



Cocoa4Future: A research in partnership project contributing to the agroecological and organizational transition of cocoa production in West Africa

L. Which Agroforestry for Commercial Perennial Crops and Trees?

Poster number: L18

Patrick Jagoret, CIRAD, France

* Stephane Saj, CIRAD, Egypt

In 60 years, African cocoa production grew at the expense of forested areas that have practically disappeared in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Besides, both countries are also currently concerned with ageing cocoa orchards whose rehabilitation is jeopardized by the cocoa swollen shoot virus. In the coming decades, climate change will also limit the areas suitable for cocoa farming. The unsustainability of cocoa production in West Africa will ultimately increase the vulnerability of cocoa farms relying on this crop. In such a challenging context, there is an urgent need to design and disseminate sound cocoa cropping and farming models, able to guarantee a decent livelihood for family farmers while avoiding environmentally detrimental practices. This is the aim of the Cocoa4Future project, which gathers Ivorian and Ghanaian research and training institutions, NGOs, several cooperatives and companies in the cocoa sector. Cocoa4Future proposes an ambitious scientific framework enabling these partners to conduct a broad range of research to i) disseminate agronomically and ecologically efficient and resilient agroforestry systems, ii) promote levers to ensure the socioeconomic sustainability of cocoa farms. Cocoa4Future combines two complementary and, so far, unseen approaches in the cocoa sector: i) an integrative approach with different levels of analyses: from the cocoa plot to the farm, from the cropping system to the cocoa production sector; ii) a multidisciplinary approach linking agronomy to technology, entomology to virology, advisory services to the cocoa value chain. It takes action in areas representative of the main cocoa growing regions in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and mobilizes networks of cocoa plantations and farms, which are closely connected. Results from the project aims at enabling the West African cocoa sector to meeting the major challenges it currently faces while - this time - placing people and the environment at the core of tomorrow's cocoa production.