

Task Force Umwelt

Meeting 15. April 2026



Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao
German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa



Agenda

1. Objectives & Context

Review & Feedback from the 1st Session

2. Recap Workstreams

Goals, steps & resources

3. Ecotop: Practical input on dynamic Agroforestry

Practical challenges

4. Discussion & Prioritization

Workstream 1: Key Topics & Formats for Political Dialogue

Workstream 2: Internal barriers & support formats for implementation by forum members

5. Conclusion & next steps



Task Force Participants (Update)

Membership Group A

BMLEH: Alexander Bernet

BMZ: Andrea Jost (GIZ)



Membership Group B

Luise Fricke (Storck)

Hauke Will (Ritter)



Membership Group C

Lisa Köhl (ALDI Süd)



Membership Group D

Kerstin Weber (WWF)

Aldo Chipana (Fairtrade)

Advisory:
Wendy Arenas (Alisos)



Meeting schedule & contents 2026



Date	Topics
March 4.	Kick-off and operational mode of the Task Force Environment Workstream 2: (1) Discuss analysis of roadmaps & M/E report, and recommendations to membership, (2) Select members to discuss dissemination of recommendations, and incentive systems
April 15.	Workstream 1: (1) Talk with local stakeholders on legal aspects for agroforestry and response of farmers (with guests) (2) Discuss experiences of GISCO member projects/programmes Workstream 2: (1) Report on feedback from selected members on how to disseminate information, and incentive Systems
May 13.	Workstream 1: (1) Identify topics/recommendations for political dialogue framework (2) Identify persons/channels through which GISCO interests can be leveraged Workstream 2: (1) Discuss formats for the dissemination of membership-specific recommendations, including incentive systems Annual General Meeting: Prepare presentation/group work during GISCO AGM
July 30.	Workstream 1: (1) Discuss background papers for the political dialogue framework Workstream 2: (1) Finalize with recommendations to membership groups and members
September 24.	Workstream 2: (1) Discuss 2-3 Options for newly formulated indicators Objective 4 (2) Agree on final formulation to be submitted to the GISCO Board
November 26.	



Feedback on points discussed at the last meeting

Workstream 1 (Political Dialogue)

Which countries should the Task Force on Political Dialogue prioritize?

Option 1: Focus on West Africa: Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana + Additional option: Nigeria or Cameroon.

Member group A	Member group B	Member group C	Member group D
Focus on West Africa: Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana + Additional option: Nigeria or Cameroon. This would align very well with the EU Sustainable Cocoa Initiative, which is supported by the BMZ and prioritizes agroforestry systems for sustainable cocoa cultivation. Furthermore, ProPlanteurs is also integrated into this initiative.	Preference for Option 1: Ivory Coast and Ghana, supplemented by Nigeria or Cameroon (in line with industry preferences and in consultation with the Living Income Task Force) Focus on Cameroon or Nigeria depending on the preference of the group as a whole Additionally: prospective consideration of Asia, particularly Indonesia	We would prefer Option 1, since CI and GH are the most relevant sources for us (in terms of quantity and volume). As far as I know, the Ecuadorian government is already pursuing an agroforestry strategy, so I'm not sure whether our intervention is necessary.	Option 2: Focus on the key supplier countries for the German market Côte d'Ivoire (64.1%) Ecuador (11.2%) Ghana (8.9%)

Integration of Ressource Persons



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GIZ CIV Projekte zu Agroforstwirtschaft ▪ GIZ GHA Projekte zu Agroforstwirtschaft ▪ SWISSCO Projekte zu Agroforstwirtschaft ▪ GIZ SV Landwirtschaft ▪ EcoCare Ghana | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CIGHCI ▪ CCC ▪ COCOBOD ▪ WCF ▪ Forestry Commission ▪ Cocoa Carbon+ Initiative ▪ OFAC (zu AF Standards) ▪ Weltbank ▪ AfDB ▪ ONCC ▪ CICC ▪ ICCO ▪ ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pro-Planteurs ▪ FNK Mitglieder (Trader/Brands) ▪ Kooperativen ▪ ECOTOP ▪ INADES ▪ IDEF ▪ Sankofa Projekt ▪ ECAMOM Projekt ▪ Holzindustrie ▪ PROAmazonia ▪ ABL ▪ FAO (Kleinbauernfinanzierung & Agroforst) ▪ Solidaridad ▪ Conservation Alliance ▪ Tropenbos ▪ Cocoa Action Brazil ▪ INIAP Ecuador ▪ Alliance Bioversity International – CIAT ▪ CIRAD (Regis Babin) ▪ CATIE (Luis Orozco; Rolando Cerda) ▪ National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) ▪ Casa Luker in Kolumbien, Chocolats Halba in der Schweiz ▪ Zertifizierer (Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, Gold Standard, etc...) ▪ Beyond Beans ▪ ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CNRA ▪ CRIG ▪ CIFOR-ICRAF ▪ CIRAD ▪ FiBL ▪ Risome ▪ Cocoa Innovation Center Brazil ▪ Fedecacao Colombia ▪ Deutsche Forschungszentren: ZALF ▪ ... |
|---|---|---|---|

Während der Sitzung am 03. März ergänzt

Ergänzung Mitgliedsgruppe A

Ergänzung Mitgliedsgruppe B

Ergänzung Mitgliedsgruppe D

Thematic Workstream 1: Addressing systemic barriers to the implementation of agroforestry systems through policy dialogue



*Roadmaps,
Monitoring,
Legal Framework,
Expert interviews,
Relevant research*

Joint Understanding of important external barriers to the implementation of agroforestry systems (outside of GISCO members' direct influence)

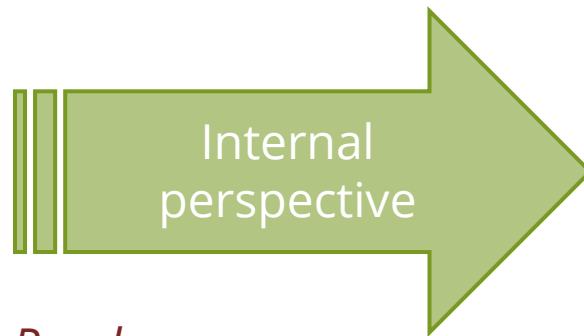
Step 1: What **are the most important external barriers** impeding the implementation of agroforestry systems?

Step 2: Which of these **can and should be addressed by political decision-makers**?

Step 3: What inputs **do GISCO members want to feed into political dialogue processes** on these barriers?



Thematic Workstream 2: Strengthening GISCO Members Strategies on Agroforestry systems



*Roadmaps,
Monitoring,
Feedback from
Members Assembly,
Relevant research*

Build joint understanding on what is needed to scale agroforestry and resilient production systems among forum members

Step 1: What are the most **important internal barriers** that limit companies to implement agroforestry systems and sustainable production systems?

Step 2: Which of **these barriers can and should we address** to support members with the implementation of agroforestry systems?

Step 3: What **recommendations do we want to give GISCO members** to strengthen implementation of agroforestry systems?

Step 4: What **instruments/ formats should we use and develop?** (inputs from Members Assembly)

Step 5: How should the **indicators for Goal 4** be adjusted, and what might a **SMART formulation** for Goal 4 look like?

Lessons learned from 30 years of agroforestry

New challenges for research and consulting

Joachim Milz – ECOTOP

Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao,
15.04.2026

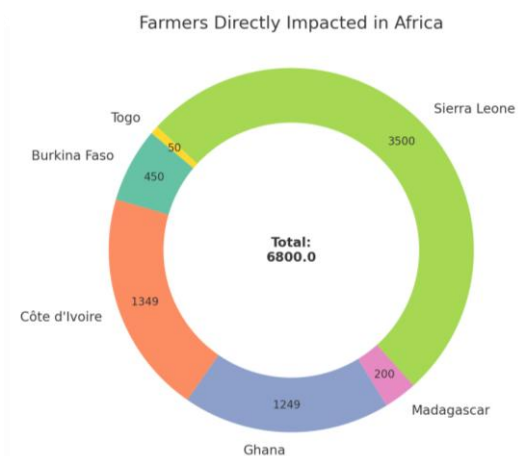
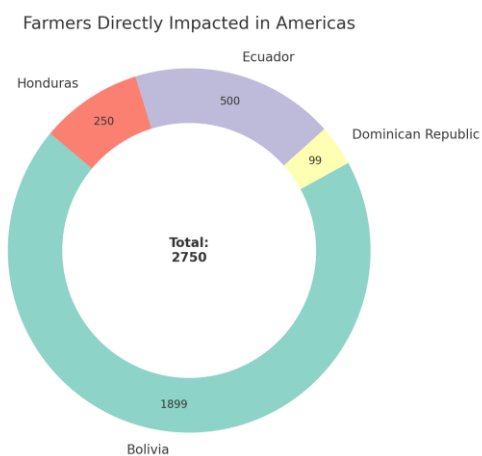
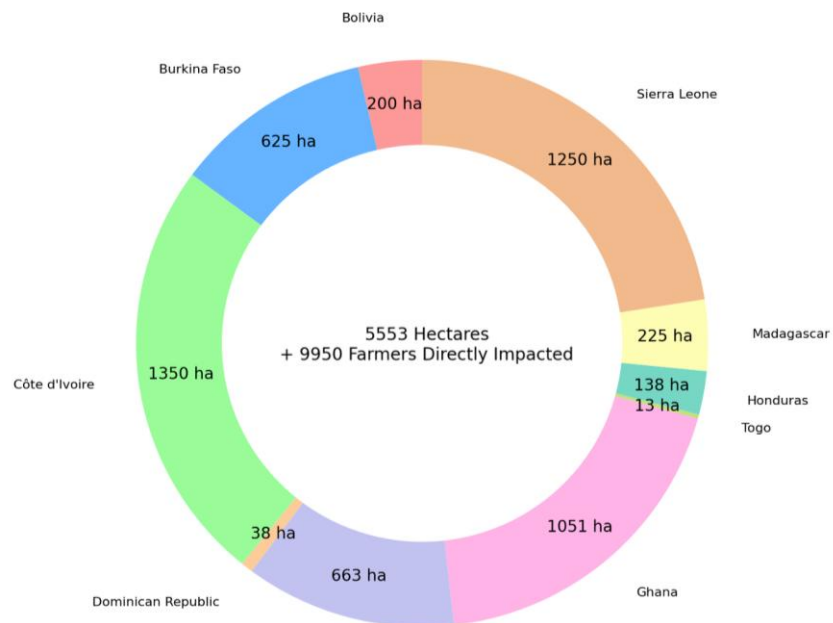
Who we are



ECOTOP



ECOTOP
FOUNDATION



Active Projects



Cocoa, Coffee, Orange, Mango, Cashew, Coconut, Oil palm



14 Countries



10,000 farmers directly impacted



5,600 hectares of Dynamic Agroforestry

Why is it so difficult for science and practice to find answers to the problems in cocoa cultivation?



Only by asking the right questions can we find useful answers



The first question should be:

Where does cocoa actually come from and what ecophysiological requirements does it have?

After that, we can develop systems that meet their specific habitat and requirements.



Cocoa comes from alluvial forests, which are very dynamic ecosystems. They are exposed to disturbances such as wind breaks and floods and are thus rejuvenated again and again.





Bolivian National Cacao - Cacao Nacional Boliviano – Bolivian
Forastero Amazónico – Alto Beni, Bolivia



Natural renewal and rejuvenation of cocoa.

An old cocoa tree has fallen and is being replaced by a seedling (yellow circle).





Cultivation without shade or cultivation in static agroforestry systems sooner or later leads to increasing problems due to diseases and pests.





CCN Ecuador

This is the idea
of modern
cocoa
cultivation





Cote D'Ivoire

The mostly shadowless cultivation without any management of the cocoa trees is one of the causes of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire



The definition of the number of trees per hectare (= definition of agroforestry) is useless if the dynamics of the system, the life cycle of the trees and the strata in which they are placed are not taken into account.

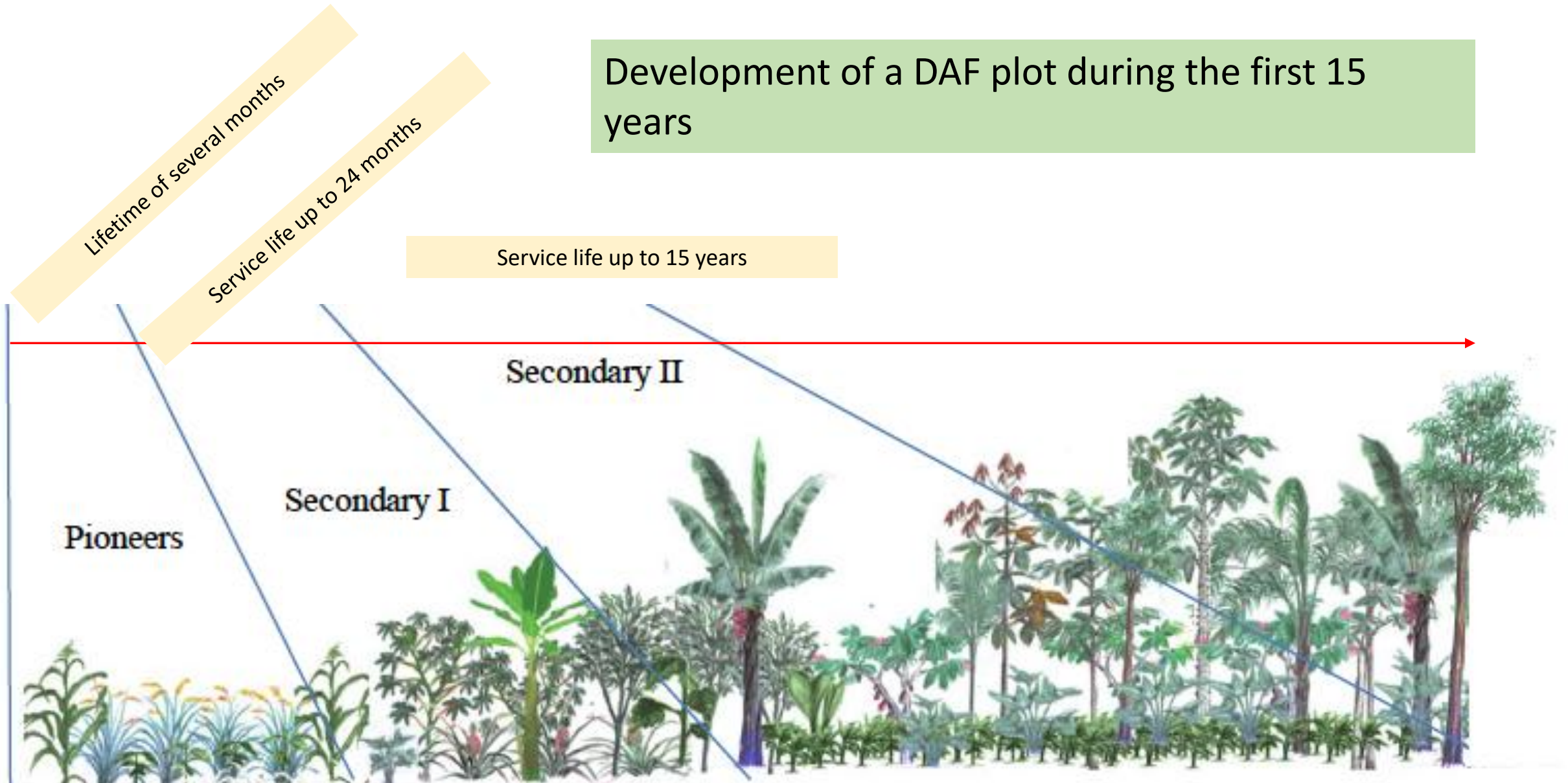


Therefore, it is not the absolute percentage of shade or the number of trees per hectare that is decisive, but the quality and periodicity between shade and light as well as

Stratification and life cycle of species.



Development of a DAF plot during the first 15 years



Plant communities with different
life **cycles** and in different **layers**
grow together without
competition.



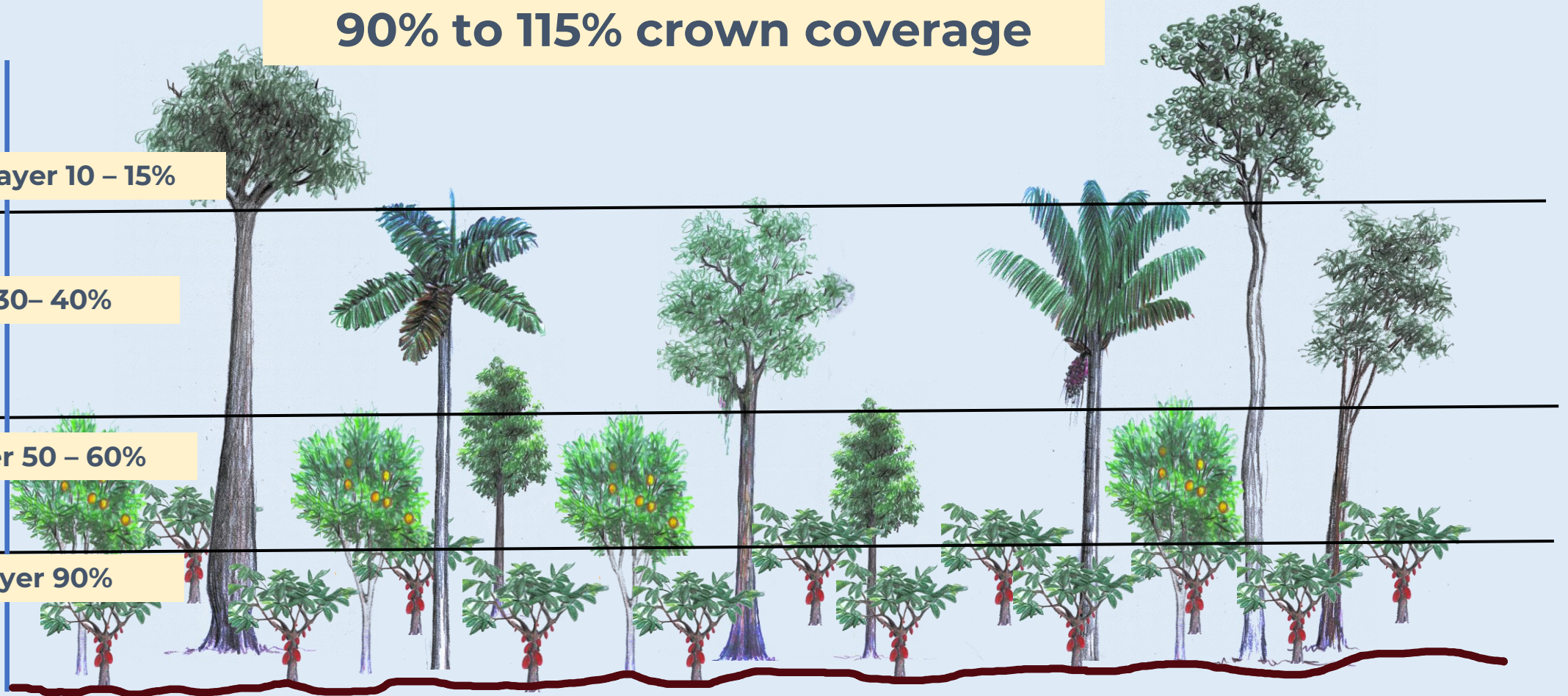
90% to 115% crown coverage

Emergent layer 10 – 15%

Top layer 30– 40%

Middle layer 50 – 60%

Bottom layer 90%



Approximate percentage of crown cover in mature cocoa production systems above the cocoa crown from 90% to 115%.



Basic principles of dynamic agroforestry systems

- High biodiversity
- High energy flow
- High species density with different life cycles and occupation of different strata/layers
- Optimising the overall system instead of maximising the yield of individual crops
- Selective weed control taking into account natural regeneration
- Application of the principle of natural succession of species



Definition of sustainability

- The energy and life balance of the system must be positive.
- **In practice, this means that more biomass has to be produced than is naturally converted in order to keep the soil always covered and to enable a high nutrient turnover.**



From complexity to simplification while
maintaining the principles.

Challenges for advising cocoa producers



Dynamic agroforestry (DAF) requires a different advisory approach to support cocoa producers.

DAF is a knowledge-intensive approach.



**The willingness to change
behavior requires an
awareness of the impact of
my actions.**



It is therefore not about "**knowledge transfer**", but about the "**process of recognition**" and the **transformation** of knowledge into **action**.



- Positive **effects** must be visible after **just a few months**.
- In addition, the **development of the entire farm** should be taken into account and not just that of the cocoa areas.
- Without **deforestation-free food production**, there will be no **deforestation-free cocoa production**.
- It is not only about **higher productivity and income**, but also about **dignity, joy and pride in being a farmer**.



The process of training trainers – a participatory approach.



Step 1: Situation analysis – diagnosis – Raising awareness



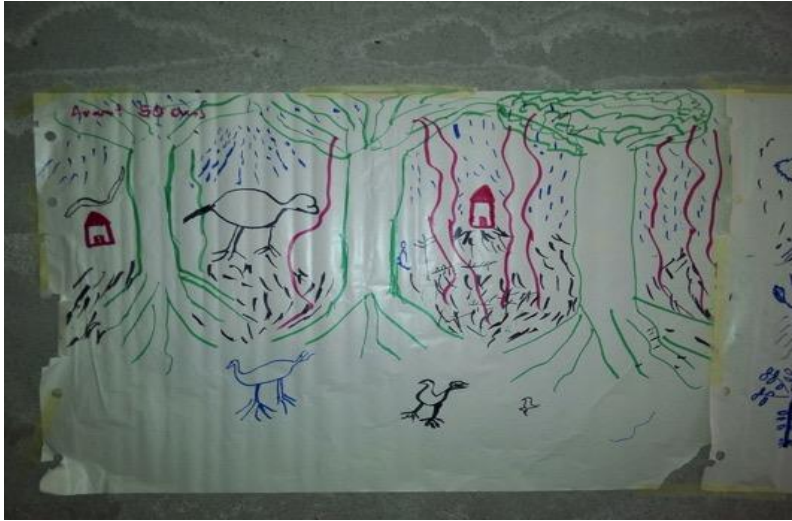


Women draw their companies as they looked 50 years ago, how they look now and how they will look in 20 years if everything continues as before



Sitations Analysis

We are running out of resources



50 years ago



Today



In 20 years





They are aware of where the development is going!



Step 2: The succession model

The principles of nature

What were the starting conditions of our grandparents
and what will our future look like if we don't change?





Figure 1: species succession in nature - successional model





The participating women interpret the model and draw their conclusions.





The place where cocoa should be grown.

Today, cocoa is grown in degraded areas.

They then position themselves in the succession model at the point that corresponds to the situation of their farm.



The question that now arises:
**What can I do to ensure that my
children can continue to live on this
piece of land in the future?**

How can I restore soil fertility in my
plantations?

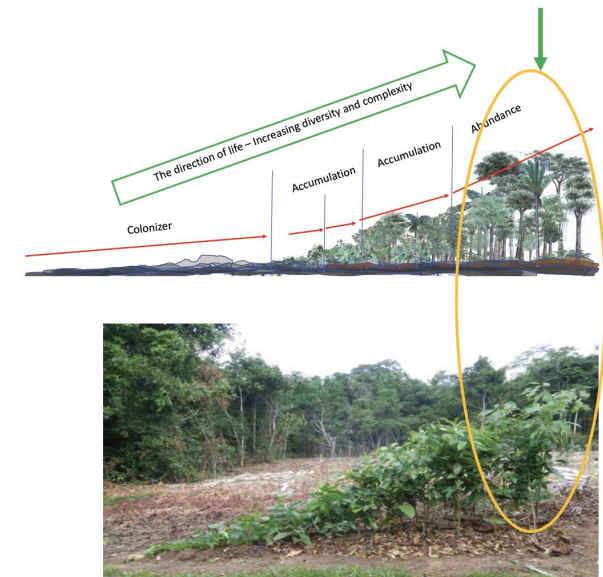


Figure 1: species succession in nature - successional model



Step 3: Dry run for field layout and species matrix

Understanding of the succession processes on one's own plot



Together, a "dry run" is carried out from planning to planting out to harvesting



KLP. PENYULUH
(Messagero)

DESIGN AGROFORESTRI

KET:

- D → DURI AN
- P → Pisang
- A → Pinang
- J → Jagung
- C → ubi
- Kp → Kc. Panjang (Yardu)
- Tr → Terong
- Cb → Cabe
- T → Trombesi
- S → Sirsak
- → CROTALARIA
- ⊕ → KESUMBA
- ⊙ → Kacang Gude



"Experimental design" –



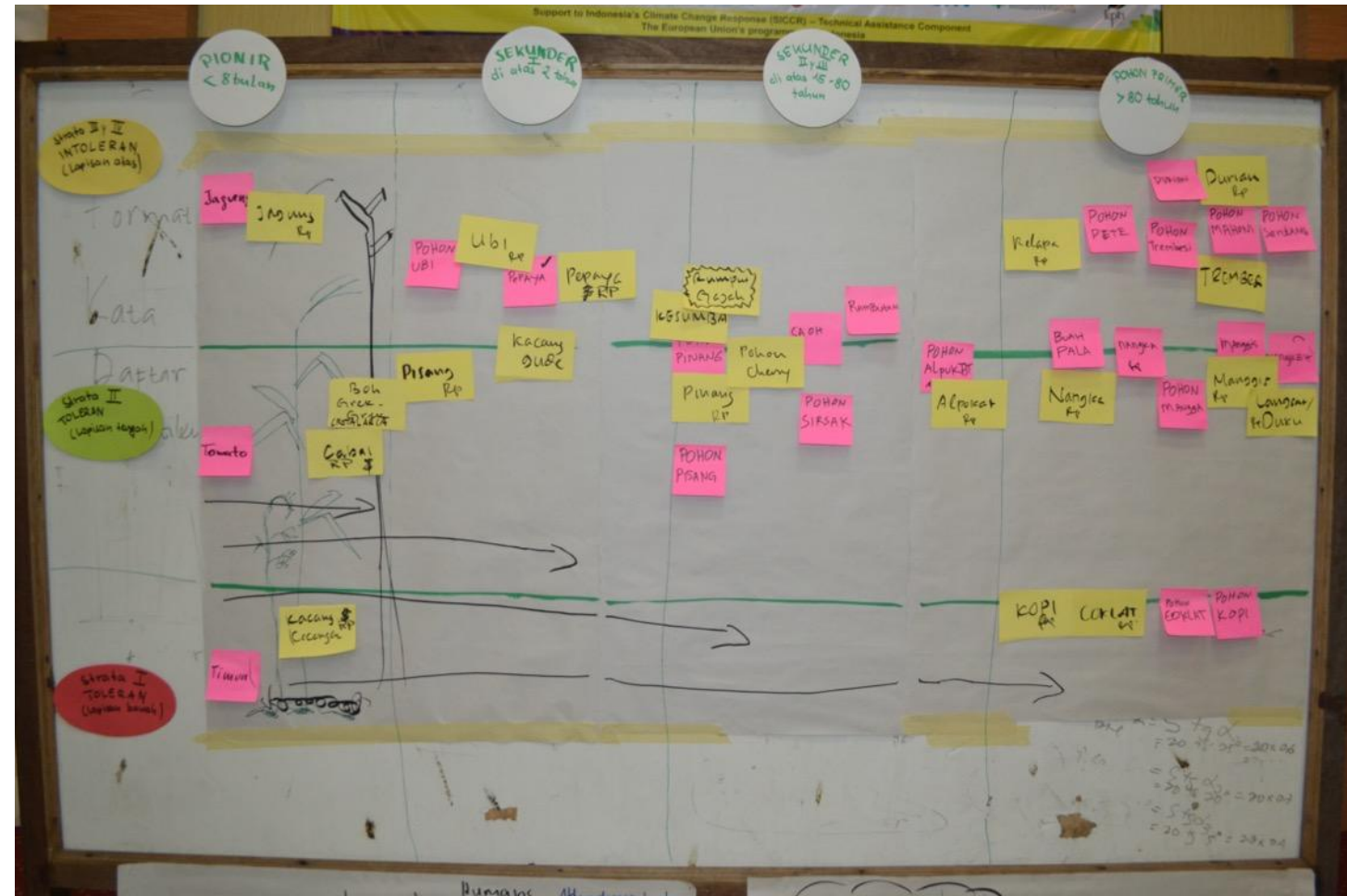
The diagram illustrates the relationship between crop types and their growth cycles, categorized by height (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW) and growth cycle duration (< 12 months, < 10 years, < 80 years, > 80 years).

Crops and their positions:

- High Growth Cycle (< 12 months):** RICE, Vegetables (spinach), Corn, Soybean, Maize.
- Medium Growth Cycle (< 10 years):** Banana, Plantain, Coconut, Bixa, Marjoram, Persea.
- Long Growth Cycle (< 80 years):** Orange, Avocado, Biennial Tree.
- Very Long Growth Cycle (> 80 years):** Cocoa, Coconut, Oil Palm, Timber, Rubber.

Arrows indicating trends:

- From RICE to Vegetables (spinach) to Corn to Soybean to Maize.
- From Banana to Plantain to Coconut to Bixa to Marjoram to Persea.
- From Orange to Avocado to Biennial Tree.
- From Cocoa to Coconut to Oil Palm to Timber to Rubber.



Step 4: Practice





Practice





Step 5: Follow up









Die “happy farmer” Evaluation

Who will still be farming in the future if this work does not provide sufficient income or personal fulfillment?



Ranking of the main practices implemented by ECOTOP in Bio Partenaire – Côte d'Ivoire 2012- 2015)

Rang	PF Hommes (27 participants, 5 votes chacun)	votes	PF Femmes (23 participants, 7 votes chacune)	votes
1	Ne pas brûler	22	Faire un champ sans brûler	18
2	Technique du billon	15	Taille de formation des cacaoyers (seulement pour les PF femmes formées en 2014)	13
3	Plantation en ligne	14	- Plantation en ligne - Couverture permanente du sol avec la biomasse	12 12
4	Technique de taille	11	- Production de biomasse, en utilisant des marguerites et d'autres espèces - Technique de plantation des bananiers	11 11
5	- Couverture permanente du sol avec la biomasse - Production des différentes cultures sur le même champ - Utilisation des bananiers pour l'irrigation des jeunes plants	10 10 10	- Technique en faisant des billons - Respect à la nature	10 10
6	Stratification des espèces	9	- Production sans engrais et sans produit chimique. - Protection des jeunes plantes avec la biomasse - Production des différentes cultures sur le même champ	9 9 9
7	- Production d'igname sans brûler - Techniques de suivis aux parcelles	6 6	Irrigation avec des bananes	8
8	- Désherbage sélectif - Respect à la nature	5 5	- Désherbage sélectif - Production d'igname sans brûler biomasse - Production de chocolat maison (13 femmes ont pratiqué à la maison)	6 6 6
9	- Intégration des arbres - Greffage - Production et utilisation de biomasse	3 3 3	- Ensemencement à la volée - Utilisation des palmiers décomposés comme engrais organique pour la biomasse	5 5
10	Travailler sous l'ombrage	2	- Critères de sélection du terrain pour faire un champ - Technique de plantation du cacao	4 4
11	Faire l'amour dans la parcelle	1	- Utilisation des différents espèces et en quantité (cycle court, moyen et long) - Stratification des espèces	1 1
12	Technique d'ensemencement à la volée (ne pas été pratiqué)	0	Connaissance des nouvelles espèces	0

1) No burning

2) Planting in rows

3) Mulch and permanent biomass production

4) Stratification

5) Cocoa cut



Bottlenecks/ Engpässe:

- Common cocoa varieties were selected according to the criterion of yield maximization, mostly under shade-free cultivation and using agrochemicals.
- Centralized seed production: (Mercedes in Côte d'Ivoire, CCN in Ecuador and Peru, merestimately produced clones in Indonesia) leads to the homogenization of the genetic pool of cocoa.
- Land ownership structure (tenants, caretakers, social structure of the tribe)
- Rights to own trees in the field (the state can grant concessions to sawmills to cut down trees in cocoa plantations)
- National policies (Ghana COCOBOD, Côte d'Ivoire CCC, Anader etc.), government pricing policy, poor or no advice





Clone Garden
Indonesia



Meristematic
propagation of
cocoa clones

Packaging and
Shipping



Locally adapted varieties that deliver good yields under shade must be explicitly selected and propagated.





Managing trees is a challenge from the start





Skilled and specialized workforce is required

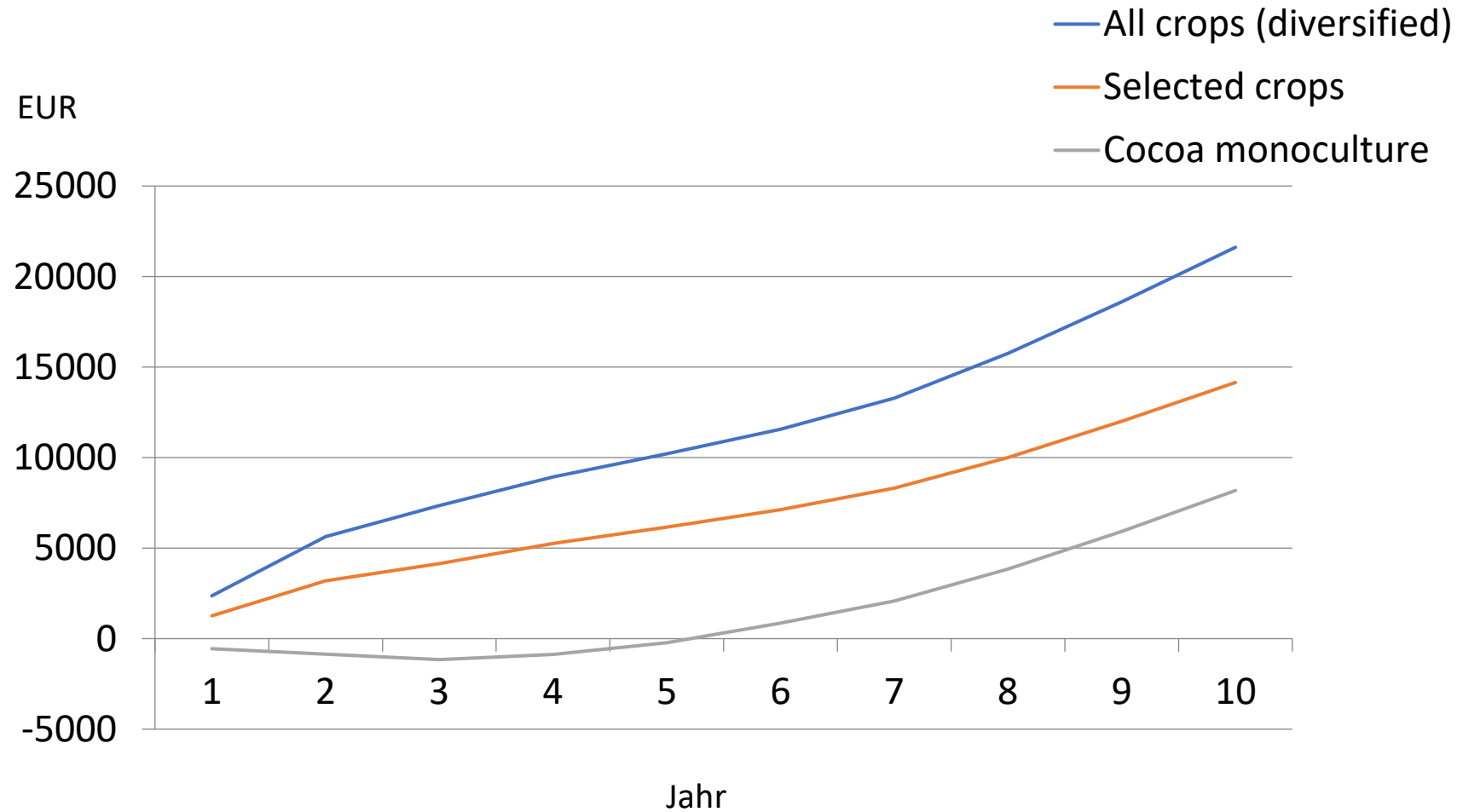


- On large farms, tillage, mulching and pruning must be mechanized.
- DAF is economically more profitable than monocultures in the first year.
- The amount of work required for field preparation without burning is no higher than for slash-and-burn agriculture.
- Marketing a high diversity of crops is challenging and often not given.
- Advice and support is intensive, especially in the initial phase, and must be provided in the long term.



Cash flow of different systems over 10 years

(Source: Field data of the Sankofa project in Ghana - ECOTOP)



Who in Europe or the USA practices agriculture without public subsidies?

Long-term strategies should be developed so that farmers can continue to feed their families for future generations and produce cocoa in diversified and sustainable systems.

The goal should be to optimize the productivity of the entire farm in the long term, rather than maximizing cocoa yields in the short term.

Training is the basis for change



20 years of research into production systems with cocoa -

SysCom Bolivia- in cooperation with FiBL- Switzerland:

Scientific validation of ECOTOP's field experience

**Comparing cacao agroforestry systems and
monocultures under organic and conventional farming**

Main partners





Picture: Eric Loshe

An aerial photograph of a dense tropical forest plot. The forest is characterized by a high density of trees with prominent white or light-colored trunks, which stand out against the lush green canopy. The vegetation includes various species of palm trees, banana plants with large, broad leaves, and other tropical flora. The plot is rectangular and appears to be part of a larger study area, with a clear boundary visible at the bottom. The overall scene is a vibrant display of tropical biodiversity.

SAFS 17

www.ecotop.org

info@ecotop.org



Discussion

Workstream 1: Political Dialogue

- Which **priority areas** should we focus on?
- Which **existing dialogue processes** are particularly relevant to agroforestry?

Workstream 2: Strengthening the Strategies of GISCO-Members

- What are the **key internal barriers** preventing forum members from implementing agroforestry and resilient production systems?
- Which of these barriers can we **realistically address** within the GISCO?
- What **formats** can we use to promote implementation?



Workstream 1: Political Dialogue

Potential priority areas for policy dialogue processes

1. Consistent definition and regulatory status of agroforestry
 2. Land and resource rights (including tree ownership)
 3. Data, monitoring, and traceability systems, as well as standards
 4. Economic incentives for agroforestry implementation
 5. Investments in rural infrastructure
 6. Strengthening public governance and administrative structures in countries of origin
- ...

At the May meeting, the task force should identify 1–3 priority areas from the list above



Dialogue formats

Please provide **feedback on the dialogue formats** that are listed here and indicate if you are involved in any of them and how relevant you consider them for the topic of agroforestry. Please also indicate if you would like to **add any relevant political dialogue processes**.



Mapping of existing political dialogue formats

1. ICCO - Offizielle Gremien

ICCO – Council

Der Internationale Kakaorat (International Cocoa Council) ist das **höchste Entscheidungsgremium der ICCO** und setzt sich aus allen Vertragsparteien des Internationalen Kakaovertrags von 2010 zusammen. Er tritt zweimal jährlich zu regulären Sitzungen zusammen und bei Bedarf zu Sondertagungen. An den Sitzungen des Rates nehmen Delegationen aller kakaoerzeugenden und kakaoverbrauchenden Mitgliedsländer teil. Die Hauptaufgabe des Rates besteht darin, die Strategie der Organisation festzulegen, die Finanzpolitik zu überwachen und das vorgeschlagene Arbeitsprogramm sowie Budget für jedes Kakaogeschäftsjahr zu prüfen und zu genehmigen. Der Rat ist das Gremium, dem die verschiedenen Ausschüsse und Arbeitsgruppen der Organisation berichten. Im Entscheidungsprozess wird der Rat von unterschiedlichen Ausschüssen und Arbeitsgruppen unterstützt.

Meets at least 2x per year, Repräsentation des **BMLEH in der ICCO**

Consultative Board:

Der Ausschuss ist ein **Beratungsgremium des Internationalen Kakaorates**. Sein Mandat besteht darin, den Rat in zentrale Herausforderungen der globalen Kakaowirtschaft zu beraten. Zu diesen Herausforderungen gehören unter anderem: Entwicklung einer nachhaltigen Kakaowirtschaft Wege zur Stärkung der Position von Kakaobäuerinnen und -bauern mit Blick auf die Verbesserung ihrer Lebensgrundlagen Langfristige strukturelle Entwicklungen in Angebot und Nachfrage Vorschläge zur Förderung einer nachhaltigen Produktion, Handel und Nutzung von Kakao; Ausarbeitung der Modalitäten und Rahmenbedingungen für die Förderung des Kakaokonsums und alle weiteren kakao-bezogenen Themen

Joint representation of GISCO/SWISSCO in the Consultative Board



Mapping of existing political dialogue formats

2. German Government

G2G Dialogue

Exchange Platform to discuss and update each European government on updates and programmes in the cocoa sector. There is a G2G call in place for the governments of Germany, Netherlands, France, Belgium, Switzerland. Italy might join in the future.

Bilateral government Consultations with cocoa producing countries. Germany x Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Cameroon

Germany regularly holds government consultations with partner countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, or Cameroon under BMZ development cooperation.. In these negotiations: Governments agree on priority sectors (agriculture, forests, climate, rural development). Cocoa is often a topic (when cocoa related projects are implemented or if cocoa is an important crop in that country).



Mapping of existing political dialogue formats

3. EU

EU Cocoa Talks (as part of the EU Sustainable Cocoa Initiative)

The EU Cocoa Talks are multi-stakeholder policy dialogues where governments, companies, and civil society meet to coordinate reforms in the cocoa sector. The talks function as a political and technical platform to align policies between producer countries and the EU market.

The dialogue focuses on three big structural issues: Farmer income; Deforestation, Child labour and sustainability

In 2022, participants endorsed an [Alliance on Sustainable Cocoa](#), a roadmap to improve the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of cocoa production and trade.

Technical Dialogues on EUDR

Since the adoption of the EU Deforestation Regulation in 2023, the EU has launched technical dialogues with producing countries whose exports will be affected, with countries like Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon. These talks are increasingly one of the most important cocoa policy dialogues with the EU.

Negotiations for SIFAs

The EU also negotiates with producing countries through broader trade and investment policy frameworks, including Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreements (SIFAs). These negotiations are not specific to cocoa but can still be relevant by developing , investment in local cocoa processing, value added industries, infrastructure for export and logistics, financing sustainable agriculture.



Mapping of existing political dialogue formats

3a. European intergovernmental coordination

Amsterdam Declarations Partnership

Die Amsterdam Declarations Partnership (ADP) ist eine zwischenstaatliche Koalition europäischer Länder zur Förderung entwaldungsfreier Agrarlieferketten, einschließlich Kakao. Mitglieder sind derzeit Deutschland, Frankreich, das Vereinigte Königreich, die Niederlande, Dänemark, Norwegen und Italien. Die ADP dient vor allem der politischen Abstimmung und Harmonisierung nationaler Strategien sowie der Entwicklung gemeinsamer Positionen gegenüber Produzentenländern und Marktakteuren. Operative Umsetzung erfolgt nicht innerhalb der ADP, sondern über nationale Politiken und internationale Initiativen. Agroforst wird indirekt im Kontext nachhaltiger Landnutzung und entwaldungsfreier Produktionssysteme adressiert.



Mapping of existing political dialogue formats

4. Producing countries' dialogue formats

Conseil du Café-Cacao (Côte d'Ivoire)

The Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC) plays a central role in promoting agroforestry in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa sector. It coordinates national and international initiatives, develops technical guidelines, and has been implementing a legal framework for agroforestry since 2024. Through tree planting programs, farmer training, and farm registration, the CCC drives the adoption of agroforestry systems. It also integrates agroforestry into traceability and monitoring systems and contributes to deforestation efforts through partnerships such as the Cocoa & Forests Initiative.

Côte d'Ivoire Ghana Cocoa Initiative

The initiative was created in 2019 to coordinate cocoa policies and strengthen the bargaining power of producer countries in negotiations with chocolate companies and global traders. The initiative coordinates government policies in several areas: Cocoa pricing - Alignment of farmgate prices and export policies; 2. Market coordination - Efforts to avoid price competition between the two countries; 3. Sustainability Collaboration on: child labour reduction, sustainable farming, forest protection. 4. Dialogue with industry and importing countries

The initiative also acts as a collective voice of producing countries in dialogues with: the European Union, chocolate companies global industry organizations.

Mapping of existing political dialogue formats



5. Public – private dialogue formats

Cocoa and Forests Initiative

The Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) is one of the most important public-private dialogue and action platforms in the cocoa sector, focused specifically on ending deforestation linked to cocoa production while supporting sustainable livelihoods for farmers. Countries involved: Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Colombia

World Cocoa Foundation

The World Cocoa Foundation is a pre-competitive multi-stakeholder platform bringing together companies, producing country governments, and partner organisations in the cocoa sector. In policy dialogue on deforestation, it facilitates exchange on shared approaches and implementation, particularly through the Cocoa & Forests Initiative. Agroforestry is primarily addressed within broader discussions on climate-resilient and sustainable production systems. Key formats include the Annual Partnership Meeting, thematic working groups, and CFI-related coordination processes.

IDH & Landscape Dialogue

The Sustainable Trade Initiative acts as a convening platform between public and private actors to advance sustainable supply chains. In the cocoa sector, Landscape Dialogues support exchange on integrated approaches to deforestation reduction and the scaling of agroforestry systems as part of resilient agricultural landscapes. Core formats include Landscape Initiatives, Investment Roundtables, and multi-stakeholder programmes at country and landscape level.

Tropical Forest Alliance

The Tropical Forest Alliance is a global multi-stakeholder platform promoting deforestation-free supply chains across agricultural commodities, including cocoa. It provides a framework for cross-sectoral dialogue and knowledge exchange on policy and implementation approaches. Agroforestry is addressed as part of broader landscape restoration and climate resilience strategies. Key formats include global and regional dialogue platforms as well as thematic action groups.



Mapping of existing political dialogue formats

6. Conferences and important sector meetings

WCF Partnerships Meetings

Annual dialogue forum of the global cocoa and chocolate sector. Its purpose is to convene the full value chain—industry, governments, farmers, NGOs, researchers, and donors—to align on priorities and coordinate collective action around sustainability and market challenges..

Amsterdam Cocoa Week/ Chocoa

European cocoa and chocolate sustainability Conference bringing together all actors from the value chain

General Assemblies of ISCOs

Workstream 2: Strengthening the strategies of GISCO-members



Key areas of action for strengthening the implementation of agroforestry by GISCO-members

1. Common definitions, standards, and knowledge bases
2. Joint level of ambition, indicators (Goal 4), and impact-oriented, data-driven monitoring
3. Feasibility of implementation at farm and project level
4. Scaling and coordination mechanisms within the supply chain
5. Economic incentives for implementation

...

At the May meeting, Task Force members should identify 1–3 priority areas from the list above



Agroforestry System for Cocoa Production

ISCO Description

- The term AGROFORESTRY refers to farming fields in which cocoa trees are deliberately combined with preferably native non-cocoa tree species that have proven to be useful for AGROFORESTRY in a stratified spatial arrangement and temporal sequence. This includes other agricultural crops on the same land management unit, triggering ecological, economic, social, and sociocultural benefits. AGROFORESTRY approaches should be locally adapted and should consider the ecologic, economic, social, and cultural environment.
- The functions of AGROFORESTRY systems are to enable long-term, sustainable cocoa production which preserves biodiversity, prevents erosion, protects the climate and natural genetic resources, diversifies and sustains production to the benefit of all land users. Cocoa AGROFORESTRY systems can be developed from different starting points, in different ecologic environments. AGROFORESTRY systems aim to provide diversified sources of income, can reduce costs, and can create co-benefits to increase the economic and climate change related resilience and to food supply of particularly smallholder farmers and local communities living in rural areas.
- Cocoa farmers play a crucial role for the definition, adoption, and longevity of agroforestry systems. A joint process where the needs, capabilities, preferences, and experiences of farmers are taken into account and in which the farmers are actively supported (technical assistance, development plan, capacity building) is very important to maintain and improve the existing production system towards long-term sustainability.
- Banana plants / plantains do not count as trees / tree species.*

*Only botanically classified trees count towards an agroforestry system, other plants, such as forbs (in Deutsch: Stauden) (incl. banana trees / plantains), therefore, do not count.

Categories for cocoa agroforestry systems

ISCO Monitoring



Entry level for AGROFORESTRY (1):

- At least 16 (non-cocoa) trees per ha with a minimum of 3 different tree species, that are preferably native.
- This entry level for AGROFORESTRY systems corresponds to CFI and WCF indicators on AGROFORESTRY.

Basic Category for AGROFORESTRY (2):

- At least 40% shade canopy cover with a minimum of 5 different native tree species. This category for AGROFORESTRY is in accordance with Rainforest Alliance's shade coverage and species diversity reference parameters.

Advanced Category for AGROFORESTRY (3):

- At least 40% shade canopy cover
 - Minimum of 12 different native tree species (pioneer species excluded),
 - At least 15% native vegetation coverage,
 - 2 strata or stories and shade species should attain a minimum of 12-15 meters in height.
- In this category a special focus is given to the landscape approach on AGROFORESTRY. This category is in alignment with the recommendations of the VOICE Network.

Dynamic AGROFORESTRY Systems (4):

- These systems are characterized by a very high density of trees per hectare. There is an abundance of different tree species, high biodiversity, and plant communities with different life cycles that serve different purposes (carbon sequestration, income sources, food etc.). They grow in different stories (strata) without competition. There are at least 3 different stories (strata), regenerative practices are used, and food security and income sources outside of cocoa are guaranteed. This system mimics the natural habitat of cacao in a highly developed cultivation system.



Next steps

- Next meeting: May 12, 2026 – 2:00–3:30 p.m.
- Submit due by May 4 (Slide 24)

Members Assembly

- Presentation of the Task Force
 - Sharing of Developed Content
- Additional meeting before summer break



To Do's bis zum 1. Mai

Bitte geben Sie eine schriftliche Rückmeldung zu den folgenden Punkten:

Arbeitsstrang 1 (Politischer Dialog)

- Bitte geben Sie Ihr **Feedback zu den Schwerpunktbereichen**, auf die wir uns bei der Ausarbeitung von Beiträgen für **politische Dialogprozesse** konzentrieren sollen und ergänzen Sie wo notwendig (max. 3) (siehe Folie X)
- Bitte geben Sie Ihr **Feedback zu bestehenden Dialogprozessen** und deren **Relevanz für das Thema Agroforst** (Folien 12-19 – neu)

Arbeitsstrang 2 (Stärkung der Strategien der Forumsmitglieder)

- Bitte geben Sie Ihr Feedback zu den **internen Barrieren**, die die Forumsmitglieder daran hindern, Agroforst- und resiliente Produktionssysteme zu implementieren, und dazu, ob das Forum diese Barrieren adressieren kann (siehe Folie 25). Bitte ergänzen Sie weitere aus Ihrer Sicht relevante Barrieren und erläutern diese.
- Bitte machen Sie Vorschläge, wie das Forum **die Umsetzung von Strategien** zur Implementierung von Agroforstsystemen fördern kann. Die bei der Sitzung der Arbeitsgruppe erarbeiteten Ideen zu den **Formaten** werden anschließend mit den Forumsmitgliedern in der Mitgliederversammlung diskutiert.



Action Points until 1st May

Please provide written feedback on the following points:

Workstream 1 (Political dialogue)

- Please provide your **feedback on priority areas** we want to focus on for developing inputs for political dialogue processes (max. 3), (**see slide ...**)
- Please provide **feedback on the mapping of existing dialogue formats** and their **relevance for the topic of agroforestry (slide ...)**

Workstream 2 (Strengthening the strategies of GISCO-members)

- Please provide feedback on the **internal barriers** stopping GISCO members from implementing agroforestry systems and whether GISCO can adress these barriers (**see slide ...**) **Please add any other barriers you consider relevant and explain them.**
- Please make suggestions on how GISCO can promote **implementation of agroforestry strategies**. Ideas for formats from the taskforce meeting will then be discussed with GISCO members in the General Assembly.



Annex: Barriers to implementation

Analysis of Interviews & Roadmaps

1. Legal Framework and Regulations

- Land Rights and Tree Ownership
- Governance & Policy Framework
- Certification and Standards

2. Knowledge and Advisory Services

- Farm Level
- Advisory and Training Level
- System Complexity

3. Economics and Finance

- Capital and Investment Requirements
- Financing and Funding
- Market Structure and Demand
- Time Factor

4. Technical Implementation

- System Design and Site Adaptation
- Infrastructure and Scaling
- Plant Protection and Diseases

5. Data, Monitoring, and Standards

Key Laws (CIV, Ghana, Cameroon)



1. Legal Framework and Regulations

Land rights and tree ownership

- Unclear or restrictive land and tree tenure rights
- Distinction between planted and naturally grown trees
- Unclear delineation between forests and agroforestry systems, as well as inconsistent datasets
- Distinguishing between planted and naturally grown trees complicates planning and utilization
- Risk of illegal logging by third parties reduces willingness to invest

Governance and policy frameworks

- Bureaucratic, slow, and sometimes contradictory approval processes
- Rigid, partly outdated regulatory frameworks and fragmented responsibilities
- Regulations that can hinder innovation (e.g. restrictions on planting material or methods)
- Weak enforcement of existing laws and limited government support
- Influence of powerful interest groups and risks of corruption

Certification and standards

- Lack of a uniform definition and regulatory classification of agroforestry
- High administrative burden and complex requirements for smallholder farmers
- In some cases, unfavorable cost-benefit ratios or markets that are too small (e.g. organic)



2. Knowledge and Advisory Services

Farm level

- Low levels of education make it difficult to convey complex agroforestry (AF) concepts
- Lack of technical knowledge (e.g. pruning techniques, stand regeneration, species combinations)
- High demands on managing shade, diversity, and system dynamics
- Low acceptance due to focus on short-term returns (“quick return”)
- Limited willingness to invest in long-term changes and system transitions

Advisory and training level

- Advisory services are difficult to scale – individual support is cost-intensive
- Dependence on cooperatives and external projects
- Insufficiently developed local advisory structures
- Training qualified experts is time- and cost-intensive

System complexity

- Agroforestry systems are knowledge-intensive and site-specific
- Multi-layered systems require continuous adaptation and monitoring
- High management and labor requirements during operation
- Increased complexity in plant protection



Capital and Investment Requirements

- High initial investment costs for establishing agroforestry systems
- Higher ongoing labor and operational costs compared to conventional systems
- Additional investment needs due to aging cocoa trees
- Higher short-term profitability of conventional systems
- Heavy reliance on cocoa as a cash crop

Financing and Funding

- Limited access to financing for smallholder farmers
- Lack of cost-effective and scalable approaches (e.g., tree registration, carbon credits)
- Lack of long-term financing and support strategies: pilot projects are often not continued

Market Structure and Demand

- Uncertain or low demand for agroforestry products
- Lack of market incentives for more sustainable production methods and inadequate premium models
- Limited influence of individual actors on market mechanisms: Dependence on supply chain partners

Time factor

- Long-term yields compete with short-term income needs
- Delayed profitability complicates investment decisions

Technische Umsetzung



System design and site adaptation

- Selecting unsuitable tree species can reduce yields or increase labor requirements
- Strong site dependency requires context-specific system design
- Lack of standardized, practical guidelines for planning and implementation
- Trade-offs between productivity, biodiversity, and management effort
- Diverging interests among farmers, companies, and governments

Infrastructure and scaling

- Lack of infrastructure (e.g. transport, access to markets)
- Logistical challenges in rural areas
- Limited mechanization due to higher system diversity
- Dependence on nurseries (direct seeding hardly established)
- Fragmented and small land structures hinder efficient implementation and scaling

Plant protection and diseases

- High disease pressure (e.g. CSSVD in West Africa)
- More complex plant protection in agroforestry systems
- Trade-off between reduced pesticide use and yield security
- Restrictions on plant protection can significantly reduce yields
- Pesticide use can limit access to organic or premium markets



Data, monitoring and standards

- Lack of standardized systems for tree registration and monitoring
- Insufficient data on deforestation, emissions, and land use
- Complex and fragmented data collection along the supply chain
- Lack of harmonized standards for risk analysis and carbon accounting
- Limited exchange on scalable, cost-efficient solutions

Côte d'Ivoire

Central laws

Forest Code 2019 (Loi N° 2019-675)

Paradigm shift: Tree ownership goes to the landowner – even in the case of customary ownership. New forest categories: agroforests, community forests, sacred forests.

Rural Land Law 1998, geändert 2019

Improved land rights security as an essential prerequisite for afforestation goals.

Décret N° 2019-979

Regulates the management of agroforests, exploitation of agricultural plantations and marketing in agroforestry.

Décret N° 2021-437

Framework for management of classified state forests through concessions. Agroforestry concessions preferred to private companies (40–50 year term).

Décret N° 2021-441

Independent monitoring of forestry and agroforestry activities by civil society organisations.

Nationale Strategien

REDD+ Strategy 2017, PPREF (Forest Policy), Cocoa & Forests Initiative. Goal: Forest cover from 9.2% to 20% by 2030. 1 million hectares of cocoa agroforestry planned.



Impacts

Tree ownership

- Forest Code 2019: Landowner = Tree Owner (also customary)
- More progressive than Ghana – but many implementing regulations are still pending
- In agroforestry concessions: state owns natural and planted trees
- Ownership regime for CO₂ rights not yet defined

Biodiversity

- Agroforestry as a strategy for >75% degraded state forests
- Natural forests offer higher quality biodiversity protection than agroforests
- Forest cover fell from 12 million ha (1960) to <3 million ha (2020)
- UN projects promote agroforestry to restore local biodiversity

Landrechte

- Centralist system: customary rights only recognised as a transitional solution
- History of violent land conflicts in the cocoa cultivation belt (1990s/2000s)
- Migrant farmers particularly at risk – no land security
- Settlers in state forests fear expulsion after reforestation

Ghana



Zentrale Gesetze

Verfassung 1992 & Concessions Act 1962

Alle natürlich vorkommenden Bäume sind Staatseigentum – auch auf privatem Land. Bauern haben keinen Anspruch auf Holzerlöse.

Timber Resources Management Act 1997 (Act 547)

Holzernte nur mit Timber Utilization Contract (TUC). Nur eingetragene Unternehmen können TUCs erhalten; Ratifizierung durch Parlament erforderlich.

Amendment Act 2002 (Act 617)

Anerkennt Eigentumsrechte für Personen, die Bäume auf Farmland pflanzen. Gilt nur für gepflanzte Bäume, nicht für natürlich regenerierte. Komplexe Registrierungsverfahren.

Forest & Wildlife Policy 2012

Fördert Rehabilitierung degradierter Landschaften, empfiehlt explizit Agroforst Modelle. Allerdings kein Gesetzesrang – kann Concessions Act nicht überstimmen.

Forest Plantation Strategy 2016–2040 (GFPS)

Dritte Säule „Trees on Farm“ verankert Agroforestry. Ziel: 3,5 Mio. ha Agroforst. Kritik: Einbezug zahlreicher nicht-einheimischer Arten und fehlende Monitoring Systeme

Auswirkungen

Tree ownership

- Natural trees = state property
- Trees planted = property of the planter
- Farmers destroy seedlings to avoid logging by concessionaires
- Registration procedure too complex → farmers do not register trees

Biodiversity

- GFPS criticism: Too many exotic species (especially teak) instead of native trees
- Lack of biodiversity monitoring
- TUCs in Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas (GSBAs) recently suspended

Landrechte

- Hybrides System: Stool Lands (gewohnheitsrechtlich) + Staatsverwaltung
- Bauern werden nicht an Holzerlösen natürlicher Bäume beteiligt
- Lizenzgebühren an Gemeinden oft nicht gezahlt oder im Rückstand
- Fehlende Stakeholder-Beteiligung als wiederkehrendes Implementierungsproblem



Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao

German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

Geschäftsstelle Bonn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32+36

53113 Bonn

Deutschland

T +49 228 4460-4229

E info@kakaoforum.de

I www.kakaoforum.de