



**Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao**  
German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa



## Members Information March 2026

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## News from the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

### Launch of the Environment and Living Income Task Forces

*Bonn, 13 February 2026*

The Executive Board has approved the Terms of Reference for the new Environment Task Force and the Living Income Task Force. The work of both groups can now commence with the following

compositions.

The Environment Task Force will include Alexander Bernet (**BMLEH**), Andrea Jost (GIZ on behalf of **BMZ**), Luise Fricke (**Storck**), Lisa Köhl (**ALDI Süd**), Kerstin Weber (**WWF**) and Wendy Arenas (**Alisos**).

The Living Income Task Force will consist of Alexander Bernet (**BMLEH**), Ann-Kathrin Binot (GIZ on behalf of **BMZ**), Rupert Day (**Cargill**), Anders Saxbol or Elise Glaab (**Ferrero**), and Sandra Brück (**Fairtrade Germany**).

During the initial meetings of the Task Forces, the respective work plans for 2026/2027, as well as the intended outcomes, will be discussed.

We look forward to collaborating in both formats and to continued exchange.

## Sustainable Procurement Models in Focus at AG Pro-Planteurs

*Online, 10. February 2026*

On 10 February 2026, current developments in the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire and the status of the project were on the agenda of AG Pro-Planteurs. In particular, participants discussed the tense market situation following the price decline, the role of the **Conseil du Café-Cacao**, and the implications for marketing and producers' incomes.

In addition, a report on sustainable procurement models was presented and discussed, analyzing contractual structures between cooperatives and their buyers.

## ISM 2026 - Future-proofing chocolate: How to build resilient supply chains

*Cologne, 03. February 2026*

On 3 February 2026, GISCO, together with the **Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa (SWISSCO)**, organized the panel discussion "Future-Proofing Chocolate: How to Build Resilient Cocoa Supply Chains" on the Expert Stage at the International Sweets and Biscuits Fair (ISM) in Cologne.

With more than 100 participants in attendance, the discussion brought together diverse perspectives from across the value chain – including producers, industry representatives, food retailers, and companies engaged in local value creation.

For GISCO and **SWISSCO**, the event provided an important opportunity to highlight the role of both multi-stakeholder initiatives in the context of current market and sustainability debates. At the same time, the event facilitated numerous conversations with members, partners, and other sector stakeholders during the subsequent reception at the **BDSI** stand.

You can find the slides from the joint thematic introduction by GISCO and **SWISSCO** [here](#).



Figure Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao / PR-Fotografie Köhring ; f.l.t.r. Monica Müller (Chocolat Bernrain AG), Adele Judith Gwet (Chambers Federation & Project Origins), Stephan Jermendy (ALDI SÜD HOLDING), Claudia Kühne (Barry Callebaut Group), Emmanuel Sarpong (Asunafo Cooperative & Fairtrade International Ghana Network)

[Find the LinkedIn post here](#)

## Postponement of the 2026 Monitoring Round

*Bonn, February 2026*

The monitoring process for the year 2025 will be postponed by six weeks this year due to unforeseen capacity constraints. Instead of starting in March 2026 as originally planned, the monitoring round will now begin on 13 April and run until 13 May 2026.

An overview of the monitoring questions will be shared at the end of March 2026. The kick-off meeting will take place on 13 April 2026. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Ulrike Joras.

## New Staff Member Joining the Secretariat

*Bonn, 01. February 2026*

Over the next six months, Ms. Katharina Münster will support the monitoring activities of the Secretariat with a 30% position.



Figure © Noi Crew

We are pleased to introduce our new colleague:

Ms. Münster studied International Relations in Berlin, Lyon, and Potsdam. She brings several years of experience in international cooperation, including work on projects of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) focusing on agricultural supply chains and sustainable economic development.

Most recently, she headed the Secretariat of the multi-stakeholder partnership Forum Nachhaltiges Palmöl (FONAP). In this role, she was responsible for monitoring the implementation of FONAP's voluntary commitment, facilitating working groups, and contributing to the further development of the multi-stakeholder partnership.

## GISCO in Côte d'Ivoire: New Living Income Benchmark Study

*Abidjan, 12. January 2026*

The research institute CIRES (Centre Ivoirien de Recherches Économiques et Sociales) is conducting an Anker Living Income Benchmark study. The study is supported by the Living Income Community of Practice (LICOP) and the Anker Research Institute and is being accompanied locally in Côte d'Ivoire by the "Living Income" Working Group of the **Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC)**.

The previous study was conducted in 2018, and the benchmark values have since been adjusted annually for inflation. The new study includes data collection in six cocoa-producing regions and a recalculation of the Living Income Benchmark. The publication of the final report is planned for autumn 2026.

GISCO in Côte d'Ivoire supports communication and coordination between LICOP and the **CCC** at the local level. Within the framework of the Alliance on Living Income in Cocoa (ALICO), GISCO also maintains regular exchange with LICOP.

## GISCO in Côte d'Ivoire: Relaunch of the CCC Public-Private Platform Working Group on Living Income

*Abidjan, 11 December 2025*

The Public-Private Platform of the **Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC)** has resumed the activities of its Working Group on Living Income. On 11 December 2025, a workshop was held in Abidjan during which tools for project development and evaluation in the field of living income were presented and discussed. Ms. Karidja Konate participated in the workshop as the representative of GISCO in Côte d'Ivoire.

A key agenda item was the recalculation of the Living Income Benchmarks within the framework of LICOP in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

The Working Group on Living Income is a multi-stakeholder platform of the **CCC**, bringing together chocolate companies, exporters, non-governmental organizations, and umbrella associations. Its objective is to harmonize approaches to promoting living incomes and to strengthen the effectiveness of related measures in Côte d'Ivoire.



Figure: Members of the Working Group on Living Income



## Pro-Planteurs and GISCO in Côte d'Ivoire

### Cocoa Sector in Côte d'Ivoire under Pressure: 2025/26 season in Challenging Times

*Côte d'Ivoire, February 2026*

The 2025/26 cocoa season in Côte d'Ivoire is marked by significant challenges. The government had set the farmgate price of 2,800 CFA francs per kilogram (approximately EUR 4.30/kg), which was welcomed by producers. However, since the start of the season, delays had occurred in the purchase and delivery of cocoa beans.

Under the validation system of the **Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC)**, loaded cocoa shipments had to be confirmed by the buyer before being transported to Abidjan. This had led to considerable bottlenecks, with large volumes of cocoa remaining in production regions or trucks that had already been dispatched being unable to unload for several days.

These delays had driven up logistics costs and raised concerns about bean quality. In particular, cooperatives where producers are only paid after exporters have transferred payment had faced growing uncertainty.

Exporters are also under pressure: the high farmgate price required substantial liquidity, while international selling prices had recently declined again. As a result, delivery deadlines, volumes, and payment flows had been affected, further intensifying tensions within the sector.



Figure: Warehouse full of cocoa – a cooperative gathers its producers to implement emergency measures.

On 20 January 2026, the government announced the repurchase of unsold cocoa stocks from cooperatives in order to secure incomes and ease market tensions. Approximately 280 billion CFA francs (around EUR 427 million) were mobilized for roughly 123,000 tonnes. The semi-public trading company Transcao took over storage and processing in Abidjan and San Pedro.

These measures followed a change in leadership at the Ministry of Agriculture, which is expected to bring further adjustments in governance and sector coordination.

## Visit to the International Green Week: Pro -Planteurs and the Conseil du Café-Cacao open New Perspectives for the Ivorian Cocoa Sector

*Berlin, 13 - 20 January 2026*

From 13 to 20 January 2026, a delegation led by **Pro-Planteurs** Project Manager Dr. Johanes Agbahey participated in the International Green Week in Berlin. The delegation included representatives of the **Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC)** as well as Ivorian partner cooperatives of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) project Green Innovation Centres.

During the trade fair, high-level discussions were held with German federal ministries, international networks, research institutions, agricultural training organizations, producer associations, and private sector actors. These exchanges explored new opportunities for cooperation, knowledge transfer, and experience sharing—particularly with regard to the effective implementation of the African Regional Standard (ARS 1000) and compliance with the EU Regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR).

Potential cooperation between the **CCC** and organizations such as the Andreas Hermes Akademie, the AgriBridge Network, and the German Raiffeisen Association is currently being examined.

The participation also provided a strategic platform to present Côte d'Ivoire's perspectives on the sustainable transformation of cocoa supply chains. Key topics included capacity building for producers and cooperatives, the promotion of local value creation, and the stronger integration of women into agri-economic systems.



Figure: The Ivorian delegation at the International Green Week.

## Service Analysis and Recommendations for Action for Pro-Planteurs Partner Cooperatives

*Côte d'Ivoire, 10 – 20 December 2025*

From 10 to 20 December 2025, Jean Elisée ASSI, Technical Advisor of **Pro-Planteurs**, conducted working meetings and field visits with 12 cooperatives in the regions of Indénié-Djuablin, La Mé, and Sud-Comoé.

The objective was to assess existing services and identify priority needs for the professional and sustainable delivery of services.

The cooperatives already provide a wide range of services, including cocoa marketing, access to finance, and technical training. Particularly promising approaches were identified in farm management, plant protection, ARS 1000 implementation, traceability, productivity enhancement, and the inclusion of women.



Figure: Meeting between Jean Elisé and the COPAZA Cooperative.

However, regional differences, limited equipment, mobility constraints, and payment delays require tailored solutions.

The mission concluded with recommendations aimed at strengthening the professionalization of cooperatives, improving internal communication, and enhancing coordination with project partners. The next step will be the commissioning of specialized consultancy services to develop viable implementation, governance, and financing mechanisms.



## Reports from Côte d'Ivoire and the Region

This section is prepared in collaboration with SWISSCO

### ICCO-Cocoa Market Report: Prices Remain under Pressure – Improved Supply Signals Lift Sentiment, Demand stays weak

*Abidjan, 12 December 2025*

The most recently publicly available cocoa market report from the **International Cocoa Organization (ICCO)**, Published in November 2025, highlights the following developments:

- In November 2025, cocoa futures contracts showed an overall downward trend, with only limited price increases.
- The postponement of the EU Regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR), as well as the announcement that cocoa would be exempt from reciprocal US tariffs, temporarily improved supply prospects and stabilized market sentiment.
- At the same time, weakening demand continued to put pressure on prices and reinforced the overall subdued market tone.
- Slight price gains were observed only due to stock drawdowns in warehouses licensed by ICE Futures US.
- Overall, regulatory delays, trade policy exemptions, and weaker demand shaped market developments in November.

[Find the report here](#)

### TV Report Highlights the Impact of the Cocoa Price Crisis

*Mainz, 13 February 2026*

A television report by ZDFheute sheds light on the difficult situation faced by cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire. According to the report, many producers benefit only to a limited extent from high world market prices, as the government-set farmgate prices remain below international exchange prices.

The report illustrates the social and economic tensions within the sector and points to structural challenges along the global supply chain.

[Find the article here](#)

## **Inflation Adjustment of the Living Income Benchmarks for 2025 in Ghana & Côte d'Ivoire**

*Ghana & Côte d'Ivoire, 2026*

The Living Income Community of Practice (LICOP) has updated the Living Income Benchmarks for rural cocoa-growing regions in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to reflect price developments since the previous year. These adjustments account for rising living costs and serve as an updated reference point for discussions on living incomes within the sector.

In Ghana, the inflation-adjusted Living Income amounts to GHS 4,893.00 per month (approximately USD 352.00) for a reference household in rural cocoa-growing areas. In Côte d'Ivoire, the updated Living Income stands at CFA 322,225.00 per month (approximately USD 566.00).

[Living Income Update Report Ghana](#)

[Living Income Update Report Côte d'Ivoire](#)

## **Côte d'Ivoire Maintains Cocoa Price – Ghana Reduces Producer Price**

*Accra, 16 February 2026*

While Ghana has reduced its guaranteed farmgate price for cocoa by around 28%, Côte d'Ivoire is maintaining its price of 2,800 CFA francs per kilogram. The government emphasized that payments to producers must be made on time and announced sanctions in cases of non-compliance.

The differing price developments could trigger new market tensions in the region. Observers particularly point to potential incentives for cross-border smuggling.

[Find the article here](#)

## **Côte d'Ivoire: President Ouattara Faces Major Cocoa Crisis**

*Abidjan, 25 January 2026*

The growing tensions in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa sector and the political challenges facing President Alassane Ouattara. According to the report, declining world market prices and a high state-guaranteed farmgate price were said to have led to large quantities of cocoa beans not being purchased. Analysts were said to view this as a political test for the government, as cocoa constituted a central component of the country's economic and social policy.

[Find the article here](#)

## **Côte d'Ivoire: Government Launches Inventory of Unsold Cocoa Stocks**

*Abidjan, 15 January 2026*

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire has announced an inventory of unsold cocoa stocks. The aim is to safeguard the incomes of cocoa producers and prevent market imbalances.

Through this stocktaking exercise, unused inventories are to be identified and marketed more effectively in order to reduce income losses for farmers.

[Find the article here](#)

## **COCOBOD Calls for Stronger Regional Security Cooperation to Combat Cocoa Smuggling**

*Accra, 13 January 2026*

The Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has called on neighboring countries to strengthen cooperation in the fight against cocoa smuggling. Smuggling disrupts official supply chains, reduces government revenues, and undermines market stability.

COCOBOD emphasized the need for joint security and control measures to curb illegal exports and protect the integrity of Ghana's cocoa sector.

[Find the article here](#)

## **New „Cocoa Media Hub“ Strengthens the Voices of Cocoa Farmers**

*Accra, 12 January 2026*

The Cocoa Media Hub was officially launched in Ghana – a new platform aimed at improving information, visibility, and participation of cocoa producers within the sector.

The initiative seeks to enhance communication along the value chain, foster dialogue between farmers, policymakers, media, and the broader public, and contribute to greater sustainability. Representatives of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), the government, the media, and traditional authorities attended the event.

[Find the article here](#)

## **Reset in Kakao Ghana's Cocoa Sector – COCOBOD Undergoes Strategic alignment**

*Accra, 07 January 2026*

Ghana's cocoa sector is showing initial signs of recovery following a strategic shift initiated by the new CEO of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Dr. Ransford Abbey. Under his leadership, the focus is set to move more strongly toward commercial production, clearer policy direction, and structural reforms aimed at increasing productivity and restoring confidence in the sector.

As part of this realignment, larger and more professional farms are to be more actively integrated alongside traditional smallholder farmers. Observers see these steps as holding potential for sustainable growth and a more positive sector outlook in 2026.

[Find the article here](#)

## COCOBOD Plans to Introduce Scholarships for Children of Cocoa Farmers

*Accra, 22 December 2025*

The Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) is planning a new tertiary scholarship program aimed at enabling children of cocoa farmers to pursue higher education. The modalities are currently being developed and are expected to be officially announced by mid-2026, with the program set to commence in September 2026.

The objective is to improve educational opportunities for farming families and to support the long-term development of the sector.

[Find the article here](#)

## Cameroon Preparing to Produce Deforestation-Free Cocoa on 50,000 Hectares

*Cameroon, 14 December 2025*

The Government of Cameroon has reaffirmed its commitment to producing cocoa without deforestation. Up to 650,000 hectares of forest areas are to be utilized for sustainable cocoa production without any additional land clearing.

The objective is to meet climate protection targets while at the same time increasing productivity within the sector.

[Find the article here](#)



## Cooperation at European level

### ISCO 2.0: European Cocoa Initiatives Strengthen Their Cooperation

*Europe, February 2026*

The European initiatives for sustainable cocoa (ISCOs) – **Beyond Chocolate** (Belgium), the **Dutch Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa** (DISCO – Netherlands), the **French Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa** (FRISCO – France), GISCO (Germany), and the **Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa** (SWISSCO) – have signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

With the so-called “ISCO 2.0” framework, the initiatives build on their cooperation established in 2020. For the collaboration until 2030, the **ISCOs** aim to further strengthen their joint impact as a European alliance, while maintaining the national independence of each individual platform. The focus lies on further developing joint monitoring and accountability mechanisms, promoting sustainable sourcing practices as a contribution to living incomes, establishing a strategic learning network, and coordinating outreach to key stakeholders.

[Find the ISCO 2.0 MoU and Approach Document here](#)

## Event-Announcement: ISCO Learning Network Webinar on Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease (CSSVD)

*Online, 19 March 2026*

On 19 March 2026, GISCO will host a webinar entitled “Fighting Cocoa Swollen Shoot Disease: Where Do We Stand?” as part of the Learning Network of the European initiatives for sustainable cocoa (**ISCOs**).

Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease (CSSVD) is increasingly spreading across West African cocoa-growing regions, posing significant challenges for smallholder producers as well as for the industry. For years, researchers, policymakers, and companies have warned of productivity losses and declining incomes.

Against this backdrop, interested **ISCO** members are invited to learn more about the current situation and potential approaches for action. Further information on the agenda and registration will be shared shortly.



Schweizer Plattform für  
Nachhaltigen Kakao

## SWISSCO: Positive Mid-Term Evaluation and Clear Commitment from SECO

*Bern, December 2025*

The mid-term evaluation of **SWISSCO**, conducted by Como Consult and the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) at the University of Bern, has been successfully completed, followed by an official response from the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

The evaluation confirmed **SWISSCO**'s credible and valued role in promoting sustainability in the cocoa sector, particularly through collaboration, joint learning, and coordinated action.

Progress was highlighted in the areas of networking, transparency, and public-private partnerships. At the same time, potential for further strengthening was identified—particularly with regard to accountability, policy dialogue, and scaling impact beyond individual supply chains. SECO reaffirmed its continued support and announced concrete follow-up measures to further sharpen **SWISSCO**'s impact in line with the objectives of the Roadmap 2030.

[Find the mid-term evaluation here](#)

[Find the official statement here](#)

## SWISSCO Board Mission in Peru Strengthens Partnership Along the Value Chain

*Peru, November 2025*

In November 2025, the **SWISSCO** Board mission to Peru further strengthened the long-standing partnership between Peru and Switzerland along the cocoa value chain. During the mission, two new Memoranda of Understanding were signed.

In addition, dialogue was intensified on living incomes for smallholder farmers, deforestation-free landscapes, and enhanced local value creation. The mission was closely linked to the project “Sustainable Landscapes in San Martín,” implemented by Helvetas Peru, thereby reinforcing the connection between policy dialogue and practical implementation on the ground.

## SWISSCO Webinar within the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Community of Practice

*Online, 27 January 2026*

On 27 January 2026, **SWISSCO** hosted an online webinar as part of its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Community of Practice (MEL CoP). The focus was on how to more effectively measure the implementation and impact of measures in practice.

Members—particularly from supply chains and the private sector—reviewed and refined the upcoming Roadmap 2030 member survey. Through targeted feedback, indicators were sharpened and the assessment of impacts along the value chain was further improved.



## Sustainability in the cocoa sector

This section was created in collaboration with SWISSCO

### Living Income in the Chocolate Sector in Focus

*Munich, 19 February 2026*

A recent report by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* highlights the distribution of value creation along the global chocolate supply chain. While consumer prices in Europe have risen, the income situation of many cocoa farmers remains strained.

The article also addresses the discussion around living incomes and explains the so-called Living Income Reference Price (LIRP), which indicates the price cocoa would need to reach for producers to earn a living income.

[Find the full article here](#)

### New International Cocoa Agreement 2026 Opened for Signature

*Geneva, 17 February 2026*

At the International Cocoa Conference, the new International Cocoa Agreement (ICA 2026) was presented in Geneva on 13 February 2026 by Michel Arrion, Executive Director of the **International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO)**. It is intended to replace the 2010 agreement and modernise the international framework for cooperation in the cocoa sector. Togo, Nicaragua and Côte d'Ivoire have already signed the agreement at the conference.

The new agreement particularly strengthens the anchoring of sustainability goals, including the promotion of living incomes for producers and ecological and social aspects along the value chain. The new framework aims to further intensify dialogue between producer and consumer countries.

[Find the full article here](#)

## Webinar on Child and Labor Ahead of the 6th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour

*Online, 10 February 2026*

The Georgetown University Collaborative on Global Children's Issues hosted a webinar entitled "Investing in Decent Work: Financing the Fight Against Child Labor and Forced Labor."

In the lead-up to the 6th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, participants discussed how financial resources can be secured to strengthen programs addressing child labor and forced labor. Topics included the impact of declining budgets, strategies for resource mobilization, and concrete financing solutions to sustain progress toward the elimination of these practices. Participants represented government, civil society, and academia.

[Find the full article here](#)

## World Cocoa Foundation Presents Refined Strategy

*Amsterdam, 30 January 2026*

At its Partnership Meeting in Amsterdam, the **World Cocoa Foundation (WCF)** further sharpened its strategic direction. The new strategy structures future collaboration around three central areas of action.

The focus lies on strengthening the political and regulatory framework ("Enabling Environment Across Markets"), developing and harmonizing shared standards and data frameworks ("Sustainability Standards & Regulatory Assurance"), and fostering coordinated and credible industry communication ("One Sector Voice").

The objective is to accelerate the development of effective cross-sector solutions and to further enhance the resilience and sustainability of the global cocoa supply chain.

[Find the full article here](#)

## Cocoa Grindings in Germany and Europe Decline Significantly

*Bonn, 15 January 2026*

In the fourth quarter of 2025, the ten companies in Germany participating in the reporting system of the **Federal Association of the German Confectionery Industry (BDSI)** processed 81,096 tonnes of raw

cocoa—representing a decrease of 9.9% compared to the same quarter of the previous year. For the full year 2025, cocoa grindings in Germany declined by around 10.1% to 357,677 tonnes.

A similar trend can be observed across Europe: according to the European Cocoa Association (ECA), 304,470 tonnes of raw cocoa were processed in the fourth quarter (–8.3% compared to Q4 2024). For the full year 2025, total European grindings amounted to 1.327 million tonnes—a decrease of approximately 6.1% compared to 2024.

[Find the full article here](#)

## Hamburg Consumer Advice Centre Examines the „Fairness“ of Milk Chocolate Products

*Hamburg, 10 December 2025*

The Hamburg Consumer Advice Center has examined how “fair” commonly available milk chocolate products are produced. The focus was on various sustainability and Fairtrade labels, as well as their respective criteria and impact on cocoa farmers.

The conclusion: the standards differ considerably in some cases—particularly with regard to minimum prices, premium payments, and environmental requirements. Consumers are therefore advised to pay close attention to the specific labels.

[Find the article here](#)

[Find the markt check here](#)

## Has the Cocoa Crisis Permanently Changed the Chocolate Industry?

*21 November 2025*

An industry article by FoodNavigator Europe examines whether the ongoing cocoa crisis has led to lasting changes in the chocolate industry. Despite rising raw material prices, supply shortages, and increasing production and logistics costs, many manufacturers have taken measures to mitigate risks, including diversified sourcing strategies and increased investments in sustainability and traceability.

The article also discusses how consumer prices, product portfolios, and brand strategies could be affected in the long term if structural challenges in the raw materials market persist.

[Find the article here](#)



## New studies and reports

## FAO Highlights Financing Opportunities for Local Cocoa Processing in Côte d'Ivoire

*Abidjan, 11 December 2025*

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has analyzed financing opportunities for primary cocoa processing in Côte d'Ivoire in a recent report. The objective is to increase value addition within the country, strengthen local industries, and provide producers with improved market opportunities and incomes.

The report examines, among other aspects, public and private financing instruments, investment incentives, and partnerships to expand processing facilities.

[Find the full report here](#)

An overview of studies on the cocoa sector, organised by topic, can be found on the GISCO [website](#).



## Member News

*Note: The following paragraphs are excerpts from contributions made by member companies, who are responsible for their content.*

### WWF Conference on Cocoa & Biodiversity

*Berlin, 19 May 2026*

On 19 May 2026, from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m., **WWF** will host an in-person conference in Berlin on Biodiversity in Cocoa Cultivation: From Nature Conservation to a Business Case.

The conference will provide an overview of how biodiversity in cocoa farming can be effectively promoted—from international policy frameworks and financing approaches to the perspectives of farmers. In addition, participants will gain insights into the progress of **WWF's** cocoa project in Colombia, and key challenges and potential solutions will be discussed. We would be delighted if you could already mark this date in your calendar.

### Lidl Strengthens Living Incomes in Cocoa Farming

*Neckarsulm, 19 February 2026*

Starting in March, producers supplying cocoa for **Lidl's** private-label chocolate bars will receive a fixed premium per ton in addition to the **Fairtrade** minimum price, the **Fairtrade** premium, and—where applicable—the Living Income Reference Price. The aim is to secure sustainable production and high-quality beans in the long term.

[Find the press release here](#)

## Ferrero - Italian initiative for sustainable cocoa supply chains at Amsterdam Cocoa Week



Figure ©Ferrero

*Amsterdam, 19. February 2026*

As part of Amsterdam Cocoa Week, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) hosted a special event with the support of the Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT, Save the Children Italia and **Ferrero**. The event presented an Italian vision for a sustainable cocoa value chain. By linking community development programmes, technical expertise, and technological and financial resources, the aim is to strengthen a coordinated, long-term multi-stakeholder partnership along the supply chain.

## Ritter reaffirms its commitment to sustainability even in difficult times

*Berlin, 22 January 2026*

At the start of the year, **Ritter** reaffirms its conviction that it will not slacken in its commitment to sustainability, especially in challenging times. In cocoa cultivation in particular, recent years have shown that investment in sustainable cultivation methods is essential to ensure long-term availability. It goes without saying that sustainability measures must also be geared towards economic efficiency. The full interview with Asmus Wolff, Managing Director of Supply Chain, can be linked below.

**[Find the Interview](#)**

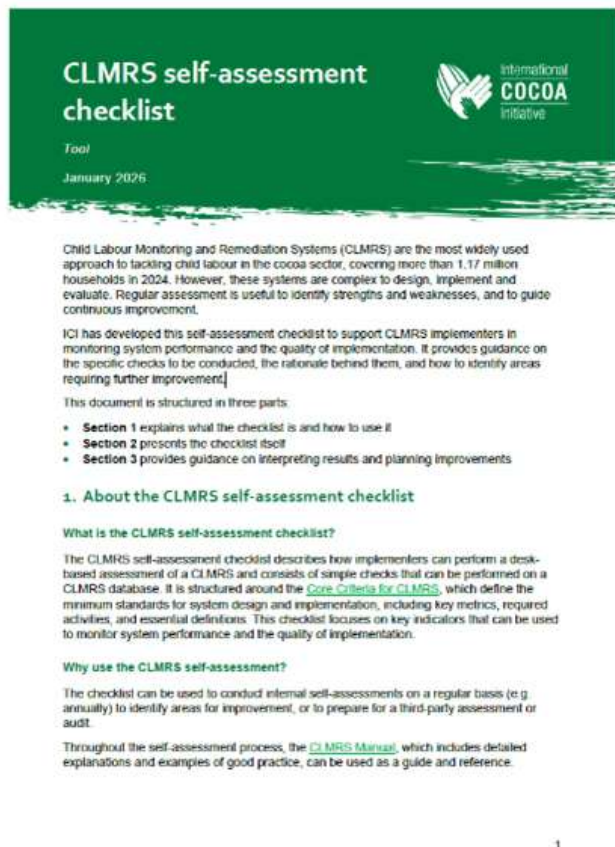


Figure ©ICI

## ICI – CLMRS self-assessment of forced labour risk

*Châtelaine, 20 January 2026*

The **International Cocoa Initiative – ICI** has developed this self-assessment checklist to guide implementers of Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation Systems (CLMRS) in monitoring system performance and ensure continuous improvement of implementation.

[Find the full report here](#)

## ICI – How effective are school kits at addressing child labour?

*Châtelaine, 19 January 2026*

A recent study by **ICI**, ETH Zürich and the University of Ghana found that providing school kits to children in cocoa communities in Ghana can improve educational outcomes and ease financial pressure on households, while reinforcing that material support alone cannot address child labour.

[Find the full report here](#)



## How effective are school kits at addressing child labour?

A summary report of an original research paper: "Lefoll, Erwin, Isabel Günther and Edward Asiedu, 2025, Evaluating the Effect of School Kits on Child Labour: Experimental Evidence from Ghana's Cocoa Communities. ETH Research Collection"

January 2026



Figure © ICI



Forced labour is a serious human rights abuse, affecting an estimated one in 200 workers in the cocoa sector of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.<sup>1</sup> However, the risk of forced labour is understood to vary considerably across the country and is considerably higher in some areas than others.

ICI has developed an area-based assessment approach to identify areas at higher risk of forced labour, helping to prioritize where action is most urgently needed to prevent and address labour rights abuses.

This document provides an overview of the area-based assessment approach, explains how it works, and outlines its intended use and value. It does not include the assessment tool itself. Stakeholders interested in conducting an area-based assessment of forced labour risk are invited to contact ICI for further information and support.

This document is structured as follows:

- What is the approach?
- How does it work?
- Why use the approach?
- How was the approach developed?
- How to go about conducting an area-based assessment of forced labour risk?

#### What is the approach?

The forced labour risk assessment takes a *key informant* approach, gathering data from knowledgeable individuals with a good understanding of the situation in their local area. Rather than trying to identify individuals in situations of forced labour directly, the approach asks different key informants in targeted communities to share information about what they have seen and heard in the places they live or work.

This approach allows information to be triangulated, it reduces bias (a key challenge when dealing with sensitive topics such as forced labour) and gathers information without exposing

<sup>1</sup> de Buhr, E. & Gordon, E. 2018, *Bitter Sweets: Prevalence of Forced Labour and Child Labour in the Cocoa Sectors of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana*, Tulane University & Walk Free Foundation. Note that this is the only available forced labour prevalence study and starts to be dated. The actual situation today may differ considerably from the estimates presented in this report.

Figure © ICI

## ICI – Area- based assessment of forced labour risk

*Châtelaïne, 6. January 2026*

ICI's tool helps stakeholders identify areas at higher risk of forced labour, helping to prioritise where action is most urgently needed.

[Find the full report here](#)

## Landbanking Group – Presentation of the „Nature Stack“ at the World Economic Forum in Davos

*Davos, Januar 2026*

At the World Economic Forum in Davos, **The Landbanking Group** unveiled their "Nature Stack", the result of four years of development on our platform Landler. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

In cocoa, we're currently collaborating with Belterra, a B Corp-certified agroforestry cocoa company in Brazil, offering long-term sourcing contracts backed by transparent natural capital data.



Figure © The Landbanking Group

[Find the recording of the event here](#)

## Fairtrade strengthens stable minimum prices for cocoa producers

*Cologne, 15 December 2025*

**Fairtrade** cocoa producers benefit from higher **Fairtrade** minimum prices, increased premiums, and organic surcharges. This is **Fairtrade**'s response to volatile markets, rising costs, and the

consequences of climate change—and it sends a clear signal for greater income security and a sustainable future in the cocoa sector.

| Neuer Fairtrade-Mindestpreis |                        |                  |               |              |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
|                              | Mindestpreis pro Tonne | Prämie pro Tonne | Bio-Aufschlag |              |
| Côte d'Ivoire                | 3.200 EUR              | 250 EUR          | 410 EUR       | ab 1.10.2026 |
| Ghana                        | 3.500 US-Dollar        | 275 US-Dollar    | 450 US-Dollar | ab 1.10.2026 |

|                         | Mindestpreis pro Tonne | Prämie pro Tonne | Bio-Aufschlag |                |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| nicht-regulierte Märkte | 3.500 US-Dollar        | 240 US-Dollar    | 300 US-Dollar | seit 1.10.2025 |
| nicht-regulierte Märkte | 3.500 US-Dollar        | 275 US-Dollar    | 450 US-Dollar | ab 11.06.2026  |

Zur Verwendung der **Prämie** gelten für Ghana und Côte d'Ivoire neue Vorgaben: **40 Prozent** müssen als direkte Auszahlung an Mitglieder erfolgen, während jeweils mindestens 10 Prozent für Investitionen in die Kooperativen, landwirtschaftliche Dienstleistungen und Gemeinschaftsprojekte bestimmt sind. Über die Verwendung der restlichen Prämieingelder wird in den Kooperativen demokratisch entschieden.

Figure © Fairtrade

## Barry Callebaut and Airbus setzt Satelliten-Monitoring für Kakao-Lieferketten ein

Toulouse, 09. Dezember 2025

**Barry Callebaut** und Airbus arbeiten gemeinsam an satellitenbasiertem Monitoring zur Überwachung von Entwaldungsrisiken in der Kakao-Lieferkette. Zum Einsatz kommt die Geodaten-Plattform „Starling“, die Satellitenbilder und KI-Analysen nutzt, um Waldveränderungen frühzeitig zu erkennen und Transparenz zu schaffen. Ziel ist es, nachhaltige Beschaffungsstandards zu stärken und regulatorische Anforderungen besser zu erfüllen.

[Find the full article here](#)



Figure: Fatou Jeng, International Relationship Manager at Plant-for-the-Planet, with the COP chocolate in Belém. © Plant-for-the-Planet

## Action by Plant-for-the-Planet at COP30

Belém, November 2025

At the UN Climate Change Conference COP 30, the **Plant-for-the-Planet** delegation distributed chocolate to draw attention to the protection of rainforests. Since COP 19, the initiative has been using chocolate to highlight that rainforests are under threat and are also the places where the raw material cocoa originates. The new fund Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) is intended to provide hope and help effectively curb deforestation. With the help of chocolate, this important message was spread in Belém, Brazil.



## Events

*Note: Some event titles are linked for further information.*



### Task Force Living Income

**02 March 2026**

Online  
GISCO



### Task Force Environment

**03 March 2026**

Online  
GISCO



### Board Meeting

**18 March 2026**

Neckarsulm  
GISCO



### ISCO Webinar

**10 February 2026**

Online  
Fighting Cocoa Swollen Shoot  
Disease: Where do we stand?  
GISCO

[Link](#)



### AG Kommunikation

**24 March 2026**

Online  
GISCO

[Link](#)



### AG Pro-Planteurs

**15 April 2026**

Online  
GISCO



## AG Pro-Planteurs

**20 May 2026**

Berlin

GISCO

## General Assembly

**20 - 21 May 2026**

BMZ, Stresemann 94, Berlin

GISCO

[Link](#)

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

### Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao e.V.

c/o Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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