



# **The Cocoa & Forests Initiative: 2024 Progress Report**

# Collective Action to End Cocoa-Related Deforestation

The governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and 35 leading cocoa and chocolate companies, representing 85% of global cocoa usage, joined together in the **Cocoa & Forests Initiative** to help end deforestation and restore forest areas. Their combined actions play a crucial role in protecting and restoring biodiversity, sequestering carbon stocks in West African forests, and addressing climate change in line with the Paris Climate Agreement. The Cocoa & Forests Initiative contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land).

The Cocoa & Forests Initiative is a public private partnership based on frameworks for action (**Côte d'Ivoire** and **Ghana**) and action plans for the private sector (**Côte d'Ivoire** and **Ghana**) and public sector (**Côte d'Ivoire** and **Ghana**) that spell out commitments to:

- Protect and restore forests,
- Promote sustainable cocoa production and farmers' livelihoods,
- Engage communities and boost social inclusion.

To learn more, follow [#CocoaAndForests](#) on social media, or visit **Cocoa & Forests Initiative**.





The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF); IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative; and the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana drive the Cocoa & Forests Initiative. The Prince of Wales (now King Charles III) launched the Initiative in March 2017.

Deforestation of tropical rainforests is a major issue in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, which together produce nearly two-thirds of the world's supply of cocoa, the main ingredient in chocolate. According to Global Forest Watch, between 2002 and 2023, Côte d'Ivoire lost 28% and Ghana 13% of their humid primary forest, with a large portion of this loss attributable to cocoa farming expansion.

A comprehensive analysis is required to determine the exact contribution of cocoa production to deforestation. WCF, CFI members, and partners are working together on science-based methods to determine the share of cocoa production to overall deforestation rates with a high level of accuracy in cocoa producing countries. Data reliability and a good knowledge of the cause and location of deforestation is essential to develop effective and adequate mitigation measures and ensure that WCF members and partners are compliant with regulations such as the EUDR.

Cocoa provides crucial income to communities in rural West Africa, but farmers are too often faced with poverty. Poverty is one of the causes of deforestation. Accelerating a transition to sustainable livelihoods is essential for farmers' economic security and a healthy planet.

## **In the season of 2023/2024, ECOM Cote d'Ivoire and its partners ensured;**

- The distribution of 855,461 multi-purpose shade trees for on-farm planting to promote agroforestry
- 57,914 farmers actively applying agroforestry
- 29,707 farmers received technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources
- 253,178 Ha underwent Deforestation Risk Assessments
- 57,117 farmers received technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm
- 23,025 individuals participating in women's empowerment projects



## **In the season of 2023/2024, ECOM Ghana and its partners ensured;**

- The distribution of 403,096 multi-purpose shade trees for on-farm planting to promote agroforestry
- 13,248 farmers actively applying agroforestry
- The distribution of 185,025 high-tech improved cocoa seedlings
- 6,833 farmers received technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources
- 103,748 Ha underwent Deforestation Risk Assessments
- 30 communities with active forest restoration and protection programs
- 28,114 farmers received technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm
- 15,759 individuals participating in women's empowerment projects

The first priority is the protection and restoration of forests that have been degraded. To this end, the governments and companies have pledged no further conversion of forest land for cocoa production and have committed to the phased elimination of illegal cocoa production and sourcing in protected areas.

Both countries are introducing a differentiated approach for improved management of forest reserves, based on the level of degradation of forests. In 2019, the government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted and published a new forest code which, among other things, put forth policies for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry to restore degraded land, improve forest cover, and promote sustainable livelihoods and agriculture in the classified forests and rural zones. Both governments have shared maps on forest cover and land-use, and continue to update the maps, including socio-economic data on cocoa farmers, to inform private sector investments. Companies have made significant investments in the promotion of cocoa agroforestry and the restoration of degraded forests.

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring of these commitments, companies have pledged to develop traceability from farm to the first purchase point for their own purchases of cocoa. They also work with governments to ensure an effective national framework for traceability encompassing all traders in the supply chain and to anticipate forthcoming due diligence legislation. The companies will similarly share information with the national satellite monitoring platforms to effectively monitor progress on CFI, as well as proactively address threats of new deforestation.

The next critical priority is sustainable agricultural production and increased farmer incomes. These are essential pre-requisites for reducing pressure for agricultural encroachment into forests and strengthening the resilience of cocoa farmers to climate change.

The governments and companies are accelerating investment in long-term productivity of cocoa in order to grow “more cocoa on less land.” Key actions include provision of planting materials for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry, training in good agricultural practices, soil fertility, land tenure reform, and capacity building of farmers’ organizations. Sustainable livelihoods and income diversification for cocoa farmers are being accelerated through food crop diversification, agricultural inter-cropping, and development of mixed agroforestry systems and shade-grown cocoa.

The final area of focus is strong community engagement and social inclusion, with a particular focus on women and youth. The governments and companies have committed to full and effective consultation and participation of cocoa farmers in the design and implementation of key actions, and promotion of community-based management models for forest protection and restoration. The governments have adopted social and environmental safeguards and are assessing and mitigating the social impacts and risks of any proposed land-use changes on affected communities.

# Community Engagement

My name is Ibrahim, and I am a 54-year-old farmer living in Doreyem in the Assin North District, Central Region (Ghana, West Africa). I am married to Bernice, and we have seven children, ranging from 7 to 31 years old. I am a Cocoa farmer, and the size of my cocoa farm is 4.2 acres (1.68 hectares). I have land titles for my farm, which I inherited from my father. This farm has been mapped by the Field Trainers from ECOM. I am a registered and active member of ECOM's Doreyem farmers' group.

I came to understand climate change and its effects on the environment through our society trainings organized by the Field Officers from ECOM. As a cocoa farmer, I observed that high temperatures and the inconsistent changes in the rainfall pattern were affecting my cocoa yields in addition to the high disease occurrence, including Black pod disease.

“Now, it is very difficult to predict the weather patterns compared to the past. When the rain comes, it is very heavy but lasts a short time, which causes soil degradation. On the other hand, there is a scorching sun, which brings a lot of heat and lasts very long which causes the leaves of my cocoa trees to wither”.

I am currently using less agrochemicals than before in controlling pests and diseases due to the knowledge I have acquired on Integrated Pest and Disease Management. The agroforestry system plays a key role in maintaining the health of my cocoa farm through the provision of shade coverage and addition of nutrients from the dead leaves and branches, which increase the soil organic matter.

I have participated in several society trainings organized by the Field Officers where we discussed deforestation and the negative impacts on the environment. I have also received training on women empowerment and youth development, and I believe in gender inclusion and equality.

*Translations done by the ECOM team. Text was edited for clarity of the reader except for direct quotes.*



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# Annex

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# Annex 1: Ghana CFI Summary Table

Description	Target (current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (current reporting year)	# On behalf of clients (current reporting year)	# Through direct investment
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION				
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain: Total Active	10,000	0	65,930	
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	12,866	0	103,748	
# metric tons of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point (target is 100%)			56,690	
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée			122	
# trees registered				
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support				
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, forest policy, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration				
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): New				
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): Total Active				
# farmers applying agroforestry: New			2,852	
# farmers applying agroforestry: Total Active			10,396	
# farmers provided with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry			7,855	
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	100,000	0	403,096	500,000
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: New	1,000	0	2,852	122
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: Total Active			10,396	
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	500	0	206,010	
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone				
# farmers provided with technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm (e.g., CSC)	1,000	0	28,144	
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)				
\$ contributed to fund				
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD				
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers	10,000	0	185,025	900
# farmers provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practices				
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)			5,762	
# individuals provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources / IGA's	1,000	0	6,833	
# individuals provided with technical assistance to save money and access finance			6,833	
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year				
# of VSLA groups in the current year			979	
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY				
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): New			15	
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): Total Active			15	
# hectares under CBNRM			122	
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities			15,759	
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)			52	

# Annex 2: Côte d'Ivoire CFI Summary Table

Description	Target (current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (current reporting year)	# On behalf of clients (current reporting year)	# Through direct investment
FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION				
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain: Total Active	7,088	0	101,100	
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	13,285	0	253,178	
# metric tons of directly sourced cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchase point (target is 100%)			112,657	
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée				
# trees registered				
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support				
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, forest policy, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	20,000	0	60,412	
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): New				
# Individuals receiving incentives to protect and restore forests and / or adopt agroforestry (e.g., PES): Total Active	960	0	2,113	
# farmers applying agroforestry: New			5,075	
# farmers applying agroforestry: Total Active			52,839	
# farmers provided with technical assistance to adopt and expand agroforestry	3,000	0	52,364	
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	60,000	0	855,461	10,646
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: New	3,000	0	5,075	
# hectares cocoa agroforestry: Total Active			104,628	
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	9,000	0	60	
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone				
# farmers provided with technical assistance to be more resilient to climate change and reduce and remove carbon emissions on farm (e.g., CSC)	21,025	0	57,117	
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)				
\$ contributed to fund				
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD				
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers				
# farmers provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to professionalize & optimize cocoa farming practices	827	0	52,291	
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)			30,150	
# individuals provided with technical assistance (based on plans) to increase income from non-cocoa sources / IGA's	2,500	0	29,707	
# individuals provided with technical assistance to save money and access finance	2,000	0	29,707	
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year				
# of VSLA groups in the current year			1,096	
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY				
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): New				
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM): Total Active				
# hectares under CBNRM				
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities			23,025	
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)			1,613	



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