



Cocoa &
Forests
Initiative

ANNUAL REPORT GHANA

2022



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARS	African Regional Standard
BAU	Business-as-usual
CFI	Cocoa & Forests Initiative
CMS	Cocoa Management System
CO₂	Carbon Dioxide
COCOBOD	Ghana Cocoa Board
COP	Conference of the Parties
CREMA	Community Resource Management Area
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERPA	Emission Reductions Payment Agreement
EUDD	European Union Due Diligence Directive
EUDR	European Union Regulation for Deforestation-Free Cocoa
FC	Forestry Commission
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FREL	Forest Reference Emission Level
GCFRP	Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	Global Positioning System
GSA	Ghana Standards Authority
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HIA	Hotspot Intervention Area
HMB	HIA Management Board
IDH	IDH
ISCOS	European Initiatives on Sustainable Cocoa
ISO	International Organisation for Standards
MOMO4C	Mobilising More for Climate Programme
MtCO₂eq.	Million Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
MTS	Modified Taungya System
NCRC	Nature Conservation Research Centre
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NIG	National Implementation Guide
NIP	National Implementation Plan
P4F	Partnership for Forests
PES	Payment of Ecosystem Services
RAIN	Rights and Advocacy Initiatives Network
RECA	Rural Environmental Care Association
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stock)
RMSC	Resource Management Support Centre
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WCF	World Cocoa Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cocoa and Forests Initiative (CFI) is a collaboration of major cocoa and chocolate companies with the governments of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, aimed at halting cocoa-led deforestation, restoring degraded forest landscapes while ensuring sustainable cocoa production. Since its establishment in 2017, CFI has played a pivotal role in addressing the main drivers of deforestation in Ghana's cocoa sector, such as forest degradation and expansion of cocoa farms into protected areas. It has promoted investment in long-term productivity of environmentally sustainable high-quality cocoa, enhancing sustainable livelihoods and economic well-being of farmers.

Twenty twenty-two was a remarkable year for the Cocoa and Forests Initiative as it moved into the second implementation phase. This annual report highlights the impact made under the three main pillars of the initiative; i) forest protection and restoration, ii) sustainable cocoa and farmer livelihoods and iii) community engagement and social inclusion. It also documents memorable achievements in 2022 gathered from interviews with government, signatory companies and civil society actors.

To promote forest protection, deforestation trends for 2022 were established based on satellite monitoring. The CFI engaged Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC) of the Forestry Commission of Ghana to identify and map various land use categories within the six Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIAs). Land cover and land use change maps for four distinct epochs: 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, covering the HIAs were developed, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the evolving situation. Additionally, deforestation impact analysis and forest risk maps were created to enhance implementation of targeted interventions. The monitoring showed that annual





deforestation rates varied from 0.006 to 0.064, with the highest rate recorded in Asunafo Asutifi HIA and the lowest in Sefwi Wiawso, Bibiani, and Anwiaso HIA.

To improve tree cover under the Ghana Forest Plantation strategy, for the 2022 planting season, a total of 28,810 ha of forest plantations were established in both degraded on-forest reserve and off-reserve lands (Public sector: 23,185 ha and private sector: 5,625 ha). Also, under Ghana's flagship Greening Ghana day programme held on 10th June 2022, a total of 26,563,607 seedlings consisting of timber species and fruit trees were distributed. Private sector contributed to this initiative with a sub-national event organized in Suhum with the participation of various private sector companies, traditional leaders, school children, and other stakeholders. They distributed a total of 100,000 seedlings in all the priority landscapes in Ghana. Companies further contributed 100 watering cans to schools to support their tree planting efforts. These efforts aim at protecting the environment, while reducing emissions

Progress made under emission reduction and carbon commitments are highlighted in the report. Under the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP), Payment of Ecosystem Services (PES) mechanisms are developed to provide economic incentives for forest conservation and restoration. In 2022, the World Bank announced payment of \$4.86 million to Ghana for reducing 972,456 tonnes of carbon emission. The payment is the first of four under Ghana's Emission Reductions Payment Agreement (ERPA) to demonstrate potential for leveraging results-based payments for carbon credits.

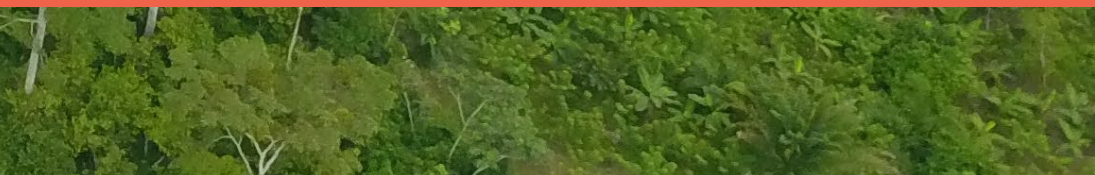
As part of the GCFRP, private sector companies deepened their collaborations with government in the HIAs. Four out of the six HIAs had formal partnerships with 13 companies signing the addendums to the HIA framework agreements. Some key institutions supporting and investing in the landscapes include World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), Proforest, Agro Eco, Mars Inc., Partnership for forests (P4F), USAID, SNV, Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC) and Tropenbos Ghana with backing from Forestry Commission and COCOBOD. The CFI, its signatory companies and other partners showed strong commitment and zeal with their investment in the landscapes.

To ensure sustainable cocoa production, private sector companies have developed unique strategies for boosting cocoa productivity per unit area without significantly affecting the environment. The report highlights these strategies and shows the role of good cocoa agroforestry practices and climate-smart cocoa production. CFI partners have facilitated the provision of shade trees to farmers and instituted payment for ecosystem services to incentivize tree maintenance on farms. The report also gives an overview of the Ghana Cocoa Traceability System (GCTS) aimed at ensuring cocoa can be traced to specific farms to improve transparency and ensure sustainable production. It details the work of COCOBOD in collaboration with the European Forest Institute (EFI) and Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC) to develop cocoa deforestation risk assessment model.

Developments in cocoa production and trade within Africa and the European Union have been showcased in the report. The European Union Due Diligence Legislation requires companies operating in the EU to carry out due diligence to ensure their partners respect human rights. Alignment of

CFI-NIP actions and activities with this legislation is discussed. Under the European Union Due Diligence Regulation (EUDR), cocoa importers into the European Union will be required to demonstrate their cocoa has been produced in a sustainable and deforestation-free manner. Partnership between COCOBOD, International Cocoa Initiatives and CFI partners, are developing child labour monitoring system, which will enable the pre-assessment of cocoa areas and identify the high-risk areas for child labour, and put in appropriate mitigation measures, thus aligning with the EUDR. At the African Regional Standards for Sustainable Cocoa (ARS 1000) level, a major achievement in 2022 was the development of the three parts of the National Implementation Guide. CFI provided opportunity to fully engage a wide range of stakeholders including civil society organisations (CSOs) and cocoa farmers in development of the standards.

The Cocoa and Forests Initiative prioritizes the inclusion of local communities and other key stakeholders, fostering collaborative efforts in the management of forest and other natural resources through participatory planning. The report provides an overview of CFI's engagements within cocoa landscape communities, emphasizing the inclusion of NGOs in its comprehensive sensitization drive across four (4) HIAs. It presents key outcomes, recommendations and partners perspectives resulting from the initiative. The CFI remains committed to achieving gender balance and inclusivity of minority groups. Gender strategies have been implemented to enhance women's representation in decision-making processes related to landscape governance. The report showcases private companies' efforts to support community financial empowerment through Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) scheme within the HIAs. It concludes with perspectives shared by public and private partners on what they look forward to in 2023 and beyond.





Hon. Samuel A. Jinapor
Minister for Lands and Natural Resources

The climate crisis continues to worsen, and the United Nations has, recently, cautioned that we are gradually moving from global warming to global boiling. This requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders, national and international, to halt climate change protect our planet, and safeguard the lives and livelihoods of our peoples.

Ghana continues to play a lead role in the global fight against climate change. Deforestation and forest degradation, however, keeps threatening sustainable forest management and sustainable production of cash crops, thereby depriving local communities of their livelihoods and reducing the contribution of cash crops, especially cocoa, to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The overarching goal of the Government of Ghana's policy in the forestry sector is to protect and conserve our forest and wildlife resources, restore our degraded landscapes through aggressive afforestation and reforestation programmes, and create the enabling environment, through policy reforms, for the private sector to invest in landscapes to improve the living conditions of farmers and local communities.

Since its inception, the Cocoa and Forest Initiative (CFI) has proven to be a great addition to the other projects and programmes being implemented in the Natural Resource and Environmental Governance Sector. It has become one of the anchor programmes in nature-based solutions to climate change, by engaging local communities to address the underlying factors of deforestation and forest degradation.

In line with our commitment to the first pillar of CFI (Forest Protection and Restoration), we have, within three (3) years, planted over forty million trees, under our flagship Green Ghana Project. The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources has, also, introduced the Timber Tending Benefit (TTB) under the Tree Tenure and Benefit Sharing policy reform, a key milestone to ensure farmers receive upfront payment for nurturing and protecting naturally occurring trees on their farms.

Government has, also, increased cocoa producer price by sixty-three point five percent (63.5%), from Eight Hundred Ghana Cedis (GHS800.00) per bag to One Thousand Three Hundred and Eight Ghana Cedis (GHS1,308), the highest price to be paid to farmers across West Africa in fifty (50) years. This will encourage farmers to adopt sustainable farming practices, as they get good returns on their produce, in accordance with the second pillar of CFI (Sustainable Production and Farmers Livelihoods).

CFI continues to contribute immensely to sustainable forest management, and we must continue to invest resources to ensure that the principal objective of halting deforestation and forest degradation in the cocoa supply chain is achieved in the long term.

For the third consecutive time, the CFI National Secretariat looks forward to hosting a high-level event on the side-lines of the Twenty-Eighth Session of the Conference of Parties (COP28) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to showcase key achievements and discuss how we can collectively sustain and enhance this partnership beyond 2025. We look forward to high level representation from the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), IDH Sustainable Trade (IDH), the private sector and our partners from Ivory Coast, who are our major allies in sustainable cocoa production.

The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources recognises the contribution of multi-national cocoa and chocolate producing companies through their direct investments in the cocoa landscapes. We, also, appreciate the continuous support from other partners to the CFI National Secretariat, including Partnerships for Forests (P4F), which also contributed to Ghana's Pavilion at COP27, WCF and IDH.

Let us continue to work together to achieve the objectives of the CFI of halting deforestation and forest degradation in the cocoa supply chain, and contribute to global efforts towards 1.5 degrees Celsius.



Chris Vincent
President, World Cocoa Foundation

The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), representing its members in the global cocoa and chocolate industry, warmly congratulates the Government of Côte d'Ivoire on its progress and achievements under the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI).

Since the launch of CFI, the Government of Ghana, under the leadership of the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, has made impressive progress in developing partnerships and coordinating the collaborative efforts of key stakeholders in the country. The government continues to make progress on its CFI commitments including satellite monitoring, the cocoa management system traceability platform, and facilitating public-private collaboration. We thank all of our government partners for supporting the transparency of CFI with the publication of this 2022 Progress Report.

Over the past year, the companies have also continued to make significant progress on their investments to tackle deforestation and restore degraded landscapes. To highlight a few, in the past year companies have:

- Mapped nearly 348,000 farms and achieved 85% in their direct supply chains.
- Distributed nearly 4.7 million trees in 2022 for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry and off-farm reforestation and 14.9 million since 2018.

- Companies also trained over 321,000 farmers on farm productivity training over the past year, including 163,000 farmers on climate-smart cocoa.

The success and partnership development that we have achieved in the first five years of CFI will underpin the next phase of the initiative, CFI 2.0, which must scale and accelerate impact on the ground. To achieve our goal of eliminating deforestation and restoring degraded forests, we are focused on building stronger collaboration for collective action in the Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIA) focusing on forest conservation and restoration. Over the past year, we have worked with the Government and other stakeholders to build public-private collaboration and facilitate the multi-stakeholder processes to develop the management plans, with the aim to begin collective action in 2023.

In order to achieve our vision of a deforestation-free cocoa sector, collaboration and partnerships will be critical and we look forward to reporting on the progress in these priority landscapes next year.



Daan Wensing
CEO - IDH

Twenty twenty-two saw the Cocoa and Forests Initiative (CFI) move into the second phase on its journey to zero deforestation and forest restoration in combination with sustainable production in the cocoa value chain. In the second phase, CFI has intensified public-private collaboration at the landscape level, which reinforces companies' direct investments in traceability and agroforestry. The priority remains to improve farmers' livelihoods, protect, and restore forests.

However, as we look back at 2022, we realize we are not where we need to be. Deforestation in Ghana continues to increase, and no matter what the contribution of cocoa to the overall number is: this trend needs to be reversed. In order to do so, all actors need to step up. In terms of resource mobilization, putting plans into action, and moving forward in public-private partnership.

To take CFI to the next level, IDH will support the industry in rolling out landscape approaches to mitigate deforestation risks, where cocoa traceability and forest cover monitoring should be piece and parcel to public-private collaboration. This current report, as a first-ever in the history of CFI, presents results from deepened analyses of forest cover change over the 2019-2022 in the Ghana CFI priority areas, enabling all partners to design adequate interventions. Moving forward, IDH will push signatories further to improve transparency and accountability against their CFI commitments.

Public policies and programs will grow in importance and prominence. We commend the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources for its dedication to the Green Ghana Project, planting over 27 million trees in 2022. At the same time, we understand the adoption of the African Regional Standard for Sustainable Cocoa, the deployment of the EU Deforestation Regulation, as well as the national sustainable cocoa strategy developed by the government of Ghana to belong at the center of the priorities of the Cocoa and Forests Initiative and as IDH we will continue to play our role as public-private convenor to facilitate policy dialogue.

As we strive to put people, the planet, and progress at the heart of trade, we believe that through a collaborative, well-resourced, and backed by the most senior commitment approach, we will deliver the most impact in progressing solutions towards environmental protection and sustainability in Ghana's cocoa sector.



Victoria Wiafe
Regional Director - Partnership for
Forests (West & Central Africa)

The year 2021/22 has been a remarkable year for the Cocoa and Forests Initiative, with the initiative transitioning into the implementation stage of the 2021-2025 CFI Action Plans. The governments of Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire and companies have made significant strides in the policy environment to eliminate deforestation within supply chains and restore forest areas.

We are especially proud of the achievements of CFI in deepening engagement and collaboration among industry players and our support as Partnerships for Forests (P4F), in enabling this.

It is evident that the collective momentum on the CFI has strengthened the case for public-private collaboration at the global, regional, and national levels but also within priority forest landscapes to

deliver deforestation-free cocoa. The strength of networks created by the CFI has catalysed greater innovative thinking, proactive action between stakeholders and demonstrated the effectiveness of a combined approach to resolving complex issues such as deforestation, traceability and living income in the cocoa sector. P4F continues to support the CFI and its members, in partnership with cocoa farmers and communities, to continue to act jointly to promote co-investment in forest landscapes and supply chains, for people and nature.

We are pleased with the progress that has been made so far and look forward to greater and transformational impact at scale within the cocoa sector.

SWISS STATE SECRETARIAT FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (SECO)



Dr. Simone Haerberli

Deputy Head of Mission/ Head of Cooperation; Embassy of Switzerland, Ghana/ SECO

Ghana remains a priority country for the economic cooperation and development initiatives of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The primary goal is to contribute to attractive economic framework conditions for sustainable growth. As part of this cooperation, SECO provided support to IDH with the overarching objective to improve the sector governance structure of the Cocoa & Forest Initiative (CFI) National Secretariat. The aim is for the Secretariat to become fully operational and capacitated to implement the approved CFI 2022-2025 National Implementation Plan. The funding support by SECO to IDH is also intended to aid the operationalization of tree ownership policy reforms, primarily focused on enabling cocoa farmers to register their on-farm trees with the Forestry Commission. This is expected to empower farmers to have ownership of both the cocoa farm plots and a stake in its economic potential.

Leveraging on successful IDH neutral convening role, supported by World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) and the National CFI Secretariat, 2022 witnessed a strong collaboration between IDH and SECO

towards the effective implementation of agreed global cooperation. SECO was impressed by the cohesive working relationship among the CFI Institutional partners, aimed at enhancing sector governance through improved collaboration among CFI signatories and alignment with other national and international initiatives. The positive outcome demonstrated the seamless working relationship that opens up opportunities for a strengthened engagement with the International Sustainable Cocoa platforms (ISCO) including, the Swiss Sustainable Cocoa (SWISSCO) partners.

While acknowledging the policy challenges in the land and tree tenure reforms, SECO strongly encouraged IDH and the CFI National Secretariat to collaborate closely with the Forestry Commission and the private sector partners. This collaboration aims to provide technical and financial support towards the publication of the tree registration manual and operationalization of tree registration documentation for small holder farmers.



The Cocoa & Forest Initiative

In Ghana, cocoa production is the major source of income for many smallholder farmers and their households. Cocoa exports earned Ghana a total of \$2.07 billion from January to September 2021, contributing about 23.9% to the country's total export earnings (Bank of Ghana, 2021). Ghana's cocoa sector contributes 3% to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (GSS, 2015). Expansion of cocoa farms however, may contribute to the loss of Ghana's forest cover with undesirable consequences for the country's economy, environment, and people. To address this, the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, together with the cocoa and chocolate industry, launched the Cocoa and Forests Initiative (CFI) in November 2017.

The CFI is a unique public-private partnership that aims to achieve zero deforestation and restore degraded forests in the cocoa supply chain. It seeks to address the main drivers of deforestation in Ghana's cocoa sector, such as forest degradation and expansion of cocoa farms into protected areas. The CFI targets at eliminating illegal deforestation from Ghana's cocoa supply chain and restoring degraded forests.

The CFI's activities are focused to align with existing national forest protection plans and policies, promoting sustainable land use practices, supporting the implementation of cocoa agroforestry systems, and increasing transparency and traceability in the cocoa supply chain through the three thematic pillars:



Forest protection and restoration



Sustainable production and farmers livelihood



Community engagement and social inclusion

A first (2018-2020) National Implementation Plan (NIP) was developed, which saw both the public and private sectors working towards halting further conversion of forest areas for cocoa production, with about 225,834 hectares of forest area restored within cocoa landscapes. Mapping exercises to promote traceability and ensure zero sourcing of cocoa from national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and wildlife resource reserves were rigorously pursued.

CFI signatory companies supported farmers to register trees on farm in preparation towards farmer ownership of naturally occurring trees on-farm. The Cocoa and Forests Initiative promotes investment in long-term productivity of high-quality cocoa in an environmentally sustainable manner. Community engagement and social inclusion was prioritized in cocoa production activities. The 2021-2025 NIP (phase 2) was launched in July 2022 and builds on achievements of the previous NIP, with the same thematic areas. It facilitates implementation by indicating actions, activities and timelines for various commitments.

The initiative also seeks to improve the livelihoods of cocoa farmers by providing them with training, inputs, and access to finance. Thus, CFI contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 13 by taking climate action through zero deforestation, Goal 1 by reducing poverty among farmers, and Goal 15 by enhancing life on land.

Overall, the Cocoa and Forests Initiative is a unique initiative that seeks to promote sustainable cocoa production while safeguarding Ghana's priceless forests and wildlife. It is an excellent example of a public-private partnership which adopts a multi-stakeholder approach that involves government, industry, civil society, and local communities to achieve a common goal. The CFI's success is essential not only for the sustainability of Ghana's cocoa sector but also for the well-being of its people, forest and environment.



CFI ACHIEVEMENTS



Forest Protection & Restoration



14,680 Ha

Area of degraded forest restored in forest reserves



877 Ha

Area of degraded lands destroyed by illegal mining (galamsay) restored



2,338 Ha

Forest area restored in off-reserve



4,640

Farmers trained in Modified Taungyan System



109,449

Farmers informed, trained and or consulted on the forest law enforcement, forest protection and restoration



5

Environmental and Social Management Plan completed in HIA's



3,233

New Individual farmers receiving Payment of Ecosystem Services



9,092

Active Individuals receiving Payment of Ecosystem Service (PES)



562,916

Cocoa plots mapped in direct supply chain of companies



339,928

Cocoa farms mapped in direct supply chain



724,775 Ha

Direct Supply chain with deforestation risk assessment completed



84%

Directly Sourced Cocoa traceable from the farm to the first purchasing point



986

Farmers supported to obtain land tenure agreements/documentation



7,384

Number of trees registered



27,004,674

Multi-purpose trees distributed for on-reserve and off-reserve planting

*Data on the trees have been taken and are awaiting verification by the Forestry Commission



Sustainable cocoa production and Farmer's livelihoods



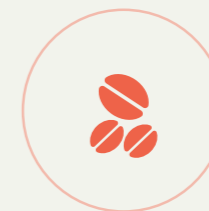
14,5056 Ha

Areas of newly cocoa agroforestry established/ in development



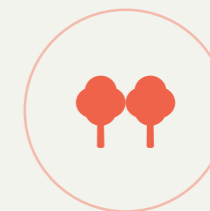
112,741

Farmers Applying Cocoa Agroforestry



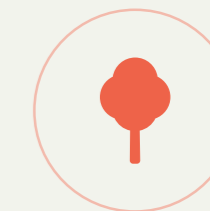
700 kg/ha

Average yield of cocoa produced



683,269 mt tons

Volumes of cocoa sourced nationwide



18,755,209

Hybrid/Improved cocoa seedlings supplied to beneficiary farmers



11,333,336

Temporary shade trees supplied for newly established cocoa farms



4,369,083

Multi-purpose trees distributed for cocoa agro-forestry establishment



551

Cocoa nurseries sites established



678,133

Farmers trained in Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs)



156,896

Farmers trained in Climate Smart Cocoa (CSC) practices



544,861

Farmers trained in additional livelihoods



72,964

Farmers participating in additional income generating activities



2,073

Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) Group established



99,174

Membership of VSLA groups



105,758

Individuals supported by companies to enroll in a formal financial products & services



Community & Farmer Inclusion

10

New Community Resource Management Areas established

658

Communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM)

309,364 Ha

Forest area under CBNRM)

106,877

Individuals participating in women empowerment program

23,922

Individuals participating in youth (15-35 years) focused projects and activities





Forest Protection And Restoration



Deforestation Trends, Based on Satellite Monitoring

Deforestation poses a significant challenge in Ghana, the world's second-largest cocoa producer. Between 2002 and 2020, the country 9.3% of its precious humid primary forests, predominantly in the High Forest Zone, which is a crucial cocoa production belt. Agricultural activities, particularly cocoa farming and expansion, emerged as one of the leading drivers of deforestation, underscoring the urgent need for intervention. Addressing this critical issue, the CFI engaged Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC) of the Forestry Commission of Ghana to identify and map various land use categories within the Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIAs). The aim was to provide crucial insights into forest cover changes, deforestation trends, and forest conversions, while also identifying deforestation hotspots and analyzing their impacts on the landscape.

In 2022, land cover and land use change maps for four distinct epochs: 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, covering six HIAs were developed, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the evolving situation. Additionally, deforestation impact analysis and forest risk maps were created to enhance implementation of targeted interventions.

The land cover maps revealed two dominant land uses across the HIAs: cocoa plantations and forests. While protected areas predominantly housed forests, cocoa plantations dominated the regions outside these protective zones. Overall, there was a net reduction in forest cover and a slight decrease in cocoa plantations across the HIAs. The annual deforestation rates varied from 0.006 to 0.064, with the highest rate recorded in Asunafo Asutifi HIA and the lowest in Sefwi Wiawso, Bibiani, and Anwiaso HIA. Deforestation outside protected areas outpaced that occurring within them, with the exception of the Sefwi Wiawso, Bibiani, and Anwiaso HIA. These outcomes carry profound implications, highlighting the need for interventions that prioritize safeguarding forest cover outside the protected areas. Preserving these vital forested regions is crucial to curbing further conversion into cocoa plantations and mitigating the environmental impacts of deforestation.

Forest Monitoring

Ghana lost 9.3% of the humid primary forest between 2002 and 2020. A major driver of deforestation in the High Forest Zone which is also the cocoa production belt is agriculture with cocoa cultivation and expansion being the single most important commodity driver. Therefore the CFI's aim is to provide an enabling environment for cocoa

sector players to positively contribute towards stopping further conversion of any forestland, zero production and sourcing of cocoa from protected areas. Key to the initiative is the ability to identify and map different landcover categories within the landscape and building on that to provide information on forests cover change, deforestation trends and forest conversion. In addition to these, identify deforestation hotspots, analyze the impact of deforestation on the landscape and provide information which will guide the implementation of forest interventions.

For the purpose of tracking deforestation trends and develop meaningful periodic reporting, the CFI National Secretariat with funding through IDH, engaged the RMSC to use spatial data to determine the extent of deforestation in the 6 priority hotspots in Ghana, the dominant driver of deforestation and use the information to assess the performance of the intervention on the ground and report on them appropriately. For the ease of replicability and consistency of comparison over a period of time CFI stakeholders led by the CFI M&E taskforce has developed a reporting template (See table 1) to be used over the years and updated when necessary.

Since this is the first time this kind of analysis has been undertaken for the purpose of assessing the impact of CFI programs and activities on

deforestation, it will not be possible to compare the results to previous years. Rather this information will serve as a baseline for comparison of future assessments. It must be stated here that the information and analysis is purely based on satellite imagery without any ground verification done. It also does not represent the entire cocoa growing landscape since the assessment was concentrated in the 6 HIAs that are the priority areas under the GCFRP.

Juabeso-Bia Hotspot Intervention Area

The Juabeso-Bia Hotspot Intervention Area (HIA) has a total forest cover of 110,603.45 Ha out of a total 243,561 Ha. A total of 10% of the total cover of the forest has been lost as of 2019 with a deforestation rate of 0.03%. Despite the presence of several forest enhancement activities in the HIA which has resulted in the 2980.79 Ha of forest enhanced over the period, about 8,093.50 Ha of forest has been lost. This puts 26.87% of the remaining forest under risk of being converted to other uses. The main driver of deforestation is food crop production with cocoa production contributing 10% of the total deforestation in the landscape. Majority of this deforestation currently happens within the off-reserve areas (57%) of the landscape. Within the forest reserves, deforestation is due to high number of admitted farms that have grown into settlements

TABLE 1: REPORTING PERIOD - 2022										
DEFORESTATION BY LOCATION										
Hotspot Intervention Area (HIA)	Forest Cover (ha)	Forest Loss (ha)	Deforestation Rate	Forest Enhancement (ha)	Net Forest Gain / Loss (ha)	Forest Risk (Medium to Very High) %	Major Drivers of Deforestation	Cocoa Led Deforestation (%)	Protected Area	Off-reserve
Juabeso Bia	110,603.45	11,074.29	0.03	2,980.79	-8,093.50	26.87	Food Crop	10	43%	57%
Ahafo Ano South / Atwima Mponua / Atwima Nwabiagya	118,718.18	16,581.78	0.04	10,034.93	-17,915.70	25.92	Food Crop	3	7%	93%
Asunafo / Asutifi	124,829.65	29,471.67	0.06	3,995.09	-25,476.58	16.55	Food Crop	5	20%	80%
Atiwa / Denkyembaour / East Akim	70,682.79	4,233.40	0.02	2,856.30	-1,377.10	25.63	Food Crop and Cocoa Plantation	29	31%	69%
Kakum	36,106.20	2,453.72	0.02	1,304.37	-1,149.35	21.58	Food Crop	27	39%	61%
Bibiani / Anwiaso / Sefwi Wiawso	60,989.08	1,058.99	0.006	1,519.64	460.65	24.98	Food Crop	24	19%	81%

with high demands for food crops. Food security remains a critical issue within the landscape especially when most of the arable lands outside forest reserves have been converted to cocoa farms. Recent interventions within the landscape have targeted food crop production especially plantain, cocoyam, maize, and vegetable production as a measure to improve the food security issue within the landscape.

Ahafo-Ano Hotspot Intervention Area

Out of a total 365,673ha within the Ahafo-Ano HIA, there is a forest cover of 118,718.18 Ha presenting 30 % of the total landscape land area. With a total forest loss of 17% within the landscape, the HIA with its proximity to the Kumasi Metropolis is one of the sources of raw materials and food for the urban centre. With this demand raising over the years and the relative expansion of urban settlements towards the landscape, the pressure on land is projected to increase over the coming years. Over the period there was significant efforts by stakeholders to enhance the forest in the landscape which resulted in about 10,000 ha of forest enhanced. But this was not enough to result in a positive gain in forest in the landscape as the net forest loss was approx.. 18,000 Ha. The rate of deforestation in the landscape was 0.04% with the major driver being food crop production and was mainly in the off-reserve areas (93%).

Asunafo Hotspot Intervention Area

The Asunafo HIA covers an area of 365,550 Ha including a forest area of 124,829.65. The HIA experienced a 23.61% decline in forest area. This reduction was primarily caused by the considerable demand for forest resources (timber) and the gradual expansion of urban communities into the region. The HIA which also has some of the major towns in the Ahafo region can also boast of the presence of the regional capital (Goaso) which has attracted a lot of workers into the region. Consequently, the forest cover shrank by 25,476.58 Ha. Deforestation in the area occurred at a rate of 0.06%, primarily driven by the expansion of food crop cultivation, particularly in the off-reserve zones (80%). As the highest performing HIA in the recent emission reductions monitoring report under the GCFRP, the landscape has the potential to further

reduce deforestation and improve the livelihoods of farmers and their communities through sustainable cocoa production and forest management.

Atewa Hotspot Intervention Area

The Atewa Hotspot Intervention Area (HIA) has a forest cover of 70,682.79 Ha, of which 4,233.40 Ha (about 6% of total forest cover) is used for food crops and cocoa cultivation. Despite a deforestation rate of 0.02%, the Atewa HIA has had a net forest gain of 2,856.30 Ha due to stakeholder engagements over the years. However, food crops and cocoa production are the main drivers of deforestation, with cocoa accounting for 29% of the total deforestation in the area. Deforestation mostly occurs within off-reserve areas (69%) and within forest reserves due to high demand for food crops. Food security is a critical issue in the area, especially since most arable lands outside forest reserves have been converted to cocoa farms. The HIA is under serious threat of mining for gold and bauxite as Atewa Range Forest Reserve together with Tano Offin Forest Reserve hosts the remains of Ghana's upland evergreen forest and known to hold some good quantities of bauxite. As such continuous exploration for minerals within the landscape keeps on fragmenting the vegetation and habitats for wildlife.

Kakum Hotspot Intervention Area

The Kakum HIA has the smallest forest cover among the 6 priority hotspots in Ghana, with 6.8% of the forest lost to food crop cultivation. A bigger portion of the area is covered by the Kakum National Park and the Assin Attendanso Resource Reserve which is managed effectively by the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission. Despite a deforestation rate of 0.02, the Kakum HIA has had a net forest loss of -1,149.35 Ha, with cocoa cultivation accounting for 27% of the total forest loss. Land available for cocoa production is scarce and currently restricted to the northern and eastern parts of the HIA. The expansion of farmlands and rising demands for forest products have contributed to the significant loss in forest cover. However, forest enhancement programs have resulted in a forest gain of 1,304.37 Ha. Almost 40% of deforestation in this HIA occurs in Protected Areas, while the remaining 60% takes place in off-reserves.

Sefwi-Bibiani Hotspot Intervention Area

The Bibiani HIA, which has a forest cover of 60,989.08 Ha, has the lowest deforestation rate of 0.006%. A total of 1,058.99 Ha of forest cover was lost primarily due to food crop production, with cocoa cultivation contributing to 24% of the total forest loss. However, effective forest enhancement measures have resulted in the enhancement of approximately 1,519.64 Ha of forest, leading to a net forest gain of 460.65 Ha. Approximately 80% of the reported forest loss occurred outside Protected Areas. Most of the major events that resulted in the deforestation happened prior to the assessment (before 2019) and thus have not been captured here. Also, a lot of effort has been put into recent interventions in the landscape to ensure that the forest is restored and well-managed.

Forest cover within the various HIAs is mostly found in the protected areas with cocoa farms dominant outside the protected areas. Deforestation within protected areas could also be directly attributed to the numerous admitted farms and settlements within these forest reserves and their demand for food, thus the food crop farms. In general, there was a net reduction in forest cover and a slight reduction in cocoa farms across the HIAs. This could be attributed to the recent efforts to restore degraded lands and COCOBOD's efforts to rehabilitate diseased and moribund farms. Deforestation in all

the HIAs was higher in the off-reserve areas than the protected areas throughout the study period. In general deforestation by cocoa farms was lower than deforestation by the other drivers.

The forest risk maps for each HIA showed that more than 70% of the forest cover were at low risk (very low and low risk categories). The forest at low risk were mostly found within the protected areas especially the national parks and conservation areas where entry is very restricted. The high-risk forest cover was found outside the protected areas and some few instances degraded portion within the protected areas.

This analysis a great step taken by the Cocoa and Forest Initiative to understand the current work been undertaken in the various landscapes and how interventions should be structured under CFI 2.0 to ensure that deforestation is halted, sustainable production enhanced and community livelihoods sustained. Whilst the interventions are beginning to manifest through satellite imagery analysis, it is also important to establish the methodology being used and repeat this analysis on a regular basis to help plan interventions, understand the typology of drivers, plan interventions and seek for investment and stakeholder support to realize the ambitions of the cocoa and forest initiative.





Public Policy Development and Enforcement Related to Forest Management

The National Implementation of Plan (2021-2025) of CFI which is in alignment with the Ghana Forest and Wildlife Policy, 2012 provides for the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded and forested landscapes through forest plantation development, enrichment planting and promotion of trees on farms. To achieve this, the Ghana Forest Plantation Strategy (GFPS) was developed as a 25 year (2016-2040) strategic plan to guide forest plantation development. Key achievements in 2022 are presented based on available data:

Forest Plantation Development

Under the GFPS, 25,000 ha of forest plantations are expected to be established annually through public and private sector efforts. The establishment strategies include the use of Modified Taungya System (MTS), Youth in Afforestation/Reforestation Project (YAP), donor projects and private sector initiatives. For the 2022 planting season, a total of 28,810 ha of forest plantations was established in both degraded on-forest reserve and off-reserve lands (Public sector: 23,185 ha and private sector: 5,625 ha).

Enrichment Planting

Enrichment planting involves the introduction of high value indigenous timber species into degraded and poorly stocked compartments within the on-reserve forest landscape while retaining other economic species already existing. The primary objective is to enhance the commercial productivity and ecological functionality of the degraded forests. The target under the GFPS is 100,000ha over 20 years making an annual target of 5,000ha, of which 1,135 ha was achieved in 2022.

Trees on Farms (ToF)

This is an intervention geared towards achieving climate smart agriculture in Ghana. Under the ToF intervention, desirable timber species at prescribed quantities are supplied to smallholder farmers to be integrated within their farming systems. The target for trees on farm is 3.75 million seedlings over 25 years making 150,000 seedlings to be distributed annually. This is intended to improve carbon stocks, enhance biodiversity, improve yield and climate resilience of the farms. In 2022, a total of 1.46 million tree seedlings were supplied and incorporated into the farms of smallholder farmers. Additionally, CFI private cocoa and chocolate companies distributed 4,369,083 multi-purpose trees to small-holder farmers for on-farm planting as part their restoration action through agroforestry.

Green Ghana Day Initiative

The 2022 edition of the Green Ghana day was announced by the President of the Republic of Ghana on 1st March 2022 under the theme, "mobilising for a greener future" and with a target of 20 million seedlings to be planted. The 2022 edition of the Green Ghana day was held on 10th June, 2022. A total of 26,563,607 seedlings consisting of timber species and fruit trees were distributed.

Private sector contributed to this initiative with a sub-national event organized in Suhum with the participation of various private sector companies, traditional leaders, school children, and other stakeholders. A symbolic planting activity was undertaken with participants and a total of 100,000 seedlings distributed in all the priority landscapes in Ghana. Companies further contributed 100 watering cans to schools to support their tree planting efforts. The Green Ghana day is also contributing to achieving forest plantation, enrichment planting and trees on farm targets referenced under the GFPS.



Landscape Investments and Public Private Partnership in the HIAs

The CFI has made significant progress in 2022 with respect to collaboration with the public and private sectors and CSOs. 2022 was marked with significant progress made by government and private sector in building collaborations in the 6 HIAs (Fig. 2) as part of the GCFRP in Ghana. During this period formal partnerships were seen in four out of the six HIAs with 13 companies signing the addendums to the HIA framework agreements that existed in the various HIAs. This also paved way for further collaboration between the partners through participation in landscape consortium meetings, support to governance structures and renewed commitments in investments into landscape initiatives which was enshrined in the CFI 2.0 Strategy.

Asunafo/Asutifi HIA

Based on an initial collaboration between 8 companies to undertake a feasibility assessment of the landscape, WCF and Proforest supported by the Forestry Commission and COCOBOD, developed the landscape management plan in the Asunafo/Asutifi HIA. The governance structure in the landscape has also been established and strengthened through a series of capacity building activities provided by the Forestry Commission, WCF, Proforest and other partners. The landscape consortium is in the process of developing.

Landscape stakeholders facilitated by WCF and Proforest with technical support from South Pole are exploring a mechanism for implementing the management of plan by developing an investment plan with a finance mechanism (loan and grant facility) to attract blended finance for the landscape. Through this mechanism and implemented over a 10-year period with three phases, a total investment of 76 million Dollars will be attracted to fund activities including forest restoration and conservation, cocoa rehabilitation and climate smart cocoa, additional livelihoods, and creation of CREMAs. These interventions have contributed significantly to the Asunafo/Asutifi HIA which led to it being adjudged the best performing HIA in Ghana by the Ghana REDD+ secretariat with regards to emission reduction in 2022 and increased the HIA share of the emission reduction payments for 2022.

“Green Ghana and reduce emission”



The most memorable moment of OFI with CFI was the greening Ghana project, which was done using agroforestry as a tool. During the greening process in 2022, more desirable shade trees (Ofram, Emire, Mahogany, Albizia lebbeck and Cedrella) were nursed by OFI, distributed and planted by the farmers as a way of contributing to carbon emission reduction in those areas and in Ghana at large. In line with the planting activity, about 80% of distributed trees were planted per assessment. Efforts are being made to improve monitoring of these trees to ensure survival.

Philemon Oduro, OFI



“Supporting framework agreement for emission reduction payments”



Supporting government in the signing of the Emission Reductions Payment Agreement (ERPA) which enabled the government to receive its first 1.3 million dollars as an advance to carbon reduction payment and about 4.8 million USD currently towards emission reduction was memorable”

(Raymond Sakyi, Partnerships for Forests (P4F))

One of the memorable moments for me was the agroforestry program we run with Pur Projet, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) from Côte d'Ivoire, in our supply chain, setting up about 400 hectares of agroforestry systems with farmers. We also instituted a payment for ecosystem services (PES) for farmers who maintained the trees on their farms. Next to this we supported households with improved cookstoves that reduces the amount of fuelwood they will use in their households and therefore cutting down CO2 emissions. From the forest protection perspective, this is one area that stays with me.

(Samuel Apana, Cargill)



Ahafo-Ano South/Atwima Mponua/Atwima Nwabiagya HIA

The Atwima Mponua/Atwima Nwabiagya was one of the HIAs that benefited from the Accelerated REDD+ (AccelREDD) funds from the World Bank. It also benefited from the partnership between Cargill and Agro Eco to form Natural Resources Committees within the landscape to develop action plans on how to protect and sustainably manage natural resources by providing funding and support in the form of capacity building and sensitization activities.

Bibiani/Anwiaso/Sefwi Wiawso HIA

Among the 98 communities introduced to the formation of Natural Resources Committees by Agro Eco and Cargill, the Bibiani/Anwiaso/Bekwai/Sefwi-Wiawso HIA had majority of communities involved. The committees were coached and provided with funds to develop and implement action plans. Under the USAID and Mars Inc partnership, tree improvement activities were carried out within the Landscape to enhance tree cover in on and off farm areas. The project focused on educating farmers on tree planting but specifically on forest policy, tree tenure system as well as benefits associated with having trees on your farms and the benefit sharing systems involved.

More Landscape Investments



“The future focus is to reduce emissions in the landscape via sustainable management and to provide more alternative source of livelihood to the people and to catalyze more investment into the landscape. Over 3.2 million pounds investment is required from partners for the Juaboso-Bia landscape through the “Support to Bia-Juaboso Landscape Management Platform (P4F -0795) project by P4F within 2022 and 2023.”

(Raymond Sakyi, P4F)

“In 2022 we had the Asunafo/Asutifi HIA landscape project in partnership with Proforest and others. This partnership provided a platform and opportunity for learning for us as Cargill in terms of the community engagement, drafting of their governance structures and also the investment plans. Leveraging on that we may have another engagement in a different HIA”.

(Samuel Apana, Cargill)



Juaboso/Bia HIA

In 2022, P4F facilitated the creation of a consortium within the Juaboso/Bia HIA with the inclusion of COCOBOD, FC, eight (8) signatory companies of CFI and community members to oversee activities including forest restoration, cocoa rehabilitation and agroforestry programs. P4F collaborated with Touton to bring together various stakeholders to tackle carbon emission in the Juaboso/Bia HIA. They also partnered with private companies including Agro-Eco, SNV and Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC) in piloting the governance structures in the landscape. Safeguarding farmers' livelihood, the mobilizing more for climate (MOMO4C) initiative led by Tropenbos Ghana, developed capacity building programs for farmers and community members with innovative business ideas as well as engaging financial institutions to secure funding for the start-up of these businesses. Framework agreements were signed with HIA/ Hotspot Management Board, Forestry Commission and COCOBOD which are tied to commitments and benefit sharing of each stakeholder under the GCFRP.

The CFI, its signatory companies and other partners have shown commitment and zeal in tackling deforestation in the cocoa supply chain while keeping the interest of the cocoa farmer in mind. This is evident by the various sensitization programs, capacity-building activities, education, tree planting activities, farmer trainings and investments that have been carried out in the past year.

EMISSION REDUCTION & CARBON COMMITMENTS

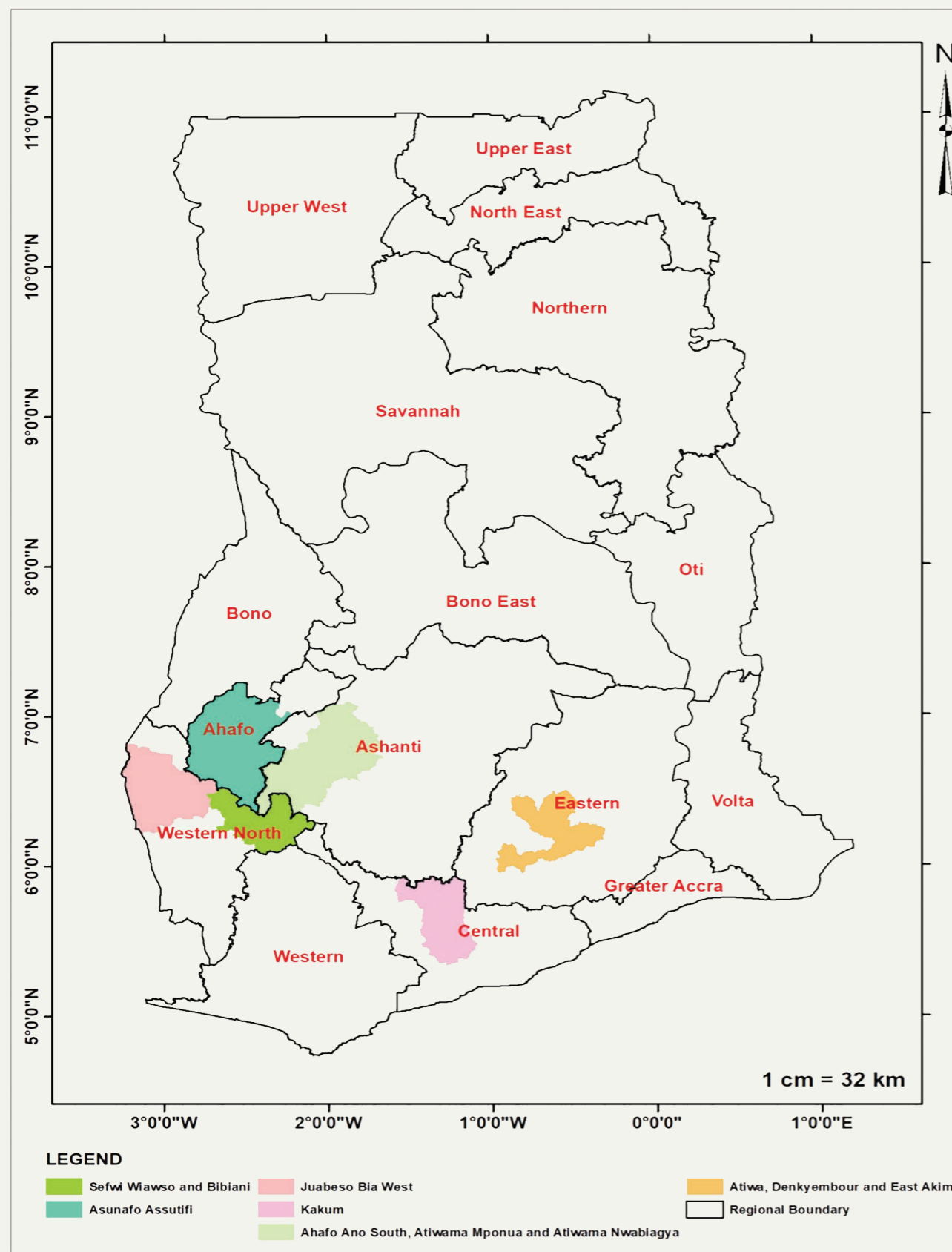


Figure 2. Map of Hotspot Intervention Areas

Ghana's economy is largely agrarian and therefore highly sensitive to climate change impacts. Ghana aims to mitigate an absolute 64 MtCO₂eq by 2030, with 24.6 MtCO₂eq being an unconditional and 39.4 MtCO₂eq as the conditional target (EPA, 2022). Ghana's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement sets a target to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 15% below business-as-usual (BAU) levels by 2030. The country also aims to achieve a further 10% reduction conditional on international support.

Ghana has shown commitment to achieving targets through sustainable agriculture programs aimed to promote agroforestry and conservation agriculture, and through the reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) program. Ghana's REDD+ program is an important part of the country's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as deforestation and forest degradation are significant sources of carbon emissions in Ghana. Through the REDD+ program, Ghana has developed several initiatives committed to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, promoting sustainable forest management, and providing economic and social benefits to local communities. These initiatives include:

- Developing a National REDD+ Strategy and Investment Plan, which outlines Ghana's approach to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and sets out strategies for enhancing forest carbon stocks.
- Implementing a Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL), which establishes a baseline for

measuring Ghana's emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and provides a framework for measuring progress in reducing emissions.

- Developing a benefit-sharing mechanism that ensures that the economic and social benefits of the REDD+ program are shared fairly among communities, landowners, and other stakeholders.
- Strengthening forest governance and law enforcement, in order to prevent illegal logging and other activities that contribute to deforestation and forest degradation.
- The Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program (GCFRP) focused on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in cocoa-growing areas of Ghana. The initiative aims to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in cocoa-growing areas, which include unsustainable cocoa farming practices, illegal logging, and land-use change.

Under the GCFRP, PES mechanisms are developed to provide economic incentives for forest conservation and restoration. In 2022, the World Bank announced that through the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Ghana had been paid \$4.86 million for reducing 972,456 tonnes of carbon emission. The payment is the first of four under Ghana's ERPA to demonstrate potential for leveraging results-based payments for carbon credits.

In the benefit-sharing plan, payments are tied to performance and level of responsibility. Based on the benefit-sharing plan, 69% of payments go to the local communities whose interventions and practices yielded the carbon credit, 27% are allocated to government institutions and 4% to administrative work by the REDD+ Secretariat. Beneficiary intervention areas would receive payments ranging from \$164,272 to \$739,224 based on their performance. Traditional Authorities in 6 HIAs together would receive \$91,450. COCOBOD and MMDAs would receive \$89,462 each, with Forestry Commission receiving \$180,336. (REDD+ Secretariat, Graphic Online, 2022).



Sustainable Production Agroforestry & Traceability

“ARS 1000 national implementation guide drafted”



In 2022, the development of three parts of the national implementation guide for African Regional Standard for Sustainable Cocoa (ARS 1000) was a major highlight. A working group of experts was established to draft the technical contents of the elaborated ARS 1000 to fit the Ghana context. Three drafts were prepared to cover the three different African Standards for sustainable cocoa farming in Africa. These drafts were vetted and finalized for implementation by Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD).

(MacMillan Pretince, Ghana Standards Authority)



“CFI NIP aligns with COCOBOD strategy”



The alignment of the second National Implementation Plan (2022-2025) with the ten-year (2017-2027) policy direction of COCOBOD and the consensus with some stakeholders in 2022 was the most memorable moment with CFI. Before then, members of CFI were doing individual activities which resulted in an inability to achieve the impacts of investments, due to duplication of projects. This implementation plan ensures that the various member groups harmonize to ensure a sustainable cocoa industry in the future.

(Michael Amoah, COCOBOD)



Agroforestry policies and implementation

Landscape restoration can be on reserved lands and off-reserve areas. For off-reserve areas the only approach that offers the opportunity for large-scale landscape -scale restoration is through the increase of number of trees on farms. Agroforestry and climate-smart cocoa practices were encouraged and implemented by private companies, CSOs and public institutions. In 2022, CFI signatory companies supplied farmers with 4,369,082 multi-purpose tree seedlings to plant on cocoa farms. Farmers were also encouraged to partake in the MTS through the GCFRP as a more sustainable way of farmland management. During the period, a total of 11,003 individuals have benefitted from ecosystem payments instituted by some companies for farmers who maintain trees on their farms. CSOs and private companies prioritized farmer education and training to 678,133 Smallholder farmers on good cocoa agroforestry practices with a focus on seeing agroforestry as a tool for forest restoration..

In line with the CFI second pillar, private sector companies have developed unique strategies for boosting cocoa productivity per unit area without significantly affecting the environment. This has been achieved through a number of means including provision of coaching support for farmers, development of farm development plans while others provide support for composting to ensure all-year-round availability of organic fertilizer to farms.

Cocoa Traceability

There is growing interest in improving cocoa traceability in Ghana, with a focus on identifying the origin of cocoa beans and ensuring they are produced sustainably without contributing to deforestation or other environmental damage. In 2019, COCOBOD initiated the development of a Cocoa Management System (CMS), an integrated database of cocoa farms, farmers and cocoa resources in Ghana for the benefit of the cocoa sector, including CFI signatory companies, and to promote sustainable cocoa production. In 2022, CFI signatory companies mapped 570,439 farms in direct supply chain. The CMS will assist in planning, monitoring and evaluation of the cocoa sector and enhance management of child labour

and deforestation issues. It will also foster internal marketing of cocoa, private service providers and promote effective subsidy administration.

The CMS is important for the development of a National Cocoa Traceability System which will allow cocoa to be traced to specific farms to improve transparency and accountability in the cocoa sector. The COCOBOD launched the Ghana Cocoa Traceability System (GCTS) with three key elements; 1) Data capturing, 2) process or system that runs the traceability and 3) identification (QR code system, labelling system), which aims to track the origin of cocoa beans from the farm to the port of export. The CMS uses a unique identification number for each cocoa farmer who has been linked to the geospatial map of his/her farm in the database, which allows for the traceability of cocoa beans back to their origin. The use of blockchain technology to track cocoa beans allows the creation of a secure and transparent digital record of transactions, which can be used to trace the movement of cocoa beans through the supply chain.

Under the GCTS, all cocoa farm polygons will be captured and linked to the profiles of farmers. This is an important milestone because when overlaid with shapefiles of the forest maps, deforestation risk assessment can be carried out. COCOBOD is working in collaboration with the European Forest Institute (EFI) and Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC) to develop cocoa related deforestation risk, assessment model. Currently, discussions are ongoing on the different definitions of forests for Ghana and FAO in terms of area of land and canopy cover. With technical assistance from EFI, maps covering the EU cut-off date of 31st December 2020 will also be obtained. These will then be overlaid on the farm polygons for deforestation risk assessment, to identify cocoa farms at a risk of causing deforestation. Once these are identified, mitigation measures will be put in place and a Monitoring and Evaluation framework developed to monitor the impact of the mitigation measures in reducing the risks to negligible levels.

Moving forward, the next steps for the GCTS include the following;

- i. Joint meeting between COCOBOD and Forestry Commission to agree on data sharing protocols

- ii. Assess the difference between national definitions and FAO definitions of forest
- iii. Workshop on the development of the Deforestation Risk Monitoring (DRM) methodology
- iv. Piloting a DRM approach
- v. Review outcome of pilot

Due diligence legislation and CFI

The proposed European Union Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive is aimed at promoting responsible business conduct and addressing human rights and environmental risks associated with global supply chains. The directive would require companies operating in the EU to carry out due diligence on their suppliers and business partners to ensure that they respect human rights, which covers a wide range of issues, including child labour; do not contribute to environmental degradation; and comply with other sustainability standards. CFI signatory companies have initiated deforestation risk assessment, child labour (human right abuse) monitoring and regulatory systems and implementing mitigation measures to address them.

Increasing cocoa yield while reducing emissions



It is expected that, dynamic agroforestry, where different components of the farm perform special purposes (biomass trees, shade trees, seed trees, cocoa trees, food trees, etc.) will be more pronounced in the coming years, beginning from 2023. It is also expected that, the number of trees per hectare will be increased; moving from 20-25 trees per hectare to about 70-75 trees per hectare, following similar programs that are being done successfully in other countries like Indonesia. This will help increase yield or productivity, mitigate climate change by reducing atmospheric carbon and help farmers manage their farms sustainably. (Philemon Oduro, OFI)



The CFI-NIP actions and activities align with the EU due diligence legislation. CFI signatory companies are engaged in restoration activities to recover ecosystems and improve forest cover. CFI provides platforms for public-private engagement to strengthen the monitoring systems of private companies. The proposed EU due diligence legislation is part of a broader effort by the EU to promote sustainable finance and support the transition to a low-carbon, circular economy. It will also be a key tool for combating climate change and promoting sustainable development, by encouraging companies to adopt more sustainable practices and reduce their environmental impact.

EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)

The EUDR aims to reduce the environmental impact of seven commodities including cocoa. Under the EUDR, cocoa importers into the European Union will be required to demonstrate that their cocoa has been produced in a sustainable and deforestation-free manner. Importers will need to provide evidence that their cocoa has been sourced from producers who have implemented sustainable production practices, such as agroforestry, and have not engaged in deforestation. The EUDR also includes provisions for due diligence and traceability, which will require importers to carry out risk assessments and implement measures to ensure that their cocoa supply chains are free from deforestation. Related, COCOBOD through the Ghana NCTS, aims to trace all cocoa through mapping of cocoa farms and link mapped farms to the farmer. The Ghana NCTS provides the platform to record details of the commodity, including the type of commodity, description, where it was produced and the polygons of the land. With respect to the risk categorization and assessment, COCOBOD initiated the National Deforestation Risk initiative in collaboration with the EFI and RMSC.

Partnership between COCOBOD, International Cocoa Initiatives and CFI partners, are developing child labour monitoring system, which will enable the pre-assessment of cocoa areas and identify the high-risk areas as far as child labour is concerned, and put in appropriate mitigation measures, thus aligning with the EUDR.

Overview of the 4 legislations

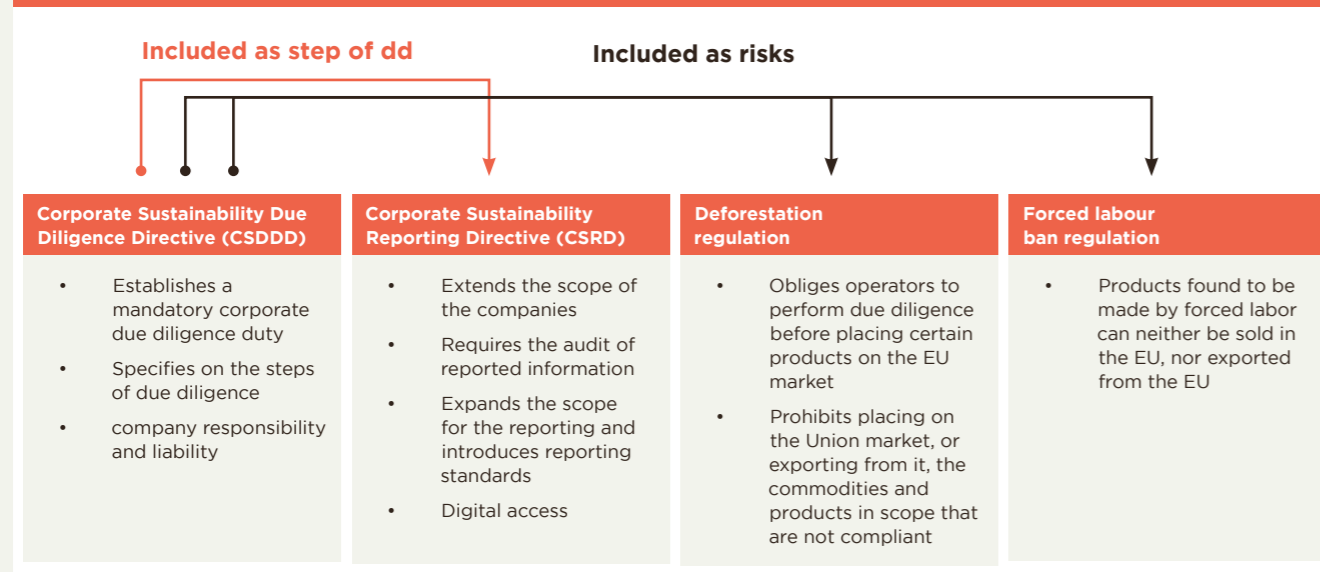


Figure 3. EU Due Diligence Legislations

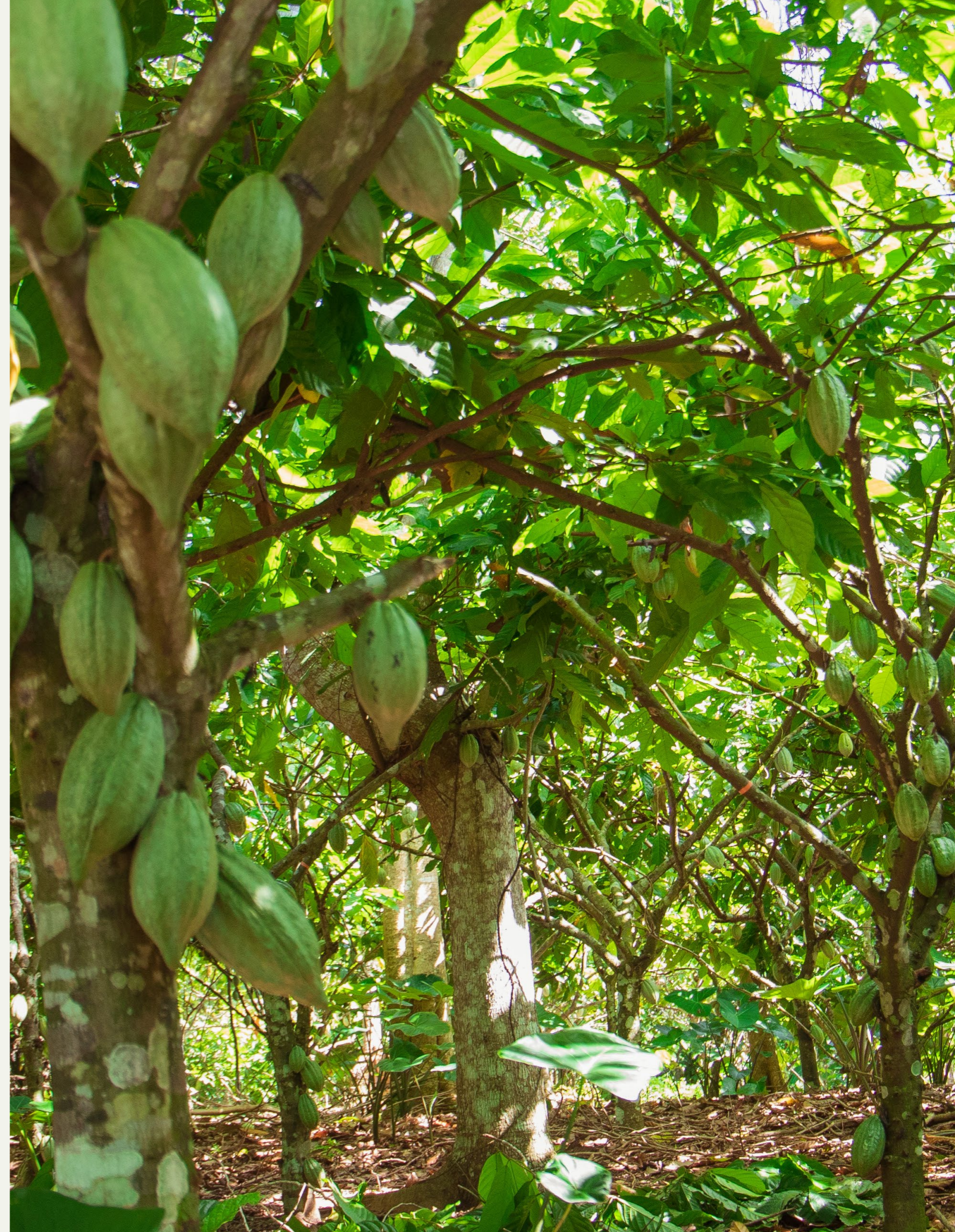
Reflections on ARS-1000

The African Regional Standards for Sustainable Cocoa (ARS 1000) was developed by the African Organization for Standardization to promote and harmonize sustainable cocoa production. Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, as members of AOS, have been leading the development of the ARS 1000. The ARS principles align differences in various regulatory frameworks from member states. The ARS 1000 has three main parts: 1) Requirements for Cocoa Farmer as Entity/Farmer Group/Cooperative Management System and Performance; 2) Performance requirements for cocoa quality and traceability beans; and 3) Requirements for Cocoa Certification Scheme. During the development of the African Standards for sustainably produced and traceable cocoa, it became clear that some prescriptions or requirements of the standard needed to be elaborated on in a national context.

Therefore, in November 2021, a national working group was established to commence work as part of a process to develop a National Implementation Guide on the ARS 1000 series of standards. A major achievement in 2022 was the development of the three parts of the National Implementation Guide.

A working group of experts was established to draft the technical contents of the elaborated ARS 1000 to suit the Ghanaian context. The drafts covered the three different parts of the African Standards for sustainable cocoa farming in Africa. These drafts were then vetted by a technical committee of experts. A sensitization workshop was organized for all key stakeholders under COCOBOD, the implementing agency, to review the content of the drafts and also discuss implementation. Currently, efforts are being made to address concerns raised on the draft, which includes the need to incorporate a tool for assessing social risks in the implementation guide.

CFI gives opportunity to fully engage a wide range of stakeholders including CSOs and cocoa farmers in development of standards. CFI works hand in hand with COCOBOD, especially through the CMS, which was developed by COCOBOD and aligns with the international standards of the ARS 1000 to harmonize the actual protocols of traceability.





Community Engagement & Social Inclusion



“Increased CFI engagement with NGOs and local communities”



A major achievement of the CFI in 2022 is the increased engagements of communities in the cocoa landscape as well as the involvement of NGOs in the activities of the CFI. The cooperation of CSOs, NGOs, private and government sectors in the cocoa and forest related landscapes is a fundamental step in the achievement of the CFI goals.

(Joshua Awuku-Apaw, Earth Service)

The most memorable achievement is the involvement of CSOs in CFI activities. CSOs now have a representation on the CFI Steering Committee. In 2022, CSOs were actively involved in not only representations but also in the sensitization activities in some geographical areas.

(Doreen Asumang-Yeboah, Rights and Advocacy Initiatives Network (RAIN))



“Improving farmer livelihoods, empowering women”



In 2022 we started additional income activities with groups of farmers in the western region mainly focusing on chili pepper and that has gone on successfully. Over 500 farmers have been able to access market at their local levels while we try to explore external markets for them. We also empowered women by setting up our village savings and loans associations and in 2022 we had about 400 women groups raising about USD 600,000 as savings which have been given out to them for businesses.

(Samuel Apana, Cargill)



“A revised and better National Implementation Plan”



“I think one of the things that has worked very well in 2022 is that realizing there were gaps with the deadlines, the National Implementation Plan was successfully revised. That allowed an extension of the deadlines because we all agreed that the original one was too ambitious. The revision was also done in a participatory manner with all stakeholders agreeing on the timelines. Everyone is aware of their roles and deadlines and everyone is committed to the process. I really see this as a success story.

(Mercy Owusu Ansah, Tropenbos Ghana)



CFI Sensitisation Drive in 2022

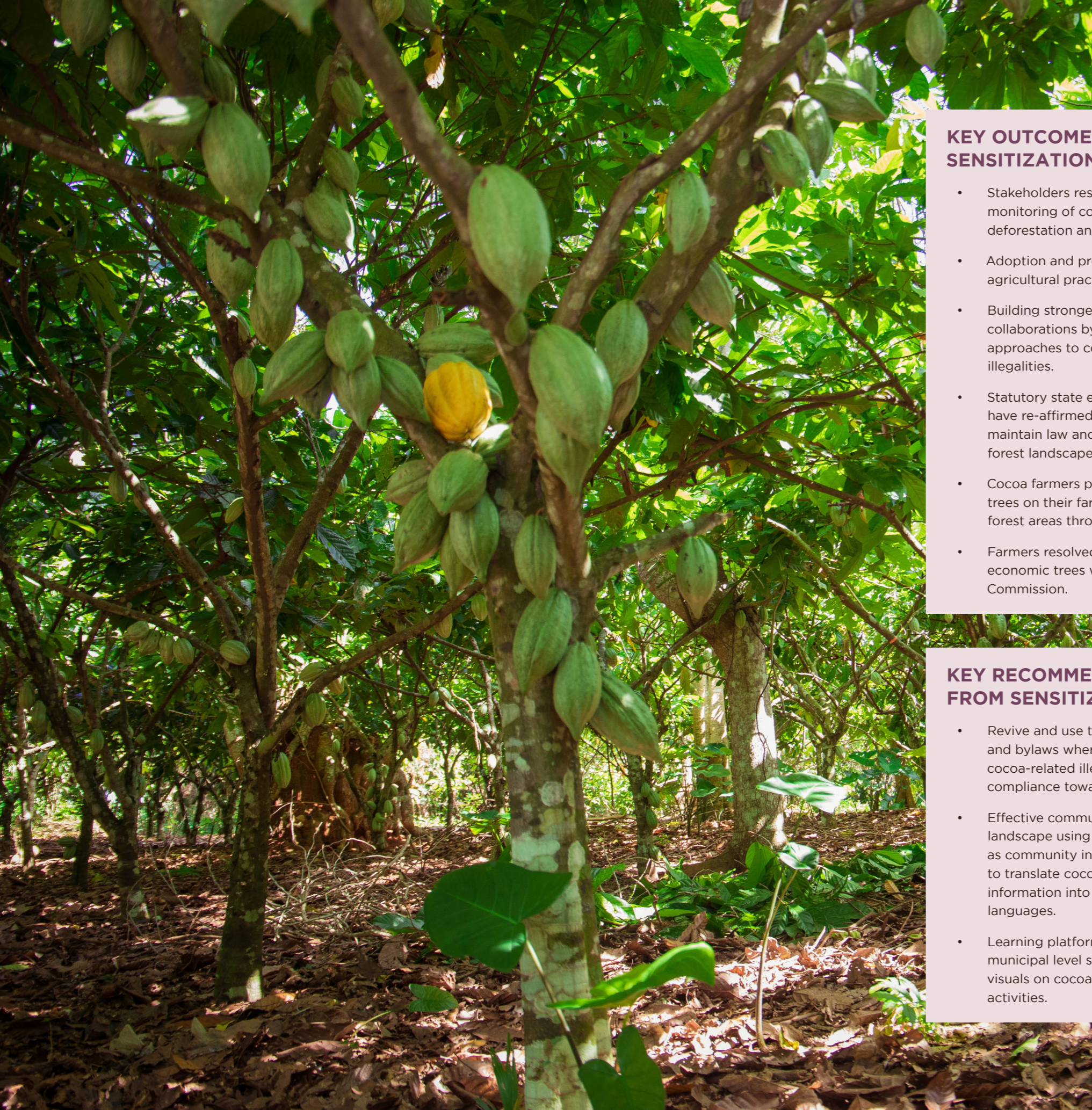
The CFI's engagements in communities within the cocoa landscape as well as inclusion of NGOs in its activities, was a significant milestone in 2022. CFI intensified its sensitization drive within four (4) Hotspot Intervention Areas through effective collaborations within the landscapes. Three landscape-level workshops were held within the first quarter of 2022 by the NGOs which aimed at sensitizing and aligning stakeholders at the landscape and community level in the four HIAs on the CFI, its mandate, core commitments, and what they mean in practice for landscape stakeholders.

The sensitization drives targeted various stakeholders within the cocoa commodity supply chain particularly cocoa farmers and licensed cocoa buying companies, forest fringe communities, traditional authorities, representatives of landscape management boards, district assemblies, statutory and non-statutory institutions in the cocoa and forest sector; the Forestry Commission, COCOBOD, Ghana National Fire Service and the Department of Agriculture of the various Municipal/District Assemblies.

The activities aided in addressing key issues in the forest and cocoa sectors, with focus on four (4) core commitments that tackles the prohibition and prevention of activities that contribute to any further deforestation or forest degradation, promote effective restoration and long-term conservation of National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Forest Reserves and off-reserve forest lands, respect the rights of cocoa farmers and forest users, and strengthen cocoa traceability at the farm levels.

Under the core commitments, landscape actors proposed remedies such as avoidance of slash and burn farming method, integration of trees on farms, prevention of bushfires, planting of improved and climate-resilient seedlings, alternative livelihood for people in forest fringe communities and awareness creation on deforestation are important to address activities that contribute to any further deforestation or forest degradation.

Stakeholders discussed the importance of creating awareness on forest laws and policies, enforcement of formal and informal forest laws, tree planting and restoration of degraded buffer areas as key actions to promote effective restoration and long-term conservation of National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Forest Reserves and off-reserve forest lands. Ensuring that cocoa farmers rights are respected, the landscape level farmers were advised to register their planted trees with the Forestry Commission to validate ownership of tree and benefit financially from any revenue generated. Under the CMS developed by COCOBOD, cocoa farmers were advised to declare and register all cocoa farms by cooperating with authorities to demarcate and take GPS coordinates to ensure that all cocoa beans are from legal sources and achieve the aim of full traceability at the farm-level.



KEY OUTCOMES OF SENSITIZATION

- Stakeholders resolved to intensify monitoring of cocoa and forest-related deforestation and forest degradation.
- Adoption and promotion of good agricultural practices.
- Building stronger institutional collaborations by adopting unified approaches to combating forest-based illegalities.
- Statutory state enforcement institutions have re-affirmed their resolve to maintain law and order in cocoa and forest landscapes.
- Cocoa farmers pledged to plant more trees on their farms, and in degraded forest areas through the MTS.
- Farmers resolved to register their economic trees with the Forestry Commission.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SENSITIZATION

- Revive and use taboos, local norms, and bylaws where necessary to check cocoa-related illegalities and ensure compliance towards sustainability.
- Effective communication at the local landscape using traditional media such as community information centres to translate cocoa and forest-related information into local Ghanaian languages.
- Learning platforms for district/ municipal level stakeholders with audio-visuals on cocoa and forest-related activities.



“There has been great improvement in both the private and public sector with respect to sensitization activities at the local landscape. This has fostered an improvement in tree planting in the HIAs. Some CSOs such as Rainforest Alliance provide additional livelihood trainings to farmers to increase their income purposely to prevent expansion of their farms into forest areas, and undertake tree distribution activities to ensure that farmers plant trees on their farms.”



“Our partnership with the CFI sensitisation in the Asunafu/Asutifi HIA focused on educating farmers about CFI, its commitments and also its linkage with REDD+. The engagement enhanced farmers understanding of what CFI is doing and their contribution to emission reduction.”



“Our community engagement focused on educating communities towards the achievements of the goals of CFI, which is common with all the CSO’s. With social inclusion, CSO’s give quota for women and youths participation and decision making. In nutshell, CSO’s play significant roles around the thematic pillars of CFI”.



Community Forest Protection

In alignment with the CFI commitments, signatory companies and partners have worked diligently towards the establishment and strengthening of HIA governance structures, monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure forest protection, sustainable cocoa production and improved farmer livelihoods.

One of the significant actions towards forest protection in 2022 was the provision of improved cook stoves to households. This was achieved through training of community members with the needed skills to build cook stoves for women in the communities. This initiative worked towards reducing the quantity of fuelwood used in households and therefore limit cutting of trees as well as carbon emissions. Over 250 cook stoves were distributed to community members.

Capacity building has been a focal point in the achievement of all the CFI goals and commitments at the community level. In 2022 capacity building has also focus on alternative businesses to provide farmers with additional sources of income, and creating alternative livelihoods in the cocoa landscapes. Partners continue to expand efforts in helping farmers increase their skills and knowledge with the main aim of attaining sustainable cocoa production without expansion into forest areas.

Gender, Youth and VSLA

CFI is committed to achieving a balance in gender representation and minority groups inclusion. Consequently, women groups have been formed in communities to ensure their contributions and opinions are captured in landscape interventions. This has contributed to the increase in women representation in leadership positions in the local and regional committees formed within the HIAs. The CFI signatory companies provided capacity building programs for 180,697 women during 2022. In the Asunafo/Asutifi HIA for example, Proforest together with its partners conducted a gender assessment for the development of the HIA management plan. A gender strategy was



subsequently developed for the landscape to be implemented for the benefit of all community members. OFI and Mars Inc. have also initiated the 'women for change' program which aims to support women and give them a voice in landscape governance.

As part of private companies' efforts to help communities to increase their financial capacity, 4,852 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) scheme was operationalised in the HIAs in 2022. Cargill for example supported the establishment of about 400 women groups which raised about 600,000 USD as savings. These savings were given out as loans to the participating women for their needs and businesses. In the Sefwi Wiawso HIA, VSLAs have successfully reduced the interest rates of loans to farmers from 100% to a range between 10% and 30%. Some companies have also supported the women with software applications and digital tools for organizing and managing their savings and loans.



CFI GOVERNANCE IN 2022

Overview of Oversight Committee Meeting Held and Decisions Taken

The highest decision-making body of the Cocoa and Forests Initiative, the National Oversight Committee, held its fourth meeting in June, 2022 in Accra and was chaired by the Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources Hon. Benito Owusu-Bio. Attendants included representatives of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR), COCOBOD, Forestry Commission, representatives of signatory companies, the World Cocoa Foundation and IDH. Four representatives from CFI Côte d'Ivoire participated as observers.

The meeting sought to take major decisions on recommendations from the Steering Committee including discussions on the 2021-2025 NIP. The Secretariat introduced 8 priority activities for 2022/2023 including the adoption of the Ghana Forest Compliance tool by CFI signatories. The NIP was subjected to scrutiny, first to ensure a participatory and inclusive process with all partners and second, to ensure the plan aligns with government initiatives, policies and expectations of stakeholders in addressing deforestation and forest degradation. The importance of aligning CFI activities to ongoing Green Ghana Initiative to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in the forest landscapes was also emphasized. The Oversight Committee approved the 2021 -2025 NIP and gave approval for CFI to adopt and work with the Ghana Forest Compliance tool (<https://www.ghana.forestcompliance.com/>) which includes the existing land use maps produced by RMSC under the Forest 2020 project.

COCOBOD was commended for the development of the CMS to ensure traceability down to the farm gate level and for companies attaining significant progress with achieving 72% traceability to the farm in 2021. COCOBOD and Forestry Commission affirmed the alignment of CFI implementation as part of the GCFRP and was therefore urged to deepen the synergies between the CFI and the GCFRP.

Discussions were also held on funding CFI, particularly, how external financing can be raised to support both the government and industry financing concurrently. Clearly, external funding is critical to CFI continuation and important to match projects to the right funders. The meeting agreed that exploring carbon finance and related policies will be important to unlock new funding for CFI.

KEY DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

The Oversight Committee members approved:

1. The 2021-2025 National Implementation Plan
2. Adoption and work with the existing land use maps produced by RMSC under the Forest 2020 project and available on Ghana Forests Compliance Service
3. Increased alignment between CFI and Green Ghana project.

Functioning of the CFI Secretariat including Ghana - Côte d'Ivoire Exchanges

The CFI national secretariat is led by the MLNR and representatives of IDH and WCF (conveners of the initiative) and other members of the Coordinating team. The secretariat coordinates the roll-out of the NIP. This includes strategic discussion and convening of the signatories through building partnerships, improving monitoring and includes the facilitation of governance meetings across all levels of the initiative. In 2022, the secretariat hosted a side event in Ghana's pavilion at COP 27 held in Egypt. The NIP for CFI second phase and the Monitoring and Evaluation report were finalised. The national secretariat hosted an exchange program with CFI Côte d'Ivoire to exchange ideas and enhance collaboration. The CFI webpage was updated as a strategic approach to enhance accessibility to CFI information and engagements.

GHANA-COTE D'IVOIRE EXCHANGES

Exchange-learning sessions were held twice in 2022 between technical stakeholders from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to facilitate discussions, and information sharing in the development of plans for the implementation of the initiative. In June 2022, exchange-learning meetings were held in Accra, Ghana between the two countries and in December, 2022 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The meetings aimed at strategizing and developing approaches to hold signatories accountable for the implementation of the second phase of the initiative in achieving the goals and commitments of the CFI. The areas of discussion for the sessions included:

- Identifying effective mechanisms to enhance public-private collaboration around forest protection and restoration with focus on; companies individual action plans in relation to CFI commitments as well as landscape approaches for collaboration in HIAs in Ghana and project selected areas in Côte d'Ivoire.
- Finding ways to improve performance and activities of in-country secretariats with focus on strengthening the governance structure, developing a communication plan and aligning of annual plans and budgets.

The topics of interest included traceability systems and satellite-based forest monitoring systems for both national and private companies. The meeting brought about the establishment of priorities where alignment is needed between for fund-raising. The partners also agreed on the CFI communication plan for the next 12 months. The sessions had presentations by various stakeholders in the CFI which highlighted on key issues related to the smooth running of both secretariats.

The exchange offered a platform for both countries to assess their progress and set-backs. Moreover, the exchange meetings enhanced the understanding of how the governance of CFI can be strengthened and solidified and identified areas for cross-country collaborations including fund-raising, communication and international outreach. It gave an insight into the progress of specific areas of interest in the other country and introduced new ideas on the roll out of the second phase of the NIP (2021-2025).



COP 27: CFI EVENT IN GHANA'S PAVILION

The 27th Conference of the Parties (COP 27) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022, carried with it the hopes of the entire African continent. CFI hosted a side event in Ghana's pavilion on 10th November, 2022 which attracted large audience and garnered the attention of many passers-by who were curious to know the business of the day.

The CFI side event hosted many prominent dignitaries and speakers including Ghana's Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Côte d'Ivoire's Minister of Water and Forest, other Ministers of State and Parliamentarians from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, CEO of the Ghana Forestry Commission and representatives of key actors in the cocoa industry. Some prominent speakers at the event included the CEO of IDH, The Global VP Sustainability and Chief Climate Officer of Mars Inc, Vice President Global Head of Public Affairs at Nestlé, the President of WCF and UK COP Ambassador for Africa.

The Minister of Lands and Natural Resources for Ghana, emphasised on the value of cocoa as a product that is more than a cash crop or trade commodity for Ghana. Addressing the progress of the CFI in Ghana, he indicated the country had made strides in restoring degraded forest lands and reducing deforestation by 13% in 2021. These accomplishments were made possible by tree planting, landscape awareness, climate-smart agriculture, cocoa traceability and development of a national monitoring system.

Côte d'Ivoire's Minister of Water and Forest noted that, the fates of the forest and the farmer are inextricably entwined as deforestation poses a serious threat to many countries. Placing emphasis on the importance of widening collaborations under the CFI to achieve its goal of restoring forest landscapes. Many speakers echoed on the significance of forming partnerships to mobilize funds for the implementation of CFI goals.



SAMUEL ABU JINAPOR, MINISTER FOR LANDS & NATURAL RESOURCES, GHANA

I urge the signatories to commit themselves to the effective implementation of the second phase of CFI, for farmers to see real benefit from the sector which I dub a 'billion-dollar industry'. This will motivate farmers to use sustainable farming practices. I appeal to the signatories under CFI to address the issues of cocoa pricing. Cocoa farming can and must be done sustainably and partnership will be vital in ensuring this.

LAURENT TCHAGBA, MINISTER WATER AND FOREST, COTE D'IVOIRE

Working together on decarbonisation and halting climate change, we need to put cocoa and forestry protection into legislative framework and build partnerships that pull in other policy areas such as labour, agriculture and environment.



CFI partners pointed out the importance of the cooperation between the public and private sectors to the success of the CFI, and the need for companies to address the issue of deforestation in the supply chain and update their net-zero commitments to incorporate deforestation-free sourcing of cocoa beans. An example of a three-pillar approach to achieving net-zero was described as;

1. adopting a landscape using a forest-positive approach; not just halting deforestation, but invest in reforestation,
2. assure regeneration of agricultural land and
3. assure a long-lasting transition by working with farmers.

Successive submissions highlighted the benefits of the CFI collaborations. The UK government, for example, was working with companies to achieve CFI goals by training 50,000 farmers in producing cocoa sustainably.

The event concluded with an assurance that other major cocoa producing countries are interested in joining CFI, strengthening the collaborative impact CFI can have. Entering the second phase of the initiative, stakeholders, industry and governments have shown strong commitment to achieving the CFI goals and ensuring its success. CFI signatory companies are developing their action plans for the next phase in alignment with government priorities with greater focus on co-investment, collective action in conservation and restoration of priority landscapes.

CFI Interaction and Alignment with European Initiatives on Sustainable Cocoa

The European Initiatives on Sustainable Cocoa (ISCOs) are national multi-stakeholder initiatives that coordinate the activities of signatory partners at both strategic and operational levels in order to make the best use of synergies and promote transnational knowledge sharing. The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO), the Belgian Partnership Beyond Chocolate and the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa (SWISSCO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2020 to highlight their cooperation efforts. The MoU was amended in 2021 and 2022 with the inclusion of Dutch Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (DISCO, formed in 2020) and French Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (FRISCO, formed in 2021). ISCOs aim at improving living incomes, halting deforestation and forest degradation and ending child labour through cocoa production activities. Towards that purpose they have established joint working groups, developed a monitory framework and collaborated with external organisations to make cocoa supply chain sustainable.



CFI and ISCOs engagement commenced in 2022 with collaborations and discussions towards alignment creation of synergy. Some CFI Ghana governance members were part of ISCO groups such as the ISCO Agroforestry Working Group. In November 2022, CFI and ISCOs engagement intensified with a visit by Beyond Chocolate (Belgium), DISCO (Netherlands), GISCO (Germany)



and SWISSCO (Switzerland) to Ghana to strengthen the relationship and explore collaboration with and between CFI Ghana and ISCOs. The engagements enhanced the knowledge of partners on each initiative's structures, stakeholders' roles and activities. It promoted the exchange of knowledge by sharing what ISCOs are doing in Europe and what CFI is doing in West-Africa. In building stronger collaborations, ISCOs and CFI strive to:

- Communicate and align more
- Become complimentary to each other
- Engage on how to harmonise monitory frameworks
- Promote exchanges and share information among members of ISCOs and CFI.

Strengthening Landscape level investments with focus on priority areas

Background

The Cocoa and Forest Initiative (CFI) requires each signatory company to prepare and implement an action plan that illustrates the company's progress toward meeting the eight commitments in the Joint Framework for Action). With the announcement of the CFI 2.0 strategy, companies are being challenged to raise their ambitions and indicate how they will accomplish these ambitions by stating the investments they will make to achieve these ambitions. Companies have aligned their action plans with activities within the six priority landscapes (known as Hotspot Intervention Areas-HIAs) in accordance with the initial agreement in the **National Implementation Plan (NIP) 2018-2020** to coordinate

CFI activities with the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program (GCFRP) to maximize resources and prevent duplication.

WCF together with companies are continuously looking for innovative means of addressing challenges within the cocoa sector by developing partnerships, adopting approaches and tools that help bridge work that companies are doing through the direct supply chains and other landscape initiatives. Despite these efforts, there is still little progress made in addressing landscape challenges with only up to 355 of farmers currently covered by company sustainability programs. For example, government through COCOBOD is actively treating diseased farms within the identified hotspots of CSSVD. Even though the spread of disease has been linked to the broken forest frontiers that serve as a natural barrier to the spread of disease, little is being done to restore this national barrier.

Overall, landscape-level investments acknowledge the interconnectivity of natural systems and the significance of approaching conservation and sustainable development holistically. These investments contribute to the long-term well-being of both ecosystems and human communities by addressing complex environmental challenges that exist in the landscape. Landscape-level investments are financial resources directed towards supporting and promoting sustainable practices, conservation initiatives, and development projects within a specific jurisdiction. These investments can take various forms, including public funding, private sector investments, philanthropic contributions, and international aid.

The Asunafo-Asutifi Landscape as a Test case

The Asunafo-Asutifi Hotspot Intervention Area (HIA) is one of the six priority landscapes under the **Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme** (GCFRP) and is important for the implementation of commitments under the **Cocoa and Forest Initiative** (CFI) Joint Framework for Action , both of which are aimed at reducing cocoa-driven deforestation in Ghana. The landscape accounts for about 10% of the national cocoa output (2020). It has also been identified as a major deforestation hotspot because of expansive agriculture, particularly cocoa, as well as mining and illegal logging. While cocoa productivity levels in the Asunafo-Asutifi landscape are reportedly higher than most cocoa landscapes in

Ghana, the productivity potential has been reduced due to a high prevalence of moribund and diseased farms. This challenge is further exacerbated by a large population of poor and aging farmers, who cultivate at small scales, often with low yields.

Based on the baseline developed, four areas were identified for collective action. These include conservation and restoration, governance and capacity building, farmer livelihoods enhancement, and cocoa rehabilitation and agroforestry. The proposed project will take a three-phase approach with dedicated activities and targets across each period. The planned activities and expected funding sources (from diverse stakeholders) for Phase I (2023-2025).

To address these challenges, the landscape actors agreed and contributed to the assessment of the landscape. This assessment was financed collectively by 8 companies which formed the basis for the development of a management plan for the landscape. During this period, extensive consultations with various stakeholder groups was done to understand the needs and aspirations of the stakeholders and also enable them to understand their role in addressing the challenges identified in the landscape.

Landscape level investments are one of the sure ways to secure and ensure that challenges are collectively dealt with all landscape stakeholders. To make investments effective, there is a need to promote collaboration, efficiency, and shared responsibility among stakeholders, leading to more effective and integrated solutions for sustainable development.

CFI PRIORITIES IN 2023

1. Satellite based mapping: CFI signatories adopt the Ghana Forests Compliance Service.
2. Tree Registration and Land Title Documentation: Developing reforms and pursue the agenda on tree registration. Sensitization on the tree registration manual which will soon be launched to begin implementation.
3. Forest restoration: The the Ministry intends to monitor the progress of distribution activities, planting and mortality of these seedlings. More than 23million trees distributed under the restoration program.
4. Integrated Landscapes (HIAs): Continue work on the Landscape approach in the HIAs. The CFI Secretariat will continue working on the Governance structures developed in the 6 HIAs.
5. Cocoa Traceability (CMS): The Cocoa Management system is well established to trace our cocoa from the source to the exchange market.
6. Communication and Sensitization: The Secretariat will adapt an intensive communication and sensitization approach in the second phase in the working areas.





Cocoa & Forests Initiative



World Cocoa Foundation




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Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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Swiss Confederation

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Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Report prepared by the CFI National Secretariat of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, IDH and the World Cocoa Foundation