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#### Short Communication

Cocoa residues as viable biomass for renewable energy production through anaerobic digestion.

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## ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Title: Cocoa residues as viable biomass for renewable energy production through anaerobic digestion.

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#### Abstract

The aim of this work was to evaluate the bioenergy potential of cocoa residue via anaerobic digestion. Batch and fed-batch lab-scale reactors were operated under low and high solids conditions. In the batch tests,  $59 \pm 4\%$  of Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) was recovered as methane. This corresponded with an average methane yield of 174 (wet) and 193 (dry) L kg<sup>-1</sup> volatile solids fed, whereas a series of fed-batch reactors produced  $70 \pm 24$  (wet) and  $107 \pm 39$  (dry) L CH<sub>4</sub> kg<sup>-1</sup> volatile solids fed during stable conditions. A case study was developed for canton Balao (Ecuador) based on our experimental data, operational estimates and available cocoa waste in the area. Annually, 8341 MWh could be produced, meeting 88% of the current electricity demand in Balao. This case study proves the potential for cocoa waste as a source of renewable energy in rural areas.

Keywords: biogas, cocoa waste, bio-energy, methane, agricultural residues

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