



Accra and Abidjan, July 16th, 2024

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Members of the European Council,

Members of the European Parliament,

Dear European decision-makers,

Subject: Reaffirmation of the support of farmers and civil society in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire for the EUDR

Dear European decision-makers,

We are a group of 120 Ghanaian and Ivorian civil society organisations and farmers' organisations, representing more than 700,000 small cocoa farm owners in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. **In this letter, we wish to express our deep concern at press reports that more than twenty (20) Member States have taken a position against the entry into force of the European Regulation on products linked to deforestation and forest degradation (EUDR), which will be** definitively adopted by the European Union in 2023 after a clear democratic process characterised in particular by consultation with several types of stakeholders. This latest information from Brussels, which is reproduced in [this article](#), has caused confusion about the efforts and investments we are making, both as producers and as a country, to be ready for the implementation of the EUDR at the end of 2024.

Indeed, as a stakeholder in the cocoa supply chain in Côte d'Ivoire, we are following with great interest the debates underway in Europe concerning all the reforms linked to the European Green Pact. **We would like to reiterate our firm and unequivocal support for the EUDR. In the face of attempts to call it into question, we are calling for it to be implemented in accordance with the initial timetable set out when the regulation was adopted. We consider this regulation to be a key element in achieving the goal of sustainable and fair supply chains.**

In stating such a position, we are not unaware of the challenges involved in setting up robust traceability systems with geolocation, particularly for small farm plots. **However, we see these challenges above all as an opportunity to provide the necessary support to the owners of small farms and their organisations, the cooperatives, so that they can continue to invest in order to comply.**

Despite their low incomes, our members, the cooperatives of owners of small cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire, are actively preparing and are already using geolocation. We should be supporting them in pursuing this necessary and essential work for the future, rather than thinking about delaying the implementation of the regulation. Such action will only reduce our collective capacity to meet the challenges of sustainable agriculture.



We are committed to the development of a sustainable and fair agricultural supply chain. Since January 2021 and the launch of the [political dialogue](#) between Côte d'Ivoire and the European Union on sustainable cocoa, we have been closely following the discussions and taking part when invited. **We have expressed our position through various notes and communications, including a position paper from Ivorian civil society to European decision-makers on the draft EU regulation on products linked to deforestation (2021); an analysis note on the concept of the reference year in the draft EU regulation on products linked to deforestation (2021); and a letter to European decision-makers to mark our strong support for the geolocation of agricultural plots (2022).**

In Côte d'Ivoire, the authorities have embarked on a comprehensive reform of the cocoa sector, including the introduction of a national traceability system, the core of which is the geolocation of farm plots and the provision of maps to producers. The other sectors, notably wood and rubber, are also involved in this process. This is an expression of Côte d'Ivoire's determination to continue structuring its agricultural sector as a producer country that plays a leading role in a number of agricultural products, of which cocoa is the most emblematic.

Because, over and above traceability based on geolocation, **the sustainability of agricultural sectors is also a need for social equity and an opportunity to put in place mechanisms to enable the owners of small farms, the key stakeholder in the supply chain, to make a decent living from their work.** Given the nature of the actors in the agricultural supply chain and the importance of the European market, the European Green Pact as a whole, and the RDUE in particular, is a unique opportunity for our members to gain access to a robust traceability system, recognised by the European Union as one of the main tools for due diligence, which will reduce the complexity of the supply chain and enable incomes and living conditions to be improved.

Dear European decision-makers, we would like to thank you for the attention and interest you have shown in our position.

Signataires:

1. Plateforme ivoirienne pour le cacao durable (PICD)
2. Ghana civil society cocoa platform (GCCP)