

Press Release

German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa at the 4th World Cocoa Conference in Berlin

The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa as a driving force and alliance partner on sustainable cocoa

Berlin, April 19, 2018 – When everything starts to revolve around cocoa in Berlin next Sunday, the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO) will also be there as a driving force. Representatives of the producing as well as of the consuming countries will discuss "A new vision for the cocoa sector" – this is the motto of the 4th World Cocoa Conference, which will take place for the first time in Germany from 22nd- 25th April 2018. The guiding question is how the cocoa sector can be made sustainable. In terms of content, the focus is on the interests of farmers, the challenges along the entire value chain, the promotion of more conscious consumer behavior and the question of the framework conditions that governments, industry and trade must create in order to achieve the desired goal.

The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa and several of its members from the German confectionery industry, retail/grocery, non-governmental organizations and the Federal Government are invited as speakers. In a total of 25 lectures, they will contribute their experiences and exemplary approaches for a sustainable cocoa sector and present them for discussion. "For us, this is a clear sign that the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa plays an important role in the international debate and in shaping a sustainable cocoa sector," said Wolf Kropp-Büttner, Chairman of GISCO. "As a multi-stakeholder initiative, the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa is itself an example of how visions are turned into results through concrete action and common solutions through interests that are by no means always the same.

In addition to their PRO-PLANTEURS project in Côte d'Ivoire, GISCO members are engaged in more than 116 projects to improve the living conditions of cocoa farmers and promote sustainable cocoa farming. 47 projects are being implemented in West Africa alone, where most of the cocoa comes from.

page 1 von 2

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Focal points of the contributions from GISCO members are:

- the living conditions and income situation of cocoa farmers,
- the fight against abusive child labour,
- the empowerment of women,
- the results and approaches of exemplary projects, such as GISCO's own PRO-PLANTEURS project in Côte d'Ivoire,
- the influence of consumers,
- the respective roles of the partners involved – from cocoa cultivation to ready-to-sell chocolate in the food stores – and opportunities for partnerships to pursue common goals, such as the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa.

A current example of such a partnership is the Memorandum of Understanding between GISCO and the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa. It was signed at the International Green Week in Berlin in January of this year. GISCO is in close contact with other partners at European and international level. In terms of content, the focus is on forest conservation in cocoa growing areas, strengthening women and protecting children.

About the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO)

The association 'German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa' is a joint initiative of the German government, civil society, industry and trade and brings together relevant actors from Germany with those from the producing countries and international initiatives. The aim of GISCO is to improve the living conditions of cocoa farmers, to conserve natural resources and biodiversity in the growing countries and to increase the proportion of sustainably produced cocoa. The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa has over 70 members and is open to other interested parties.

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