



Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao
German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019
of the
German Initiative
on Sustainable Cocoa

DOCUMENTATION

07 – 08 May 2019 | BMZ Berlin
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Stresemannstraße 94
10963 Berlin



Evening Event

WELCOME



Gunther Beger, Head of Directorate-General 1 “Policy Issues of Development Cooperation; Civil Society, Churches and Private Sector; Rural Development” at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), welcomed the participants. He pointed out that more than 60 % of sustainable cocoa was sold throughout Germany last year. This was a great success and a twenty-fold improvement over the beginnings of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO). In 2011 only about 3 % of German cocoa was

certified according to sustainability standards: “A sign that multi-stakeholder initiatives can work successfully” and GISCO is one of the best, according to Beger.

Mr Beger recommended to adopt the new overall objective of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa as proposed. He stressed that his Ministry took the new objective very seriously and that it would provide answers to the central questions of the sector. “I am delighted that we have made it this far, and we are laying the foundation for even greater success today,” Beger said, who once again stressed the GISCO's outstanding role in this context.

OPENING OF THE EVENING EVENT



Wolf Kropp-Büttner, Chairman of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, welcomed the guests, including the Executive Director of ICCO, Michel Arrion, and the members to the 7th Annual General Meeting of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa. This year's General Meeting would deal in detail with the topic “Living income and better living conditions for cocoa farmer families”. Kropp-Büttner referred to the Berlin Declaration, which states that the cocoa sector cannot be sustainable as long as cocoa farmers do not earn a living

income. This is also the purpose and priority task of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa. GISCO was faced with challenges and efforts, and had not yet produced all the results expected. A major problem is that “most cocoa farmer families are too dependent on cocoa cultivation”, Kropp-Büttner said. Only 13 % of families in Côte d'Ivoire reach or exceed an income above the poverty line.

In order to achieve “true change” three main strategies would have to be pursued: There must be a closer dialogue between cocoa consuming and cocoa producing countries and closer cooperation between cocoa producing countries. In addition, the development of the cocoa sector must be embedded locally in the sustainable development of the agricultural sector as a whole. Kropp-Büttner concluded with the words “We can only make progress together” and with the desire to make more efficient use of GISCO on the part of both the government and the private sector.

KEYNOTE: (NEW) STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE ICCO AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO A SUSTAINABLE COCOA SECTOR



Michel Arrion, Executive Director of the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) since the beginning of this year, introduced the new strategic direction of the ICCO and its contribution to a more sustainable cocoa sector.

Arrion stressed that despite efforts by all stakeholders to make the cocoa sector more sustainable within the framework of the International Cocoa Agreement (2010) and the Global Cocoa Agenda (2012), efforts have not been large enough to meet the scale of the challenges. The majority of producers still live below the international poverty line. As a global

organization, the ICCO has the main objective of contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). It must focus its work more on providing a living income for cocoa producers and on ecological sustainability. A “core element” is the improvement of incomes for small farmers through an increased farm gate price for cocoa, embedded in a combination of other measures: strategic supply management, increased diversification, financial incentives for organic farming practices, etc. ICCO should also prioritise the development of agroforestry systems, the elaboration of national agricultural development plans, local processing and the strengthening the political dialogue between all stakeholders.

According to Arrion, the Secretariat's task is to assist the ICCO member states by serving as a knowledge and information centre and as an intermediary for international cooperation and political dialogue. To this end, statistical data, economic analyses and forecasts should be improved and studies and market analyses should be carried out. Among other things, ICCO's participation in national and international should also improve the communication and visibility of ICCO. In order to improve political dialogue, the focus is not only on dialogue between member states within the International Cocoa Council, but also with the private sector within the Consultative Board. Michel Arrion concluded by saying that ICCO and he, as the new Executive Director, have a strong interest in receiving input from the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa. He sees ICCO in the future as the “World Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa” which depends on further input and support for the successful implementation of its priority tasks.

Subsequently, the option of setting up an Executive Committee to discuss key issues in a smaller circle was discussed. Arrion once again underlined the explosive nature of climate change for the cocoa sector, as entire regions could become unsuitable for cocoa cultivation in the future. ICCO has a responsibility to emphasise the importance of the issue time and again according to Arrion.

See [here](#) for the presentation by Michel Arrion.

Public Annual General Meeting

Moderation: Prof. Dr. Christian Thorun (ConPolicy)

OPENING



Wolf Kropp-Büttner, Chairman of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, welcomed the representatives of the Federal Government, the Parliamentary State Secretary Dr. Maria Flachsbarth and Dr. Katharina Böttcher, as well as the invited guests and the numerous members present. He thanked the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for its hospitality. He extended a special welcome to the new members and foreign guests.

Mr Kropp-Büttner stressed that the poverty of cocoa farmers is a major cause of abusive child labor and that deforestation in the growing regions poses major challenges for the cocoa sector. A milestone was the study of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) "Demystifying the Cocoa Sector in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire". With the help of the work of KIT and the Community of Practice for Living Income, there has been data for the first time on what a living income of the cocoa farmer families looks like, Kropp-Büttner said. The challenge now would be to translate this information into concrete implementation measures in order to continuously improve the income of the farmers. The Task Force Living Income, which is currently being established, is a promising initiative. Its aim is to find sustainable solutions together with the producing countries and to implement them. Success, however, will depend on whether close cooperation and active cooperation between the producing countries can be achieved. Kropp-Büttner called on the ICCO to assume a leading role in the sustainable development of the cocoa sector. An important task of the ICCO, he continued, is "to measure progress in the global sector". In return, Kropp-Büttner promised ICCO explicit support from the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa.

Kropp-Büttner appealed to the German government to address the challenges in the cocoa sector as part of the government negotiations with Côte d'Ivoire and other cocoa producing countries. In order to find solutions, good governance, greater transparency, accountability, less corruption and political will are needed in the producing countries according to Kropp-Büttner.

The Conseil du Café et du Cacao (CCC) is also proving to be a reliable partner for the PRO-PLANTEURS project with the new Director Yves Brahim Koné and is very positive about the implementation of the project. Wolf Kropp-Büttner said that he too would very much welcome a continuation of the project. The visit of the PRO-PLANTEURS project as part of the members' trip in November 2018 was very positive. Cooperation with the producing countries, in particular Côte d'Ivoire, has been further strengthened in this way.

According to Kropp-Büttner, a further highlight is the increased share of cocoa certified according to sustainability standards or verified as equivalent in the confectionery sold in Germany. For 2018, this was 62 % for the entire sector in Germany and 65 % for the GISCO members. The target of 85 % for 2025 is ambitious. A third highlight was the development of a definition by GISCO for sustainable cocoa and the revision of the now 12 individual goals which reflect the current challenges in the sector.

Kropp-Büttner very much regretted not being able to welcome guests from the producing countries to the General Meeting this year and appealed to change this again next year. The Chairman thanked the hospitality of both ministries, BMZ and BMEL, which substantially support GISCO's work, the heads of the working groups and their deputies, and Mr Thorun for his moderation.

WELCOME



Dr. Maria Flachsbarth, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), referred to the good cooperation with the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa and stressed the efforts of the German government to achieve the sustainability goals of the coalition agreement. She also spoke of the impressive experience of talking to cocoa farmers at the opening of the Green Innovation Centre in Côte d'Ivoire. There are many projects and cooperatives that work with standards, but she had noticed “that so many farmers do not receive a living income”.

The figures in Côte d'Ivoire are alarming, according to Dr Flachsbarth. Four out of five families could not make a living from selling cocoa, and challenges such as child labor and deforestation remain. Only when the weakest link in the value chain, the cocoa farmers, is profitable, will the challenges of the sector be overcome. “A living income is not a “nice-to-have”, but a “must-have””, the Parliamentary State Secretary said. In addition, GISCO's new overall objective must be used to achieve effects, to lift local people out of poverty and to protect natural resources.

To this end, a practicable global monitoring system should be implemented under the leadership of ICCO that reflects the sustainability development of the global sector. In addition, new strategies and solutions are needed to generate living incomes. “We must become more political: In dialogue with cocoa producing countries, we and donors must work together more closely and coherently and support reforms”, Dr. Flachsbarth said.

She expressed her explicit support for the establishment of an international multi-stakeholder task force “Living Income”. Companies would have to exercise due diligence in the supply chain, human rights violations would have to be ruled out and more investments would have to be made in forest protection. Biodiversity is also an essential element on the way to a sustainable cocoa sector. These and other points are reflected in the BMZ's and BMEL's 10-point cocoa plan and in the BMZ's new cocoa strategy, according to Dr. Flachsbarth.

Parliamentary State Secretary Dr. Flachsbarth concluded by pointing out that the BMZ considers binding regulations to be necessary in the future in order to achieve the sustainability goals of the cocoa sector.



Dr. Katharina Böttcher, Head of Department Agricultural Markets, Food Industry, Export at the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), recalled last year's Berlin Declaration of the World Cocoa Conference in Berlin. All the groups present were deeply involved in the development of the declaration. It clearly includes the abolition of child labor and a commitment to environmental protection. She gave both central concerns to the General Meeting and stressed that the BMEL would continue to accompany the work of GISCO constructively. The 10-point plan

for a sustainable cocoa sector presented at the beginning of this year by both ministries was a “signal for more fairness along the entire value chain – from the plantation to the consumer”. According to Dr. Böttcher, there are countless sector-wide efforts to improve the living conditions of cocoa farmers, but unfortunately no significant effects have yet been recorded to a satisfactory degree. Measures taken so far must be reviewed in order to ensure that the objectives are achieved. But not alone the consuming countries are responsible, but also on the part of the producing countries the efforts must be intensified to improve the living conditions of the cocoa farmers. “The producing countries must ensure that existing laws, especially the ban on child labor, are implemented”, said Dr. Böttcher. Finally, Dr Böttcher appealed to all those involved to ensure the continuation of the PRO-PLANTEURS project in Côte d'Ivoire, which would also mean that the CCC would continue to participate appropriately.

PRESENTATION: DEVELOPMENTS ON “LIVING INCOME”



Beate Weiskopf, Executive Secretary of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO), presented the definition and calculation of living incomes and the different approaches to achieving these incomes at first. She underlined the importance of living incomes in the context of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which in Article 23 establishes the “the right to just and favourable remuneration”. Moreover, the achievement of living incomes directly contributes to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals (no

poverty (1), zero hunger (2), decent work and economic growth (8), reduced inequality (10)). According to Weiskopf, recent figures show that more than 700 million people, many of them smallholder farmers in rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa, were still living in extreme poverty in 2015.

Therefore, the concept of living income deals with the level of income needed by smallholder farmer families and how this can be achieved. The Living Income Community of Practice defines a living income as “the net annual income required for a household in a particular place to afford a decent standard of living for all members of that household”. It encompasses the income of an entire household and also takes into account regionally specific costs for various aspects of a decent life. The income gap results from the difference between the required living income and the actual household income. It must be closed, Weiskopf said. Calculations by the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) on behalf of the Living Income Community of Practice had shown that this income gap for smallholder families in cocoa growing regions is 306 EUR per month in Côte d'Ivoire and 179 EUR per month in Ghana, which corresponds to 64 % and 52 % respectively of the living income. Calculations by Fairtrade International showed that a reference price for cocoa, is to be far above the current Fairtrade minimum price of 2,400 USD (at FOB level) in order to achieve a living income. Strategies to achieve a living income would have to go beyond the payment of premiums to achieve higher farm gate prices and would have to include increased supply control, income diversification, sustainable purchasing practices and increased productivity. Exactly this form of cross-sectoral and cross-actor strategy is also pursued by two central initiatives: While the Living Income Community of Practice is dedicated to the task of promoting cross-sectoral harmonisation in order to calculate living incomes and close the income gap, the Living Income Task Force is a multi-stakeholder association with a focus on the political-structural level of the cocoa sector in order to close the income gap.

See [here](#) for the presentation by Beate Weiskopf.

KICK-OFF TALKS FOLLOWED BY WORLD CAFÉS: LIVING INCOME AND BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS FOR FAMILIES OF COCOA FARMERS

In their keynote speeches, Michel Arrion (International Cocoa Organization, ICCO), Taco Terheijden (Cargill), Friedel Hütz-Adams (Südwind-Institut), Miko Hillig (Schokofair), Anna Laven (Royal Tropical Institute, KIT) and Judith Steffens (PRO-PLANTEURS) shed light on different aspects of the priority topic “Living income and better living conditions for families of cocoa farmers”. They were the prelude to the in-depth discussion in a total of six world cafés.

Michel Arrion, Executive Director of International Cocoa Organization (ICCO)



Michel Arrion, Executive Director of the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO), said the ICCO has so far been too little involved in sector-relevant discussions on sustainability issues in the cocoa sector, which he would like to change. He said that achieving a living income for cocoa farmers is an overriding priority in bringing about change in the cocoa sector.

With the question *“How can the ICCO contribute to a better income and better living income conditions of cocoa farmer families?”* Michel Arrion invited to a discussion with the guests

of the General Meeting.

With the introduction of the new five-year strategic plan at the meeting of the International Cocoa Council and Subsidiary Bodies in April 2019, Michel Arrion officially introduced the issue of a living income for cocoa farmers into the ICCO agenda. However, Arrion stressed the need to improve the exchange and discussion between cocoa producing and cocoa consuming countries. The understanding of the problem situation between the two groups of countries is not the same and there is not a sufficient basis of trust. To work on this is a first prerequisite to advance the issue of living income at ICCO level and in cocoa producing countries. A joint conceptual discussion is also important in order to achieve a common understanding of the fields of action for a living income. With this in mind, the participants of the world cafés welcomed the work of the Living Income Task Force, which has set itself precisely this task. They also called for consuming countries to organize themselves better in the ICCO. They are often not able to speak and have not coordinated their positions. On the part of the producing countries, the ministry level should be involved in the ICCO and not only the level of industry organisations, such as COCOBOD or CCC. A concrete contribution of ICCO could be to implement innovative pilot projects for additional income opportunities for cocoa farmers, e.g. through environmental services, or to act as a knowledge centre for the topic.

Taco Terheijden, Director of Cocoa Sustainability, Cargill



Taco Terheijden, pointed out that Cargill as a cocoa processor and chocolate manufacturer plays an active role in the Living Income Community of Practice: “Cocoa is a way of living”. He pointed out that working with cocoa must be rewarded as such, so that cocoa farmers can make a living from it. The question is what we can do and what each of us should do, according to Terheijden. He called for a clear distribution of the roles and contributions of the various interest groups.

With the overarching question *“What does the Living Income Community of Practice want to contribute to achieving a living income for cocoa farmer families? What does Cargill want to contribute to a living income of cocoa farmers?”* Taco Terheijden invited to a discussion with the guests of the General Meeting.

On the question of what the relevant actors in the cocoa sector need to do and what kind of environment needs to be created so that a living income can be achieved in cocoa growing regions, the participants discussed the influence of farm gate prices, the improvement of transparency along the supply chain and the question of the timeframe for achieving living incomes for smallholder farmer families.

Miko Hillig, Representative of the Student Initiative Schokofair



Miko Hillig began with the urgent call to press ahead with the abolition of child labor. He reminded of the World Cocoa Conference last year and that not much has changed since then. The living income problem is still at the top of the agenda, neither voluntary commitments by industry nor certifiers such as Rainforest Alliance, UTZ and Fairtrade have achieved much so far. Therefore, Miko Hillig and the members of the Schokofair! student initiative emphatically called for a legal ban on child labor, transparent supply chains and punishments for violations of children's and human rights even abroad: "No company may profit from child labor. Do not destroy the future of these children but save them. Just imagine they were your own", Miko Hillig said.

"What role do laws or regulatory frameworks play or can play in the elimination of child labor?" and "How are child labor and living incomes related – What are the recommendations for action?" were the guiding questions of the world café headed by Miko Hillig.

Using the example of the EU Regulation (2017/821) on conflict minerals, Hillig derived an existing obligation to provide evidence from the supplier to the customer, which may also result in a possible marketing ban. In the case of cocoa, reference was made to questions of implementation, control and possible consequences and to the NAP process already in place. Further points of discussion were whether the regulation was sufficient and whether companies were sufficiently complying with it. It was undisputed that any measure had to serve the welfare of the farming families. On the issue of child labor, the guests discussed possible consequences of a cocoa sector free of child labor, such as a shift of the problem to forced labor, to other sectors or the abduction of children from neighbouring countries, possible effects on the supply of cocoa and the price and, thirdly, structural problems that could prevent the desired school attendance.

Anna Laven, Social Scientist, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT)



At first, **Anna Laven** referred to the study "Demystifying the Cocoa Sector in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire" conducted by the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in the Netherlands, which examined the income situation of smallholder cocoa farmer families in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. She appealed to the participants to draw their own conclusions from the results. According to Laven, the entire sector should now build on this level of knowledge, put new information into context and make recommendations. Although there are differences between Côte

d'Ivoire and Ghana and between households, the gap between the current income and the required living income is still significant. Solutions need to be found to ensure income stability, equity and equity, transparency in producer countries, and coverage of basic needs in communities (e.g. health), according to Laven.

With the overarching questions "What are the key messages and conclusions of the study "Demystifying the Cocoa Sector in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire" by KIT?" and "What are your recommendations to achieve a living income for cocoa farmers' households?" Anna Laven invited to a subsequent discussion with the guests of the General Meeting.

Anna Laven offered the participants a detailed insight into the most important results of the study and the recommendations that result from it for achieving a living income for smallholder cocoa farmers. In particular, the role of diversification was discussed. An important finding of the study is that many households are already highly diversified. However, the question of how to effectively diversify regionally in order to increase income in a sustainable way needed to be addressed more intensively. On the other hand, there was the question of the effectiveness of certification systems and their impact on income increases. This was another point that needed to be explored more closely. Another topic was that in addition to measures to increase income directly related to cocoa cultivation, covering basic needs such as education, health and infrastructure also played an important role. The respective responsibilities of national governments, certification organizations and the private sector need to be clarified. Research institutes are to continue to shed more light on

open questions and in future focus on the entire range of results rather than just averages.

Friedel Hütz-Adams, Research Associate at Südwind-Institut



Friedel Hütz-Adams spoke out clearly in favour of closer exchange between the individual groups of actors and more transparency. According to Hütz-Adams, there is an urgent need for action to pass on existing research data and make it public. Despite the turnover generated by the industry, it has not been possible to make such data available. NGOs spend a lot of time finding funding agencies for such studies. There is not a lack of data in general, as has been discussed for years, but of publicly accessible data, according to Hütz-Adams.

With the overarching question “*From the point of view of NGOs, what are the most pressing challenges to achieve a living income and better living conditions for cocoa farmer families? What are the most important activities on the part of NGOs to achieve this?*”, Friedel Hütz-Adams invited to a subsequent discussion with the guests of the General Meeting.

Friedel Hütz-Adams initially delved even deeper into the problem of the industry's unwillingness to disclose its data on cocoa cultivation: Competition secrets of private companies make it very difficult to make the cocoa sector more sustainable and fair. He also sees a very clear need for action on the part of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa and its members to achieve a living income for cocoa farmer families. A further point that was discussed by the representatives of the various stakeholder groups in a very diverse way was the efficiency of certification and the question of how much they would benefit from it in the end. One industry representative called for more pressure to be exerted on the governments of producing countries to raise the minimum price or to set it at all. The consensus was that farmers should be more directly involved in a price increase. Finally, the participants dealt with the role of civil society. The most important measure is to establish partner structures between German civil society (e.g. NGOs) and civil society in Côte d'Ivoire according to the participants.

Judith Steffens, Project Manager of PRO-PLANTEURS



Judith Steffens stressed the important role of concrete projects. “What can and what should cocoa projects contribute to a livelihood?”, Steffens questioned and asked the participants for input on where more should be done and where the current strategy could still be adapted.

With the overriding question “*What is PRO-PLANTEURS' contribution to a better income for cocoa farmers (and their families)? What measures have been taken and what are the effects?*” Judith Steffens invited to a subsequent discussion with the guests of the General Meeting.

The participants of the world café discussed the most important approaches in projects to close the income gap. The points mentioned can be summarised as (1) increasing productivity in cocoa cultivation, (2) buy-in by public partners and ownership in the project country, (3) diversification, access to local markets and financing of sustainable business models, (4) cost reduction and budget management as well as (5) joint learning and information exchange. According to point 5, the participants shared experiences from their projects. It was pointed out that in many areas there was an information gap that needed to be closed. Particularly with regard to diversification, the conditions vary greatly from region to region, which makes an exchange of knowledge, scientific work and the dissemination of lessons learnt, best and worst practices all the more necessary.

GISCO'S PROJECT PRO-PLANTEURS: LOOKING BACKWARD AND FORWARD



Judith Steffens, Project Manager of PRO-PLANTEURS, looked back to the PRO-PLANTEURS project since the start in 2015.

All project partners (German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, BMZ/BMEL, CCC) had made their financial contributions as planned and thus enabled the project work to improve the living conditions of the cocoa farmers and their families. To achieve this goal, various target groups were reached in the four project areas "Strengthening farmer organizations", "Producing sustainable cocoa", "Improving nutrition through diversification" and

"Promoting joint learning" through various instruments. As part of Component 1, 18 cooperatives have already been trained, and 17 further cooperatives will undergo the training in the course of 2019. In addition to training in good agricultural practices, training was also provided in the field of agricultural entrepreneurship within Component 2, with a share of 26% women.

Further training courses, especially for young entrepreneurs, are planned for the remaining period until May 2020. They are supposed to improve the household management of producers, increase their income from cocoa cultivation and create sustainable business and income opportunities for young entrepreneurs. As part of Component 3 members of the cooperatives had been trained in improved nutrition and diversification. In addition, projects on income-generating measures for women could be implemented, which had been particularly well received by the producers.

All these measures should be extended to other cooperative members by the end of the term. Since 2015, the PRO-PLANTEURS project has been intensively concerned with processing and documenting learning experiences from the project and sharing them with the project partners within the framework of studies, evaluations and events as part of Component 4 "Joint Learning". In addition to networking with project partners and other actors in the sector, the networking of PRO-PLANTEURS cooperatives among each other had also been promoted. According to Steffens, this is also important in order to plan a possible next phase of PRO-PLANTEURS based on learning experiences.

See [here](#) for the presentation by Judith Steffens.



Key questions of a possible second phase of PRO-PLANTEURS were presented by **Sonia Lehmann** from the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa in her lecture. The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa is currently in the preparatory phase for a possible second phase of PRO-PLANTEURS from June 2020. In March 2019, a review mission to develop a project concept was carried out in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. An external evaluation carried out in September 2017 for the BMEL had shown that the PRO-PLANTEURS project included exemplary cooperation

between the partners involved, both from Germany and from Côte d'Ivoire, which also promoted a joint learning process. Therefore, the results so far are positive in all four components and the project objectives could be achieved by 2020. In addition, the visibility of GISCO in Côte d'Ivoire has been increased, Lehmann said. Therefore, a possible second phase of PRO-PLANTEURS should build on the successes of the first phase, deepen and expand them. The aim should be to improve the living conditions of cocoa farmers and their families and to contribute to the conservation of natural resources. Four components are proposed for implementation: (1) strengthening cooperatives; (2) strengthening operating systems through improved cocoa cultivation, diversification and nutrition; (3) joint learning; (4) direct cooperation along the value chain. Components 1 and 2 are based on the previous components 1-3 and would provide training for the cooperatives, also in the area of access to financing and networking between the cooperatives. In addition, measures in agricultural entrepreneurship and diversification/nutrition as well as in the area of adaptation to climate change are planned. The exchange of experience under Component 3 should focus on close cooperation with the Green Innovation Centre in Côte d'Ivoire, which is financed by the BMZ and focuses on cocoa. Under Component 4, concrete pilot projects with members of the German Initiative on

Sustainable Cocoa on child labor, agroforestry, living income and other topics are planned. The empowerment of women would find its way into the individual components as a cross-cutting theme. In this way, the special focus of the project on women would be maintained. It was also recommended to continue the project in the current intervention zone in the southwest of Côte d'Ivoire, Lehmann said.

See [here](#) for the presentation by Sonia Lehmann.

QUESTIONS FOR THE FOLLOW-UP PHASE OF PRO-PLANTEURS

Following the presentations by Mrs Steffens and Mrs Lehmann, the members and guests of the General Meeting were asked to brainstorm on the evaluation and outlook of PRO-PLANTEURS with the help of the questions “Did PRO-PLANTEURS I meet your expectations?” and “Does GISCO need PRO-PLANTEURS II?”.

In general, the participating guests saw the expectations of the PRO-PLANTEURS project fulfilled, but the participants wanted more experience reports from the project and more transparency regarding the achievement of objectives.

Overall, there was a majority consensus that the project should have a follow-up phase. To this end, it should be made even clearer which lessons should be drawn from the first phase and how they could be applied to a second phase. However, many of those present wanted the Ivorian government to continue to play an active role in a follow-up phase in the future - some of the members decided that financial participation was a basic prerequisite.

SURPRISE VISIT FROM FEDERAL MINISTER DR. GERD MÜLLER



To the great surprise of all participants, the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), **Dr. Gerd Müller**, paid a spontaneous visit to the General Meeting of the German Initiative on Sustainable in the early afternoon. Cocoa is a “top topic at management level” within the BMZ, 62 % is not enough, 100 % certified cocoa should be achieved in the long term. The Federal Minister expressed his great thanks to the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa for its many years of commitment and emphasised its pioneering role. GISCO is a role

model for other sectors. His personal experience in cocoa producing countries had shown him that a great deal of commitment is still needed in the future in order to make progress towards a sustainable cocoa sector. To this end, it is also necessary to appeal to consumers and to make it clear that each individual's decision to consume can send an important signal. According to Dr. Müller, the time has come to implement the German government's National Action Plan for Human Rights with the help of a clear monitoring system to show that voluntary commitments by companies could certainly be successful. The cocoa sector is far ahead of other sectors and is a role model. Müller also said that if voluntarism could not rule out child labor, legal regulation would have to demand it. “After five to ten years, voluntary work has come to an end”, Federal Minister Müller said. He appealed to all those present to continue the existing commitment in order to achieve the ambitious goals in the cocoa sector with “joy and determination”.

Wolf Kropp-Büttner, Chairman of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, thanked the Minister for his words and promised to listen to the appeals. He also asked the Minister to call for the implementation of a sustainable cocoa sector on the ground as part of the forthcoming government negotiations with Côte d'Ivoire.

MARKET FOR INFORMATION

The “Market for Information“ presented accompanying topics to the participants and offered the opportunity to discuss their goals and successes.

➤ **eco.business Fund (Finance in Motion)**



The [eco.business Fund](#) is a joint initiative of investors. It supports the promotion of business and consumer practices that contribute to the protection of biodiversity, the sustainable use of natural resources, the fight against climate change and adaptation to its effects.

Contact:
Julian Smykalla, Sylvia Wisniwski

➤ **BMZ Special Initiative “Training and Job Creation“ (GIZ)**

The [BMZ Special Initiative “Training and Job Creation“](#) has been supporting companies since the beginning of the year with investments in African countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Ghana, Ethiopia, Morocco and Tunisia. The aim is to create jobs through an overarching approach.

Contact:
Andreas Kaiser



➤ **Initiative for a Task Force Living Income (GIZ)**



The Task Force Living Income, currently in preparation, is a multi-stakeholder coalition focusing on the cocoa sector. It concentrates on policy issues and structural barriers and develops practical strategies and solutions for living incomes. The aim is to close the income gap of cocoa farmers through collective action.

Contact:
Martina Gäbler

➤ **CO₂ financing, climate strategy and sustainable supply chains(South Pole)**

[South Pole](#) develops climate protection projects and is particularly dedicated to the implementation of projects in complex agricultural supply chains. Particularly in the cocoa sector, they follow the "Supply Chain Climate Action Partnerships" approach: The aim is to bring all actors in the cocoa sector together, reduce emissions and create income diversification.

Contact:
Christopher Politano



➤ **Trees for Climate Justice (Plant-for-the-Planet)**



[Trees for Climate Justice](#) is a project launched by Plant-for-the-Planet to plant trees around the world to combat the climate crisis. Children around the world have joined forces to plant a billion trees to offset CO₂ emissions.

Contact:
Gisela Petzold, Paula Ordemann, Maximilian Rürger

➤ **Implementation of the National Action Plan "Economy & Human Rights" (NAP Helpdesk)**

The [NAP Helpdesk](#) is a support service of the Federal Government for German companies. It offers free and confidential advice regarding the implementation of the National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights in companies and business associations.

Contact:
Sabine Peters-Halfbrodt, Katharina Herrmann



➤ **Carbon Insetting (Forest Finest Consulting)**



The aim of [Forest Finest Consulting](#) is to use its own supply chain to shape the CO₂ offsetting of its own company instead of buying CO₂ certificates on the open market (offsetting). The buyer of raw materials from carbon-certified land use projects (e.g. a cocoa or chocolate brand) thus benefits from carbon neutrality and improved long-term supplier loyalty and better cocoa beans.

Contact:
Magdalena Garbacz

CLOSING WORDS

Wolf Kropp-Büttner, Chairman of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, closed the public General Meeting and thanked all those present for their participation. The lively discussion, which took place again this year, will be further intensified by GISCO in cooperation with the partners.

The agenda of the Annual General Meeting and the presentations are available on our website, see: <https://www.kakaoforum.de/en/about-us/general-meetings/>

Note:

The minutes of the internal meeting have been prepared and sent separately to the GISCO members.

