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SCA Announces 2019 Sustainability Award Winners

March 15, 2019 — The 2019 SCA Sustainability Award winners: Union Hand-Roasted Coffee for their project at Yayu BioSphere Reserve, Agricafe / Fincas Los Rodriguez, and Esperanza Dionisio Castillo will be recognized on the Re:co Symposium stage the 10-11 April 2019.

The awards for Project and Business Model, created in 2004, recognize outstanding work in the field of sustainability in the coffee industry. This year there is a third award recognizing the work and impact of an individual, called the Sustainability Champion award.

Award Winners:

1. **Project** - “Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and climate resilience at Yayu Biosphere Reserve” by Union Hand-Roasted Coffee. The award will be accepted by Pascale Schuit, Union’s Sustainable Sourcing Manager.
2. **Business Model** - Agricafe S.A. / Fincas Los Rodriguez. The award will be accepted by Pedro Rodriguez.
3. **Sustainability Champion** – Esperanza Dionisio Castillo

The selection process for the 2019 Sustainability Awards was led by the SCA Sustainability Center’s Awards Committee, a group of dedicated coffee professionals who volunteer their time to support the SCA’s mission, and the winners were chosen by individual votes from the committee’s members.

SCA Chief Sustainability Officer Kim Elena Ionescu said, “The SCA has recognized outstanding work in the field of sustainability since 2004 and with every year we see greater diversity in the approaches that companies, organizations, and individuals take to confronting the challenges facing our industry. This year’s awards reflect collaborations that happen across geographies, cultures, and supply-chain roles, and I’m thrilled to be able to celebrate a kind of innovation that benefits all of us.”

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Notes to Editors  
- Photos of Project winner  
- Photos of Business Model winner  
- Photos of Sustainability Champion  
- For more resources visit the SCA Sustainability webpage

Project winner: “Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and climate resilience at Yayu Biosphere Reserve”

This project was implemented by Union Hand-Roasted Coffee in collaboration with Darwin Initiative (UK) Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG, Kew) Environment, Climate Change and Coffee Forest Forum (ECCCFF) Sor Gaba Union HiU Coffee.

The project is located in Yayu Biosphere reserve, in the Illubabor Zone of Oromiya Regional State, in the southwestern part of Ethiopia. At Yayu, coffee generates up to 70% of the cash income for over 90% of the population. Most farmers in the area are struggling to make sufficient income from coffee. The most important factor restricting coffee income is coffee quality, rather than productivity/quantity. If quality is assured, then an improved market will exist. The aim of the project was fourfold (1) reduce poverty; (2) reduce land-use change/conversion; (3) preserve biodiversity (particularly critical wild genetic resources for Arabica coffee); and (4) minimize farmer’s vulnerability to climate perturbations. These problems were identified by the project participants and especially by ECCCFF during more than a decade of work at Yayu. The project benefited five cooperatives with a total of 950 members directly, with an average of 5.5 individuals per household we estimated 5225 individuals have been affected of which c. 2600 are woman. The 5 cooperatives generated seasonal employment for approximately 250 workers per season.

“Projects such as Yayu are fundamental for our business model at Union, working together with producers to improve the quality of coffee and livelihoods, with a tailored approach to individual farms and producer partners. We’re honored to receive this award and to be contributing to the long-term future of Arabica coffee in the world.” -Steven Macatonia, co-founder of Union Hand-Roasted Coffee

Business Model winner: Agricafe S.A. / Fincas Los Rodriguez

Agricafe is a family business that has been devoted to the production, commerce, roasting and export of coffee for over 30 years now, differentiating ourselves in the market with a new business model of strategic alliances with producers in the region, which allows us to stand out with quality and consistency, and for making a contribution to families’ economies in the regions where we are developing as a company.

Historically, the regions in our country Bolivia where we are developing our coffee business, have been of very few opportunities. We strongly believe that by positioning Bolivian coffee in a differentiated and responsible manner, we will be able to make a contribution to our country, to obtain more international relevance and to generate other business opportunities as a contribution to the socioeconomic development of Bolivia. With our Sol de la mañana program we have even been able to increase coffee production significantly – whereas
traditional coffee culture produces 5 sacs per ha, with our program we have reached a productivity of 30 sacs per ha.

**Sustainability Champion winner: Esperanza Dionisio Castillo**

Esperanza Dionisio Castillo was born in Jauja, Peru and she is an Agronomist by profession. Esperanza worked as an extensionist in rural development and tropical agriculture, especially in coffee from 1977 to 1996 and travelled to Costa Rica and Brazil for her specialization. In 1997 she joined Pangoa as the cooperative’s Manager and remained in this role to investigate the marketing of coffee, an essential function of the cooperative. To date, Pangoa is consolidated as a leading organization at national level holding Organic, Fair-trade, and Bird Friendly certifications. They constantly seek social, environmental and economic development of their members and collaborators.

**Re:co Symposium**, taking place this April 10-11, is a unique event designed for high-level discussion, leading innovation and strategy development for those passionate and influential in the world of specialty coffee. Through a mixture of speakers, interactive experiences and opportunities for conversation, Re:co looks at the specialty coffee market, the challenges we face and some of the solutions we have, and to shine a light on opportunities for growth and development and will delve into how these can be approached. This year the event will take place in Boston, MA. Learn more at [https://www.recosymposium.org/](https://www.recosymposium.org/).

**About the Specialty Coffee Association**

The SCA is a trade association built on foundations of openness, inclusivity, and the power of shared knowledge. From coffee farmers to baristas and roasters, our membership spans the globe, encompassing every element of the coffee value chain. SCA acts as a unifying force within the specialty coffee industry and works to make coffee better by raising standards worldwide through a collaborative and progressive approach. Dedicated to building an industry that is fair, sustainable, and nurturing for all, SCA draws on years of insights and inspiration from the specialty coffee community. Learn more at [www.sca.coffee](http://www.sca.coffee).