Best Practices for Intercropping in Coffee and Cocoa

The continuous practice of planting crops together with trees highly increase on the productivity of the land in a given period of time which improves on farmer‘s income.

As combining perenial crops with other crops or trees is a form of agroforestry, intercropping perenials enhances socioeconomic and ecological benefits. Specific combination of crops and trees are adopted according to needs of farmers, environment and market access.

Intercropping practices

Suitable intercropping depends on location, bio physical contacts and farmer‘s preference and as coffee is intercropped with vegetables, spices or fruits, intercropping with legumes add nitrogen used by coffee.

Similarly, cocoa can be established with maize, cassava, papaya and banana as choice of system depend on preferences and capacities. Select suitable trees and crops together with management practices when making used plan and optimize shade management for healthy main crop to prevent competition for light, water and nutrients.

Additionally, adapt fertilizer and pest management requirements for each crop in the system and intercropping should consider labour distribution over the year and allow mechanisation as well. Continue by removing the ageing and un productive trees to create more space in each existing plantation.

Finally, add in crops in spaces created basing on preference

and plant new crops in structured manner and according to planting distances.