



Press Release

To the Annual Report 2020 of the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa

Progress on the common journey towards a sustainable cocoa value chain

Embargoed until 06:00, July 22, 2021

The Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa continues to make progress in promoting sustainability in the Swiss cocoa value chain and deepens its engagement in projects and international cooperation.

- **Imports of sustainably produced cocoa into Switzerland increased by 19 percentage points to 74%, an important step towards achieving the interim target of 80% by 2025. Imports of sustainable cocoa butter recorded a strong increase from 36% to 59%. The share of sustainably imported cocoa beans also increased slightly to 96% (up 6 percentage points).**
- **Value chain projects in producing countries foster the impacts of sustainable sourcing through certification and verification. In cooperation with the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and its members, the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa (SWISSCO) is currently implementing 14 projects in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Togo, Peru, Colombia and Costa Rica. The innovative pilot projects are helping to improve the production and living conditions of over 90,000 cocoa farmers, 30% of whom are women.**
- **The persisting challenges of poverty, child labor, climate change and biodiversity require a deepening and dissemination of the innovative pilot approaches through strong partnerships. The platform is therefore strengthening its cooperation with European partner initiatives and intensifies its dialogue with local authorities in the future.**

Berne, 22 July 2021. The Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa brings together 68 Swiss-based companies and organizations committed to a sustainable cocoa value chain. According to the annual report published today, SWISSCO reports a net increase of 19 percent in the proportion of sustainable cocoa bean equivalents imported into Switzerland from 2019 to 2020. Today, more than 74% of these imports are now sustainably sourced, either by a certified sustainability standard or by an independently verified company sustainability program. SWISSCO aims to increase this rate to 80% by 2025. While 96% of imported cocoa beans already come from sustainable production, the figure for cocoa butter is now 59%. In particular, the strong increase in sustainable cocoa butter by 23 percentage points explains the strong increase that has been recorded in sustainable cocoa sourcing over the past year.

"We are very pleased that we have made important progress in sourcing of sustainable cocoa despite the Covid 19 pandemic. This shows us that despite the economic challenges posed by the pandemic, the Swiss industry players are strengthening and further developing their sustainability goals," said Filippo Veglio, who became the new president of the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa at the virtual general assembly in October 2020.

Furthermore, our Platform was able to find answers to the difficult situation in the handling of projects in partner countries. The project partners in Africa and Latin America, who did their best to support the cocoa farmers in the crisis and, where necessary, to provide emergency aid. Despite extensive travel and assembly bans, the implementation of a total of 14 projects across 7 countries reached more than 90,000 cocoa farmers, a third of whom are women. During the crisis, the project teams relied even more on the competencies and skills of local forces. Even though group training could not take place due to the crisis in many places, much was made up for by a strong expansion of individual coaching.

"We want to use the experience of the pandemic crisis to expand our commitment in order to meet the challenges," said Christian Robin, Executive Director of SWISSCO since the beginning of June. After all, the social, economic and ecological challenges have become more acute in many places as a result of the crisis. The aim is to intensify the cooperation with the producer countries and to strengthen the collaboration with the European partnership initiatives. In a Memorandum of Understanding with partner initiatives in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, they agreed on closer cooperation in knowledge exchange, impact measurement, projects and dialogue with producer countries. For example, joint working groups on the topic of traceability and transparency are strengthening the previous national efforts.

In addition to the sector-independent President, the platform's board consists of six members from the chocolate manufacturing, commodity trading, retail, research, non-governmental and public sectors. The board is composed of the following members.

- Urs Furrer, Director, CHOCOSUISSE
- Robert van Raamsdonk, Commercial Director, Barry Callebaut Group
- Monica Rubiolo, Head of Trade Promotion, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
- Yanick Lhommel, Business Development Manager Cocoa, Max Havelaar
- Ingrid Fromm, Research Associate and Lecturer, BFH (Bern University of Applied Sciences)
- Sandra Hinni, Teamleader Ecology Food, Migros Genossenschaftsbund (MGB)

Media inquiries and for further comment or information on specific topics

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