UNFSS | United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards













UNFSS statement based on the ICCO workshop on Sustainable Cocoa Certification, June 24-26, 2013, Douala Cameroon

The UNFSS agrees with the ICCO workshops identification of sustainable cocoa certification as an increasingly important trade and development issue.

UNFSS is aligned with the following key points identified in the workshop:

- 1. Sustainable certification has demonstrated significant benefits but also important challenges, which must be addressed.
- 2. Sustainable certification is a tool within a toolbox of interventions that can potentially support the sustainable development of the cocoa sector and the sustainable development of producer countries. But if the associated challenges are not addressed they could add burdens on the sector and in particular on smallholders, negatively impacting both the sector and the economic and social development of cocoa farmers and their environment.
- 3. Governments must play a proactive role in this process, and the ICCO can play a leading role in achieving this. Recommended action includes:
 - a) Having access to credible and rigorous information on the impacts and real costs and benefits of implementing sustainable certification programs, in order to make informed policy decisions.
 - b) Governments need to view certification programs within a broader national development strategy and context.
 - c) Standards programs need to be comprehensive and include clear, locally applicable, and results-based criteria and processes, efficient and effective training programs- focusing, in addition to complying with criteria, on improved yields and quality as well as organizational development and business management.
 - d) A funding mechanism should be established to support this process, and the concept of a sustainability fund, with both private and public contribution, could be such a mechanism and should be further pursued. The ICCO is perhaps best placed to effectively manage such a fund.
 - e) Costs and benefits must be equitably shared along the supply chain and farmers' net incomes must be sufficient to incentivize them to adopt sustainable farming practices and to receive a proper living wage, in order for them to continue farming cocoa.

- f) Standards programs must continue and expand their cooperation to harmonize their approaches, lower the complexity of their programs and the costs of becoming certified.
- g) Overall, coordination and cooperation between all the stakeholders (private, public, civil society, producers, researchers) is critical in this process and the ICCO can play an important role in constructively convening these actors.

The UNFSS is open and supportive of working with the ICCO and its members in achieving these goals.