

Belgian Chocolate Sector Takes First Steps Towards Sustainability

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- **57.5% of the 700.000 tons of chocolate produced annually in Belgium meets sustainable standards, a 7% increase compared to the previous year.**
- **All chocolate sold under the private labels of Colruyt, Delhaize, Aldi and Lidl is now certified. More A-brands are also moving towards certification and corporate sustainability programs.**
- **In the past year, 7 pilot projects were set up in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and the Democratic Republic of Congo, raising the bar for Belgian chocolate.**
- **Still, poverty, deforestation and child labor remain major challenges in the sector. The Belgian chocolate sector is committed to stepping up its efforts.**

Belgian chocolate is known worldwide as a high-quality product. But in addition to quality, consumers of Belgian chocolate should also be able to count on the sustainability of the product. That is why the Beyond Chocolate partnership was launched in December 2018, with the support of Belgian Development Cooperation. Today, Beyond Chocolate brings together more than 60 partner organizations under a common commitment: by 2030, partners will ensure a living income for the more than 140,000 cocoa farmers who supply to the Belgian market and will end further deforestation linked to cocoa production.

To bridge the gap between now and 2030, an intermediary target has been set: by 2025, 100% of chocolate produced and/or sold in Belgium will be certified and/or included in a corporate sustainability program.

The second annual report of Beyond Chocolate is shared today with partners and the public. The report offers insights into the evolution of the Belgian chocolate market through the analysis of data reported by the signatories. The annual report shows that the Belgian chocolate sector is taking first steps towards realizing its ambitions. Of the more than 700,000 tons of chocolate produced in Belgium today, 57% is now certified and/or covered by a corporate sustainability program. An increase of 7% compared to 2019. The growing market demand for sustainable products seems to support this trend. More and more brands are opting for certification and/or corporate sustainability programs. Supermarkets are taking up responsibility: as a first step, Colruyt, Delhaize, Aldi and Lidl have ensured that all chocolate sold under their private labels is certified.

Philippe de Selliers, Chairman of the Steering Committee: *"This second annual report of Beyond Chocolate demonstrates that we are indeed making progress. The data shows that there is a renewed dynamism on the Belgian market, with more chocolate products appearing on shelves, setting the bar higher in terms of sustainability. This must be celebrated. But at the same time, we must keep our focus on the 2030 targets. The report also shows that the road to living incomes is still long, and that progress will need to accelerate in the coming years."*

To accelerate the switch to sustainability, Belgian Development Cooperation has made available a fund of 2 million euros to mobilize private sector investments in sustainable cocoa supply chains. 7 sustainability projects have now been launched in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Through these projects, more than 6 million euros is invested directly in innovation and sustainability, supporting more than 12,000 cocoa farmers to reach a living income. Successful models will be scaled up in the coming years to reach

more farmers and bring more sustainable products to the Belgian market. In this way, the fund acts as an engine for change.

During the general assembly, five new partners were announced. Klingele Chocolade, Natra, CocoaSource, International Cocoa Initiative and Cera/BRS have committed to contribute to Beyond Chocolate's goals. The Belgian partnership thus continues to unite the sector around a common ambition: to secure a living wage for cocoa farmers and to end deforestation by 2030.

For more information and interviews, contact Charles Snoeck via snoeck@idhtrade.org

About Beyond Chocolate

Making Belgian chocolate even better and even more sustainable. That was the joint ambition of the Belgian chocolate and retail sector, civil society, social impact investors and universities when signing the Beyond Chocolate partnership on December 5th, 2018. Together, they committed to tackling child labor, halting deforestation and ensuring a living income for local cocoa producers. Beyond Chocolate is funded by Belgian Development Cooperation and facilitated by IDH The Sustainable Trade Initiative.

For more information, please visit www.beyondchocolate.be or follow @BeyondChocolatePartnership on LinkedIn.

About IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative

IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) is a not-for-profit organisation that brings together governments, companies and NGOs in public-private partnerships. IDH strives for sustainable value chains with better jobs, better incomes and a better environment. When IDH is successful, companies rebalance the relationships between the workers they employ, the customers they serve and the planet that serves all of us.

For more information, please visit www.idhsustainabletrade.com or follow @IDHTrade on Twitter and LinkedIn.