

## **Collective Statement of Intent**

### **The Cocoa and Forests Initiative**

#### *Preamble*

Recognising the vital role of the cocoa sector in bringing jobs and wealth to local communities, while at the same time seeking to be environmentally and socially sustainable and striving to protect the world's tropical forests;

Noting the importance of the cocoa sector in national economic development, the reduction of rural poverty, and in accelerating the transition to sustainable livelihoods for the millions of smallholder farmers who grow cocoa;

Emphasising the critical role of forests, biodiversity and conservation in addressing global climate change, regulating the local and regional climate, and providing other critical ecosystem services that underpin the resilience of the cocoa sector and local livelihoods;

Acknowledging the role of agricultural commodity development, including the cocoa sector, as a driver of deforestation and forest degradation, and recognizing the contribution that the cocoa sector can make in many countries to the restoration of forests and resilient landscapes;

Understanding the importance of public-private partnerships in sustainable and inclusive economic development, and our commitment to supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

Conscious of the need to promote, foster and accelerate the economic and social development of tropical forest countries, in order to improve living standards and people's well-being;

Recognising that agricultural commodity production must contribute to national commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions agreed in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as other relevant global commitments;

We, the undersigned companies, commit to working together, pre-competitively, to end deforestation and forest degradation in the cocoa supply chain, with an initial focus on Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

#### *Declaration*

To this end, we will:

Promote and participate in multi-stakeholder coalitions that bring together public, private, and civil society partners, to support the development of a common vision and joint framework to end deforestation and forest degradation in the cocoa sector;

Align individual company action plans with the common vision and joint framework by 2018, to reach our respective deforestation commitments in the cocoa sector;

Build on existing initiatives and catalyze further efforts to improve cocoa productivity and resilience to reduce pressure on existing forests, working in partnership with producer country governments, farmers and farmer organisations, civil society organizations,

development partners, and other stakeholders; and promote improved practices through our supply chain relationships;

Work in partnership with producer country governments and all relevant stakeholders to professionalize and economically empower farmers and their families, and deepen support for inclusive and participatory development of cocoa-growing communities, with a strong focus on gender empowerment;

Ensure evidence-based decision-making by generating and sharing data and research on forests, forest loss and degradation, and patterns of land use in cocoa landscapes; and by promoting collective learning on sustainable commodity production across geographies, sectors and actors;

Work with producer country governments, farmers and farmer organizations, civil society organizations, development partners, and other stakeholders to jointly advance effective approaches to land use policy and planning, forest protection, and where appropriate, forest and land restoration; and integrated landscape scale management;

Encourage increased mobilization of financial resources from all sources (including public and private, bilateral and multilateral, and alternative sources of finance) as well as the use of innovative financial tools and mechanisms, to address the challenge of financing for sustainable development in the cocoa sector;

Ensure effective and transparent monitoring and reporting on progress on our respective deforestation commitments in the cocoa sector;

Seek to extend the initiative to other cocoa-growing countries and regions based on the experience of the initial collaboration in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

#### *Joint Framework for Action*

Following this meeting, we undertake to work collectively with producer country governments, farmers and farmer organizations, civil society organizations, development partners, and other stakeholders to prepare a joint framework for action to give substance to the commitment above by November 2017, with a view to announcing the framework and associated commitments at the 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 23) to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Germany.