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**Minutes of the Sustainability Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022**  
**FDF, 10 Bloomsbury Way, London, WC1A 2SL & Via Video Conference**

**Present at Meeting:**

Roxy Rocks-Engelman – Cafédirect Plc (Sustainability Chair) (via Teams)  
Paul Rooke – BCA Executive Director  
Catriona Balfour – BCA Communications & PA Manager  
Tracy Brown – BCA Secretariat  
Jenny Breadmore – Cafea UK (via Teams)  
Robert Nugent – Cafea UK  
Victoria Moorhouse – Costa (Part of Meeting via Teams)  
Oliver Ellis – JDE (via Teams)  
David Short – JDE (via Teams)  
Alan Beattie – Matthew Algie (Via Teams)  
Mary Child – Nespresso (via Teams)  
Sadie Walton – Ringtons (via Teams)  
Krisztina Szalai – Taylors of Harrogate (via Teams)

**Speaker:** Nick Girkin - Cranfield

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Nick Martell-Bundock – Cafedirect Plc  
Rebekah Kettrick - Finlays  
Toby Bevans - JDE  
Hannah Eatough – Taylors of Harrogate

**2. Competition Law Rules**

It was proposed that the meeting would run under the revised FDF competition law compliance rules previously distributed.

**3. Welcome**

RRE welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**4. Notes from the Last Meeting**

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

**5. Sustainability News – *Presentation Attached Separately***

RRE referred to substantive stories that have appeared since the last meeting.



- The next IPCC report had 5 key points but warns of 'irreversible' impacts of global warming.
- The report in The Guardian, notes deforestation emissions far higher than previously thought. The Guardian notes that "The Standard methods used by the IPCC are not spotting some of the things we've seen in this paper, such as small-scale deforestation and the movement of land-clearing into mountains. They are 't really capturing the trend that we've seen in the last two decades."
- RRE noted that the UN Environment Assembly opens with all eyes on a global agreement on plastic pollution.
- Edie talks about Starbucks trials deposit return scheme for reusable cups.

#### **6. Presentation – Enhancing The Sustainability & Climate Resilience of Coffee Production – Nick Girkin, Cranfield – *Presentation Attached Separately***

PR noted that RRE had attended a workshop that Cranfield ran last year. Subsequent conversations had covered the work Cranfield was doing with other sectors, such as tea, and it was on that basis that NG had been invited to present to the Committee

NG noted he is a plant and soil ecologist, he joined Cranfield in 2020 to bring together the existing work done by Cranfield on plantation crops, such as tea, coffee, cocoa, palm oil etc. and to set-up a working group which looked at addressing key sustainability issues.

In conversations with organisation over the past few months, some key themes have developed, soil health, ecosystem services, net zero, climate resilience, agroforestry, yields, regenerative agriculture, fertilisers and irrigation.

This working group has been looking at developing sustainable plantation crop tool kit.

NG ran through 3 examples of projects they had been working on recently.

- An Irrigation App for Colombian banana growers.
- Monitoring Kenyan tea plantations with satellite imagery.
- Data led soil management for smallholder tea producers.

NG ran through a 3 case studies.

1. Coffee Case Study - Coffee Survey in Vietnam.
2. Cocoa Farms in Indonesia
3. Tea study, looking at alternative tea nitrogen management

For each what was the challenge, the approach, and the impact.

NG noted that a lot of what they do is heavily orientated towards the needs of businesses, NGOs and Farmers.



Part of a review by a post graduate student thesis on global coffee production, and resilience. Obviously being in the tropics the impact of climate change on coffee production makes it highly vulnerable. A 1°C rise in mean maximum temperature about 24°C could see a reduction in yields by 14%. Arabica is more sensitive to these rises than Robusta in the context of precipitation. This could have an impact with more deforestation to increase yields.

NB noted some of the potential solutions and climate change mitigation for coffee. A student had identified 5 solutions.

1. Agroforestry (shade grown coffee)
2. Intercropping (growing crops at intervals during coffee plants)
3. Organic nitrogen (such as manure or straw to give cost savings)
4. Future genetic resources (genetic diversity, some of which might have the potential to be the coffee variety for the future)
5. Altitudinal changes (could lead to deforestation)

The regenerative agriculture toolkit for climate resilient coffee including:-

- a. Micro and macrofauna biodiversity
- b. Temperature stabilisation
- c. Wind speed reduction
- d. Carbon storage
- e. Income from tree products

NG noted the emergent environmental risks such as:-

- Soil Health
- Yield
- Water
- Quality

What can we do at Cranfield about this? We look at ways of working in partnership with businesses and supporting your organisation, Cranfield value long-term partnerships including:-

- Skill sharing
- Funding
- Knowledge sharing
- Facilities
- Network and partners

Types of collaboration available, Cranfield can work at varying scales. Small projects, such as MSc group projects, knowledge transfer partnerships, consultancy, industrial research and leveraged research.

#### **Take home messages**

- Coffee production is highly vulnerable to climate change.
- There remain substantial opportunities for mitigating impacts.



- Researchers, working in partnership with industry, can help address many of the key sector-wide challenges.
- Cranfield can help design and delivery projects to suit a range of scopes (and budgets).

RRE noted as a Sustainability Committee we are trying to look at some of the more common topics around climate resilience and coffee production. RRE asked if there were various levels of work that could be undertaken, NG explained what could be undertaken. RRE asked those on the call if any of this work resonated with anyone.

PR noted that examples given on the coffee survey in Vietnam, how do Cranfield see these lessons learnt/tools being transferred onto the ground. NG noted that a lot of work is done with the larger producers they have farmer outreach programmes or through farmer cooperatives and NGOs such as with the banana study, with Cranfield working on the development of the irrigation app for dissemination by the other partners on the ground.

PR asked about funding, are there restrictions and difficulties if developed here in the UK. NG noted that Knowledge Transfer Partnerships are often more successful in obtaining funding.

RRE noted that she keeps reading about mushroom coffee, and asked if there were any developments on this, NG noted he was not aware of this.

RRE noted the point about post-harvest loss at origin, and the research around this would be extremely interesting, and where we could potentially make savings there.

PR and RRE gave their thanks to NG, and stated that his presentation would be shared along with his contact details.

## **7. Deforestation**

### **• Defra Consultation – Response To Be Finalised**

PR noted we have talked about where we are in the UK, it is important to understand where the UK and the EU are in terms of proposals. The UK is focussed on illegal deforestation and this fits into where companies would need to have due diligence.

RRE asked if those on the call had seen the consultation in some form since Defra released it.

Defra have sought views on how they would introduce the legislation, their preferred view would be to introduce 1 or 2 to start with. The focus would likely be on those commodities with roundtables already established, soya and palm oil. If they had to do all the commodities at once, it would likely slow down legislation.

PR noted that some companies who operate both in the UK and the EU may have to default to the strictest system which, at present, was the EU approach.



PR added that the common view across the sectors was that when the legislation comes in it needs to work, and a one size fits all approach will not work.

PR noted that we must finalise our response by the end of next week (w/e 11<sup>th</sup> March). We had a discussion in the Executive Committee before this meeting, and they are keen to see where we are to date.

Within our response, PR asked would the industry be supportive on having coffee added, we are supportive of getting the legislation in early, but there needs to be a graduated approach and that there is more information and time required as to what industries need to prepare for.

PR noted in terms of Q24, and sequencing of legislation, what are the key factors to be included, please can you review as a business that needs to be added please do come back to us asap.

**Action: ALL**

RRE noted regarding the scope of the consultation, and the scale of impact is there a minimum turnover, what about businesses that will be out of scope who might have good practices that this consultation does not consider. PR noted that if your turnover is below £50m this does not preclude you from becoming involved. RN asked if the BCA had discussed this with other Trade Association within commodity sectors who might also be affected. PR noted regarding turnover we have not discussed, but we have on several other issues. RRE added that the EU legislation that has quite strict interpretation in regard of deforestation, PR noted that it overrides third country legislation from that point of view.

KS noted that she had given a quick overview of the legislation, for a mid-sized roaster would purchasing certified products be enough to demonstrate that as a minimum they had done their due diligence. RRE noted that we discussed this briefly at the last Committee meeting. In the consultation there is a section around certification, which it appears the government are asking for more information from industry. PR added that the UK takes a more positive view of the role certification can play and can be part of due diligence but not the whole package. There are several criteria that Defra talk about, proof of legality, chain of custody, robustness and transparency, and the challenges that some certification bodies may have is around transparency, who is reviewing the certification body and that their practices are right.

RRE noted that perhaps we need to send out a reminder to the Sustainability Committee, if Members have weblinks to their own case studies in the public domain that they can provide, we can then utilise these with the question responses.

**Action: PR/ALL**

RRE asked if the BCA could look to organise a webinar on deforestation. PR noted that CB is already working on this for the spring, also on the day of the dinner we will be running a conference and the majority of that conference will be around due diligence.



RRE asked when the consultation needs to be in, PR noted that 11<sup>th</sup> March. PR noted that in the consultation there are several questions that are industry specific that the BCA cannot answer, if Members wish to cut and paste from our response to do their own, they are most welcome to do this.

**Action: BCA/ALL**

- **Review of FDF Draft Response**

PR noted that he sits on the FDF Committee who are undertaking the FDF response and noted that there are only a couple of differences.

## **8. Plastic Packaging Legislation**

- **Consideration of Imported Packaging and Possibility for Collection**

PR noted that the packaging tax is due to start from April.

A question had been raised in respect of imported plastic packaging and the possibility of BCA members acting as collectors of material for re-export. This would offer the opportunity of receiving a credit on the tax paid as well as helping to encourage reformulation of packaging to take it out of the scope of the tax.

DS noted that post industrial waste is not as high as importance as getting more recycled plastic onto the market, for food contact it is a bit of a challenge given the additional restrictions on what can and cannot be used as a food contact material.

CB referred to the recent Valpak presentation to the FDF around EPR and DRS, CB asked if Members would like a coffee specific drop-in session. OE noted that once Valpak have more of a direction and more clear answers around tax etc. then a session would be appreciated. CB noted that she will continue dialogue and update members as and when we have it.

**Action: CB**

PR noted that perhaps if companies are not recovering industrial waste, they might not be hitting the 30% recovery rate, PR noted that we might need to talk with the warehousing side to gauge further opinion.

**Action: PR**

## **9. Product Environmental Scores**

- **Update, Including IDG 2022 Pilots**

PR noted that there is not too much more to talk about at this time.

We have become aware of a range of organisations looking at a form of product scores in the UK.

Within the food industry more widely there has been some concern about these approaches.

IDG has taken up some work and is looking at a labelling framework with 10 products that they were going to pilot and test consumer opinion. This is still the plan, but it has been delayed slightly, but coffee is going to be included within the 10 pilots.



RRE asked if we have circulated the IDG draft, PR noted that he would need to check what could be circulated.

**Action: PR**

#### **10. What to focus on – 2022?**

RRE noted that a very small survey will be sent out to the Sustainability Committee to rank accordingly.

**Action: RRE/BCA/ALL**

#### **11. Dates of 2022 Meetings**

- **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July**  
1.30p.m. – 3.30p.m. - FDF, 10 Bloomsbury Way, London - Rooms Bodinnar & Cleminson
- **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November**  
1.30p.m. – 3.30p.m. - FDF, 10 Bloomsbury Way, London - Rooms George & Machin