

## ACOPAGRO

The Cooperativa Agraria Cacaotera ACOPAGRO is an organization of more than 2000 small-scale specialty Fairtrade and Organic cocoa producers in the San Martín region of Peru.

One of the main impact areas the co-op focuses on is reforestation and practicing sound agroforestry. In the last 15 years, they have planted more than three million trees on degraded land. Agroforestry, reforestation, and the sale of carbon credits have the benefit of reducing pressure on forests by preventing agricultural expansion, providing sources of firewood and wood to communities, and increasing conservation.

For cocoa farmer Betman González Saavedra, reforestation dates back decades ago when he began planting forest plants on his initiative so the children and grandchildren can enjoy it. Since joining ACOPAGRO and being able to sell his cocoa on Fairtrade terms, he appreciates that he can receive technical assistance, courses, and workshops financed with the Fairtrade Premium to continue his work.

*He says: "Reforestation of trees is important to control microclimates, conservation, and to have fresher and purer air... Having reforested areas allows you to take care of the environment."*

Betman also helps other farmers learn about the benefits of these practices. The trees - native species of the region such as the copaiba or the capirona - are planted on boundaries around cocoa farms, or on dedicated areas of between 1 and 2 hectares. On planting days, a specialist organizes a group of people for the *Choba-Choba* - a Quechua expression that reflects the cooperation of different families for a common goal.

"Fairtrade is a relief because we were able to start planting forest plants, the co-operative has the resources to pay technicians and it is very healthy because our children will be able to be members in the future and they have money to finance their studies."

Betman also believes that reforestation will provide a secure retirement, through being able to sell the adult trees and obtain carbon credits.

*"[Fairtrade] gives us the Fairtrade Premium that is distributed in the cooperative for infrastructure, education, technical assistance provided by the cooperative's technicians. For this reason, we thank Fairtrade and the technicians who are paid by the cooperative that provides us with its services and prepare us for the farm."*

## BETHY JUZGA GARGAT

*"From Fairtrade, we receive a lot because they come to address three fundamental aspects: the economic, social and environmental aspects. That direction has made us change our lifestyles in our homes; we have many joys. Our children now have more hope for the future and are not forgotten. Fairtrade recommends Standards, but we also have to comply to make a change. With the Premium we feel happy as farmers."*

## SARITA TUANAMA SALAS