MIGHTY EARTH

Cocoa Accountability Map 2.0 Webinar

Q&A

Q1: Are the VividEconomics "alerts" for deforestation or also forest degradation?

A: Alerts detect a significant change in the structure of the canopy. In this sense alerts detect forest loss (or deforestation).

Q2: A few questions for vivid economics: What is the resolution that the images platform is using? How much ground truthing has been done? How has it been proven that cocoa was the driver of deforestation?

A:

- The resolution is 10*10m.
- We have done about 10 ground truthing missions to verify alerts in the South West of Côte d'Ivoire. Except for alerts in the Tai National Park all alerts had been caused by cocoa farming.
- We confirm our ground truthing observations when comparing our 2016 and 2019 land-use inventories for the South West of the country.

Q3: The boundaries for Forêts Classées used by Vivid seem obsolete. The MINEF released other references for these protected areas. Is there a specific reason for using other boundary references? Using different references will also change the % of deforestation in Forêts Classées (21%?).

A: Thanks for your question. The FC boundaries are indeed outdated. It is unclear when we will get a hold of the most recent/less outdated boundaries. These boundaries were shared by MINEF last year. I guess it's time to make another official request for the most recent shapefile!

Q4: To Paola and Sarah: What are the licensing plans for your land classification maps? Will they be openly licensed like we see MapBiomas doing in South America? And if so, what is the timeline for this?

A: The Ghana land classification map is available to the public here: https://cfi.knust.ourecosystem.com. The Forestry Commission has developed the data and has full control over its distribution, so any questions regarding downloads can be directed to RMSC (details are on the link). Ecometrica can provide reports for companies as a service to determine whether farms they are sourcing from are compliant with CFI as well as monitoring effectiveness of interventions - please do reach out directly (sarah.middlemiss@ecometrica.com) if you would like more information.

IMAGES' land classification maps are freely available to the Ivorian Government and NGOs upon request. Private companies can access the maps for a certain fee. For more information reach out to Paola Despretz: paola.despretz@vivideconomics.com

Q5: To Niels; you mention "Maintain high forest cover with agroforestry cocoa". However, agroforestry should never replace existing old-growth forests. Simple/monoculture cocoa should be transformed to diverse agroforestry systems that include cocoa. But old-growth forests really shouldn't...

A: Thank you. Indeed, I am thinking in conversion trajectories: I meant to keep the cover rather than convert further to monocultures like we see more in other regions, and appreciate the existing agroforest still there.

Q6: Does CFI in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire explicitly set out to address degradation outside of the Gazetted (Protected) Forests?

A: CFI was explicit in addressing degradation even in off reserve areas. The Ghana CFI implementation plan is anchored on three themes:

- Forest Protection and Restoration
- Sustainable Productivity & Farmers Livelihood
- Community Engagement and Social Inclusion.

These themes cut across both on-reserve issues can only be fix by government commitment

Q7: Do you consider sharing the Ivory Coast dataset including mapping of cooperatives? We are very much interested in it!

A: As for land use mapping and deforestation alert mapping - it is freely available to the Ivorian Government. It can be made freely available to NGOs upon request to the Government.

Q8: To Paola - Your report states that between 2019 and 2020, 68,000 hectares of primary forest, 2.2% of remaining forest, were lost in Côte d'Ivoire. In contrast, WRI GFW reports that 11,600 HAs of primary forest was lost in 2019. This is a significant 6x difference in estimation of Primary Forest Loss. How do you explain this discrepancy? Is Vivid's methodology publicly available?

A: Differences between GFW and IMAGES are normal and due a combination of different factors:

- The definition of forest. IMAGES defines primary forest as land with tree canopy cover superior to 70%, in which trees should reach a minimum height of 15 meters. IMAGES' definition of forest is consistent with previous Ivorian land classifications. It may be that GFW's definition is broader (e.g. if in line with FAO's definition of forest).
- The methodology. IMAGES defines alerts as consistent deviations from a baseline radar backscatter, where the baseline is measured by national averages. It is likely that, in order to cover all forests, GFW have used a different baseline, which produces different types of alerts.
- The baseline land use classification.
- The satellite resolution. IMAGES uses 10*10m resolution whereas GFW uses 30*30m resolution.

It does not mean that a system is better than the other one. It just means that each system achieves different objectives.

Q9: A recent publication by WRI/Global forest Watch indicated that there is a decrease of deforestation in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana of 50% between 2018-2019. How can we explain the increase of deforestation revealed by VividEconomics?

A: See above

Q10: Airbus (Earthworm) indicated that it is NOT possible to detect forest disturbance under the canopy. How about the other systems (Vivid Economics, Satteligence, Ecometrica?; is that possible?

A: With airbus or other submeter imagery it is not possible to see through or under the canopy. It is possible to see between the crowns. With airborne Lidar one can see through, Ecometrica was trialing that.

From Vivid Economics: It is not possible to detect forest cover loss under the canopy with the technology that we used. Therefore, we cannot be 100% sure that we have detected all forest cover loss. However, using the alerts (forest cover loss alerts), forestry teams can quickly see activities beneath the canopy for areas very close to deforested zones.

Q11: Given the sensitivity of the problem of deforestation on the image and the economy of the countries on spot, it will be worth harmonizing the methodology of the study on the subject before large diffusion of the corresponding findings.

A: Concerning IMAGES, the entire code and methodology has been handed over to the Ivorian Government. For more information on the methodology reach out to Paola Despretz: paola.despretz@vivideconomics.com

Q12: Do we have a look on country's as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinée, where it's appearing the cacao industry are busy, to escape all the focus on the big cocoa country

A:It is so vital to extend mapping of deforestation (and other abuses) into cocoa in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea - not to mention also Nigeria, Vietnam, Indonesia, Ecuador, Peru, etc. Yours is a fundamental question and the answer is: we need global, joined up, synergistic monitoring of deforestation for cocoa, and traceability for the global industry.

If we only focus on CDI and GH we will indeed risk a leakage market development.

Q13: If LiDAR is the way forward but is very expensive, what can donors do to address the challenge at scale? What sort of sums are we talking about for a whole country like Cameroon (at least the cocoa production zones)?

A: Ecometrica have done some testing of LiDAR for understorey vegetation monitoring in Scotland. The costs are driven by the cost of the instrument itself (around £450,000) and the fact that the best results are with drones, and long range drones are still limited in their use due to challenges in getting the right flying permissions (while you can get some indication of high/med/low vegetation from an aircraft, it might not be granular enough for cocoa detection). As an indicative cost, we have been quoted approx. £40,000 / day for surveys, covering 100 ha, with the price per day decreasing as larger areas are covered.

Q14: Looking at all these contributions with the lenses of REDD+, I'm happy with the tools and the finding related to the MRV works covering different cocoa landscapes…. The key question is how these tools & findings are perceived by states & non states actors? Are these findings already part of the MRV process at the national and/or sub-national Jurisdictional landscapes? Did we have the chance to mainstream this work with the national MRV frameworks? Will these tools & findings be used for the next NDC process submissions?

A: In Ghana, RMSC (the technical wing of the Forestry Commission) has presented the map (in various iterations) to stakeholder groups as part of the formal consultation process. They are currently looking to the official "outdooring" of the map as well as community validation, but this has been delayed by the disruption of the pandemic and the tragic loss of the head of the Forestry Commission. RMSC have the mandate for producing official datasets of Ghana's forest cover, and these land classification maps will be incorporated into the National Forest Monitoring System.