

ANALYSIS OF THE COMPETITIVENESS OF COCOA BEAN EXPORTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET



Muhammad Zidhan Arifianto¹

Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur, Surabaya, Indonesia
20024010072@student.upnjatim.ac.id

Mubarokah²

Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur, Surabaya, Indonesia
mubarokah@upnjatim.ac.id

Mirza Andrian Syah³

Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur, Surabaya, Indonesia
mirza.a.agribis@upnjatim.ac.id

Abstract

Indonesia is one of the world's largest cocoa-producing countries; however, the competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa beans in the international market has been steadily declining. This study aims to analyze the comparative and competitive advantages of Indonesian cocoa beans over a ten-year period from 2014 to 2024, as well as Indonesia's efforts to maintain and increase its market share in the international market, particularly in Malaysia. The methods used in this study include Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) to measure comparative advantage, Export Product Dynamics (EPD) to analyze competitive advantage, and Market Share Analysis (MSA) to assess the growth of Indonesia's market share compared to competing countries. The types of cocoa beans used in this study are whole or broken, raw or roasted, fermented or non-fermented, with HS code 180100. The results of this study indicate that the competitiveness of Indonesia's cocoa bean exports is unstable. Indonesia's RCA values do not consistently exceed one, suggesting that its comparative advantage has not been maintained. Meanwhile, in the EPD analysis, the position of Indonesia's cocoa bean exports shifts across several quadrants, indicating that its competitiveness is inconsistent within the market. The results of the MSA analysis indicate that Indonesia's market share has declined. Indonesia has significant potential for cocoa bean exports. Therefore, various strategic efforts are needed to enhance the competitiveness of Indonesia's cocoa exports by improving product quality and productivity, as well as strengthening trade policies that support cocoa bean exports.

Keywords: Cocoa Beans, Export Competitiveness, RCA, EPD, Market Share

INTRODUCTION

International trade is the exchange of goods and services among businesses from various countries and serves as one of the primary means for Indonesia to drive economic growth. International trade, including exports and imports, contributes to the country's economic growth and influences Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Ikaningtyas *et al.*, 2023). Exports play a crucial role in boosting the national economy through the agricultural sector, particularly the plantation sub-sector, which consistently makes a significant contribution to international trade (Brahmana and Novianti, 2022). The plantation crop subsector, which is the agricultural subsector with the highest GDP contribution in Indonesia, is projected to reach Rp 668,379.8 billion in 2023 and continues to grow rapidly each year.

Table 1.
Indonesian Cocoa Production Data

Year	Cocoa Production (ton)
2014	728.400
2015	593.331
2016	656.817
2017	590.684
2018	767.280
2019	734.795
2020	720.660
2021	650.611
2022	650.611
2023	641.741
2024	650.000

Source: *Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS)* (2024)

Cocoa (*Theobroma cacao* L.) is a high-value agricultural commodity with promising global market prospects, and Indonesia is recognized as one of the world's leading producers of cocoa beans, alongside countries such as Ivory Coast and Ecuador. Table 1, which presents cocoa production data from Indonesia's Central Statistics Agency (BPS) for the 2014–2024 period, shows a significant decline, with production in 2014 at 728,400 tons and dropping to 650,000 tons by 2024. This situation has a direct impact on Indonesia's cocoa bean exports, particularly regarding the continuity and volume of supply in the international market, especially to Malaysia, which is Indonesia's largest cocoa importer. Although Indonesia possesses a comparative advantage in terms of geographical location and natural resources, unstable and declining production could hinder its ability to consistently meet global market demand, potentially eroding buyer confidence and jeopardizing long-term contracts with major importers such as Malaysia.

Indonesia's cocoa bean exports to Malaysia have not reached their full potential due to low quality and productivity, which are influenced by post-harvest processes that do not meet standards, resulting in limited demand in the international market (Directorate General of Plantations, 2022). As a cocoa bean processing country, Malaysia prefers high-quality products, whereas Indonesia has not been able to compete efficiently due to high logistics costs and suboptimal utilization of trade agreements (Sudaryanto, 2021). Global demand for high-quality cocoa beans presents an opportunity for Indonesia to expand its market (ICCO,

2023). However, supply continuity remains a major constraint due to fluctuating production, weak supply chains, and minimal post-harvest investment (Setiawan and Siregar, 2020).

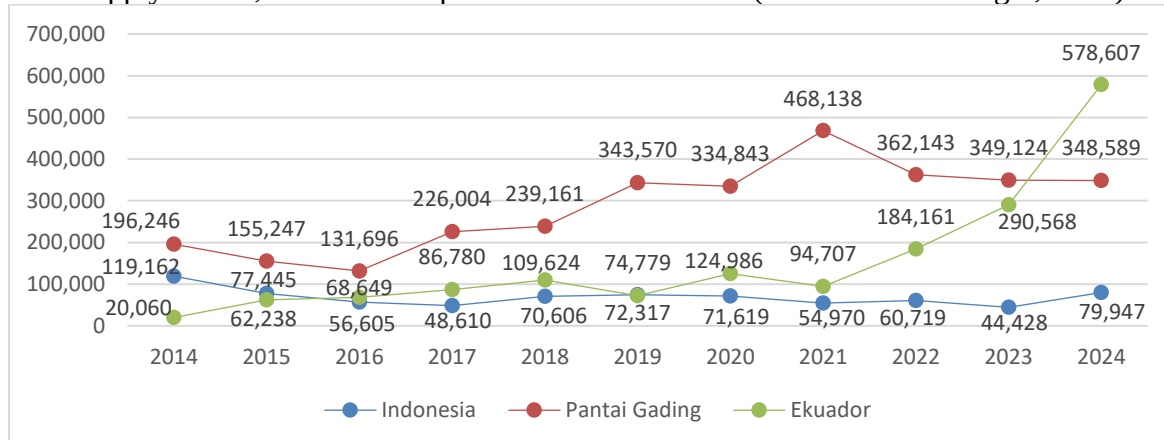


Figure 1.
Value of Cocoa Bean Exports from Several Countries to Malaysia 2014-2024
Source: *International Trade Centre (ITC) 2014-2024.*

Based on Figure 1, the value of Indonesia's cocoa bean exports to Malaysia, according to the International Trade Centre (ITC), fluctuated and remained relatively low compared to competing countries during the 2014–2024 period. In 2014, export values were still relatively high, but declined significantly by 2016. Subsequently, exports increased during the 2018–2020 period, although this growth did not continue consistently in the following years. This decline was caused by low bean quality, weak post-harvest technology, and a lack of product value-added.

Regulation of the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia No. 39/PMK.05/2022 on Technical Guidelines for the Implementation of the State Expenditure Budget in Ministries/Agencies has an indirect impact on cocoa bean export activities by strengthening budget management in the public sector that supports promotion, export assistance, and the strengthening of related institutions. This PMK clarifies the budget allocation mechanisms for programs of ministries such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Trade, and the Quarantine Agency, which play a crucial role in supporting the export of strategic commodities, including cocoa. Although it does not specifically regulate cocoa exports, the implementation of this PMK impacts the effectiveness of government funding for activities supporting the export of flagship commodities.

Several previous studies have shown that the competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa exports has declined in the international market. This is influenced by various factors, such as product quality, productivity, trade policies, and competition from other producing countries. Therefore, a more in-depth analysis of the competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa bean exports, particularly in the Malaysian market, is needed. This study aims to analyze comparative advantages, assess the competitive edge of cocoa exports in the Malaysian market, examine the development of Indonesia's cocoa export market share in Malaysia, and formulate strategies to enhance and sustain the market share of cocoa bean exports to Malaysia based on the findings of this analysis.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Comparative Advantage

Comparative advantage refers to a country's ability to produce and export certain commodities more efficiently than other countries. This concept explains that every country will benefit by focusing its production on commodities that have a relatively higher efficiency in international trade. Comparative advantage is one of the key indicators for assessing a country's export competitiveness in the global market. In international trade research, comparative advantage is generally measured using the Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) method.

RCA method is used to determine the level of competitiveness of a commodity based on its export performance. An RCA value greater than 1 indicates that a country has a comparative advantage in that commodity, while an RCA value less than 1 indicates relatively low competitiveness in the international market. For agricultural commodities, comparative advantage is influenced by factors such as natural resources, productivity, product quality, and the trade policies implemented by the government.

Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage refers to the ability of a country or company to maintain competitiveness through product quality, innovation, production efficiency, technology, and the ability to meet the needs of the international market. Competitive advantage is influenced not only by the availability of resources but also by product development strategies and the ability to face global competition (Sari & Putra, 2023). In international trade, competitive advantage is used to assess a commodity's ability to maintain and expand its export market share. Competitive advantage is typically measured using the Export Product Dynamics (EPD) method.

This method can indicate a product's competitive position in the international market, such as rising star, falling star, lost opportunity, and retreat. The rising star position indicates that a commodity has strong export growth and market demand, enabling it to compete effectively in the global market (Rahman *et al.*, 2024). Competitive advantage in export commodities is influenced by various factors, such as product quality, production continuity, competitive pricing, government policies, and the ability to innovate and diversify products. Therefore, improving product quality and value-added is a crucial step in strengthening Indonesia's export competitiveness in the international market (Wibowo & Lestari, 2023).

Market Share

Market share is the percentage of a countries or company's market control over the total trade of a product in a specific market. In international trade, market share is used to assess a country's ability to maintain and improve its export position relative to competing countries. The larger the market share, the stronger the commodity's position in global competition (Manalu *et al.*, 2022).

Market share is a key indicator in export competitiveness analysis as it reflects changes in market demand for a commodity. An increase in market share indicates that a country's product is gaining acceptance in international markets, while a decline suggests competitive pressure from other exporting nations or a weakening of the product's competitiveness (Nurcahyani & Salqaura, 2023). In the trade of plantation commodities, changes in market share are influenced by several factors, such as product quality, export prices, production continuity, trade policies, and demand from export destination countries.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive-analytical methodology. The data sources used are secondary data obtained from various sources, such as the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), and publications related to international trade. The analyzed data cover Indonesia's cocoa bean exports to Malaysia and global cocoa export data from 2014 to 2024. The commodity studied in this research is cocoa beans with HS code 180100. The data obtained include the value of Indonesia's cocoa exports to Malaysia, the value of global cocoa exports, as well as the total value of Indonesia's and the world's exports. For data analysis, this study uses three main methods: Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA), Export Product Dynamics (EPD), and Market Share Analysis.

Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) addresses the first objective; it is used to measure a country's level of comparative advantage in exporting a particular commodity. The RCA value is calculated using the formula:

$$RCA = \frac{X_{ij}}{X_t} / \frac{W_j}{W_t}$$

Description:

X_{ij} = Value of cocoa bean exports from the exporting country to Malaysia (USD)

X_t = Total export value of the exporting country to Malaysia (USD)

W_j = Value of global cocoa bean exports to Malaysia (USD)

W_t = Total global export value to Malaysia (USD)

If the RCA value is > 1 , then a country has a comparative advantage; conversely, if the RCA value is < 1 , then that country does not have a comparative advantage.

The second objective is addressed through an analysis using the Export Product Dynamics (EPD) method. The EPD method is used to validate the results of the RCA method in assessing the competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa beans in the international market (Tarman *et al.* 2011). From this analysis, there are four distinct categories of market share positions, namely:

- Rising Star: There is an increase in the country's export market share as well as the market share of a specific product at the global level.
- Lost Opportunity: Although the country's export market share is declining, the market share of a specific product in global trade is increasing.
- Falling Star: There is an increase in the country's export market share, but the market share of a specific product in global trade is decreasing.
- Retreat: There is a decline in both the country's export market share and the market share of a specific product at the global level.

There are two methods for calculating the EPD formula: by calculating the values on the X-axis and the Y-axis to determine the market position of cocoa beans.

X-axis: Growth in export market share:

$$\frac{\sum_{t=1}^t \left(\frac{X_{ij}}{W_{ij}} \right) t \times 100\% - \sum_{t=1}^t \left(\frac{X_{ij}}{W_{ij}} \right) t - 1 \times 100\%}{T}$$

Y-axis: Product market share growth

$$\frac{\sum_{t=1}^t \left(\frac{X_t}{W_t} \right) t \times 100\% - \sum_{t=1}^t \left(\frac{X_t}{W_t} \right) t - 1 \times 100\%}{T}$$

Description:

Xij: value of Indonesian cocoa bean exports to Malaysia (USD/year)

Xt: value of total Indonesian commodity exports to Malaysia (USD/year)

Wij: value of cocoa bean exports from all countries to Malaysia (USD/year)

Wt: total export value of all commodities from all countries to Malaysia (USD/year)

t: year of analysis

t-1: previous year

T: total number of years

The third objective was addressed using the Market Share Analysis method, which was employed to determine the extent of Indonesia's cocoa bean exports' contribution to total global cocoa bean exports, as well as to compare Indonesia's position with that of its main competitors, such as Ivory Coast and Ecuador. The formula for calculating market share is as follows:

$$MSI : \frac{\text{Nilai ekspor negara}}{\text{Total nilai ekspor}} \times 100\%$$

Description:

MS : Market Share

i : year of analysis

Country's export value : Indonesia's cocoa bean export value (in USD)

Total global export value : global cocoa bean export value to Malaysia (in USD)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Comparative Competitiveness of Indonesia's Cocoa Bean Exports

Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) can be used to measure changes in a commodity's comparative advantage. Theoretically, RCA provides an index that reflects shifts in comparative competitiveness over time. The RCA index relates a country's exports of a specific commodity to its total exports, and then compares this to the export performance of that same commodity relative to global total exports. Therefore, a country's export competitiveness can be measured through the RCA value (Harya *et al.*, 2018).

This method was chosen because it can measure and analyze the extent to which Indonesian cocoa beans possess a comparative advantage relative to those of competing countries. The RCA for cocoa is calculated by comparing the value of Indonesia's cocoa exports relative to the total value of all Indonesian exports with the value of global cocoa exports relative to the total value of all global exports. To measure the extent to which Indonesia has a relative advantage in exporting cocoa beans (HS 180100) to Malaysia compared to competing countries, according to Balassa (1965), an RCA value > 1 indicates that a country has a comparative advantage in that commodity in the destination market.

This RCA analysis not only assesses the competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa in the Malaysian market but also directly compares it with that of its main competitors. The results of this RCA can indicate whether Indonesian cocoa exports remain highly competitive or have declined during the 2014–2024 period. The following table presents the RCA results for cocoa beans and their growth:

Table 2.

RCA from Indonesian, Ecuador, and Ivory Coast to Malaysian, 2014–2024

Year	Value RCA
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	Indonesian	Ecuador	Ivory Coast
2014	2,78915	219,8877	124,2061
2015	2,58548	244,1949	140,3231
2016	2,04923	250,8851	109,3994
2017	1,60335	268,103	133,861
2018	2,06432	267,8479	144,3158
2019	2,10618	211,0377	134,326
2020	1,71538	168,0716	99,73017
2021	0,90495	90,13699	115,2338
2022	1,08371	214,0693	137,7046
2023	0,63461	158,9443	68,08036
2024	0,60388	86,2477	44,26476
Average	1,649114	198,1297	113,7677

Source: Processed data, 2025

Based on table 2 the Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) values for cocoa by Indonesia, Ecuador, and Côte d'Ivoire. Ecuador and Côte d'Ivoire were used as comparators in the analysis of comparative competitiveness in cocoa exports. Over a ten-year period (2014–2024), Indonesia initially possessed strong comparative competitiveness at the start of the study, as evidenced by an RCA value > 1 through 2020. Indonesia's highest RCA value was recorded in 2014 at 2.78, but it continued to decline, reaching 0.60 by 2024. This means that since 2021, Indonesia no longer possesses a comparative advantage, as an RCA value < 1 indicates weak competitiveness compared to competing countries.

RCA analysis shows that the competitiveness of Indonesia's cocoa bean exports in the international market still lags far behind that of major competitors such as Ecuador and Ivory Coast. Indonesia's steadily declining RCA value indicates that the country's comparative advantage is not sustainable and that there are serious challenges in maintaining global competitiveness. However, this position cannot be sustained in the long term. This weak competitiveness is influenced by various factors, such as low productivity and limitations in cocoa bean quality. This reinforces the findings of Saptana *et al.* (2020) and Pangestu *et al.* (2022), who state that declining productivity and cocoa bean quality are the primary causes of the weakening of Indonesia's comparative advantage in the international market, particularly in Malaysia.

The Competitive Competitiveness of Indonesia's Cocoa Bean Exports

The Export Product Dynamics (EPD) method is an analytical tool used to assess a country's export competitiveness by observing dynamic changes in commodity market share over time. Using the EPD method, the export position of Indonesian cocoa beans can be categorized into four groups: Rising Star, Lost Opportunity, Retreat, and Falling Star. EPD analysis is used to identify the dynamic competitive position of a commodity based on two main indicators: a country's export market share growth (X-axis) and global market demand growth (Y-axis).

Table 3.
Score EPD Indonesian to Malaysian, 2014-2024

Year	X- axis	Y - axis
2014	-	-

2015	-0,018	-0,0034
2016	-0,025	-0,0010
2017	-0,017	0,0013
2018	0,020	-0,0001
2019	0,001	-0,0004
2020	-0,017	0,0000
2021	-0,028	0,0073
2022	0,011	0,0021
2023	-0,027	-0,0055
2024	-0,006	0,0029

Source : Processed data, 2025

Based on table 3, The negative value on the X-axis indicates that Indonesia's cocoa export market share has declined, while the positive value on the Y-axis shows that Malaysia's market demand for cocoa beans continued to grow during the study period. Based on the results of the Export Product Dynamics (EPD) analysis, Indonesia's position during the 2014–2024 period indicates that the growth dynamics of exports to Malaysia have not yet been fully optimized. This finding is consistent with Widodo's (2009) research, which states that Indonesian plantation commodities often possess a comparative advantage but have not been able to sustain their "Rising Star" status in EPD analysis. Indonesia has not yet been able to capitalize on growing market demand to increase its exports. Factors contributing to this situation include a decline in domestic production, poor post-harvest quality, and increased competitiveness from rival countries.

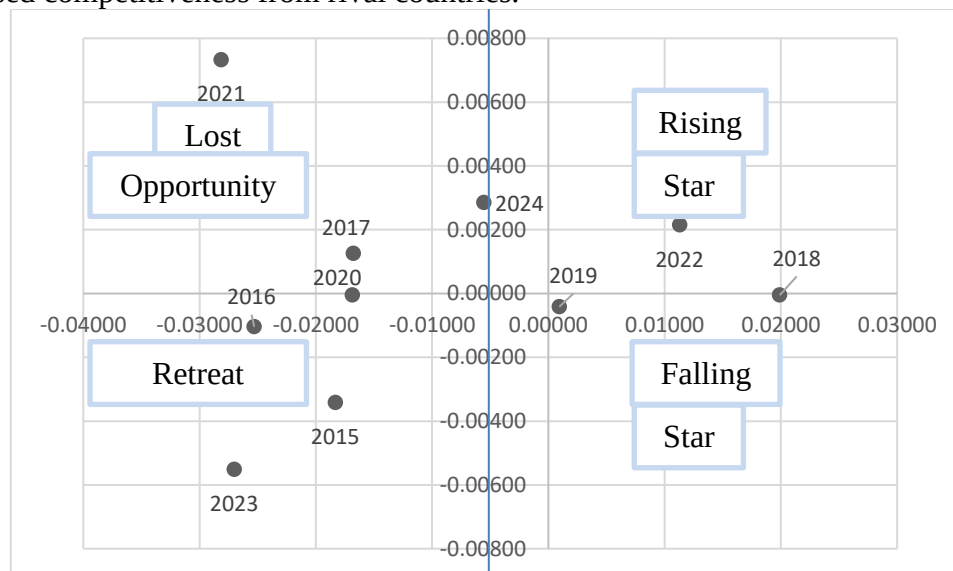


Figure 2.

Competitive Analysis Mapping of Indonesian Cocoa Beans in the Malaysian Market

Source: Processed data, 2025

During the 2015–2024 period, the competitiveness of Indonesia's cocoa exports showed a decline. In 2015–2016, Indonesia was in the "Retreat" quadrant with negative X and Y values, indicating a simultaneous decline in exports and market share. The years 2017, 2020, 2021, and 2024 placed Indonesia in the "Lost Opportunity" position, where the global

cocoa market experienced growth but Indonesia's exports actually declined or stagnated, indicating an inability to capitalize on market opportunities. Conditions briefly improved in 2018 with a "Falling Star" position and in 2022, which pointed toward a "Rising Star," but these improvements were not sustainable.

Indonesia's cocoa bean exports in the international market remain weak and unstable. The negative average value on the X-axis and the positive value on the Y-axis indicate that Indonesia is in a "Lost Opportunity" position, where global market demand is increasing but Indonesia's exports are actually declining. This situation reflects that Indonesia has not yet been able to fully capitalize on opportunities presented by growing global demand. This weak position also highlights the need to improve dynamic competitiveness through increased productivity, enhanced quality, and greater efficiency in the export supply chain (Nurchayani & Salqaura 2023). With these strategic measures, Indonesia is expected to improve its position in the global trade landscape and transition to the "Rising Star" category in the next period.

Growth of Indonesia's Market Share

Market Share Analysis (MSA) is an analytical technique used to evaluate the size of a country's export market share in total global exports as well as in specific target markets. The MSA method provides an overview of a country's capacity to maintain and expand its market share in the international trade arena (Widyasanti & Hariyanti, 2018). By applying this method, it is possible to determine whether Indonesia's export performance has improved, remained stable, or declined when compared to competitor countries such as Ecuador and Ivory Coast.

Table 4.
Score MSA Indonesian, Ecuador, Ivory Coast

Year	Indonesian	Ecuador	Ivory Coast
2014	0,129979	0,021881	0,214061
2015	0,111659	0,089734	0,223832
2016	0,086363	0,104739	0,200931
2017	0,069594	0,124241	0,323565
2018	0,089498	0,138955	0,303152
2019	0,090435	0,087458	0,415503
2020	0,073576	0,128402	0,343994
2021	0,045445	0,078296	0,387017
2022	0,056748	0,172118	0,338461
2023	0,02973	0,194441	0,233625
2024	0,024199	0,175135	0,105512

Source : Processed data, 2025

Based on table 4, presents the results of a Market Share Analysis (MSA) of cocoa beans from the world's three leading cocoa-exporting countries Indonesia, Ecuador, and Ivory Coast for the period 2014–2024. Based on these results, it is evident that Indonesia's cocoa export market share has declined significantly over the past eleven years. In 2014, Indonesia's MSA value was still 0.1299, but it continued to decline, reaching only 0.0242 by 2024. This indicates that Indonesia's position in the Malaysian cocoa export market is weakening, and its competitiveness is declining compared to rival countries. Indonesia's declining market share aligns with the results of previous RCA and EPD analyses, which

showed that Indonesia has lost its comparative advantage and is unable to fully capitalize on the growth of global market demand (Pangestu *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, a strategy to strengthen competitiveness is needed through increased productivity, improved post-harvest quality, and greater efficiency in the export supply chain so that Indonesia's position can improve again in the global cocoa market (Saptana *et al.*, 2020).

Strategies for Strengthening the Competitiveness of Indonesian Cocoa Bean Exports

The integration of RCA, EPD, and MSA results in this study reinforces a multidimensional approach to measuring export competitiveness. Widodo (2009) emphasizes that measuring competitiveness is insufficient when relying on a single indicator, as comparative advantage does not necessarily lead to competitive advantage or an increase in market share. The findings of this study indicate that although Indonesia possesses potential comparative advantages, its success in maintaining its market position against Malaysia depends heavily on the dynamics of export growth and the ability to sustain market share. This aligns with Porter's (1990) theory of competitive advantage, which states that modern competitiveness is determined by efficiency, innovation, and quality not merely natural factors.

Therefore, to restore the competitiveness of Indonesia's cocoa bean exports, the following strategies can be implemented:

1. The first strategy is to improve the quality of cocoa beans through better post-harvest handling processes, particularly fermentation and drying, in accordance with international standards. Quality improvement can be achieved through farmer training, the application of post-harvest technology, the provision of fermentation facilities and modern drying equipment, as well as strengthening export quality standards. Continuous assistance is needed to ensure more consistent cocoa quality and to enhance Indonesia's competitiveness in the international market (Wahyudi and Nasution, 2020).
2. The second strategy is to increase cocoa productivity through plant rejuvenation and the use of superior varieties. Replanting programs are necessary because many cocoa plants are old and vulnerable to pests and diseases. Efforts that can be implemented include the provision of superior seedlings, subsidies for production facilities, strengthening research on pest- and climate-resistant cocoa varieties, as well as assistance in modern cultivation techniques and integrated pest management. This strategy is important to maintain the stability and sustainable growth of cocoa production (Syamsuddin *et al.*, 2021).
3. The third strategy is to improve supply chain and logistics efficiency in order to reduce export distribution costs. Improvements in road infrastructure, ports, and distribution systems are needed to ensure faster and more efficient cocoa shipments. Optimizing the National Logistic Ecosystem (NLE) program and strengthening cooperation among farmers, cooperatives, exporters, and logistics companies are also important to improve the price competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa in the international market.
4. The fourth strategy is export market diversification to reduce dependence on certain destination countries and expand market opportunities. This effort can be carried out through international trade promotion, bilateral trade cooperation, and the utilization of digital trade platforms. In addition, strengthening the branding of Indonesian cocoa

- as a high-quality and sustainable product is important to compete in potential markets such as Japan, South Korea, Turkey, and the Middle East (Ninaquispe *et al.*, 2025).
5. The fifth strategy is strengthening government policies and support through export incentives, easier access to financing, simplification of export procedures, and strengthening international trade promotion and diplomacy. Evaluation of export duty policies is also necessary to avoid burdening farmers and exporters, while expanding access to the People's Business Credit (KUR) program in the plantation sector can help improve productivity and the export competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa.
 6. The sixth strategy is to enhance sustainability and product certification to meet global market demands that increasingly emphasize environmentally friendly practices. The implementation of sustainable agricultural practices, such as agroforestry and the use of environmentally friendly fertilizers, as well as international certifications such as Rainforest Alliance, Fair Trade, and Organic Certification, can increase buyer confidence and expand Indonesia's export market access. The government also needs to facilitate farmers' access to certification through financial assistance, simplified procedures, and continuous education.

CONCLUSION

The competitiveness of Indonesian cocoa bean exports to Malaysia declined during the 2014–2024 period. The RCA analysis shows that Indonesia's comparative advantage weakened, with RCA values falling from 2.78 in 2014 to 0.60 in 2024, indicating reduced competitiveness compared to Ecuador and Ivory Coast. The EPD analysis places Indonesia mostly in the “Lost Opportunity” category, meaning that Indonesia has not been able to take advantage of increasing global cocoa demand. In addition, the MSA analysis shows that Indonesia's market share in Malaysia continued to decline significantly during the study period. To strengthen export competitiveness, several strategies are needed, including improving cocoa quality and productivity, enhancing logistics and supply chain efficiency, diversifying export markets, strengthening government support and trade policies, and increasing sustainability practices and international product certification. These efforts are expected to improve Indonesia's position in the global cocoa market.

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