Climate Change & Deforestation

Through our shared commitment to build a fair, balanced and robust cocoa value chain, we act to push for the implementation of valuable, sustainable structures and networks to encourage real change on the ground, ensuring long-term vision and investment among key stakeholders in the value chain for the future.

We collaborate and work together with partners to facilitate efforts to improve farmer self-reliance and independence. As a healthy environment is critical for a successful ecosystem, where people and nature can thrive, we campaign for the conservation of the environment in cocoa farming for present and future generations.

Current Situation

Across Africa, particularly in Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Ghana, there are millions of hectares of land that are suitable for farming activities due to the soil quality and fertility. However, in many communities in the region, most particularly in cocoa, coffee and nut growing areas, there is widespread soil degradation, damage to the environment and natural resources mostly caused by environmental and climate changes due to anthropogenic activity. In addition to this, due to low-income from their existing cocoa tree harvest, many small-holder cocoa farmers are expanding their cocoa farming plots, resulting in deforestation activities to make way for extra trees.

These environmental risks not only cause losses to biodiversity, soil quality and natural resources, but also result in long-term risks to the cocoa value chain. For example, degraded soil results in lower productivity on cocoa farms, leading to reduced farmer incomes, lower cocoa supply and increased risk of deforestation activities.

Therefore, Farmgate Cocoa Alliance believes it is essential to sensitise smallholder farmers to these challenges and to provide information on alternative farming techniques that conserve the environment for the future.

Risks Mitigation

To effectively sensitize and educate cocoa farmers on environmental risks and damage such as climate change and deforestation, Farmgate Cocoa Alliance proposes the inclusion of topics such as Climate Smart agriculture, dynamic agroforestry, and Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in farmer training and capacity building.

By promoting modern, dynamic farming methods and skills, farmers can build resilience to environmental challenges and also avoid contributing to them. Therefore, it is essential to work

together with farmers and local community leaders to identify ways that farmers can produce their crops and earn income from farming while protecting the forest and its resources for future generations. Activities based on this include:

- Working with farmers groups to develop sustainable enterprises in cocoa and to introduce to them to additional livelihood means were farmers can earn a living without deforesting.
- Sensitize farmers to Climate Smart Agriculture, Good Agricultural Practices and other dynamic agricultural techniques
- Implement community projects to map forests and resources so they can identify, protect, and conserve the environment;

In particular, Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) helps farmers to manage their resources in ways which protect ecosystems and reduce agriculture's contribution to climate change. By promoting new methods and technologies, this project will also help to build resilience against future changes in weather patterns. CSA also aims to help farmers boost their profits, supporting business growth and the development of stronger value chains. By promoting diversification and the growth of cash crops such as haricot beans, this project will encourage agricultural intensification which is both profitable and environmentally friendly.

By providing access to information and training on environmental conservation in relation to cocoa production, sustainability goals related to environment can be reached and maintained. Farmers adopting such techniques will be able to manage productive and eco-friendly farms that provide them with sufficient income and a profession whereby they are able to effectively manage risks related to climate and environment.