



For Immediate Release

IRIS Initiative and FAST Announce Data Sharing Partnership

July 13, 2012 – The Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) initiative and the Finance Alliance for Sustainable Trade (FAST) announced a data sharing partnership through which social, environmental, and financial performance data from FAST members will be shared with the IRIS initiative. Similarly, aggregated IRIS data related to the agriculture sector will be shared with FAST for joint analysis and public distribution. The partnership represents a continued collaboration between the IRIS initiative and FAST, which worked together in 2011 to develop a set of standardized performance metrics for investments in sustainable agriculture that are now included in both the FAST Shared Impact Assessment and Measurement Toolbox (SIAMT) and IRIS. The IRIS initiative will add data contributed by FAST members to a broader set of aggregated performance data from IRIS users. The data will be used to build an evidence base about the social and environmental benefits generated by sustainable agricultural organizations receiving impact investment.

“This partnership with FAST represents an important alignment in performance reporting between the sustainable agricultural sector and the broader impact investing industry, which supports investment into businesses, organizations, and funds that generate social and environmental benefits alongside financial returns,” said Sarah Gelfand, Director of IRIS. “We are thrilled to add FAST to our growing list of partners that are helping to unify the currently fragmented landscape of social and environmental performance data.”

“This data sharing agreement will provide the impact investing community and FAST members alike with increased capacity to report on impact through a broader suite of reporting tools, while streamlining the data collection and management process,” said Jason Potts, FAST Co-Founder. “We see this partnership as a pillar for the development of a robust understanding of the varied impact of the sustainable agriculture finance sector.”

FAST is a member-driven international organization that aims to increase investments in sustainable agricultural small and medium enterprises (SME) in developing countries through the provision of strategic market and impact information to the SME finance industry, among other relevant services. The IRIS initiative manages a set of standardized metrics that can be used to describe an organization’s social, environmental, and financial performance, and collects anonymously-reported IRIS data for aggregation and market analysis to bring transparency and accountability to the impact investing industry.

###

About The Financial Alliance for Sustainable Trade (FAST)

FAST is a member-driven organization representing a global community of financial institutions and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) including producer organizations dedicated to bringing sustainable products and sustainable finance to market. FAST develops resources and activities aimed at increasing the number of producers in developing nations who successfully access quality finance. For more information, please visit: www.fastinternational.org.

The FAST Shared Impact Assessment and Measurement Toolbox (SIAMT) is a common framework for investors, financial institutions, and SMEs to monitor and report the social, financial, and environmental performance generated from financing activities in sustainable agriculture value chains. For more information, please visit FAST SIAMT on the FAST website.

About the Global Impact Investing Network

IRIS is an initiative of the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the scale and effectiveness of impact investing. Impact investments are investments made into companies, organizations, and funds with the intention to generate measurable social and environmental impact alongside a financial return. Impact investments can be made in both emerging and developed markets, and target a range of returns from below market to market rate, depending upon the circumstances. The GIIN builds critical infrastructure and supports activities, education, and research that help accelerate the development of a coherent impact investing industry. This work is informed by the GIIN Investors' Council, a diverse membership group comprised of leading impact investment institutions. To serve the needs of the greater impact investing community, the GIIN also oversees the development of IRIS and ImpactBase, an online global directory of impact investment vehicles designed to reduce search and transaction costs across the impact investing industry. For more information, please visit www.thegiin.org.

Contacts: Melody Meyer (GIIN) at (646) 837-7174 or mmeyer@thegiin.org.
Cristina Larrea (FAST) at (514) 759-6626 or cristina.larrea@fastinternational.org