



# Weekly news email

20<sup>th</sup> July 2023

## News headlines

**Europe** - Extreme heat grips Europe and south-west US. Much of southern Europe is experiencing extreme heat, with warnings that local records could be broken in Italy, Greece, Turkey and the Balkans. The temperature could reach 48C in Sardinia this week ...

**India** - Why McDonald's dropped tomatoes from Indian menus. The price of the everyday staple has been climbing steeply for the past couple of weeks, and now stands at almost 200 rupees (£2; \$3) a kilo in certain parts of India - a sharp shift from the usual 40-50 rupees.

**Kenya** - LGBT rights in Africa: Will Kenya be the latest to pass anti-gay law?... a Kenyan opposition MP is leading a campaign for parliament to further criminalise the country's small LGBTQ community.

**Nigeria** - Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu declares state of emergency over food. Some of the initiatives include using money saved by the recent removal of a fuel subsidy to provide fertiliser and grain to farmers.

**Russia – Ukraine war** - Ukraine Grain Deal Collapses as Russia Refuses to Extend It. The Ukraine grain-export deal has ended almost a year into its run after Russia terminated the pact, heightening uncertainty over global food supplies and escalating tensions in the region.

**UK** – 1 in 20 adults reported running out of food and being unable to afford more as prices soared, according to an official survey. Single parents were particularly vulnerable, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey suggested, as more than a quarter found themselves in such a scenario.

**UK** – The battle over M&S Oxford Street and construction's carbon footprint. Retailer's redevelopment bid has raised questions about the environmental costs of demolishing and replacing older buildings as opposed to retrofitting them.

**UK** - Sunak's migrant fee hike for public sector pay rise receives criticism. Unison and the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants call the policy "deeply unfair" and "deliberately divisive". The British Meat Processors Association, concerned the fee hike may contribute to inflation.

**UK** - Immigration rules relaxed to tackle construction worker shortage. A shortage of skilled construction workers is being addressed through a relaxation of post-Brexit immigration rules.

**UK** - Conservative debates on LGBTQ+ rights 'toxic', says Tory MP. Former equalities minister hopes rights will become uncontroversial in interview for 10th anniversary of equal marriage.

**Uruguay** - Drought leaves millions in Uruguay without tap water fit for drinking. More than half of Uruguay's 3.5 million citizens are without access to tap water fit for drinking, and experts say the situation could continue for months.

**USA** - Latino farmworkers led by advocates WeCount! in Florida call for heat standard ensuring access to water, shade & breaks. Florida farmworkers exposed to deadly heat fight for protections.

**US** – 'Cascading impacts' warning as Farmers Insurance becomes latest insurer to quit Florida. State's efforts unable to persuade company to stay amid growing risk for carriers as climate crisis increases strength of storms.

**US** - US refuses climate reparations for developing nations. The US says it will not "under any circumstances" pay reparations to developing countries hit by climate change-fuelled disasters.

**Tunisia** - EU signs off €1bn deal with Tunisia to help stem irregular migration. Ursula von der Leyen hails deal as an investment in shared prosperity and stability. Tunisia says it will not be 'reception centre' for returning migrants.

## Gender

**McDonald's** - Workers speak out over sexual abuse claims. McDonald's UK apologises after racism, sexual misconduct report. McDonald's workers come forward with new abuse claims.

**UK Schools** - Sexual harassment of girls is a scourge at schools in England, say MPs. Commons committee's report calls for government strategy to engage with young boys to tackle problem.

**Global** - Harassment in garment factories highlighted. Two major new studies have been published which seek to shine a light on sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the global garment industry. Solidaritycenter.org

## Human rights and ethical trade news

**Defra Seasonal worker reviews & surveys published** - 2021 survey: Invitations to take part in the survey were sent in the summer of 2022 to seasonal workers who took part in the seasonal workers pilot in 2021.

2020 survey: Invitations to take part in the survey were sent in the summer of 2021 to migrant workers who had worked in the UK with Seasonal Worker visas issued in 2020.

**Modern Slavery PEC** - [Equality, diversity and inclusion in modern research in the UK](#). This project, commissioned by Modern Slavery PEC, sought to provide an overview of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in publicly funded modern slavery research in the UK.

**Solidaridad Network** - [Are cocoa farmers achieving a living income in Latin America?](#)

## Sustainability/climate

**Climate crisis** - [Big oil quietly walks back on climate pledges as global heat records tumble](#). Energy firms have made record profits by increasing production of oil and gas, far from their promises of rolling back emissions.

**Climate change** – [We must stop climate solutions from killing biodiversity](#). Without thinking through where we put wind and solar facilities, we risk accelerating nature's destruction.

## Resources and reports

**The Centre for Child Rights & Business** – [Improving Your Summer Hiring: Embrace Responsible Recruitment Practices from the Start](#).

**Elevate LRQA Report** - ESG Trends Report: 10 Themes Shaping Supply Chains in 2023. The report highlights the vital learnings from the past year, insights from LRQA EiQ supply chain intelligence platform with key focuses that include - Navigating responsible sourcing from regions with political instability and civil unrest; Adapting to changing supply chain operations in China due to Covid-19 challenges; Expanding emissions tracking to stay ahead of increasing climate change implications.

## Podcasts/video

**Climate crisis Video report** – [Extreme flooding seen across the world so far this summer](#). Catastrophic floods have hit many parts of the globe as extreme rainfall becomes more and more frequent because of human-caused climate change.

## Events and webinars

**Launch/webinar** - [KnowTheChain 2023 Food & Beverage benchmark launch](#). Join us as we explore the NEW benchmark findings & find out how Food & Beverage companies are addressing forced labour risks. 25 July 2023 🕒 15:00 BST/16:00 CEST/10:00 EST/ 07:00 PDT

**Call for Evidence by the Director of Labour Market Enforcement, Margaret Beels** - to inform the UK Labour Market Enforcement Strategy for 2024/25 has now launched The deadline for written evidence is 8<sup>th</sup> September:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/labour-market-enforcement-strategy-2024-to-2025-call-for-evidence>.

**The Food & drink federation webinar** - The push for transparency- How and why are companies approaches to procurement coming under greater scrutiny? 27<sup>th</sup> July 12.00 – 13.00 hrs – [Details & register here](#).

**Business & Human Rights Journal webinar** - [Beyond human rights due diligence: What else do we need?](#) Date & Time Aug 17, 2023 11:00 AM in London. [Register here](#).

**Business & Human Rights Centre Webinar** - Mary Robinson Speaker Series 2023. [Raising the bar: Regulating to end corporate abuse](#). **Sept 14, 2023 02:00 PM London time**. The event brings together expert perspectives on emerging human rights regulation and will feature representatives from government, business and worker voices. It is a crucial opportunity to empower and protect marginalised communities and workers.