COCOA AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS IN CONGO BASIN AND COTE D’IVOIRE

THE ROLE OF TIMBER TREES

THE TROPICAL WOOD INDUSTRY OPERATES IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS:

CENTRAL AFRICA
- Commitment to sustainable forest management
- Livelihoods projects for communities

WESTERN AFRICA
- Foreseeable shortage of wood
- Companies and small farmers experimenting with the cacao-timber tree association

THE COCOA INDUSTRY IS FACING MANY CHALLENGES IN AFRICA:

- Low level of income diversification
- Cocoa (and farming) is a driver of deforestation
- Ageing cacao trees, diseases, climate change

THE ASSOCIATION OF CACAO AND TIMBER TREE SPECIES WITHIN AGROFORESTRY PROJECTS:
- AN ASSET FOR MANY STAKEHOLDERS

FROM A DIVERSITY OF INITIAL LANDSCAPES:
ONE GLOBAL APPROACH TO ACHIEVE A CACAO-TIMBER TREE ASSOCIATION MODEL

STAKEHOLDERS’ INTERESTS

- Improving living standards
- Food security
- Access to certified cocoa
- Forest preservation
- Financing livelihood projects for communities near forest concessions
- Sustainable forest certification
- Timber availability

TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS/ASSISTANTS

FARMERS

MICROFINANCE

RESEARCH

NGOs

TIMBER COMPANIES

GOVERNMENT

CHOCOLATE COMPANIES

Generating new knowledge on AF

Bringing technical solutions (e.g. nurseries, timber tree management)

Financing income-generating activities - Upright financing agroforestry cacao cultivation projects

Biodiversity preservation
- Livelihoods - Strengthening small farmer organisations

KEY LEARNINGS
- The agroforestry model depends on production goals
- A strong synergy between farmers, NGOs, and donors is essential to successful initiatives
- Funding is key to start off the initial stages of a project as the inability to pay for initial costs may prevent excellent investments from being made
- A virtuous cycle is then triggered: aid > certification > livelihood improvement > savings > reinvestment > scaling up

PROSPECTS
- Large-scale dissemination of knowledge of agroforestry systems to other Fair Trade certified cooperatives
- Enhancing the value of timber trees grown in agroforestry systems with the new ‘Trees outside forest’ PEFC standard
- Development of financial mechanisms
- The legal framework needs to be adapted

Article references:
Cocoa agroforestry systems in the Congo Basin and Côte d’Ivoire: The role of timber tree species

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