



Tropentag, October 6-8, 2009, Hamburg

“Biophysical and Socio-economic Frame Conditions  
for the Sustainable Management  
of Natural Resources”

## Sustainable Cocoa Production in Southern Cameroon: Potentials and Constraints of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

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### Abstract

This research work was aimed at complementing the theoretical and practical courses offered to the final year students of the International Master of Science in Rural Development (IMRD) in the ERAMUS MUNDUS programme co-hosted by Ghent University Belgium (coordinating), Humboldt University Germany, PISA University Italy, Cordoba University Spain and Agrocampus Rennes France.

This study aimed to analyse the potentials and constraints of sustainable cocoa production in Southern Cameroon through the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques. Specifically, the study will probe into the following: identify current Integrated Pest and Management practices by smallholders and assess factors that favour adoption of the technique (IPM). To attend the objectives of this study, semi structure interview was conducted to 20 smallholders using a guided questionnaire, focus group discussion with some members (president-manager and secretary general) of common initiative groups and cooperative, direct field observation and lastly key informant interviews conducted with some stakeholders (actors) in the cocoa sector using the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method and tools. The 20 smallholders that the questionnaire was administered to are graduated of the farmer field school (FFS) conducted by International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) under its Sustainable Tree Crop Program (STCP).

Concerning identification of current Integrated Pest Management practice by smallholders, they identified in order of importance in terms of time concerning labour and capital investment, the following practices were listed: pruning, clearing, harvesting, spraying, shade management etc. ranked according to importance.

Factors such as price incentives, available markets for cocoa, traditional (indigenous) knowledge, good climate and vegetation, scarcity and high prices of chemicals are amongst the reasons that facilitated the adoption of Integrated Pest Management techniques by smallholders in the study area.

**Keywords:** IPM, PRA, smallholders, sustainable cocoa production