A nice cup of tea (key stages 3 and 4)

What the photo says
This photograph, of tea pickers on a plantation near Guilin in southern China, is an opportunity to examine fair trade and the advantages of fair trade co-operatives for tea farmers.

The more general context is questions like these – all fertile areas of study for geographers:
- Where does our food come from?
- How is it produced?
- What impact does its production have on the producers, the consumers, and the environment?

Lesson idea
Context: Agriculture, trade, consumption

Other resources
- access to ICT facilities
- websites: Cafédirect (http://www.cafedirect.co.uk) has a comprehensive website, including some useful video and photo resources; Fair Trade Foundation (http://www.fairtrade.org.uk).

Suggested activity
Show students the image. Explain that this group of tea farmers, concerned that they are not getting a fair price for their tea crop, have formed a collective. The students represent a company that sells fair trade tea; they have approached the farmers with an offer to take their crop, but the farmers’ leaders won’t sign an agreement until all members of the collective have accepted the deal.

Using the internet, students research the benefits of fair trade, with the aim of making a presentation to the farmers’ collective explaining the benefits to them of entering into a fair trade agreement.

Curriculum opportunities
Global dimension: The interdependence of the global economy, and how our consumer power can impact on the quality of life of producers far away.
Sustainable development: sustainable economic development for LEDC producers.
Citizenship: The importance and impact of consumer choice.
Personal, learning and thinking skills: The opportunity to develop independent/group problem-solving, as well as effective teamwork and presentation skills.

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