



EU-NIGERIA
Agribusiness Platform

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POST-WEBINAR REPORT

10th Edition

EU-Nigeria Agribusiness Platform Information Webinar

*Cocoa & EUDR: Navigating the
New Deforestation Regulations — Protecting
Nigeria's €1.5 Billion Cocoa Export Market*



Date	Thursday, 19 February 2026
Time	11:00 AM – 12:45 PM (West Africa Time)
Platform	Zoom (Virtual)
Host	EU-Nigeria Agribusiness Platform (EUNAP)
Funding Partner	European Union
Implementing Manager	Agribusiness Register Limited
Technical Partner	NICERT Ltd
Moderator	Mr. Nathaniel Odiba– Communications, Marketing & M&E Specialist, EUNAP
Total Participants	52 registered participants



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 to accelerate traceability, geolocation mapping, and legal documentation.

The session featured high-level government opening remarks from the Federal Ministries of Agriculture and Industry, a technical compliance briefing from NICERT/Naiset 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.

The 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:



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 / NICERT 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. Mr. Oroh issued a direct call to Nigerian exporters to register on the EUNAP platform to facilitate direct European buyer engagement.

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 if Nigeria fails to comply—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.

“Our credibility depends on a unified national system.” — Dr. Aisha Aliyu, FMAFS

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 rather than a burden. 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.



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:

- **Geolocation Mapping:** All farms must be mapped using GPS coordinates. Farms exceeding four hectares require polygon mapping. Accepted data formats include GeoJSON (the EU standard), KML, and Shape files. Maps must exclude any deforested or protected 'red zones'.
- **Due Diligence & Risk Assessment:** Conducted using satellite technology and GIS tools, farms are classified as high, medium, or low risk. Risk mitigation plans are required for medium and high-risk designations.
- **Legal Compliance:** Exporters must provide proof of legal rights to cultivate land. Local attestation by community heads may supplement formal land titles.
- **Farm-to-Port Traceability:** Full chain-of-custody tracking from farm to export point is required to prevent mixed sourcing with non-compliant farms.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** Exporters must demonstrate no deforestation or degradation occurred after the cutoff date. Compliance deadlines are 31 December 2026 for large operators and 30 June 2027 for SMEs and smallholders.

5.3 Nigeria's Current Compliance Gaps

The presentation identified six critical weaknesses 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 the 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

NICERT/NICERT Expert Consulting presented two completed compliance engagements as proof of concept:

- **Valency Limited (Cross River & Ondo States):** 12,000 hectares of cocoa farms mapped with complete farmer profiles, GPS coordinates, polygon data, and Due Diligence Statement (DDS) reports generated.
- **Moi Food (Southwest Nigeria):** 4,000 hectares mapped for cocoa compliance.

Ongoing engagements with Saro Agro in Benue and Nasarawa States were also noted as active compliance projects



6. Technology Demonstration – Food Sign & Clear Up Platforms

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

6.1 Food Sign – First-Mile Traceability

Food Sign is a farmer and farm management platform designed to digitalise the first mile of the cocoa supply chain. Key features demonstrated included:

- **Farmer Registration & Unique ID Generation:** Farmers are onboarded with supporting documentation and assigned a unique Farmer ID, enabling structured procurement and third-party engagement.
- **Walk-and-Plot Farm Mapping:** Field officers map farm boundaries in real time using mobile devices, generating accurate polygonal representations and multi-plot per farmer management.
- **Harvest & Inventory Tracking:** Quantity and timing of harvests are recorded, linked to storage facility management.
- **Custom Reporting & Dashboards:** Task tracking, field officer performance, and farm analytics are accessible to operators via a digital ledger interface with permission-based access controls.



6.2 Clear Up – Compliance & Risk Assessment

Clear Up automates EUDR compliance monitoring using remote sensing and satellite data. Key capabilities demonstrated included:

- **GeoJSON Upload & Risk Scoring:** Farm plot files are uploaded and processed against satellite imagery to detect deforestation events after 2020, forest conversion, and non-compliant land use changes.
- **Automated Due Diligence Statements (DDS):** DDS documents covering raw, semi-processed, and finished goods are generated automatically and can be downloaded as PDFs for European buyer submission.
- **Customer Transparency Portal:** European buyers can directly access compliance and traceability data, strengthening supply chain trust and supporting market engagement.

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 to Nigeria and ECOWAS clarified that the EUDR does not compel exports to Europe, but all products entering the EU market must meet its traceability standards uniformly across all supplier countries. He reaffirmed that the regulation is environmental, not political, and applies equally to EU domestic producers. Critically, Mr. Briggs confirmed two major financial support mechanisms:

- €18 million EU-GIZ compliance support project for producer country readiness
- €190 million in mobilised investment through the Bank of Industry (BOI) and FCMB

7.2 Fairness & Structural Concerns

Several participants questioned whether traditional cocoa cultivation practices constitute deforestation under EUDR definitions. Mr. Ezenwa (NICERT) acknowledged that many legacy farms are long-established, but noted that new cocoa expansions in certain regions have involved forest clearing. He also underscored that Nigeria is a signatory to the Paris Climate Agreement, aligning its obligations with the regulation's intent.

“He who plays the piper dictates the tune. If the EU is our primary market, compliance becomes a business decision.” — Mr. Victor Ezenwa, NICERT

7.3 Smallholder Burden

Delegates raised concerns about the affordability of mapping, the accessibility of digital tools for smallholders, and capacity gaps at the farm level. 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 that the government is developing coordinated frameworks and exploring the use of extension officers to support farmer-level onboarding.

7.4 National Coordination & Land Tenure

Dr. Dele Adeniji (CRIN) questioned the adequacy of coordination across national, state, and local government levels. FMITI confirmed that a national task force is actively

working on legality harmonisation and that industry mapping and structured compliance frameworks are ongoing. 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 that EUDR compliance be leveraged to drive increased local processing and value addition rather than continued export of raw beans. Mr. Azama agreed that traceability compliance strengthens Nigeria's positioning in premium and sustainably-certified markets, and that value addition should be pursued as a complementary priority



8. Key Issues Identified

The following systemic issues were surfaced during the session as critical barriers to Nigeria's EUDR readiness:

- 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
- 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

The following concrete outcomes were achieved during the webinar:

- 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.

As Mr. Victor Azama stated in closing:

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

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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