THE LOVE OF CHOCOLATE

Milk chocolate, white chocolate, dark chocolate, hot chocolate, chocolate cake, chocolate ice-cream... Europeans love chocolate! Half of all the chocolate produced in the world is consumed in Europe.

In supermarkets we find dozens of different chocolate products. But there are only a few big companies dominating the processing of cocoa and the production of countless chocolate brands. This pays off: The chocolate industry achieves annual net sales of US$ 100 billion. At the same time, most of the 5.5 million cocoa farmers earn less than US$ 1.25 per day.

Cocoa originates from Central America. The Aztecs believed cocoa was a drink of the gods. The Mayas were the first cultivating cocoa and they also used cocoa as a means of payment.

The first European to encounter cocoa was Christopher Columbus in 1502. Originally, cocoa was consumed in Europe only by very rich people as a cold drink.

As the demand for cocoa strongly increased in the 19th century, European companies started to grow cocoa in colonized countries in Africa and Indonesia.

DID YOU KNOW?

It is said that Napoleon always carried chocolate with him on his military campaigns and ate it whenever he needed a quick burst of energy.
The majority of chocolate consumption occurs within the Global North. But 70 percent of the world cocoa beans come from four West African countries. The specific conditions for producing cocoa exist only in the tropical regions around the Equator.

Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana are the two main producers of cocoa in the world. Only 15 percent of the world’s cocoa production comes from South American countries.

Cocoa is the primary source of income for 5.5 million smallholder farmers and secures the livelihood of up to 14 million rural workers and their families.

The average cocoa farm has 2.5 hectares. To compare: The size of a football field is around one hectare.

90 percent of cocoa is grown by small-scale farmers.

HARD WORK FOR COCOA FARMERS
Cocoa cultivation highly depends on intensive manual labour. Cocoa pods do not all ripen at the same time. They need continuous monitoring, care and harvesting. Cocoa trees are very susceptible to pests and diseases, which can even cause a complete crop loss.

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THE DARK SIDE OF CHOCOLATE

Hunger, poverty and child labour – that’s the everyday life of most cocoa farmers. The market for chocolate products is growing and generates huge profits for the chocolate industry. But cocoa farmers and workers are excluded from those benefits.

THE PRICE FOR COCOA: UNFAIR!
Cocoa farmers in Côte d’Ivoire have to get by with US$ 0.50 per day – in Ghana it is US$ 0.84 per day in average. It is not enough to cover their basic needs including shelter, nutrition, drinking water, health care and education. Cocoa farmers' income is often based on the cultivation of cocoa alone. This sole dependency on cocoa magnifies the impact of volatile cocoa prices.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: DEVASTATING!
Farmers lack the resources to invest in crop protection, use fertilisers sustainably and remove old and sick trees. Rainforests are cut to expand farming land. Apart from a reduction in biodiversity, excessive farming causes a deterioration of drinking water quality and an increase in pest infestation. Cocoa farmers lack training and access to expert advice on sustainable agriculture.

WORKING CONDITIONS: EXPLOITATIVE!
Human rights and international labour standards are infringed every day. Cocoa farmers earn too little to pay sufficient salaries to their workers. Work with dangerous chemicals, excessive overtime, poor housing and malnutrition are part of a cocoa farmer’s everyday life. Up to 2 million children are working on cocoa plantations in West Africa – almost 500,000 of them under exploitative conditions. Child trafficking and forced child labour still exist in some cocoa growing regions. The root of the problem is poverty.

The average age of cocoa farmers in Ghana is above 55 years. The average life expectancy in Ghana is 65 years.

Younger generations don’t want to become cocoa farmers anymore since the working conditions are so bad. They migrate to the cities or take the long and dangerous journey to Europe. In consequence, the chocolate industry could soon be left without its most important ingredient.

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CHOCOLATE INDUSTRY: TAKE ACTION NOW!

The chocolate industry needs to face its great social and ecological responsibility and stop putting profits above everything else. Companies need to take effective measures to tackle the inhuman conditions in cocoa cultivation. The European campaign Make Chocolate Fair! calls on chocolate companies to:

- Ensure fair payment for cocoa farmers and their workers
- Adhere to human and labour rights and oppose exploitative child labour
- Enhance cocoa farmers’ capacities for sustainable and diversified farming
- Adopt an independent certification and monitoring system

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2001, the biggest chocolate producing companies signed an international agreement (Harkin-Engel Protocol) with the aim “to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in the cocoa sectors of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire”. More than 10 years later, half a million children still work under exploitative conditions.

Cocoa farmers in Côte d’Ivoire receive 60 percent, those in Ghana 70 percent of the world market price of cocoa for their product.

40 percent of the cocoa harvest is lost every year due to insufficient maintenance.

Out of two cocoa pods you can make one bar of chocolate.
YOU CAN BE THE CHANGE!

As a global citizen you have the opportunity to take action:

- Sign the petition of the Make Chocolate Fair! Campaign
- Buy certified chocolate
- Inform your friends and acquaintances about the situation of cocoa farmers
- Link to the campaign website www.makechocolatefair.org
- Participate in the actions of our campaign

Make Chocolate Fair is a European campaign for more justice in cocoa production. The campaign joins forces with a variety of civil society organisations in 16 European countries. Make Chocolate Fair! informs, mobilizes and takes action to push companies to take up their responsibility. Become a part of a European movement for fair chocolate!

The exhibition has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents are the sole responsibility of INKOTA, MONDO, Südwind and EAP and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.