



Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao

German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa

Anuga 2021



PHOTO DOCUMENTATION
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9th October 2021 – Opening day

Visit of Julia Klöckner, Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture and Henriette Reker, Mayor of the City of Cologne at the stand of GISCO.



In the picture from left: Franz-Martin Rausch (BVLH), Friedhelm Dornseifer (BVLH), Julia Klöckner (BMEL), Henriette Reker (Oberbürgermeisterin Köln), Christian Mieles (BVLH)



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Event: Living Income for Cocoa Farmers and Child Labor Free Cocoa - What follows from the EU Cocoa Talks?



The aim of the event was to bring together and discuss the results of the EU Cocoa Talks, which took place from January to May 2021, especially regarding child labor and living income. The stakeholders of GISCO and partner initiatives presented their conclusions, which were discussed in the subsequent panel discussion with politicians, civil society and the private sector.



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OPENING & WELCOME



Merit Buama, Chair of GISCO since June 2021, opened the event on Monday at the Congress-Centrum Ost of Koelnmesse and welcomed the speakers, representatives of the panel and the guests present. Buama stressed that in the future, all actors in the cocoa sector must move in the same direction and that the success of efforts also depends on strong and professional producer organizations. The EU should therefore continue to drive forward the implementation of the recommendations from the EU Cocoa Talks with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders and efficiently organize the policy dialogue with the cocoa-producing countries.



In his opening speech, **Dr. Karl Wessels**, Head of Department at the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), confirmed the importance of the topic of sustainable cocoa for the BMEL. He assumed that the topic would remain important in the new government and welcomed the initiative taken by the Forum for Sustainable Cocoa.



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Keynote

Alex Assanvo, Executive Secretary Initiative Cacao Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana



Alex Assanvo, Executive Secretary of the Initiative Cacao Côte d'Ivoire - Ghana, travelled from Ghana for the event and shared the views of cocoa producing countries with the audience in his opening speech. Assanvo praised the EU Cocoa Talks process and explained: "We see the right to earn a living income as a human right. Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana have taken important steps such as the introduction of the Living Income Differential and the adoption of the African Regional Standard for Sustainable Cocoa to advance sustainability in the sector. The next level of sustainability efforts is to address the economic imbalance and integrate sustainability into the global market. Each stakeholder group must contribute to this, Assanvo said. We need a systemic change in the cocoa sector and business as usual is not possible to deliver the ambition of a paradigm shift to deliver a sustainable cocoa production



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Impulse presentation – Aminata Bamba (Ecookim)



Aminata Bamba, head of sustainability at ECOOKIM, a cooperative union in Côte d'Ivoire, pointed out that out of one million coffee and cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire, only about 15% can earn a living income according to a Fairtrade study published in July 2021. Poverty is also the main cause of child labor. To get out of poverty, however, producers must be able to invest. It is therefore essential to support income diversification and work towards a fair cocoa price. According to Bamba, both the industry and politicians have a duty here.



Impulse presentation – Christian Mieleles (BVLH)



In his keynote speech, **Christian Mieleles**, Director of the Federal Association of the German Retail Grocery Trade (BVLH), emphasized that the focus should be on the structural challenges in the cocoa sector in particular, so that companies can also meet their ambitious sustainability targets. He warned against unilaterally raising prices at producer level without accompanying them with holistic agricultural programs. Accompanying measures, such as diversification in cultivation and volume management in cocoa, could prevent overproduction, achieve more stable prices, and counteract deforestation. According to Mieleles, the EU should participate through partnership and trade agreements. In his view, a practicable EU duty of care regulation could also be effective, which would make all actors involved responsible in their respective spheres of influence.



Impulse presentation – Harold Poelma (ECA)



Harold Poelma, President of the European Cocoa Association, urged that the creation of an enabling environment was a top priority to address common challenges. According to Mr. Poelma, this included uniform traceability and transparency across the cocoa sector, managed by national governments, as well as the implementation of strong agricultural policies at the producer country level. The root cause of child labor – the poverty of cocoa producers – has not been adequately addressed at all levels. The cocoa price is a critical element in achieving a living income, integrated into a smart mix of policies, measures and cooperation and coupled with a robust supply management policy. The President of the European Cocoa Association called for a concrete action plan from the EU to address and monitor the identified gaps with clear and time-bound targets, detailing the activities to be carried out by each actor. He sees an important contribution from the private sector in scaling up successful initiatives.



Impulse presentation – Matthias Lange (ICI)



Matthias Lange, the new executive director of the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) as of November, stressed the importance of scaling-up effective human rights due diligence and social traceability systems and to ensure better alignment and integration between private and public systems and stronger coordination led by cocoa producing countries. Addressing the root causes of child labor as a complementary and mutually reinforcing objective, he said, requires a joint effort by producer and consumer countries which will require far more resources than has been the case to date. "Multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the EU Cocoa Talks, ICI or GISCO make important contributions to raising the common bar," he concluded.



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PANEL DISCUSSION

The subsequent panel created space for discussion. The focus was on the question of which of the demands presented could be implemented as a matter of priority and who is responsible for what. Part of the panel were **Sebastian Lesch** (Head of Division at BMZ), **Julia Christian** (Campaigner at Fern), **Aldo Cristiano** (President of CAOBISCO) and **Zoé Druilhe** (European Commission DG INTPA).



In the picture from the left: Julia Christian on the screen, Zoé Druilhe on the screen, Conny Czymoch (moderator), Sebastian Lesch, Alex Assanvo and Aldo Cristiano

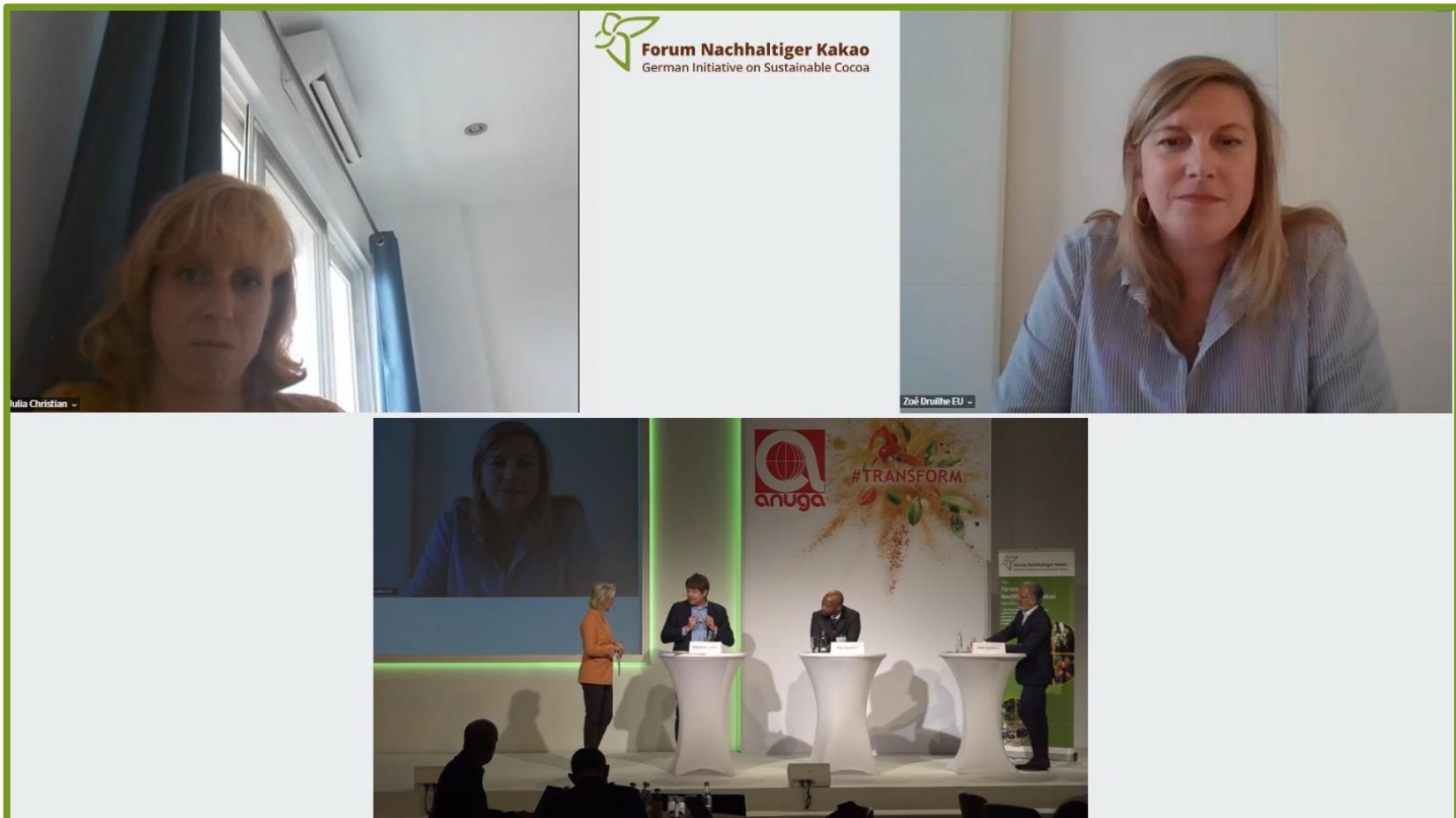


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PANEL DISCUSSION

The entire event took place as a hybrid format, so that participants and guests could also connect virtually and follow the contributions and discussions.





PANEL DISCUSSION

Sebastian Lesch, Head of Division at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) presented conclusions from the EU cocoa talks by like-minded European ministries committed to support a sustainable cocoa sector. He pointed out that there were no easy solutions, but that there was a good starting point for tackling the problems. In this context, Lesch welcomed the joint Initiative Cacao Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana and offered to support important initiatives in close cooperation with the EU.



Julia Christian, campaigner at Fern, referred to the joint letter from West African & European NGOs calling for bilateral agreements between the EU and cocoa-producing countries to reach sustainable cocoa production. Local civil society and cocoa farmers should be involved in the development and implementation of an action plan for each producer country to address outstanding issues in the cocoa sector, which should be enshrined in a bilateral agreement with the EU, Christian said.



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PANEL DISCUSSION

Aldo Cristiano, President of CAOBISCO, praised the outcome of the Cocoa Talks, saying that the stakeholders now have a common understanding in many areas. After intensive dialogue, the EU must now move forward with the transformation process. Core elements of this are uniform national traceability systems, sectoral transparency, supply and demand management as well as the creation of an enabling environment and a political dialogue at eye level, Cristiano said.





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PANEL DISCUSSION



Zoé Druilhe replied that the Commission shared most of the suggestions. From the Commission's point of view, achieving a living income is also the basis for a sustainable supply chain and has the highest priority. At EU level, there are three main work streams: to continue the dialogue on sustainability issues; to deepen the bilateral dialogue with producing countries on the development cooperation and the trade side; and to support producing countries in the transformation of the cocoa sector through our development and finance instruments.





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PANEL DISCUSSION

All speakers agreed that the EU Cocoa Talks significantly improved the constructive dialogue between stakeholders in the sector, the EU and producer countries and built consensus on what needs to be done. However, it is now even more important to translate the recommendations into action. A comprehensive and inclusive EU support program must focus on measures to stabilize the international cocoa market, to effectively combat poverty and to create the necessary economic and political framework conditions.





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Closing remarks – Dirk Schattschneider (BMZ)



In his closing remarks, **Dirk Schattschneider**, Head of Division for Sustainable Supply Chains at the BMZ, called for even closer cooperation between European countries and the EU at the political level. Development cooperation with cocoa-producing countries must be coherent, he said. He thanked the EU's Directorate-General for initiating the process and GISCO for organizing the event and for its commitment to a sustainable cocoa sector



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IMPRESSIONS





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From the right: Aldo Cristiano, CAOBISCO, Sebastian Lesch, BMZ, Alex Assanvo, Initiative Cacao Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana, Merit Buama, Chair of GISCO, Christian Mieles, BVLH, Dr. Karl Wessels, BMEL, Beate Weiskopf, Secretariat GISCO, Alexander Bernet, BMEL, Conny Czymoch, moderator, Dr. Torben Erbrath, BDSI, Evelyn Bahn, INKOTA-netzwerk, Johanna Bodewing, Secretariat GISCO.



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GISCO stand at the BVLH Retail Forum



On the left, the new information brochures for Anuga: GISCO's flyer, the PRO-PLANTEURS factsheet, and the specific objectives.



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Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao e.V.

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