

ABIDJAN COCOA DECLARATION

World Cocoa Conference 2012

The Abidjan Cocoa Declaration is a legally non-binding expression of support for the World Cocoa Conference

Abidjan, 23 November 2012

A. Preamble

As key participants engaged in the cocoa value-chain: producers, cooperatives, traders, exporters, processors, chocolate manufacturers, wholesalers, producing and consuming countries, governmental and non-governmental organizations, financial institutions as well as donors and international aid and development agencies; we believe that the cocoa economy cannot prosper in the long term without operating in a more sustainable and cooperative manner. We recognize that through our business operations and/or through our initiatives in the sector, we have a responsibility towards the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the cocoa economy. We believe that this objective can only be reached without compromising healthy competition between market participants if we all cooperate as the scale of the challenges to be addressed are so complex and intertwined.

As stakeholders in the cocoa value chain, we have either participated in the World Cocoa Conference leading to the Global Cocoa Agenda for a Sustainable Cocoa Economy, or we have decided to support its recommendations. Collectively, we are all committed to playing our part in addressing the key challenges faced by the whole cocoa sector, in particular by providing opportunities for smallholder farmers to move out of poverty and to improve their livelihoods, a necessary condition to achieving sustainability of the sector.

B. The World Cocoa Conference – towards a Sustainable Cocoa Economy

Therefore, as signatories to the Abidjan Cocoa Declaration, we agree to participate in the process initiated by the first World Cocoa Conference, guided by the following principles:

In relation to the Strategic Management of the sector

- a. To recommend working towards a visible and coherent approach of the initiatives currently undertaken in the cocoa sector, thus providing the framework for a better coordination of these operations;
- b. To recommend developing and/or assisting, as required, the formulation and implementation of national cocoa development plans, based on transparent and fully participatory local Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) approaches;
- c. To give due consideration to applicable internationally recognized regulations and agreements, in particular with regard to the environment and food safety and related issues;

- d. To aim to improve the living standards and working conditions of populations engaged in the cocoa sector, consistent with their stage of development, and in particular those of children and women, bearing in mind internationally recognized principles and applicable ILO standards;
- e. To participate in a voluntary consensual process to attain sustainability, without impinging on contracting parties freedom to trade, taking into consideration the contribution of existing cocoa certification schemes, other programmes, as well as those initiatives under preparation at national, regional and international levels, bearing in mind that cocoa farmers should be adequately rewarded for additional efforts.

In relation to the Sustainability of Production

- f. Aim, where necessary to transform cocoa farming into successful business entities that are likely to be attractive to younger generations. This is achievable by increased productivity and the sustainable growing of good quality cocoa that meets characteristics outlined by the cocoa and chocolate industry. These aims may be met by using better planting material and inputs, innovative technology, integrated pest management to control pests and diseases, while recognizing international labour standards;
- g. Enable cocoa farmers to operate as members of farmers' groups supported by adequate education and training in Good Agricultural Practices, backed up with affordable and accessible credit facilities and extension services, adequately managing soil fertility and preserving biodiversity and existing ecosystems;

In relation to the Sustainability of the Industry Chain

- h. Promote the use of best known practices along the value chain thereby keeping the chain as short and efficient as possible, enhancing traceability and reduce any harmful action to the environment. Support all relevant stakeholders having adequate training and awareness of market conditions and consumer safety issues, in order that all entities along the value chain operate in a sustainable way in the long term. Additional income may also be generated by value-addition at origin;

In relation to the Sustainability of Consumption

- i. Formulate and implement cocoa consumption strategies that meet evolving expectations and concerns of consumers, while promoting cocoa consumption in traditional/mature markets and in emerging markets, as well as in origin (producer) countries.