

****EGU Press Release under embargo till 15:00 CEST April 26, 2023****

Low wages for cocoa farmers in West Africa threaten sustainability of the chocolate industry

Research shows widespread agreement on the need to increase farmer incomes, but opinions diverge on whether the proposed Living Income Differential (LID) is viable

MUNICH – Persistently low farmer incomes drive unsustainable cocoa practices in two small countries in West Africa: Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, where two-thirds of the world’s cocoa is grown. The Governments of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire have joined forces to demand that the cocoa industry pays the Living Income Differential (LID). This additional US\$400 per ton is meant to be directly transferred to cocoa farmers.

Using a rigorous policy evaluation method that engaged over 50 experts, both internationally and in Ghana, a [paper](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2023.106201) published in the journal World Development (doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2023.106201) shows that there is widespread agreement on the need to increase farmer incomes, but opinions diverge on whether the LID is viable. Specifically, there are fears that the LID will increase unsustainable production methods including widespread deforestation in biodiversity hotspots.

UVic professor Sophia Carodenuto, who led the study, says: “It is clear that global cocoa trade needs structural changes in pricing to ensure environmental sustainability. Right now, the poorest farmers pay the price of sustainability in terms of market exclusion. The chocolate industry is trying to invest in sustainability, but success remains limited and deforestation rates continue to increase.”

Carodenuto’s research engages cocoa commodity traders to better integrate social considerations into corporate sustainability programming. Learn more about her work here: tradersandsustainability.com.

Want to learn more about this study? Join the press conference at EGU23 on **Wednesday, 26 April, at 14:00 CEST**. The author will also be available to the media through the conference week.

Note to the media:

When reporting on this story, please mention the EGU General Assembly 2023, which is taking place from 23-28 April 2023.



EGU Press Contact:

Gillian D'Souza

EGU Media and Communications Officer

Munich, Germany

media@egu.eu

More information

The European Geosciences Union (EGU) is Europe's premier geosciences union, dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in the Earth, planetary, and space sciences for the benefit of humanity, worldwide. It is a non-profit interdisciplinary learned association of scientists founded in 2002 with headquarters in Munich, Germany. The EGU publishes a number of diverse scientific journals, which use an innovative open access format, and organises a number of topical meetings, and education and outreach activities. Its annual General Assembly is the largest and most prominent European geosciences event, attracting over 14,000 scientists from all over the world. The meeting's sessions cover a wide range of topics, including volcanology, planetary exploration, the Earth's internal structure and atmosphere, climate, energy, and resources. The EGU General Assembly 2023 is taking place in Vienna, Austria and online from 23-28 April 2023. For information and press registration, please click [here](#), or follow the EGU on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

If you wish to receive our press releases via email, please use the Press Release Subscription Form at <https://www.egu.eu/news/subscription/>. Subscribed journalists and other members of the media receive EGU press releases under embargo (if applicable) 24 hours in advance of public dissemination.