



World Cocoa Conference 4

Berlin, Germany

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Farmgate Cocoa Alliance

Report

Farmgate Cocoa Alliance

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WCC4 Berlin 2018

‘A New Vision’

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Introduction

The World Cocoa Conference, held biannually, has this year been held in Berlin, Germany, with over 1500 delegates. As sustainability has been at the forefront of the agenda in the sector, particularly as consumer awareness is on the increase and the severity of sustainability challenges also increases, there is a strong need for value chain stakeholders to pull together to address the problems using a unified approach that takes farmer perspectives into account.

The conference keynote speakers included:

- Dr. Jean-Marc Anga, Executive Director, **ICCO**
- Frank Mars, Member of the Board of Directors, **Mars Incorporated**
- Andreas Ronken, CEO, **Ritter Sport**
- Nicko Debenham, Head of Sustainability, **Barry Callebaut**
- Martin Christy, Director, **International Institute of Chocolate and Cacao Tasting**
- Stephan Nießner, Chairman, **The Association of the German Confectionery Industry**
- Nicolas Mounard, CEO, **Farm Africa**
- Florian Schütze, Head of CSR, **Lidl**
- Gregory Aharonian, President, **Kukaxoco**
- Edward George, Head of Group Research, **Ecobank**

The conference was a great success in bringing the value chain together, with inputs from Farmgate Cocoa Alliance being well-received by key stakeholders and leading to the drafting of a progressive Declaration for the future.

Conference Activity

Over the four conference days, Farmgate Cocoa Alliance representatives were very effective in connecting with stakeholders to bring attention to farmer interests and issues that must be addressed, including:

- Farmer marginalisation in the value chain leading to low incomes and poverty
- Need for professionalisation and recognition of cocoa farming
- Lack of impact so far in sustainability initiatives
- Need for a unified, collaborative and inclusive approach to sustainability using national structures

Farmer Representation

Farmgate Cocoa Alliance attended the WCC4 with a strong team of representatives, including:

The conference addressed a range of issues facing the value chain, of which Farmgate Cocoa Alliance was involved in:

- **Abraham Adusei**, President, **WCFO** – **Panellist, deforestation in cocoa production, improving socio-economic situation of cocoa farmers**
- **Warren Sako**, CEO, **FCA** – **Panellist, a new vision for a sustainable sector**
- **Patrick Esapa Enyong**, President, **SWEFCU** – **Speaker, situation of cocoa farmers**
- **Toussaint N’Guessan**, President, **WCFO** – **Speaker, climate change and deforestation**
- **Frank Okyere**, National Trainer of Trainers, **FCA** – **attracting youth in cocoa farming**
- **Hugh Johnson**, Head of **ICCF0**, **WCFO** – **creating professional and commercial FBOS**

Mr Esapa Patrick made a particularly strong impact when giving farmer perspectives regarding farmer income and the lack of inclusion of farmers in the value chain. Mr. Esapa Patricks words were noted a number of times online by stakeholder representatives, calling for immediate action to be taken to improve the situation. This was a great achievement from Mr. Esapa Patrick and the rest of the team in raising awareness of key farmer perspectives and challenges that the rest of the value chain must endeavour to act on.

As representatives of Farmgate Cocoa Alliance, all team members made extremely valuable and impactful contributions to the conference that contributed effectively to the focus of the conference being brought to farmers themselves and how to ensure that farmers can effectively sustain themselves and the value chain for the long-term.

Unification of WCFO & WCPO

In addition to contributions through speaking and panel positions, FCA were also engaged in facilitating the unification of the World Cocoa Farmers Organization and the World Cocoa Producers Organization. Both as large farmers umbrella organizations with many similar objectives, a unification agreement was signed between the two to work towards a common agenda for cocoa farmers, under the following agreement:

Today, the 23rd of April 2018, the leaders of the:

World Cocoa Farmers Organization (WCFO)

and the

World Cocoa Producers Organization (WCPO)

agree to put aside all differences to work as a single organization. This organization works towards common goals of representing, protecting and building the wellbeing of cocoa farmers across the value chain.

The agreement represents an important step in unifying the cocoa value chain, which requires commitment from stakeholders to collaborate in order to achieve a coordinated and cooperative sector that is beneficial for all. Farmgate Cocoa Alliance believes that this is a strong step towards a better value chain and a progression that will effectively bring farmer interests and perspectives to the value chain with solidarity.

Drafting of Berlin Declaration

At all WCC conferences, an updated declaration is drafted based on the 2010 International Cocoa Agreement. This agreement sets out the values and objectives that all stakeholders should be working towards, as well as recommendations for necessary actions and steps.

Farmer representatives were involved in the drafting of the Berlin Declaration, bringing the interests of farmers and pushing for the declaration to highlight the need for actions to address farmer-level challenges using a unified approach.

Key articles resulting from the input of Farmgate Cocoa Alliance include:

-A sustainable cocoa sector is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders, and we should work together to achieve this ambitious goal. Areas should be identified for increased non-competitive collaboration, at local, national and global level, avoiding a proliferation of efforts that lack coordination.

-Without farmers, there is no cocoa. All actors should work together to create an enabling environment to professionalise cocoa farming.

-Recognising cocoa farming as a business sector, farmer organization(s) should be stronger, and farmers should be encouraged to self-organise. This should include appropriate policies at national level.

-Relevant stakeholders should contribute to creating an enabling environment that improves access to savings, credit, finance, and insurance, also for small-scale farmers.

-Governments should give due consideration to the needs of farmers in international trade, including options for robust international competition laws that promote fair trade for both farmers and consumers.

As can be seen in the above articles, Farmgate Cocoa Alliance has been able to ensure the inclusion of farmers and their interests in the Declaration, which is to be taken on board by all major stakeholders. The Berlin Declaration is a positive step forward in ensuring that the value chain is a balanced and transparent entity that ensures farmers are actively included and considered in the development of the sector. The Declaration now offers a strong reflection of Farmgate Cocoa Alliance values and objectives, stimulating the strengthening of farmers, and farming as a profession in the value chain.

Conclusions

Following the conference and Farmgate Cocoa Alliance contributions, the following steps must be taken to achieve a sustainable cocoa sector for all:

- It must be ensured that stakeholders actively and effectively implement the Declaration, with support from FCA where applicable
- FCA must continue to call on all stakeholders to work and collaborate together to effectively implement the Declaration at national and international level to facilitate better livelihoods for farmers and to protect consumer interests
- FCA will facilitate actions to ensure that cocoa farming does not contribute towards deforestation or environmental degradation by working directly with cocoa farmers and other stakeholders
- FCA must continue in bringing governments together with farmers and value chain stakeholders through national platforms to ensure that income generation is effective for farmers, governments and all subsequent chain actors

Contributors

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