

Ivory Coast Seeks to Produce 300,000 Tons of Rubber in 2013

Ivory Coast expects to produce 300,000 metric tons of rubber in 2013 as it plans to raise funds for developing new production zones of the crop.

Output this year was lower than expected, at 230,000 tons from a forecast of 250,000 tons, Albert Konan, executive secretary of the Rubber Development Fund, said in a phone interview from the commercial capital, Abidjan. He didn't give a reason for the missed target.

In 2013, the fund plans to sponsor 5,000 rubber farmers and create new plantations spanning about 20,000 hectares (49,421 acres) in the West African nation, Konan said.

The fund, which is managed by the national natural rubber trade association Apromac, seeks to boost production to 600,000 tons by 2020 if it can attract donor funds to finance its expansion plans, he said.

Natural rubber produces its crop year-round while cocoa is harvested twice a year. Ivory Coast is the world's biggest grower of the chocolate ingredient. Bloomberg