Fair and sustainable cosmetics
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INTRODUCTION

From the 1970s and 1980s onward, globalisation has reduced distances and led to the emergence of the Global Village through the development of a collective awareness, which has made a deep impact on international relations and on individual behaviour.

The environment, climate, and the economy now hold global risks and threats and the scope of our individual responsibility is enlarged and covers the entire planet.

How can I take action? What can I do?
There are many individual answers. When they are all added up they become trends, then collective movements that put pressure on and correct the more sinister aspects of globalisation.
Together, as citizens and consumers of developed countries, we have the means and resources to contribute to the changes that we want to see happen, in particular, for the benefit of those living in the poorest countries of the world.

Sustainable, fair and supportive trade appeals to our sense of individual responsibility as consumers by being part of an existing system (the world market economy) and provides us with a concrete and effective way to act for the benefit of the most vulnerable human beings and the environment.

First applied in the field of handicrafts, then in food-processing, fair trade has extended its principles and operating rules into other fields of activity and particularly into those fields that import raw materials from the poorest countries.

Cosmetics, which are increasingly made with natural (or organic) ingredients produced in Southern countries (palm oil, aloe vera, green tea, cocoa butter, etc.), also fall within the realm of fair and supportive trade, which ensures fairer levels of income for producers and enables them to develop while respecting the environment.

But what are sustainable, fair trade, or organic cosmetics?
Who certifies them?
How are they made and what are they made of?
Where can I find them?
What do they provide to producers in Southern countries?

We will try to answer these questions to help you, the concerned consumer, make choices with full knowledge of the facts.

Good news! It is now possible to be handsome and ethical.
And, therefore, even more beautiful.
Cosmetics

What are cosmetics?

By “cosmetic product”, the European Cosmetics Directive of 27 July 1976 (76/768) means “any substance or preparation intended for placing in contact with the various external parts of the human body (epidermis, hair systems, nails, lips and external genital organs) or with the teeth and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity with a view, exclusively or principally, to cleaning them, perfuming them, protecting them in order to keep them in good condition, change their appearance or correct body odours”.

The composition of cosmetic products

Whatever their purpose, these cosmetic products are all made from three main categories of ingredients:

- **Active ingredients**, which have a therapeutic, repairing, calming or other effect (essential oils, aloe vera, etc.)
- **Additives**, which are used by formulators to modify the appearance of a product or to correct certain unwanted effects (perfumes, preservatives, colouring, antioxidants)
- **Excipients**, which give the finished product the desired consistency and enable application of the active ingredient (water, oil, alcohol, etc.)

The manufacturer’s task is to create and offer to consumers, healthy products that meet hygiene and health requirements.

In its appendices (updated on a regular basis), European Directive 76/768 sets out the rules defining the composition of cosmetic products and provides a detailed list of components (ingredients and colouring) that are prohibited, temporarily admissible or restricted. Restricted substances are limited to one or several fields of application and to a maximum authorised amount.

To date, over 1,500 substances have been prohibited in the manufacturing of cosmetics. Today’s main regulatory trends relate to prohibitions against animal testing decided by the European Union. It also expects all manufacturers to provide information on their manufacturing methods and on results from toxicological studies and controls carried out before a new product can be put on the market.

They are, therefore, hygiene and personal care products or products with an aesthetic purpose generally classified in five main categories:

- Skin care (facial care products, body lotions, etc.)
- Hair care (shampoos, scalp care, etc.)
- Mouth care (toothpaste, etc.)
- Colouring cosmetics (mascara, lipstick, etc.)
- Other (deodorants, feminine hygiene, etc.)

For the past several years, manufacturers (including major brands) have paid more attention to the demands of consumers and have been offering and promoting products made from natural or organic ingredients or of fair trade origin.

This trend came into place fairly easily since a large proportion of the raw materials used are also used in other industries, food-processing for example, which have been aware of the trend toward responsible consumption for some time.

Natural, organic and fair trade production channels have been able to adapt quite easily to the demands of cosmetics manufacturers for a wide range of ingredients including avocado, cocoa, olive and sunflower.
Cosmetics labelling

The labels of cosmetic products contain a mix of advertising information and statements required by European standards. It is compulsory that product packaging contain the following information:

- The name and address of the manufacturer or of the entity responsible for putting the product on the market (importer or distributor)
- The amount of product contained by volume or weight (except for packages containing fewer than five grams or less than five millilitres)
- The minimum product use-by date (expiration date). If longer than 30 months, the date is not required
- Any special precautions for use
- The manufacturing batch number or a reference to enable identification
- The product’s purpose
- A list of ingredients by descending order of weight in INCI nomenclature (International Nomenclature Cosmetic Ingredients). This nomenclature is a mix of very technical terms, in English and Latin. Although it is not always easy for consumers to understand, it does make the work of physicians and allergists easier.

The market and the players

The global market for perfumes and cosmetics was estimated at nearly 237 billion euros in 2008 and it is continuing to grow (by more than 1.8% over 2007) thanks to increased demand from Asia (+ 24.5%), Latin America (+ 11.6%) and Russia (+ 28.5%). Increasing incomes and greater numbers of women in the workforce in these parts of the world have strongly stimulated the consumption of perfumes and cosmetics. Contrary to North America and Japan, consumption in Western Europe continues to increase (+ 5.3%) and it has solidified its position as the world’s leading market, with sales estimated at 63 billion euros in 2008.

The global cosmetics market experienced growth of 4% in the first half of 2008 despite a brutal economic slowdown in Western Europe and the United States.

Despite the crisis, the sector’s large multinationals, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, Estée Lauder and Colgate-Palmolive recorded revenue growth of 8% to 13% in the third quarter of 2008. After twenty-four years of two-digit growth, L’Oréal, the world leader in cosmetics, announced that its profit growth would only be 7% compared to 16% a year earlier.

The organic and natural cosmetics market

With over a billion euros in annual revenues in 2008, the global organic and natural cosmetics industry has seen average annual growth of 30%. This has clearly caught even more the attention of the cosmetics giants because the sector still has significant growth potential (including in North America and Europe, its main markets).

The share of organic cosmetics sales as part of overall cosmetics sales grew from 1% in 2005 to 4% in 2008. Analysts predict that organic and natural cosmetics will account for about 10% of the market by 2010-2012 and 30% of the total cosmetics market within five years.
Fair, organic, sustainable

Since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, consumers have become more and more aware of environmental issues and of the living conditions of the world’s poorest people. In response to this gradually increasing awareness, there have been more and more initiatives to provide 21st century consumers with alternatives that are more respectful of the environment and of the most vulnerable human beings.

Sustainable trade

Sustainable trade, which includes fair trade, takes place when the commercial exchange of goods and services generates social, economic and environmental benefits that comply with the basic principles of sustainable development:

- The creation of economic value
- A reduction in poverty and inequality
- The regeneration of environmental resources

Labels and certifications

Although not all products currently sold by fair trade and sustainable trade distributors carry a label or a certification (notably in the case of textiles and decoration items), significant efforts are being made to highlight products produced by these channels and to facilitate consumer choice.

However, lacking binding standards (with the exception of organic products), it is important to make a distinction between labels and certifications granted by independent organisations (Max Havelaar, Rainforest Alliance, etc.) and distributor initiatives.

In fact, while the former guarantee that a product and every production step have been verified by an independent certifier using specifications that adhere closely to the essential principles of fair trade or sustainable development, the latter do not always provide the same level of guarantee.

The multiplicity and diversity of labels and designations (some of which are solely intended to mask commercial ambitions) does not simplify the decision-making process for consumers. A certain amount of education is required.
Fair trade and cosmetics

Fair trade was born from a simple observation: The wealth gap between people in the richest countries and those in the poorest ones never ceases to increase despite the sums invested in development aid. In less than a century, the income gap between the richest 20% of countries and the poorest 20% increased from 11 to 1 in 1913 to 75 to 1 today.

Wars, natural catastrophes, faulty infrastructure, corruption...there are many reasons for this imbalance, but basic structural economic problems are, without a doubt, among them. Speculation in raw materials, the debt spiral, the subsidising of northern competitor producers, all of these mechanisms create obstacles that prevent the poorest countries, which lack control over their own development, from taking off.

In 1999, the main international fair trade organisations (the World Fair Trade Organisation, the Fair Trade Labelling Organisation and the Network of European World Shops) agreed on a common definition: “Fair trade is a commercial partnership based on dialogue, transparency and respect that seeks greater equity in international trade.”

Although these commercial inequalities were brought to light as far back as the 19th century (notably with the publication in 1860 of a novel by the Dutchman Edward Douwes Dekker of which Max Havelaar is the hero), it was only after the Second World War that the first fair trade projects started to appear, led by American and English organisations (Ten Thousand Villages in the United States and the Oxfam NGO in the United Kingdom).

The concept of fair trade was first defined in 1964 at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). “Trade, not Aid” became its founding principle.

The first fair trade shops in Europe opened at the end of the 1960s, and the producer cooperatives and associations that would benefit from fairer exchange, first in the fields of handicrafts and agriculture, were created in developing countries during the same period.

The ingredients used in cosmetics, whether hygiene, personal care, or beauty products, can be of animal, plant, mineral or synthetic origin. A significant proportion of the raw materials used in their formulation are imported from developing countries. This explains the importance of fair trade for this sector of activity and why some of its pioneers were already taking an interest in it by the end of the 1970s. Since then, organisations, labels and certifications have multiplied to support exports from developing countries and provide consumers with products that meet their new expectations.

What is fair trade?

It contributes to sustainable development by offering better commercial conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalised producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair trade organisations (backed by consumers) are actively engaged in supporting producers, awareness-raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practices of conventional international trade.”
In order to support the implementation of this economic system, the organisations list 10 basic principles that must be followed:

- Create opportunities for economically disadvantaged producers
- Promote transparency and accountability
- Promote individual capabilities
- Promote fair trade
- Guarantee the payment of a fair price
- Ensure gender equality
- Ensure decent working conditions
- Avoid child labour
- Protect the environment
- Promote commercial relations based on mutual trust and respect

In practical terms, fair trade guarantees that producers in poor countries receive purchase prices above world rates, relative price stability, and favourable conditions and payment terms (sometimes with pre-financing), which ensure that farmers and craftsmen will not have to sell their products too cheaply or have to rely on usurious loans.

The fair price must cover all product production costs, including environmental costs, and ensure that producers enjoy a decent standard of living.

What’s more, fair trade buyers generally commit to social programmes (literacy, access to educational and health care systems, etc.) and support productive investments by producer organisations.
Since 1988 and the creation, on one hand, of IFAT, the International Fair Trade Association (WFTO, World Fair Trade Organisation since 2009) and the launch of the Max Havelaar label, on the other, two main fair trade regulatory channels have emerged and now coexist: the integrated channel (notably WFTO and EFTA) and the labelled channel (FLO Max Havelaar, in particular).

The integrated channel is the traditional form of fair trade organisation. Its distinguishing characteristic resides in the fact that all actors involved (producers, processors, importers and points of sale) take part in the creation and sale of the products and all are committed to fair trade and comply voluntarily (even actively) with its principles.

Those are the players who benefit from certification (generally associated with a logo) corresponding to rules and criteria that have generally been jointly defined.

The labelled channel is based on certification of the commercialised product.

The companies that create these products commit to following precise specifications and to obtaining supplies from producer organisations in developing countries (often cooperatives) that have been certified by a labelling organisation.

These labelled products can then be sold in any point of sale, including through major retailers.

The Max Havelaar label, which represents the FLO label in Belgium, is the best known of these labels.

The coexistence of these two channels illustrates the diverging visions of fair trade, which relate, in particular, to the type of relations that should be established with private economic players (multinationals, major retailers) and to differences between a vision based on development (and the stigmatising of international trade), on one hand, and a commercial outlook based on control, on the other.
The main fair trade labels

**Fairtrade FLO**

The Max Havelaar Fairtrade label appears on many types of products (foods, textiles, cosmetics, etc.) It certifies that brands carrying the label have committed to abiding by the specifications established by FLO - Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International, which is represented by Max Havelaar in Belgium.

The brands that use this logo have been verified by the FLO-Cert independent certification organisation, which verifies that a company’s practices comply with the principles of fair trade.

The Fairtrade Max Havelaar label is granted based on the criteria set out in specifications. It includes economic, social and environmental pillars.

*TO FIND OUT MORE:*
www.fairtrade.net

**Fairtrade Trade Organisation (FTO)**

This label is awarded by the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO) to organisations for which fair trade is the primary activity. The WFTO label certifies the fact that these distributors and/or producers have adhered to the requirements of the FTO standard, particularly in terms of evaluation and monitoring.

This standard requires that producers get a fair price within the framework of contracts that comply with ILO rules (gender equality, healthy working conditions, etc.)

Environmental criteria are also taken into account and special attention is paid to the creation of opportunities for economically vulnerable producers, to raise the awareness of consumers and to provide them with information.

*TO FIND OUT MORE:*
www.wfto.com

The economic pillar provides for, among other things, a guaranteed minimum purchase price that is stable over time.

The social pillar includes a development bonus paid by the purchaser to the producer organisation and requires compliance with the standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in matters of working conditions.

The environmental pillar ensures that no GMOs are used, forbids the use of over 118 chemical pesticides, and emphasises the conservation of ecosystems.
**ESR (Equitables Solidaires Responsables)**

Used in the food, cosmetics and textiles fields, the ESR certification (Equitables Solidaires Responsables) guarantees respect for fair trade procedures across the entire production chain (producers, processors, exporters and importers).

In compliance with the criteria set out by the FINE network, which brings together the main fair trade organisations (WFTO, FLO, EFTA and NEWS), the ESR certification standard (monitored by Ecocert) includes the setting of a minimum guaranteed purchase price that covers production costs, while creating a profit that enables suppliers to improve their living conditions.

**Bio Equitable**

Created with a global vision, the Bio Equitable brand (Organic Fair Trade) combines fair trade guarantees with those of organic farming for food, textiles and cosmetic products from agricultural production.

This brand involves all of the players in the chain (production, processing and distribution) and guarantees consumers that products carrying its logo comply with internationally recognised organic farming regulations. It also ensures that technical support and training in organic farming (and in Bio Equitable specifications) are consistently provided to producers while ensuring respect for local cultures and traditions.

**Fairwild**

Created in 2008 with the goal of “implementing worldwide conditions favourable to the development of sustainable and ethical trading systems that generate added value,” the Fairwild Foundation has created a unified certification standard that combines environmental and social criteria for the evaluation of production systems.

Implementation of this Total Quality Management System is intended to provide distributors with a guarantee that the products they buy have been monitored and made in strict compliance with environmental and social criteria.

A special aspect of this standard is that it includes a very strong environmental component, which encourages the adoption of good agricultural practices, a waste and packaging management policy and transition to organic production. The latter is required for certain products including cotton, flowers and bananas.

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**Fairwild**

Among other things, this certification system guarantees the traceability of products, the transparency of financial exchanges and the sustainable nature of investments made.

**TO FIND OUT MORE:**

ESR: www.bioequitable.com


Fairwild: www.fairwild.org
The major organisations, international fair trade associations

WFTO - World Fair Trade Organisation

With 350 member organisations (of which 65% are in the Southern hemisphere) representing all of the links in the fair trade chain (producers, processors and distributors), WFTO, the World Fair Trade Organisation has been considered the main coordinator of the sector’s organisations since its founding in 1989.

Until recently, the WFTO was known as IFAT, the International Fair Trade Association.

As an emblematic organisation of the integrated channel, WFTO awards its label to organisations rather than to products. They then benefit from the FTO label granted following an evaluation based on stringent criteria and standards.

WFTO is a place to exchange information and experiences and it brings together hundreds of organisations at its international conferences, considered to be among fair trade’s most important events.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.wfto.com

FLO - Fairtrade Labelling Organisations

FLO (Fairtrade Labelling Organisations) is both a federation of labelling organisations and an independent structure responsible for a fair trade label. It sets fair trade standards, monitors their implementation and certifies the products that meet the standards.

In order to better achieve its goals, FLO consists of two separate structures: FLO International and FLO-Cert.

FLO International is an association with more than 20 national member certification organisations of which 15 are European (Max Havelaar represents the label in Belgium and France). It conceives and develops fair trade standards (specific to each product type), supports new outlets and assists in strengthening producer organisations.

FLO-Cert is a private limited company which is ISO 65 accredited. This guarantees its independence as a certification organisation, the objectivity of its monitoring and the transparency of its activities.

As a result, Flo-Cert certifies producer organisations and delivers approvals to the economic players of the channel (importers, exporters, processors and brands) after regular audits and controls. Over 500 organisations (cooperatives and farms) in over 50 countries in Africa, Asia and South America have been certified.

A neutral multi-party certification committee consisting of producer, importer and national association representatives decides whether to grant an approval or to withdraw certification.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.fairtrade.net
EFTA - European Fair Trade Association

EFTA is a kind of historical club of organisations that are leaders in their own countries. It brings together the major European fair trade importing groups that get their supplies from 400 producer groups in emerging countries.

EFTA was created in 1990 as a platform for sharing information and good practices. Its goal is to develop imports of fair trade products by strengthening synergies and promoting experience exchange between members.

EFTA is more of a working tool than a tool of political representation and it has developed shared databases and a joint monitoring system.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.european-fair-trade-association.org

FINE

These last four major organisations make up FINE (acronym from the first letters of their names). Its goal is to coordinate their activities, set a common direction for fair trade and, especially, to build and maintain the trust required for the development of fair trade.
Natyr, Pure wellness

THE PROJECT

The Natyr line of cosmetics was created in 2004 by the Gala Cosmetici company for the CTM Altromercato cooperative, the Italian fair trade leader. Oxfam became a project partner two years later and started selling Natyr products through its network of specialised retail stores, the "Magasins du Monde".

The Natyr product line is sold through the Oxfam-Magasins du Monde and CTM Altromercado sales and distribution networks. Production is taken care of by Gala Cosmetici, an Italian laboratory that develops, packages, and controls cosmetics made from raw materials supplied by producers registered with Oxfam-Magasins du Monde, Oxfam-Fairtrade, FLO and/or WFTO.

However, since not all ingredients can be certified due to a lack of resources, Natyr products are not labelled. Instead, they bear the statement "Oxfam - Made in Dignity" which is associated with fair trade thresholds that guarantee that at least 50% of ingredients and labour used are from certified sources.

The Natyr product line consists of 33 phytocosmetic products. It offers a complete range of products (cleansers, make-up removers, milks, exfoliants, deodorants, after-shaves, bath oils, etc.) divided into four major families: Aloe Vera, Green Tea, Spices and Flowers & Soaps.
THE PRODUCERS

Following the example of the Alter Eco line, Natyr products are made using raw materials from integrated production channels set up and monitored by Oxfam and from ingredients supplied by communities of producers that have been awarded a label by one of the major certifying organisations, in particular, FLO and WFTO.

The following organisations are members of Natyr’s raw materials producer networks.

THAILAND
THE GREEN NET COOPERATIVE

The Green Net cooperative is active in the development of organic farming in northeast of Thailand. It was founded in 1993 as the result of collaboration between Surin Farmers Support, a local NGO, Claro, and local producers, with the goal of protecting traditional rice varieties and better allocating profits from rice growing.

Starting in the early 1980s, a number of this very poor region’s producers were already organised in cooperatives with the support of western NGOs. They pooled their resources and created solidarity funds, rice banks and savings banks where deposits are made in rice or in cash.

Green Net provides training in organic farming and production techniques to its 1,100 members and provides support to counter the monopolistic food-processing industry.

Green Net is a militant organisation that has contributed to the creation of a national organic certification through collaboration with urban associations. Together, they are carrying out awareness-raising activities for farmers on social rights, the division of labour between men and women, and the benefits of fair trade compared to traditional trade.

Green Net was FLO certified in 2002 and has been a member of WFTO since 2004.

Thanks to fair trade, rice and aloe vera producers receive a set salary, which is higher than in the traditional channel, and protect the environment through organic agriculture. This project provides a way to slow the rural exodus. Economic development and pre-financing of crops provides a way to break the vicious circle of debt and removes the need to rely on usurious lenders.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.greennet.or.th
SRI LANKA
THE STASSEN GROUP

Founded in 1977, the exporter Stassen Group has been the Sri Lankan tea market leader since 1988 with 20,000 hectares of land dedicated to the crop and many complementary activities (banking, hotels, insurance and logistics).

Stassen Group has converted many of its fields to organic since 1987. These fields are primarily worked by women who are responsible for picking and packaging the tea leaves.

Since its creation, Stassen Group has been working to improve the quality of life of its 1,500 workers and their families by providing them with incomes significantly above the national minimum and by supporting a large number of social projects.

The Stassen Group received FLO certification in 2006 thanks to this commitment.

In addition to its environmental work, Stassen Group has supported the development of infrastructure for workers (150 houses and 470 toilets were built for the community and 350 families have electricity).

Today, thanks in particular to fair trade development bonuses, all worker families have running water and toilets in their houses. Two medical centres were built, as were roads, a care facility for the elderly, several day care centres and kindergartens.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.stassengroup.com
The José Martí Credit and Service Cooperative (CCS) was created in 1971 by small independent farmers in the Ciego de Ávila region of central Cuba. They decided to unite forces in an organisation that would provide loans and professional services to its members.

The José Martí Agricultural Production Cooperative (CPA) was founded in 1979 by a number of CCS members to jointly manage their properties and means of production to improve their conditions and yields and, therefore, their incomes.

Contrary to CCS members, the 70 citrus fruit producers (oranges, grapefruit and lemons) of the José Martí CPA are co-owners of the land. They organise work collectively and their produce is sold at a fixed price to Citricos Caribe S.A., a state company. This ensures stable revenues.

The central government manages sales and exports to Europe through its logistics platform located in Rotterdam, where traditional fair trade distributors and operators such as Oxfam buy their supplies.

The José Martí cooperative was certified by FLO (Fairtrade Labelling Organisations) in 2000.

In addition to the better working conditions and higher incomes the José Martí CPA guarantees to its workers (owners and seasonal workers) that it also carries out essential social functions. It distributes part of its fruit crop to schools, hospitals and retirement homes for free, helps its members and their families build houses and organises cultural and sports events on a regular basis.

**TO FIND OUT MORE:**
Alter Eco, total fair trade

THE PROJECT

Originally created as an association in 1998, the French company Alter Eco imports and distributes fair trade food products and cosmetics.

Thanks to its strong growth, the company has opened offices in Australia and the United States and has also been able to develop a global approach to optimising its activities. This includes market studies, audits, and raw materials quality control and monitoring.

Alter Eco gets its supplies from 51 producer organisations in 28 countries to which it often entrusts high value-adding activities: raw materials processing, and sometimes packaging of the 80 products that the company sells in over 3,000 medium and large outlets.

Alter Eco cosmetics offer a complete line of 14 body care products (shower gels, balms, liquid soaps, masks, etc.) and products made from fair trade cotton (cleansing pads and cotton swabs). Ingredient thresholds are set for two criteria: natural, at 95%, and from fair trade, at 50%.

Alter Eco received a Max Havelaar label for all of its products and an Agriculture Biologique label for its food products. It has implemented its own audit system (FTA 200) and is proud to guarantee its producers purchase prices above those required for Max Havelaar certification. For example, in 2005, it paid on average 81% over market price for raw materials compared to the 54% required by Max Havelaar.
In addition to its commercial activities, Alter Eco has also initiated awareness-raising and information activities with, notably, the publication of many documents and books for the general public and the creation, with the E. Leclerc retail chain, of the Laboratoire du Commerce Equitable, a good practices information and exchange platform to contribute to the development of fair trade.

**THE PRODUCERS**

Alter Eco combines fair trade’s two traditional approaches in its relationships with its suppliers by ensuring the implementation and development of integrated local producer channels while using production networks labelled by fair trade certifying organisations.

Among the organisations with which Alter Eco works for the production of its line of 14 cosmetic products are:

**SOUTH AFRICA
THE HEIVELD / WUPPERTHAL COOPERATIVE**

Located in the sandy and rocky region of the Bokkeveld in South Africa, 400 km north of Cape Town, the Heiveld organic cooperative consists of about sixty small producers of wild and cultivated Rooibos (red bush) tea.

Combined with shea butter from Burkina Faso for moisturising care, this “red” tea (in fact a golden-red infusion) has been very successful over the past few years, thanks to its antioxidant properties and its high polyphenol content. Today, the producers are working with scientists to develop production while taking care of their land. The harvest of wild Rooibos tea is done in a way that protects specific and unique local biodiversity.

Unofficially started by 12 founding members at the end of apartheid in 2000, this cooperative (which became official in 2002) obtained both fair trade and organic certifications and, thereby, increased its members’ incomes.

In fact, the small size of this cooperative (43 members) has enabled very good management of the additional revenues, which have been invested in successful and ambitious development projects.

The women of the cooperative participate in the project by making the tea bags and boxes in which the tea is sold. They are also working together with the objective of creating a tourism venture that will enable travellers to discover their way of working the land and their way of living in harmony with nature.

The cooperative manages the production, processing and packaging of its products. It is a model for the creation of high added value by fair trade cooperatives.
The Olive Branch Fund has invested in local economic development and the peace process for many years. It is a Palestinian association located in the commune of Taybeh, 30 kilometres northeast of Jerusalem in the occupied territories of the West Bank.

Created in 2001 by Father Ra'Ed, a Catholic priest from the commune, to revitalise the farming and sale of olive oil (a family heritage and a vital necessity for the poor families of Taybeh), the Olive Branch Foundation contributes to ensuring that 300 families receive an income that is as high as possible. The oil produced at Taybeh is used to make some of the body care products of the Alter Eco line of cosmetics.

There are no FLO (Fairtrade Labelling Organisations) standards for this business but Alter Eco has taken a leading role in implementing an integrated and recognised fair trade structure. A number of audits were carried out to decide on a minimum guaranteed price and on the development bonus paid to the cooperative. Fair trade provides these producers with a fairer price for their oil (about 50% more than the price on local markets). This ensures satisfactory margins and the potential for other projects.

In the last year, the development bonus paid to The Olive Branch Fund by Alter Eco and assistance from Caritas and the Archdiocese of Florence enabled the city of Taybeh to purchase a press and develop processing activities that add maximum value to its products.

The solidarity projects financed by The Olive Branch Fund, thanks to development bonuses, include schooling for poor children, the creation of welcome centres for tourists and pilgrims, micro-credit for families in difficulty and on-line distribution of a pacifist information letter (www.go.to/non-violence.org) to promote dialogue and intercultural exchange. The bonuses paid by Alter Eco also finance the projects of two women's associations that are working to give free training to women about their rights and to help them gain access to higher education.

"Since 2003, the French fair trade company Alter Eco has been purchasing a major part of the oil produced at Taybeh at a fair price. In these difficult economic and political times in Palestine, this contract provides a great deal of hope for the inhabitants of the village who have found an outlet for their production which had been piling up in garages and cellars."

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.taybeh.info/fr/olivebranch.php
**NICARAGUA - THE COSATIN COOPERATIVE**

The honey gathered by the producers of the Cosatin cooperative is 100% natural and organic. It is one of the main base ingredients of the Alter Eco fair trade line of moisturising cosmetics.

This cooperative, which was created in 2007, currently has 340 small producers in 25 different communities in Nicaragua's Boaco department. For a long time, its main activity had been the production and export of organic Arabica coffee. However, in order to be less dependent on the very volatile coffee market, some of its members decided to diversify and converted to organic apiculture.

The sale of honey to fair trade players like Alter Eco ensures that Cosatin honey producers enjoy consistent outlets for their products and price stability. This contributes to securing and increasing their revenues. The fair trade bonus paid by Alter Eco enables the cooperative to hold training sessions on organic farming for small producers and it has contributed to the implementation of schooling projects for the farmers' children.

**SRI LANKA - THE SOFA COOPERATIVE**

The association of small organic tea producers of the Kandy region in Sri Lanka was created in 1993 at the initiative of Sarath Ranaweera, an engineer specialised in the organic cultivation of tea, to deal with the difficulties met by farmers facing pressure from intermediaries.

The Small Organic Farmer Association (SOFA) was created in 1997. Organic certification was awarded in the same year to a number of producers who had never used chemical products on their plots due to lack of money. They were able to easily move to organic farming. By taking an organic approach, the 462 members of SOFA chose to reintroduce traditional farming methods. This enabled the protection of certain species and better care for the environment. Sarath created Biofoods in 1994. This is a private company that manages the cooperative and product exports. The objective is to develop outlets for small Sri Lankan producer associations who make the effort of moving to organic farming and organise themselves according to the principles of fair trade.

Biofoods helps these small producers create an association and manage it. It lends facilities and provides financial support to the organisation until it becomes self-sufficient.

The audit carried out by the Laboratoire du Commerce Equitable in 2008 highlighted the advantages of the project: "The SOFA example provides a development model that illustrates the range of action levers available to local fair trade projects. Initiated by local entrepreneurs and supported by fair trade importers, the SOFA project helps to make the farming activities of small producers more dynamic. (...) It is the higher price guaranteed at purchase that provides the financing for these activities. SOFA now manages the entire production system, quality control, and farmer monitoring autonomously. This enables the cooperative to maximise added value with 45% of the consumer price (France) returning to the country of origin thanks, in particular, to the efforts made to promote a local packaging solution". According to Mr Wiesinghe, SOFA member and producer of Alter Eco tea: "The fair trade bonus has been used to bring technical advice to producers, buy green fertiliser, and develop the village's social system. (...) We hope to attract more members to the cooperative if the system demonstrates its stability and profitability."

**TO FIND OUT MORE:**

www.cosatin.org

www.biofoodslk.com/
The Body Shop: A fair trade cosmetics pioneer

THE PROJECT

Created in 1976, The Body Shop is the true pioneer of fair trade cosmetics.

At a time when aid to producers in Southern countries was primarily a third-world, communitarian or religious concept, Anita Roddick, as a 23-year-old English woman, decided to take part in the movement by creating The Body Shop, a militant company for the sale of body care products inspired by traditional Indian practices. Anita Roddick combined her fair trade principles with respect for the environment, animal rights and the fight to stop violence against women.

At its inception, The Body Shop created its "Community Trade" principles (Trade, Not Aid), very similar to those of fair trade, and based on the following criteria:

- Work with local communities for the long-term
- Pay a fair salary to suppliers and workers
- Visit them on a regular basis
- Support sustainable development initiatives

The company stood out for its active support of many international environmental campaigns (notably Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth) and grew very quickly. Today The Body Shop (bought out by L’Oreal in 2006) has a franchise network of over 2,200 shops in 57 countries.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.thebodyshop.com
Although it was a sponsor of WFTO, The Body Shop's brand name recognition and acknowledgement of the support it provides to its supplier communities under the "Community Trade Programmes" has enabled it to continue without an external label.

In fact, its standards are often compared to those of the Fairtrade Labelling Organisations (FLO).

Since its first exchanges with producer communities in India, The Body Shop has invested in a number of ways to support and assist the producer channels from which it obtains its raw materials. This includes fair prices, development bonuses as well as strategic advice, aid for diversification, farmer training, awareness-raising on health issues, etc.

Despite the debate created by its takeover by Groupe L’Oreal in 2006, The Body Shop continues to be a recognised player on current environmental issues. Matthias Diemer, a palm oil expert for WWF in Switzerland points out that: “The Body Shop was the first cosmetics company to use sustainable palm oil in its products. This decision marked the beginning of the industry’s demand for sustainable oil and we hope that other companies will follow this example. We would also like to congratulate The Body Shop for its leading role in creating stringent guidelines for sustainable oil production”.

When Anita Roddick died on 10 September 2007 at the age of 64, homage was paid to her around the world.

John Sauven, the Executive Director of Greenpeace worked with Anita Roddick on many campaigns. He said: “She was an incredible source of inspiration to all of us... She was ahead of her time when it came to doing things ‘differently’. She was a true pioneer”.
THE PRODUCERS

Since its creation, The Body Shop has set itself apart by its involvement in starting, supporting and assisting its integrated Community Trade supply channels.

Today, over **25,000 producers, in about 30 communities in over 20 countries around the world**, benefit from The Body Shop’s Community Trade Programmes and, therefore, from higher incomes, more humane working conditions and resources for development projects.

GHANA - KUAPA KOKOO LTD

The Body Shop has been getting its cocoa bean supply from Kuapa Kokoo Ltd in Ghana since 1996. This cooperative has over **40,000 small farmer members**.

Established in 1993 following the liberalisation of the Ghanaian cocoa market, the Kuapa Kokoo association of “good cocoa planters” was created to provide farmers with a commercial cocoa structure that belonged to them and represented them.

Kuapa Kokoo’s innovation in a country with over 20 companies dedicated to the cocoa business resides in the fact that it is a cooperative created by and for producers. They have decision-making power within the organisation and are represented at local, regional and national levels.

According to one of its secretaries:

“With Kuapa Kokoo, we were able to organise for cocoa. We also understood that we had to diversify our production in order not to be solely dependent on cocoa. We can farm palm, grow pepper, maize and peanuts. In fact, we would like to create a collective farm.”

FLO-certified in 2006, the association set up a producer Board of Trustees, which allocates the bonuses paid by fair trade.

The minimum price guaranteed by fair trade partners is $1,600 per tonne, to which is added a set additional bonus of $120 per tonne paid when the world rate is higher than the guaranteed minimum price. The amounts paid to the cooperatives enable the development of community projects such as schools and village wells thanks, in particular, to the social bonus paid by The Body Shop.
DIVINE CHOCOLATE

In 1998, the Ghanaian cocoa production cooperative Kuapa Kokoo went a step further with The Body Shop and created the “Day Chocolate” brand in the United Kingdom and its own chocolate called “Divine Chocolate” for direct distribution in the British market.

The 250,000 pounds invested by The Body Shop to launch the project have since been entirely paid back to the producers in the form of company shares. This control over the entire product value chain marks major progress and a huge opportunity for Kuapa Kokoo’s small farmers.

NAMIBIA - THE EUDAFANO WOMEN’S COOPERATIVE

The Eudafano Women’s Cooperative was created in 1999 by women’s groups in northwest Namibia to “promote and defend the economic and social interests of its members”.

Consisting of 14 associations with nearly 4,800 women who produce marula oil, the Eudafano Women’s Cooperative quickly benefited from a fair trade programme from The Body Shop, its main customer, which uses the oil for its exceptional moisturising properties.

The purchase prices paid by The Body Shop (about 150% of the standard price) have enabled these women to receive a fairer salary for their work. This means financial independence and greater equality.

The fair trade bonus paid as part of the programme has led to training and investment activities and has also enabled schooling for many children.

According to Selma Ekandjo, who manages one of the associations of the Eudafano Women’s Cooperative, the marula nut business has changed the lives of the community’s women: “We can now support our families, help our children go to school and pay for medical care. We have gone from nothing to an international activity in a very short period of time. And we are very proud of it.”
The French company "commercequitable.com" was created in December 2000 by Isabelle Trunkowski and Jeremie Deravin to develop North-South channels and protect natural ecosystems.

In 2001, to accomplish this, it simultaneously launched "Forest People", the first line of fair trade beauty/well-being cosmetics and "Coeur de Forêt" which takes concrete action to protect tropical rain forests by planting one tree for every Forest People product purchased.

The goal of the company is to offer a concrete alternative to deforestation by directly involving the populations of Southern countries in forest conservation projects and to restart local economies, while promoting traditional quality and know-how to ensure that local activity is revitalised and becomes sustainable.
Over the past eight years, Forest People has set up fair trade and sustainable partnerships with producer groups and cooperatives for the supply of raw materials that come solely from the gathering of wild products (fruits, leaves and nuts) or from organic farming. The Brazilian, Guyanese and Peruvian Amazon produces andiroba, pequi and capaiba oils, Madagascar produces essential oils, Morocco produces argan and Burkina Faso shea oil (see ultra).

Forest People is certified Nature & Progress Cosmetique Bio-Ecologique. This label’s specifications are very strict and guarantee “the naturalness of components and the preservation of traditional know-how”. Forest People is evaluated every year by the Certipaq certification organisation and is validated by a committee that also takes into account the environmental solidarity approach.

THE PRODUCERS

THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON
THE SANTO DOMINGOS AND MAGUARI ASSOCIATIONS

Located in the heart of the Amazon forest in Brazil, the village of Santo Domingos is several hours by dugout canoe from the nearest city.

The Andiroba project currently enables the 22 women working there to meet the needs of all of the village’s families. They had lived from hunting, fishing and manioc, their staple food. This use of forest products enables the community’s young people to remain anchored in their traditional way of life rather than having to work in the city. The project has slowed the rural exodus, which had been increasing over the past years.

“In 2002, before the association was set up, only two women worked in the Amazon forest oil production workshop. Eighty percent of the village inhabitants were living in the city or employed cutting wood. Since we began this collaboration, all village women work on harvesting and processing and some of the men volunteer to help them build the business. As a result, the living (un-cut) forest is again a justly prized resource.”

Elsewhere in Brazil, thirteen families of the Maguari community are involved in the “Latex Amazonia” project. The impact of the project on the village life has been very similar.
MADAGASCAR
THE EQUIMADA COOPERATIVE

In 1996, Mr Naina decided to export his production of essential oils to the European fair trade market to counter a price dumping policy carried out by several foreign pharmaceutical companies. He brought together a number of local producers in the process to improve farming and essential oil extraction.

In September 2005, Mr Naina and the Commercequitable.com team thought up and created Equimada, the first organic and fair trade cooperative in Madagascar.

It offers an “organic & fair trade essential oils” outlet to European buyers who want to become involved in a policy of environmentally and socially responsible purchasing.

The project also enables small Madagascar farmers to sell their products at a better price than the one they are currently receiving.

MOROCCO
THE UNION OF WOMEN’S ARGAN OIL PRODUCING COOPERATIVES (UCFA)

Created in 2000, the UCFA now brings together thirteen autonomous cooperatives of small Moroccan argan oil producers. For every litre purchased from UCFA, 42.5% goes directly to the producer, 7.5% goes to the cooperative and 50% goes to the Union (for bottling, analysis and organic certification).

This union enables its small producer members to continue producing argan oil traditionally at home. They can organise their day as they please to take care of their household work.

Commercequitable.com has been working with UCFA since 2002.

BURKINA FASO
THE NAFA COOPERATIVE

As part of the NAFA project in Burkina Faso, Commercequitable.com has been working since 2002 with the Albert Schweitzer Ecological Centre (ASEC), a Swiss NGO that fights poverty in Africa. Its goals are: “to create and transfer innovative technologies thanks to a large network of skills, promote South-South exchange, introduce products to the market that respect the criteria of fair trade and promote agro-ecological practices.”
CŒUR DE FORET

Cour de Forêt has been working since 2001 to protect forest biodiversity and to promote the traditional know-how of forest residents.

To consistently link these activities with the development of the Forest People cosmetic line, the founders of Commercequitable.com launched the “One Forest People product purchased = One tree planted” project.

This enables Cœur de Forêt to work on four types of projects:

- The search for alternatives to deforestation
- The creation of nurseries and the planting of productive trees
- Support for and/or creation of fair trade channels
- Public opinion awareness-raising

Cœur de Forêt has been working in eight countries since 2001: Brazil, Guyana, Madagascar, Peru, Cameroon, Senegal, Rwanda, and the United States (Navajo & Hopi reservations).

Since its creation, the association has planted 90,000 trees, sown 1,300,000 seeds on river banks, purchased 400 hectares of land for forest communities (Para state in Brazil) and two pilot fields of 114 hectares for young plants (200 endemic species), and created six fair trade channels.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.forest-people.com
www.commercequitable.com
www.coeurdeforet.com
Fair and organic:
Thémis, an Ethis company brand

THE PROJECT
Created in Paris in September 2004 by Corinne Paulet and Henri Sauphar with support from the Crédit Coopératif, Ethis is based on a simple concept: bringing together natural cosmetics and fair trade.

To implement their project, the founders of the company decided to create a line of natural organic products called Thémis using fair trade ingredients.

In fact, Thémis was the first line of cosmetics to receive the Max Havelaar label.

Cocoa butter from Peru, Ulmo flower honey, verbena-scented cane sugar from Paraguay… a majority of the ingredients used to make the products are food grade and come from producers in Southern countries who already have experience working with fair trade channels and organic certification organisations. The products in the Thémis line are certified organic (Cosmebio label) and have been awarded a Max Havelaar label. They are monitored by FLO-International, the world’s leading fair trade certification organisation.

Distributed in France and in Belgium through organic shop networks (such as Biocoop and Naturalia), parapharmacies and fair trade shops (Artisans du Monde, for example), the success of Thémis products has been growing and they should soon find their way to North American markets.

THE PRODUCERS
Ethis currently does not invest in setting up and developing new production communities but prefers to work with existing fair trade networks, namely:

THAILAND – ORGANIC JASMINE RICE PRODUCER GROUP
Founded as a cooperative in 1986, the Organic Jasmine Rice Producer Group (OJRPG) was created to enable the rice producers of the Ubon Ratchathani region in northeast Thailand to better manage the impact of weather and fluctuations in international markets. The development models proposed to rice growers by the cooperative have led to the development of natural soil fertilisation, adapted sowing and harvesting methods, and the reorganisation of production management processes.

The cooperative was certified fair trade by FLO-International in 2002; it has more than 600 members in about 200 villages. It has initiated several projects by on pooling means and resources.

Micro-credit and training (rice growing, variety selection, conversion to organic farming) have been offered to members. Buffaloes have been purchased jointly as part of the “Buffaloes Bank Project” to facilitate harvesting; and the planting of rubber trees has helped to fight deforestation.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.laboequitable.fr
Created in January 2001, the Union des Groupements des Productrices des Produits de Karité de la province de la Sissili-Ziro (UGPPK/SZ) is a group of 2,300 women who have organised themselves into a cooperative in 38 Burkina Faso villages located near the Ghana border.

The first shea butter producers organisation to be awarded fair trade certification from FLO-International, in 2006, the Union des Groupements des Productrices des Produits de Karité de la province de la Sissili-Ziro was also certified organic by Bio d’Ecocert for its shea butter in 2008.

Most of the shea butter produced is sold through fair trade networks. Export volumes (to France and Canada, primarily) have increased from five tonnes in 2001 to 95 tonnes in 2007. The UGPPK/SZ’s main customers are Occitane, Alter Eco, Thémis, Nature et Vie, Sophim and Ten Thousand Villages.

In this country, one of the poorest in the world, fair trade is a real economic and development investment that provides a large part of the rural population with significant revenues.

The resources acquired thanks to the fair prices paid by fair trade networks have enabled the Union to implement many development projects. Nearly 1,800 women have been trained in traditional shea butter gathering and churning techniques. In addition, since its creation, the Union has been carrying out literacy activities (over 200 women have benefited) and fighting HIV/AIDS through family awareness-raising campaigns and the distribution of school materials to children who have contracted the virus.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.afriquekarite.com

PERU
COOPERATIVA AGRARIA CAFETALERA VELLE RIO APURIMAC

Founded in 1969, the Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera Velle Rio Apurimac (CACVRA) is a cooperative organisation directed and managed by the workers of the sector which brings together nearly 3,700 cocoa and coffee farmers located in the Ayacucho region of Peru, a valley near Brazil.

Organised as a cooperative, this federation consists of small farms that grow cocoa and coffee using traditional methods that respect the environment.

Hit hard by the economic crises that have battered the region since the 1980s, then by fighting between the army and Shining Path guerrillas, the cooperative’s farmers received assistance from the United Nations Development Programme in 1995 and support from international foundations that enabled them to reorganise production and obtain fair trade certification from FLO-International in 2004.

The inclusion of CACVRA in fair trade channels has especially helped to guarantee that sales prices for cocoa and coffee are much higher than production costs and have enabled the implementation of social projects, in particular, literacy and training for women.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.cacvra.com
So’Bio Etic

Léa Nature group’s organic line

Founded in 1993 by Charles Kloboukoff, Léa Institut Vital is an independent, family-operated company that produces and sells food, health, cosmetic and household products made from plants and natural components.

In 2007, nearly 11 years after launching its first line of natural cosmetics, the company, which had experienced strong growth, launched its So’Bio Etic organic cosmetics line. A year earlier, the company had received a good citizen award for its commitment to international solidarity and sustainable development. In 2007, it received the Mariannes d’Or for its commitment to saving bees and its support for the Terre d’Abeille association.

So’Bio Etic has 12 organic products in its line (care, oils, shampoos and soaps). They have been awarded the Cosmebio label and are monitored by Ecocert. Some of these products have also received the Max Havelaar label.

Mireille Lizot, Manager of the Group’s Information Department explained the company’s vision to us:

“For SO’BIO Etic, the first fair trade criterion is that the product is organic, both for the small farmer and the consumer. (…) For example, for the SO’BIO Etic Shea Butter line, we work with the UGPPK cooperative in Léa in Burkina Faso. It federates shea butter producers in southern Burkina Faso. We helped this cooperative obtain organic certification in 2007. It has been certified fair trade since 2001. Thanks to this dual certification it can sell shea butter at prices that are higher than both normal market price and the fair trade price”.

In addition, as part of its Bio Equitable textiles line, Léa Nature sells products (bath towels, socks, under garments and t-shirts) made from 100% organic and fair trade Max Havelaar certified cotton. What’s more, as members of the “1% For the Planet” programme, Groupe Léa Nature’s organic lines contribute 1% of their revenues to environmental protection associations.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.leanature.com
Natura Brasil: “Well-Being-Well”

Natura Brasil, the famous Brazilian brand based on the concept of “Therapeutic Cosmetics”, was founded in 1969 by Luiz Seabra, a young economist from São Paulo who, starting in 1974, very quickly developed the activity by turning to a direct sales model using a network of consultants. At the end of the 1980s the company, which had expanded throughout Latin America, launched its social project and laid out its “Values and Reason for Being” with the “Bem Estar Bem” (“Well-Being-Well”) concept.

“Bem estar” is the harmonious relationship that we have with ourselves and with our bodies. Estar berm is the empathic, complete relationship we cultivate with others, with nature, with the world” states Natura Brasil. With the launch of its Ekos line in 2000, Natura Brasil concurrently launched an extensive programme to promote the raw materials used in its products. These ingredients profit from Brazilian biodiversity and are harvested by local communities using sustainable processes.

Natura Brasil, has not been certified by any of the major fair trade organisations. It has created its own Certification Programme for active ingredients. Its goal is to guarantee to consumers that the ingredients it uses are extracted from Brazilian plants collected from their place of origin in an environmentally respectful and socially just way.

Certification of active ingredients from extraction processes is based on FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) principles and criteria. This is an international non-governmental organisation that certifies all of the world’s forests.

Active agents from farmed areas are governed by CAN (Conservation Agriculture Network) principles.

Natura Brasil supports local producer communities in cooperation with NGOs, scientists, researchers and governments. It ensures that the economic activities of the communities are sustainable, regardless of the company’s presence, and that they do not depend on a single product, because these products can be just as easily removed from a product line as they are added to it.

This is why the company has also encouraged communities to find other sources of income including crafts and eco-tourism.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.naturabrasil.fr
Beauté du Monde, at Nature & Découvertes

Created by Terre d’Oc and distributed by the famous Nature & Découvertes chain, the Beauté du Monde collection offers collections of objects, perfumes and cosmetics which, starting with the fragrances and colours of Provence, have gone on to discover other traditions.

Born from a desire to help people discover the secrets of beauty, world cultures and the riches of nature in matters of body and facial care, the Beauté du Monde cosmetics collection is based on six natural principles: argan from Morocco, pomegranate from India, shea butter from Burkina Faso, coconut from Bali, Brazil nuts and fleurs de source from Japan.

These ingredients are sourced with the support of NGOs that assist underprivileged populations in the spirit of fair trade and solidarity.

The Beauté du Monde line of natural cosmetics is made with ingredients from organic agriculture. All of the products are certified organic cosmetics and have been awarded the Cosmebio label from Ecocert.

Terre d’Oc has stated its support for the fair trade charter and promotes the partnerships it has set up with producer groups in Morocco (the Ajddigue cooperative), in India (Pan Himalayan Grassroots Development), and in Burkina Faso, Bali and Vietnam.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.terredoc.com
www.natureetdecouvertes.com

Photo credits
Terre d’Oc
And others

Earth Month pioneers since 1999, Aveda and its partners have collected over 11 million dollars over the past ten years to benefit environmental causes and recognised NGOs (Earth Funds, Global Greengrants Fund and WaterCan, among others).

And, in April 2009, Aveda was the first cosmetics company in the world and the second American company to receive Cradle to Cradle (C2C) sustainable certification, which rewarded Aveda for its recent efforts to develop products and processes that comply with the highest standards for intelligent design, sustainability and materials reuse.

This acknowledgement recognises 30 years of sustainable and responsible practices promoting the environment. In fact, Aveda was the first American cosmetics company to recycle its packaging, to use wind power to make its products and to support organic farming in the cosmetics field.

**TO FIND OUT MORE:** www.aveda.com

Founded in Paris in 1990, Guayapi Tropical makes and sells food products and cosmetics created with recipes and plants found and used by the local populations of the Amazon and Sri Lanka.

A dynamic and militant supporter of “environmental protection and biodiversity based on high social criteria”, Guayapi Tropical is a member of PFCE, the Plateforme du Commerce Equitable (Platform for Fair Trade) and of IAFN (International Analog Forestry Network) and a partner of the Forest Garden Program (FGP).

Guayapi Tropical is very close with the Amazon’s Satéré Mawé community, which harvests and prepares Warana (a type of vine from which seeds rich in tannins and caffeine are collected). Guayapi Tropical created a line of natural cosmetics called Cosm’Ethic which was awarded the Cosmebio label.

The main beneficiaries of this activity are the Satéré Mawé tribes, which are now economically independent and self-governing thanks to Warana (guarana in the sacred Satéré Mawé language) and other medicinal plants grown on their ancestral lands.

They collect, prepare and process Warana using ancestral methods that fully respect the ecosystem and biodiversity. This activity is both sacred and commercial and is based solely on the principles of fair trade. It ensures protection of the “Satéré Mawé éco ga’apypiat waranà mimotypoot sésé” (the “Sateré Mawé cultural and ecological Warana sanctuary”).

**TO FIND OUT MORE:** www.guayapi.com

Photo credits

MPI.nl
Organic cosmetics labels

Although today not all of the products offered by cosmetics makers carry a label or are certified, significant efforts are being made to highlight those products which are produced through fair trade or organic channels and to facilitate consumer choice.

However, in the absence of restrictive standards, it is important to differentiate between labels and certifications granted by independent organisations and those that are placed by distributors themselves.

In fact, while the former guarantee that a product and all of its production steps have been verified by an independent certifier based on specifications that adhere to the fundamental conditions of fair trade or organic products, the latter do not always provide the same level of guarantee.

Fair, natural, organic … Many labels co-exist and this can lead to confusion for consumers who may have some difficulty understanding the different types of information found on the labels.

Between the incomprehensible jargon used for ingredients and appealing (and at times misleading) advertising found on packaging, it is sometimes difficult to tell if a cosmetic is natural or organic. This is why there are more and more labels to address the concerns of consumers who are becoming increasingly aware of the quality of cosmetics and of the source of their ingredients.

While the trend of using natural products is already quite common among cosmetics manufacturers, the appearance of organic product lines is more recent and has led to the creation of specific labels.

BioGarantie and EcoGarantie

BioGarantie, the Belgian equivalent of the French AB label, was created by a group of organic industry players (producers, processors, distributors, consumers and technical bodies) that came together to create the BioForum organisation.

This label certifies the organic origin of food and textile products by guaranteeing that they were produced without chemical fertilisers or pesticides. In Belgium, Certisys and Blik-Integra analyse soils, seeds and finished products and carry out controls of animal feeds, manufacturing sites, storage facilities, etc.

Concurrently with the BioGarantie label, which only covers farm products, the ÉcoGarantie label can be placed on any product made with organically grown ingredients but whose composition is primarily mineral. This includes cosmetics and cleaning products.

ÉcoGarantie specifications are based on compliance with a number of criteria related to the composition and manufacturing processes of cosmetic products. These include the use of plant and animal products from organic farming, careful selection of minerals, and the exclusion of synthetic and/or petrochemical ingredients. Products must be perfectly biodegradable, cannot accumulate in the human body or be in any way toxic to aquatic organisms.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.bioforum.be and www.ecogarantie.be
Cosmebio and Cosmeeco

Born in 2002 from a collaboration between ten French cosmetics laboratories working on the creation of specifications for ethical cosmetics, Cosmebio is an association that now brings together over 140 members who represent all of the business’ players (raw materials and ingredients suppliers, manufacturers, laboratories and distributors) and approximately 4,000 certified products.

The Cosmebio charter includes a very demanding set of specifications, which was filed with the French Ministry of Industry and published in the French Journal Officiel on 9 April 2003.

The standard defines “Ecological and Organic” cosmetics strictly, transparently and without ambiguity and helps to guide consumers to authentic natural and organic products.

The charter was specifically created for the cosmetics field. It goes well beyond the inclusion of organically farmed ingredients in product formulas.

Cosmebio has filed two labels with INPI (The National Institution for Intellectual Property). They contain the following content criteria:

For the Bio logo:
- At least 95% natural ingredients (plant, animal, mineral, and marine ingredients taken directly from unprocessed farm production or from a physical process) or of natural origin (natural ingredients processed according to authorised chemical procedures) and at least 10% of products from organic farming (of which 95% must be certifiable, that is, certified according to organic farming production rules, given that today’s cosmetics are 50% to 80% non-certifiable water)
- Maximum 5% synthetic ingredients (from chemical processes authorised by the Cosmebio standard)

For the Eco logo:
- Minimum 95% natural ingredients or ingredients from a natural source and at least 5% of products from organic farming (of which 50% must be certifiable)
- Maximum 5% synthetic ingredients

To receive these labels, manufacturers must commit to using only biodegradable or recyclable packaging and wrappers and to provide consumers with complete and transparent information on the ingredients used and on each step of the manufacturing process.

Bio Cosmesi AIAB and ICEA

Set up by the Italian Association for Organic Agriculture (Associazione Italiana Agricoltura Biologica) and the Institute for Ethical Certification (ICEA), the Bio Cosmesi AIAB label guarantees consumers cosmetic products that are not damaging to the environment and made with natural raw materials.

To be awarded this label, a cosmetic product must comply with specifications that exclude a range of substances and stipulate the natural origin of ingredients, high levels of dermal compatibility and eco-compatibility (high biodegradability and low aquatic toxicity).

The following are strictly forbidden: sterilisation of natural ingredients or of finished cosmetics using radioactive processes or irradiation, ingredients from petro-chemical and synthetic sources (including perfumes and colouring), products from non-organic animal sources and certain manufacturing processes that are not respectful of the environment.

Monitored by the Cosmetology Centre of the University of Ferrare, controls include inspection of the production facilities of the entire chain and control of the environmental configuration of the company manufacturing the labelled product.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.biocosmesi.com
BDIH Natural Cosmetics

Created in 1951, BDIH (Bundesverband Deutscher Industrie und Handelsunternehmen) is the federal association of German commercial and industrial enterprises for medical, dietary, cosmetic and body care products. BDIH is competent for all legal matters related to the manufacturing and commercialisation of these products. BDIH has over 420 member companies.

In collaboration with known manufacturers, this German federal association has created a standard that clarifies the concept of natural cosmetics and recognises the legitimate expectations of consumers for safe and ecological products.

- **The protection of nature:** When obtaining raw materials, producers must ensure that nature is disturbed as little as possible by paying particular attention to the protection of animals and of plant species. Genetic manipulation is strictly forbidden.
- **Careful processing procedures:** Processing of raw materials into cosmetics must emphasise physical and mechanical procedures over chemical ones. Packaging must be minimal and respectful of the environment.
- **Product compatibility:** Cosmetics cannot contain certain substances including petroleum derivates, artificial aromatics or colouring and synthetic preservatives (which can cause allergies).
- **Social compatibility:** The raw materials used must, insofar as possible, come from fair trade and developing countries.
- **Monitoring:** Independent bodies must assure monitoring. Compliance with these criteria is proven by the awarding of the label, which is the association’s own brand.

Since its official introduction in the spring of 2001, over 2,000 products have been evaluated and awarded the label, which is used throughout Europe and the United States.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.bdih.de

Soil Association Organic Standard

Created by Soil Association Limited, an association that promotes sustainable agriculture and organic certification, Soil Association Organic Standard is the main British label for organic food and non-food products. Its certification standards are among the strictest in the world.

In order to receive this label, cosmetics must be made using only organically grown ingredients and using processes that exclude animal testing.

In addition, this label includes social criteria and, in particular, compliance with the rules of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.soilassociation.org
Nature et Progrès Cosmétique Bio-écologique

Founded in 1964, the Nature et Progrès association brings together farmers, cosmetics manufacturers and consumers who share the common goal of making products that respect the laws of nature and who use as few synthetic components as possible.

Nature et Progrès launched the "Cosmétique Bio-écologique" charter in 1997. It is based on the principle that all cosmetic and personal care products must be made with raw materials processed with simple physical or chemical processes, without using synthetic molecules, and in compliance with strict criteria that respect the environment. Concretely, this means 100% natural ingredients (with a preference for raw materials from plants recognised by Nature et Progrès, Demeter or AB, and meeting fair trade criteria) and 0% synthetic ingredients or ingredients derived from petrochemical processes.

The Nature & Progrès charter has created a strict and detailed list of raw materials and of authorised and forbidden manufacturing processes. It forbids the use of ingredients from animal sources with the exception of dairy products and ingredients from eggs and beehives.

Minerals are only authorised if their extraction does not create pollution or cause landscape deterioration. The products must be as biodegradable as possible and all packaging must be recyclable.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.natureetprogres.org

European Ecolabel for Hygiene and Cosmetics

This environmental label was created in 1992 and is recognised by all of the countries of the European Union as well as Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland. This ecolabel is intended to harmonise throughout Europe the manufacture, sale and use of products that are more respectful of the environment, notably in the Hygiene and Cosmetics sector.

To receive this label, products must meet a series of environmental criteria (set by the European Commission) that address, in particular, toxicity to aquatic organisms, biodegradability and the presence of substances that are dangerous to the environment. Certain ingredients are completely forbidden (toxic substances, biocides, colouring and certain perfumes) and a maximum amount of packaging is set for each product.

Independent bodies designated by member governments carry out monitoring for the label.

In Belgium, the Ecolabel committee is part of the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment.

The list of eco-labelled products has continued to grow since the label was created: There are now 23 different product groups and over 300 certificates have already been awarded.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.eco-label.com
Humane Cosmetics Standard – Leaping Bunny

Managed by the Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics, the Humane Cosmetics Standard guarantees that the ingredients used to make products that carry its label have not been tested on animals.

The Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics is an American organisation created in 1996 by eight associations for the defence of animal rights. In Europe, the label is backed by the European Coalition to End Animal Experiments (ECEAE), which has 18 member organisations from 17 European countries, including GAIA in Belgium.

The Coalition created the “Leaping Bunny” label, which is awarded to manufacturers who have not carried out, sponsored or accepted any testing on animals during the entire manufacturing process of their products or of their ingredients.

In order to be allowed to place the label on their products, manufacturers must make a request and present a file containing attestations from all of their raw materials suppliers that no tests were done on animals.

In France, the label is awarded by the One Voice association, which represents the European Coalition to End Animal Experiments. It has entrusted the Ecocert certifying organisation with audit and control responsibility.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.leapingbunny.org

Naturland Cosmetics Bio

Founded in the Munich area in 1982, Naturland-Verband is one of the most important organic farming organisations in the world.

Naturland Cosmetics Bio specifications provide a relatively extensive list of guarantees for cosmetics:

- All natural plant and animal ingredients must come from organic farming
- BDIH certification is compulsory for all natural ingredients
- The product cannot contain synthetic or genetically modified ingredients
- Packaging and wrapping must be biodegradable or recyclable
- Neither the product nor its components can be tested on animals

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.naturland.de
AB – Agriculture Biologique

Well known and frequently used in France, the goal of the AB label is to guide consumers to organic products through quick visual recognition. According to 2008 survey of CSA/Agence Bio, 85% of French people know the AB brand and 84% of consumers use it as an identifier when buying organic products.

The brand is the exclusive property of the French Ministry for Agriculture, which defines the rules for its use. The AB brand has been managed by Agence Bio since 1 January 2008 and it is officially responsible for awarding and promoting the label.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.agencebio.org

The AB label provides clear guarantees:

- A product made with ingredients that are at least 95% sourced from organic production methods that use agricultural and animal husbandry techniques that respect the natural environmental equilibrium and the well-being of animals
- Compliance with regulations in effect in France
- Certification placed under the control of a body recognised by the French public powers and meeting criteria for independence, impartiality, competence and effectiveness as defined in European standards.

Ecocert

Founded in 1991, Ecocert is a French certification and monitoring body. Its activities are organised through the public powers and legislation.

Certified by the Institut National de l’Origine et de la Qualité, Ecocert is accredited by the French Accreditation Committee, based on the ISO 65 guideline (which requires independence, competency and impartiality) for the certification of agricultural and food products (Agriculture Biologique, IFS) and the certification of industrial products (Ecofert).

As a certification body, Ecocert’s basic mission is to monitor and to grant guarantees covering strict compliance with specifications applicable to products, systems and services. Ecocert creates standards in partnership with the professionals of the sector concerned. The standards must be based on objective and quantifiable criteria.

Ecocert is responsible for the creation of a monitoring plan based on quality, origin, and traceability objectives.

In the field of cosmetics, Ecocert contributed to the creation of the Cosmebio standards charter (in cooperation with the association of professionals of the same name) that guarantees that the environment is taken into account throughout the entire production process and that natural substances of superior ecological quality are promoted. Ecocert provides a benchmark for organic certification. It monitors over 70% of the organic companies operating in France (production and processing) and nearly 30% around the world.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.ecocert.fr
Nordic Swan

Created in 1989 by the Nordic Council of Ministers, which wanted to develop collective ecological awareness by officially introducing a common label in Scandinavian countries, Nordic Swan is applicable to about sixty product groups for which ecological labelling is necessary and useful.

The Nordic EcoLabelling Council (Nordiska Miljömärkningsnämnden - NMN) decides unanimously which products require labelling and what criteria they must adhere to, based on the recommendations of expert groups, and following consultation with the representatives of the various governments, environmental defence bodies, commerce and industry.

Today, over 800 products and services of all kinds carry the Nordic Swan label.

To have its products certified, a company must present a complete file that includes, in particular, the results of evaluations carried out by an independent laboratory using criteria set by the Nordic Eco-Labelling Council, which then ensures certificate verification and monitoring of the company (control visits).

Nordic Swan takes into consideration the impact of products during their entire life cycle, from raw materials through product recycling.

Since evaluation criteria are constantly evolving, companies must inform Nordic Swan of the results of all tests carried out by independent laboratories to prove that their products meet the required criteria.

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.svanen.se

Other labels

Forest Garden Program

Founded twenty years ago by Doctor Ranil Senanayake, the FGP “Forest Garden Program” label, is an international certification system guaranteeing ecosystem restoration that respects biodiversity and local populations.

Forest Garden Program is an International Certification Body of IAFN (International Analog Forest Network) that operates in a number of countries: the Brazilian Amazon, Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica, Canada, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Guatemala and Australia.

The Forest Garden Program seeks to:
- Promote renewal of vegetation on cleared or deteriorated lands
- Increase local wealth and biodiversity
- Improve land yields and reduce erosion
- Improve local living conditions
- Stabilise or reverse the rate of deforestation
- Shift the intensive chemical production used by farms to natural and organic production
- Develop Forest Garden products
- Transmit bio-diversification know-how with the intent of ensuring respect for original forests, while taking into account ecological biodiversity equilibrium and respecting local populations

TO FIND OUT MORE:
www.forestgardencertification.com
Rainforest Alliance

Founded in New York in 1987 by Daniel Katz, Rainforest Alliance is an American non-governmental organisation (NGO) with offices across the United States and around the world.

The Rainforest Alliance’s goal is the preservation of biodiversity and sustainability of resources. Its approach is to change agricultural, business and consumer habits.

In order to achieve these goals, it works with populations whose means of subsistence depend on the earth. It helps them change their growing, wood harvesting and tourism practices.

From multinationals to SMEs and including cooperatives, Rainforest Alliance involves companies and consumers around the world in its efforts to bring responsibly produced goods and services to the global marketplace, where the demand for sustainable products is growing.

By reducing their footprint on the environment, farms with the Rainforest Alliance Certified label have good relations with local populations, protect local animals and plants and are often involved in regional conservation projects.

Many cosmetic product ingredients are Rainforest Alliance certified. The Body Shop buys used palm oil from the Daabon company in Colombia. For the past 20 years, this company has dedicated a significant amount of its resources to getting its products fair trade and Rainforest Alliance certified.

Daabon has been a pioneer in matters of social and environmental responsibility for many years and it works in close cooperation with local cooperatives, to which it provides training and outlets.

Under the auspices of the Sustainable Agriculture Network SAN, an international network of nature conservation groups, Rainforest Alliance supports farmers in respecting SAN standards criteria in matters of animal and plant protection, the management of unused lands, workers rights and support for local communities.

Farms that adhere to these standards receive the Rainforest Alliance Certified label.

When an agricultural or forestry operation is awarded the Rainforest Alliance Certified label, it means:

- **Less water pollution** thanks to monitoring of all sources of contamination (pesticides, waste water, fuel, etc.)
- **Less soil erosion** through soil conservation practices
- **A reduction in risks for the environment and human health** thanks notably to a ban on the most dangerous pesticides and to strict regulation of all agricultural chemical products
- **Protection of the natural habitat of animals and plant life** because deforestation is stopped and river banks and fragile ecosystems at the heart of farm operations are protected
- **Less waste** thanks to the use of farming by-products as a natural fertiliser (compost). Other waste, such as plastic, glass and metal are recycled
- **Less water consumption** thanks to irrigation and conservation measures
- **More effective management** of farms thanks to support from the certification programme which helps farmers organise and implement improved practices
- **Better conditions for farm workers** who receive fair salaries and have access to decent housing, drinking water, education and medical care
- **Increased profitability and competitiveness for farm operations** that increase production, improve quality, reduce the number of complaints from workers and increase their effectiveness
- **Increased cooperation between farmers and environmentalists**: Parks alone cannot protect biodiversity. It is necessary to ensure that wildlife and plant life are protected outside of special zones

The Rainforest Alliance Certified label gives farmers more weight during commercial negotiations. It enables them to differentiate their products and obtain higher prices and easier access to loans.

**TO FIND OUT MORE:**

www.rainforest-alliance.org
2009-2012: Implementation of the European COSMOS standard

Contrary to food products, natural and organic cosmetics do not fall under the scope of application of European rules governing the production and labelling of organic products and therefore do not enjoy community regulation.

With significant development in this market and increasing demand, private initiatives (producers, industries, laboratories and associations) have filled the gap by creating charters and standards. While they have a common foundation (natural cosmetics that respect man and the environment), they also include differences and specificities that complicate choices for consumers and the work of importers and distributors.

Labels such as Cosmebio, Cosmeco, Bio Cosmesi AIAB or BioGarantie set standards in their own countries for products that are often sold throughout Europe.

In order to resolve this issue, Cosmebio and BDIH had a first series of meetings in 2001 that led to the creation of the European Cosmetics Standards Working Group, which was later joined by the Belgian organisation BioForum, the French certification body Ecocert, the Ethical Certification Institute in Italy (ICEA) and the Soil Association Limited in Great Britain.

These six organisations represent over 1,000 cosmetics manufacturers supplying over 11,000 products in more than 40 countries. They set themselves the goal of harmonising their standards in a single European standard called COSMOS (COSMetic Organic Standard).

Launched in 2002, this project was a major challenge with much at stake. Some in this multi-national group clearly favoured organic production, while others were happy with natural ingredients. Some wanted to use independent certifiers and others carried out their evaluations internally. Some saw the raw materials allowed and banned as a global issue whereas others created exhaustive lists of allowed and banned ingredients.

Yet, after six years of work, and a three-month international public consultation, the European Cosmetics Standards Working Group announced the publication of the COSMOS standard in May 2009. It harmonises the systems used to describe organic and natural cosmetics at the European level.

What is included in the European COSMOS Standard?

The COSMOS standard effectively harmonises definition criteria for organic cosmetics whether for the classification of raw materials or the description of new labelling rules.

The main measures and standards defined in the COSMOS Standard framework are as follows:

Precautionary principle
The COSMOS Standard has adopted the precautionary principle as a fundamental rule applicable at all levels of the production chain, from raw materials to finished products, and requires complete transparency for consumers.
Ingredients categories

Four major categories of ingredients are defined within the framework of this standard for which stringent standards are applicable:

Water and mineral ingredients: Although they cannot be certified as organic, they must be natural, obtained by processes that respect the environment and preferably be renewable.

Physically processed agro-ingredients: These can be of plant, animal or microbial origin (from fermentation) but cannot be genetically modified. In the case of ingredients of animal origin, they must not be made with extracts from living or slaughtered animals (bees’ wax, honey, eggs and milk, for example, are acceptable). They can be certified organic.

Chemically processed agro-ingredients: Considered indispensable for organic cosmetics to compete with conventional products, they must however subscribe to the 12 principles of Green Chemistry intended to reduce or eliminate those processes or substances that are most dangerous for humans and the environment. Even when processed chemically or synthetically, a raw material can be considered organic when the organic content of the ingredient obtained is precisely evaluated and displayed (an ingredient consisting for 40% of an organic raw material and 60% of chemical components must be labelled as being “40% organic”).

Other ingredients: This category includes everything the others do not, in particular preservatives, which are generally synthetic and for which there are currently no known effective natural substitutes.

Guarantees and prohibitions

To be certified within the framework of the COSMOS Standard, a cosmetic product must meet the following thresholds:

- 20% of the total product must be certified organic (not including water), except for lotions (the minimum there is 10%)
- 95% of the certifiable ingredients processed mechanically must be organic
- 30% of natural ingredients processed chemically must be organic
- Products of synthetic origin are not allowed under Cosmos specifications

In addition, packaging and wrapping must be biodegradable or recyclables and the percentages of natural and organic ingredients must be clearly indicated on all packaging of certified products as a percentage of total weight and as a percentage of the weight without water (which is an important ingredient, but not certifiable).

The COSMOS Standard also lists a number of prohibitions:

- Cosmetic products and ingredients cannot be tested on animals
- Perfumes, synthetic colouring and synthetic preservatives, ingredients of petrochemical origin (paraffin, silicon, etc.), ingredients treated with ionising radiation and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) are prohibited.
Monitoring and certifications

The COSMOS Standard label will be awarded subject to monitoring carried out by independent certifying bodies (such as Ecocert) and renewed every year. Certificates of compliance will be awarded product by product and not to a brand. Normally, COSMOS Standard certified products will not have a specific logo as certification will simply be mentioned on existing labels (Cosmebio, for example), which consumers are just now beginning to identify.

Two types of COSMOS certification are planned for different requirement levels.

The COSMOS Natural label will exist alongside the COSMOS Organic certification. It will be granted based on a less restrictive standard, notably with respect to ingredients of organic origin.

2009-2012: Implementation of the COSMOS Standard

The COSMOS Standard implementation programme has set the end of 2009 as the deadline for its first certifications. However, the COSMOS Standard will not be applicable in its entirety until 2012. The programme has planned for an adaptation period of three years to give producers and manufacturers the time to integrate the new criteria.

Derogations will be granted during this transitional period, notably to enable companies to find new suppliers (in particular in the organic channels) for ingredients that will eventually be banned.

TO FIND OUT MORE:

Cosmos and NaTrue

The approach launched at the beginning of 2001 to create the COSMOS Standard has met with some resistance over the past years, in particular from a group of German and Swiss brands (Logona, Weleda, Dr Hauschka, etc.). At the end of 2007, these brands (most of which have the BDIH label) chose to leave the COSMOS project and to start up a competitor label organisation called NaTrue. It was stated that the reason for the decision was directly tied to the “many years of discussions about the creation of a harmonised label at the European level which did not always result in tangible results”.

Very critical of the COSMOS Standard, which apparently included “imprecisions and other contradictions about the naturalness and the organic character of product components”, the representatives of NaTrue also felt that “the lack of clarity of the information provided and about the rules governing the standard is not of a nature to guarantee the independence or the transparency of the future label for consumers”.

With the goal of “safeguarding the highest level of requirements possible for the standards applicable to natural and organic cosmetics and to the ingredients with which they are made”, the international NaTrue organisation has already launched its own label (and logo), which will be applied based on the requirements level met during product manufacturing:

- **NaTrue one star** natural cosmetics only meet the requirements for ingredients from nature and the processes authorised for the manufacturing of these ingredients
- At least 70% of the natural substances contained in **NaTrue two star** natural cosmetics must be from controlled organic production and/or certified wild collection
- At least 95% of the natural substances contained in **NaTrue three star** natural cosmetics must be from controlled organic production and/or certified wild collection
Where’s the consumer in all this?

While we should congratulate ourselves on all the work done by those involved in natural and organic cosmetics production to harmonise national standards at the European level, it must be pointed out that, in the end, consumers may not benefit very much in terms of comprehension and legibility.

They will eventually be faced with cosmetics labels and packaging which, in addition to compulsory notices, will also display a national organic label (Cosmebio or BDIH, for example), a certifying body logo (Ecocert...), a fair trade label (Max Havelaar or other) and a European certification with (NaTrue) or without a logo (COSMOS Standard). And this doesn’t include labels created by manufacturers for their own brands.
Conclusion

Being and staying handsome and healthy

This is what is at stake for the cosmetics and personal care products on which Europeans spend an average of 200 euros a year per person.

Yet, regardless of the goal that all these products are moving towards, consumers are paying more and more attention to manufacturing procedures and product composition, to their impact on the environment and to the working conditions of those who help make products. Manufacturers are aware of this phenomenon (and of its economic implications) and have rushed into formulating natural, organic and fair trade products, and have globally encouraged the creation of (more or less) independent labels intended to reassure consumers as to the reliability of the ethical messages promoted by their new products.

Having taken note of the success of these products, these manufacturers (committed companies and major corporations) are expanding their offerings with new product lines (baby care, beauty products for men, sun screen, etc.) for which they are looking for new natural active ingredients from nature’s biodiversity.

Consumer interest, increased demand, private investment, support to local producers, social development, and ecosystem conservation: the virtuous cycle is in motion.

This movement is progressing slowly, but gaining momentum, for the benefit of the planet and all living things.

These are really good news.
CENTRE OF EXPERTISE

The Trade for Development Centre is the centre of expertise on Aid for Trade, Fair Trade and sustainable trade.

- It collects, analyses and edits information (opinion polls among consumers, market studies…)
- It coaches a working group of the “Business for Development” platform, which supports the private sector

SUPPORT TO PRODUCERS

The Trade for Development Centre supports producers’ organisations. It supports marginalized producers, micro and small enterprises as well as social economy projects that are embedded in Fair Trade or sustainable trade.

- Strengthening of organisational, technical and productive capacities
- Transmission of relevant information (about the markets, existing certifications…)

RAISING AWARENESS

The Centre sets up campaigns and develops awareness-raising tools for consumers, economic actors and Belgian authorities.

- Fair Trade week
- Presence at different exhibitions, fairs
- Internet site www.befair.be

WWW.BEFAIR.BE