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Forest Conversion News

WWF's newsletter on the forest conversion driven by expanding palm oil and soybean cultivation

WWF Welcomes First Steps towards Sustainable Palm Oil

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – WWF welcomes the outcomes of the first meeting of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil that took place on August 21-22 in Kuala Lumpur. The meeting was a historic first, bringing together over 200 delegates from industry and interest groups from 16 countries around the world.

Dato' Dr. Mikhaail Kavanagh, Executive Director of WWF Malaysia, welcomed the meeting results as the first steps towards setting the standard for responsible palm oil production. "I am encouraged by the spirit of goodwill amongst the roundtable's participants and their commitment to work together to make the Roundtable a success," he said.

WWF recognizes that palm oil is a basic foodstuff with high consumer demand. The industry generates valuable foreign exchange earnings and employment opportunities for tropical producer countries. WWF is, however, concerned that oil palm plantations have sometimes imposed environmental and social costs due to indiscriminate forest clearing, uncontrolled burning with related haze, and disregard for the rights and interests of local communities. WWF is therefore keen to work with the industry, regulators, financiers, buyers and other stakeholders to develop and promote adoption of environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable practices in the oil palm industry.

Dr. Mubariq Ahmad, Chief Executive Officer of WWF Indonesia said, "WWF hopes the Roundtable can help forge a common understanding of what constitutes sustainable plantation development. I would encourage all parties to sign on to the Roundtable and help ensure its success".

M.R. Chandran, Chief Executive of the Malaysian Palm Oil Association described the success of the roundtable in bringing together parties with very different interests.

All participants of the Round table and other stakeholders of the palm oil sector will be asked to sign a Statement of Intent for the Roundtable to express their commitment to actively participate in a process to achieve sustainability in the palm oil sector.

Palm oil can be found in a wide range of food and non-food products, including cosmetics, detergents, confectionery, chocolate, ice cream, ready-to-serve meals, and margarine. About four fifths of palm oil is produced in Malaysia and Indonesia.

The Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil is a business initiative of Anglia Oils/Aarhus, Golden Hope Plantations, Migros, Malaysian Palm Oil Association (MPOA), Sainsbury's and Unilever in cooperation with WWF (www.sustainable-palmoil.org).

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Media review

Pledge to Establish Common Sustainable Production Stand

INTERNATIONAL palm oil players consisting of producers, buyers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have pledged their cooperation towards establishing a common stand in promoting sustainable production of palm oil.

Source: [Business Times, 23 August 2003](#)

Palm Oil Forum Sends Message Across

THE first Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, which concluded in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, expects wider stakeholder participation from the global palm oil industry in the initiative towards the expansion and promotion of sustainable palm oil production

Source: [The Star, 23 August 2003](#)

Investor Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit Banyak Timbulkan Masalah (in Bahasa)

INVESTOR asing kelapa sawit di Indonesia banyak menimbulkan masalah, seperti kerusakan lingkungan dan konflik sosial. Hal ini antara lain terjadi karena para investor menerapkan standar ganda (double standar), yakni mematuhi aturan hukum di negara asalnya, tetapi mengabaikan peraturan hukum yang berlaku di Indonesia.

Source: [Kompas, 23 August 2003](#)