

Speech by Joseph Larrose, Group Director for
Sustainability Touton

Madam Chairperson,

Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Ghana

Your Excellency the British High Commissioner

Chief Executive, Forestry Commission

Chief Executive Officer, Ghana Cocoa Board

Distinguished forestry and cocoa industry stakeholders present,

Friends from the Media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very grateful for the opportunity to be here today for this important event.

My name is Joseph Larrose and I am the Group Director for Sustainability at Touton, a French trading and processing company that handles cocoa, coffee, as well as spices and ingredients worldwide.

Touton trades over 350 000 MT of cocoa beans each year, 40 % of which we source from Ghana. Our company has a long-standing engagement and commitment to the cocoa sector in Ghana.

In fact, two years ago, we opened our first cocoa processing factory in Tema from which we now produce 50 000 MT of products per annum.

Since 2010 we have invested more than 10 MILL US\$ in our sustainability programmes in Ghana. We have developed a holistic model for delivery of services to farmers with the aim of supporting farmers in producing cocoa sustainably through our Rural Service Centre approach.

Indeed, over time, we have increased the scope and improved the impact of our sustainability programmes on the ground. This has been a journey that has led us from traceability initiatives, to the implementation of certification curricula for farmers from which we source products, all the way to bespoke programmes that aim to increase farmers' capacity and improve livelihoods. Nowadays, sustainability sits at the core of our activities and is a key value for our shareholders.

Together with our peers and partners, we are committed to continuing to contribute to a thriving cocoa sector. And as you know, the cocoa industry highly values cocoa from Ghana for its taste and consistent premium quality.

For the past two-years we have worked closely with the Ghana Cocobod and the Forestry Commission in their efforts to develop an ambitious cocoa production emissions reduction programme.

In order to do so, we have sought the expertise and enthusiasm of renowned authorities in this area, specifically SNV, the Dutch Development Organisation, the Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC), Agro Eco and the Verified Carbon System (VCS), Solidaridad among others.

Together we have developed a landscape approach to tackling climate change in the HIA of Bia West and Juaboso administrative Districts in the Western region. We are grateful to have received some match-funding and technical support from the Partnership for Forests

programme, which is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Our Ghana Manager for Sustainable Sourcing, Mr Ernest Dwamena, will be presenting the project more at length during this afternoon's session and I encourage you to attend and participate, would you like to know more about our shared ambition.

Today we are proud to be launching the Partnership for Productivity, Protection & Resilience in Cocoa Landscapes (PPPRCL) as a first pilot project to drive the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ programme forward. We are honoured that this project is being launched in the esteemed presence of:

- His Excellency President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo,
- The formal Chief Justice of the Republic of Ghana, Her ladyship Justice Georgina Theodora Wood,
- Chairman of the council of state, Nana Otuo Seriboe II,

- The British High Commissioner to Ghana, H.E. Iain Walker,
- Chief Executive Officer of Ghana Cocoa Board, Joseph Boahen Aidoo,
- Chief Executive, Forestry Commission, Kwadwo Owusu Afriyie.