

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE COCOA

Towards sustainable cocoa practices

What is the LBCS tool?

The Basic Guidelines for Sustainable Cocoa, or LBCS for the Spanish acronym, is a tool developed by ITC, Swisscontact and the Colombian Cocoa Network, thanks to funding from the Swiss government (SECO). The tool was designed to help small cocoa producers in Colombia's rural regions understand and comply with international sustainability standards, as well as connect with potential buyers. By giving smallholder farmers increased visibility for their sustainability efforts, LBCS paves the way for heightened competitiveness and increased market access.



The results



The LBCS self-assessment tool helped producers affiliated with the Colombian Cocoa Network, or the *Red Cacaotera*, regain Organic and Fairtrade certifications.



50 cooperatives have been trained to comply with LBCS criteria



2500 producers implemented more sustainable practices between 2016 and 2019.



A **guide on verification of LBCS compliance** will be launched this year to guide companies and third-party agencies in carrying out the verification process. This will expand the LBCS network of companies and cooperatives that would like to work together for sustainable cocoa



Between 2015 and 2019, the *Red Cacaotera* trained **40 cooperative technicians** on the implementation of LBCS, following the content of the LBCS Implementation Guide.

Feedback from LBCS Beneficiaries

"The producers are able to improve the quality of the bean, ultimately maximizing their chance to access international markets. They are able to implement basic requirements and basic processes of quality assurance. Ultimately, the producers become more respectful of the environment and decrease the application and use of agrochemicals." - Cooperative INTEGRASINU

"[Participating in LBCS] helped us with quality, accounting, and finding new buyers."
Cooperative GUARDABOSQUES DE LA SIERRA

LBCS IN ACTION - Testimonials from the ground



The Suagu group is a bean-to-bar, family-run business specialized in fine cocoa and chocolate. Based in Bogota, the chocolate maker sources its cocoa from different departments like Tolima, Bolivar, Meta, Caqueta and many other, thanks to an alliance with the Colombian Cocoa Network. Thanks to this alliance, Suagu buys the cocoa beans from two cocoa cooperatives, who were finalists of the “Golden Cocoa” contest 2019 (organised each year by the Colombian Network and its partners in Colombia), and also apply LBCS criteria in the production of their cocoa.

Suagu's chocolate boasts the LBCS stamp – a logo and a QR code linking to ITC's Sustainability Map for increased traceability. Co-founders María Camila Suárez and Juan Diego Suárez, along with their father Justiniano Suárez, answered a few questions about their business.

What made you want to launch a chocolate business?

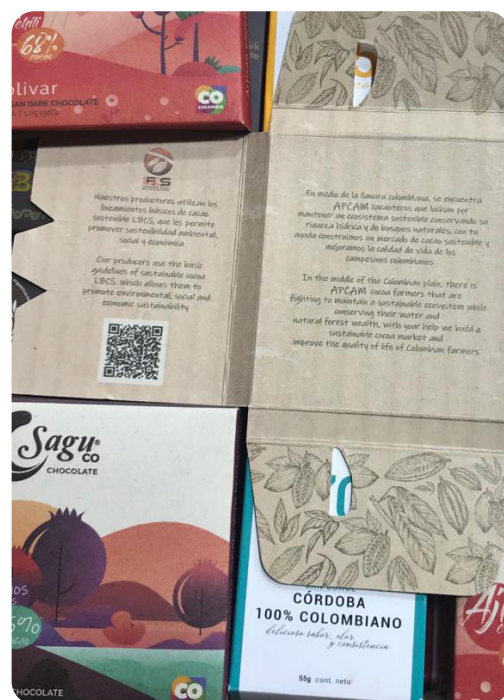
As owners of a family farm in the countryside, we quickly realized that the farm's rich and delicious cocoa beans had high potential. We therefore started to process our farm's cocoa. Today, we work with more than 7 regions nationwide, supporting the farmers with their internal processes and giving them a better price.

Why did you decide to work with LBCS producers?

We decided to work with LBCS producers because they are cocoa farmers who have invested time, dedication and passion to come up with quality and sustainable cocoa. As Colombians, it is our duty to support them.

How has the LBCS brand helped you in your communications efforts?

The LBCS brand, through the QR code linking to Sustainability Map, allows buyers to have additional information regarding quality and sustainability efforts, as well as the transparency of the actors along the supply chain.



Next steps: how can companies and cooperatives engage with the LBCS network?



STEP 1

Access our website
sustainabilitymap.org/lbcs



STEP 2

Create your company/
cooperative profile on
the Virtual Network



STEP 3

For companies: start connecting
with the cooperatives
For cooperatives: develop your
network of producers



STEP 4

Make your profile
public and start
connecting with
potential trade partners

For more information, please contact:

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