Sustainable cocoa

From Global Commitments to Local Action
Momentum is building to address major concerns – from environmental degradation to widespread poverty and child labor – which have hindered sustainability in the cocoa industry.

Across the industry, from traders and chocolatiers to governments, cocoa stakeholders are signing on to global commitments for positive change. But, efforts in producer countries are hampered by poor coordination and a critical need for governing environments that enable lasting and widespread transformation.

Managed sustainably, cocoa production has the potential to become a powerful engine for rural development in producer countries, but there is a long way to go before this commodity can provide sustainable livelihoods for the farming families of today and tomorrow.

Sustainable Cocoa and the Global Goals

Working on sustainable cocoa touches on almost all of the global development goals, including: no poverty, zero hunger, addressing climate change and responsible consumption, among others.
Our Approach

As a trusted development partner, with a presence on the ground in more than 170 countries, UNDP helps turn agricultural and marine commodity sectors into drivers of positive human development and environmental protection.

UNDP’s Green Commodities Programme works with governments, growers, cocoa companies, civil society and other stakeholders to build a shared vision for national cocoa sectors, and a joint commitment to action.

We support producer country governments to take the lead in building this shared national vision and commitment to joint action, which reaches across sectors, bringing issues and solutions in farming, forestry, trade and commodities together.

We help build enabling environments for change, which involves addressing issues related to regulations, planning, enforcement, incentives and institutions.

We help establish capacity for better production, which means improving farmer support systems, as well as facilitating joint efforts between companies, cooperatives, governments and donors.

We also help create partnerships for change, facilitating stakeholders who have never collaborated before to establish working relationships.

Using our convening power and expertise on poverty alleviation and sustainable landscape management, we link partners to international donors and global funding mechanisms, such as REDD+, to bring solutions to scale.

“Meeting the growing demand for commodities without having to remove the world’s remaining forests means developing new ways of thinking and doing business. The GEF is proud to partner with UNDP and its Green Commodities Programme and other organizations in realising these new approaches.”

Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson, Global Environment Facility.
As the leading UNDP sustainable commodities effort, the Green Commodities Programme works in 11 countries across seven commodities, including cocoa.

The Environmentally Sustainable Production Practices in Cocoa Landscapes project in Ghana. Since 2013, we have partnered with Mondelez International’s Cocoa Life programme, the Ghana Cocoa Board, national and local government bodies, and communities. Working in
cocoa producing areas, our partnerships focus on creating the conditions needed for farmers to widely adopt sustainable production practices, while also conserving nearby ecosystems and natural resources.

**The Amazon Program on Forest Conservation and Sustainable Production in Ecuador** aims to reduce emissions from deforestation, currently contributing 30% of GHG emissions in Ecuador. Supported by the Global Environment Facility, the program works locally on sustainable production, nationally on strengthening collaboration as well as coordination, and internationally on trade agreements.

**The Global Platform for the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF).** UNDP and its Secretariat partners launched this Platform at the 2017 global climate talks, with support from the German Government’s International Climate Initiative. The NYDF Global Platform seeks to increase ambition, forge new partnerships and accelerate progress on the NYDF. The declaration sets out ten ambitious global goals to protect and restore forests and end natural forest loss by 2030. To date, nearly 200 countries, sub-national governments, companies, indigenous peoples and NGOs have endorsed the declaration.

**REDD+ project in the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire: Forest Restoration, Reforestation and Reduced Deforestation through Zero-deforestation Agriculture.** A key element of this far-reaching programme is aimed at supporting zero-deforestation cocoa supply chains. It involves analysing risks from deforestation to supply chains, supporting small-scale farmers to boost production, implementing traceability systems, strengthening national skills and partnerships.

**National Action Plan for Sustainable Cocoa Production in the Dominican Republic.** UNDP’s Green Commodities Programme supported the Government of the Dominican Republic to set-up a National Cocoa Platform, which was a vital step to coordinate the sector in devising a 10-year Action Plan aimed at addressing key barriers to sustainability. Now widely endorsed, a key aim of this government-led plan is to boost farmers’ access to training, support and resources.

**UNDP is supporting the Government of Peru to establish sustainable production landscapes in the Peruvian Amazon.** The focus is on encouraging growers to adopt sustainable and efficient production practices and ending deforestation caused by the expansion of cocoa and other commodity production.
Ghana’s cocoa landscape has deteriorated from poor production practices, including the elimination of shade cover. Through our partnership with Mondelez International’s Cocoa Life program, we are working to improve farmers’ livelihoods, while improving the landscape by supporting the re-introduction of shade grown cocoa.

This involves farmer training and the distribution of economically viable timber shade tree seedlings. Tree planting provides an alternative income for farming families and makes landscapes more resilient against pests, disease, and climate change. We are also supporting the Government to review the laws and policies governing tree ownership so that cocoa farmers have appropriate rights over the distributed seedlings once they become valuable timber trees.

Already, 1.1 million economically viable timber shade tree seedlings have been planted. Meanwhile, more than 9,600 farmers have been trained in good agricultural practices, linked to re-introducing shade grown cocoa.

“Deforestation makes up the largest part of our carbon footprint, which is why it’s so important for us to address this issue head-on. Through our collaboration with UNDP and our other partners in Ghana, we can build on the ongoing forest protection efforts in our Cocoa Life program to be even more efficient in safeguarding the environment and helping cocoa farmers to become resilient to climate change.”

Hubert Weber, Executive Vice President and President Europe at Mondelez International.
Our Partners

**Government:** Forestry Commission of Ghana; Ghana Cocoa Board; Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Ghana; Ghana REDD+ Strategy (led by Climate Change Unit of Forestry Commission); Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Cote d’Ivoire; Permanent Executive Secretariat for REDD+ Cote d’Ivoire; Ministry of Agriculture, Dominican Republic; National Cocoa Commission, Dominican Republic; Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Peru; Ministry of the Environment, Peru; Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries, Ecuador; Ministry of Environment, Ecuador.

**Private Sector:** Mondelez International; Mars Chocolate; Barry Callebaut; Cargill; Nestle; CEMOI; Blommer; Hershey; Olam and Touton.

**Civil Society:** Cocoa and Forests Initiative (World Cocoa Foundation, Sustainable Trade Initiative and The Prince of Wales); World Cocoa Foundation.

**Funders:** The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Switzerland; the Global Environment Facility, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ GmbH).

“Through the Cocoa and Forest Initiative, the cocoa and chocolate industry has joined with the governments of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, along with development partners, civil society organizations, farmer groups and others, to find lasting solutions that take into account both environmental concerns and the livelihoods of cocoa farmers. UNDP is an essential partner as we work to turn our global commitments into local actions.”

Richard Scobey, President of the World Cocoa Foundation.
“GIZ sees collaborative action on sustainable commodities as key to addressing climate change and deforestation, the biggest environmental issues of our time. With UNDP as a partner we support transformative efforts in countries with significant commodity sectors, including those on the frontline of the cocoa expansion.”

Andreas Brede, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ GmbH).
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