

## **Eni's commitment to sustainability in Côte d'Ivoire, interview with Giuseppe Marando, Sustainability Manager in the country (full version)**

Date: 11 February 2025

### **What is the strategic importance of social and environmental sustainability for Eni in Côte d'Ivoire?**

Environmental and social sustainability drive and orient Eni's strategy and operations in the country, aligning seamlessly with the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Baleine is the first net-zero emission project in Africa (Scope 1 and 2) and is already being studied in the energy sector. We aim to be leaders in innovation, blending operational excellence with sustainability, and we have begun this journey with clear, shared commitments. In December 2021, we signed a Memorandum with the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, through its Minister of Mines, Oil and Energy. We agreed to work together to advance decarbonisation, make the most of local resources, develop agricultural projects for vegetable oil production, and support local communities. Our goal is to become a model of sustainability for our peers and for those who want to invest responsibly in the country.

### **What are the benefits for local farmers participating in the agrifeedstock project?**

To answer the question you need to provide some context. The project to make vegetable oil from rubber tree waste seeds for biofuel started with a July 2023 agreement with the Ivorian Federation of Rubber Producers. This federation represents more than 200,000 families living chiefly along the coast and in the southwest of the country. Once harvested, the seeds are processed in a local centre near Abidjan, equipped with advanced technologies for the extraction of vegetable oil. The key benefit for local farmers is the generation of economic value from a by-product (waste seeds) that previously were just cleared from the land. The project has therefore generated additional income for thousands of families who have improved their livelihoods.

### **How do decarbonisation and local development intertwine in Côte d'Ivoire?**

The Baleine project's strategy to cut emissions combines advanced technology with innovative measures such as clean cooking and the protection and renewal of forests. The improved stoves, with their capacity to cut down on wood and charcoal use, have already benefited families in the recipient communities. Among these advantages, the most significant are certainly time and resource savings in gathering wood, and better health, especially for women who spend more time near cooking areas breathing in harmful fumes. Eni and the Ivorian Ministry of Water and Forests have signed the agreement for the Conservation and Restoration Project for fourteen forests. The initiative also includes developing agroforestry systems with local farmers and training communities in sustainable forest management and farming.

Lastly, as mentioned, the vegetable oils initiative significantly boosts local development by creating new jobs and extra income for the community.

### **In what areas does Eni act to promote the country's local development?**

The main areas of intervention in the country are education, economic diversification and community health. Starting with education, we have initiated a project with the AVSI Foundation (Volunteer Associations for International Service) to refurbish twenty primary and two secondary schools, opened by the Minister of National Education and Literacy in October 2023. Teacher training programmes and parent participation in student activities also positively impact the whole school ecosystem.

Also in the field of education, we have launched a programme with Iveco and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), which offers 300 young people from vulnerable communities vocational training in the energy and automotive sectors. We are also investing in university education in the energy sector in collaboration with the Institut National Polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny. In the health sector, we are engaged in restructuring and equipping health centres at regional and national level. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and NGOs such as Medici con l'Africa CUAMM and IRC, we launched two projects aimed at strengthening the health system by modernising hospitals and ambulances, providing medical equipment and improving the quality of care. Finally, in the area of economic diversification, the Ethical Fashion Initiative is underway in collaboration with the International Trade Center, a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. Our goal is to establish a textile production hub in Abidjan and to foster the growth of a sustainable fashion industry that creates jobs, especially for young people.