



EMPOWERING  
AGRICULTURAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
INNOVATORS

## Project Factsheet

Project duration: July 2019 – June 2022

Implementation partner: Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC)

Further partners: -

Direct and indirect beneficiaries: Actors involved in cocoa sustainability

Focus areas covered: increasing the understanding about the farmers and their environment

# Adapting and Testing an Approach for Monitoring & Evaluating Climate Smart Cocoa CREMAs Ghana

### Background

Ghana is currently implementing the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program (GCFRP), the world's first commodity-based emission reductions program, with significant private sector support from the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI). Considering the complexity of the cocoa growing landscapes of southwestern Ghana, the key implementation strategy for implementing the GCFRP and CFI is the creation of HIAs - Hotspot Intervention Areas - which will adapt the Community Resource Management Areas (CREMA) governance mechanism to the cocoa landscape. The CREMA mechanism is the best approach to meet the goals of these two initiatives, as it will empower traditional leaders, elders, communities and farmers on the one hand, while on the other hand setting the stage for companies (under CFI) to be able to implement CSC and related agroforestry practices into a cocoa-forest landscape with the full support, involvement and benefit of the local stakeholders.

In at least two HIAs, implementation efforts are already underway and are supporting the establishment of CREMA and HIA institutions, as well as the operating costs. As part of this process, the traditional authority and all of the communities will be involved in the formation of community committees, followed by higher level executive committees and landscape boards to guide the development of farm-to-landscape climate-smart by-laws and management plans. Other stakeholders will also be involved in a co-opted manner, through a stakeholder's consortium in which the partners will enter into formal, binding agreements about the management of the landscape and the terms of collaborating. By coming together, the consortium offers private sector, government and civil society stakeholders a precompetitive means to leverage and coordinate activities, and ensure that investments are more efficiently spent, effectively implemented, and individual and collective targets achieved.

As part of efforts under the GCFRP and CFI, cocoa companies, the government of Ghana, and other landscape stakeholders require methods to monitor and evaluate (M&E) the activities and impacts from the landscape-scale rollout of climate-smart cocoa (CSC)/cocoa agroforestry and landscape governance.

### Project content

The Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC), with support from the Lindt Cocoa Foundation, is therefore implementing a project in the Kakum HIA landscape, in the Central Region of Ghana to develop and test an M&E system that can be applied across these types of landscapes. In developing the system, NCRC will adapt and test a socio-economic and ecological M&E approach that it has been using in a mature CREMAs in northern Ghana, and combine it with research methods NCRC has used in cocoa and oil palm systems over the past five years for the purpose of monitoring climate-smart cocoa CREMAs in HIAs in the cocoa landscape. Under this system, NCRC will incorporate three types of variables; those that speak to (1) socio-economic sustainability, (2) ecological sustainability, and (3) linkages between cocoa and CREMA related activities and people's attitudes and perceptions, including: livelihoods and wellbeing, CSC practice adoption and yields, biodiversity and ecosystem health, landscape governance and management, and climate patterns. NCRC also anticipates that this monitoring system can play an important role in furnishing data and information (which is not otherwise available) to support the testing and implementation of a newly developing global landscape standard--LandScale--of sustainability aimed at assessing progress across commodity and extractive landscapes on a range of goals.

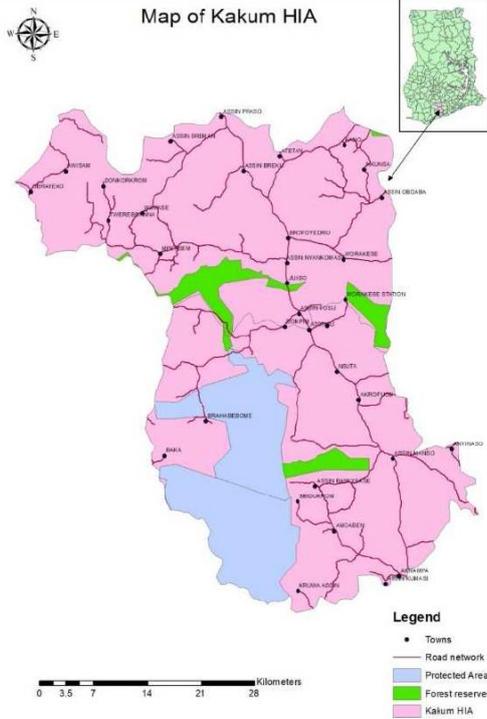
The project, which started in July, 2019, will be implemented in the climate-smart cocoa HIA landscape on the eastern and northern boundaries of Kakum National

### About the Lindt Cocoa Foundation:

*The Lindt Cocoa Foundation was founded in 2013 and has the declared purpose of working to achieve social and ecological sustainability in the cultivation, production and processing of cocoa and other raw materials used in chocolate production.*

Learn more:  
[www.lindtcocoafoundation.org](http://www.lindtcocoafoundation.org)

Park, in Ghana's Central Region. NCRC has been working in this landscape for the past 5 years with multiple stakeholders, and is familiar with both the landscape and the local communities and farmers.



- 4) revise the monitoring approach and make it available to all HIA initiatives working under the GCFRP, and
- 5) align the M&E system to support the pilot testing of the LandScale framework in the Kakum HIA with provision of data that is not otherwise available, and then ensure that both the M&E system and LandScale are available for any other cocoa landscapes.

In fulfilling these goals, we envision important benefits to key stakeholders from the project, including (but not limited to) improved governance and incomes to communities and farmers as a result of the monitoring and sharing of results, the ability to confirm impacts (or identify challenges) related to the private sector and government's no-deforestation and climate smart cocoa commitments, and generation of data that can be used to support landscape level assessment/verification of sustainability of a range of goals. Overall, the project will support a unique and innovative community-based research system for monitoring "sustainable" cocoa cultivation, production and related activities across a landscape using integrated natural and social science methods. The subsequent sharing of results back to communities and stakeholders will help to increase understanding of landscape management decisions and conditions, and inform climate smart cocoa activities of key stakeholders. The M&E Model will be shared publicly, allowing others to apply it as well in other CREMAs and HIAs.

### Project objectives

The specific goals of this project are to:

- 1) review and adapt NCRC's existing M&E approach from mature CREMAs;
- 2) incorporate recent research methods from cocoa and oil palm projects in Ghana;
- 3) field test the revised M&E approach to ensure effective monitoring of climate smart cocoa CREMAs in HIAs;

### Serving the mission of the Lindt Cocoa Foundation

The project touches upon the following focus area of the Lindt Cocoa Foundation:

- 1) Support research projects that aim at increasing the understanding about the farmers and their environment in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of projects

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