Loma Saotavento farm

El Factor – Dominican Republic
The current situation of the smallholders' cocoa culture

- **Old farmers** (85% > 50 ans),
- Small plots (80% < 1,5 ha), 56% of them planted more than 25 years ago.
- **Production**: 600 to 800 kg/ha (World yield 2014: 460 kg/h FAOSTAT 2014)

- Very heterogeneous density of cocoa trees (from 100 to 1600 cocoa trees/ha) --> associated to 43 vegetal species, whose 12 represent 95% of the number of plants.
- **Cultivation system can be improved**: density and organization/design of the planting; choice of the species in relation to their use/the service they could offer.

The Dominican Republic Example (**O.Deheuvels** – 2015): enquiries on 102 farms in Duarte and El Ceibo area
We want need to find an alternative to the «classical» intensification methods.
Project started in 2015

1st phase in Dominican Republic before replication in South America and West AFrica

Innovating together for the sustainable cocoa of the future
Cacao Forest, a multi-stakeholder initiative

The issue: Current cocoa cultivation models are not adapted to growing cocoa in a way that is sustainable and suitable for family-based agriculture.

Intensive models little suited for family agriculture

Economic and social stagnation of family-based cocoa cultivation

The Objective: to create and to test with local producers new cultivation models that are:
- Based on agroforestry principles
- Adapted to local contexts
- In a Bottom-up process
3 steps

Analyzing cocoa culture in 3 regions in Dominican Republic

- Workshops with cocoa producers → CIRAD
- Finding market opportunities → TFT

Planting pilot parcels
The results (2015_2023 !)

Validated and tested cocoa ecosystems

Leaders identified among producers’ groups

Tested new market opportunities

Scale up within the country (new project)
Cacao Forest aims to re-invent cocoaculture with the farmers

COLLABORATIVE APPROACHES: after a long phase of diagnostic, a PhD student (M. Notaro) focuses on conception of « ideal models » with the farmers;

Conception participative de systèmes agroforestiers à base de cacaoyers (SAF cacao) et modélisation de trajectoires d’évolution à moyen et long terme – M. Notaro – UMR SYSTEM (CIRAD)

TEST OF SOLUTIONS:
- pilot parcels + test of value chains (fruits, timber...)

TRAINING OF FARMERS: workshop, GAP...

MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS governancy:
- From the farms to the cakes
- Research AND Development – long term thinking, short term tests
- From one value-chain oriented organization to a network of networks! Impact each aspect of the project!

To prepare a successful Scale up (AFTER CACAO FOREST), starting accumulating quick wins
- Better GAP
- Income: 14 k€ in 8 months