



# News Release

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## **Working with communities to promote biodiversity conservation Barry Callebaut leads cocoa farmer training program in joint initiative with the Rainforest Alliance to help protect Taï National Park in Côte d'Ivoire**

- Initiative brings together experts and rural cocoa farming communities to expand use of sustainable agriculture and conserve biodiversity
- Parties aim to develop long-term solutions for preventing further degradation of rainforest and fragile ecosystems near Taï National Park
- Barry Callebaut is training farmer groups neighboring the park in Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) standards and on improving farm productivity

*Zurich, Switzerland, April 3, 2013* – Barry Callebaut, the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality cocoa and chocolate products, is participating in a joint sustainability initiative with the Rainforest Alliance, other experts in development and environmental and wildlife protection, and the national office of parks and reserves to protect the Taï National Park in southwest Côte d'Ivoire.

The park is one of the last major remnants of the vast primary tropical forest that once spanned across present-day Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and is the largest island of forest remaining in West Africa, according to the UNESCO World Heritage Center. It is noted for its population of endangered pygmy hippopotamus, 11 species of monkeys and 1,300 species of higher plants.

As part of a comprehensive multi-stakeholder initiative to conserve the forest's biodiversity, cocoa farmers in the rural areas bordering the park are being offered training in sustainable cocoa production. Barry Callebaut, which has worked with cocoa farmers and cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire since 2005, is conducting the training program that will enable approximately 2,000 farmers from five cooperatives to comply with the environmental, social and economic criteria defined by the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) standards and become Rainforest Alliance Certified™.

In cooperation with the Rainforest Alliance, Barry Callebaut is also establishing nurseries for indigenous shade trees, launching a tree planting program, creating nurseries for cocoa seedlings, and setting up demonstration plots to showcase good agricultural practices.

The training program, part of Barry Callebaut's Cocoa Horizons global cocoa sustainability initiative, comprises agricultural training for farmers and business and administrative skills training for the management personnel of the respective cooperatives. Agricultural training takes place in Farmer Field Schools (FFS), a methodology that facilitates adult learning on good agricultural practices and environmental protection through participant interaction and demonstrations. In addition to business training, the cooperatives also receive support in setting up internal management systems required to qualify for Rainforest Alliance independent certification. Barry Callebaut's in-house certification team, based in Côte d'Ivoire, is conducting the training of lead farmers alongside qualified lead trainers accredited by the Rainforest Alliance.



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“We are very encouraged by the strong interest shown by farmers participating in the training activities, which underscores our shared commitment to sustainable cocoa production and the protection of the rich diversity of wildlife and plant species unique to this important geographic region,” said Anke Massart, Project Manager Cocoa Horizons in Côte d’Ivoire.

One of the auditors of the program, Mélanie Bayo-Sirima, said, “I am proud as an Ivorian to be personally involved in the protection of those landscapes essential for the ecological balance of the Western Region. I have no doubt a rational management of natural resources by involving communities can also improve the standard of living of cocoa farmers and their families.”

In addition to the Rainforest Alliance and Barry Callebaut, the other parties in the joint initiative are Centre d’Etudes, Formations, Conseils, Audits (CEFCA); Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ); Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF); and the Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves (OIPR). CEFCA, a not-for-profit nongovernmental environmental organization, has implemented several Rainforest Alliance technical assistance projects in Côte d’Ivoire. GIZ has promoted sustainable projects and worked with the park’s management body since the mid-1990s. The Wild Chimpanzee Foundation, created in 2000, aims to protect the key chimpanzee population in West Africa. OIPR has been responsible for the sustainable management of the park since 2002.

“We are pleased to be working with this distinguished and committed group of experts to help find long-term solutions for preventing further degradation to areas in and near the park and to expand the use of sustainable agriculture through a focus on productivity improvements and biodiversity conservation,” said Nicholas Camu, Group Manager Cocoa Horizons at Barry Callebaut.

Barry Callebaut’s Cocoa Horizons initiative, announced in March 2012, is a 10-year CHF 40 million program to boost farm productivity, increase cocoa quality and improve family livelihoods in a sustainable way. Barry Callebaut is focusing first on large producer countries including Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, Cameroon and Brazil, and aims to expand the initiative to other cocoa producing countries with high development potential. Cocoa Horizons builds on Barry Callebaut’s proven Quality Partner Program (QPP) with cocoa farmer cooperatives, launched in Cote d’Ivoire in 2005 and replicated in Cameroon in 2010.

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**Barry Callebaut ([www.barry-callebaut.com](http://www.barry-callebaut.com)):**

*With annual sales of about CHF 4.8 billion (EUR 4.0 billion / USD 5.2 billion) for fiscal year 2011/12, Zurich-based Barry Callebaut is the world’s leading manufacturer of high-quality cocoa and chocolate – from the cocoa bean to the finest chocolate product. Barry Callebaut is present in 30 countries, operates around 45 production facilities and employs a diverse and dedicated workforce of about 6,000 people. Barry Callebaut serves the entire food industry focusing on industrial food manufacturers, artisans and professional users of chocolate (such as chocolatiers, pastry chefs or bakers), the latter with its two global brands Callebaut® and Cacao Barry®. Barry Callebaut is the global leader in cocoa and chocolate innovations and provides a comprehensive range of services in the fields of product development, processing, training and marketing. Cost leadership is another important reason why global as well as local food manufacturers work together with Barry Callebaut. Through its broad range of sustainability initiatives and research activities, the company works with farmers, farmer organizations and other partners to help ensure future supplies of cocoa and improve farmer livelihoods.*



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