

Dear Colleague,

The COSA collaboration with two UN bodies is preparing the first global database on sustainability in agriculture and recent fieldwork in several countries has led to a new version 2.0. As we continue to innovate in the measurement of real sustainability impacts, new institutions and researchers as partners are vital. It's all below, in a brief update for you, of this year's work.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniele". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

Daniele Giovannucci and the Committee on Sustainability Assessment (COSA)

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#### 1. COSA 2.0 Now Available

Following an extensive consultation and adaptation processes in Latin America and Africa, COSA 2.0 is now available. COSA 2.0 represents significant advances:

- simplified and more accessible
- advanced version is as short as 17 pages
- allows field researchers to select indicators based on farm conditions
- data upload interface

By the end of 2010, COSA 2.0 will be fully functional online through the ITC database

#### 2. COSA and the United Nations

In addition to our ongoing collaboration with UNCTAD and other bodies, COSA and the UN's International Trade Centre (ITC) are moving forward on the partnership that will result in the first global database on sustainability.

The ITC currently provides some of the best trade and development data, and this strategic collaboration with the ITC's "Trade for Sustainable Development" program strengthens its mandate to provide a better understanding of the impacts of sustainable trade. The resulting online platform that is currently under development with ITC will include volumes of data from thousands of datasets from COSA partners around the world.

It will offer users the ability to form their own queries about the effects of participating in sustainability programs based on the actual results of farmers. Users will find answers to questions about the effects of sustainability on:

- Yields
- Biodiversity
- Costs of production
- Health
- Labour practices
- Education
- Market access
- Risk management

Users will also be able to filter queries by a variety of variables such as country, farm size, certification type and gender. Interested in partnering or knowing more? [Contact us](#) or visit [www.sustainablecommodities.org/cosa](http://www.sustainablecommodities.org/cosa)

### 3. COSA Seeking Senior Researchers

In addition to working with world renowned experts, we want to continue an open door policy with leading think tanks and research institutions to help formulate state of the art multi-criteria analysis approaches.

As the demand for COSA research grows across countries, COSA is seeking research partners for field level research and also for statistical analysis. If you are an experienced researcher with a strong interest in impact assessment of sustainability standards, please contact our [Research Director](#).

The objective is for policymakers and researchers throughout the world to be able to customize their observations and views of many sorts of COSA data to better help identify the specific sustainability-related impacts that matter in particular situations.

For a look at a sample go to [www.sustainablecommodities.org/cosa/update](http://www.sustainablecommodities.org/cosa/update)

### 4. Standards Bodies Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Rainforest Alliance, Utz Certified, and Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International are among those initiatives that are actively advancing the understanding of their impacts in order to be more effective. COSA is working together with the leading standards bodies as they improve their M & E efforts. Although each relationship is different, the core objectives of COSA are to gather credible data that can add to the public knowledge of sustainability and to also partner in improving the effectiveness of any sustainability effort.

COSA is also an active part of the Committees operating under the umbrella of the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance to develop a broad global standard of impact assessment for standards bodies.

### 5. COSA Partnerships Expand

As different groups request the implementation of COSA methods in their countries, we are exploring the functionality of COSA as an M&E component within supply chains and development projects to provide reliable answers about sustainability on an ongoing basis. We are now building COSA into the project work of three agribusiness supply chains that

want to better understand their impacts at ground level. Some private firms are already using COSA-based work in a similar manner.

Collaborators in the recent adaptations and improvements to COSA deserve our thanks and recognition:

- The Colombian National Federation of Coffee Growers and Cenicafe
- The Regional Center for Social and Economic Studies (CRECE)
- Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE)
- The Tanzanian Agriculture Research Department
- Tanzanian Coffee Research Institute (TACRI)
- Sokoine University
- Ministry of Agriculture of Tanzania
- Technoserve and several cooperative groups
- ANADER Extension Agency
- The Sustainable Tree Crops Program

We would like to acknowledge several individual researchers for their support: University of Verona's Angelo Zago, University of Berne's Udo Höggel, and IFPRI's Gian Nicola Francesconi. We are also grateful for the support of SECO, Solidaridad, NORAD, BTC, USAID, ICO, ACDI /VOCA and FNC.

#### 6. COSA's Field Operations

COSA is now operational in Costa Rica, Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Tanzania, and Cote d'Ivoire. Planned expansion includes Brazil, Vietnam and Kenya, where negotiations are concluding to apply COSA on a program specific basis.

Cocoa assessment is developing well, particularly through our work in Cote d'Ivoire. With Solidaridad's support, COSA was adapted to cocoa and is now being applied to Utz Certified and Rainforest Alliance certified cocoa farms there. Discussions to expand into Ghana are now at an advanced stage. Requests for COSA in tea and other crop sectors are in the pipeline.

#### 7. Technical Assistance with SCAN

The Sustainable Commodity Assistance Network (SCAN) is a broad global framework to provide the technical support to enable producers to manage their farms and businesses more sustainably. At a pre-competitive level, SCAN can facilitate basic understanding of common processes to be more sustainable, attain any certifications and effectively access markets.

SCAN members — including UNDP, IFOAM, FLO, Utz Certified, Rainforest Alliance, Solidaridad and HIVOS — work through local partners. In each country local institutions are trained to support sustainable enterprises in vital areas such as: good agricultural practices, organizational development, financial literacy, market information, and internal control systems. As SCAN programs develop, COSA will be a valuable tool for measuring the costs and benefits of implementing these interventions.

Read more about SCAN at [www.sustainablecommodities.org/scan](http://www.sustainablecommodities.org/scan)

#### 8. The Finance Alliance for Sustainable Trade

The Finance Alliance for Sustainable Trade (FAST) a member driven, non-profit association that works to ensure continued growth of sustainable production and trade by improving the access and availability of affordable finance to sustainable producers in developing nations. Its hundreds of members include socially oriented and alternative lending institutions, SME producer organizations, development institutions and other stakeholders in

the agricultural commodities supply chain. FAST partners with SCAN to support the development and delivery of technical assistance in basic financial literacy skills. Producer groups trained through SCAN can become preferential “FAST track” recipients of credit and financial services from FAST.

For more go to [www.fastinternational.org](http://www.fastinternational.org)

#### 9. ‘State of Sustainability Initiatives’ Report

The State of Sustainability Initiatives (SSI) is a neutral reporting initiative launched earlier this year. Following consultations with stakeholders and its esteemed [Advisory Panel](#), the SSI has released its draft indicators for sustainability standards. The indicators will form the basis of an Annual Report across sustainability standards making it the first regular report on the status of the growing field of sustainability standards. The first Report is scheduled to be released in May 2010. The Advisory Panel has prioritized information on the impacts of sustainability standards. It has proposed that COSA provide this field level data as it becomes available.

For more information on the SSI visit [www.sustainablecommodities.org/ssi](http://www.sustainablecommodities.org/ssi)



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