

**EFFAT**

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

NEWS FROM EFFAT

For immediate release

Brussels, 13 December 2009

The aftermath of Copenhagen

EFFAT initiated and participated in different meetings and conferences organised to monitor and influence the Copenhagen Summit. In September we held a conference entitled “The climate is changing. How about the workers?” and also launched a dedicated website <http://www.effat.be/cccl/>.

On 11 December 2009, EFFAT and its Danish agricultural affiliate 3F met to discuss the consequences of climate change for our sectors and present the results of the climate change conference organised in Brussels in September 2009. On 15 December in Copenhagen, together with ETUC and Members of the European Parliament, EFFAT General Secretary Harald Wiedenhofer debated the impact of climate change on EFFAT’s sectors. As climate change is expected to have a fairly major impact on EFFAT’s sectors (bearing in mind that the food and drink industry accounts for some 23% of global resources used and 18% of greenhouse gas emissions and agriculture accounts for around 9% at EU level alone), EFFAT’s affiliates will be exposed to mitigation and adaptations that will not always be very easy to swallow.

Harald **Wiedenhofer** has underlined the need for even closer cooperation between all trade unions and NGOs than in the past. “Today”, he said, “we are united by the concept of sustainability, paving the way for an entirely new form of cooperation”. We are sorely disappointed with the politicians’ failure in Copenhagen. Not only did the policymakers fail to come up with binding commitments, but the question of how to distribute funds to bring about change in the most vulnerable developing countries, as well as many other issues, remained unresolved. We have to pressure the new European Commission to more strongly embrace the need for a binding agreement and for a deeper understanding of the impact of climate

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change on our sectors. Although some non-binding commitments were agreed, the outcome of the climate negotiations in Copenhagen is both an environmental and social failure, though first and foremost it constitutes a failure of the international system of negotiation. So the need has emerged to define an international financial, economic, environmental and social system that enables new development, including in the poorest countries. The result must be that texts under negotiation include references to 'just transition' and 'decent work'. "Copenhagen presents us with a unique opportunity to take the necessary steps to mitigate climate change right now.

If nothing is done now, years will go by before another such historic opening arises", EFFAT President Bruno **Vannoni** told around 60 participants at an EFFAT event held in Copenhagen on 11 December. The EFFAT conference marked the culmination of its year-long campaign to assess the impact on jobs of climate change and develop appropriate measures to combat any such consequences. EFFAT Agricultural President Peter **Holm** said: "Today, EFFAT has a comprehensive programme for creating new jobs and securing endangered jobs through new activities. Especially in disadvantaged locations like mountainous regions and coastal areas, examples from Italy have highlighted some new solutions. The Spanish unions have also reported progress in the domain of water management. And EFFAT now has detailed descriptions of the problems faced by a growing number of countries". Holm assured the participants that these activities would continue. Contact: [Arnd Spahn](#).

ENDS

Note to Editors:

EFFAT represents the interests of more than 2.6 million members, affiliated to 118 national trade unions in 38 European countries in agriculture, food production and tourism.

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