



Target 1: Increase adoption of forest-friendly cocoa practices

Sub-topic: Forest Friendly Cocoa Production

Why is Forest Friendly cocoa needed?

- Global demand for cocoa is increasing with population growth and as people in countries like China have higher incomes and develop a taste for chocolate with high cocoa content.
- At the same time, in many cocoa producing countries, cocoa yields have been falling due to old trees, poor farming practices, exhausted soils etc.
- To try to keep up with the demand for cocoa, farmers have been using slash-and-burn techniques to clear tropical forests and make way for cocoa farms – often using sun-tolerant hybrid seedlings that allow for intensive plantations. Ivory Coast has lost 80% of its rainforest over the last 50 years.
- This deforestation is a huge contributor to global climate change.
- The international cocoa market needs a more sustainable production model that rewards producers of good quality forest-friendly cocoa through higher prices.

What is Forest Friendly cocoa?

Forest-friendly cocoa meets different environmental, social, and economic criteria:

Environmental

- It is produced using agroforestry farming practices (i.e. cocoa grows amongst shade trees and other crops) which optimizes productivity in a smaller space, is better for biodiversity than traditional farming, and also provides food for the family and an alternative crop to sell locally.
- Virgin rainforest is never cleared to establish new cocoa farms.
- Farmers do not engage in hunting, mining, poaching, or logging in the rainforest.
- Crop raiding is mitigated using defensive strategies (see crop raiding information sheet)

Social

- Cocoa farmers work together as part of a democratic producers' organisation (NGOCFU), which helps them to improve farming practices and cocoa quality and allows them to market their cocoa collectively through village buying centres run by elected officers.
- Women are included in cocoa work and share in the decision-making and benefits. Children are encouraged to learn about their family's cocoa business, but school education is prioritised.
- The agroforestry production model emphasises group work and the use of labour, and all workers are treated fairly.

Economic

- Forest Friendly cocoa attracts a speciality market and higher price due to its high quality and environmental credentials.
- Forest Friendly cocoa farmers have a greater understanding of the international market through close long-term relationships with speciality buyers who care about the environment and the livelihoods of producers.

Question to listeners: what does forest friendly cocoa mean to you?