

# Ivory Coast to boost cocoa grinding capacity with new plants

By Ange Aboa

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Ivory Coast will increase the amount of cocoa it processes domestically to 49% of production starting in October with the addition of several new plants, the head of the sector regulator said on Friday.



Workers sew up sacks of cocoa next to a warehouse in Soubre, Ivory Coast January 8, 2021. REUTERS/Luc Gnago

Ivory Coast is the world's top cocoa producer with an annual production of about 2.2 million tonnes. Currently, about 35-40% is processed in the country and the rest is exported, but the government has a goal of increasing that to at least 50%.

The West African country has signed an agreement with the United Arab Emirates for the construction of a new plant in San Pedro with a grinding capacity of 120,000 tonnes, said Yves Brahima Kone, director general of the Coffee and Cocoa Council (CCC), who was in Abu Dhabi this month to open a new CCC office.

"This permanent representation (in Abu Dhabi) is the fruit of our new vision for Ivorian cocoa that we want to export all over the world. This office will allow us to explore markets in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa," he told Reuters.

Ivory Coast also expects two new factories financed by China to enter into production in October, with a production capacity of 50,000 tonnes each, Kone said.

The new plants will allow the country to process more than 1 million tonnes of cocoa annually, making it the world's leading cocoa grinder, he said. Currently, it vies with the Netherlands for the top spot.

The state has implemented an aggressive policy in recent years to make local processing attractive, including offering tax cuts and other incentives to Ivorian companies.

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