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“1% for the Planet” Accepts IMO as a Participating Non-Profit Partner

December 11, 2009- The Institute for Marketecology (IMO) has been accepted as a non-profit partner to “1% for The Planet.” 1% for the Planet is an alliance of businesses that donate at least 1% of their annual revenues to environmental organizations. Since its inception in 2002, it has become one of the largest funders of environmental work around the world. Currently, there are more than 1,000 businesses in 37 countries, together giving over \$12 million annually to almost 1,000 environmental groups worldwide. One of their newest partner non-profits, the Swiss-based IMO is one of the first and most well-renown eco-product certifiers. IMO also initiates and contributes to the development of standards and certification systems for ensuring environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

In 2006 an alternative Fair Trade Certification Program called Fair for Life was developed by IMO and the Swiss Bio-Foundation. Since then, Fair for Life Social & Fair Trade certification has gained quick acceptance in worldwide markets, as it offers many complimentary benefits to existing Fair Trade systems. These benefits include high transparency, social responsibility audits on up-market companies, requirements for good environmental performance, harmonization of fair trade production under the Fair for Life logo, and the ability to combine Fair Trade certification with other certifications, such as organic certification for all major world markets. Socially responsible and fair trade operators also need to take care to protect the environment at and around their production or processing sites. For this reason, the Fair for Life programme includes detailed environmental criteria.

IMO is based in Switzerland, with field offices in over 30 different countries and activities in over 90. As IMO has a core competency working with and certifying small-holder farmer groups from diverse countries and cultures, it has been highly successful in adapting Fair Trade principles and concepts to provide a meaningful Fair Trade certification option to producers who had previously been excluded from fair trade. Currently IMO is almost entirely funded through certification fees and development projects worldwide, but it wants to be able to support some of its planet-enriching projects through non-profit donations, such as farmer-outreach, development of eco-product and socially responsible standards, agricultural development activities, and fair trade education.

“We are excited to now be a partner non-profit with 1% for the Planet, as we have long been involved in the pursuit of sustainability and social responsibility, and we hope to be able to increase our activities and positive results worldwide through the support of corporate philanthropy.” says Wolfgang Kathe, Department Manager for Social & FairTrade at IMO.

To learn more about IMO, visit, www.FairforLife.net or www.IMO.ch, or contact Kerry Hughes at (707) 644-2354 or Kerry@IMO-Control.org (US Contact) or Anja Ibkendanz at ai@imo.ch (Swiss Contact). To learn more about 1% for the Planet, visit www.OnePercentforThePlanet.org.

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