



*Press release*

## **German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa promotes international exchange on sustainable cocoa production at World Cocoa Conference**

- **World Cocoa Conference 2018 to be held in Germany**

**Berlin, 30.05.2016** – “The central theme of lively discussions at the World Cocoa Conference 2016 were the living conditions of small-scale cocoa farmers, against the backdrop of climate change” said the Chairman of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO), Wolf Kropp-Büttner. From 23 to 25 May 2016, 1,300 representatives from 64 countries participated at World Cocoa Conference (WCC), which this year took place in Bávaro in the Dominican Republic. Among them were more than 100 small-scale cocoa farming men and women. Following the event’s motto “*Building Bridges between Producers and Consumers*”, participants exchanged on issues of future cocoa production, strengthening sustainability as well as market and trade issues. Two highlights of the conference were the foundation of the network “*Women in Cocoa & Chocolate*” and the “*Cocoa Producers’ Forum*”.

On the occasion of this international conference, the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, as a multi-stakeholder initiative, took the opportunity to exchange with European partners to agree on closer cooperation and to establish contacts with Dominican producers and decision-makers together with the Ivorian delegation.

### **European actors could play pioneering role**

In a workshop for representatives of European stakeholders, which was carried out by GISCO in cooperation with the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the participants agreed on the need of an even stronger association of the actors under the umbrella of the global Plan of Action of the World Cocoa Organization (ICCO) and the CocoaAction strategy of the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) to implement the sector-wide change towards sustainability in cocoa. The European players could play a pioneering role. “Approaches must be bundled and used more effectively,” said Beate Weiskopf, Executive Secretary of



the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa. Participants of the meeting agreed to further this process together with the Swiss, the Dutch and German multi-stakeholder actors.

Following the World Cocoa Conference, the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa organized an excursion bringing together government officials and cocoa producers from the Ivory Coast, GISCO's partner country, and leading cocoa cooperatives, the Ministry of Agriculture as well as national cocoa bodies of the Dominican Republic. The focus of the two days was to exchange experiences and knowledge and to learn from each other in order to identify concrete ways and approaches for improvement. Topics included sustainable cocoa farming in agro-forestry systems under shade trees, the strengthening and integration of women and young farmers, fermentation and drying processes to improve quality, collaborative marketing by producer organizations and the role of public authorities and services to farmers' organizations.

“The successful experiences of Dominican farmers were very impressive and gave us many suggestions for improvement. We would like to continue promoting the exchange between cocoa producers in the future,” said Massandjé Touré-Litse, Director General of the Ivorian state-run Conseil du Café Cacao (CCC). Wolf Kropp-Büttner evaluated this information visit as an important step forward on a joint understanding of sustainable cocoa farming. “These past days we have seen very illustrative examples and learned a lot more about cocoa farming, quality and organizational development. We would be pleased if the visitors from West Africa continued this dialogue to allow many small-scale cocoa farmers and their families to benefit,” says Kropp-Büttner.

### **World Cocoa Conference 2018 to be held in Germany**

Every two years, the World Cocoa Conference (WCC) hosts representatives of governments, businesses and non-governmental organizations from producer and consumer countries to discuss interests of the cocoa economy and to continuously further develop the World Cocoa Agenda launched in 2012. In 2018, the WCC will be hosted by Germany. “Germany is looking forward to be the host for the cocoa world in Berlin in two years,” said Cornelia Berns, Head of Division for International Trade Policy at the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). Berns



## Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao

German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

accepted ICCO's decision on the next venue, deputizing for Christian Schmidt, Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture.

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Picture caption:

Cocoa producing countries cooperate: pictured here, representatives of the Ivorian Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC) and its Director General Massandjé Touré Litse (center) gather information on cocoa production and organizational development with the producer cooperative Grupo Conacado in El Ceibo, Dominican Republic. The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa had organized and accompanied this exchange of experiences in the framework of the World Cocoa Conference.

Photo: GISCO

About the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

The association German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO) is a joint initiative of the Federal Government, civil society as well as industry and retail grocery trade. It brings together relevant actors from Germany, the producing countries and international initiatives. The aim of the forum is to improve the livelihood of cocoa farmers, to protect and conserve natural resources and biodiversity in the producing countries, as well as increase the proportion of sustainably produced cocoa. GISCO currently has about 70 members and is open to other interested parties.

**Secretariat of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO)**

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