



Report WFTO-Europe Board meeting

6 of February : 10.00am – 16.00pm

Zoomlink: (for Greek hosts)

<https://zoom.us/j/915120416?pwd=SVRKZEFVeHZ5QTNMTXJWSWFKeVZ3QT09>

Chair: Juanjo Martinez

Present: Juanjo Martinez, Estelle Vanwambeke, Giorgio Dal Fiume, Stephanie Brookes, Cassandre Maury, Jean-Christophe Galland and Leida Rijnhout. Michael Fivet joined for session 6 and 7, Greek hosts joined online on point 8. Notetaker: Tessa Hartman (intern WFTO-E)

Time	Issue	Who?	Document/Aim
10.00	1. Update from the office (including FTAO and WFTO) – (10') 2. FT Europe updates (20')	LR/EV	
11.30	3. Approval Agenda and possible amendments (5') 4. Approval minutes of previous Board meeting and follow up eventual action points (5')	All SB	Doc. 0: Agenda - for approval Doc. 1: Minutes (18 Dec 2019) - for approval
11.05	5. Strategic plan discussion (115') - Final outcomes of the survey - Main activities for LT strategy	JM/SB LR	Doc: 2: draft LT-strategy
12.30	LUNCH Break		
13.30	6. Finances (Financial report 2019 and Update budget 2020) (30') 7. Decide on AGM proposal – to be decided: 3 years financial plan discussion, scenarios (30')	MF/LR/S B	Doc 3: Final Report 2019, Updated Budget 2020 Doc 4: LT financial scenarios
14.30	8. 2020 WFTO-Europe Biennial Conference (60') - Decide on program, speakers, .. - Budget – entrance fee - Online registration - Timeline	LR/EV	Doc 5: link to: https://docs.google.com/document/d/15RwrEF322gEskF9luWwLskt08di7mluqQ-6iskyd5l/edit#
15.30	9. Next Board meeting and agenda items (20')	JM/LR	
15.40	10. AOB		

1) Update from the office

Still working on the TFLF project, submission of a H2020 project

Two FTAO meetings: They are working on terms of reference for a group that could be working on long term strategy 21-25.

2) Facts regarding FT in Europe for the past few months

Oxfam is in financial difficulty, they're going through a restructuration process, so it's currently their main focus. The commercial strategy has become one of the main objectives, which causes **HR problems** as a lot of workers have now to work on the commercial strategy, and to be more profit oriented even though it's not their job at all.

French market: there is a new law on relations between companies and retailers that makes it **harder for SMBs to negotiate with retailers** (the law favors big companies). Multinationals are going into the **organic market** (which is not to be confused with FT, but for consumers it's the same, which makes it hard for FT companies to stand out). Organic takes more and more space in supermarkets. FT requires a lot of communication now.

Commerce Equitable France : northern FT is taking more and more space.

EFTA meeting: world shops are struggling. But on the other hand **FT and organic products are trendy**, and very present in city centers, consumers are really interested in these kind of projects, so it could be turned into an opportunity. The problem is the presentation of the products that is too old fashioned. There is a real need for a new economic model that recruits dynamic people.

Spain has seen big demonstrations of farmers for the 1st time in 20 years. The farmers are asking for a better price for the products as they've been under the pressure of the supermarkets and their constantly lower prices. There is a need to change people's minds, as buying quality products for a cheap price is not a viable economic model.

UNCTAD report (Geneva) : some research has been made about alternative business models. Members have been surveyed and asked about their models, support to producers, FT practices... Outcomes: Even though some characteristic models have been identified, none of them stood out as more successful than the others.

EESC event in Brussels on alternative business models: LR introduced Erinch and the report, and he will now go to the conference as a speaker

The situation in **Italy** is similar to EU countries: it is tricky for Trade organisations.

Good results however with the Christmas sales that went up compared to last years. The Italian economic and social situation isn't going down anymore, and there are more **investment in world shops** (in communication mostly). The landscape similar but there is a sign of reaction and **possible changes** for the future.

Altromercato started promoting sustainability of the world shops, related to climate crisis issue. For now this project is too ambitious compared to the available funds, but the situation is bettering. They're also promoting circular economy and the reduction of carbon impact.

Others

The **organic boom** has been highlighted as an opportunity. If we want to move forward we need to be closer to organic shops and increase the knowledge of the consumers (about the labels mainly).

Young and dynamic generations are an opportunity to spread the word and logo.

3) **Agenda** : approved

4) **Minutes board meeting 18 December**: approved

5) **Strategic plan**

1/3 answered the survey which isn't much.

Global also sent a survey at the same time which might have caused a confusion.

Mission and vision

Most agreed on adapting it, as there is a confusion on the definition of a "fair producer". 2 visions:

- How to show that the for producer is marginalised and has difficulties to integrate in society?
- Or should it simply include producers with fair and ethical practices and social enterprises.

There is a general agreement on the fact that we need to broaden our network and cooperate with organic organisations etc. We need to define the business model we want, and the people we want to include (e.g. should we include young entrepreneurs/ « hipsters » surfing on the organic and ethical trend etc.)

Priorities

We need to increase market accessibility through **networking and partnerships**. Therefore, we should get members to know each other better, work on economies of scales, share marketing costs, work more together also for language difficulties. There is a need for companies to know each other within the network (most of them know 20-30 out of 110).

The strategic plan should make WFTO **more attractive to members**.

==> How can we do more for them ? How can we help members to be more attractive to customers?

Also

Do we need to regulate more what is **domestic FT** in Europe ? We need to grow and this goes by working with northern producers.

Conclusion:

Discussed points will be added by Leida and put online so that everyone can participate and add on the document, followed by a skype (end of Febr) for the remaining points to discuss.

6) Finances: Report 2019 and Budget 2020

Financial report 2019

Michael joins the meeting, and sent a corrected version, of what he sent earlier, of the report 2019. There we see a deficit of 15.454 Euro. The income side was too ambitious budgeted, with income expectations that did not come. Also, the Belgian grant BTC was not covering staff costs, which causes the HR expenses to be higher than estimated. The TFLF project used less money, so a part of budgeted income for 2019 on TFLF should be transferred to 2020 budget. Michael will send this new update asap. Based on those figures Leida can make the new budget 2020 and scenarios for longer term.

Suggested solutions

We need to **involve members** more, especially for local grants. For example, the French and German governments are interested in projects involving northern producers. We need to invite members to collaborate with us on projects, and to make us appear more relevant.

Creating a **group of fundraising** people could be an idea to implement that (to discuss/establish at AGM) , where members could pass ideas and opportunities when they see them. In France, Kronembourg Foundation often publishes tenders and fundraising opportunities to support sustainability-related projects.

Also, to save money we could **reduce office costs** by merging the offices with FTAO, or be on payroll of WFTO-Global. This will also reduce accounting costs as there will only be one contract instead of two.

We could **raise the membership costs**, but a significant amount would be needed (ca. 400€ per member, which for some members would double their fees!). This could be done progressively to reduce the impact on our members' finances, and there should be an important and efficient communication around it to justify such a raise.

The budget for 2021 will be prepared after the elaboration of the strategic plan.

7) Future scenarios

Leida will make a new scenario doc, based on the new figures Michael will deliver.

8) Conference in Athens

What has been decided?

The guided tours on Wednesday morning have been replaced by relaxed walks and sightseeing.

The AGM will take place on Friday morning as some of the participants will have to leave early and a quorum is needed. Therefore it is important to have a maximum of participants.

In the afternoon, « How to » workshops will take place to help defining which actions will be implemented in practice to achieve our goals.

AGM agenda: to be drafted by secr and Juanjo.

What still needs to be done:

For the 1st plenary event it would be good to have someone a bit outside the box, out of the FT movement, with new ideas. Maybe someone in Fashion? Gender balance is important so we should keep an eye on it.

The draft program is online: strong request to board members to have a look at it and recommend names! With the info we have we can start opening the registration link.

9) Next meeting

Doodle will be made for the next online meeting. On the agenda: LT strategy plan, conference Athens, AGM

10) AOB

None

*** end***