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RJC Recognition of Part A of the Fairtrade and Fairmined Standard for Artisanal and Small Scale Miners

We have recently received concerns about the potential impacts of the recognition of the producer section of the Fairtrade and Fairmined standard (Part A) by the RJC's Chain-of-Custody Standard and about the ARM and Fairtrade International partnership's growing industry engagement. The recognition by RJC is intended to exemplify Fairtrade and Fairmined certification of artisanal and small scale mining organisations as best practice to the industry and provide increased market access for artisanal and small-scale miners to sell to RJC members.

We are extremely grateful for the dedication, passion and commitment of the individuals and companies, small and large, that have been the pioneers of Fairtrade and Fairmined certified gold. We are also delighted by the growing consensus around our desire to scale up the Fairtrade and Fairmined gold market, to bring greater opportunities to the world's artisanal and small-scale miners.

It is important to understand that to whom and where to sell gold always remains in the hands of miners. The recognition by RJC of the producer section (part A) of the Fairtrade and Fairmined standard will provide miners with increased choices. Fairtrade and Fairmined certified miner organisations are already able to access Fairtrade and Fairmined markets by selling to registered traders who comply with the trader section of the Fairtrade and Fairmined standards (Part B). Recognition by RJC of Fairtrade and Fairmined certified miners will now also enable them to sell their gold to RJC members certified against the RJC Chain-of-Custody Standard. The RJC recognition therefore provides miners with further market access through their certification.

Under the RJC recognition, it will not be possible to use the Fairtrade and Fairmined dual label, or for claims around our certification of the metal to be made, unless the trader purchasing from the miners is registered with the Fairtrade and Fairmined certification system and meets the requirements in the Fairtrade and Fairmined trader standards, including payment of the Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium. Fairtrade and Fairmined buyers who pay the Fairtrade Premium (an additional payment to be spent on social development within the miners' community) remain the most attractive market to the gold miners who are eager to see sales increase.

As the gold industry adopts a wide variety of standards which aim to bring traceability to global gold supply chains, the partnership feels that the recognition of the producer section of the Fairtrade and Fairmined standard under the RJC Chain-of-Custody Standard will be a step forward to recognising the Fairtrade and Fairmined Standard as best practice in ASM and further integrating the miners into global supply chains.

ARM and Fairtrade envision an artisanal and small scale mining sector that flourishes as a legitimate, profitable and responsible activity, fully involved in the industry debates, initiatives and global agendas that impact it. Towards this end, we are reviewing the Fairtrade and Fairmined Standards, following the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for standard setting, and following the principles of third party verification, transparency and traceability. This will include review of the current traceability requirements as identified in the Fair Jewellery Action and Ethical Metalsmiths letter. As the system and standards evolve to meet the needs of miners and the market, we invite all interested parties to be part of this consultation process by registering your email at standards@communitymining.org or gold@fairtrade.org.uk.

Lina Villa
Executive Director
Alliance for Responsible Mining

Chris Davis
Director of Producer Partnerships
Fairtrade Foundation

Q&A

1. *What will the RJC Recognition of Part A of the Fairtrade and Fairmined Standards mean?*

Part A of the Fairtrade and Fairmined Standard is proposed to be formally recognised by the RJC as a 'Responsible Mining Standard' for artisanal producers. This means that under the RJC Chain-of-Custody Standard, gold produced by a Fairtrade and Fairmined Certified Mining Organisation would be viewed as another type of 'Eligible Material' for chain-of-custody sourcing and will be able to be mixed with other types of 'Eligible Material', including recycled gold. This is governed and audited under the RJC Chain-of-Custody Certification process. Claims around the Fairtrade and Fairmined certification status of metals cannot be made unless Part B of the Fairtrade and Fairmined Standard for traders, which governs trading conditions, has been met.

2. *What if I'm a Fairtrade and Fairmined Certified Producer?*

If you are a Fairtrade and Fairmined certified miner recognition by the RJC will mean that your gold can now reach new and diversified markets. The recognition will encourage interested RJC Members, such as gold refiners, to source from your mine which means you have the possibility to access markets through alternative routes.

3. *What if I'm an RJC Member, but not certified to trade Fairtrade and Fairmined certified metals, but wish to express what Fairtrade and Fairmined certification means for the artisanal and small scale miners I am sourcing from?*

If you are an RJC member who is not already part of a certified Fairtrade and Fairmined supply chain, but interested in sourcing and offering certified metals which can carry the Fairtrade and Fairmined dual label then please contact gold@fairtrade.org.uk or visit www.fairgold.org. Fairtrade can then put you in touch with the relevant contact who can then advise you on the next steps. It will not be possible to use the Fairtrade and Fairmined dual label or make any claims around Fairtrade and Fairmined certification unless the trader purchasing from the miners is registered with the Fairtrade and Fairmined certification system, and meets the requirements in the Fairtrade and Fairmined trader standards, including payment of the Fairtrade Minimum Price and Premium.

4. *What if I'm a RJC Member, and already certified to trade in Fairtrade and Fairmined certified metals?*

If you are already both an RJC Member registered against RJC chain of custody system and certified within a Fairtrade and Fairmined supply chain then you can continue to source and sell on as per the Fairtrade and Fairmined standard requirements. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your account manager within Fairtrade.

5. *What will it mean for RJC Members?*

It is most relevant for gold refiners. CoC certified gold refiners may include gold sourced from certified artisanal and small scale miners and mix it with other eligible sources to produce 'CoC Gold' under the RJC Standard. Decisions on sourcing and commercial relationships remain at the individual discretion of RJC Members. Under the current Fairtrade and Fairmined gold standard it is not possible to then label or make claims around metal as being Fairtrade and Fairmined if mixed with other sources.

6. *How will it relate to the OECD Due Diligence Guidance?*

The OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains includes an Appendix to the Gold Supplement to support sourcing from legitimate ASM production. As refiners are a key point in the gold supply chain, they are expected to apply due diligence to ensure no links with conflict and human rights abuses. Refiners will be looking for assurance from mines on this point, and certification provides important verification of mine site practices. Refiners implementing the OECD Guidance in terms of due diligence, and looking to support legitimate ASM production, are encouraged to participate in this and related initiatives that increase ASM uptake of certification.

About Alliance for Responsible Mining

The Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM) is an independent, global-scale, pioneering initiative established in 2004 to enhance equity and wellbeing in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) communities. ARM's vision is for ASM to become a formalised, organised and profitable activity that uses efficient technologies, and is socially and environmentally responsible. An activity that increasingly develops within a framework of good governance, legality, participation and respect for diversity, and increases its contribution to the generation of decent work, local development, poverty reduction and social peace in our nations, driven by a growing consumer demand for sustainable minerals and ethical jewelry. ARM owns the FAIRMINED Certification Mark, a registered trademark which shows that a product has met ARM Standards. Learn more on www.communitymining.org

About Fairtrade International

Fairtrade International (FLO) is an internationally recognized, non-profit organization that works to secure fairer trade terms so that farmers and workers in developing countries can invest in a better future for themselves and their communities. Fairtrade International is responsible for the strategic direction of the Fairtrade system, setting the international Fairtrade Standards and supporting producers to gain Fairtrade certification. Fairtrade International owns the FAIRTRADE Certification Mark, a registered trademark which shows that a product has met the Fairtrade Standards. Fairtrade International's members include producer networks who represent the interests of producers in the Fairtrade system and labelling initiatives who promote Fairtrade to business and consumers in the countries of sale. Over 6 million people (farmers, workers and their family members) in 63 countries directly benefit from the global Fairtrade system. For more information, please visit www.fairtrade.net.

About RJC

The Responsible Jewellery Council is an international not-for-profit organisation bringing together more than 370 member companies. RJC and its Members are committed to promoting responsible ethical, human rights, social and environmental practices in a transparent and accountable manner throughout the jewellery industry from mine to retail. This commitment aims to reinforce consumer and stakeholder confidence in diamond, gold and platinum metals jewellery products. The RJC has developed the RJC Member Certification system which applies to all Members' businesses that contribute to the diamond, gold and platinum metals jewellery supply chain. All Certified Members of the RJC are audited by accredited, third party auditors to verify their conformance with the RJC's Code of Practices. A voluntary Chain-of-Custody Standard has also been developed for gold and platinum group metals. The RJC is a Full Member of the ISEAL Alliance – the global association for sustainability standards. For more information on RJC Members, Certification, and Standards please visit www.responsiblejewellery.com.