027 and certification against them begins in 2028.

We would like to hear from you!

Fairtrade has published a consultation document with the proposed changes, and feedback is being collected through its [online consultation platform](#), where stakeholders can focus on the issues most relevant to their role within Fairtrade. If you have not already given your feedback, we encourage you to do so before **31 August 2026**.

For detailed information, visit www.fairtrade.net/en/for-business or contact your local National Fairtrade Organisation.