



[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Agroforestry systems for more sustainability and prosperity](#)

# Agroforestry systems for more sustainability and prosperity

📍 COLOMBIA 📍 SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

20.09.2023

Floods, hot spells, and water shortages: cocoa farmers in the Colombian department of Antioquia have been struggling considerably with the effects of climate change for years. The Sustainable Sourcing Landscapes Project, which Swisscontact is implementing together with the Pakka Foundation and the Colombian export company Colcocoa on behalf of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), aims to ensure greater climate resilience in the region and among farms. This project is co-financed by [SECO](#) through the [SWISSCO](#) Landscape Programme.



The harvests of farmers in the region fluctuate greatly, income opportunities are limited, many local families are affected by



poverty and in 2020, a climate emergency was declared in Antioquia.

The most urgent problems are greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and deforestation. The first step is to strengthen the ecosystems and stop deforestation for cocoa cultivation. Swisscontact works closely with local partners as well as authorities, producer associations and cooperatives in Colombia. The aim of this collaboration is to develop a joint agenda for the sustainable development of the landscapes.

On a second project level, the focus is on cooperation with local cocoa farmers. To this end, Swisscontact is partnering with the private sector, including the Swiss [Pakka Foundation](#). [Pakka](#) trades and markets products such as chocolate and nuts in the European market and its foundation promotes fair trade and sustainable, resource-efficient value chains from the field to the consumer.

## More sustainability and better quality

Through the project in Antioquia, cooperation with local cocoa farmers is being intensified to introduce climate-friendly and regenerative cultivation methods. At the same time, the use of sustainable fertilisers and processing practices is being promoted. The aim is more sustainability and productivity in cultivation, as well as better quality of the cocoa and, thereby, higher incomes for the smallholders.

Additional income opportunities are further promoted through other crops and sideline activities outside agriculture. At the same time, the sustainable landscape makes cocoa farming more resilient to the challenges of climate change and fluctuating markets. All these aspects combined will increase farmers' incomes over the long term and improve the overall standard of living in the region.

Thanks to the project, the climate emergency should soon be history; by 2030, Antioquia is to become a sustainable, resilient, low-emission and climate-adapted department.





*Cocoa farmer. Photo: Pakka Foundation*

## Three questions to Katharine van der Laan, Managing Director, Pakka Foundation



*Katharine van der Laan, Managing Director, Pakka Foundation*

### **What is new about the 'sustainable landscape' approach?**

There is an escalating demand for responsibly produced agricultural products. Businesses, as well as governments and consumer markets alike, are placing sustainability commitments at the forefront of their agendas. The Sustainable Landscape Project aims to unite these diverse actors and their commitments, generating a more comprehensive and significant impact.

### **How do local farmers benefit from this project?**

To successfully transition to more sustainable and regenerative farming systems, farmers require technical assistance, a supportive industry, that for instance, offers affordable inputs, and financial support. Often these services are not known or readily available to smallholder farmers. The Sustainable Landscape Project helps to bring these services to the forefront for smallholder farmers. Additionally, it sheds light on the areas that require attention, in order to establish a system that promotes responsibly produced goods.

## What does the Pakka Foundation hope to gain from the cooperation with Swisscontact, Colcocoa and other partners?

Pakka Foundation believes that the improvement of agricultural practices, the promotion of local processing, and high quality organic and fair-trade products improve the living conditions of the rural population and smallholder farmers. We are actively engaged in projects aimed at establishing the essential framework conditions to facilitate these objectives. The collaborative efforts with Swisscontact, Colcocoa, and other project partners are playing a vital role in driving progress towards this goal with the cacao industry in Colombia.



📍 COLOMBIA 🌱 SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

### SUSTAINABLE SOURCING LANDSCAPES

The project seeks to improve the livelihood and wellbeing of rural families in the selected areas by creating sustainable sourcing landscapes with deforestation-free and climate-friendly supply chains for present and future generations.

[LEARN MORE →](#)

