

## Dominican republic nico specific companies and products

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Our subsidiary YACAO was founded by PRONATEC with local partners in 1999. Since then, it has been supplying us with aromatic organic and fair trade cocoa beans from the Dominican Republic. Through its partnership with the FUNDOPO smallholder organisation, YACAO has brought over 3,000 smallholders directly into our supply chain.

By helping to set up the Fundaci?n Dominicana de Productores Org?nicos (FUNDOPO) in 2002, YACAO laid the foundations for one of the most successful smallholder organisations in the Dominican Republic. Having started with just 84 families, FUNDOPO has grown to have over 3,000 members. By selling their organic fair trade cocoa beans, the smallholder families receive a regular income based on the fair trade minimum price plus organic and fair trade premiums on top.

Our cocoa beans from the Dominican Republic travel by container ship from the countries of origin to European sea ports. Until recently, that was where their journey by ship ended. The cocoa beans were then transported to their destination by rail or lorry. As of 2023, we have been able to improve the carbon footprint of our cocoa products by transporting most of our beans by ship up the Rhine to Basel in Switzerland. From Basel, they travel just a short distance by lorry to our cocoa processing plant PRONATEC Swiss Cocoa Production near Schaffhausen by the Rhine Falls.

Biodiversity - cultivation is based on a woodland-like agroforestry system, including different fruit trees and shade trees, with 7% of the land remaining uncultivated (in accordance with Bio Suisse certification requirements)

YACAO serves as a loyal partner for the Dominican smallholders to this day. "We pay a fair price to the local farmers, making sure the smallholder families receive their money immediately. We also take care of fermentation, drying, quality control and export of the organic cocoa beans," says Kilian Moser in an interview for our newsletter. (The two managing directors Kilian Moser of YACAO and Wilder Nahui of FUNDOPO tell us in this interview about the opportunities and challenges of their current cooperation).

YACAO operates four processing centres and employs around 80 permanent staff plus an additional 70 seasonal workers during the main harvest season. About 72% of the people working at the YACAO headquarters in Santo Domingo are women.



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