

## Official WTM WRTD Opening

Harriet Lamb, Executive Director of the UK's Fairtrade Foundation - an organisation that has dramatically transformed shopping habits and improved the lives of millions across the globe – is to officially open WTM World Responsible Tourism Day.

Vivien Green said: 'Life is not about waiting for the storms to pass. It is about learning to dance in the rain.'

And it certainly is very stormy at the moment. I know just how tough it is for you all just now – it's tough for the public, so it's tough for your businesses, and it's pretty desperate for too many of the communities and workers who depend upon tourism for their livelihoods.

But maybe, tough times can give us the chance to rethink radically?

Maybe business as usual just won't do?

And now is in fact the ideal time to be really brave and innovative

And to take this vision, this germ of an idea you have here in responsible tourism and to take it right to the heart of all your businesses.

Michael Jackson – that idea informs work of the Fairtrade Foundation, an independent charity that seeks to tackle poverty by ensuring that farmers and workers in developing countries get a fair price. We give our stamp of approval to products – from coffee to flowers, tea to T-shirts, ice-cream to face-cream –

When we started, twenty years ago, people laughed in our faces. You will never make it work, they said

The public don't care

They won't pay more for Fairtrade, they said

You'll only ever be a tiny green ghetto.

And we made plenty of mistakes, I can assure you. There were the hairbrushes/

Those critics are not laughing now. Today you can buy Fairtrade products in over 24 countries. Last year, sales of Fairtrade products just in the UK topped £1 billion. 40% growth in these tough times. If we were a grocery brand, we would be second only to Coco Cola; if we were a retailer, we would be in the top ten.

Today we are working with 1.5 million farmers and workers across 50 developing countries, helping them transform their lives and their communities by building their businesses. Malawi woman.

We are working with over 700 companies just in the UK alone – from major power brands such as Nestle, Ben and Jerrys (all their ice-creams the world over will be Fairtrade) and Starbucks (who have switched all their espresso based coffees to Fairtrade) through to tiny, dedicated 100% Fairtrade companies such as Cafedirect. Or my favourites who use Fairtrade cotton are – Pants to Poverty and Life's not Fair but my Knickers Are. Many have seen double-digit growth when they first started doing Fairtrade – the public think better of companies who act responsibly and that will drive sales.

Hotel and catering risen to the challenge – B&Bs and Hotel Dorint in Amsterdam.

A few years ago PWC predicted that sustainability would only continue to rise. It is, they suggested, like the internet – in the end sustainability will become part of the way all companies do business; everyone will have to engage. The smart companies are the only who are early adopters because they will be rewarded by the public.

Businesses are engaging:

1. Because it is the right thing to do: - we must all play our part in ending the poverty that blights too many people's lives. Not only through charity, but also through finding new business models which will empower communities to build their futures themselves. **Nelson Mandela:** "*Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life.*" Tourism already so important globally – has the potential.
2. Because the business model works – the public do care. They say that repeatedly. For example, last month we released our latest Globescan survey of 18,000 people across 18 countries which found that nearly 80% of those polled think that companies can play their part in tackling poverty by changing the way they do business.

They expect companies to

They also believe in the power to create change through their shopping choices.

This is the public giving businesses – giving you – permission to care. They are saying clear and loud that they do not want cheap at any price; that they do expect you to meet basic norms in how you do business – but more than that, they want you to give back to the communities on whom you depend.

Same people buy Fairtrade as buy your holidays.

And if it is working for FT when we have to create the links, bring alive the farmers behind the coffee and tea – imagine the golden opportunity for you in tourism, You ARE that connection, that bridge between people – you have the most direct and powerful opportunities to drive sustainable change.

If the customer is always right, then surely they are right when they ask for responsible tourism as much as when they ask for clean towels or good food! It may be always be top of their agenda. But the clever companies are always just one step ahead of the public – delighting them by offering new opportunities for them to have that holiday of a lifetime while also feeling proud to have given back to the communities. That is true leadership.

And it pays off>

Companies have found that the more they invest in sustainability, the prouder staff feel – so helping with recruitment and retention of the brightest and best. I will always remember the day that Virgin Trains announced that they were switching all their tea and coffee and chocolate to Fairtrade; man came to me... proudest day of my working life....

1. Finally investing in the communities and workers at the heart of tourism must be the bedrock of building the future. To take an example from cocoa – visited with CEO of Cadburys.....
2. I don't need to tell you that poverty and the conflicts that too often feed on poverty are not good for tourism. It is assuredly in your interests to help tackle

poverty, build the economic underpinnings of peace and empower communities to build the tourist industry of tomorrow.

You are the leaders in your industry. You are the people who have already seen the importance of making the industry sustainable, and can now take it to scale.

There are of course many fantastic initiatives already –

Prize winners

FT coffee farmers reduce reliance on one crop diversified into Machu Picchu tours.

Traidcraft who organises tours of fairtrade producers from rice farmers to basket weavers;

I hope the tourist industry will put responsibility at the heart of your offers as we welcome tourists to the Olympics in London next year. I am delighted to say that thanks to the London Organising Committee, all the tea, coffee, sugar and bananas on the site will be Fairtrade. I hope many hotels, trains and planes will be welcoming visitors with Fairtrade wine and hot drinks

Today two new milestones:

- Tourism Concern launching their Business and Human rights |report laying out the frameworks and guiding of how to build a tourism industry that puts disadvantaged people first.
- Fairtrade Tourism in South Africa, who have developed a standards for FT in Tourism and are today launching with Kuoni the first Fairtrade certified package to South Africa's Garden Route.

There are so many exciting initiatives, pioneering a new way forward.

This will not be easy. But in the end. This is the only agenda to follow.

Finally – you have a great charity Just one Drop  
And Mexican farmer

And so I am delighted to declare the WTM World responsible tourism day 2011:  
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