



UNION FOR
ETHICAL
BIOTRADE

SOURCING[®]
WITH RESPECT

Three questions for Karène Volpato, UEBT's verification programme coordinator



1. How long have you been working for UEBT?

I started to collaborate with UEBT as early as 2013, already 8 years ago! At that time, I was working for a Certification Body in Chile and Argentina, and I had been trained on the UEBT standard to be able to certify companies that were interested. I worked even more closely with UEBT when I returned to France, by participating to many of the organisation's international projects. I joined the team on a full-time basis early 2019.

For me, UEBT is an organisation that has many ethical values that I share, starting with a profound respect for the environment which I feel is crucial today if we really want to be the generation for change, and because the world urgently needs it! UEBT also promotes good economic and social practices which are vital. We need to put people at the heart of the value chains by encouraging fair and equitable interactions.

These are the values that attracted me to UEBT, but I was also drawn to the dynamism of an international and passionate team.

2. What are some of the improvements you have seen in the companies that UEBT works with and that you are proud of?

There are so many!

I would say an increasing awareness on biodiversity, a topic still too little known and developed in many sectors.

Some of our findings on local biodiversity lead to actions being taken to preserve and even regenerate local species. This makes all of the work that we do worthwhile.

I see social improvements such as support to producers by upgrading their work, or a good understanding of the structure of the supply chain leading to a strengthening of partnerships between the different actors. These improvements are changing the face of the sectors and creating real synergies.

3. You drive the topic of fair wages and fair prices within UEBT. Can you tell us why is this important?

Indeed! It is social justice that we're talking about here.

Consumers are increasingly committed and want to understand the impact of their purchases on the ground, for local populations.

Now is the time for a real recognition of the work that is being done in the fields (cultivation or wild collection), that respects people and biodiversity. In order for this to happen, the workers and

producers in the field must be paid decently, for the continuation of their activity but also for more fairness in trade. Without them, nothing would be possible, and the future of this society undoubtedly depends on our ability to be equitable across different value chains, working in collaboration rather than individually.