



Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen





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TO SHARE, MEET & LEARN FOR SUSTAINABLE COCOA

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On a cocoa farm, you can find other people farming next to the farmers and his or her family ... [read further](#)

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Social policies and their implementation contribute to a healthy cocoa sector and to rural development ... [read further](#)

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When cocoa beans are bought and bulked, they are ready for transport and storage ... [read further](#)

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THE INTERNATIONAL COCOA ORGANIZATION

The International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) is a global organization, composed of both cocoa producing and cocoa consuming member countries.

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CHOCOA CONFERENCE AMSTERDAM 28-03-2014

At The Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), KIT is an independent centre of knowledge and expertise in the areas of international and ... [Read more](#)

CHOCOA GOOD COCOA BETTER CHOCOLATE

CONNECTIONS TO OTHERS

CARGILL
OXFAM-NOVIB
UTZ CERTIFIED
STICHTING MAX HAVELAAR

World Cocoa Foundation

NEWS AND EVENTS NEW

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Sustainable cocoa: a matter of taste?

KIT, Sustainable Economic Development & Gender
Anna Laven & Susanne van der Kooij

Chocoa Conference
28th March 2014



Chocoa Festival – March 2013



Fine or
flavour' and 'single
origin' cocoa as
instrument for
promoting
sustainable cocoa



Yes, but how?

1. Is fine flavour chocolate sustainable?
2. Has the fine flavour market the potential to boost the volume of sustainable cocoa and chocolate?
3. What can the mainstream market learn from the fine flavour market regarding sustainability?



What is fine flavour cocoa and chocolate

Fine flavour cocoa

A specific origin and grade of cocoa beans of a unique flavour or colour, sought after by makers of high quality, specialty chocolate.

Fine flavour chocolate (products)

A high quality of cocoa beans and chocolate, with a specific taste for both of which a higher price is paid. It is often combined with terms such as 'high quality', 'single origin' and/or 'bean to bar' chocolate. The combination of cocoa genetics, cultivation methods, environmental conditions, post-harvest practices and processing techniques are all contributing factors.

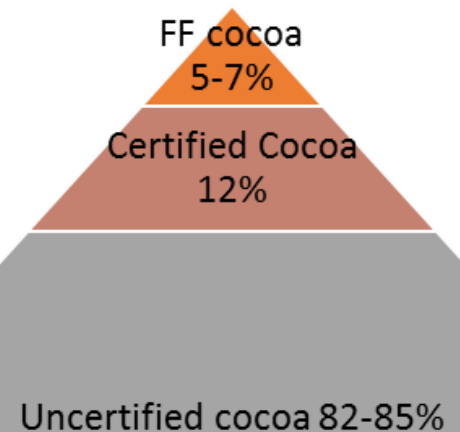


Market shares

Uncertified: bulk, no guarantee for standards, producer price, 3% of real costs of chocolate bar go to farmer.

Certified: guarantee for standards. No guarantee for high quality/taste. Farmers receive: producer price + percentage of the certification premium (average 10% on top of the conventional price).

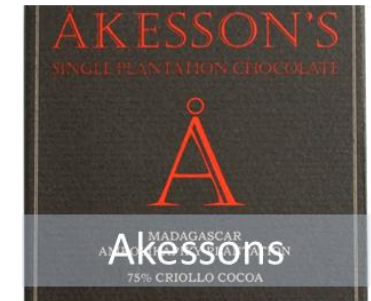
Fine flavour: known for high quality standards and taste. But not clear on other criteria being met. The price paid to farmers is significantly higher if fine flavour cocoa is processed in fine flavour bar.



Learning from practice

- Case-studies - 4 bean to bar companies:

- *Business approach?*
- *Value chain?*
- *Where is quality & taste added?*
- *How is value distributed?*
- *Is the bar sustainable?*



- Comparative analysis and recommendations



Marou – a chocolate that is true to its beans

- Founded in 2011 by Samuel Maruta and Vincent Mourou.
- Marou is set up as a company, producing products for a high end market segment.
- Marou is first artisan chocolate maker based in Vietnam. They built a chocolate factory located in the outskirts of Ho Chi Min City (Saigon).
- This year, they won three awards from the Academy of Chocolate.
- Trinitario is only cocoa variety in Vietnam. Trinitario is normally used as fine flavour.
- Vietnamese cocoa beans are not known for their high quality due to poor farm-management and inadequate post harvest techniques.

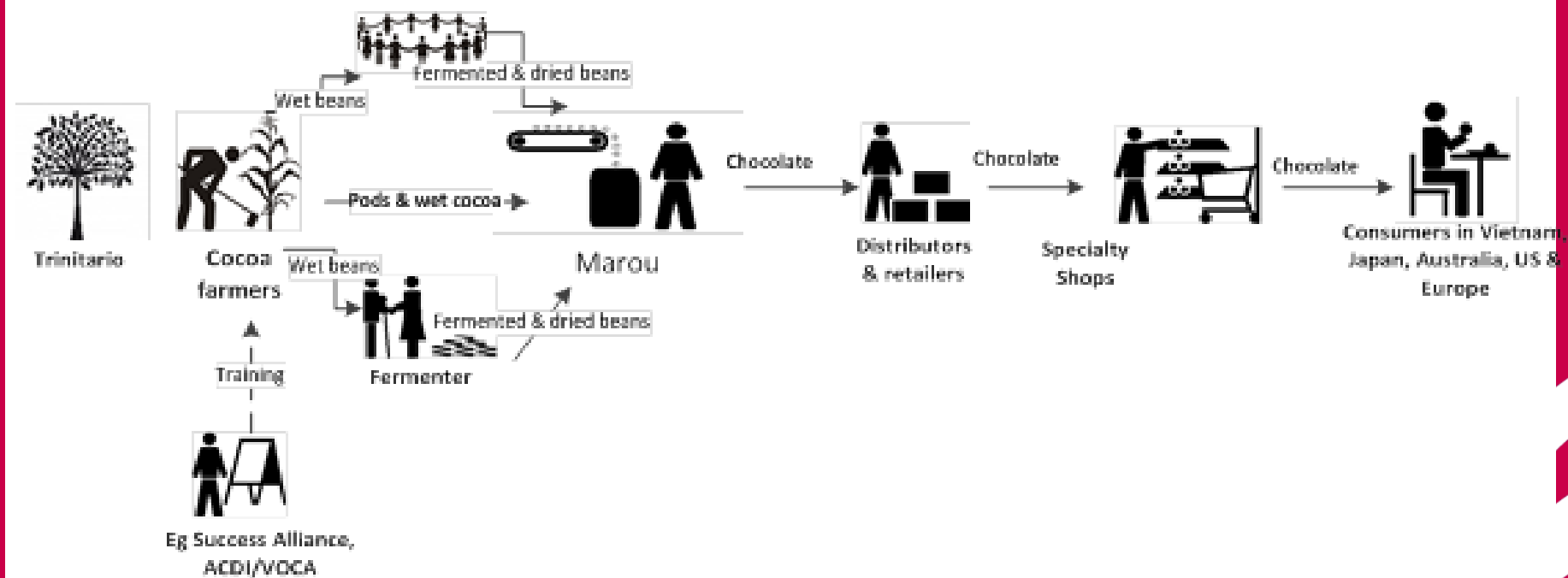


Some facts around cocoa in Vietnam

Cocoa in Vietnam (2013)	Fine flavour – Marou	Conventional
Total production	25 tonnes from 5 different provinces	5.500 tonnes - 0,1% world market
Average productivity	1500 kg/ha/y	1500 kg/ha/y
Main variety	Trinitario	Trinitario
Model	Farmers + fermenters	Farmers + fermenters
Level of organisation	Very low – community level	Very low – cultural history



The Value Chain





Quality

- On-farm practices
- Post-harvest handling
- Processing chocolate

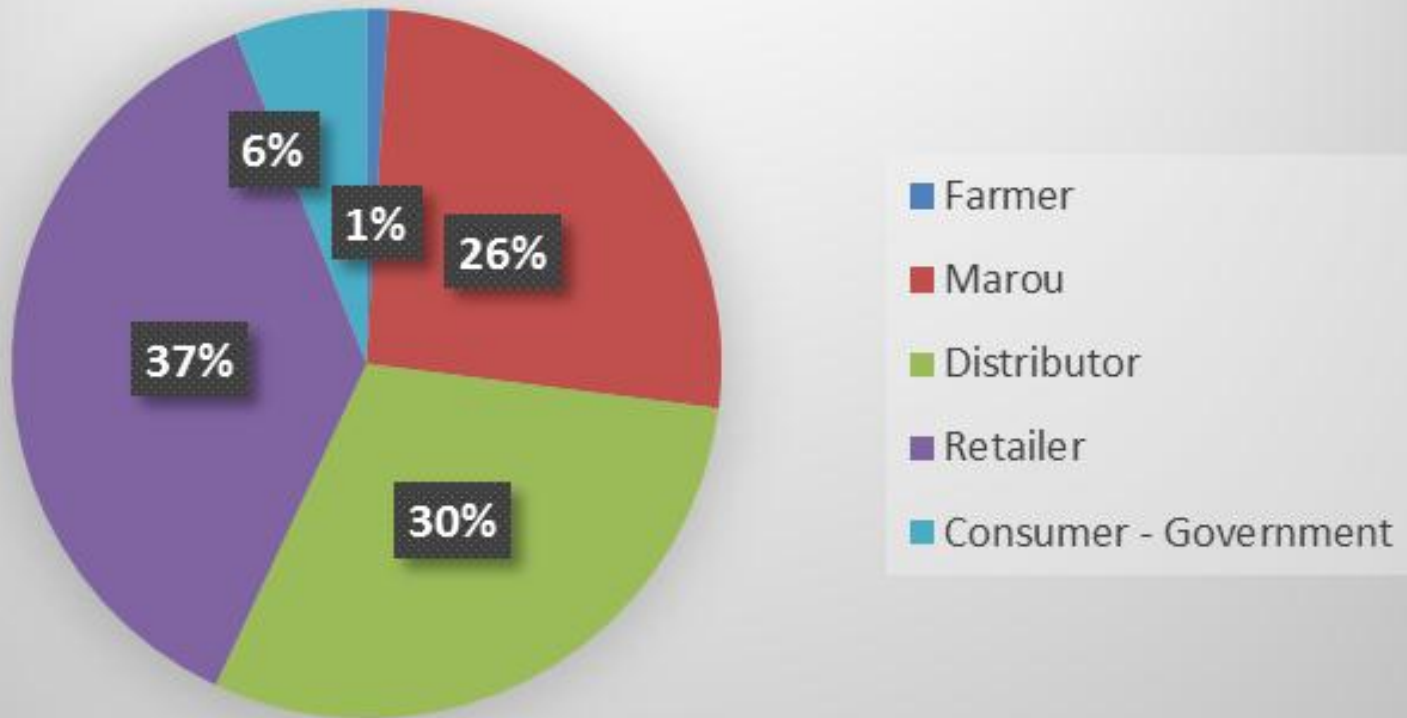
Quality control at each step in the chain!

Most remarkable is that the main way to guarantee quality is to move closer to the farmer and take over farmers' tasks.



Marou; a good deal for farmers?

Value share Marou chocolate bar \$8,90





Is Marou sustainable?

- They pay a higher price for beans and an attractive price for cocoa pods
- The cocoa is traceable
- They have strict quality control.
- Farmers can always sell high quality cocoa to Marou (warehouse)
- They invest in direct and strong relationships
- The farmers they work with are already trained and are able and motivated to invest in quality

- On the long-term Marou wants to invest in reforestation
- Organic certification is difficult due to scale and low level of organization



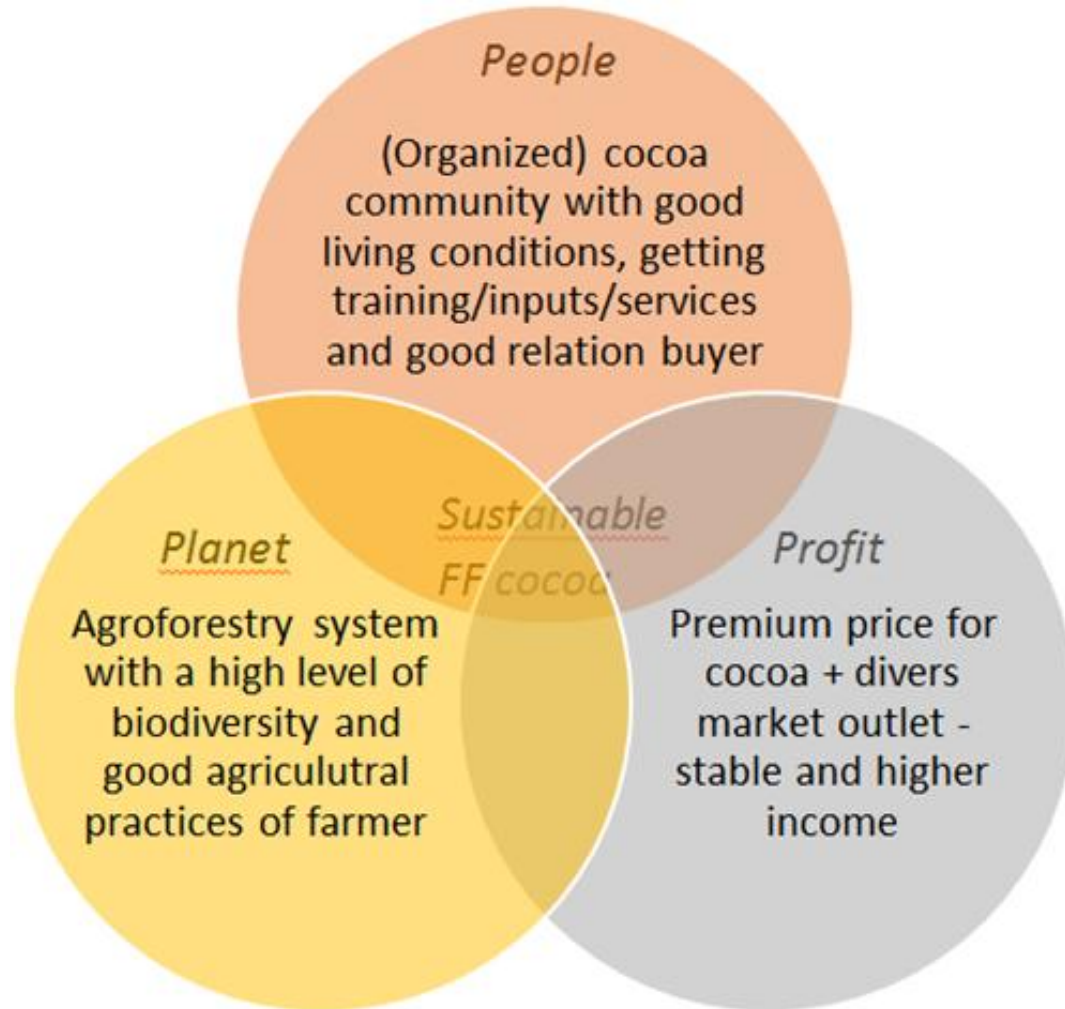
Three other cases...

What can we learn from the cases

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Is fine flavour sustainable?





Can it give a boost to volumes of sustainable cocoa?

- Recognize fine flavour as sustainable cocoa
- Investments in fine flavour are growing (also in more mainstream countries)
- Challenge is that not all fine flavour cocoa ends up in fine flavour chocolate

- The small-scale of fine flavour is also its strength
- Passionate people, learn by doing and innovate
- Take sustainability to a higher level



Taste as catalyst for sustainability

- Fine flavour brings taste and quality back in the sustainability debate
- High rewards!
- Farmers are more involved in the value chain
- Longer-term perspective
- Eg Amma Brazil: Cabruca – traditional agroforestry → a more integrated way of production and diversified market
- Value chain integration to control quality
- Market differentiation is good for the farmers!



Next steps

- Finish the study and put it in the public domain on www.cocoaconnect.org.
- Present the study during the World Cocoa Conference in 2014
- Continue looking for ways how fine flavour and mainstream can strengthen each other
- Continue discussions and learning, also from other sectors, like coffee and palm oil.