



**Tropical Commodity Coalition**  
for sustainable Tea Coffee Cocoa



# Evaluation report



2008 - 2010

# Tropical Commodity Coalition



**Final report** | short version

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## Tropical Commodity Coalition stakeholder involvement

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# Executive Summary

An independent evaluation of the strategy and program of the Tropical Commodity Coalition (TCC) was carried out between June and September 2010.

## Value Added

The evaluation shows that TCC has a unique position in the NGO community. TCC is perceived as a platform that helps many stakeholders – both internal and external – in terms of information provision (through the Barometers) and in terms of providing a platform for dialogue with the NGO community, both in the Netherlands and in producer countries.

## Major Outcomes

Our findings indicate that TCC is known and accepted as a relevant stakeholder in the international debate on cocoa and coffee, but not yet on tea. TCC is increasingly recognized and respected as a broker of information by most stakeholders. TCCs' positive track record is mainly due to the publication of the Barometers, which are considered as a unique source of information on sustainability initiatives in the industry. However, some respondents note dissatisfaction with the lack of accuracy of the data. Our findings indicate that TCC has not influenced stakeholders' decisions directly. As for industry stakeholders, it can be concluded that TCC's work has confirmed the sustainability policies of a number of frontrunners. TCC has been less successful in reaching out to other companies, especially in respect to laggard companies. TCC has been very supportive to southern NGOs by inviting them to high-level industry meetings, which had been inaccessible to them previously.

## Strengths and Limitations

A major strength of TCC as a coalition is that it gives its members the opportunity for information exchange and for fine-tuning and alignment of activities aimed toward industry. TCC functions as a platform is an important

mechanism for having this debate and to prevent potential conflicts and uncoordinated actions. TCC members are satisfied with the skills and abilities of the TCC bureau. One limitation of TCC is that decision-making procedures are not always clear. There is also an observed lack of focus on targets to be reached, and a lack of transparency in decision-making and information sharing. Finally, the composition of TCC is not reflecting environmental and justice issues.

## Future Potential and Recommendations

There is wide consensus that TCC has an important role to play in the coming 3-5 years. It is therefore recommended to continue TCC's work in the years ahead in the field of coffee, cocoa and tea. In view of the evaluators, it is recommended for TCC to remain active in lobbying of industry to improve their sustainability performance by maintaining the approach of constructive criticism, while leaving the watchdog/campaigning role to other organizations. TCC should remain a platform for dialogue between NGOs in order to facilitate open, critical discussions between NGOs, and to represent Dutch NGOs in other platforms or networks, including IDH. Finally, TCC should keep the role of joint representative of the southern voice at international meetings.

Regarding the future potential of TCC, it is recommended to extend the current focus on social/labour issues to a broader definition of sustainability, including environmental and justice issues. TCC could increase effectiveness and create impact outside the relatively small Dutch setting by developing closer relationships with other European and international networks. Finally, it is recommended to carry out a SWOT of possible commodities for TCC to adopt, including cotton, palm oil, soy, sugar and tropical fruit.

# 1 Introduction: evaluation set-up and methods used

2 At the initiative of the members of the Tropical Commodity Coalition (TCC), an independent evaluation of its strategy and program was commissioned. The evaluation was carried out by Mark van Dorp of DUVILLA and Jostein van Vliet of Warner Strategy & Fundraising between June and September 2010, with backstopping of Theo van Koolwijk of Warner Strategy & Fundraising.

**The objectives of the evaluation were threefold:**

- › To assess the added value of TCC towards its stakeholders
- › To assess the results of the TCC efforts in the last three years (2008-2010)
- › To analyse future potential of the coalition

In the Terms of Reference a list of questions was included that needed to be answered by the evaluation. To structure the evaluation, an indicator framework was developed, based on a review of key documents and a meeting

with TCC staff and Steering Committee. Data for this evaluation were gathered through 1) a literature review of annual plans and reports and other key organisational documents, 2) thirteen in-depth interviews, with TCC staff, TCC members and other stakeholders of TCC and 3) 27 questionnaires sent to members and other stakeholders. All persons approached for the interviews agreed to participate. 20 out of 27 people responded to the questionnaire, which gives a response rate of 74% (see list page 12).

The evaluation indicators and questionnaires were prepared in coordination with TCC staff and the Steering Committee. The members provided feedback to the evaluator's team on the main outcomes of the evaluation. This final report was finalized on the basis of the feedback received. This report provides the major results and recommendations of the evaluation. If you are interested in a more detailed report, please contact Mieke van Reenen: [m.van.reenen@teacoffeecocoa.org](mailto:m.van.reenen@teacoffeecocoa.org)

**Table 1:** Overview of interviews, questionnaires and response rates per stakeholder category

Stakeholder category	In-depth interviews	Questionnaires received	Total
TCC members	4	5	9
Government	2	0	2
Standard bodies	0	3	3
Southern NGOs	1	3	4
European NGOs	0	2	2
Branch organisations	1	1	2
Industry representatives	2	6	8
TCC staff	3	0	3
Total	13	20	33

## 2 Findings and conclusions

### 2.1 Value of the coalition

#### Value of TCC to stakeholders

TCC identifies seven categories of stakeholders, namely TCC members as internal stakeholders and government, standard bodies, southern NGOs, European NGOs, branch organisations and industry representatives as external stakeholders.

Most internal stakeholders (members of TCC) are satisfied with their involvement with TCC and indicate that they see a clear added value of the objectives for their own organizations. They value TCC for providing an NGO dialogue platform for coordination and information exchange. An important function of TCC is that it provides a platform for fine-tuning and alignment of TCC members' campaigns and partnerships with the industry. According to some members, the coordinating role could still be improved by facilitating the alignment of member activities to ensure synergy.

External stakeholders value TCC for varying reasons. Most industry stakeholders appreciate TCC as information provider on sustainability initiatives in the tea, coffee and cocoa chains. Some sustainability managers in large companies explicitly stated that they value TCC for keeping the pressure on their companies in the transition towards more sustainable value chains. The standard bodies appreciate TCC for creating more transparency on the volumes of sustainable coffee, cocoa and tea. Southern NGOs mainly appreciate TCC because TCC provides access for them in international platforms, as well as the capacity building provided by TCC.

Overall, the majority of stakeholders recognize the added value of TCC in providing a platform for dialogue between NGOs and other stakeholders. However, a small group of industry stakeholders and standard bodies do not see any added value to TCC, either because they feel there are already too many NGO platforms or because they simply do not believe in partnering with NGOs.

#### Outcomes and benefits to stakeholders

TCC has defined three general objectives, which are broken down into activities for the three commodities (tea, coffee and cocoa), and for general activities. This creates a matrix of objectives and activities that forms the basis of TCC's planning process (see TCC Proposal 2008, 2009 and 2010). To be able to evaluate against workable objectives, the evaluator's team has decided to make use of the four sub-objectives, which seem to be more focused and measurable (TCC Proposal 2008). In relation to these four objectives, the following outcomes and benefits to stakeholders have been achieved<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Objective 1: TCC is known and accepted as a relevant stakeholder in the international debate on sustainable tropical commodities.**

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Our findings indicate that TCC is known and accepted as a relevant stakeholder in the international debate on cocoa and coffee, but not yet on tea.

In cocoa, TCC has built up strong working relations with a number of international key players, including Mars and Cargill. These companies are actively providing TCC with company data as inputs for its Barometers.

In coffee, TCC is known and accepted in the Netherlands, and increasingly involved in international discussions in the coffee sector. TCC has mainly built upon the work initiated by the Coffee Coalition, and has been able to continue its strong working relationships with industry stakeholders such as Sara Lee, Tchibo and Kraft.

In tea, TCC is less known and not yet accepted as a relevant stakeholder. This is due to the fact that TCC has become active in tea only as of late 2009/early 2010. It is also related to the less important position of the Netherlands in international tea trade and processing.

4 **“TCC has been an active force to keep sustainability related issues and debates high on the political agenda”** (Industry platform organization)

**“TCC catalyzed the public dialogue around the alignment of certification systems, both through public events and by informal meetings with industry and standard bodies”**

(Government stakeholder)

**Objective 2: TCC is a broker of information regarding CSR in the light of sustainable tropical commodity chains.**

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Our findings indicate that TCC is increasingly recognized and respected as a broker of information by most stakeholders. TCCs’ positive track record is mainly due to the publication of the Barometers, which are considered as a unique source of information on sustainability initiatives in the industry. However, some respondents note dissatisfaction with the accuracy of the data; industry respondents complain about the inclusion of data by TCC from other NGO reports that are reportedly flawed or outdated. On the other hand, it should be noted that it is difficult for TCC, as an NGO coalition with limited means for in-depth studies, to collect company data that are often confidential.

Other TCC outputs are also valued by stakeholders, such as the website and the two Conferences in the Netherlands (Combining Flavours and Combining Efforts in 2008 and 2009), although they are less frequently mentioned in comparison to the Barometer. In the table below, the usefulness of TCC activities and outputs of a limited sample of TCC stakeholders for the different outputs is indicated

(score of 5 indicates highest usefulness). Although the results cannot be generalized because of the small sample size, it is worthy to note that the Barometers are given the highest score by all stakeholder groups except for the industry. Another finding is the relatively low score of the website.

Many stakeholders confirm that TCC has become an “expert” in the three sectors. Increasingly, TCC is approached by industries to share their views and discuss the data presented in the Barometers. Industry stakeholders value learning about the sector by TCC that has taken place over the last years. TCC is seen as a stable and trustworthy NGO partner with growing expertise on the three commodities. Especially in the cocoa sector, TCC has gained a strong reputation of “opinion maker” and its vision on sustainability is reaching out to many stakeholders<sup>3</sup>. Global standard setters have a mixed perception of TCC: some are very positive about the comparison of standards, while others see room for improvement. For southern NGOs, TCC has provided access to previously inaccessible information on the industry.

**“The Barometers are really benchmark documents; high level information that no other organization (worldwide) is providing”**

(Government stakeholder)

**Objective 3: TCC influences its identified target groups (industry and retailers, global standard setters, consumers, ngos, etc) towards improving conditions in the coffee, tea and cocoa supply chains.**

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Over the past three years quite some progress was seen in industry and retailers in terms of steps towards a more

sustainable supply chain. These changes in the sectors are described in a number of TCC reports (esp. the Barometers). As these changes happen in a complex environment it is impossible to attribute them to a single actor. Our findings indicate that TCC has not directly influenced stakeholders' decisions. As for industry stakeholders, it can be concluded that TCC's work has confirmed the sustainability policies of a number of frontrunners. TCC has been less successful in reaching out to other companies, especially in the case of laggard companies; one company stated that TCC has "not at all" influenced the company's policies or activities. The evaluators have not found evidence of TCC having influence on the policies of global standard setters. As for southern NGOs, they indicate to be more aware of the industry's initiatives on sustainability, feeding into their own strategies. Consumers are the only target group that TCC has not reached: in the course of

the years, it was realized that consumer campaigns would be better left to individual member NGOs, such as Oxfam Novib and FNV.

### **"TCC confirmed our sustainability policy"**

*(Industry stakeholder)*

### **"We now include opinions and thoughts of TCC and members in our programs"**

*(Industry stakeholder)*

### **"We see TCC as an important**

**sparring partner"** *(Standard setting body)*

**Table 2:** Sample of usefulness of TCC stakeholders for the different outputs of TCC<sup>2</sup>

Stakeholders / Interventions	Standard bodies	Southern NGOs	European NGOs	Branch organizations	Industry representatives	Overall score
Number of respondents	2	3	2	1	4	12
TCC barometers	● 4.5	● 4.7	● 4.5	● 4	● 3.8	● 4.3
TCC conferences	● 3	● 4.7	● 3	● 4	● 4.7	● 4.1
TCC workshops	● 2	● 4.7	● 3.5	● 4	● 4.3	● 4.0
TCC other publications	n/a	● 4.5	● 3.5	● 4	● 3.7	● 3.9
Dialogue with industry	● 3	● 4.0	● 4	● 4	● 4.0	● 3.8
Dialogue with branch organizations	● 2	● 3.5	● 4	● 4	● 4.0	● 3.7
TCC standard comparison	● 2.5	● 4.5	● 4	● 4	● 3.5	● 3.6
TCC Website	● 3	● 4.3	● 3	● 4	● 2.7	● 3.4
TCC Southern NGO program	● 2	● 4.5	● 3.5	● 4	● 2.5	● 3.2

**Scoring system:**  
 ● 5 = very useful  
 ● 4 = fairly useful  
 ● 3 = useful  
 ● 2 = not so useful  
 ● 1 = not at all useful

**Objective 4:** TCC is successful in coordinating the participation of its members in various (inter-) national CSR-platforms/meetings/discussions<sup>4</sup>

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TCC has set up a capacity building program in a number of producer countries. This includes the creation of national reference groups, which are meant to make NGOs views and visions heard at the international level. This is often organized in close cooperation with one its members (e.g. Oxfam Novib in Africa, Solidaridad in South East Asia). During so-called pre-conferences, these NGOs are prepared by TCC to the dynamics of high-level platform meetings. In the coffee sector, national reference groups were set up in India, Kenya, Brazil, Honduras, Tanzania and Peru. In the tea sector, national reference groups were set up in Sri Lanka, India and Indonesia. In cocoa, National Platforms are in the process of being created in Ghana, Indonesia, Cote d'Ivoire and Ecuador. In the first three Round Tables for Sustainable Cocoa Economy (RSCE) (2007, 2008 and 2009), TCC has played an important role in getting southern stakeholders on board.

Based on our findings, it can be concluded that TCC has been very supportive to southern NGOs by inviting them to high-level industry meetings to which they previously had no access. Especially the pre-conferences to these meetings were very useful, as it allowed them to strategize and formulate clear and consistent messages as a group of southern NGOs. A potential role of TCC would be to ensure that TCC members that are implementing activities in producer countries would better coordinate their work with other TCC members.

It should be noted that TCC is working with a limited group of NGOs that are frequently invited to meetings in the Netherlands or elsewhere; this might have led to a limited or one-sided input of southern countries.

***“The industry has opened its doors to southern NGOs, which was partly due to TCC’s efforts”*** (Southern partner)

***“As a result of the good contacts with TCC, we held regular meetings with NGOs at CEO level”*** (Industry stakeholder)

#### **TCC’s functioning as a Coalition: strengths...**

A major strength of TCC as a coalition is that it gives its members the opportunity for information exchange and for fine-tuning and alignment of activities aimed toward industry. The members of TCC vary in their strategies and theories of change. These differences are especially salient with regard to activities aimed at industry. There is a continuing debate on the positioning of TCC and its members.<sup>5</sup> TCCs function as a platform is an important mechanism for having this debate and to prevent potential conflicts and uncoordinated actions. According to some members, a limited number of conflicts happened due to a lack of coordination in the past. An example is the conflict between TCC and Unilever about the publication of a negative report on Unilever’s practices in India, which was resolved in a satisfactory way by TCC. Its members decided collectively that this should not happen again.<sup>6</sup>

Based on the results of our interviews, we can conclude that TCC members are satisfied with the skills and abilities of the TCC bureau. Its staff members do a good job in managing and implementing the activities of the coalition, reporting on meetings and events, and are open in sharing information and giving support to member’s activities. TCC’s coordinator is applauded by many stakeholders (both internal and external) for her perseverance, enthusi-

asm and strong relationship management. She and other TCC staff members are valued for their knowledge about the sector.

### **... and limitations**

Our evaluation has also found a number of limitations of TCC as a coalition. It was found that in the past, some major decisions were not consent of all members. This has led to frustration with some members, who expressed that they would like to see this changed. There is also an observed lack of focus on targets to be reached, and a lack of transparency in decision-making and information sharing. Some members expressed that TCC staff could be more “service oriented” in terms of responding to requests by members for information or support in member’s activities.

At the start, it was expected that an important spin-off of TCC would be that members learn from experiences in one commodity and apply the lessons to another. In reality, this cross-commodity learning took place on a more limited scale. A lot of exchange and learning took place within the TCC Bureau, and this learning was shared with TCC members. When the Coffee Coalition developed into TCC, learning from coffee was used in the development of the cocoa program. Some TCC members noted that cross-commodity learning seems to have decreased, despite considerable efforts made by TCC to share knowledge on the three commodities and its interrelations. In late 2009, TCC produced an extensive overview of cross-commodity learning, which was shared with its members (see TCC Proposal 2010). One possible explanation of the lack of cross-commodity learning is that the majority of TCC members focus on one of the three commodities only.

Finally, our findings indicate that the composition of TCC fails to reflect two key issues that are at stake in dealing with sustainability of the three chains, namely environ-

mental and justice issues. Furthermore, some external stakeholders report that TCC is restricted in its outreach because it is only composed of Dutch organisations.

## **2.2 Results**

### **Key achievements and results achieved by TCC**

Based on our findings, key achievements and results of TCC’s work in the last 3 years are as follows.

- 1.** *Due to TCC’s efforts, the private sector is more committed towards a fully certified supply chain, in particular for cocoa. It should be noted that the three sectors consist of so many different stakeholders that it is hard to attribute a particular change to one actor. Therefore, it is not possible to tell exactly how much TCC has contributed on the basis of our evaluation.*
- 2.** *TCC has played a key role in the perception of civil society as a respected partner by companies by establishing a broad dialogue in the three sectors between NGOs, companies and standard setters. Our findings indicate that this dialogue was facilitated in two ways: 1) by organizing conferences and workshops for all stakeholders working on sustainable value chains in the 3 sectors, including the Combining Flavours and Combining Efforts conferences in 2008 and 2009 respectively and 2) by bilateral and informal meetings with industry stakeholders to discuss issues around sustainability and certification.*
- 3.** *TCC has given southern stakeholders a voice in the global arena, contributing to the creation of an environment that enables participation in the global discussions around sustainability. A network of southern NGOs involved in multi-stakeholder initiatives on the three chains has been set up, providing access to industry stakeholders. This was achieved by building the capacity of southern NGOs and facilitating their participation to*

**8** *National Reference Groups and Round Tables (in producer countries) and international platforms (e.g. Round Tables on Sustainable Cocoa Economy and other platform meetings).*

**4.** *TCC has contributed significantly to the global discussion on sustainability through the publication of the Coffee, Cocoa and Tea Barometers. Our findings indicate that these Barometers are widely used by stakeholders (especially for coffee and cocoa), because they provide a unique source of information on sustainability initiatives in the tea, coffee, and cocoa sectors (see Section 2.1).*

**5.** *TCC has stimulated a public dialogue around the alignment of certification systems. It should be noted here that the Barometers are focused on certification as a tool for more sustainable value chains, even though certified produce represents only a minority of the market. There is considerable debate as to whether to focus on industry commitment towards 100% certification or 100% sustainability.*

### **Cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency**

Our findings indicate that TCC has been able to implement its program in a cost-effective and cost-efficient way: with an annual budget of 335,000 Euro, TCC managed to carry out the majority of planned activities with a small Bureau of 3 staff. In terms of focus on the three commodities, in 2008 most expenses were made in the field of coffee, while in 2009 and 2010 the focus was on cocoa. Relatively little funds were spent on tea due to the late start of TCC’s tea activities (see table below).

### **Is TCC unique as a coalition?**

Our evaluation shows that TCC has a unique position in the NGO community. TCC is perceived as a platform that helps many stakeholders – both internal and external – in terms of information provision (through the Barometers) and in terms of providing a platform for dialogue with the NGO community, both in the Netherlands and in producer countries. There is no single comparable initiative anywhere else in the world. Especially the Barometers are seen as a unique contribution to the discussion. TCC has shown to be a learning organization by building in-house expertise on the three sectors.

**Table 3: Expenses of TCC per activity category for 2008-2010 in euros<sup>7</sup>**

Expenses per category	2008	%	2009	%	2010	%
General activities	71000	21.0%	45000	13.8%	53000	15.5%
Tea activities	16000	4.7%	3000	0.9%	18000	5.3%
Coffee activities	46000	13.6%	6000	1.8%	18000	5.3%
Cocoa activities	33000	9.8%	53000	16.2%	59000	17.3%
Salary cost	136000	40.2%	179000	54.7%	152000	44.6%
Office cost	20000	5.9%	24000	7.3%	24000	7.0%
Program management Hivos	16000	4.7%	17000	5.2%	17000	5.0%
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>338000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>327000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>341000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**“TCC is a key player in organizing joint statements on shared opinions from NGOs”**

*(Government stakeholder)*

**“Discussions with TCC are always relevant, honest, they give good insights, and try to think with us and provide leads to other persons involved”** *(Industry stakeholder)*

**“I want them (TCC) to keep us sharp. Pressure is good, especially when it is moderate, based on content, and not only from a watchdog position”** *(Industry stakeholder)*

### **Responsiveness of TCC to changing context**

On the basis of our research, it can be concluded that TCC has managed to find a balance between holding on to its original objectives and changing its strategy and activities according to the changing context. TCC has managed to respond well to the changing environment by acting on emerging opportunities and challenges that the three sectors are facing. As an example, in March 2010, TCC played the role of mediator between NGOs and standard setters. Standard setters Utz and Max Havelaar, backed up by Solidaridad and Oxfam Novib respectively, were disagreeing around a court case on the use of sustainability standards in the procurement policy of Dutch municipalities. Due to its good relations and trustworthiness, TCC was able to successfully mediate between the different parties, leading to a mutually agreed communication strategy on the outcomes of the court case.

The creation of IDH was perceived by members as a significant development. However, IDH does not seem to have fundamentally changed the strategy and positioning of TCC. Both organisations have a very clear niche and can well co-exist. Whereas IDH is a multi-stakeholder programme, initiated by the Dutch Government and focusing on industry supported improvement programmes, TCC is an independent platform for dialogue of Dutch NGOs with a critical constructive approach towards the industry and standard bodies. Respondents, including industry stakeholders saw the function of representing NGOs as a unique strength of TCC. It is important for TCC members who are also active in IDH, to remain critical partners within IDH discussions.

### **Women’s empowerment and gender equality**

Regarding gender, a mixed picture emerges of TCC’s efforts. Our findings indicate that TCC is actively encouraging women from the South to participate in multi-stakeholder platforms. TCC provides details in the annual reports on the division between men and women participating in their activities. TCC is also promoting gender equality with other stakeholders, such as IDH and global standard bodies. In TCC’s Barometers, gender is highlighted in the standard comparison under “Inclusiveness of vulnerable stakeholders”. However, it was noted that TCC could do more in the field of women’s empowerment and gender equality, as this is a major factor in sustained poverty. As TCC has no direct interventions in producer countries, the coalition is limited in changing the situation for women on the ground, and as a result TCC is struggling to fill in this role

## 3 Future potential of TCC and recommendations

### 3.1 Recommendations on future role and strategic focus of TCC

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Based on our findings, there is wide consensus - both with internal and external stakeholders - that TCC has an important role to play over the coming 3-5 years. It is therefore recommended to continue TCC's work in the years ahead in the fields of coffee, cocoa and tea. This will allow TCC to capitalize on the investments made in terms of relationships built, knowledge acquired and confidence gained. It is recommended to perform a specific SWOT per commodity assessing the issues and opportunities resulting in strategies per commodity; our findings indicate that there is a need to focus on the tea and coffee sector, as the cocoa sector is considered to be sufficiently targeted by TCC.

#### **Specific recommendations for each commodity are:**

- › In the tea sector: to continue to lobby industry stakeholders and standard bodies, and to actively seek international partnerships, given the relatively small economic importance of the Netherlands in the global tea trade.
- › In the coffee sector: to contribute to a new impulse to mainstream sustainability, building on the successes already achieved.
- › In the cocoa sector: to monitor collaboration of standards and to keep the pressure on industry stakeholders (especially laggard companies) to follow the move of frontrunners towards 100% certification and, ultimately, 100% sustainability.

TCC enjoys the support of many key stakeholders throughout the three sectors of tea, coffee and cocoa, even though there are also controversies that need to be tackled and even though TCC can be more effective in achieving its objectives. The first three-year period of TCC is coming to an end, as the coalition is preparing for the next term. Major challenges lie ahead, some of which are outlined in this chapter. As TCC depends on the commitment of its members, it is recommendable to hold a con-

sultation workshop with all members, possibly involving a number of trusted external stakeholders as well.

It is recommended to a) revise TCC's strategy with a clearer focus and a stronger profile, b) to make a clear choice about which stakeholder groups to target, c) to focus on stakeholders in the North, while continuing those activities in the South, which are relevant for and contribute to TCC's work, especially the linking of southern NGOs and producers to international meetings, d) to decide on which issues to focus per commodity, e.g. agenda setting, implementation, impact monitoring or harmonisation of standards. Important considerations are what TCC can do best, and what can be left to other organizations or platforms.

#### **In the view of the evaluators, it is recommended for TCC:**

- › To remain active in lobbying of industry to improve their sustainability performance and to maintain the approach of constructive criticism as this is fitting with the position of linking between many stakeholders. A strong approach in either partnership or campaigning could alienate other stakeholders, both internal and external.
- › To leave the watchdog/campaigning role to other organizations, as others are better equipped to perform this role and it does not go well with the trusted position currently present within the industry.
- › To keep the role of neutral information gathering and sharing as a service to all its stakeholders. This includes creating transparency of market shares of sustainable production and trade, as well as creating a dialogue on the alignment of standard systems for each of the three commodities tea, coffee and cocoa.
- › To keep the role of providing a platform for dialogue between NGOs. It is important to facilitate open, critical discussions between NGOs, and to represent Dutch NGOs in other platforms or networks, including IDH.

- › To extend the current focus on social/labour issues to a broader definition of sustainability, including environmental and justice issues. To this end, it is recommended to consider broadening TCC membership with other NGOs (in particular environmental NGOs such as WWF).
- › To increase effectiveness and create impact outside the relatively small Dutch setting by developing closer relationships with other European and international networks. To this end, it is recommended to explore the full potential of existing international networks of TCC members (e.g IUF, Oxfam International etc.).

**Towards producer countries, it is recommended for TCC:**

- › To keep the role of joint representative of the southern voice at international meetings.
- › To involve southern NGOs in strategy development and governance of TCC, in order to increase the commitment of southern NGOs towards the work of TCC.
- › To extend TCC's network of local organisations to a more diverse network and larger choice of project partners/speakers at conferences.
- › To reconsider the TCC's potential to contributing to the improvement of women's empowerment and gender equality in the tea, coffee and cocoa sectors.

### 3.2 Recommendations on choice of commodities

Our findings indicate that there is no consensus on the question whether or not to expand the number of commodities. The five most frequently mentioned commodities are cotton, palm oil, soy, sugar and tropical fruit. It should be noted that a number of interviewees explicitly discouraged expansion into palm oil, soy and sugar. There is certainly potential for expansion to other commodities, after a careful process of weighing the advantages and disadvantages. If expansion is sought, it is important to select a limited number of commodities so the focus can be maintained.

**The following specific recommendations are made on the choice of commodities:**

- › To recommended to carry out a SWOT of possible commodities for TCC to adopt.
- › To assess the added value of exchange or collaboration with multi-stakeholder initiatives working on other commodities such as the Soy Coalition.

### 3.3 Recommendations on choice of membership

As said, during the evaluation, it was found that the composition of TCC fails to reflect two key issues that are at stake in dealing with sustainability of the three chains. This relates to environmental (e.g. climate change, biodiversity) and justice issues (e.g. allocation of added value, tax evasion, corruption). It is noted that many TCC member organisations are active in environmental and justice issues, both internally or as part of their international network, a potential that has not been utilised sufficient until now.

Considering the global nature of the value chains TCC deals with, one avenue of exploration is to expand across borders. The main challenge herein will be to build on the strengths of TCC, while increasing its impact by being more inclusive of sustainability issues that are not (sufficiently) covered at present, or by covering a larger geographical area.

**The following specific recommendations are made regarding extension of membership:**

- › To assess the potential of extending membership to other Dutch or European organisations by a detailed force field analysis of potential allies and partners.
- › To reassess the minimum input of members needed to keep the coalition manageable when choosing to expand the membership.
- › To consider expanding the membership to include or-

ganizations working on environmental and justice issues, as there is limited attention for these issues at present within TCC.

- › To capitalize on the network and expertise of member organisations in environmental and justice issues.

### 3.4 Recommendations on the internal organisation of TCC

#### Functioning of TCC as a coalition

- › Consider implementing a more process-focussed planning, monitoring and evaluation system.
- › Redefine and formalize the decision making procedures of the Coalition to ensure that all members feel fully committed and to respond to the demand for more transparency
- › Redefine and formalize the roles and responsibilities of TCC Bureau, Steering Committee and members; special attention is needed for the process of fine-tuning and alignment of member's activities to prevent potential conflicts or missed opportunities.
- › Increase cross-commodity learning between members and other stakeholders and to have more discussion amongst members on specific topics (organize discussion sessions).
- › Assess the funding structure of TCC and look into the potential to attract external funding to lessen the dependence on a limited number of funding members that are likely to decrease their contribution in the years ahead.

#### Functioning of the TCC Bureau

- › As TCC staff be more “service-oriented” towards members; there is a need to clearly define what kind of services are desired by which member, and to improve communication about what TCC can offer its members and vice versa.
- › Improve the institutional memory of TCC in order to lessen the dependence on personal knowledge/relations.

## Annex

### List of resource persons contacted

#### 1. Thirteen in-depth interviews

**Frank Mechielsen** / Oxfam Novib / TCC member/ NGO // **Sjoerd Panhuysen** / TCC (2008-1010) / TCC member/ NGO // **Eelco Fortuijn** / Goede Waar & Co / TCC member/ NGO // **Geertje Otten** / Solidaridad / TCC member/ NGO // **Shatadru Chattopadhyay** / Solidaridad South & South East Asia / Southern NGO // **Marcel Vernooij** / Dutch Ministry of Agriculture / Nature and Food Quality / Government // **Barret Brown** / Initiatief Duurzame Handel / Government // **Stefanie Miltenburg** / Sara Lee / Industry (coffee/tea) // **Matthieu Guemas** / Cargill / Industry (Cocoa grinder) // **Tijmen de Vries** / KNVKT / Industry (Industry platform organisatom) // **Bert Beekman** / Former Oxfam Novib / TCC member/ NGO // **Bärbel Weiligmann** / TCC / TCC office // **Mieke van Reenen** / TCC / TCC office

#### 2. Twenty questionnaires

*20 out of 27 people responded to the questionnaire, which gives a response rate of 74%.*

**Catherine van der Wees and Coen van Beuningen** / Hivos / TCC member/ NGO // **Gine Zwart en Nicole Mathot** / Oxfam Novib / TCC member/ NGO // **Sanne van der Wal** / SOMO / TCC member/ NGO // **Dick de Graaf** / FNV Bondgenoten / TCC member/ NGO // **Nico Roozen and Arjen Boekhold** / Solidaridad / TCC member/ NGO // **Han de Groot** / UTZ Certified / Standard body // **Marcel Clement** / Rainforest Alliance / Standard body // **Melanie Rutten** / 4C Association / Standard body // **David Kpelle** / African Cocoa Coalition / Southern NGO (Ghana) // **Henry Heyenardhi** / Business Watch Indonesia / Southern NGO (Indonesia) // **Alfredo Duenas** / Conservacion y Desarrollo / Southern NGO (Ecuador) // **Marieke Poissonnier** / Oxfam Wereld Winkels België / NGO (Belgium) // **Albrecht Schwarzkopf** / Christliche Initiative Romero / NGO (Germany) // **Bill Guyton and Geert Waelkens** / World Cocoa Foundation / Industry Platform organization // **Hilke van de Bosch** / Drie Mollen / Industry (coffee/tea) // **Ronald Waardenburg** / Ahold / Industry (retail) // **Darrell High** / Nestlé / Industry // **Nicko Debenham** / Armajaro / Industry (cocoa and coffee trader) // **Peter van Grinsven** / Mars / Industry // **Roeland Stomp and Elink Schuurman** / Industry (Tea) // **Nicky Coninck** / Landelijke India Werkgroep / TCC member/ NGO // **Jos Harmsen** / Max Havelaar / Standard body // **Jan Vingerhoets** / International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) / Platform organization // **Isabelle Adam** / European Cocoa Association / Industry Platform organization // **Aldo Christiano** / Ferrero / Industry // **Michiel Hendriksz** / ADM / Industry (Cocoa grinder) // **Michiel Leijnse** / Unilever / Industry (Tea)

## Footnotes

- 1 In the longer version, an overview is given of the major outcomes of TCC between 2008 and 2010.
- 2 Note: not all respondents filled out this table, so results cannot be generalized
- 3 This is illustrated by the fact that at an IDH conference in 2009, Bärbel Weiligmann, TCC's coordinator, is mentioned as one of the "cocoa sustainability leaders" (Presentation IDH, Nov. 2009).
- 4 This objective has two distinct foci. On the one hand, TCC has facilitated the participation of its Southern partners in international platforms. On the other hand, TCC has coordinated the inputs of its own Dutch members. The latter is discussed in the next session on TCCs internal functioning.
- 5 A classification has been provided by Oxfam Novib, dividing TCC members into 3 groups: 1) constructive insiders (e.g. Solidaridad): considering partnerships with private sector as crucial to obtain their objectives; 2) critical insiders (e.g. Oxfam Novib): using partnerships with companies to further their own agenda's; and 3) constructive outsiders (e.g. SOMO): willing to provide inputs and information, but not willing or able to cooperate formally with private sector.
- 6 The report, which was launched during the annual shareholders meeting of the company, was published by FNV and co-published on behalf of TCC, even though not all members were consulted on this. The report, which was contested by Unilever who claimed that the information was false, generated a lot of negative publicity. TCC managed to resolve the conflict.
- 7 Note: Figures for 2008 and 2009 are real expenses, for 2010 projected expenses (in Euro).

## Participants



## Abbreviations

<b>ADM</b>	Archer Daniels Midland
<b>CAOBISCO</b>	Association of the Chocolate, Biscuit and Confectionary Industry of the EU
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>ICCO</b>	International Cocoa Organization
<b>IDH</b>	Intitiatief Duurzame Handel
<b>KNVKT</b>	Koninklijke Nederlandse Vereniging voor Koffie en Thee
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis
<b>TCC</b>	Tropical Commodity Coalition
<b>WCF</b>	World Cocoa Foundation

## Sources

TCC Annual reports 2008 & 2009, TCC Proposal 2010

## Colophon

**Text** Mark van Dorp of DUVILLA and Jostein van Vliet of Warner Strategy & Fundraising

**Design and graphs** Tegenwind: Roelant Meijer, Utrecht

**Print** Drukkerij Mostert & van Onderen, Leiden, September 2010



## Tropical Commodity Coalition

for sustainable Tea Coffee Cocoa

Tropical Commodity Coalition (TCC) comprises ten non-governmental organizations: Hivos, Oxfam Novib, Solidaridad, Oikos, Somo, Fairfood, India Committee of the Netherlands, Both Ends, Goede Waar & Co, and Stop the Traffik; and two trade unions, FNV Bondgenoten and CNV BedrijvenBond. TCC cooperates with NGOs and trade unions in coffee, tea and cocoa producing countries to improve the social, environmental and economic conditions at the beginning of the coffee, tea and cocoa value chains.

TCC addresses the social, environmental and economic conditions in the coffee, tea and cocoa chains by organizing informed discussions, in both the South and the North. The TCC ensures coordination of the members' activities where needed, compiles lessons learnt and promotes the interchange of strategies in order to build shared understanding and approaches to sustainability in these commodities. TCC shares its knowledge and influences policies and plans of companies, standards bodies, CSR initiatives, governments, NGOs and unions to develop and implement sustainable practices efficiently throughout the coffee, tea and cocoa chains. TCC creates an enabling environment for civil society stakeholders from producing countries to join and take an active part in the sustainable commodity debate.

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