

GIZ, ofi and Rikolto expand low-carbon cocoa project in Ecuador

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ofi, a global leader in food and beverage ingredients and solutions, international NGO Rikolto, and the German Development Agency GIZ (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), have announced a low-carbon agriculture project in Ecuador, which aims to support farmers to mitigate against and adapt to the impacts of climate change on cocoa production.

The consortium is co-funded by BMZ and ofi, with Rikolto leading the implementation of ofi's sustainability programs, including those it delivers for its customers over three years. It seeks to address the impact of unpredictable weather conditions on growing cocoa by training 2,800 farmers in climate-smart agriculture.

Climate change poses a significant threat to 1.7 million Ecuadorians dependent on cocoa, with approximately 60 per cent of cocoa farmers relying on cocoa as their main source of income.

The low-carbon agriculture project aims to help support farmers in creating more resilient livelihoods and increasing the efficiency of their cocoa production. By implementing agroforestry, a regenerative farming approach, cocoa can grow alongside other plant species. The technique can help farmers improve cocoa yields and provide additional income from other planted crops while sequestering carbon and promoting biodiversity.