

Cocoa industry agrees plan to tackle deforestation

LONDON, England - Major chocolate makers, including Ferrero, Nestle, and Mars, agreed Thursday a landmark initiative to tackle deforestation in top cocoa producers Ivory Coast and Ghana - a move hailed by Prince Charles.



Jean Van Jean via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Twelve cocoa and chocolate companies agreed to "a statement of collective intent" committing them to work to end deforestation and forest degradation in the global cocoa supply chain, with an initial focus on the two west African nations, the industry announced following a London meeting hosted by the British heir to the throne.

"The agreement... commits the participating companies to develop and present a joint public-private framework of action to address deforestation," at UN climate talks in November, said a joint statement.

Deforestation a threat to resilience of cocoa sector and smallholders who depend on it

The prince told a conference that "the most powerful direct reason for action is that deforestation threatens to undermine the very resilience of the cocoa sector itself, and with it the livelihoods of the millions of smallholders who depend on it."

"I am heartened that companies are undertaking to work up, in full collaboration with host governments and civil society, a joint framework of action to make good on the commitments announced today, in time for" the UN climate change conference in November.

The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), which held the meeting with the Sustainable Trade Initiative and Charles' International Sustainability Unit, described the agreement as "the first collective industry commitment to specifically end deforestation and forest degradation covering the global cocoa supply chain".

The dozen companies involved in the initiative comprise also Barry Callebaut, Blommer Chocolate Company, Cargill, CEMOI, ECOM, Hershey, Mondelez, Olam, and Touton.

"We look forward to more companies joining the effort and are grateful for the leadership provided by The Prince of Wales in convening today's landmark event," said WCF chairman Barry Parkin.

Source: AFP

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