



World Cocoa  
Foundation

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**LEADING COCOA AND CHOCOLATE COMPANIES JOIN TOGETHER TO HELP  
COCOA FARMERS ADAPT TO WEATHER AND CLIMATE IMPACTS**

**New Partnership in West Africa and Latin America  
Focused on Industry's Sustainability**

**State College, Penn.,** – The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) announced today the launch of its new program designed to strengthen collaboration between the public and private sector to address the threat climate change poses to cocoa sustainability and the many livelihoods the sector supports. The WCF-led partnership brings together ACIDI/VOCA, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the world's leading chocolate and cocoa companies. The announcement was made by WCF's Acting President Tim McCoy during a presentation at Penn State's Frontiers in Science and Technology for Cacao Quality, Productivity and Sustainability meeting.

This partnership is an unprecedented effort involving numerous stakeholders across the cocoa value chain to develop solutions to climate and weather variability and deforestation, which pose critical economic, social and environmental threats to millions of smallholder cocoa farmers, national economies of cocoa producing countries, and the global cocoa and chocolate industry. West Africa accounts for more than 70% of global cocoa output, while Central America's cocoa sector is smaller but has been growing rapidly in recent years. Climate modeling suggests that various regions may need to change crops and cropping strategies, or implement adaptive management practices, in order to maintain cocoa supply and viable livelihoods.

WCF Acting President, Tim McCoy said: "Addressing climate change is an important priority for the cocoa and chocolate industry, farmers, small businesses and national governments in origin producing countries, and the broader international community. Addressing this issue today will help prepare for tomorrow and will build the foundation for a strong private sector platform. Investing in climate smart cocoa is a critical step in ensuring greater sustainability in the cocoa sector and positions our industry to respond to the realities of climate change discussed at COP21 in Paris last year."

The program builds on existing industry commitments to increase cocoa productivity among smallholder producers in countries including Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Liberia as well as the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. With support and expertise from USAID and ACIDI/VOCA, private sector partners will develop a common strategy to address climate's impacts on cocoa and develop innovations to assist farmers in adapting to changing weather patterns, such as research and development of climate resilient planting material, improved farming practices, and new agroforestry models. The program will also focus on the challenge of deforestation in cocoa growing regions, and will include collaboration with technical experts such as the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) on ongoing research on climate modeling and deforestation mapping.

CIAT's Theme Leader on Linking Farmers to Markets, Mark Lundy, said "Climate change will have significant impact on cocoa in West Africa with the majority of effects projected to occur by 2030. This means that cacao planted today will need to adapt to changing rainfall patterns as well as higher temperatures during its productive lifespan. This new initiative is critical because it inserts solid climate projections for cocoa into private sector decision-making processes, allows for dialogues with public agencies and donors, and prioritizes collective investment plans to ensure a resilient cocoa sector that benefits farmers, companies and consumers into the future."

WCF member companies involved in the partnership include Barry Callebaut, Cargill, Ecom Agrotrade, The Hershey Company, Lindt & Sprüngli, Mars, Inc., Nestlé, Olam International Ltd, and Touton. The partnership contributes to the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, which supports partner countries in developing their agriculture sectors to spur economic growth and trade that can reduce hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

**About WCF:** *The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) promotes sustainability in the cocoa sector by providing cocoa farmers with the support they need to grow more quality cocoa and strengthen their communities. For more information, visit [www.worldcocoafoundation.org](http://www.worldcocoafoundation.org) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).*

**About USAID:** *The U.S. Agency for International Development leads the U.S. Government's efforts to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies, including the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future. For more information, visit [www.feedthefuture.gov](http://www.feedthefuture.gov).*

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