

EL SALVADOR Swiss PartnershIP

Intellectual Property Cooperation Programme

The project with El Salvador is part of the Swiss PartnershIP – Intellectual Property Cooperation Programme funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and implemented by the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (IPI). This programme aims to strengthen the intellectual property systems in partner countries in order to promote innovation and creativity and thereby contribute to improved competitiveness and sustainable economic development. The project with El Salvador focuses on the cocoa, chocolate and coffee sectors, as well as IP administration.

Project objectives

The overall objective of the Swiss PartnershIP – El Salvador is to positively contribute to the Salvadoran economy by helping Salvadoran partners to differentiate, protect and promote their cocoa, chocolate and coffee, and to strengthen their IP system.

The project directly responds to the development priorities of the Salvadoran government and private sector (cocoa, chocolate, and coffee). It is being implemented by the IPI together with its Salvadoran project partners – the “Centro Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria y Forestal” (CENTA), the “Instituto Salvadoreño de Café”



(ISC), and the Salvadoran Institute of Intellectual Property (ISPI).

Salvadoran cocoa has a distinctive sensory profile and is of a high quality, but still needs adequate IP protection to facilitate market access.

Quick project facts

Project duration

September 2024 – February 2028

Total budget

CHF 750,000

Donor agency

Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs – **SECO**

Implementing partners

Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property – **IPI**
Centro Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria y Forestal – **CENTA**
Instituto Salvadoreño del Café – **ISC**
Instituto Salvadoreño de la Propiedad Intelectual – **ISPI**

El Salvador country context 2024

Population: 6.3 million

Area: 21,041 km²

Annual GDP growth: 3%

Annual income per capita: USD

Relevance of the project for El Salvador

It is a national priority of El Salvador to improve its positioning as a source of high-quality and differentiated products – be it coffee, cocoa or other products. Cocoa from El Salvador is known for its aromatic flavour, which makes it suitable for high-quality markets. Nevertheless, the sector is still lacking adequate IP protection and thus offers insufficient added value. El Salvador’s “Policy for the Development of the Cocoa Value Chain” (2018) contains two specific objectives in this regard: (1) to position Salvadoran cocoa in the national and international markets with an emphasis on quality differentiation and added value; and (2) to strengthen the agribusiness management capabilities of value chain actors.

An adequate intellectual property protection is seen by CENTA, ISC and other government agencies as crucial to promote Salvadoran cocoa and coffee. IP tools such as geographical indications (GIs) and

certification marks protect and value unique combinations of high, differentiated quality, variety, and cultivation

techniques. GIs and certification marks also have a solid certification system, and they contribute positively to local sustainable development.

The priorities of El Salvador do not only include strengthening the cocoa sector as such, but also the nation's growing and mostly artisanal chocolate industry, which depends on differentiated, high-quality Salvadoran cocoa.



El Salvador has a growing chocolate industry. The Association of Chocolate Producers wants to protect Salvadoran chocolate with a certification mark “Chocolate de El Salvador”.

Last but not least, the project is supporting ISPI in its efforts to further strengthen El Salvador's national IP system and administration, which is key for strong, efficient protection and the enforcement of different IP rights.

Relevance of the project for Switzerland

Switzerland is a major importer of both green coffee and cocoa beans, and at the same time a producer and exporter of finished products, that is, roasted coffee and chocolate. Swiss traders and buyers in the differentiated market segments of the coffee and cocoa sectors have a strong interest in purchasing coffee and cocoa of consistently high and specific quality that is sustainably produced and traceable. The support provided through this project responds to their needs.

Both coffee and cocoa are also priority value chains in other SECO-financed projects. The Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa (SWISSCO) and the Swiss Sustainable Coffee Platform (SSCP) – initiatives founded by SECO and now run by the Swiss private sector – link Salvadoran producers with Swiss and international buyers.

Partners and beneficiaries

Direct partners and beneficiaries include CENTA, ISC, the Association of Chocolate Producers, and ISPI. Indirect beneficiaries include producers, processors, and SMEs in the fields of cocoa, chocolate and coffee, and the GI management associations of the six Salvadoran coffee regions already registered as GIs.

The project aims to support the Salvadoran chocolate industry by helping Salvadoran partners to arrange appropriate IP protection. IP protection for “Chocolate de El Salvador” against imitations and blended cocoa products of inferior quality will help to promote and add value to Salvadoran chocolate.

Compared with the cocoa sector, coffee is a more traditional sector in El Salvador, dating back to the end of the 19th century. As with the cocoa sector, the aim is to further improve the quality and differentiation of Salvadoran coffee, leading to more value added. For this purpose, the project is assisting ISC in revising its existing trade mark “Café de El Salvador”, developing a differentiation strategy and protecting it further as a certification mark so that it can access relevant markets.



Coffee is another important Salvadoran product with a long tradition. The project supports the ISC with an adequate IP protection for “Café de El Salvador”.

More information

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