



YEAR BOOK
2022





Table of Contents

01

The year
in review

03

2022 in
numbers

05

About trusteea

08

Livelihoods

10

Environment

13

Safety

15

The journey so
far

16

Towards
sustainability

23

Members,
Partners,
Collaborators

26

Key Events

THE YEAR IN REVIEW



RAJESH BHUYAN

Director
Trustea Sustainable
Tea Foundation

Another momentous year has gone by for the trustea program. The work of the trustea program is based on collaboration and multilateralism. As we look back, we can see the impact of the strategic initiatives that we have put in place that reflects the collective vision of the program stakeholders.

In 2022, the sustainability footprint of trustea expanded to 100 new entities encompassing a volume of 117 million kgs. of tea. The trustea program currently covers close to 65% of the tea produced in India. Coupled with the steady expansion, we at trustea, are continuously deliberating on ways to deepen the impact of the code and make it relevant to the current global sustainability scenario in the agricultural commodity landscape with focus on tea. Keeping this in mind, the trustea code is the process of a comprehensive revision. The goal is to create a code that offers ease of implementation yet fully addresses the need of the hour. It is being designed to help the tea producers to combat the challenges of climate change by adopting sustainable agricultural practices and focusing on energy efficiency to improve resilience in the face of adverse impacts of climate change as well as improve competitiveness for businesses across the supply chain.

Our focus on the vulnerable sections of the tea supply chain include emphasis on a safe and equitable workplace for the women workers and livelihood improvement opportunities the small tea growers. Strategic partnerships are being forged in these areas to ensure deeper impact going beyond compliance.

We believe that technology tools will be the key to deliver the intended outcomes. Towards this end, we are focusing on creating a number of web and mobile based applications tailor made to aid the delivery of the intended outcomes of the program and provide ease of operation for the entities. The digital tools will also enable in the monitoring and evaluation of the program. Further, this will create avenues to bring geo-location based value-added services to the small tea growers.

Last but not the least, all the achievements of the program are possible only due to the hard work of the personnel on the ground. The key stakeholders and funders have always provided valuable guidance and support towards the achievement of the goals of the program. I would like to place on record sincere appreciation of the wholehearted efforts put in by the team at trustea, who are working tirelessly to bring to reality the vision of the program.

In the coming years, trustea will continue to be a dedicated partner in the sustainability journey of the Indian tea industry.

Rajesh Bhuyan

Director
Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation
Kolkata

May 2023



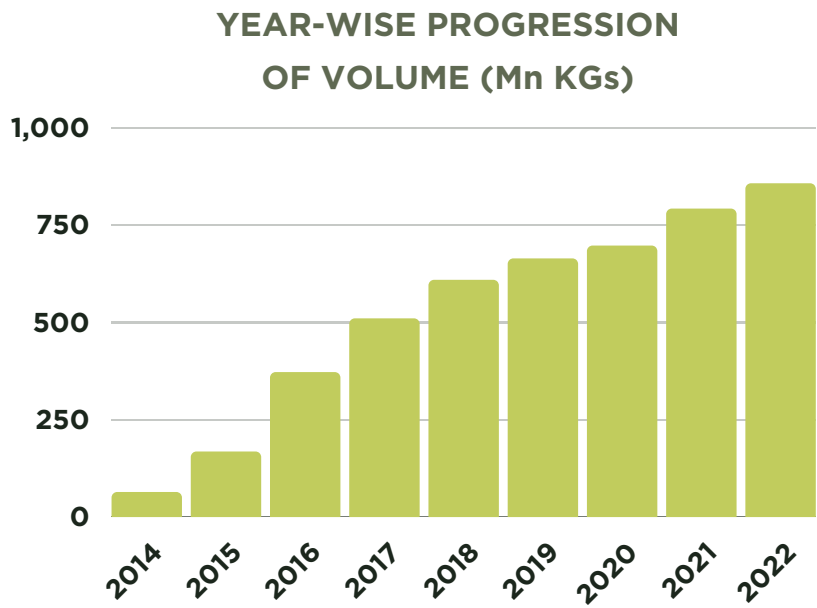


2022 IN NUMBERS



868

Mn KGs
TEA VERIFIED
ON EXIT 2022



2,88,151 MALE
3,66,514 FEMALE

WORKERS REACHED



632

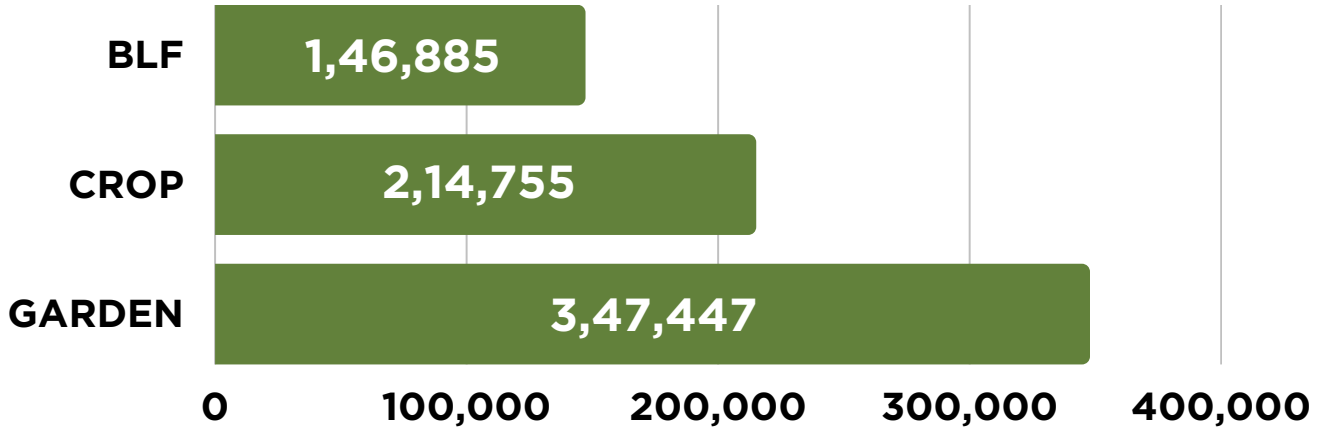
ENTITIES VERIFIED



1,05,787

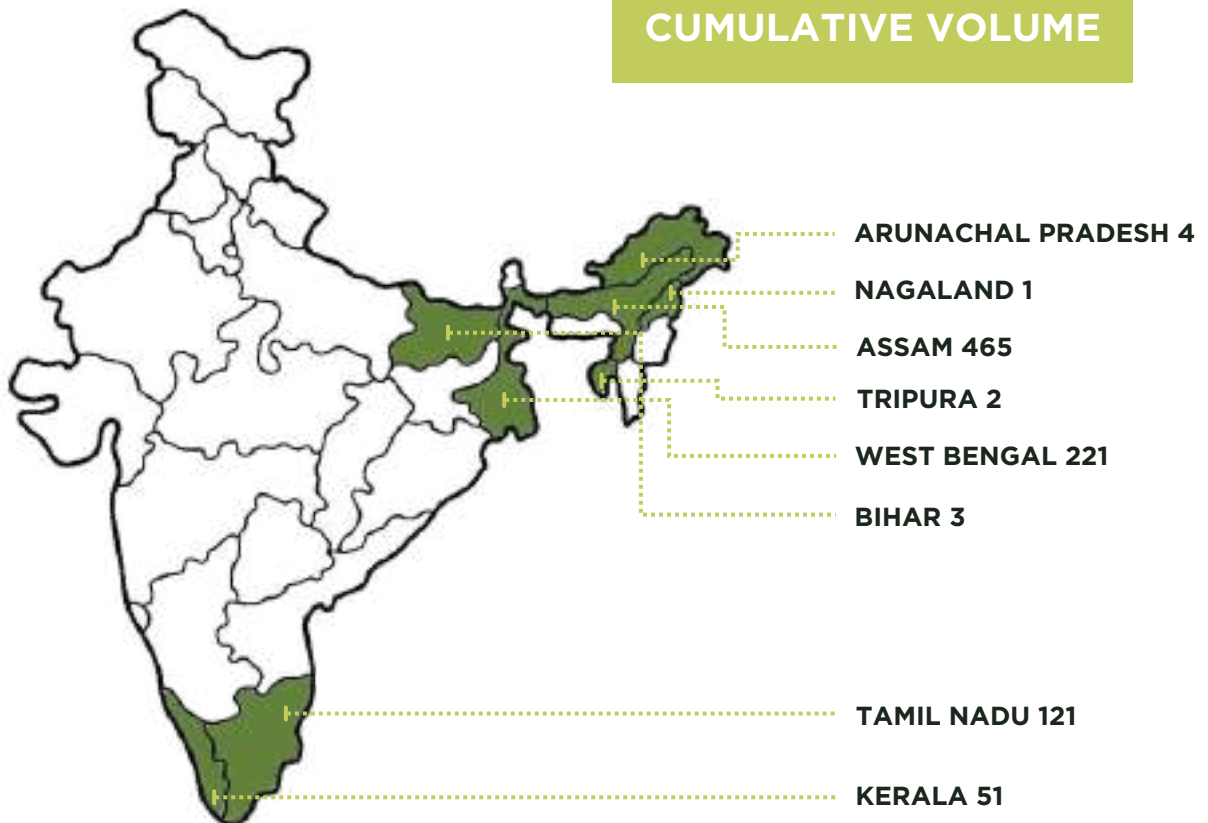
STGs ADDED

AREA COVERED (in hectares)



Note: The tea garden area includes the crop area of the garden and they are not mutually exclusive

CUMULATIVE VOLUME



Note: The depiction of the boundaries in the map is for general illustration purposes only

ABOUT TRUSTEA

trustea is a sustainability certification for the Indian tea industry, launched in 2013 to work with industry stakeholders to raise the cumulative benchmark of tea producers in the country. We work with small tea growers, bought leaf factories, estates, and packers across India.

Our three focus areas are environment, safety, and livelihood. Within these sectors, we prioritise issues such as working conditions and entitlements, health and safety of workers, in particular women, prevention of sexual harassment, promotion of gender equality, interventions for water pollution, food safety, soil erosion & contamination.

The trustea certification is based on the global practices of sustainability to create a network of verified sustainable tea producers across India.



VISION

To sustainably transform the Indian tea industry for the benefit of consumers, workers, farmers and the environment by:

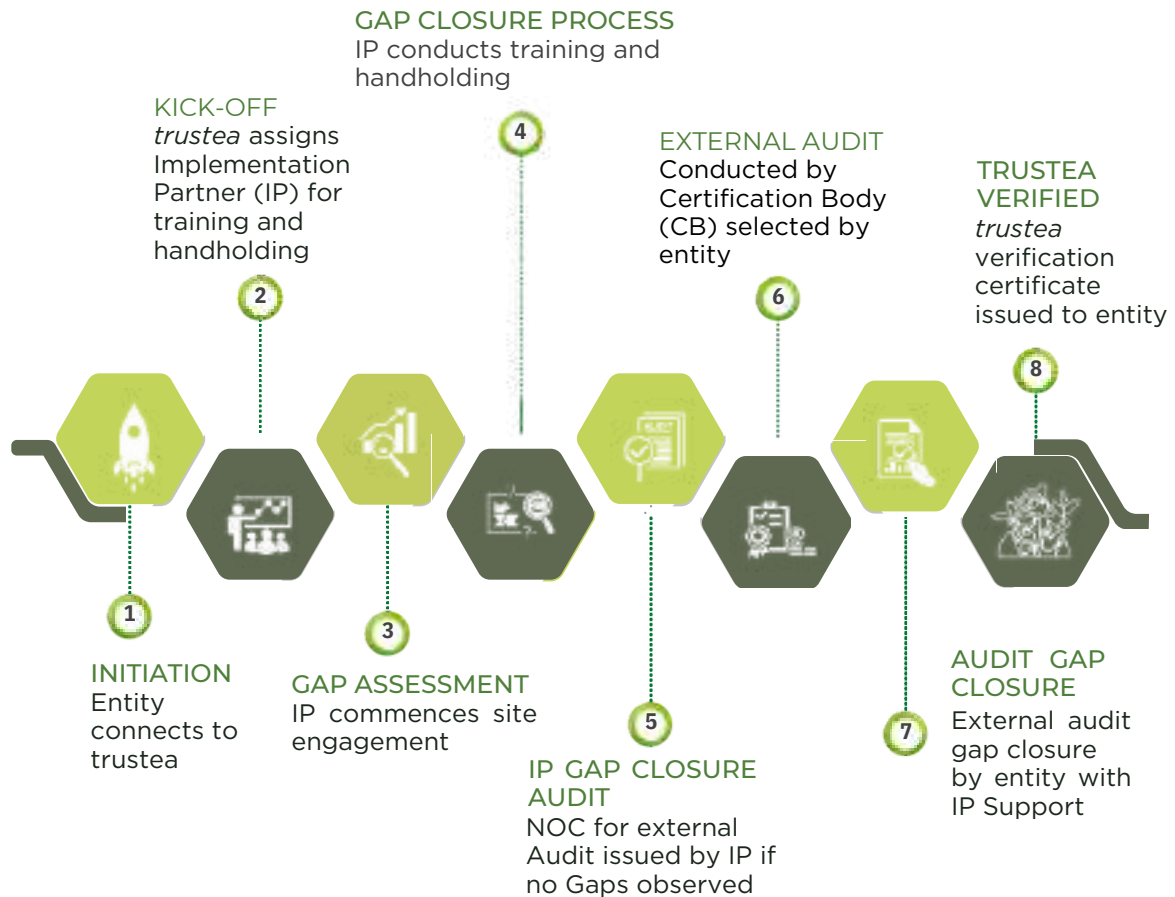
- Verifying tea producers against a world-class sustainability code of conduct
- Working with the tea industry to address key sustainability challenges such as food safety, pest and disease control, legally mandated wages, workers' welfare and equality preservation of biodiversity, and improvement of STGs' livelihoods.

MISSION

The Indian tea industry provides high-quality and safe tea for consumers, good livelihoods for producers, workers and their families, whilst caring for the natural environment.

TRUSTEA CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Any tea producer can seek to be a trustea member. Once an entity initiates the engagement with us, we verify their current status to create a roadmap for certification. The process begins with a gap assessment followed by customised training and engagement. An external audit completes the verification process.



Audits (2022)	Nos. conducted	Person days
Certification Audits	100	302
Recertification Audits	296	888
System Assurance Audits	42	107

Break up of BLFs, Estates and STGS verified	No.
Bought Leaf Factories	383
Estates	249
Estates + Bought Leaf	106
STGs	1,05,787

Volume of tea verified from	Million Kgs
Estates	445
BLFs	423



LIVELIHOODS

We want to improve competitiveness among the producers by positively influencing the scale of production, processing, technologies, supply-chain development, market access, and regulatory compliance.

Till December 2022

Livelihoods supported via sustainable business and agri practices

1,00,000+ small tea growers

Women workers supported

3,60,000+

Ensuring compliance of Equal Work, Equal Pay and Provident Fund (PF)

6,70,000

Small Tea Growers trained in sustainability

57,777



Our focus has been on

- Facilitating better working conditions
- Non-discriminatory treatment
- Health and hygiene (beginning with basic infrastructure such as proper toilets)
- Safety
- Remunerations (Provident Fund, gratuity, etc.) for people working in tea estates and factories.

Specifically, for women, we are ensuring

- Compliance of legally mandated maternity benefits
- Creche facilities
- Redressal of grievances as per POSH act

Our code includes zero-tolerance aspects toward child labour and training on wage disparity.



As a bought leaf factory (BLF), we are completely dependent on the small tea growers (STG) for the supply of green leaf. Our CTC factory has an installed capacity of 1 mn kilos per year, which needs about 4.5 mn kilos of green leaves. This is supplied by around 120 small tea growers. After trustea, my interaction with STGs and other stakeholders has increased tremendously.

The biggest impact of trustea has been on the mindset of stakeholders, whether in the factory or the STGs. We are thinking about safety, about protecting the environment, and wearing protective gear... There is a care element. If someone refuses protective gear because it's hot, I explain why he has to protect himself from the chemical he is spraying.

Another important change has been with women workers, who are a big part of the industry. trustea has provided them a mechanism where they can speak up and not keep things to themselves. This has brought a sense of security among them.

BLFs and STGs are two sides of the same coin. The relationship between the two has weathered many tides. As a BLF, I want to impact the livelihoods of the small tea growers we work with, and trustea, for me, is one of the most important tools to achieve this.



MEHUL VERMA
Director
Sanjeevani Tea Industries

ENVIRONMENT



We work with our members to protect environmental health via judicious use of chemical fertilisers, the adoption of Integrated Pest Management and proper waste management.

Our on-the-ground training on the standards requirements includes:

- The use of Plant Protection Code (PPC) and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) approved chemicals for tea cultivation
- Storage, the dosage, and the risk involved in mixing, handling, spraying
- Maintaining buffer zone
- Use of the right PPEs, MSDS,
- First-aid
- Maintenance and cleaning of PPEs and empty chemical containers. The latter fall under hazardous activity so storing empty chemical containers and safe disposal as per the norms are an integral part of the training.

We supplement our field training with Farm Diaries where the recommended fertilisers, dosage and proper application are clearly spelt out for farmers.

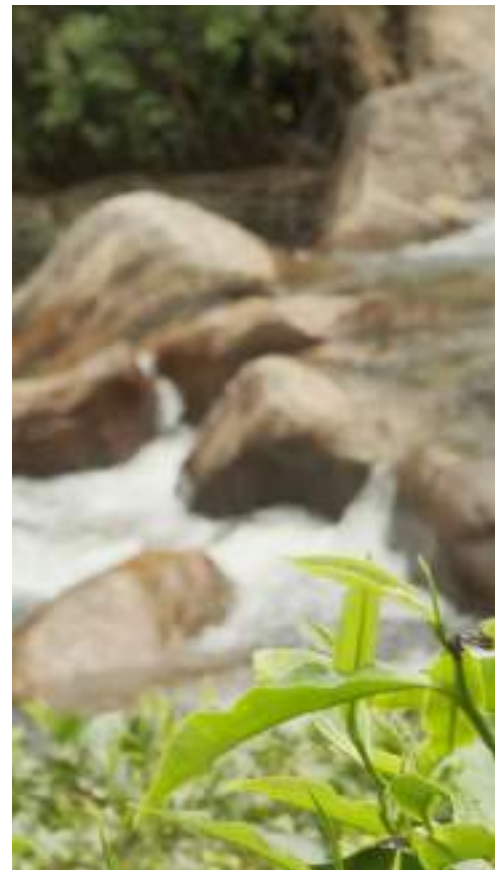
BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

A biodiversity action plan (BAP) is an internationally recognised program addressing threatened species and habitats. It is designed to protect and restore biological systems; the original impetus derives from the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

trustea mandates a BAP for all the certified units to maintain an ecological equilibrium and reduce the negative impact of farming on the surrounding ecosystem.

“A biodiversity action plan for natural ecosystem conservation shall be available with the verified unit outlining procedures for responsible management of the impact of tea farming and processing. Natural vegetation, water bodies and natural habitats of animals, birds, and beneficial insects within the periphery of the verified entity are to be identified and nurtured to enhance biodiversity. Measures like afforestation, and plantation of shrubs and other woody vegetation including natural vegetative barriers with native species are to be part of the plan and actions.”

- trustea Code, Chapter 10



INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a system that utilises methods and techniques of pest control that reduce the negative impact of excessive chemical usage but without causing an economic loss of crops.

An effective IPM strategy needs a sound understanding of the bio-ecology of pests and pathogens, the economics of control measures, and possible harmful effects of pesticides on human health, non-target organisms, and the environment.

The large-scale adoption of the recommended IPM approach at the beginning of the season will be crucial in ensuring food safety and adequate crop protection. Our IPM practices are supported by biological controls and practices based on indigenous technical knowledge (ITK).



AFFORESTATION

Afforestation is another focus area for us. In 2022, 4.8 hectares of afforestation was done by our members.

EFFICIENT WASTE MANAGEMENT

Established protocols are followed for the segregation of hazardous, non-hazardous, and biomedical wastes. Hazardous waste is sold to authorised vendors and there can be no burning of waste.





NEETA TIWARI

**trustea and
Social/Environmental
Sustainability Coordinator
MLD Group
Assam**



We have been associated with trustea since 2014 and are certified for 10.3 million kilos of CTC tea for the whole group. As a tea producer, we are associated with 1,000 small tea growers (STGs) and are putting all efforts to move forward with trustea guidelines.

The modus operandi of trustea is training and awareness building and I like that very much. Nothing can be changed overnight, and we have to train our workers on a daily basis.

The changes we are seeing are healthy flora, fauna and fresh air. Our tea quality has improved. We are concentrating on hygiene of workers and hygiene of the factory.

We are reducing the use of synthetic chemicals for our plants and soil, adopting integrated pest management. We have our own in-house bio pesticide lab. It's unique and we are culturing trichoderma and Beauveria Bassiana to make biopesticides. We have made around 4,000 litres, and are seeing good results.

We are also adopting indigenous technical know-how and using pruning litter of hedges as raw material and extracts of medicinal plants as pest and insect repellent. We have a large project for vermicompost that is ongoing. We are producing around 500 metric tonnes annually and have recently begun vermi-wash.

The use of biopesticides has reduced our costs per hectare by half. We want to move forward hand in hand and feel encouraged by trustea. When the auditors come, we feel motivated to do more and reduce the harmful effects to the environment.

In my view, every estate, every STG should adopt trustea.



SAFETY



Our safety measures address both people safety and product safety.

PEOPLE SAFETY

Workers are given extensive training on handling chemicals and fertilisers. Safe handling and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has reduced exposure to harmful chemicals thereby minimising adverse impact on health and well-being.



Till Dec '22, trustea has sustainably transformed 868 million KGs of tea, or 65% of the year's total production.



TEA SAFETY

We monitor the use of legally mandated safe chemicals which helps deliver safe tea to the consumers. We facilitate PPC and FSSAI-compliant tea and this has reduced the toxic load in tea production which carries the assurance that it that has been produced responsibly and is safe for consumption.



As a company, we are aligned with trustea in areas such as environment protection and people welfare. We have set a target for planting shade trees and fuel trees every year. There are three rivers here and we educate our people to keep the rivers clean and not contaminate them. Hedges have been planted along the roads so that people are not affected by the drift from spraying. There is no spraying done on the roadsides used by people. We have marked buffer zones between the field and the road. These paths are blocked for 24 hours after spraying so that people are not affected by it.

Training has been a significant intervention because of trustea. We have trained our factory workers in safety procedures and conduct regular mock drills. We have formed a Mother's Club which is made up of women from the estate who are trained by our team to in turn, train women on cleanliness, hygiene, sanitation, health, and workplace rights. Our Blue Angels network teaches women on menstrual hygiene and makes sanitary napkins accessible to women.

We have trained and advised our transportation partners in following our garden protocols which includes clean vehicles to avoid any contamination of the tea during transport. We have worked closely with our warehouses so that there is no contamination of our tea while it is stored in the warehouse.

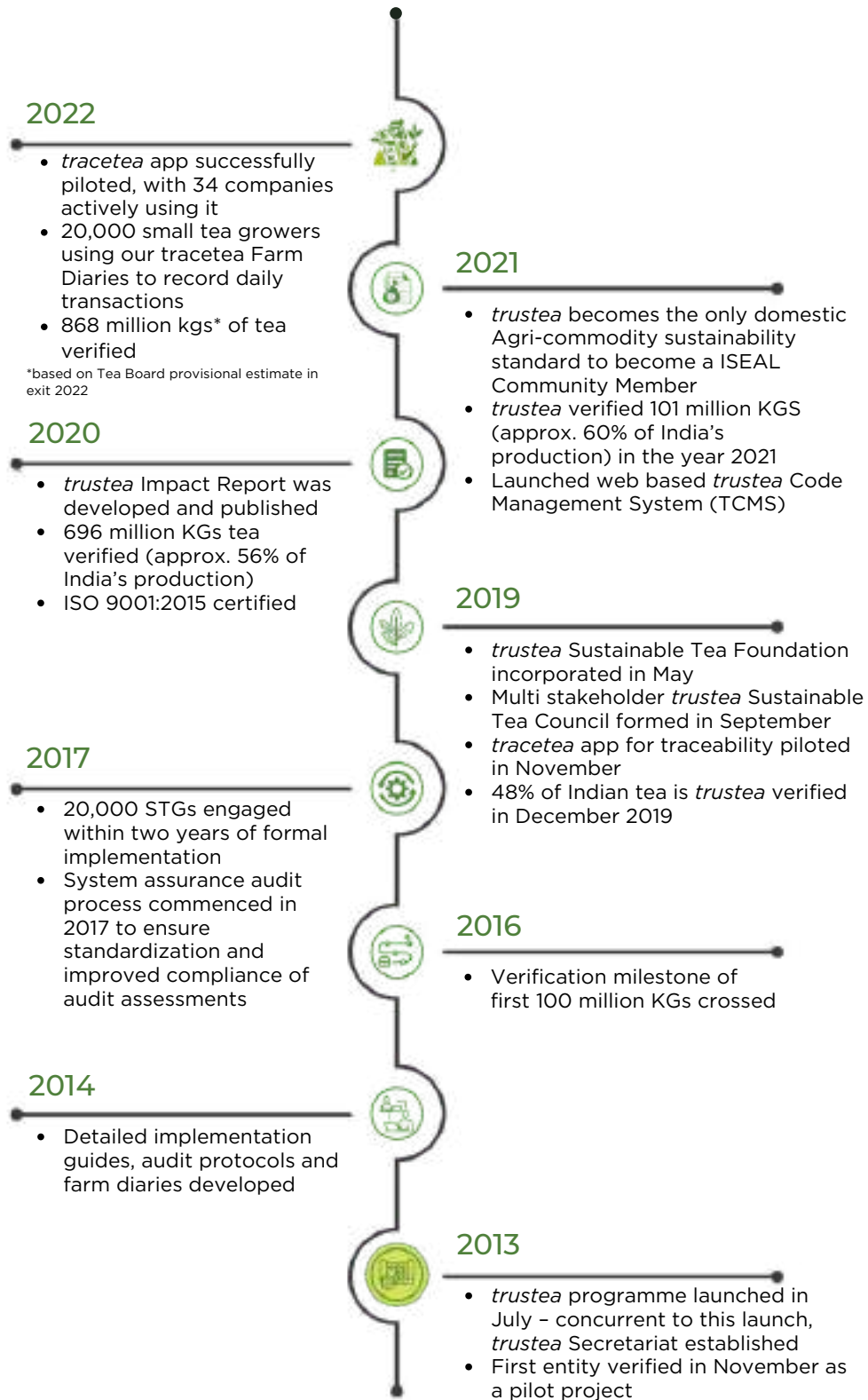
A certification such as trustea is very important as consumers today want a safe cup of tea, which is produced in a garden that takes care of its workers and gives back to the environment. For us, these are just some of the reasons why it's important to be a part of trustea.



JOE BAJAR

**Senior Manager
Leesh River Tea Garden
Goodricke Group Limited**

THE JOURNEY SO FAR



TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

We align with several UN Sustainable Development Goals.



trustea entities adhere to labour laws. Wages must meet statutory requirements and workers must be made aware of their rights and with access to redressal systems.



Sustainable agriculture underlines the future of food security and we have undertaken the task of enabling the Indian tea industry to embark on a sustainability journey.



trustea works with stakeholders on occupational health and well being of the workforce. Access to safe and hygienic washing facilities, clean toilets, potable water, first aid kits with trained personnel are mandated.



Over 50% of the workforce in the Indian tea industry is women, and we are working to empower, educate and enable gender equality with equal pay for similar work. Labour laws related to maternity benefits and stipulated wages are mandatory.



Nearly 5,00,000 people are employed in the Indian tea industry, and they live on or near the tea farms. Ensuring access to clean water and toilets is an essential part of the trustea code.



We are supporting the small tea grower segment in Indian tea to earn a decent living and be assured of an acceptable quality of life.



We believe that technology will offer the means and tools to bring greater systemic efficiency in our tea industry. We have developed and adopted several applications and tools, including tracetea, the only end-to-end traceability app for tea farmers in India.



We actively work with our small tea grower community, and women in particular, to address livelihoods and gender gaps in wages to reduce inequality.



trustea works with tea producers towards creating a sustainable workplace and in the manufacture of a product that can be traced through the supply chain from the consumer end.



Climate change has come into greater focus in the past years and we are revisiting our Code to see how we can improve resilience and reduce the impact of climate change in tea.



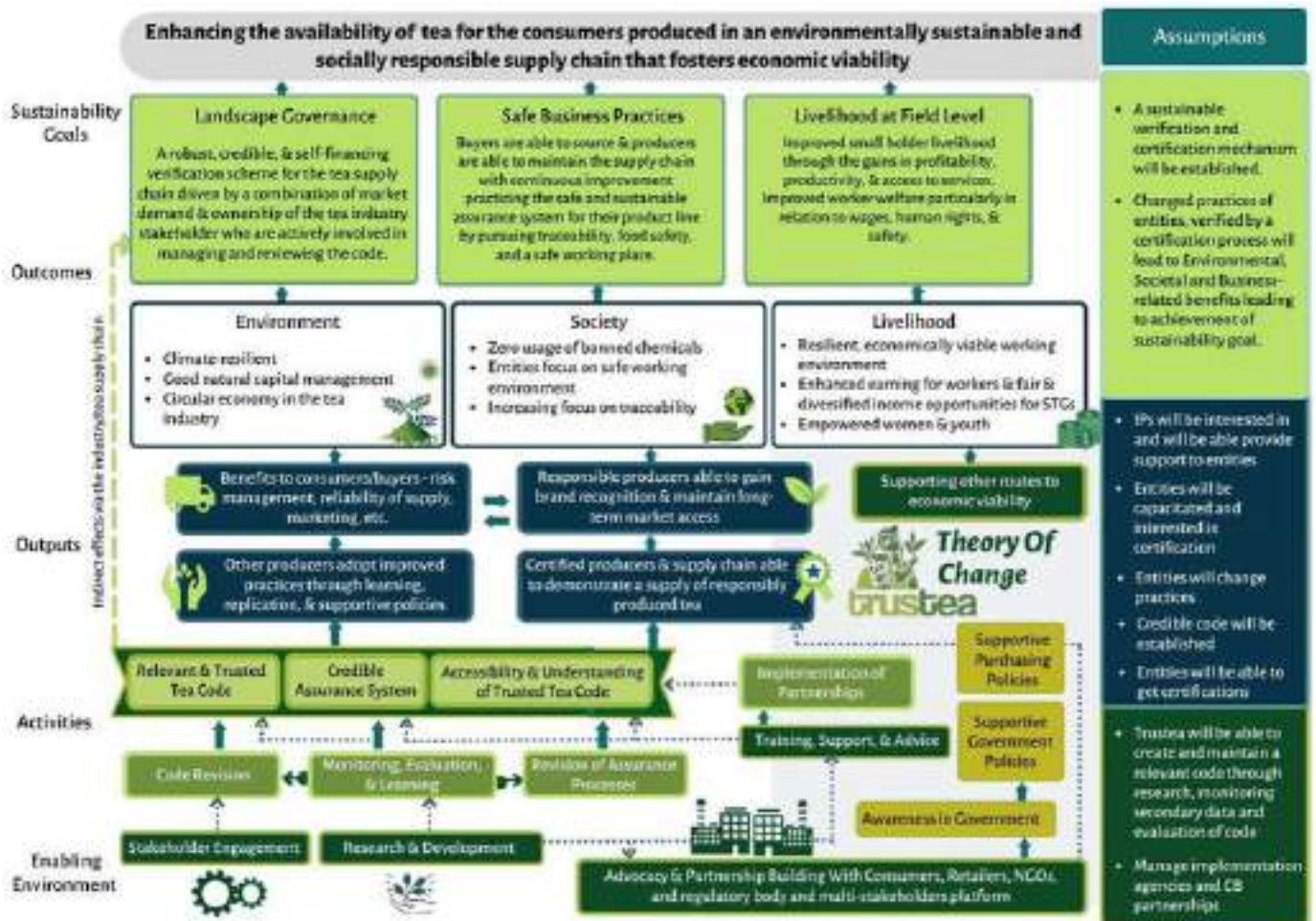
Environment protection, wildlife safety, soil preservation, and afforestation are part of the trustea code, to preserve and protect life on land.



As a multi-stakeholder verification body, we have sought to partner with various members of the Indian tea industry, across regions for a fair representation for all. We believe this inclusiveness and collaboration is the way forward to enable positive change in the industry.

THEORY OF CHANGE & MONITORING - EVALUATION & LEARNING

We adopted the Theory of Change (TOC) approach to achieve our sustainability goals, and developed in consultation with stakeholders:



Monitoring - Evaluation & Learning defines the pathway from the activities to impact. It tracks the progress of activities and measures the output and outcome being achieved using both quantitative and qualitative data. The M&EL framework also evaluates outcome and impact to ascertain the extent to which the desired change and the sustainability goal has been achieved. Any deviation in the activities or the intended outputs will be identified for required course correction.

“An Indian tea industry that provides high-quality and safe tea to consumers, and good livelihoods for producers, workers, and their families, whilst at all times caring for the natural environment.”
- Our vision and sustainability goal

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

We have been enabling greater efficiency and wider reach via a strong technology infrastructure.



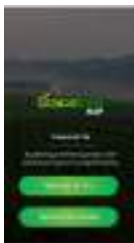
tracetea

This is an app designed as a farm-to-gate digital traceability solution. It is the only end-to-end traceability app in India covering farmers, agents, and factories in a single platform. It offers special features such as offline operation and auto synchronisation. As of December 2022, tracetea is being used by 34 tea companies across India with over 80 companies in various stages of implementation. More than 20,000 farmers are using this app for their daily transactions and farm diary management.



tracetea small tea grower's app

This has been developed to record farmer profiles along with geolocation. Apart from locational information, the farmers can now use their GPS location to get connected to satellite imagery-based advisory services on weather forecasts, pest control, and soil condition.



traceteaMAP app

We developed an easy-to-use format to record the map of the farm by way of simple circumnavigation or plotting of key points along the periphery. The output translates into a map embedded on Google maps via satellite GPS data even in offline mode. The maps are embedded in the companion trustea WebGIS .The maps can only be accessed through the secure login of the specific entity.



trustea e-learning portal

This is a comprehensive video-based online tool for training on trustea code. It has been designed for trustea officers, verified entities, auditors and anyone interested in becoming a trustea auditor. The portal offers learning material and the training videos are available offline along with a knowledge bank. Over 2,500 people have registered on the portal with 1,500+ having successfully earned the online certificate.



Animated learning videos

We have developed character-based animated video learning modules to supplement field training for small tea growers. These videos are made available via our YouTube channel and are offered in Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Tamil and Malayalam. The first series was broadcast to 70,000+ farmers by SMS with a viewership of 85,000+.

It addresses:

- Waste and Pollution Management
- Product Traceability
- Workers' Health, Safety and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act 2013
- Plant Protection Formula
- Biodiversity



Trustea Code Management System

This is the core trustea governance portal through which auditors, implementation partners, tea companies, and our team collaborate for audits and certifications. Over 1,600 audits have been completed via this portal with over 700 certificates generated. We use a dedicated and secure cloud database for our program data.



"I find the tracetea app easy to record information. Earlier I would write this down but now I enter the details of plucking, wages, costs and fertilisers in the app."

Vijayan
Small Tea Grower, Nilgiris



"The Farm Diaries are useful, and allow us to document information. The recommendations on use of fertilisers along with recording the information in the Farm Diaries has helped reduce the expenditure on chemicals."

Manikandan
Small Tea Grower, Nilgiris

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

We work with our implementation partners (IP) for training programs. For every new member, we carry a needs analysis based on which the implementation partner designs a training program.

As of 2022, trustea has four implementation partners:



National Skills Foundation
of India (NSFI)



An Initiative of TATA TRUSTS

Reviving Green
Revolution (RGR)
an initiative of Tata Trust



Action for Food
Production (AFPRO)



Tea Research Association
(TRA)

They have been selected after a careful evaluation about their alignment with trustea and their local presence.

In 2022, over 28 experts from our IPs were deployed across Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal. They provide on-ground support and execute capacity-building activities ensuring seamless service delivery.



DR. JOHN JACOB

**Executive Director
Action for Food Protection
(AFPRO)**



The partnership of AFPRO with trustee Sustainable Tea Foundation was started in 2019 to support small tea growers and tea workers at tea gardens and factories. Through the programme, we have engaged with 14,370 small tea growers in five states in India - Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tripura. We are proud to state that we could influence environmental, safety, and livelihood issues through training and providing handholding support. The programme provided the opportunity to address other issues with respect to water pollution, gender, the health and safety of workers, food safety, soil erosion, capacity development, deforestation, and climate change. We have created awareness among factories and tea gardens for providing basic facilities like sanitation and health benefits, equal wages, optimising the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, personal protective equipment, etc. Our small interventions have a great impact on the overall living standards of small tea growers and workers.

This project aligns well with AFPRO's mission of enabling green and inclusive growth and ensuring sustainability in commodity sectors. So far we have certified about 74 million kg of tea under trustee code. We are sure that through the consistent efforts of our partnership, we will be able to transform the Indian tea industry for the benefit of the community and the environment.



MEMBERS, PARTNERS, COLLABORATORS

THE TRUSTEA
NETWORK



Keeping with the spirit of UN Sustainable Development Goal 17, we have also focussed on partnerships that will further the impact of our sustainability initiatives. In 2022, we formed two critical partnerships:

We partnered with Women's Safety Accelerator Fund (WSAF) which is working towards greater awareness and understanding of gender-based violence. They support the tea industry by instituting measures to prevent and respond to violence against women. They also work to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs. By partnering with WSAF, we are hoping to combine our to deepen the impact on women's safety.

There was a need to create an ecosystem to diversify the income of small tea growers, to give them a fall-back option given the uncertainties that accompany agricultural activities. We partnered with the Small Tea Growers Sustainability Platform which works actively with the segment and has implemented initiatives to help farmers diversify and become agri entrepreneurs. There are areas of mutual convergence with trustea-verified farmer clusters. We are working together to deliver multifaceted benefits to our farmers from this partnership.



The Women's Safety Accelerator Fund has a focus on creating safe and empowered workplaces for women in the tea value chain. In the tea gardens, the line between the place of work and place of residence is blurred. We began working with trustea to build a stronger mechanism for women's safety. This is not limited to creating committees but in building capability and in training.

Some of the issues we see are:

- Normalisation of violence: Our baseline study showed that violence is not acknowledged or recognised by men, women, or the management.
- Lack of trust: Women don't come forward to complain because they feel they will not get the required support even if they do.
- Lack of toilets: This means many women suffer from urinary tract or fungal infection which feeds the cycle of poor health, absenteeism, and impact production.
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH): There has been greater awareness building at both the management level and the worker level. We are training people towards making this Act functional.
- Longstanding social practices of discrimination and subjugation continue to be there with very less representation at decision making, and while the younger generation is more aware of what is happening in the outside world, newer forms of violence have emerged.

trustea certification carries a lot of value and their emphasis on women's safety as a zero tolerance point will send out a strong message to the industry and make a difference.



MANISHA MAJUMDAR

**Women's Safety Accelerator Fund
IDH The Sustainable Trade Initiative**



ARUP SEN

Director, Elegant Tea Producer
Daspara, North Bengal



We are a bought leaf factory, producing tea since 2013. As on date, we have 141 small tea growers with us, with almost 352.04 hectares under tea. In the last couple of years, our production has been between 12-13,00,000 kilos of tea annually.

This is an unconventional tea area and tea planting only arrived in the late 80s. It was a backward district and there was a lot of fallow land. The bought leaf factory sector has contributed to the economy significantly. We have more than 40,000 small tea growers in this district and most of the land is owned by the farmer.

We were attracted to trustea because they help us maintain all the parameters for making good tea, while also addressing the livelihood of farmers and those dependent on us. We hold regular meetings with our farmers to take the trustea norms, protocols and other guidances to the small tea growers. We have tried to educate them on areas such as the Plant Protection Code, as per trustea's advice.

Hygiene and cleanliness has become a regular part of our work. We have been training our farmers on the use of chemicals and now they are more concerned about what they should use, how much they should use and how they should use it. They are also more concerned about protecting water reserves, proper drainage and managing storage and disposal of chemicals and their containers.

Now, trustea has also launched tracetea, which will help monitor updates from the small tea growers and help with traceability. It is not easy to bring about change, it will take time and also a lot of work to make sure that the small tea growers understand why this is important even though they will not see immediate benefits from it.



KEY EVENTS

Training Programs for Auditors and Small Tea Growers

February 2022

1

Webinar: Women's Rights and Safety at Workplace in the Tea Garden

21 April 2022

Panelists: Rajesh Bhuyan (Director, Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation), Poulomi Pal (UN Women), Shikha Mukherjee (Independent Journalist), Pranjal Neog (General Manager, Goodricke Group Ltd.), Dr Nazrana Ahmed (Director, Ahmed Tea Co. (P) Ltd.), Manisha Majumdar (Women's Safety Accelerator Fund)

2

trustea Program Partner Conference

9 June 2022

Attended by: Tea Research Association, RGR - an initiative of Tata Trust, NSFII and Ambuja Cement Foundation (IP), Control Union, TUV India, Cotecna, DNVGL, Control IMO, Indocert, OneCert, SCG (CB)

3

4

Brainstorming session on 'Taking the tea industry towards carbon neutrality'

Organised by Tea Board of India and Tocklai TRA
15 July 2022

7th Council meeting

24 August 2022

Location: Kolkata + online

5

6

Webinar: Prevention of Deforestation and Deliberating trustea's role

21 September 2022

Panelists: Rajesh Bhuyan (Director, Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation), Dr. B. Radhakrishnan (UPASI TRI), Daleram Gulia (Procurement Lead, Sustainability - South Asia, HUL), Dr. Manjunatha (IFS, Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Tea Plantations), Swapan Mehra (Founder & CEO, IORA Ecological Solutions)

8th Council Meeting

1 December 2022

Location: trustea Kolkata + online

7



trustea was awarded in the 4 edition of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Social Impact Award for its on-ground impact towards sustainability.





Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

**5th Floor,
6, Dr. Meghnad Saha Sarani,
Tollygunge,
Kolkata 700026,
West Bengal**

Phone: +91 33 4073 2658

Email: support@trustea.org

Website: www.trustea.org

