

The Cocoa & Forests Initiative

An analysis of the initiative's work toward collective action against deforestation



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Executive Summary

Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire produce around two-thirds of the world's cocoa, which is a crucial commodity in both countries' national development strategies. The expansion of cocoa farms is considered a key driver of forest loss in West Africa, and sustainable solutions to cocoa production must be explored to ensure the continued supply of cocoa for future generations – as well as mitigating the impacts of climate change.

A strength of the CFI was its ability to foster decision making amongst key stakeholders, which was achieved through the formation of a robust governance structure. These structures brought together key cocoa players and aligned the CFI with national policy and programmes such as the Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire REDD+ programmes. This collaboration supported the development of regenerative cocoa policies in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. There were some factors that limited the impact of the CFI, however, most notably the challenge of securing representation of farmers in decision-making positions within the CFI. This presented a gap in buy-in and flow of actions between high-level committees down to the landscape, which inhibited alignment between national and local decision-making structures.

The Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) is a platform that aims to address the problem of deforestation within cocoa supply chains by facilitating collective action between different cocoa stakeholders. The platform successfully engaged and secured commitments from chocolate and cocoa companies, the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, and civil society organisations (CSOs), on sustainable cocoa production. The CFI channelled these commitments into three action areas: forest protection and restoration; sustainable cocoa production, and; improvement in livelihoods and conditions for cocoa farmers.

Following a thorough review of existing literature and consultations with the CFI signatories, this report suggests six recommendations for implementing initiatives that wish to achieve similar goals in sustainable commodities:

- 1 Find the major drivers of the problem the initiative aims to solve and direct action towards it
- 2 Identify the key public sector authorities, leading businesses and relevant representative organisations that operate within the value chain and secure their buy-in
- 3 Develop strong partnerships between key stakeholder by identifying a shared vision
- 4 Foster an inclusive decision-making process that involves all stakeholders involved in the commodity value chain you are targeting
- 5 Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation system that defines actions and responsibilities and fosters transparency and accountability
- 6 Develop a supportive policy environment



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Acronyms

CFI	Cocoa & Forests Initiative
CSO	Civil society organisation
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LID	Living Income Differential
MTS	Modified Taungya System
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
P4F	Partnerships for Forests
WCA	West and Central Africa
WCF	World Cocoa Foundation

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Introduction

3.1. Aims and objectives

This report will aim to provide an overview and systematic guidance on how the CFI effectively engaged key government stakeholders, leading cocoa companies and civil society organisations to foster collaboration. The report will focus on documenting the initiative's joint public-private commitments and action plans for implementation in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire and will feature the experiences of the key stakeholders involved with the CFI. It will also look at how the CFI is working towards transformational change in sustainable land use and regenerative cocoa. Additionally, this report will assess the major successes and challenges faced in the implementation of the CFI and provide guidance for replicating similar initiatives in different countries and sectors. This study has been informed through stakeholder interviews with key CFI members and a review of the available literature.

The report aims to:

- Demonstrate how to secure political buy-in from governments on multistakeholder initiatives, and how to facilitate continued participation and engagement.
- Detail the processes and strategies used in engaging governments in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana to form policies in favour of regenerative cocoa practices, as well as changes to private sector corporate policies and practices.
- Provide insights to large-scale, multistakeholder approaches for driving transformational change across policy and practice in cocoa landscapes in West and Central Africa (WCA).
- Share lessons on joint action for achieving sustainable production and markets, forest protection and landscape resilience.



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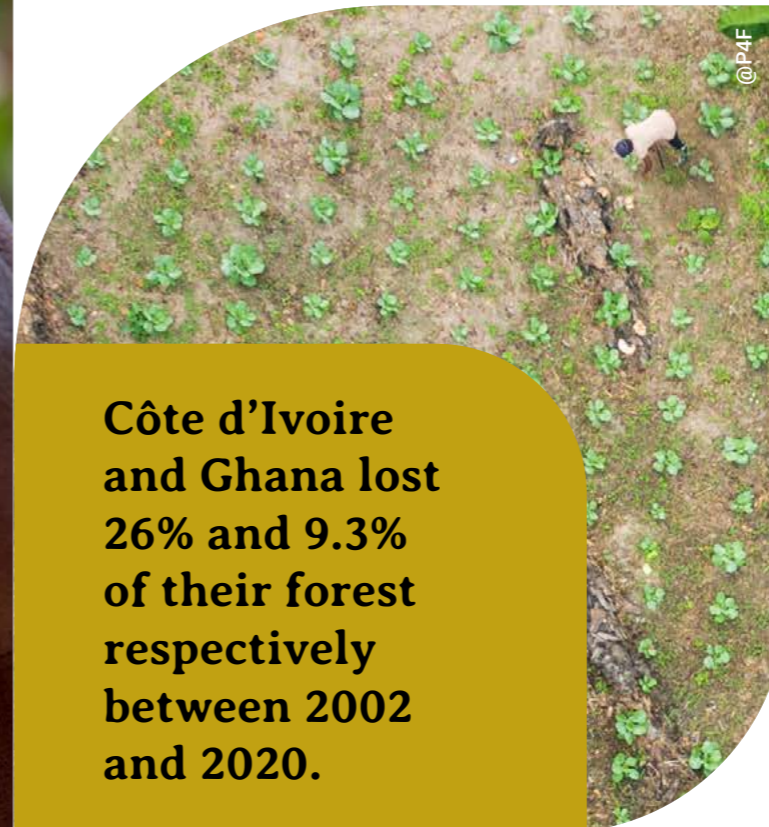
Context

Deforestation of tropical rainforests is a major issue in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, which together produce nearly two-thirds of the world's supply of cocoa, the main ingredient in chocolate. Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana lost 26% and 9.3% of their humid primary forest respectively between 2002 and 2020, with a significant proportion of deforestation attributable to cocoa farming expansion. Trade in cocoa is integral to many economic and social systems in West Africa. It is a major source of revenue for the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, with cocoa exports accounting for approximately 5% and 15% of Gross Domestic Product respectively, and it attracts high levels of investment from international cocoa and chocolate companies. Cocoa production also supports approximately 800,000 smallholder farmers in Ghana, and one million farmers in Côte d'Ivoire (Amankwaah et al. 2021). The increasing threat of deforestation linked to cocoa carries with it risks of negatively disrupting national revenue, investment from the private sector and farmer livelihoods.

Cocoa-linked deforestation is made an ever more pressing issue with the upcoming changes to EU legislation which effectively bans the import of agricultural products (including cocoa) that are linked to deforestation into the EU. With the EU being the largest importer of cocoa globally (FERN, 2018), following through on zero deforestation commitments is crucial for West African countries that rely on producing and selling cocoa to develop. With cocoa production forming the backbone of the economy in Côte d'Ivoire, and being a major source of revenue in Ghana, this is particularly critical.

Deforestation within the cocoa sector has socioeconomic, environmental, and political drivers. A leading cause of deforestation is poverty, causing farmers to look to generating income by clearing land to make way for cocoa plantations. Exacerbated by poverty, the perceived need to respond to food insecurity incite forest fringe communities to farm in forest reserves. A study by van Vliet et al. (2021) identified that 30-58% of smallholders involved in cocoa production in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire earn a gross income below the World Bank extreme poverty line. Initiatives aimed at marketing ethical or environmentally-friendly chocolate as a more attractive product for consumers often have limited impacts on poverty in cocoa communities, as farmers only receive approximately 7% of the price consumers pay for chocolate (Solidaridad, 2020).

Environmental factors can also exacerbate deforestation and put additional financial pressures on farmers. Reductions in soil fertility across Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire have been observed caused by inappropriate soil management practices (Issaka et al., 2021), which can drive farmer encroachment into forest reserves in pursuit of more productive farmland. Additionally, the impact of climate change is presenting an ever-increasing threat to cocoa farmers, as they must adapt rapidly to changing climatic conditions. Many smallholders earning an income below the poverty line, do not have the support or resources to purchase new tools or seeds to invest in a more diverse production. As the effects of climate change worsen, developing a liveable income becomes more difficult as cocoa farmers' costs increase (WCF, 2022a). In addition to the impacts of climate change and soil productivity, Ghana's cocoa sector is facing further biological



Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana lost 26% and 9.3% of their forest respectively between 2002 and 2020.

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challenges through the increasing prevalence of cocoa swollen shoot virus disease (CSSVD) in cocoa producing areas. This disease has greatly affected cocoa farmers and yield production, with cutting and replanting affected farms being the main method of controlling the disease.

Finally, deforestation across Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana can also be driven by political factors, such as weak governance or poor enforcement of forest law. National policies centred around forest protection have had limited success – demonstrated by the prevalence of cocoa farms in forest reserves across Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire – primarily due to poor enforcement of laws from authoritative bodies, allowing the expansion of cropland into forested areas. Enforcement has improved in Côte d'Ivoire, however, where the government has updated its Forest Code to allow private sector to play a larger role in the enforcement of forest protection.

In addition to poor enforcement of forest law, forest regulators often do not discuss the reasons smallholders use to justify encroachment activities (Kumeh et al., 2022), such as poverty and food insecurity. A two-pronged approach that both addressed socioeconomic factors that cause farmers to encroach into forests, and strengthened forest governance to prevent smallholders from farming in protected areas, could create a more

effective policy framework. Well-intentioned policies aimed at strengthening the governance of forests are unlikely to successfully curb forest conversion if they do not consider and address the root causes for why communities encroach into forest reserves.

4.1. What is the CFI?

The CFI is a multi-stakeholder platform launched with the goal of ending deforestation and forest degradation within the cocoa value chains of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The CFI provides a guiding framework for public and private action on deforestation attributed to cocoa in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Since 2017, the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), IDH, and the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire have driven the CFI jointly. They have brought together 35 leading cocoa and chocolate companies and key ministries and agencies in Government, including the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources and Cocoa Board in Ghana, the Ministry of Water and Forests, and the Conseil du Café-Cacao in Côte d'Ivoire. The CFI has created a platform for the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, cocoa companies, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to align efforts in preventing cocoa-driven deforestation and facilitate the formation of policies in favour of regenerative cocoa production. The initiative structured action around three pillars:

1 Forest protection and restoration

The CFI emphasises the conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of protected areas in the six priority landscapes. The signatories of the Joint Framework for Action (JFA) made five commitments to halt conversion of any forest land for cocoa production and to eliminate production and sourcing of cocoa from national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and wildlife resource reserves, except for farms with existing legal status.

2 Sustainable production and farmers' livelihood

The CFI has a 'more cocoa on less land' strategy, with sustainable cocoa production and increased cocoa productivity contributing to forest protection and enhanced livelihoods for farmers. Public, private, and civil society partners of the CFI recognise that sustainable agriculture intensification in environmentally suitable areas and better incomes for farmers reduce pressure for cocoa-driven encroachment into forest reserves, ensure biodiversity conservation, and strengthen the resilience of cocoa farmers against climate change.

3 Community engagement and social inclusion

Forest fringe communities and most communities in cocoa-growing landscapes depend largely on the forest to provide fundamental resources, such as sources of food and fuel wood, and ecosystem services, such as improved soil quality, water supply and climate regulation. However, human activities in rural areas aimed at enhancing livelihoods – including agriculture, small-scale mining, and wood harvesting – have a direct impact on forest cover. Engaging with these sectors and activities is vital to ensuring protection, restoration, and biodiversity conservation, particularly in forest protection areas. The CFI safeguards the social inclusion of local communities and other key stakeholders, including public and private sectors and CSOs, and promotes collaboration and participatory planning on the management of forests and other natural resources.



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The process

5.1. Structure of CFI

5.1.1. Process roadmap

This section outlines the timeline of the CFI implementation plan - from the signing of the joint declaration of commitments, to the roll out of the National Implementation Plans in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

FIGURE 1 | Timeline of National Implementation Plan (NIP) for Ghana (WCF, 2018)

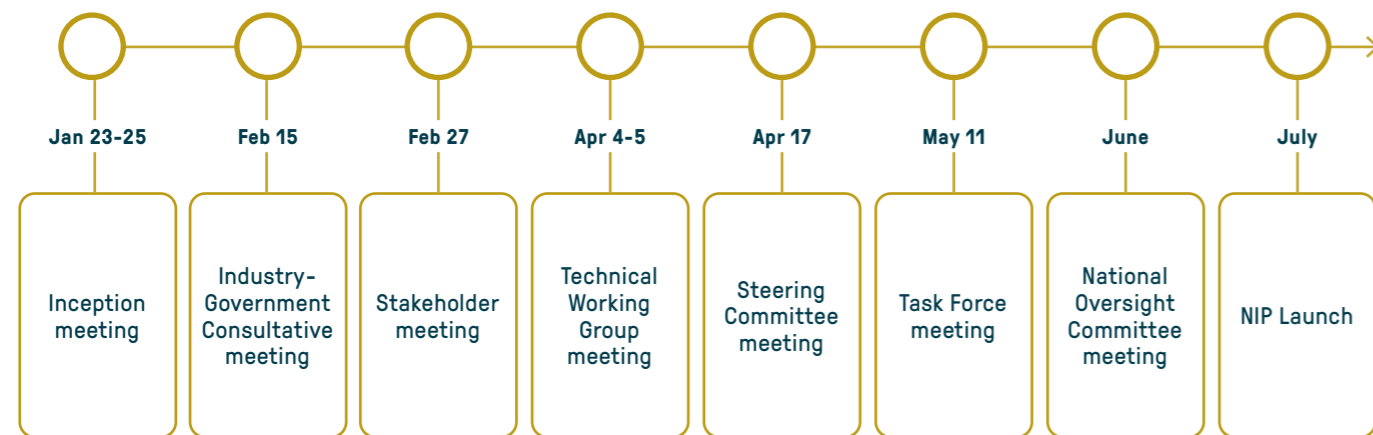
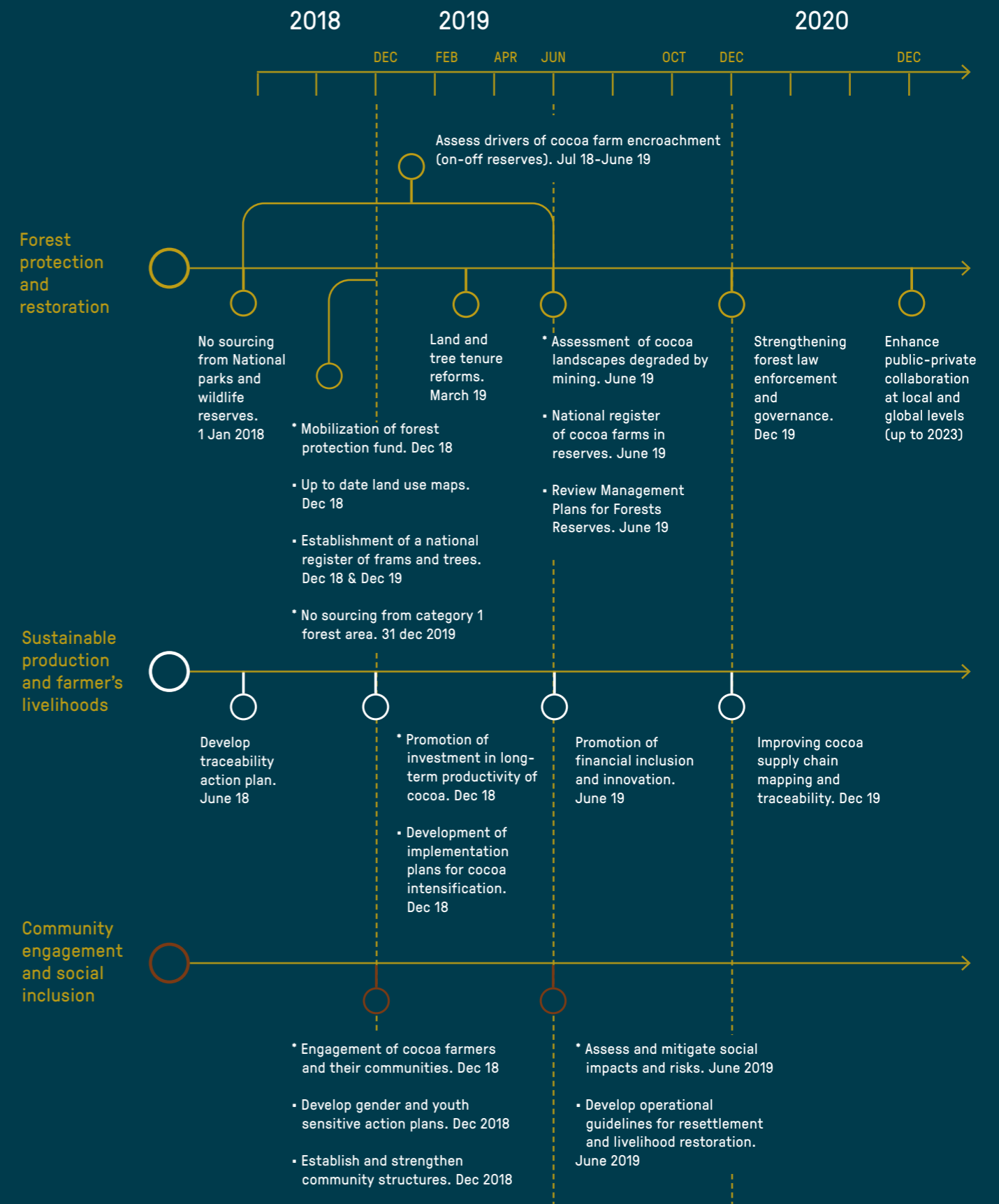


Fig. 1 provides an overview of the facilitation sessions that were required to reach a consensus on how to best deliver the CFI. Each session was facilitated by IDH and WCF and had representation from Ghanaian and Ivorian Governments, cocoa companies, and civil societies.

Fig. 2 illustrates the activities of the technical implementation plan for the CFI between 2018 to 2020 across the CFI's three pillars: Forest protection and restoration, Sustainable production and farmers' livelihoods, and Community engagement and social inclusion. This details the necessary actions required to fulfil the commitments following the signing of the joint framework of action.

FIGURE 2 | Technical implementation timeline for CFI in Ghana (WCF, 2018)





5.1.2. Decision making and accountability

National steering committees, technical working groups and task forces closely collaborated with a broad spectrum of stakeholders to detail out the Joint Framework for Action, which was then developed into the National Implementation Plan in both countries. Both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire worked with the International Coordination Body which supported knowledge and experience exchange. The governance structures of the CFI differed slightly between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Provided below are overviews of the governance structures for both Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

5.1.2.1 Ghana governance structure

The governance structure for the CFI in Ghana was developed and endorsed by government, industry partners, civil society, traditional authorities, farmers and educational institutions. The development took place through bilateral meetings, organised workshops, technical roundtables, and stakeholders' programmes, facilitated by IDH and WCF. Through successful engagement of key government

institutions, the CFI effectively defined roles and responsibilities among key public sector stakeholders:

- Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources**
 Responsibilities: overseeing the acquisition of appropriate technology for forest monitoring and fast-track the promulgation of policies and laws backing implementation of the plan. Overseeing the establishment and strengthening of multi-stakeholder dialogues and consortia among key actors.
- Forestry Commission**
 Responsibilities: leading the implementation of commitments related to forest protection and restoration and collaborate on implementing commitments under other the three pillars of action. Leading the process for developing an extension system to complement that of the Cocoa Board and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Ghana Cocoa Board**
 Responsibilities: lead institution implementing most of the commitments around sustainable production of cocoa and enhancement of farmers' livelihoods.

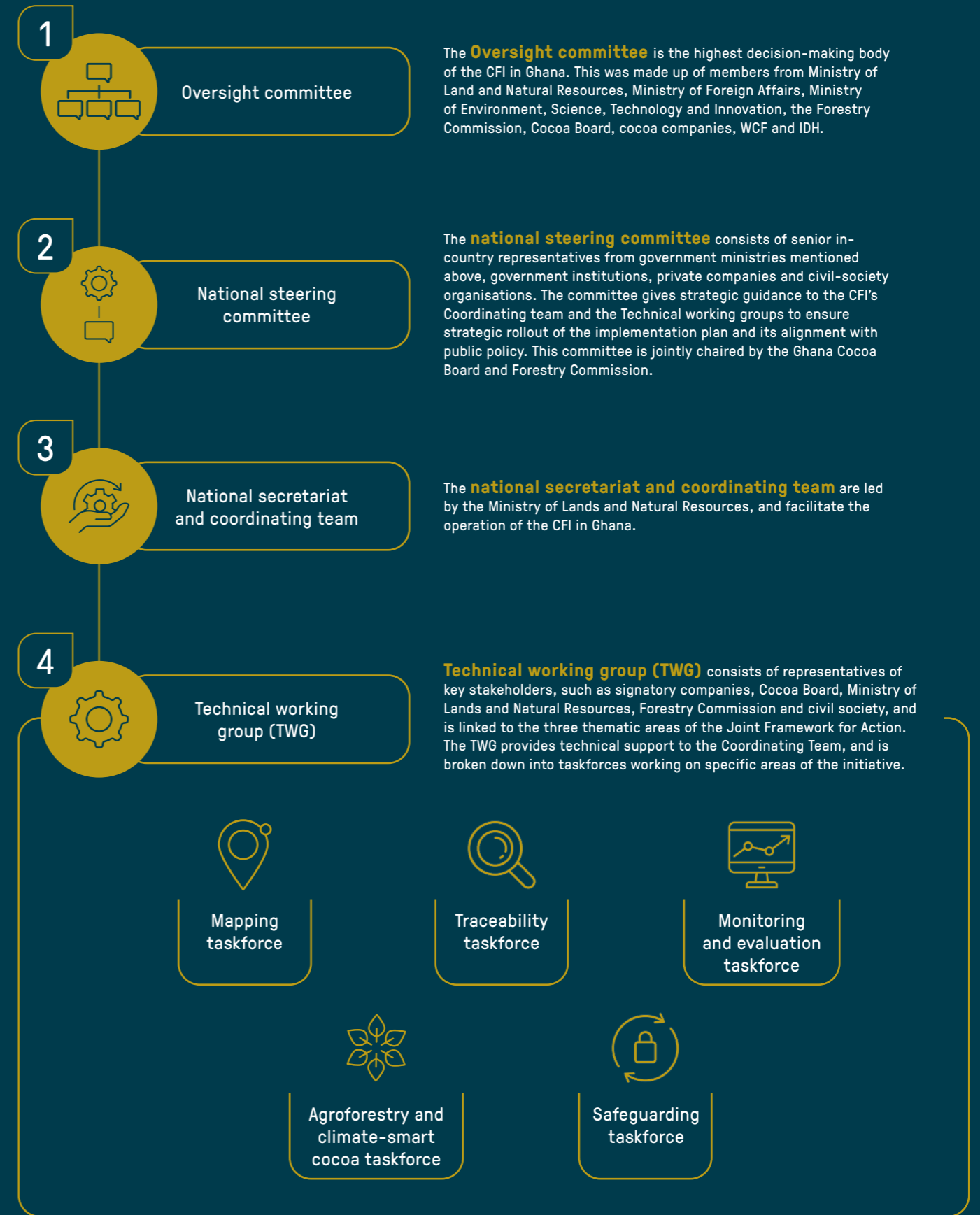


Cocoa farming

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FIGURE 3 | Structure of the decision-making bodies for the CFI in Ghana

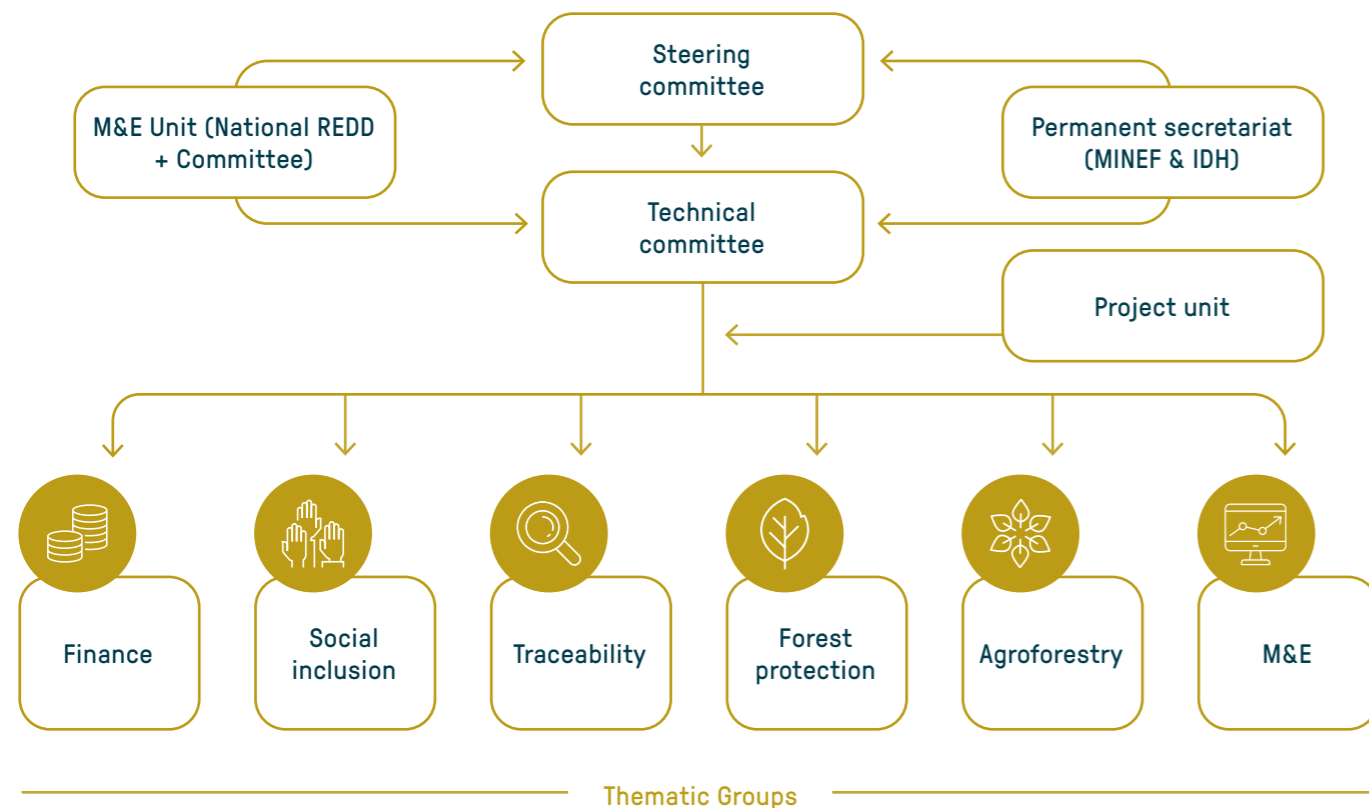




5.1.2.2 Côte d'Ivoire governance structure

The governance structure of the CFI in Côte d'Ivoire was centred around three core units: the steering committee; the technical committee, and; thematic groups.

FIGURE 4 | Governance structure of the CFI in Côte d'Ivoire (WCF, 2019)



The steering committee's key role was to provide strategic guidance and create momentum for the functioning of the CFI governance bodies. It also acted as the final authority on proposals made by the technical committee and governed the process of implementation of the Joint Framework of Action. The mandate for the technical committee was to coordinate the implementation of the actions defined in the Joint Framework of Action, supervise the work of the different working groups, and validate action plans. The thematic groups reported to the technical committee and regularly provided them with updates on the implementation of the Joint Framework of Action. Additionally, they proposed detailed action plans specifying objectives, timelines and budgets for activities and contributed to monitoring actions.

The layers that made up the governance structure of the CFI were supported further by the permanent secretariat, the monitoring and evaluation unit, and

the project unit. The secretariat provided coordination assistance for the initiative, and the monitoring and evaluation unit ensured proper monitoring and evaluation of progress made at the national level. The project unit monitored progress against the action plans of the CFI's signatories and prepared progress reports to be shared with CFI stakeholders.

5.1.3. Evaluation of approaches in engaging stakeholders

Targeting and engaging key cocoa stakeholders and decision makers was a critical first step towards collective action in cocoa sector sustainability. With the facilitation of the Prince of Wales' International Sustainability Unit, IDH and WCF, the CFI successfully targeted and brought together key government ministries that had the jurisdiction to form policies in favour of sustainable cocoa

production (such as the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, the Forestry Commission and Cocoa Board in Ghana, and the Ministry of Water and Forests and Conseil du Café-Cacao, in Côte d'Ivoire). They also brought in leading cocoa companies that had the resources and will to invest in stopping deforestation in their supply chains. The targeting of ministries, institutions, and companies that had the power to make decisions, institutionalise policy, and deliver investment was critical in producing a platform that could create impact at the landscape level.

After securing buy-in and engagement of key sector actors, the next step was to facilitate a dialogue and create an environment for collaboration for these groups. Collaboration and action would need to be aligned with the three pillars of the CFI (Forest protection and restoration, sustainable production and farmers' livelihood, and community engagement and social inclusion). IDH and WCF helped determine the motivations for difference actors being involved in the CFI, highlighted areas where motivations overlapped, and facilitated collaboration through this shared vision. This role was key to securing commitments and establishing relationships that would bring about collective action.

The facilitation of stakeholders was expedited by building upon pre-existing international and national policies and programmes that were already facilitating public/private dialogue, such as the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme, Ghana Forest Investment Program, the Green Ghana Initiative, and the National Climate-Smart Agriculture and Food Security Action Plan. Not only did this increase the pace at which initial facilitation occurred, but it also aligned the activities of the CFI with other national sustainability programmes.

While the CFI was successful in securing buy-in from key government entities and the private sector, farmers were not represented on the committees of the initiative. Engagement from CSOs and NGOs had been sought during the initial consultations of the CFI and were represented in relation to forestry and conservation; however, farmer and rights-based organisations struggled to actively participate within the platform, and as such, were not well represented in formation of action plans. Comments were made from CFI stakeholders that more resources could have been directed towards convening farmer organisation to better facilitate and formalise their participation within the CFI. Cocoa producers and their representatives also often live and work in remote locations away from urban centres and would struggle to self-fund the travel and accommodation costs of participating in the

CFI. This lack of farmer representation resulted in some decisions from decision-making platforms not having the desired effects on the ground.

One initiative that struggled to gain a foothold within the landscape was the Modified Taungya System (MTS) in Ghana. The MTS is an agroforestry practice that is centred around creating livelihood opportunities for forest fringe communities and was implemented as an action area of the CFI. In this system, farmers were given access to degraded forest reserve areas for tree planting with integration of food crops for a defined period of time and were entitled to 100% of the revenue the agricultural crops generate (Kalame et al., 2011). A report from Mighty Earth (2019) suggested that the lack of farmer representation on CFI committees delayed implementing the MTS within communities. This was because communities were absent from discussions of activities that directly impacted them, and therefore actions took longer to sensitise and implement within the landscape. The MTS example illustrates the importance of seeking participatory approaches when implementing initiatives within landscapes. Better representation and inclusion of farmer-representative organisations within decision-making structures of the CFI since its inception could have helped to bridge gaps between the committee and the communities, and successfully embed transformative cocoa policy at a landscape level.

5.2 Partnerships for Forests' support to the CFI

Partnerships for Forests (P4F) has supported the CFI since its inception in 2017, offering both financial and technical assistance to coordinate platform activities. The first phase of the CFI was focused on development and engagement of key stakeholders. In this phase, P4F offered grant support and provided technical assistance to IDH and WCF to design the initiative, identify relevant stakeholders and help in establishing relationships between the CFI's members across Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. This process led to the signing of the Statement of Intent and the Joint Framework of Action which set out the core commitments, time-bound actions and preconditions required for a deforestation-free cocoa supply chain in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

Following the development and engagement phases was the implementation phase. Additional P4F funding was provided to IDH and WCF to facilitate and operationalise the initiative in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, and on the international stage. WCF was



responsible for securing participation of cocoa companies within the platform, and IDH supported government leadership of the CFI through the CFI secretariat, as well as enabling civil society engagement. P4F's support enabled IDH and WCF to assist individual signatory's efforts, and effectively coordinate the multistakeholder platform, through defining roles and responsibilities of the initiative's members, determining the governance structure, setting expectations, and facilitating multistakeholder dialogue.

Beyond financial assistance, P4F contributed its expertise to facilitate national dialogue between public, civil, and private sector stakeholders, to support the development and implementation of the CFI. This consisted of facilitating bilateral and round table meetings using existing public-private platforms convened by IDH and WCF. As an example, P4F helped to facilitate meetings between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to design and agree to a monitoring framework which enabled regional alignment and knowledge sharing across the two countries.

Finally, P4F was also involved in the development of the CFI's strategy for 2025 through its involvement in the CFI 2021-2025 Action Plans for both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. The key achievements listed in this report and the CFI 2021 – 2025 Action Plan have generated a lot of interest from other African countries involved in the cocoa trade. Currently, P4F is supporting WCF in assessing opportunities to expand the geographical focus of the CFI to Nigeria and Cameroon. This expansion aims to build on the successes of the CFI in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to replicate and scale the initiative.

5.3 What has the CFI achieved?

5.3.1. Commitments from stakeholders

Following the initial engagement of stakeholders, the Joint Framework for Action was signed at United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP23) in November 2017 in Bonn, Germany by 12 leading cocoa companies and the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. The signing of this framework committed signatories to no longer converting forest land into agricultural land for cocoa production, in line with Sustainable Development Goals 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land) and the Paris Climate Agreement. Along with governments, chocolate and cocoa companies committed to ending illegal cocoa production, in line with stricter enforcement of national forest policies and the development of alternative livelihoods for affected farmers. The framework contained eight core commitments, agreed to by both governments and signatory companies. Table 1 provides an overview of these.



Sui Forest Reserve



TABLE 1 Summary of the eight core commitments signatories of the CFI must adhere to detailed in the Joint Framework or Action for Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire

Ghana		Côte d'Ivoire
Prohibit and prevent activities that cause or contribute to any further deforestation or forest degradation in the cocoa sector.		Prohibit and prevent activities in the cocoa sector that cause or contribute to any further deforestation or forest degradation in National Parks and Reserves, Classified Forests, and conserved forests in the rural domain, such as sacred forests.
Respect the rights of cocoa farmers, including identifying and mitigating social risks, and sequencing the implementation of actions to minimize potential adverse social and economic impacts.		Respect the rights of cocoa farmers, including identifying and mitigating social risks, and sequencing the implementation of actions to minimize potential adverse social and economic impacts.
Promote the effective restoration and long-term conservation of National Parks and Reserves, and Classified Forests.		Promote the effective restoration and long-term conservation of National Parks and Reserves, and Classified Forests.
Strengthen supply chain mapping, with the end goal of full traceability at the farm-level.		Strengthen supply chain mapping, with the end goal of full traceability at the farm-level.
Implement verifiable actions and timebound targets on the basis of sound data, robust and credible methodologies, stakeholder consultation, and realistic timeframes.		Implement verifiable actions and timebound targets on the basis of sound data, robust and credible methodologies, stakeholder consultation, and realistic timeframes.
Implement agreed actions in the context of a broader landscape-level approach, with strong links with similar initiatives in other commodities, and full alignment with the national REDD+ strategy and other relevant national strategies and plans.		Implement agreed actions in the context of a broader landscape-level approach, with strong links with similar initiatives in other commodities, and full alignment with the national REDD+ strategy and other relevant national strategies and plans.
Work together to implement the framework actions, and mobilize the necessary financing, resources and technical support for implementation, including continued engagement in a multi-stakeholder process for dialogue on key issues, development of effective implementation plans, joint learning and knowledge sharing and enable institutional capacity.		Work together to implement the Framework actions, and mobilize the necessary financing, resources and technical support for implementation, including continued engagement in a multi-stakeholder process for dialogue on key issues, development of effective implementation plans, joint learning and knowledge sharing and enable institutional capacity.
Provide effective monitoring and reporting on progress on commitments and actions to ensure transparency and accountability.		Provide effective monitoring and reporting on progress on commitments and actions to ensure transparency and accountability.

Along with governments, chocolate and cocoa companies committed to ending illegal cocoa production

















Through the signing of the Statement of Intent and Joint Frameworks for Action of the CFI signatories, the platform committed cocoa companies to not only halting deforestation within their own cocoa value chains, but also to working with each other and with governments to maximise action across the whole cocoa sector. This enabled the formation of National Implementation Plans for both Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire, which outlined approaches on how best to collaboratively produce outputs and policies to support transitions to deforestation-free cocoa production. Since signing the original Joint Framework for Action in 2017, the number of cocoa and chocolate companies participating in CFI has grown from 12 to 36, with plans to replicate the CFI in Nigeria and Cameroon.

5.3.2. Regional and national level impacts

Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire have seen significant developments across the CFI's three pillars, enabled through collective action facilitated by the CFI:



TABLE 2 Results of the CFI mapped across the three pillars: Forest protection and restoration, Sustainable production and farmers' livelihoods, and Community engagement and social inclusion

Forest protection and restoration	Sustainable production and farmers' livelihood	Community engagement and social inclusion
 Côte d'Ivoire planted more than 28 million trees for the purpose of forest regeneration	 The government of Côte d'Ivoire has mapped one million farmers across 3.2 million ha of cocoa farming land	 17,038 women and youths trained in additional livelihoods
 Ghana restored 9,488 ha of degraded forest and helped 4,302 farmers to register 50,344 forest trees	 In Ghana a total of 515,762 farmers owning 845,635 farms have been registered in the national Cocoa Management System	
 Cocoa and chocolate companies distributed 11.3 million non-cocoa trees for the development of agroforestry in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana	 Cocoa and chocolate companies have reached a stable 72% traceability in their direct supply chains	 Seven additional companies signed onto agreements in Hotspot Intervention Area landscapes in Ghana
 National forest monitoring system in Ghana	 Land use maps for cocoa growing regions produced by the Forestry Commission in Ghana for cocoa companies	 Definition and implementation of benefit-sharing on ecosystem services determined and operational in Ghana
 A satellite forest monitoring tool has been implemented in Côte d'Ivoire	 Cocoa Management System implemented in Ghana	 2000 farmers in 12 communities reached by landscape community-level awareness in Ghana
 Côte d'Ivoire has classified 666,081 ha of forest under public-private protocols for restoration	 Ecowas climate smart cocoa standard designed	

In addition to the impacts detailed in Table 1, a notable change to national policy in both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire can also be seen through the development of the Living Income Differential (LID) in 2020. The LID was introduced by the cocoa authorities (Cocoa Board in Ghana and Conseil du Café-Cacao in Côte d'Ivoire) in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to raise incomes for cocoa producers to a liveable wage. The cocoa sectors in these countries are heavily regulated by government, and it is these agencies who worked together to establish a pricing mechanism to help cocoa producers earn a living wage. The mechanism operates by applying a differential of GBP £329/tonne above the floor price of cocoa, seeking to increase income for farmers and helping them achieve a living income. By October 2020, the LID had increased Ghana's guaranteed cocoa farm gate price by 28% and Côte d'Ivoire's by 21% (Fountain and Huetz-Adams, 2020).

There has been speculation over the effectiveness of LID in giving cocoa producers enough income on which to live, with some sources stating to provide farmers with enough money to live on the premiums should be increased by an additional 75% (IEED,2022). However, this does provide evidence of the effectiveness of collaboration in helping address an issue that exacerbates cocoa-related deforestation: poverty.

5.4. Successes and challenges

5.4.1. Successes

Separate to the clear successes the CFI delivered in effectively engaging stakeholders and facilitating a robust decision-making model previously mentioned, an overview of the key successes and main challenges the CFI faced is detailed below.

5.4.1.1 Accountability, transparency and innovation

CFI's work to build trust between members was another key component of its stakeholder engagement strategy. One of the key successes of the CFI was observed in the effective monitoring and evaluation of progress on commitments made by signatories of the Joint Framework for Action. Defining clear roles and responsibility for each of the CFI stakeholders helped in achieving accountability and transparency. In Ghana, public sector agencies including the Forestry Commission, Cocoa Board and

the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources were assigned specific roles to provide data on relevant KPIs relating to the three thematic pillars, as well as and community engagement and social inclusion.

The private-sector signatories had specific KPIs based on their action plans to complement the overall nationally agreed KPIs to track progress on achievements. WCF was assigned to lead the work with the CFI companies to ensure the high quality and timely reporting on the targets set in their action plans. Data and evidence were then backed up with field visits to validate the reported information. This approach clearly helped to provide clarity for all CFI members on what was expected, but also fostered an environment of trust, which was essential for the continued collaboration and combined action the CFI sought to deliver.

Building a platform that instilled trust within its members through a robust monitoring framework had many positive knock-on effects. Members who were part of public-private platforms prior to the CFI noted that the higher levels of trust they had seen fostered within CFI. Others noted that this environment helped to expedite the rate at which innovation and collaborative action occurred. Nevertheless, innovation within the sector was happening prior to the CFI, but the strength of the networks created catalysed innovative conversation and action between stakeholders at a greater rate, showing both the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system created, and effectiveness of a combined approach in resolving complex issues such as forest depletion in cocoa sectors.

5.4.1.2 Changes in policy

5.4.1.2.1. Public policy

A major success of the CFI in relation to public policy in Côte d'Ivoire was the development of a National Forest Monitoring System, which was adopted by all Ivorian CFI signatories (WCF, 2022c). This was a significant step forward for the CFI in Côte d'Ivoire as this system enabled stakeholders to monitor where forest loss was most prevalent and provided data to better target their activities to protect forests in deforestation hotspots. In addition to the national forest monitoring system, the government of Côte d'Ivoire has issued an update to its Forest Code that incorporates new measures to aid forest protection, as well as involving the private sector in enforcing forested areas. The amendments to the code were drawn up in collaboration with all stakeholders of the CFI and provide evidence of the CFI's success in leading policy reform in favour of regenerative cocoa.



5.4.1.2.2. Corporate policy

The CFI also made progress in prompting new corporate policies or changes to existing policies. While announcements of these policies are a positive start to initiating action, more time is needed to quantify their impact and overall success. Notable examples of corporate policy changes produced from involvement in the CFI are:

- Unilever committing to sourcing deforestation-free raw materials, including cocoa, by 2023.
- Barry Callebaut’s Forever Chocolate has resolved to lift more than half a million cocoa farmers out of poverty by 2025.
- Cargill acknowledged that, “many farmers struggle to achieve a Living Income and as a result face being trapped in a cycle of poverty” (Cargill, 2019) and have institutionalised ways in

which they help farmers increase their income through the Cocoa Promise programme.

- Mondalez’s Cocoa Life Programme now includes key metrics such as net income from cocoa and from other sources to assess performance.

5.4.2. Challenges

5.4.2.1 Follow through on zero forest conversion commitments

One of the main challenges the CFI has faced is the mixed levels of follow-through on zero forest conversion commitments. As outlined in Fig. 5, forest loss in Ghana has steadily increased since 2010, with rates peaking in 2018 and remaining high in recent years between 2018 to 2021. In Côte d’Ivoire (Fig. 6), deforestation peaked in 2017, and remained high in 2018, however rates have declined in recent years.

FIGURE 5 Global Forest Watch data on rates of tree cover loss in Ghana between 2010 to 2021

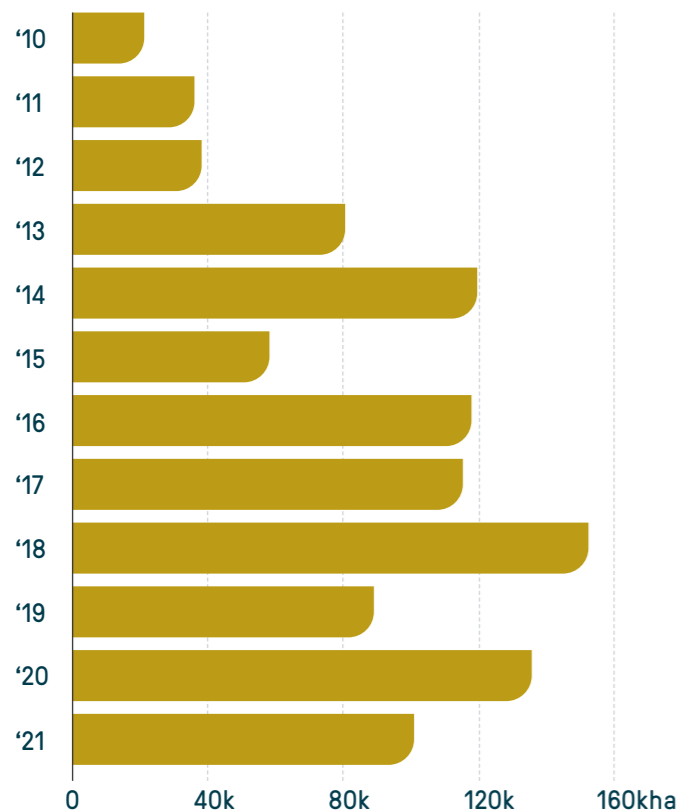
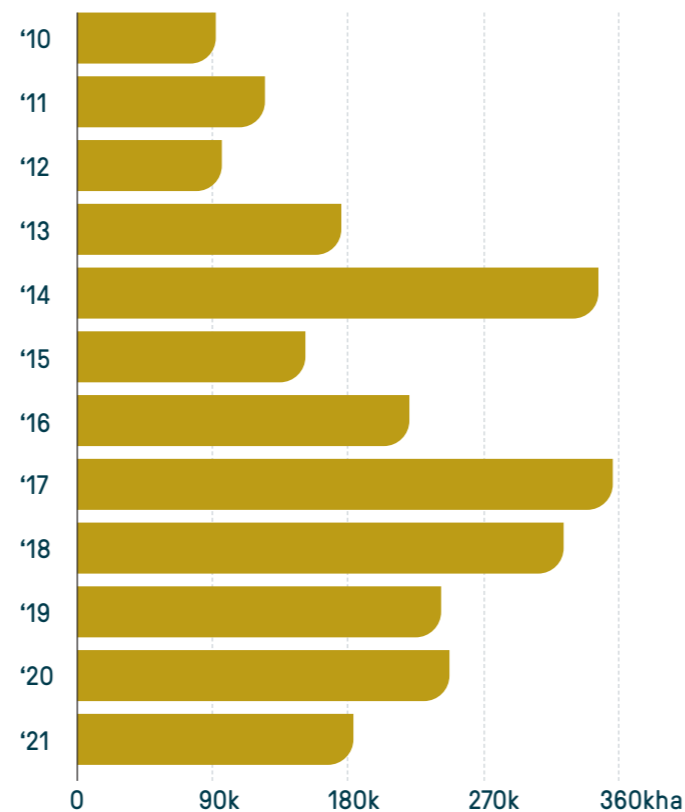


FIGURE 6 Global Forest Watch data on rates of tree cover loss in Côte d’Ivoire between 2010 to 2021



In both Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, rates of tree cover loss have remained consistently high since 2017, the year the CFI was created, with much of this deforestation occurring in forest reserves and cocoa production areas (Mighty Earth, 2022). Given CFI signatories’ pledges to zero conversion of forest for cocoa production and zero production of cocoa from within national parks by 2018 (CFI, 2022a; CFI, 2022b), this suggests that the CFI has not yet been successful in achieving its main goal of achieving deforestation-free cocoa production. Expanding on this, critics of the CFI asserted that the programme was failing to target crucial drivers of forest loss such as land governance, poverty, and corruption (Might Earth, 2019), causing it to be ineffective in addressing the problem of deforestation in cocoa supply chains.

5.4.2.2 Barriers to action at the landscape level

A key barrier to transformational change by the CFI was its inability to operationalise action at the landscape level. Previously in this report it has been noted that the lack of inclusion of farmers within decision-making committees impeded action and caused friction when implementing activities on the ground. Coupled with this, many stakeholders were of the view that there was a misalignment between community governance structures with national governance structures, which made it difficult for actions agreed in national level platforms to have their desired impact on the ground.

It is likely that the CFI’s struggle to target the drivers of deforestation emanated from the omission of certain stakeholders from the consultation process and from within decision-making structures, notably the lack of representation from farmers. Utilising pre-existing facilitation platforms, such as Ghana’s REDD+ initiative, as a route to establishing networks and collaboration forums can be efficient, but it can

also risk exclusion of certain stakeholders whose participation could be key in delivering results. Many members of the CFI identify farmers as the agents of change in the fight against cocoa associated deforestation, and for policies and collective action to fully take effect, their participation must be actively sought and if necessary, provide resources to secure this engagement.

Similar to the issues with governance, coordination of private cocoa companies’ actions at the landscape level were another challenge. Although well-aligned at the national level, cocoa company’s activities within forests were still implemented in relative silo and deforestation attributed to cocoa is still prevalent in Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire (Might Earth, 2022). This evidence supports the narrative that the CFI struggled to direct actions agreed to at national level committees to forests and forest communities.

5.4.2.3 Monitoring and traceability

Although there have been notable developments in monitoring and traceability in the CFI, there have been areas where action plans did not result in progress. One of these areas was related to the adoption of a national forest monitoring system in Ghana. Although there have been several real-time monitoring systems under development within the CFI in Ghana there was inaction between private sector and government on how best to achieve a national solution. Many cocoa companies have invested in supply chain mapping systems and can track where their cocoa was produced, however, these approaches have been operating relatively independently, and actions in this space have not been aligned. Addressing monitoring and traceability and finding a solution to the national forest monitoring system would be a major development in Ghana’s National Implementation Strategy and would be a key strategy to begin tackling deforestation at its root causes.



Conclusion

Cocoa is a vital commodity for West Africa, providing income to farmers, developing cocoa economies, attracting foreign investment, and shaping the socioeconomic systems of communities, companies and countries. To address the deforestation prevalent within cocoa supply chains, collaboration is vital, and efforts of cocoa stakeholders must be combined towards a shared vision. Effective facilitation, engagement, and participation of stakeholders within the CFI platform will help to maximise action in this area.

Critics of the CFI have drawn into question its overall effectiveness at stopping deforestation within cocoa production areas, with rates of tree cover loss remaining high in the years following the CFI's inception in both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Further to this, the CFI experienced challenges in engaging community representation within its platforms, and farmers were notably absent from various decision-making committees, which could explain why high-level actions and commitments from the signatories struggled to have their desired impact on the landscape.

Although the CFI struggled to curb the rate of forest loss in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, it did make significant strides in engaging the influential actors that operate within cocoa value chains. It

also fostered an environment of trust, allowing stakeholders to collaborate, communicate, and coordinate activities. The effective governance of the CFI supported and strengthened the transparency of the platform, defined roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders, and directed action between various national and subnational committees. Concrete actions included successfully implementing a satellite forest monitoring tool in Côte d'Ivoire, helping to strengthen the country's ability to trace deforestation in cocoa supply chains – a core deliverable in the CFI's national implementation plan for Côte d'Ivoire. The CFI has also been successful in coordinating combined action against deforestation and has facilitated the formation of regenerative cocoa policies in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

A number of lessons can be taken from the CFI experience. Decision-making bodies and governance structures should be well-represented by government institutions, leading private sector actors, CSOs and representatives of communities. This will help to design integrated approaches in creating forest-positive policies that are connected to action on the landscape level – in turn, accelerating the transition to deforestation-free cocoa production and securing the longevity of cocoa supply chains and incomes for future generations.

Cocoa pod in a co-operative farm



Recommendations for replication

A list of recommendations based on learnings from the CFI's implementation in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire has been provided for policy makers, private sector

actors, NGOs and any other parties interested in implementing similar sustainable commodity initiatives:

-  **1 Find the major drivers of the problem the initiative aims to solve and direct action towards it:** Understanding the context for why the problem the initiative aims to address persists is key to facilitating sustainable action.
-  **2 Identify key public sector authorities, leading businesses, and relevant representative organisations that operate within the value chain and secure their buy-in:** From the outset of establishing the initiative, find the key players that operate within the commodity value chain and secure their buy-in. Utilise pre-existing dialogue structures that exist in-country to expedite engagement, such as Côte d'Ivoire's and Ghana's REDD+ initiatives in the context of the CFI, but also continue to review engagement, as active players in supply chains can change over time.
-  **3 Develop strong partnerships between key stakeholders by identifying a shared vision:** Understand the motivations for organisations wanting to join the platform and identify and showcase any overlaps with members. Develop a shared vision for the initiative that is aligned with the goals and priorities of all stakeholders.
-  **4 Foster an inclusive decision-making process that involves all stakeholders involved in the commodity value chain you are targeting:** If there are notable absentees from decision-making platforms, seek to understand why those groups are not participating, and find solutions to ensure their voice is included. An example of this could be funding a facilitative platform with the focus of formalising farmer participation into national decision-making committees.
-  **5 Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation system to foster transparency and accountability:** Justify roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder within the platform and provide clarity on expectations for each participating member. Include transparent reporting and communication mechanisms to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of progress and decisions made.
-  **6 Develop a supportive national and regional policy environment:** Develop a supportive policy environment that aligns national and regional approaches to enable policies to deliver their desired impact within the landscape.



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