

Vacancy

Senior cocoa expert in the Dominican Republic - Country Lead

22nd April 2021

Summary

Gaia Cacao B.V. is a limited liability company based in the Netherlands, which aims to build bridges between cocoa producers and buyers of cocoa. The company organizes logistics and distribution of cocoa beans and derivatives, acts as a sales agent and works on consultancy projects. The company just endorsed on a new project, which is a global market study and case study on the Dominican Republic.

For this reason Gaia Cacao is looking for a senior cocoa expert in the Dominican Republic for the role of Country Lead.

What is the study about?

The study seeks to achieve a greater understanding of market interaction and the opportunities available to improve cocoa beans and derivatives' value. The aim is to support Dominican Republic stakeholders active in cocoa to make long-term decisions based on realistic market information. This will affect not only Dominican stakeholders but also other cocoa-producing countries. Therefore, the study pursues to:

- Understand the global market for cocoa and its derivatives through a comprehensive market analysis;
- Understand how global (macro) events influence the cocoa sector and affect the current and future global marketplace of cocoa and its derivatives;
- Analyze the potential and current positioning of Dominican Republic cocoa, including processed semi-finished and final consumer products in different markets to support effective decision-making in production, marketing and promotion operations;
- Provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of certification and private sustainability programs in the cocoa industry and extrapolate it to the Dominican Republic case study to understand market interaction and opportunity for value.

Duties and responsibilities:

As a Country Lead you will:

- Be the main link with the different cocoa value chain actors in Dominican Republic.
- Work closely together with the Gaia Netherlands Team (GNT) and another individual (yet to be identified) in the Dominican Republic.
- Provide a list of stakeholders related to Dominican Republic's cocoa sector that can validate this research and/or contribute with new information, especially in the context of rapidly changing realities (e.g. response to COVID-19):
 - Producer and exporters
 - Business support organizations
 - Government institutions
 - Other experts in the local cocoa industry
- Identify local experts who can support data collection.
- Provide overall local support with logistics, planning of meetings etc.

Skill set required:

- Understanding of cocoa and chocolate marketing and branding, market channels and segments.
- Agriculture and/or social science education background, Masters preferred, with 3 to 5 years' experience in agriculture research
- Extensive cocoa industry expertise, including good knowledge of the production value chains in the country.
- Experience with cocoa and derivative products and market differentiations, including knowledge on pricing.
- Extensive experience with producer-level cocoa operations, including export experience
- Knowledge of cocoa bean production and processing and a network of such processors
- Network with producers, cooperatives, exporters, and SME companies in the Dominican Republic
- Excellent communication skills, preferably bilingual (Spanish and English)

Duration of the project:

Six months – April 2021 – October 2021. Start of the work is on 5th May till 30 August.

Fee:

150 USD per day for 9 days.

Interested?

Please send an email to: mariana@gaiacacao.com

Deadline to apply: 10th May 2021

About Gaia Cacao:

Gaia Cacao is based in Amsterdam and founded in 2019 by Mariana De La Rosa and Marika van Santvoort. The company aims to build bridges between The mission of Gaia Cacao is to support entrepreneurship among farmers and exporters who grow specialty cacao and help them find new markets to grow their business as well as support farmers, buyers and businesses in creating a more sustainable and valuable cacao ecosystem. Transparency, fast communication, integrity, and shared responsibility are key values of the company.

Gaia Cacao seeks to bridge this gap and grow the market for specialty cocoa. The company offers a wide range of services to achieve this. At origin, Gaia Cacao works with the farmers and exporters and helps them prepare the export. In the Netherlands it offers warehousing, quality control, distribution of samples and logistic services to the buyers. In some cases, commercialization of the beans and derivatives is also offered.

Besides that, Gaia Cacao offers consultancy to farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, governments, financial organizations and other private companies. Currently, the company is involved in three different projects (one in Ivory Coast, in Sierra Leone, and one global with a case study in Dominican Republic - the reason for this application) training farmers to improve the quality of their beans, marketing support and commercialization of their beans. Since the start of the company in 2019, Gaia Cacao sold almost 400 MT of specialty cocoa beans and cocoa derivatives.

For the purpose of the global study, Gaia Cacao is expanded to a 'consortium' of experts, adding Gustavo Ferro, Jeroen Krufft and Katty Sanchez Amiquero.