

Partnership for Productivity Protection and Resilience in Cocoa Landscapes

To halt deforestation driven by cocoa production in Ghana, Partnerships for Forests is supporting a consortium led by Touton to achieve a deforestation-free cocoa landscape in the Juabeso and Bia Districts of Western Ghana and to develop a market for climate-smart cocoa beans.

Background

Cocoa is Ghana's most important agricultural commodity, accounting for roughly 57 percent of all agricultural exports and supporting the livelihoods of some 2.5 million rural farmers and their dependants. Cocoa production is predominant in the high forests zones of Ghana. The Western Region, which holds the largest area of remaining primary forest in Ghana produces over 50 percent of the country's cocoa beans.

Ghana's forests have come under severe threat from agricultural expansion, which accounts for nearly 140,000 hectares of High Forest Zone (HFZ) loss each year, with over a quarter of this being driven by cocoa production. This makes cocoa production the single biggest driver of deforestation in the landscape. The underlying causes for this include: a shortage of financial and technical support for sustainable cocoa production leading to expansion into forest areas; legal disincentives to maintaining trees on farms; a lack of land use planning and landscape management; and a lack of collaboration amongst cocoa stakeholders.

The Project

As part of efforts to reverse this trend, agro-industrial company Touton, through the Partnership for Productivity Protection and Resilience in Cocoa Landscapes (PPRCL) project, is leading a consortium of partners - the Ghana Forestry Commission, the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), SNV, Agro Eco, the Nature Conservation Research Centre and communities - to develop and pilot a landscape-wide governance framework in the Juabeso-Bia landscape in the Western region. In collaboration with IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative, local NGOs and CBOs, District Assemblies, and Traditional Authorities, the project will provide farm-level support to 60,000 cocoa farmers to improve their livelihoods through increasing productivity in an environmentally sustainable manner, and developing incentive mechanisms for communities and cocoa farmers to sustain this over time.

The project seeks to establish a landscape forest governance board at the district level with oversight of land use management and forest protection. The partnership adopts a jurisdictional approach which ensures that all stakeholders across the cocoa sector commit to and collaborate on achieving climate-smart cocoa which is tied to Ghana's Emission Reduction Programme. The Forestry Commission and Ghana's COCOBOD as partners will enable the strengthening and enforcement of the existing regulatory framework to ensure a sustainable cocoa supply chain. The PPRCL is the first pilot of both the Ghana Cocoa and Forests Emission Reduction Programme and will contribute towards early action under the Cocoa and Forests Initiative, launched in London with support from HRH the Prince of Wales earlier this year.

Partnerships for Forests is supporting the PPRCL project to adopt a multi-stakeholder, landscape-wide, governance approach to eliminating deforestation footprints in the cocoa supply chain. This will result in measurable reductions in deforestation, enhanced resilience, significant increases in farmers' yields and incomes and the marketing of climate-smart cocoa beans.

The expected outcome of the project is to catalyse investment from the private sector to preserve approximately 160,000 hectares of protected forest reserve and deliver socioeconomic benefits to an estimated 150,000 people by 2020. The project covers approximately a quarter of the entire forest area and is expected to reduce up to 2.3 million tons of carbon emissions each year, which in turn has the potential to generate US\$ 11.5 million in carbon revenue from the Carbon Fund. In addition, by targeting 60,000 smallholder cocoa farmers, the project is expected to generate around GBP 14 million in input supply, of which an estimated GBP 2.3 million will be injected into the local economy.