

France pledges investment to boost sustainable cotton in Ivory Coast

By [Ange Aboa](#)

30 Apr 2021

ABIDJAN, Côte d'Ivoire - France's development agency will invest 68.5m euros (\$83.04m) over the next five years to boost cotton production in Ivory Coast, economy minister Bruno Le Maire said during a visit to the West African country on Thursday.



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Le Maire said the programme will target 120,000 cotton farmers in the northern region of the country and boost revenue in the cotton sector, benefiting the Ivorian economy.

The country produced 490,000 tonnes of cotton in the 2019/20 season and 2020/21 output is forecast at 500,000 tonnes by the agriculture ministry.

France's aid pledge comes as the European Union (EU), Ivory Coast's biggest trading partner, strives to introduce domestic laws to prevent the import of commodities and products linked to deforestation and human rights abuses.

Ivory Coast is negotiating with the EU to determine minimum standards for sustainability, particularly in cocoa production.

Le Maire said that France plans to provide similar aid to Ivory Coast's cocoa sector to improve sustainable development there as well.

"Ivory Coast is the world's biggest cocoa producer, but having an agri-food industry behind it that enhances production, will protect it from fluctuating cocoa prices and preserve employment and it adds value in the sector," said Le Maire.

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