



Weekly News email

9th November 2023

News headlines

Bangladesh - Workers for fast fashion brands fear starvation as they fight for higher wages. Garment workers in Bangladesh making clothes for UK brands say plans to increase their pay to £92 a month is not enough to survive, leading them to steal and scavenge food from bins.

Bangladesh – Garment union reject “unacceptable” minimum wage offer following mass strikes and protests.

Brazil - Brazil: On the 8th anniversary of the Mariana dam disaster, BHP has pledged to reach a financial settlement.

China – Makes largest soy bean purchases in months. Chinese importers bought around 10 cargoes of soybeans, or about 600,000 metric tons, for shipment from Gulf Coast and Pacific Northwest export terminals between December and March, trade sources said.

China – Weather Tracker: Unseasonal cold air brings widespread snowfall for China with temperatures 10 Dec C lower than normal for the time of year.

Gambia – Families sue Indian Pharmaceutical company and local distributor over deaths of children who consumed contaminated cough syrup.

Gaza - Today’s newsletter focuses on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza as Palestinians face worsening living conditions from a lack of clean water, shortage of food and poor sanitation. Some U.N. agencies are calling it a "humanitarian catastrophe" enveloping the tiny enclave of 2.3 million people.

Germany- NGOs file complaint under Supply Chain Act against two supermarket chains over alleged labour rights abuses on plantations in Ecuador and Costa-Rica. International aid organisation Oxfam has lodged a complaint against German supermarket heavyweights Rewe and Edeka with the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (Bafa), alleging human rights abuses on Latin American banana and pineapple plantations. The accusation asserts a disregard for evidence of low wages, deplorable working conditions, and suppression of trade unions. Despite competitors Aldi and Lidl addressing these concerns, Edeka and Rewe remain aloof, claims Oxfam.

Germany- NGOs release guidance note on Supply Chain Act for communities & rightsholders

India – [Reeling under toxic air, India's capital shuts schools](#). Reeling under hazardous air quality levels, India's capital New Delhi shut down all schools for an extended period on Wednesday, the latest in a series of measures to protect residents from growing air pollution.

Uganda - Activists and environmental defenders in Uganda are facing harassment, intimidation, arrests, [and unlawful detention, for protesting an oil pipeline project](#) that has devastated thousands of people's livelihoods in Uganda and risks worsening the global climate crisis.

UK – [Lloyds of London to invest \\$65Million following release of slavery report](#). The money will be invested in regions affected by the transatlantic slave trade with \$12million allocated to a programme to improve recruitment and progression for black and other ethnic minority groups in the commercial insurance market.

UK - [UK grocery inflation in single digits for first time this year](#) – Kantar reports. British grocery inflation has fallen below 10% for the first time since July 2022, industry data showed on Tuesday, providing some relief for consumers as they enter the key Christmas shopping period.

UK – [Uk job market remains sluggish in October reports KPMG](#). The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC), a trade body for recruiters, said the number of permanent job placements fell last month, but by the smallest amount since June, while businesses' spending on temporary staff was steady.

UK/China - Seafood sold in UK supermarkets may have a dark side - [here's why](#). An investigation has found nine large seafood companies in China have received at least 2,000 Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities from Xinjiang province - and that many of them supply the UK.

UK - The [COVID inquiry reveals a uniquely toxic, destructive set of individuals](#) trying to work through a crisis. Behind the door of Number 10, Mr Johnson and officials were handling the worst crisis Britain had faced since the Second World War.

UK – British Steel must halt [mass job losses](#) at Scunthorpe plant because of shutting down furnaces. The Conservatives are presenting a false choice. Other countries have shown that it is possible to transition to zero-carbon steel making and protect good steel-making jobs for the future.

USA - [How shipping more US natural gas to Europe helped fuel CO2 pollution](#). Carbon dioxide emissions from U.S. liquefied natural gas facilities have jumped to 18 million tons per year, up 81% since 2019,

Human rights and ethical trade news

Gaza – The [Unfolding Women's Rights crisis in Gaza](#). Israel's blockade of Gaza is devastating to women and girls.

Japan - [Victory for Transgender Rights in Japan](#). Last week, Japan's Supreme Court ruled as unconstitutional the country's law mandating sterilization surgery for transgender people as a requirement for legal gender recognition. The case follows years of advocacy and litigation to remove this abusive and retrograde requirement that contradicts medical best practices and international human rights law.

Sustainability/climate

Circular Economy – [Bottled drinks green claims are misleading reports European Consumer Groups](#). They have filed a complaint to the European Commission and a network of consumer protection authorities (CPC), urging an investigation and an end to claims such as "100% recyclable" or "100% recycled" that they say mislead consumers. Affected firms include Coca Cola, Danone and Nestle.

Carbon Credits – Can Carbon credits help save the rain forests? [Watch the video explainer](#).

Earthshot Prize Winners 2023 – [Prince William announces the five winners of the Earthshot prize in Singapore who each receive £1m to scale their climate and environmental solutions](#)

Just Transition – [Shared prosperity models and Indigenous leadership for a Just Transition](#). Investment into renewables is growing rapidly: according to the International Energy Agency, for every USD 1 spent on fossil fuels, USD 1.7 is now spent on clean energy. Five years ago, this ratio was 1:1. Large national and international energy companies are currently dominating the shift to renewable energy – but a growing body of evidence suggests that alternatives, such as community-owned or co-owned models are also on the rise: from microgrids and small-scale renewables to Indigenous ownership and co-ownership of larger commercial-scale projects, these offer a significant opportunity for an energy transition that is fast, just and equitable

Record Breaking Global Temperatures - [Near certainty' 2023 will be Earth's hottest year on record, scientists warn](#). The warning comes after a record-breaking October, in which global temperatures were 0.4C higher than the previous record for the month - set in 2019.

Global Warming - A [new paper by a team of scientists](#), including from NASA and Columbia University, shows that the world could reach the 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) warming threshold this decade

Sustainability & Indigenous Land - [Human Rights-Based Approaches to TNFD: What Does a Leading Approach Look Like? The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(GBF\)](#) adopted a human rights-based approach to conservation as a guiding principle and the rights of Indigenous Peoples received explicit recognition.

Resources / Reports/Blogs

IDH – [Rewriting the sustainability playbook to integrate social and environmental agendas](#). Explore how Mars and IDH partnered with Forum for the Future to commission research that explores how companies can better integrate environmental and social agendas.

SIZA – This [Month's newsletter](#) includes articles on Enhancing supply chain visibility, Compliance programme for emerging growers, and status update of compliance status of South African growers.

TUC Blog – BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) women nearly three times more likely to be on [zero hours contracts](#) as white men.

TUC - TUC announces [special Congress](#) to fight Conservative attack on the right to strike on 9th December

TUC Policy Paper Sustainable Travel - A trade union [bargaining guide](#) for greener, healthier, and fairer travel. Why is it important and how to action in the workplace.

WWF – [Report](#) on Nature and Embedding Human Rights in Conservation

Events and webinars

Action through Collaboration: [IDH Market Transformation Summit 2023](#). IDH will recognize 15 years of public-private collaboration at our Action through Collaboration Summit in Geneva, Switzerland where we will be welcoming 200+ committed front-running leaders, ministers, investors, innovators, and practitioners that have the most influence over global value chains to accelerate action towards market transformation. 15-16th November, Geneva, Switzerland

The future of trade: trade justice in a changing political landscape – Trade Justice Movement

[Exploring the changes that we should be fighting for in 2024, a bumper election year.](#)

Wed, 15 Nov 2023 13:00 - 14:00 GMT

United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights. [27 - 29 November 2023](#)

Location - hybrid – in person element in palais des nations, Geneva (Switzerland)