



Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao

German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

Members' Information July 2025

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News from the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa



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Review of the 13th General Meeting of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

Bonn, 26 & 27 May 2025

On May 26 and 27, the 13th General Meeting took place at the **Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Food, and Regional Identity (BMLEH)** in Bonn. Around 80 participants from civil society, politics, industry, and the food trade gathered to discuss under the title "On Track for Change? Strategies and Partnerships for a Living Income". A central element of this year's assembly was the exchange on the Living Income Roadmaps, which members developed and submitted over the past year. Additionally, thematic sessions provided space for further exchange on certification, procurement practices, and support measures for producers. A highlight consisted in the panel with Alida N'Takpe-Coulibaly (SCOOP-RASSO), Mamadou Gbongué (**Le Conseil du Café-Cacao - CCC**), and Jonathan Parkman (Marex), who shared their views on the current situation in the cocoa market.



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We thank everyone for their participation in the assembly and the constructive, and inspiring exchange. Special thanks go to the **BMLEH** for providing the premises. The results of the discussions and group work will contribute to GISCO's strategic development, particularly in the discussion of concrete measures to promote responsible procurement practices.

[To the Photo Documentation of the public part of the General Meeting..](#)

[To the Press Release](#)

Board members of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa re-elected for another term, PRO-PLANTEURS III approved, individual goals reduced

Bonn, 26 May 2025

The members of **GISCO** confirmed the board members from the previous election period during the general assembly. The board is composed of appointed as well as elected representatives.

Member Group A – Federal Government:

- **Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Food, and Regional Identity**, represented by Dr. Artur Ickstadt (appointed member)
- **Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development**, represented by Jens Busma (appointed member)

Member Group B – German Cocoa, Chocolate & Confectionery Industry:

- Aldo Cristiano, **Ferrero**
- Dr. Torben Erbrath, **BDSI** (appointed member)

Member Group C – German Food Trade:

- Florian Schütze, **Schwarz Group**
- Christian Mieles, BVLH (appointed member)

Member Group D – Civil Society:

- Evelyn Bahn, **INKOTA-netzwerk e.V.**

Dr. Torben Erbrath, **BDSI**, was re-elected as treasurer.

Additionally, the members of **GISCO** decided not to continue with individual goal 8 on the implementation of corporate due diligence obligations and individual goal 11 on the share of certified cocoa and cocoa from company programs, which will expire in 2025. Certification remains an important instrument and part of the members' roadmaps, ensuring that developments continue to be monitored. The members also agreed to continue the **PRO-PLANTEURS** member project into a third phase III (2025 – 2030).

In the subsequent board meeting, the board also confirmed the chairman Aldo Cristiano and the two deputy chairpersons Florian Schütze and Evelyn Bahn.

The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa sets the course for improved cooperation

The **German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa** aims to further develop its working methods: In the future, **GISCO** wants to act more dynamically and address strategic questions more directly from its membership. To achieve this, the board will convene task forces that will focus on specific issues. The task forces will be filled as needed from the membership and supported by the secretariat. The representatives will relay the proposals developed in the task forces back to their respective member groups to gather feedback and ensure broad approval within the membership. These task forces will replace the previously existing Sustainability Working Group (AG Nachhaltigkeit) and the Monitoring Subgroup (UAG Monitoring). Other working groups of **GISCO**, which serve the purposes of exchange, joint learning, and communication (such as the Communication Working Group or the PRO-PLANTEURS Working Group), will continue to exist.

The Sustainability Working Group (AG Nachhaltigkeit) will conclude with a final **in-person meeting on October 7** in Bonn at the **BDSI**. This meeting will mark the start of the new task forces. The representatives of all member groups will discuss which task forces are needed for which strategic issues at the strategy meeting in September.

Due to current needs, two task forces have already been established:

- A task force to accompany this year's monitoring report, replacing the Monitoring Subgroup (UAG Monitoring).
- A task force to prepare for the strategy meeting in September.

A big thank you goes to the members who have been actively involved in the outgoing working groups - especially the leaders of the Working Group Sustainability (Andreas Reichert and Evelyn Bahn) and the Subgroup Monitoring (Evelyn Bahn)!

Online Seminar: Pricing mechanisms in the cocoa sector - Regulated and unregulated markets in producing countries

Online, 13 May 2025

How do different pricing systems affect income in cocoa farming? In the online seminar, Dr. Sophie van Huellen (University of Manchester) and Dr. Samuel Orisajo (Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria) examined the impact of regulated and unregulated cocoa markets using the examples of Ghana and Nigeria. Over 80 participants discussed how price stability, market mechanisms, and political frameworks interact – and what this means for the goal of achieving a living income. While Ghana pursues a government-regulated approach with fixed farmgate prices that are increasingly being flexibly adjusted, Nigeria is considering moving towards a hybrid model with stronger regulation through a planned Cocoa Management Board.

[To the recording of the online seminar](#)

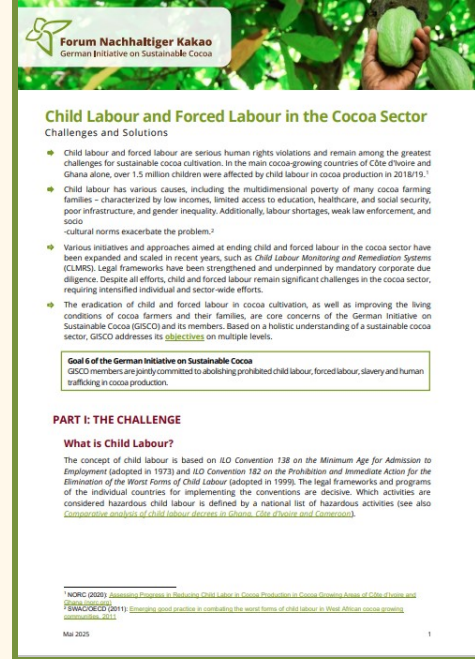
[To the presentation slides](#)

Background Paper on Child Labor and Forced Labor

The updated background paper on child labor and forced labor is now available on the website of

GISCO in both German and English. In addition to updates to existing texts, sections on forced labor, the existing legal framework, and solutions for ending child labor and forced labor have been added.

[<u>Here you have access to the English version.</u>](https://www.kakaoforum.de/ueber-uns/unsere-mitglieder/roadmaps-unserer-mitglieder/)



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Communication on Individual Goal 11

To facilitate communication regarding the discontinuation of Individual Goal 11, a text module has been created in coordination with the Working Group Communication. This module expresses amongst others that certification remains an important instrument for the members and part of their individual roadmaps and progress reports. The text module is stored in the members' section of the website and can be used as needed.

[To the text module Individual Goal 11](#)

Personnel Changes – New Team Members in the Secretariat

This summer, there will be some personnel changes at **GISCO** due to parental leaves and position changes. Bettina Renner will take over Annalena Podzun's position as Junior Specialist Communication on August 1, 2025. Julia Ditz and Juliane Lutze will go on maternity leave followed by parental leave for several months starting in July. Christian Dohse will take over the topics of Forest/Agroforestry/Traceability, Online Seminars/ISCO Learning Network, and support for the monitoring system on July 1, 2025. Ralf Buss will primarily be responsible for the pilot project on complaint mechanisms and the Retailer's Working Group on Living Income starting July 1, 2025. Additionally, he will assist in developing the joint communication structure of the ISCOs and take over responsibility for the topics of Human Rights, Child Labor, and Gender. We look forward to good cooperation!

PRO-PLANTEURS

PRO-PLANTEURS III: Ongoing preparations for the third phase

Côte d'Ivoire, April-May 2025

PRO-PLANTEURS III will tackle new challenges and adjust its action strategy in its areas of operation. To this end, two missions were conducted in May. During the first mission, 15 cooperatives in the **PRO-PLANTEURS III** project area were visited to evaluate the cooperation to date. This visit also serves as an important basis for developing criteria for selecting cooperatives in Phase III. Another mission analyzed the use of the digital learning platform in the cooperatives to ensure the long-term support of cocoa producers in the previous project regions.



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Ivorian delegation gains insights into the German cocoa and chocolate industry

Hamburg/Frankfurt/Aachen, 20 – 29 May 2025

As part of the framework program surrounding the visit to the General Meeting of the **German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa**, Dr. Johanes Agbahey (Project Manager **PRO-PLANTEURS**), Yelly Bintou Niamen-Ndeli (**PRO-PLANTEURS**), and Karidja Konate (Ivorian staff member of the **German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa**) as well as Mamadou Gbongué (**CCC**), gained insights into the German cocoa and chocolate industry during their stay in Germany. At various locations in Germany - from the transport and storage of raw cocoa at the Port of Hamburg with **H.D. Cotterell** and **HCCO** to the end products at **Nestlé**, **Ferrero**, and **Lambertz** - the team received exciting insights. The discussions revolved around cocoa processing, chocolate production, and sustainability efforts. During a tour at **Chocoversum**, the process from cocoa harvest to finished chocolate was traced at various stations. For the project team, this first mission was a good opportunity to gain insights into the new field of sustainable procurement and to better understand the work of the **German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa** and individual stakeholders. The mission concluded with an introductory meeting with the new economic cooperation officers of the German Embassy in Abidjan, where the project and office management, as well as the **CCC**, presented the long-standing collaboration within the framework of the **PRO-PLANTEURS** project. Special thanks go to all those involved who made and organized this exciting framework program possible.



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PRO-PLANTEURS new project manager, Dr. Johanes Agbahey

With each new phase of **PRO-PLANTEURS**, there has also been a change in project management. Sonia Lehmann is succeeded by Dr. Johanes Agbahey for the third phase of **PRO-PLANTEURS**. Mr. Agbahey is a PhD agronomist with over 17 years of experience in planning, implementing, and coordinating development projects, particularly in sustainable agricultural supply chains and agricultural policy advisory. He obtained degrees in agronomy from the University of Abomey Calavi in Benin and the University of Hohenheim, and received his PhD in agricultural economics from Humboldt University Berlin. In addition to his academic work, Mr. Agbahey gained field experience with NGOs and research institutes in Benin and Cameroon and previously held roles as a consultant at GIZ in Germany. Since 2021, he has been the project manager for the GIZ project Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains in Côte d'Ivoire. Mr. Agbahey is fluent in German, French, and English, as well as Fon and Mina.



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PRO-PLANTEURS III – new factsheet available

PRO-PLANTEURS is a joint project of the Ivorian Coffee-Cocoa Council (**Conseil du Café-Cacao**), the German Federal Government (supported by the **Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Regional Identity** and the **Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development**), and the **German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa**. Since 2015, the project has aimed to improve the living conditions of cocoa farming households, professionalize cooperatives, and pave the way for sustainable cocoa production. Significant impacts have already been achieved in the first two phases: for example, supported households have increased their productivity to at least 500 kg per hectare and significantly boosted their incomes. Further impacts are summarized in the new [PRO-PLANTEURS factsheet](#).

In the third phase, the project will focus on achieving living incomes, as well as accompanying and testing new models for sustainable procurement with interested companies. Additionally, cooperatives will be supported in meeting requirements related to the African Regional Standard (ARS 1000) and the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). The fight against the cocoa virus disease Swollen Shoot (CSSV) will be intensified with targeted measures within the project. Knowledge exchange in the **German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa** and the further development of knowledge products remain in focus. **PRO-PLANTEURS III** will initially be implemented by GIZ from June 2025 to May 2028.

Reports from Côte d'Ivoire and the region

This section was created in collaboration with SWISSCO



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ICCO Cocoa Market Report May: Price Shifts, Climate Impacts, and Changing Stock Levels

Abidjan, 12 June 2025

The International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) has published the Cocoa Market Report for May 2025. Four key developments are currently shaping the market:

- **Factors leading to price increases in the market:** Market concerns shifted from quantity to the quality of cocoa deliveries. Delayed rainfall affected the quality of the mid-crop beans, exacerbating supply shortages. This led to a rise in cocoa prices in the first half of the month.
- **Price volatility:** Cocoa prices surged significantly in the first half of the month, reaching a three-month high of \$10,242 per ton in London and a three-and-a-half-month high of \$10,986 per ton in New York. There were considerable price fluctuations with rapid price increases within a few days.
- **Factors leading to price decreases in the market:** In the second half of the month, the price increase reversed, and prices dropped significantly. Improved weather conditions and the buildup of inventories led to the price

https://www.icco.org/wp-content/uploads/Cocoa-Market-Report_March-2025.pdf

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2025 (ICCO)

decline. Above-average rainfall promoted the development of cocoa plants, easing supply concerns and increasing downward price pressure.

- **Stock levels:** Cocoa bean inventories in New York followed an upward trend, indicating increased supply, while inventories in London decreased due to structural differences in cocoa classification. Different valuation standards and US customs policies influenced inventory development and market sentiment.

Growth Returns to Ghana's Cocoa Sector for the First Time

Accra, 17 Juni 2025

Ghana's cocoa sector recorded a growth of 3.4% in the first quarter of 2025, marking the first growth since the second quarter of 2023. *Citi Newsroom* reports that this ends a six-quarter decline which had raised concerns in agriculture and export value chains. The resurgence is part of broader growth in the agricultural sector, which increased by 6.6% in the first quarter of 2025, compared to 2.4% in the same period last year. Overall, the Ghanaian economy grew by 5.3%, driven by strong performances in fisheries, ICT, and manufacturing. Experts view the growth of the cocoa sector as a sign of recovery, especially given the stabilizing global demand.

[To the article \(Citi Newsroom\)](#)

Africa Cocoa Summit and COFAAA Cocoa Awards

Accra, 16 June 2025

The Cocoa Farmers Alliance Association of Africa (COFAAA) announced the Africa Cocoa Summit and the COFAAA Cocoa Awards, as reported by *The Guardian*. The two-day event will take place from October 22 to 23, 2025, at the ISSER Conference Centre, University of Ghana, in Accra. The summit will address threats such as synthetic cocoa and structural challenges faced by Africa's cocoa producers. Its aim is to promote fair trade practices and better market conditions. The event will feature lectures, strategy meetings, and the awarding of prizes for sustainability and innovation.

Energy from Cocoa Waste in Côte d'Ivoire

Divo, 5 June 2025

The Climate Funds Manager (CFM), part of the City Climate Finance Gap Fund, and Société des Energies Nouvelles (SODEN), an independent Ivorian energy producer, have inaugurated the first grid-connected facility for energy generation from cocoa waste in Divo, Côte d'Ivoire. According to *ESG News* and *Sikafinance*, the 76 MW biomass project will generate 550 GWh of clean electricity annually for 1.4 million people and save 2,029 tonnes of CO₂e emissions. Additionally, it will support 36,000 cocoa farmers and increase the local economic value by 6.8 million euros annually.

[To the article \(The Guardian\)](#)

[To the article of ESG News](#)

[To the article of Sikafinance](#)

Nigeria aims to promote cocoa processing

Abuja, 2 June 2025

On June 2, Nigerian Vice President Senator Kashim Shettima stated, during the visit of a delegation from the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), that the government under President Bola Tinubu is determined to revitalize the cocoa industry and the entire agricultural value chain in Nigeria, according to *Vanguard* and *channelstv.com*. The aim is to transform Nigeria from a cocoa producer to a global cocoa processor. This will be achieved through sustainable cocoa cultivation and forest conservation. The recent decision by the Federal Executive Council to establish a National Cocoa Management Board (NCMB) underscores this initiative. Shettima emphasized that processing cocoa is economically much more lucrative than mere production. Additionally, Nigeria is pursuing a \$25 billion project for an underwater gas pipeline to Europe to secure energy supply and attract international investments. Christ Vincent, President of the WCF, indicated his support and willingness to collaborate with the Nigerian government.

[To the article \(Vanguard\)](#)

[To the article \(channelstv.com\)](#)

FAO supports mapping in agroforestry systems in Cameroon

Kamerun, 19 May 2025

Agroforestry promotes biodiversity conservation and strengthens ecosystem services, but it also leads to particular requirements to ensure access to the European market. Through the COCAFORI project and the EU-funded Sustainable Cocoa Programme, *FAO* supports stakeholders in Cameroon with advanced mapping technologies and AI-based models to comply with the EU's deforestation regulation. *FAO* experts develop maps and risk assessment tools from georeferenced data to lay the foundation for a sustainable cocoa sector in Cameroon, Africa's third-largest cocoa producer.

[Here you get to the whole article.](#)

Collaboration on the European level

ISCO 2.0 – Presentation at the European Cocoa Forum in Malta

Bern/Bonn/Brussels/Paris/Utrecht

Together with the four platforms for sustainable cocoa from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, the GISCO has developed an approach for enhanced cooperation at the European level to

better address common challenges and make the ISCO collaboration future-proof. The ongoing review process is expected to be completed in August. The new ISCO 2.0 approach will then be presented and an updated Memorandum of Understanding will be signed at the upcoming ECA Forum on **September 17 and 18 in Malta**. The meeting will also serve as the starting point for the operationalization of the various work areas.

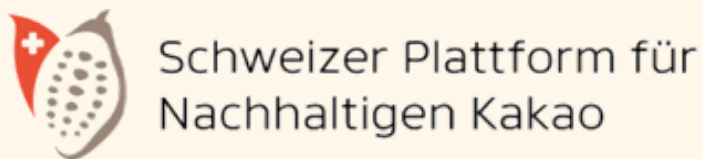
[The website for the European Cacao Forum 2025 you can find here.](#)



DISCO – Annual General Meeting on 07/09/2025

Amsterdam, July 2025

The Dutch platform **DISCO** will hold its Annual General Meeting on 07/09/2025 in Amsterdam. **DISCO** partners will have the opportunity to discuss, among other things, the progress and further strategic direction of the platform as well as the implementation of the **DISCO** procurement principles.



Strategic Shift: Switzerland's Cocoa Sector Tightens Sustainability Targets"

Frick/Zurich, May-July 2025

The Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa (**SWISSCO**) has officially launched a new phase in its commitment to sustainability with the adoption of a significantly revised **Roadmap 2030**. Unveiled during the platform's annual general meeting (June 26, 2025) at the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in Frick, the roadmap outlines stronger, clearer, and more actionable goals for the decade ahead. An important milestone: In 2024, 84% of the cocoa imported into Switzerland came from sustainable sources (certified by Fairtrade Max Havelaar or Rainforest Alliance or from company programs that were verified through independent audits).

A key milestone: As of 2024, **84% of cocoa imported into Switzerland** now comes from sustainable sources (certified by Fairtrade Max Havelaar / Rainforest Alliance or coming from company programmes verified by independent audits).

What's New in the Roadmap 2030?

The revised strategy features **six focused sustainability ambitions**, developed collaboratively by stakeholders across business, research, government, and NGOs

The Six Ambitions of the Roadmap 2030

1. All cocoa farmers with viable farmland and sustainable yield achieve at least a living income.
2. Cocoa production protects human rights, ensures fair working conditions, and ends child and forced labor.

3. Cocoa cultivation does not contribute to deforestation and actively supports the restoration of degraded forest ecosystems.
4. Agroforestry practices are widespread in cocoa cultivation.
5. Cocoa farming is aligned with global climate goals by reducing emissions in the short term (2030) and long term (2050).
6. The import of cocoa-containing products into Switzerland is based on fully traceable and transparent supply chains.

Why this matters: These targets are now supported by a **three-tier implementation model**, making participation accessible to companies at various stages of sustainability development.



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[More information here.](#)

Between September 22 and 26, **SWISSCO** and the Swiss Sustainable Coffee Platform (SSCP) will host a **Landscape Week in Zurich**. The event aims to bring together members and partners from cocoa and coffee-growing regions of the Global South to share knowledge and experiences on landscape initiatives, fostering mutual learning and stronger collaboration among farmers, businesses, authorities, and civil society. Participation in the event is by invitation only – interested parties can contact the [SWISSCO office](#).

Sustainability in the cocoa sector

This section was created in collaboration with SWISSCO

Sustainable cocoa cultivation in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone, 11 June 2025

Transparency and traceability are crucial to addressing challenges such as low incomes and environmental impacts in the global cocoa supply chain. Within the framework of the [Due Diligence Fund](#) (DDF), the **Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains Initiative (SASI)** collaborated with partners such as **Fairtrade**, dm-drogerie markt, and Maestrani to sustainably improve social, ecological, and economic standards in cocoa cultivation in Sierra Leone. This [LinkedIn post](#) demonstrates how approximately 7,000 smallholder farmers and companies benefit from these measures.

New President of the European Cocoa Association elected

Brussels, 11 June 2025

Christian Vollers, Managing Director of the **Vollers Group**, has been elected as the new President of the European Cocoa Association (ECA). He assumed office on May 15, succeeding Paul Davis. The **Vollers Group** in Bremen is a long-established logistics company specializing in cocoa, coffee, tea, and other high-quality raw materials.

[More information here.](#)

Peruvian government promotes the implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation at a regional meeting of cocoa farmers

Peru, 7 June 2025

The Peruvian Ministry of Agrarian Development and Irrigation (MIDAGRI) participated in the regional meeting of cocoa producers "For a Sustainable Cocoa Chain with a Woman's Face", as reported by [gop.pe](#). The event was organized by the Peruvian Association of Cocoa Producers (APPCACAO) with the support of GIZ, UNDP, FOLUR, HUMUNDI, and CONVEAGRO. The aim was to strengthen the involvement of women in the cocoa value chain. MIDAGRI presented the national strategy for complying with the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) to ensure that cocoa, coffee, and palm oil can be exported deforestation-free and in compliance with the law. Special attention was given to the inclusion of women from rural areas. During the event, proposals were developed to promote female leadership roles, gender equality, and sustainable practices.

[To the article of \[gop.pe\]\(#\)](#)



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Combating child labour through digitalisation

Online, 5 June 2025

The **SASI** lunch break in June presented the FAO's DigiChild initiative. This uses geo-referenced data to systematically identify, map and reduce risk factors for child labour in agriculture.

World Bank raises international poverty line

Online, 5 June 2025

The World Bank has been measuring global poverty for 35 years to track progress in the fight against extreme poverty. In 1990, the international poverty line was introduced, which has been updated several times and currently stands at 3 US dollars per person per day, according to the *World Banks Blog*. In addition to this line, there have been poverty lines for middle-income countries since 2017. These data show that poverty has significantly decreased in East Asia and the Pacific as well as in South Asia, while it is increasingly concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, the World Bank developed the Prosperity Gap to better capture differences in living standards between low-income and highly developed countries. These measurements aim to help identify political action areas more precisely to combat global poverty more effectively.

[Here you can read the whole article.](#)

New studies and reports



© UNICEF/ILO

UNICEF/ILO publish new report on child labor worldwide

New York, 2025

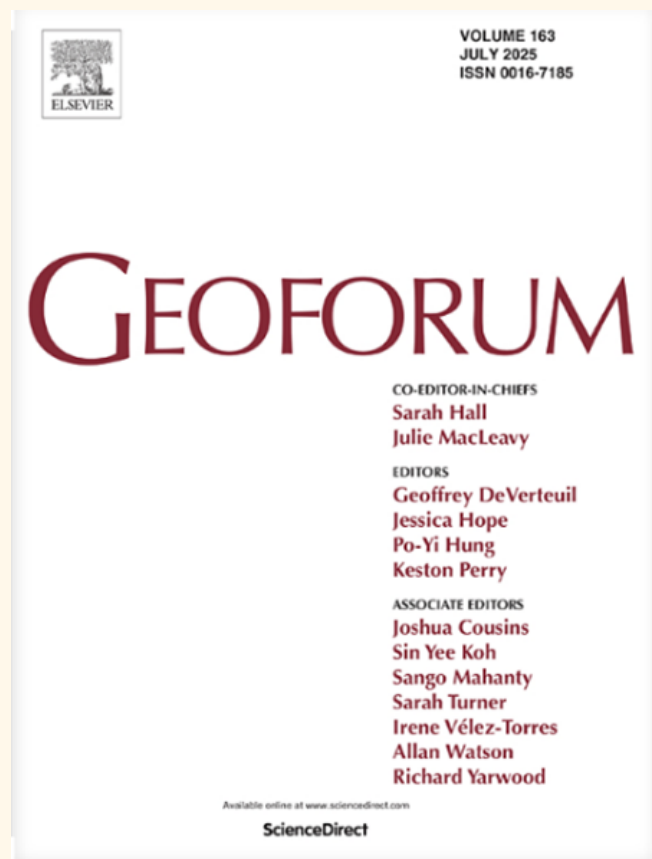
According to the latest estimates from UNICEF and the ILO, **almost 138 million children and adolescents aged 5-17 years were engaged in child labor** worldwide in 2024. Despite a temporary increase during the COVID-19 pandemic, the positive trend of previous decades in reducing child labor continued: In 2020, UNICEF and ILO had still counted 160 million children. Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the highest proportion, where nearly two-thirds of the counted child laborers live, and almost one in four children is affected (22%). Compared to other regions of the world, an above-average portion of child labor, 70%, takes place in agriculture.

[To the report](#)

Study: Formalization through contracts: Implications for power in smallholder cocoa supply chains

Victoria, 31 May 2025

In the current issue of *Geoforum*, a joint study by researchers from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, England, France, and Canada was published. The study examines the impacts of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) on cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Through case studies and over 100 interviews, formal and informal contractual relationships were analyzed, and it was found that certifications, while promoting sustainable production, could also restrict the flexibility and agency of farmers. This is partly attributed to the fact that informal contracts could offer more bargaining power and autonomy. It is emphasized that balanced policies are necessary and that the effects on farmers must be assessed to achieve fair and sustainable outcomes.



© Geoforum

[To the study](#)

New study on the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (EU CSDDD)

Brisbane, 26. May 2025

Regulation & Governance published a study by Wageningen University titled “Navigating the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive: How Multinational Enterprises Approach Regulatory Familiarization in the Chocolate Sector”. The study examines the implementation of the EU Supply Chain Directive (CSDDD) in the chocolate industry, with a focus on the onboarding processes of companies. The findings highlight an adjustment in business behavior induced by the concept of due diligence under the changed regulation of corporate responsibility. The study emphasizes the notably early support of the directive by multinational companies and the increased interaction between private sector actors and civil society in the so-called Global North even during the negotiation of the directive. The study identifies uncertainties for implementation and political insecurity as challenges for companies and their acclimatization processes. In the long term, the CSDDD aims to reduce human rights violations and environmentally harmful practices in global supply chains. This is seen as a significant step towards promoting sustainable and responsible business practices.

[Here you find the whole study.](#)

Study on Climate Change: Fear and Hopelessness Drive Cocoa Farmers to Unsustainable Practices

Brasil, 21 May 2025

Climate change is increasingly impacting the cocoa industry. A study by the University of Exeter, published in the *Strategic Management Journal*, shows that fear and hopelessness are driving cocoa farmers in Brazil

to adopt short-term, harmful adaptation measures such as switching to livestock farming. These strategies exacerbate climate change in the long run and lead to so-called climate traps, which intensify ecological damage and increase vulnerability to future climate risks.

[To the artikel](#)

[To the study](#)

You can find an overview of studies on the cocoa sector organised by topic on the [website](#) of the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa.

Member News

Note: The following section consists of excerpts from contributions by member organizations and any inputs remain in their responsibility.

Sustainability Theme Week at the Schokoladenmuseum Cologne

Cologne, 23 June 2025

The Sustainability Week 2025 at the **Schokoladenmuseum** was a great success – with interactive workshops, exciting tours, and hands-on activities all about fair cocoa and climate protection. The museum invites you again in 2026: from May 4th to 8th for schools, and on May 9th and 10th for the big family weekend.



© Schokoladenmuseum



© Schokoladenmuseum

[More information here.](#)

Amsterdam Declarations

Partnerships – BMZ and BMLEH sign new declaration

Berlin, 5 June 2025

The Amsterdam Partnership (ADP) is a cornerstone in European discussions on deforestation-free agricultural products. For 10 years, the signatory countries have been promoting open dialogue among producer and consumer countries, businesses, associations, and civil society. Under German leadership, the ministries **BMLEH**, BMUKN (Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture), and **BMZ** invited participants to a multi-stakeholder meeting in Berlin on June 5, 2025. The primary focus was on exchanging solutions and strategies.



[To the declaration](#)

[To the website](#)

Strengthening the Living Income Reference Price (LIRP) model by Fairtrade

Brussels, 23 May 2025

On May 23, 2025, a **Fairtrade** dialogue on the Living Income Reference Price (LIRP) model for the cocoa sector took place in Brussels. The meeting brought together a wide range of stakeholders from the cocoa industry. Key topics included the review and further development of the LIRP model as well as ensuring transparency and broad participation. The participants emphasized the importance of fair prices and called for clearer communication and more realistic assumptions. **Fairtrade** is committed to further improving the model and promoting the living conditions of cocoa farmers.

[Here you can get to the summary of the event.](#)

Update of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Program

N/A, 22 May 2025

The **Rainforest Alliance** has announced a comprehensive update to its agricultural certification program to strengthen sustainability along global value chains. The new standard version was presented in Abidjan and is set to come into effect in October 2025. The revised version 1.4 of the sustainable agriculture standard simplifies existing requirements and focuses on the most effective elements. Future audits will be more targeted to reduce the workload for farmers, auditors, and supply chain actors without compromising quality. Data collection has been optimized with a centralized indicator system and improved digital tools and training. Additionally, three optional certification modules on regenerative agriculture, climate, and livelihoods will be introduced. The update supports companies in complying with the new EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). The

Rainforest Alliance offers AI-supported remote monitoring tools and a traceability system for certified products. Around two million farmers and agricultural workers in West and Central Africa benefit from this program. Studies show that certified farms tend to achieve higher yields and better product quality.

[More information you can find **here**](https://www.plant-for-the-planet.org/de/chocolate/).

Increasing number of substitute products in the cocoa industry – Fairtrade supports cocoa farmers in improving their income

N/A, May 2025

The industry is responding to the current high cocoa prices with new recipes to replace cocoa with cheaper substitutes. While this is understandable from a cost perspective, it worsens the - according to **Fairtrade's** assessment - already strained income situation of cocoa producers. **Fairtrade** advocates for over 480,000 farmers to improve their incomes and actively adapt to climatic conditions.

Fairtrade supports cocoa farming families in improving their lives independently. In addition to forming democratic organizations, Fairtrade standards focus on sustainable farming methods, promoting gender equality, and ensuring a voice in decision-making. The Fairtrade minimum price serves as a safety net against price fluctuations for farmers. The Fairtrade premium is an additional financial bonus that goes into projects: cooperative members collectively decide how to finance them. Over a fifth of the Fairtrade premiums are distributed as financial support to the producers.



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[Mehr zu den Aktivitäten von Fairtrade erfahren Sie hier.](#)

Events

Note: Some event titles are linked for further information.

2025 European Cocoa Forum

Malta, 16.-18.09.25

SWISSCO-SSCP Landscape Week

Zurich, 22.-26.09.25

ANUGA

Cologne, 04.-08.10.2025

We will keep you informed about further events on our [website](#).



Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao e.V.

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