

## Sustainability issues in the Cocoa Value Chain: will EU Due Diligence Legislation make a difference?

During recent years, the sustainability of the cocoa global value chain has become a major issue of concern to both producers and consumers. This relates to all three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social and environmental. Firstly, the living income of cocoa farmers has not improved sufficiently despite several initiatives taken to address the issue. Most cocoa farmers are still living below the poverty line with very low living standards. Furthermore, there has been a rise in environmental and social advocacy in commodity supply chains including cocoa. Challenges regarding deforestation, labour and social ethics in the cocoa sector are influencing consumption patterns for cocoa and chocolate products. Over the years, several corporate governance issues at sector and company level have aimed at improving the sustainability of the sector. Though some improvements have been made, many key human rights and other sustainability issues still remain unresolved.

Cocoa is thus one of the sectors that features prominently amongst the on-going discussion on corporate due diligence legislation in the European Union. Interestingly, leading cocoa and chocolate companies themselves are calling for regulation of the sector to create a level playing field for all actors. Based on the presentation of a new study assessing the current state of play with respect to the sustainability of the cocoa global value chain, the conference aims at discussing possibilities and strategic priorities for promoting human rights and the sustainability of cocoa production in the framework of the on-going debate on EU due diligence legislation. The discussion will shed light on the extent to which an effective EU Due Diligence Act can improve sustainability issues in the cocoa value chain. However, it will also ask critically where the limitations of such regulation lie.

**Please register at: [registration@oefse.at](mailto:registration@oefse.at)**

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Organizers



in cooperation with



**Sustainability issues  
in the Cocoa Value Chain:  
will EU Due Diligence  
Legislation make a difference?**

Wednesday, 30 March 2022, 4 – 6 pm (CET)

Online Conference

## Speakers

**Sarah Dekkiche** is Director of Policy and Partnerships at the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) since January 2021. She has worked for more than ten years for organizations such as CSR Europe, amfori and twentyfifty and has relevant expertise in Business & Human Rights and Human Rights Due Diligence. ICI was founded in 2002 and is a Swiss-based, non-profit foundation which mission is to advance the elimination of child labour and forced labour in the cocoa sector. Its members include stakeholders from the chocolate and cocoa industry, civil society organizations, including certification bodies and a workers' organization, as well as international organizations. Recently, ICI was among the signatories of a joint position paper calling on the EU to adopt ambitious due diligence legislation.

**Hannes Grohs** is a Junior Researcher at the Austrian Foundation for Development Research (ÖFSE) and holds a master's degree in Development Studies from the University of Vienna. His research focusses on global value chain analysis, industrial policy, and development economics and policy. He is co-author of the study "Sustainability in the Global and Austrian Cocoa & Chocolate Value Chain" and supported a variety of research projects investigating the cocoa value chain and sustainability efforts and legislation in supply chains.

**Jan Grumiller** is a Researcher at the Austrian Foundation for Development Research (ÖFSE) and holds a doctoral degree in economics from the University of Business and Economics Vienna (WU). His research focusses on global value chain analysis and industrial policy. He is co-author of the study "Sustainability in the Global and Austrian Cocoa & Chocolate Value Chain" and conducted a large variety of research projects on the economic, social and ecological sustainability of global value chains, with a particular focus on cocoa.

**Friedel Hütz-Adams** is a Researcher at Südwind Institute in Bonn since 1993. He published research papers on value chains of various products including cocoa, coffee, hazelnut, palm oil, cars and mobile phones. Since 2009, he has been involved in the debate on creating a sustainable cocoa market, published various studies on the subject and organized conferences. He is co-author of the Cocoa Barometers 2012, 2015, 2018 and 2020. He is engaged in VOICE, a network of international non-governmental organizations and unions working on cocoa. He has been a member of the Rewe GROUP Sustainability Advisory Board since 2013.

**Michael Odijie** is a Research Fellow at the University College London (ULC) working on the AFRAB project 'African Abolitionism: The Rise and Transformations of Anti-Slavery in Africa'. He received his university training at Ambrose Alli University, Nigeria and University of Sheffield, UK. He spent two years as a postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre of African Studies, University of Cambridge. In his work, he shows the historical links between cocoa and (child) slavery. Regarding current sustainability efforts in the cocoa supply chain, he argues that it is no longer enough to point out that child slavery practices exist, but that more time and effort should be invested to truly understand the processes and conditions that create them.

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## Programme

4.00 pm

### Welcome and introduction

Werner Raza, ÖFSE – Austrian Foundation for Development Research

Ute Mayrhofer, Dreikönigsaktion Hilfswerk der Katholischen Jungschar

4.15 pm

### Study presentation: "Sustainability in the global and Austrian Cocoa & Chocolate Value Chain"

Hannes Grohs and Jan Grumiller, ÖFSE – Austrian Foundation for Development Research

4.45 pm

### Panel discussion: "What should be done to strengthen sustainability in the cocoa value chain, and what role can EU Due Diligence Legislation play?"

#### Panellists:

- Michael Odijie, University College London
- Friedel Hütz-Adams, Südwind Institute Bonn
- Sarah Dekkiche, International Cocoa Initiative
- Jan Grumiller, ÖFSE – Austrian Foundation for Development Research

*Facilitation: Karin Küblböck, ÖFSE – Austrian Foundation for Development Research*

6.00 pm

### End of conference

*By participating in this event, you consent to the publication of photographs and film footage that are produced by the organizers during the event.*