

PRESS RELEASE

For release: Monday, 17 August 2026

CAA International Cocoa Conference Returns to Singapore as One of Asia's Leading Cocoa and Chocolate Industry Gatherings

Singapore, 17 August 2026 — The Cocoa Association of Asia (CAA) will host the 4th CAA International Cocoa Conference and Dinner from 2 to 3 September 2026 at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore, under the conference theme **“Good Together: Building an Agile Cocoa Future”**. The Conference is approaching full capacity, underscoring strong regional and international interest in Asia's cocoa and chocolate sector, and will bring together leaders across the cocoa and chocolate value chain for two days of dialogue, industry exchange and high-level networking.

Recognised as one of Asia's leading cocoa and chocolate industry gatherings, the Conference will convene **senior industry leaders, diplomatic representatives, policymakers**, manufacturers, traders, processors, sustainability practitioners, development partners, researchers, financial institutions and regional stakeholders. The 2026 programme will address issues that matter not only to the cocoa and chocolate sector, but also to wider conversations on food supply, consumer prices, sustainability, climate resilience, responsible trade and evolving EU regulations.

Aligned with CAA's mandate of **“Keeping Farmers Growing and Chocolate Flowing”**, the Conference will focus discussions on practical collaboration across the cocoa ecosystem — supporting farmers, strengthening responsible supply chains and helping ensure that cocoa and chocolate continue to reach businesses and consumers in a rapidly changing global market.

The programme features plenary discussions under themes including **“In Conversation With Some of Cocoa's Most Prominent Leaders”**, **“Invisible No More”**, **“What in the Cocoa World Is Going On?”**, **“Will Cocoa Grind to a Halt?”**, **“EU Crash Test”**, **“Can Cocoa Truly Go Green?”**, **“Reimagining Chocolate”** and **“The Bittersweet Byte”**. These sessions will explore farmer voices and diversity, including perspectives from the **International Farmers Network Forum (IFNF)**, cocoa pricing, future-focused supply resilience, evolving regulation, traceability, deforestation-free supply chains, climate-smart practices, innovation in chocolate, and the role of artificial intelligence in the cocoa value chain.

With registration nearing capacity, the Conference will also include masterclasses, CAA's Cocoa Village exhibition spaces, a curated photo exhibition, networking sessions and a gala dinner. The gala dinner, which is by ticket and invitation only, is fully subscribed, with a waiting list now in place. Together, these elements will offer delegates and media further opportunities to experience cocoa beyond the conference room — through origin stories, farming communities, industry partnerships, cultural connections and cocoa's journey from farm to market.

Selected ceremonial announcements will be made during the Conference, including developments linked to CAA's regional work and industry collaboration. Further details will remain under embargo until they are formally unveiled at the event.

The Conference is expected to welcome more than 600 delegates for the plenary sessions and over 700 guests for the gala dinner. Invited dignitaries and senior representatives from embassies, cocoa-origin countries, government agencies, development partners, regional organisations and industry leadership are expected to attend, subject to protocol, scheduling and accreditation arrangements.

“The CAA International Cocoa Conference is a platform for honest dialogue and practical partnership across the cocoa and chocolate value chain,” said Shirley Choo, Chief Operating Officer and Secretary General of CAA. “As Asia continues to grow in importance as a cocoa processing, manufacturing, innovation and consumption hub, our role is to bring stakeholders together to keep farmers growing and chocolates flowing.”

Conference timeline at a glance:

2 September 2026: Registration, opening ceremony, selected ceremonial announcements, plenary sessions, VIP exhibition walkthrough, Cocoa Village and photo exhibition, and networking cocktail.

3 September 2026: Masterclasses, continued plenary sessions, Cocoa Village and photo exhibition, and closing remarks. The gala dinner is sold out and now has a waiting list.

4 September 2026: Optional free-and-easy activities and Singapore tour opportunities for delegates, designed to showcase Singapore’s heritage, culture and visitor experience beyond the Conference.

Background on CAA and Singapore relevance:

Headquartered in Singapore since 2003, CAA represents more than 40 key stakeholders across the Asia-Pacific cocoa and chocolate sector. Many members maintain regional headquarters, factories, trading operations, logistics networks and R&D functions in Singapore, contributing to the country’s role as a trusted hub for cocoa trade, food manufacturing, innovation, finance, logistics and sustainability.

Strategic context:

Asia is an increasingly important centre for cocoa processing, chocolate manufacturing, ingredient innovation, consumer market growth and supply chain connectivity. Conference discussions will cover cocoa market dynamics, origin and processing developments, sustainability expectations, regulatory shifts, responsible sourcing, climate resilience, financing, technology and the future of cocoa consumption in Asia.

Media note

Certain ceremonial details and selected announcements connected to the Conference will be shared only at the time of their official unveiling. Media representatives are kindly requested not to publish or refer to embargoed details before they are formally announced by CAA.

Media enquiries and accreditation

Media representatives interested in covering the Conference may contact the CAA Secretariat for accreditation, interview requests and access arrangements.

Media contact: CAA Secretariat

Email: secretariatDL@cocoaasia.org

Conference website: www.caacocoaconference.org

Website: www.cocoaasia.org



CAA INTERNATIONAL COCOA CONFERENCE & DINNER

2 - 3 SEPTEMBER 2026
MARINA BAY SANDS
SINGAPORE

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME



**ASIA'S MOST PROMINENT
COCOA AND CHOCOLATE
CONFERENCE IS BACK!**

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Official Supply Chain Partner



Official Sustainability Partner



Official Industry Development Partner



Official Traceability and Compliance Partner



Official Post-harvest Solutions Partner



Pre-Gala Networking Cocktail Sponsor



Networking Cocktail Sponsor



Day 1 Lunch Sponsor



Day 2 Lunch Sponsor



INTERNATIONAL FARMERS NETWORK FORUM PARTNERS



AIRLINE AND HOTEL PARTNERS



HELD IN

MARINA BAY SANDS
SINGAPORE



PARTNERSHIP



SUPPORTED BY



MEDIA PARTNER



Attire: Business Formal (Tie Optional for men) | Gala Dinner: Formal or Traditional Costume

WEDNESDAY



02.09.2026

7:30 AM

REGISTRATION OPENS L4, MELATI

Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall Opens

8:20 AM –
10:30 AM

OPENING CEREMONY

- Welcome Speeches
- Welcome by CAA Chairman
 - Guest of Honour
 - Secretary-General

Special segment – Unveiling Ceremony
Signing Ceremony & Phototaking



10:30 AM –
11:00 AM

COFFEE BREAK

VIP Exhibition Hall Walkthrough
Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall

11:00 AM –
12:15 PM

PLENARY 1

"IN CONVERSATION WITH"

(Chatam House Rules applies)

12:15 PM –
1:30 PM

PLENARY 2

"INVISIBLE NO MORE"

1:30 PM –
2:30 PM

LUNCH BREAK

Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall
Sponsored by Commodity Quest

2:30 PM –
3:30 PM

PLENARY 3A

WHAT IN THE COCOA WORLD IS GOING ON?!

3:30 PM –
4:30 PM

PLENARY 3B

WILL COCOA GRIND TO A HALT?

4:30 PM –
4:45 PM

COCOA BREAK

Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall

4:45 PM –
6:00 PM

PLENARY 4

EU CRASH TEST

6:00 PM

END OF DAY 1

6:00 PM –
6:30 PM

REGISTRATION FOR NETWORKING COCKTAIL

Baywalk area, Level 4
Sponsored by StoneX



VISIT SINGAPORE



THURSDAY

03.09.2026

8:00 AM

REGISTRATION OPENS L4, MELATI

Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall Opens

09:00 AM –
09:45 AM

MASTERCLASS, GROUP 1

- Diakite Cocoa Products
- Swisscontact
- JSG Commodities

09:45 AM –
10:00 AM

BREAK

Transition to Group 2

10:00 AM –
10:45 AM

MASTERCLASS, GROUP 2

- Enfactum
- ECA- CABISCO Joint Cocoa Research Fund
- International Cocoa Initiative

10:45 AM –
11:00 AM

COFFEE BREAK

Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall

11:00 AM –
12:30 PM

PLENARY 5

REIMAGINING CHOCOLATE

12:30 PM –
1:30 PM

LUNCH BREAK

Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall
Sponsored by Cargill

1:30 PM –
3:00 PM

PLENARY 6

CAN COCOA TRULY GO GREEN?

3:00 PM –
4:15 PM

PLENARY 7

THE BITTERSWEET BYTE

Balancing AI's promise with the realities of the
cocoa value chain

CLOSING REMARKS

COCOA BREAK

Cocoa Village & Photo Exhibition Hall

DRESS CODE
FORMAL

5:30 PM

GALA DINNER REGISTRATION

LEVEL 4, MELATI & ORCHID BALLROOM

6:00 PM –
7:00 PM

PRE-GALA DINNER COCKTAIL - ALL TICKET HOLDERS

Baywalk area, Level 4
Sponsored by Succden

7:00 PM –
10:00 PM

GALA DINNER AWARD CEREMONY

Orchid Ballroom, Level 4

! All Delegates
to be seated
by 7:00pm

FRIDAY

04.09.2026

FREE AND EASY
TOURS AVAILABLE FOR BOOKING [VIEW HERE](#)



Note: Updates on agenda to be expected
Updated on 31 July 2026

DAY 1, 2 SEP, WED - PLENARY 1

IN CONVERSATION WITH SOME OF COCOA'S MOST PROMINENT LEADERS

This session will explore how each of you sees the current state of the cocoa world — just honest dialogue about where the cocoa world is headed over the next 3-5 years. It's designed to set the tone for our conference e.g on prices, supply, climate, regulation, what keeps you awake at night.

MODERATOR



PROF. ANNIE KOH

Professor Emeritus of
Finance (Practice)
Singapore
Management
University

PANEL



BRANDON TAY

CEO
Guan Chong
Berhad



**ALAIN
FREYMOND**

President Global Cocoa
Barry Callebaut



**TEJINDER SINGH
SARAON**

Managing Director
& CEO
ofi Cocoa



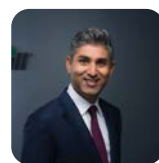
TEY HOW KEONG

Executive Director
& CEO
JB Cocoa



DARREN O'BRIEN

Chief Cocoa Officer &
Chief Corporate &
Government Affairs
(CGA) Officer
Mondelēz International



KASHAN RASHID

Vice President &
Managing Director,
Food
Cargill, SEA, Australia
& NZ

P2 - INVISIBLE NO MORE

Built around the International Farmers Network Forum (IFNF), this session puts young farmers and women leaders in the spotlight. They will share their experiences of growing cocoa today - from income and climate to market access - as well as business ideas they have developed with industry mentors. The discussion will focus on what companies can do differently on the ground: how to support these ideas, adjust sourcing models and make sure farmer voices shape real decisions, not just side events.

OPENING REMARKS



**GRICHA
SAFARIAN**

Former GM
and Current
Shareholder of
Puratos Grand
Place
Indochina -
Founder and
GM of The
Cocoa Project

SPEAKER/ MODERATOR



**SELENE
SCOTTON**

Group
Cocoa
Sustainability
Manager
Puratos
Grand-Place
Indochina


PANEL



**FAY FAY
CHOO**

Asia Director
Cocoa
Sustainable
Sourcing
Mars



**CHEOK MEI-
ING**

Director,
Partnerships
Development,
Supply Chains
Save the
Children
Federation, Inc.



**LOUISE
MABULO**

Founder
The Cacao
Project

COCOA VILLAGE EXHIBITION OPENS 08:00 DAILY



Marine Bay Sands Exhibition Level 4

AI illustration

DAY 1, 2 SEP, WED - CONT'D

P3A - WHAT IN THE COCOA WORLD IS GOING ON?!

A session that brings together the industry's most respected voices to discuss the unprecedented developments occurring across the global cocoa and chocolate sector. With record prices, supply uncertainty, changing regulations and evolving consumer expectations, this discussion aims to separate short-term noise from long-term structural shifts and explore what might lie ahead for the industry.

SPEAKER



CHRIS DE LAVIGNE

Executive Director,
Strategy Risk &
Transactions
Deloitte (SEA)

Deloitte.

MODERATOR



ANTHONY MYERS

Founder &
Editor-in-Chief
CocoaRadar



PANEL



MICHEL ARRION

Executive Director
International Cocoa
Organisation (ICCO)



ALEX ASSANVO

Executive Secretary
Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana
Cocoa Initiative
(CIGCI)



P3B - WILL COCOA GRIND TO A HALT!

This session addresses one of the most pressing questions facing the cocoa and chocolate industry today. With record cocoa prices, persistent supply concerns, cost-of-living pressures and increasing regulatory requirements, many are questioning what this means for grindings, consumer demand and the future affordability of chocolate. The objective is not just to examine what is happening today, but to challenge assumptions about what demand and consumption could look like over the coming years.

MODERATOR



ANTHONY MYERS

Founder &
Editor-in-Chief
CocoaRadar



PANEL



ERIC BERGMAN

Head of Cocoa
& Coffee Trading
JSG
Commodities



PAUL FELIX TIOPUTRA

Cocoa Product
Director -
APAC
Cargill



PAUL ARENSEN

Senior Director,
Cocoa Sourcing
and Trading
Barry Callebaut



MICHAEL CLARK

Vice President
Commodity
Price Risk
Management
Mondelez
International



MAX GOETTLER

Head of
Trading
JB Cocoa



P4 - EU CRASH TEST

The EU's shifting regulatory landscape has sent shockwaves across the cocoa world. With delays, reconsiderations and rising compliance expectations, this session tests companies' resilience, traceability systems, and commitment to sustainability — and explores the opportunity for alignment and leadership, is Asia and the rest of the world ready?

SPEAKER



BUCKI MICHAEL

Counsellor on
Environment and
Agriculture,
Delegation of the
European Union to
Thailand

MODERATOR



ANTHONY MYERS

Founder &
Editor-in-Chief
CocoaRadar



PANEL



MATTHIJS DE MEER

Director EU Affairs &
Sustainability
European Cocoa
Association



SARAH DEKKICHE

Director of Policy
and Partnerships
International Cocoa
Initiative (ICI)



FUZZ KITTO

Co-Director
Be Slavery Free,
The Chocolate
Scorecard



DAY 2, 3 SEP, THURS

P5 - REIMAGINING CHOCOLATE

This forward-looking session explores how chocolate itself is evolving — how brands and manufacturers are reworking recipes and formats under high input costs and tighter regulations, and what it takes to design the next generation of chocolate experiences.

SPEAKER



HANSIKA SUBRAMANIAN
Principal Analyst
Mintel



MODERATOR



YETING LIU

Vice President, Global
Cocoa Coating Centre
of Excellence and R&D
AMEA
Barry Callebaut Group



PANEL



TOBIAS GARRITT

Founder & CEO
Junglegold Ball



JAKE BERBER

Co-Founder, CEO
Prefer



MANFRED KU

PhD Candidate,
National University
Singapore

P6 - CAN COCOA TRULY GO GREEN?

Making cocoa "green" is not just about launching a new project or report. This session looks at what it would really take to move towards a low-carbon, nature-positive cocoa sector. Speakers will discuss climate-smart and agroforestry practices, deforestation-free supply chains, traceability, carbon markets and who actually pays for all of this. The conversation will focus on what is already working, where the bottlenecks are, and how to make sure farmers benefit from the transition

SPEAKER



THOMAS COLONNA

Head of the Asia
Regional Office
European Forest
Institute (EFI)



MODERATOR



MEGAN WILLIS

Founder and
Director
Willis Lee
Advisory

PANEL



LEAH WICZOREK

Vice President
Carbon Markets
EMEA & APAC,
Dubai



JOHN KELLY

Sustainability
Director, Customer
Solutions
Barry Callebaut



NATCHAYA SUKKAEW

APAC Product
Delivery Manager
Kaltiva



P7 - THE BITTERSWEET BYTE

This plenary looks at how far AI is genuinely helping the cocoa sector today — and where expectations are running ahead of reality. Rather than asking whether cocoa should adopt more AI, the session starts from what is already happening in cocoa and in other crops such as rice, coffee and palm oil, where tools like machine learning and computer vision have delivered both useful breakthroughs and clear disappointments.

MODERATOR



WILLIAM GAULTIER

Partner
Enfactum



PANEL



HANS CHRISTIAN FLEISCHER

Chief
Commercial
Officer
Farmforce



EDUARDO BURG

Founder
COA & Co



NATALIA POLIAKOVA

Founder
Unscript IKIGA!



MISHARI MUQBIL

Fractional CTO
Mishari.net