

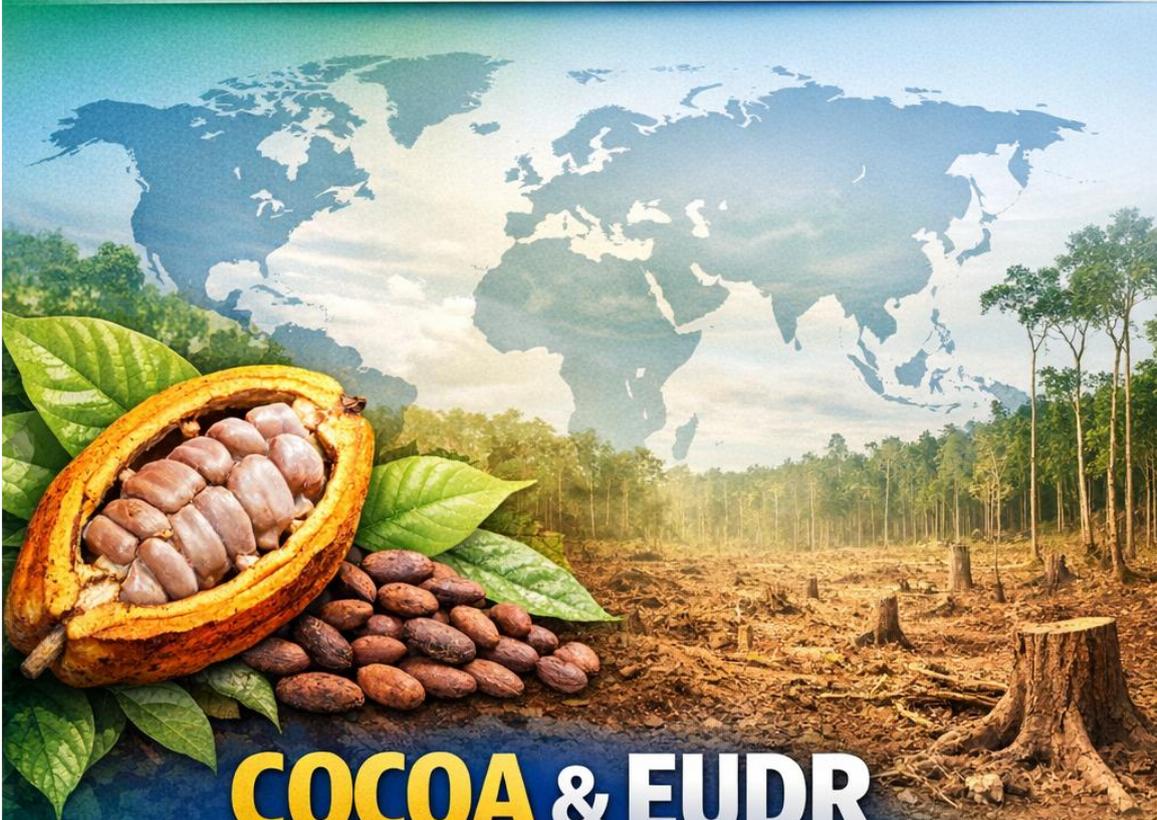


EU-NIGERIA
Agribusiness Platform



EU-NIGERIA AGRIBUSINESS PLATFORM
(EUNAP)

POST-WEBINAR REPORT



COCOA & EUDR

Navigating the EU Deforestation Regulation

Protecting Nigeria's €1.5 Billion Cocoa Export Market

10TH EDITION



19 FEBRUARY 2026



ZOOM (VIRTUAL SESSION)

**Global
Gateway**



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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **10th Edition of the EU-Nigeria Agribusiness Information Webinar**, held on 19 February 2026, convened 52 stakeholders from government, the private sector, development finance, and research institutions to address an urgent regulatory challenge: Nigeria's compliance readiness for the **EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)**.

With approximately **80% of Nigeria's cocoa exports — valued at €1.5 billion annually — destined for the EU market**, the EUDR represents both a significant market risk and a transformational opportunity. Key compliance deadlines of **31 December 2026** (large operators) and **30 June 2027** (SMEs and smallholders) place immense pressure on the value chain.

52	€1.5B	€208M	2026
Registered Participants	Annual Cocoa Export Value	EU Funding Mobilised	Large Operator Deadline

The session featured high-level government opening remarks from the Federal Ministries of Agriculture and Industry, a technical compliance briefing from NICERT Expert Consulting, a live platform demonstration of **Food Sign** and **Clear Up** traceability tools, and a structured stakeholder debate. The EU Delegation confirmed **€18 million** in dedicated compliance support and **€190 million** in mobilised investment through the Bank of Industry (BOI) and FCMB.

Overarching Conclusion: EUDR compliance is no longer optional. It is the *"green passport"* for Nigerian cocoa's continued access to European markets.

2 OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The webinar was designed to deliver three core outcomes:

- **Strategic and technical clarity** on EUDR compliance requirements for Nigerian cocoa stakeholders
 - **An honest risk assessment** of the threat posed to Nigeria's €1.5 billion cocoa export market
 - **Actionable, practical compliance pathways** for producers, exporters, aggregators, and policymakers
- These objectives were reinforced across all sessions and were largely achieved by the close of the event.

3 PARTICIPATION

The webinar attracted **52 participants** representing a cross-section of Nigeria's cocoa and agribusiness ecosystem:

Participating Institution / Sector	Representative Category
Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security	Government - Policy & Regulation
Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade & Investment	Government - Trade Policy
Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN)	Research & Academia
EU Delegation to Nigeria & ECOWAS	Development Partner
NICERT / Naiset Expert Consulting Ltd	Technical & Certification
Food Sign / Clear Up (Trace X)	Technology Providers
Private Sector Exporters & Consultants	Industry
Diaspora Stakeholders	International Engagement

4 SESSION PROCEEDINGS

4.1 Moderator's Opening – Context Setting

Mr. **Nathaniel Odiba** opened the session by situating the webinar within EUNAP's core mandate: providing structured market intelligence, regulatory preparedness support, and trade facilitation for Nigerian agribusinesses accessing the EU's 27 Member State market. He outlined session logistics, engagement rules, and the expected outcomes of clarity, compliance readiness, and sector coordination.

4.2 Welcome Address – EUNAP Project Director

Mr. **Roland Oroh**, Project Director of EUNAP, framed the platform as *"a public good facility managed by a private sector entity"* originating from the 2022 AU-EU Agriculture Ministers' Meeting. He outlined key platform activities including B2B matchmaking, market intelligence, and regulatory facilitation, and announced the 2026 trade expansion strategy centred on a B2B mission to Italy and the establishment of a Nigerian Trade Office at the Port of Gioia Tauro in Southern Italy. Priority export commodities highlighted included cocoa, sesame, cashew, fresh produce, cassava flour, and cassava pellets.

4.3 Opening Remarks – Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security



Dr. **Aisha Aliyu** delivered the ministry's address, framing EUDR compliance as both strategic and symbolic. She warned of the economic stakes — over **\$1 billion in direct export earnings** and **\$3 billion in broader economic value** at risk — and urged a unified national response. She stressed that the EU assesses Nigeria as a single entity, not state by state, making a centralised national traceability database and harmonised compliance platform essential.

4.4 Opening Remarks – Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade & Investment

Mr. **Oladele Oluwafemi** confirmed Nigeria's position as Africa's fourth-largest cocoa producer and emphasised EUDR compliance as a national policy imperative. He confirmed that the Ministry is working alongside state governments to harmonise export systems with EUDR traceability requirements and noted that a national task force is active on legality harmonisation and industry compliance structuring.

"Our credibility depends on a unified national system."

– Dr. Aisha Aliyu, Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security

5 TECHNICAL PRESENTATION – EUDR COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

Lead Presenter: *Mr. Victor Ezenwa, NICERT / NICERT Expert Consulting Limited*

5.1 EUDR Overview

The EUDR is a landmark EU regulation prohibiting the importation of commodities linked to deforestation or forest degradation occurring after **31 December 2020**. **Seven regulated commodities** are in scope: cocoa, coffee, palm oil, soybean, rubber, cattle, and wood. Non-compliance carries severe consequences including **fines of up to 4% of EU buyer turnover**, product confiscation, and permanent market exclusion.

5.2 Compliance Requirements

Mr. Ezenwa outlined five mandatory compliance pillars:

<p>■ Geolocation Mapping</p>	<p>All farms mapped with GPS. Farms >4ha require polygon mapping in GeoJSON, KML, or Shape file formats.</p>
<p>■ Due Diligence & Risk Assessment</p>	<p>Satellite + GIS classification as high/medium/low risk. Mitigation plans required for elevated designations.</p>
<p>■ Legal Compliance</p>	<p>Exporters must prove legal rights to cultivate. Community head attestation supplements formal land titles.</p>
<p>■ Farm-to-Port Traceability</p>	<p>Full chain-of-custody from farm to export point to prevent mixing with non-compliant sources.</p>



■ Ongoing Monitoring	Continuous verification of no deforestation post-cutoff. Deadlines: Dec 2026 (large) / Jun 2027 (SME).
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5.3 Nigeria's Current Compliance Gaps

Six critical weaknesses were identified in Nigeria's cocoa supply chain:

- Incomplete farm mapping and missing GPS plot data
- Poor traceability and mixed sourcing at village and aggregator level
- Weak documentation and record-keeping at farm level
- Limited farmer awareness of EUDR requirements and deadlines
- Absence of standardised risk assessment procedures
- Inconsistent legality verification across states

5.4 NICERT's Case Studies

Client	Location	Scale	Deliverable
Valency Limited	Cross River & Ondo States	12,000 ha	Full farmer profiles, GPS, polygon data & DDS reports
Moi Food	Southwest Nigeria	4,000 ha	Complete cocoa compliance mapping
Saro Agro (ongoing)	Benue & Nasarawa States	TBC	Active compliance engagement

6 TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION – FOOD SIGN & CLEAR UP

Presenters: Madhu (Food Sign), Himanshu (Clear Up) — Trace X, NICERT Partner

Food Sign	Clear Up	Compliance & Ris
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmer Registration & Unique ID Generation • Walk-and-Plot Farm Mapping (mobile, real-time) • Harvest & Inventory Tracking linked to storage • Custom Reporting, Dashboards & Field Officer Analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GeoJSON Upload & Deforestation Risk Scoring • Automated Due Diligence Statements (DDS) as PDFs • Customer Transparency Portal for EU buyers • Real-time satellite monitoring post-2020 	

The integration of **Food Sign** and **Clear Up** delivers a farm-to-export compliance pipeline that reduces manual intervention, supports real-time risk monitoring, and meets EU regulatory formatting standards.

7 STAKEHOLDER DEBATE & Q&A

7.1 EU Delegation Clarifications

Mr. **Hugh Briggs** of the EU Delegation confirmed that while EUDR does not compel exports to Europe, all products entering the EU market must meet traceability standards uniformly. He reaffirmed the regulation is environmental — not political — and applies equally to EU domestic producers. He confirmed two major financial support mechanisms: **€18 million EU-GIZ compliance support project** and **€190 million mobilised through the Bank of Industry (BOI) and FCMB**.

7.2 Fairness & Structural Concerns

Participants questioned whether traditional cocoa cultivation constitutes deforestation under EUDR. Mr. Ezenwa acknowledged legacy farms are long-established but noted new expansions in certain regions have involved forest clearing. Nigeria's ratification of the Paris Climate Agreement aligns its obligations with the regulation's intent.

7.3 Smallholder Burden

Delegates raised concerns about mapping affordability and digital tool accessibility for smallholders. NICERT responded that technology providers can aggregate farmer data at cooperative level to reduce per-farmer costs, while satellite mapping significantly reduces manual burden. FMITI confirmed government is exploring deployment of extension officers for farmer-level onboarding.

7.4 National Coordination & Land Tenure

Dr. **Dele Adeniji** (CRIN) questioned adequacy of coordination across governance levels. FMITI confirmed a national task force is actively working on legality harmonisation. The need to integrate all state-level geo-mapping data into a single national database was reaffirmed as a prerequisite for credible EU market access.

7.5 Value Addition

Participants urged EUDR compliance be leveraged to drive increased local processing rather than continued export of raw beans. Mr. Ezenwa agreed traceability strengthens Nigeria's positioning in premium and sustainably-certified markets.

"He who plays the piper dictates the tune. If the EU is our primary market, compliance becomes a business decision."

– Mr. Victor Ezenwa, NICERT



8 KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

- Weak GPS and farm-level geolocation data across major cocoa-growing states
- Fragmented and incompatible traceability systems at aggregator and exporter level
- Significant knowledge and awareness gaps among smallholder farmers regarding EUDR obligations
- High compliance cost barriers relative to average smallholder income
- Legality verification inconsistencies arising from informal land tenure arrangements
- Insufficient integration of carbon finance and green investment mechanisms into compliance planning

9 STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Risks of Non-Compliance	Opportunities from Compliance
Exclusion from €1.5B EU cocoa market	Scarcity premiums as non-compliant competitors exit
Revenue decline and competitive displacement	Carbon credit monetisation through deforestation-free certification
Reputational damage for exporters and buyers	Green finance and sustainable investment access
Supply chain fragmentation	Data-driven sector reform and operational efficiency
Loss of EU buyer relationships	Stronger EU investment alignment and B2B opportunities

The EUDR permanently reshapes market entry conditions. Early compliance movers stand to gain significant competitive and pricing advantages as global sustainability standards tighten.

10 SESSION OUTCOMES

- Technical clarity delivered on GeoJSON, polygon mapping, DDS requirements, and compliance timelines
- Government reaffirmed commitment to national coordination and a unified traceability framework
- EU Delegation clarified available support mechanisms and confirmed €18M + €190M in dedicated funding
- Private sector compliance solutions from NICERT and Trace X demonstrated with live case studies
- Stronger public-private and Nigeria-EU dialogue established as a foundation for follow-up action

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

For Government

- Finalise and publish the national cocoa traceability framework with clear implementation timelines
- Establish a central national traceability database integrating all state-level geo-mapping data
- Support and formalise remote sensing and satellite mapping partnerships at scale
- Deploy structured farmer awareness and digital literacy programmes in cocoa-growing states
- Accelerate national task force outputs on legality harmonisation and land tenure documentation

For the Private Sector

- Immediately adopt digital traceability platforms (e.g. Food Sign, Clear Up) for farm-to-port documentation
- Aggregate farmer data at cooperative or exporter level to reduce per-smallholder compliance costs
- Explore carbon credit frameworks to monetise deforestation-free supply chain commitments
- Engage with EUNAP to access EU buyer matchmaking and B2B trade facilitation services

For EUNAP

- Publish an official post-webinar communiqué summarising outcomes and commitments
- Host follow-up technical sessions on carbon credits, value addition, and compliance financing
- Facilitate EU-Nigeria B2B matchmaking for compliant cocoa exporters
- Develop a compliance tracking dashboard for EUNAP-registered exporters

12 CONCLUSION

The 10th Edition EUNAP Information Webinar delivered a clear and unambiguous message to Nigeria's cocoa sector: the EU Deforestation Regulation is operational, the compliance clock is running, and the window for preparatory action is narrowing rapidly.

With **€1.5 billion in annual export value at stake**, the cost of inaction far exceeds the investment required to build a compliant, traceable, and sustainable cocoa supply chain. The webinar demonstrated that practical compliance solutions exist, EU funding mechanisms are available, and both government and the private sector are mobilising — but that coordination, speed, and execution are now the decisive factors.



"The clock is ticking. Compliance is no longer optional. It's the green passport for Nigerian cocoa."

– Mr. Victor Ezenwa, NICERT (Closing Remark)

Nigeria must transition decisively from awareness to structured implementation to protect its position in the European market and to leverage EUDR compliance as a platform for sustainable sector transformation.



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