

EUROPEAN COCOA FORUM 2025

PROGRAMME



eca
european cocoa association

Day 1 – Tuesday 16 September

12.00 – 19.00 **Forum Registration**

17.00 – 18.00 **Cocktail reception**

By invitation only:

12.30 – 14.30 ECA Board Meeting

15.30 – 16.00 ECA General Members Meeting

18.30 – 23.00 ECA/FCC/WCF Board dinner

Day 2 – Wednesday 17 September

08.00 – 09.00 ICE CoT Breakfast (*by invitation only*)

08.00 – 09.00 **Forum Registration**

09.00 – 09.05 Welcoming words by **Catherine Entzminger**, ECA Director General and **David Rose**, Master of Ceremonies

09.05 – 09.15 **Opening speech** by **Christian Vollers**, ECA President

09.15 – 09.25 **Keynote speech** by **Hon. Silvio Schembri**, Minister for the Economy, Enterprise and Strategic Projects, Government of Malta

09.25 – 10.30 **Setting the scene: the cocoa industry in 2025 – and beyond**

Moderator: **Guus de Gruiter**, ECA Board Member; Co-CEO, ECOM Cocoa

Panellists: **Alex Assanvo**, Executive Secretary, Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative (CIGHCI)
Peter Feld, CEO, Barry Callebaut
Dieter Weisskopf, former CEO and Board Vice-Chair, Lindt & Sprüngli

10.30 – 11.10 Coffee break

11.15 – 12.10 **How can we transform today's production challenges through innovative solutions for farming, climate change and CSSV?**

Moderator: **Alain Freymond**, ECA Board member; President Global Cocoa, Barry Callebaut

Panellists: **Régis Babin**, Cocoa and Coffee Entomologist, CIRAD
Marie Baranger, Co-founder, RISOME
Michiel Kuit, Senior Consultant, Agri-Logic

12.15 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.00 **Consumer demand and inflationary pressure. What way forward for cocoa and chocolate confectionery?**

Moderator: **Emiel van Dijk**, ECA Board member; Managing Director Cocoa & Chocolate Europe and West Africa, Cargill

Panellists: **Julia Buech**, Senior Consumer Food Analyst, Rabobank
More speakers to be announced soon

15.00 – 16.00 **The power of data as an enabler of progress**

Moderator: **Christian Vollers**, ECA President; Group Director, Vollers Group

Panellists: **Renske Aarnoudse**, Cocoa Program Director, IDH
Rémi d'Annunzio, Forest Officer, Forest Data Partnership Science and Data Lead, Food and Agriculture Organisation
Thomas Vaassen, CEO and Co-Founder, Meridia
More speakers to be announced soon

17.30 – 22.30 **Social activities: Mdina visit and casual dinner**

Day 3 – Thursday 18 September

08.00 – 09.00 **Forum Registration**

09.00 – 10.15 **Stakeholder roundtable: EUDR implementation on the eve of the 30 December 2025 application date**

Moderator: **Chris Beetge**, ECA Board member; Regional Head Europe and Global Head Cocoa Operations, ofi

Panellists: **Clive de Ruig**, President, ICE Benchmark Administration
Antoine Haouchine, International Relations Officer, European Commission DG ENV
Iván Ontaneda, President, ANECACAO
Harold Poelma, Strategic Advisor, ECA; Former President, Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate
Andreas Schäfer, Head of Department, German Federal Office for Agriculture and Food
Rachel Vujovic, Director of International Sustainability, Aldi Süd

10.15 – 11.00 **EU food safety regulatory framework: What lies ahead for cocoa and how can we strengthen preparedness along the supply chain?**

Moderator: **David Rose**, Master of Ceremonies

Panellists: **Klaus Berend**, Director of Food Safety, Sustainability and Innovation, European Commission DG SANTE
Michiel Kokken, Global Head of Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Cocoa & Head of Regulatory Europe, Middle East and North Africa, ofi
Morag Webb, Head of Science and Policy, COLEAD

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break

11.30 – 12.25 **Looking ahead: A shared vision for a successful cocoa sector**

Moderator: **David Rose**, Master of Ceremonies

Panellists: **Michel Arrion**, Executive Director, ICCO
Ismail El Khalil, President-Director General, Ivory Cocoa Products
Jorge Marún, General Manager, Hacienda San José, Pongarbel
Urszula-Maria Stepkowska, Deputy Head of Unit, ACP, Overseas Countries & Territories, European Commission DG TRADE
Christian Vollers, ECA President; Group Director, Vollers Group

12.30 – 12.35 **Closing remarks** by **Christian Vollers**, ECA President

12.40 – 14.30 **Lunch**

17.00 – 23.00 **Valletta visit and Gala dinner**

Side sessions

14.30 – 15.30 **JRF side session “*How the cocoa industry addresses challenges related to productivity, diseases and contaminants*”**

14.30 – 16.30 **ISCO side session**