



EMPOWERING  
AGRICULTURAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
INNOVATORS

## Project Factsheet

Project duration: July 2020 – May 2024

Implementation partner: Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC)

Further partners: Ecom, Private Sector Partners, LandScale

Direct and indirect beneficiaries: Actors involved in cocoa sustainability

Focus areas covered: fostering an enabling environment and removing constraints

# Kakum Sustainable Landscape Project supporting the establishment of local governance structures

## 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). The most significant challenges to achieving the goals and targets of the GCFRP and the CFI are meaningful engagement and investment by companies and other industry stakeholders at the landscape level, coupled with a clear concept of how to collaborate in the rollout of landscape governance and CSC.

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 HIAs concept is based on the Landscape Approach, which fosters the implementation and rollout of sustainable cocoa production systems that nests farm-level sustainability interventions (best practices climate-smart cocoa agroforestry) within a broader community-based, landscape governance structure and landscape management planning process so as to enable planned farm-farmer-community focused investment to radiate beyond farm boundaries into the surrounding communities and forested areas across the HIA landscape via the governance system.

At the community-level, the well-established CREMA mechanism remains 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.

### Project content & location

The project is focused on the Kakum Landscape in Ghana's Assin South District of the Central Region and is home to the world renowned Kakum National Park. In 2017, this landscape was designated as a *Hotspot Intervention Area* (HIA) by the government, making it a priority landscape for reducing deforestation and achieving the industry's Cocoa & Forest Initiative (CFI) targets. The Kakum HIA represents one landscape where the concept of landscape governance and collaboration is well developed thanks to initial support from The Hershey Company and other funders, but the scale of private sector support and engagement is still limited and can only succeed in achieving impacts if additional companies join the process. The Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC), with support from the Lindt Cocoa Foundation, is therefore developing the needed governance structures in a new and critically important northern portion of this landscape, while aligning existing investments from Lindt & Sprunli through Olam to support climate-smart cocoa production practices in the same area. Specifically, the project supports NCRC to establish a second Sub-HIA and set of CREMAS which are essential for achieving scale. In total, this project will reach approximately 3,000 farmers covering 3,000 - 5,000 hectares of cocoa in 3 years, and then grow to a larger scale over time.

The Kakum National Park and three adjacent forest reserves make-up over one third of the district. The National Park covers 375 km<sup>2</sup> of moist evergreen forest and raffia swamps. A number of small rivers also run through the park, including the Kakum River which serves as one of the major sources of water for the city of Cape Coast and its surrounding towns. This forest is home to numerous wildlife species of mammals, birds and reptiles including the Diana monkey, the bongo antelope, yellow-backed duiker, the densest population of

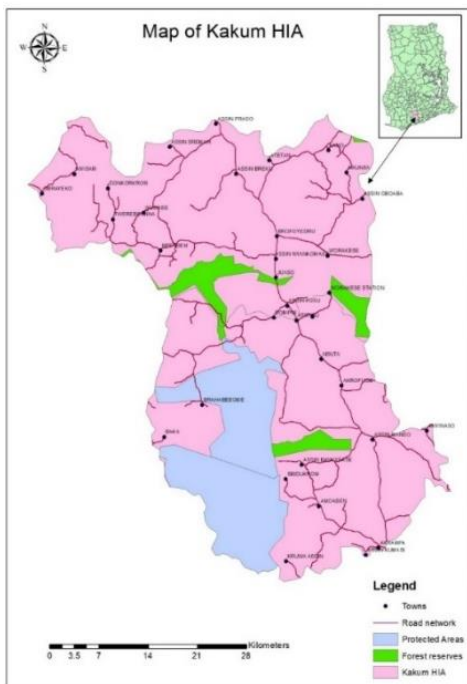
### About the Lindt Cocoa Foundation:

*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)

forest elephants in Ghana (over 200), and an endangered tortoise species. The park is also an important bird area and an ecotourism destination of international note due to its world-renowned canopy walkway. The Assin South district covers 1,187 km<sup>2</sup> and is home to approximately 100,000 people. Across Assin South, over 80% of households are involved in agriculture, with the majority of people engaged in cocoa farming, food crop farming, and oil palm production. Logging and other forestry activities also predominate, including illegal logging and poaching.



### Project objectives

The goal of this project is to transform the Kakum cocoa landscape to a more sustainable and climate-smart cocoa production system and source of beans so as to protect the forests and biodiversity, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance farmers' and communities' wellbeing and resilience to climate change.

Specifically, the project will achieve its goal by implementing activities across four key objectives that are crucial to achieving landscape sustainability:

- 1) **Develop Landscape Governance:** developing a community-based landscape governance mechanism and joining a multi-stakeholder consortium of partners committed to the landscape

- 2) **Implement Coordinated Climate Smart Cocoa Production:** implementing climate-smart cocoa agroforestry activities to raise cocoa productivity, reduce deforestation of the natural forest ecosystem and enhance trees across the farming landscape;
- 3) **Demonstrate landscape sustainability through Monitoring:** implementing the M&E system to be able to monitor impacts, identify challenges, and achieve and makes claims about sustainability; The M&E system will support the data required to take the landscape fully into the Verra LandScale Assessment of Verified Sustainability, complementing existing traceability efforts and KPI reporting.
- 4) **Improve Farmer Wellbeing:** implementing activities to improve farmers and communities' wellbeing by supporting diversification, and using the Consortium to more coherently tackle overarching issues like poverty, child labor, access to potable water, education, nutrition, and access to other services, etc.

In implementing the project, we envision important benefits to key stakeholders from the landscape as well as to project partners, including: improved governance and management of the landscape (forests and farms) leading to reduced deforestation; strengthened governance capacity and tenure rights for farmers and communities in the landscape; increased productivity and incomes for farmers; improved efficiency and scale of CSC extension due to consortium stakeholder collaborations; enhanced knowledge and understanding of the landscape and progress towards corporate-government commitments; demonstrating how to work collaboratively across a landscape and make claims about sustainable landscape performance.

### Serving the mission of the Lindt Cocoa Foundation

The project aims at fostering an enabling environment and removing constraints farmers face to improve their practices. The development of a landscape governance system and multi-stakeholder consortium create an enabling environment in which farmers and farming communities across the landscape can collectively address many of the environmental and socio-economic conditions that to date have negatively affected their decision-making and constrained their productivity and wellbeing. Further, it will also facilitate coordination and collective efforts on the ground, between companies and the government agencies so as to greatly improve farmers' motivation, capabilities and capacity to access and adopt climate-smart cocoa farming practices.

March 2021