

Forest Conversion News

WWF's newsletter on forest conversion focusing on the expansion of palm oil and soy • No 24, Dec 2009

WWF assesses the environmental performance of top European buyers of palm oil, more major brands and retailers make commitments to buying certified oil

Shortly before the 7th Roundtable Conference on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO RT7) (see below), WWF released the Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard, which scores the performance of 59 of the most prominent retailers and manufacturers in Europe that buy and use palm oil in their products. The results show that the majority of European palm oil buyers are failing to buy certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO), despite its availability and the previous commitments by many companies to purchase it, according to a first assessment by WWF.

Only 10 of those 59 companies have scored 20 or more points, and thus are considered by WWF to be showing real progress on their commitments to buy and use sustainable palm oil. They have joined the Roundtable, properly monitored their palm oil purchases, and have put in place and started to take action on commitments to buy certified sustainable palm oil.

On the other hand, 19 of the 59 companies scored between 0 and 3 out of 29 possible points, meaning that they have taken very little or no action to curb their use of non-certified palm oil and are failing to respond to the efforts that palm oil producers have made to achieve certification under the Roundtable. 28 companies scored between 5 – 20 points. While a few are showing progress many of these have only just begun to take action on responsible palm oil. While some have put policies and systems in place, often they have yet to start buying certified sustainable palm oil.

“WWF welcomes the action of those companies that have moved toward buying certified palm oil,” said Rod Taylor, Director of the Forests Programme at WWF International. “Although many companies have a long way to go, the performances of the top companies in the Scorecard signal to the rest of the industry that it is possible to turn commitment into action and transform the market. However, WWF also acknowledges that even the top scoring companies in the Scorecard need to continue to raise their



WWF Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard 2009

How 'green' is the palm oil purchased by European companies?
From lipstick to ice cream—and even some breads and biscuits—palm oil is used in a variety of products we purchase every day. But the true cost of palm oil is being paid in high-biodiversity tropical rainforests, which continue to be cleared for ever expanding oil palm plantations.



This Scorecard is an assessment of the palm oil purchasing practices of major European companies that produce or sell everyday consumer products. The performance of each company in the Scorecard was assessed against a set of objective criteria relating to their commitments to, and actions on, responsible purchasing of palm oil.
 ▶ See company scores on page 4

Why has WWF published a Scorecard?

- to hold up a mirror to major European retailers and manufacturers who buy palm oil, setting a baseline level of performance against which these companies can measure their improvements on sustainable palm oil sourcing over the coming years
- to build awareness of sustainable palm oil among companies both inside and outside of the EU and demonstrate that companies can be part of the solution
- to show palm oil producers around the world that there is a mainstream and growing market for sustainably produced palm oil

Palm oil facts

- Oil palms produce more per hectare of land than any other oil-producing crop
- In 2008, palm oil accounted for a third of the 130 million tonnes of vegetable oil produced worldwide
- Palm oil has surpassed soy oil as the world's most popular vegetable oil
- Palm oil is used in about 50% of all packaged food products in supermarkets today
- Palm oil is used in a wide range of foods (e.g. margarine, ice cream) and non-food products (e.g. shampoos to make them more 'creamy')

www.panda.org/palmoilscorecard

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game if they are to use certified palm oil for 100 per cent of their palm oil supply, which is the stated objective of many of these companies.”

WWF opted to grade palm oil buyers after releasing figures in May showing that only a small percentage of the sustainable palm oil available on the market had been bought. Since then, the situation has started to improve. Over the last year, RSPO certified plantations have produced over 1,100,000 tonnes of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO), and over 317,000 tonnes have been sold to date.



While this still represents only 27 percent of the available supply on average, the RSPO has reported that CSPO sales have been growing in recent months.

The publication of the Scorecard seems to have provided further stimulus for the market, and several major brands and retailers rated in the Scorecard, including United Biscuits, Nestle, Albert Heijn and Waitrose, have made recent public commitments to use 100% certified sustainable palm oil by 2015 or earlier.

Links: *WWF News, October 27, Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard, Reuters, November 2*

Recent commitments by major brands and retailers: *Albert Heijn, Sainsbury's, Marks & Spencer, United Biscuits, Premiere Foods, Nestle, Waitrose*

Latest sales figures for CSPO: www.rspo.eu

INTERVIEW

Retailers reflect on the Scorecard experience

WWF asked representatives from four retailers assessed in the Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard about their experiences. Fiona Wheatley from Sainsbury's, John Clague of Waitrose, Paul Rowsome of Carrefour, and Hugo Byrne of Ahold offer their views.

1. Please reflect on your company's experience with the Palm Oil Buyer's Scorecard. Has it helped or hindered your efforts to procure CSPO?

Sainsbury's: Sainsbury's leadership position in the Scorecard reflects the considerable energy and investment that the company has committed to sustainable palm oil sourcing over many years. It was enormously beneficial to have this effort publicly acknowledged by a respected independent organisation like WWF. The Scorecard has also been extremely useful in motivating a wider range of companies to engage in sustainable palm oil procurement.

Waitrose: We were on a journey of moving to CSPO but the Scorecard certainly helped raise the profile of CSPO and add momentum to the industry's conversion to it.

We have now announced a challenging target to use only CSPO in our products by the end of 2012, buying Green-Palm certificates for all our range in the meantime.

Waitrose Managing Director Mark Price said at the time of this announcement: "Our mediocre rating in WWF's Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard 2009 has toughened our resolve. We can and we will meet this ambitious target. We want to be part of the solution, not contributing to the environmental problems caused by the growth in palm oil use."

Carrefour: Carrefour is committed to transparency and to communicating on its sustainability policies, programmes and results. As such responding to another stakeholder request for information on palm oil was seen by Carrefour to be another opportunity to show our commitment to sourcing sustainable palm oil and to communicate on the practical steps that we are taking to achieve that objective. The Scorecard itself does not change the challenges that exist in procuring sustainable palm oil. The WWF Scorecard may certainly have helped raise the awareness of other actors not as engaged as Carrefour and as such can be seen as a good exercise.

Ahold: The WWF Scorecard is helping to raise the awareness for this issue and therefore is also helping us to achieve our goals. Ahold is committed to completely moving to Certified Sustainable Palm Oil in our corporate brand products. For instance, Ahold gave the commitment that that would be achieved by 2015.

2. How do you think the Scorecard impacted the market for CSPO?

Sainsbury's: The Scorecard had a positive impact on the market for CSPO through increasing media and public focus on corporate palm oil sourcing practices. RSPO certified producers will benefit directly from the increased investment in sustainable palm oil procurement resulting from the Scorecard. As well as rewarding progressive companies, this provides a major incentive for those growers not yet committed to certification to participate in the RSPO.

I anticipate that RSPO certification will become a minimum requirement for companies wishing to supply palm oil to the European market.



The Scorecard moves this vision forward by highlighting the many companies that are demanding RSPO certified palm oil and outlining the considerable market potential this offers for those willing to adopt certification.

Waitrose: We believe early signs show it has galvanised the market - with more of a demand for CSPO encouraging an increase in production.

Carrefour: Given the complexity of the supply chain and the difficulty today of sourcing segregated certified palm oil, I believe that the Scorecard will promote the GreenPalm certificates system as it is the only simple and affordable solution in the immediate to short term. The WWF Scorecard gives credibility to this system.

Ahold: Most likely more consumer goods companies will now consider to use certified palm oil, which will raise confidence in the market and will therefore accelerate the use of this oil. We will also see a shift from the book and claim system to segregated oil, possibly via the mass/balance route. The results should be visible when WWF does another survey for the Scorecard.

3. What challenges do you see for your company as it moves toward realizing its CSPO commitments?

Sainsbury's: Sainsbury's has committed to only using certified sustainable palm oil by 2014. While acknowledging the important contribution made by the book and claim certificate scheme, Sainsbury's aim is to drive market change through the procurement and use of physical palm oil.

Currently the market direction is moving towards the adoption of certificates, which means that many traders, processors and ingredient manufacturers who buy and use palm oil are not engaged. This affects Sainsbury's ability to transform our customer offer through product development and supply chain engagement.

Waitrose: Ensuring availability and traceability of some palm oil derivatives is a foreseeable challenge. We have been thoroughly assessing this with our suppliers, and where we can't secure sustainable supplies of those derivatives we will need to review the use of palm oil in those products to ensure we meet our CSPO commitment.

Carrefour: Carrefour is committed to using and promoting CSPO. It can achieve its objectives through Greenpalm certificates, however Carrefour would prefer in the longer term to be able to use traceable, segregated CSPO in its private label products. However to do this Carrefour is dependent on the supply chain making segregated CSPO available at affordable prices to its manufacturers of Carrefour private label products.

Ahold: The realisation of Ahold's goals is very much dependant on the supply of - preferably segregated - certified palm oil to those locations, where the manufacturers of our corporate brand products can actually use it. At the moment we are facing the chicken and egg situation, where traders are hesitant to ship segregated certified palm oil to Europe (or the US) because there is not enough demand. On the other hand the demand is not there, because there is no segregated oil. While in the mean time the gap can be filled with so called book and claim oil (GreenPalm), we should all make sure that the confidence is there to move to segregated oil.

4. How often should WWF publish the Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard?

Sainsbury's: The majority of companies that have set time bound targets on sustainable palm oil have committed to only using CSPO by 2015, so the European Scorecard should hopefully have a limited life span in line with these deadlines. Most comparable performance league tables are published annually or bi-annually, therefore this frequency of reporting would seem appropriate.

Waitrose: We believe it makes sense for this to be an annual rating.

Carrefour: WWF have suggested that the next Scorecard will be published in October/November 2011. This two yearly frequency would appear appropriate.

Ahold: In the start-up phase of certified palm oil, the Scorecard could be published every year.



OTHER ARTICLES

Unilever suspends purchases from Sinar Mas

Last week, Unilever announced that it would suspend all future purchases of palm oil from the Indonesian palm oil producer PT Smart, part of the Sinar Mas Group, until such time as the company can provide verifiable proof that none of its plantations are contributing to the destruction of high conservation value (HCV) areas and expanding onto peat lands. This move was in reaction to a new report by Greenpeace (“*Illegal forest clearance and RSPO greenwash: case studies of Sinar Mas*”) that alleges bad environmental practices by Sinar Mas (see “Publications” below).

In April 2008, Greenpeace issued an earlier report entitled “*How Unilever palm oil suppliers are burning up Borneo*”. Greenpeace claimed that Unilever’s palm oil suppliers were responsible for unacceptable environmental practices in Southeast Asia. Unilever then commissioned its own study to check the report’s substance and to screen suppliers against RSPO criteria. According to Unilever, the study found that that the Greenpeace report was broadly accurate. Some evidence suggests that land might have been cleared without prior Environmental Impact Assessments and HCV assessments being completed. This would constitute a breach of RSPO requirements.

Unilever shared the study’s results with its suppliers and urged them to address the shortcomings. Unilever believes that constructive engagement with its suppliers is the most effective way to promote sustainability and improve practices in the palm oil sector. However, if suppliers continue to ignore RSPO criteria, Unilever promised to take appropriate action.

Links: [Unilever Press Release](#), [Unilever statement on sustainable palm oil](#), [Greenpeace statement](#), [Times](#), [December 11](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [December 13](#)

Results of RSPO RT7

At the beginning of November, the 7th Roundtable Conference on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO RT7) took place in Kuala Lumpur. Titled “Moving ahead in challenging times,” the three-day conference drew more than 800 people from more than 20 countries, including buyers, producers, and traders of palm oil and social and environmental NGOs.

The number of participants was up from the 550 that attended the 2008 conference, demonstrating growing interest in the production and use of sustainable palm oil.

A widely discussed topic was how RSPO members can measure and mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from palm oil production. While the Working Group charged with developing a proposal did not concur on a proposal before RT7, the RSPO’s Executive Board nevertheless agreed to immediately implement some measures for reducing the GHG emissions that will be incorporated in the Roundtable’s certification standards. They agreed to further address the issue, including defining emissions measures related to land use change, before the next Roundtable conference in 2010. To this end, they will develop a voluntary framework within which companies will work together to reduce emissions.

This objective received considerable support by producers from outside Malaysia and Indonesia who said they will use this voluntary standard as soon as it becomes available, while immediately committing to stop the expansion of plantations on peat lands.

“This is a move in the right direction,” said Adam Harrison, WWF’s representative on the RSPO Executive Board. “We encourage companies to embrace emissions reduction standards once they become available and do their part to avoid the catastrophic effects of climate change.”



Photo: Adam Harrison from WWF presenting the WWF Palm Oil Buyers’ Scorecard to the RT7 plenary

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"The Democracy Wall" at RSPO RT7

The conference also focused on the frustration by producers concerning the slow uptake of certified sustainable palm oil by buyers. The sluggish market prompted WWF to publish the Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard (see article above). Widely discussed at the conference, the Scorecard was praised by both producers and buyers as a positive vehicle for bringing much needed transparency to this growing market and showing buyers that they are expected to do their part in transforming the market.

Links: WWF News, November 5

Greenpalm and Utz lower fee for trade in RSPO certified palm oil

Utz Certified and Greenpalm, both involved in the trade of RSPO certified sustainable palm oil, have lowered their transaction fee for trading CSPO from 3 to 2 US dollar per metric ton. For Greenpalm the reduced brokerage fee was announced at the RSPO's annual Roundtable conference in November, while Utz introduced its new fee on December 1, 2009. "By lowering our fee, we aim to positively contribute to mainstreaming sustainability in palm oil trade. Efficient pricing is one of the crucial conditions," stated Bas Geerts, Program Manager for Palm Oil at Utz Certified.

To date 80,000 tonnes of RSPO Certified Sustainable Palm Oil have been traded via Utz Certified and 192,000

certificates have been traded via GreenPalm. Every ton of palm oil sold via Utz or certificate traded via GreenPalm generates a donation of 1 US dollar to the work of the RSPO.

More information: www.utzcertified.org, www.greenpalm.org

Sustainable palm oil gets boost in China

During the 2nd International Oil and Fats Summit in Beijing on July 9, major China-based producers and users of palm oil announced they intend to provide more support for sustainable palm oil, an important boost for efforts to halt tropical deforestation. The China Chamber of Commerce for Import & Export of Foodstuffs, Native Produce and Animal By-products (CFNA) and WWF China launched the initiative on the Statement of Support (SOS) for Promoting Sustainable Palm Oil in China.

Palm oil producers and buyers making the statement included Wilmar International, IOI Corporation, KLK Berhad, Kulim Malaysia Berhad, Asia Agri. Premier Foods PLC and Unilever PLC Oxfam International, TransAsia Lawyers, and Solidaridad China.

The signatories to the SOS met again in Beijing at the end of October. During this 2nd meeting, the signatories agreed to establish the Network for Promoting Sustainable Palm Oil in China, which will be led by CFNA and WWF China. Strategies for meeting the objectives of the Network have been identified and the priority for the immediate future is to develop a clear action plan to implement these strategies.

China is currently the world's largest importer of palm oil, accounting for one third of all global trade. Increasing demand for palm oil is causing considerable damage to fragile rainforest environments, threatening endangered species like tigers, and contributing to global climate change. "Given the massive of volumes of palm oil now being purchased, any move China makes towards using sustainable palm oil will have a big influence on protecting tropical forest resources in South East Asia and other areas," said WWF China Country Representative Dermot O'Gorman.

Links: WWF News, July 16 , nachhaltigkeit.org, July 16 (in German), nachhaltigkeit.org, July 20 (in German)



Update from the RTRS

The Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS) has recently formed its Traceability and Market Claim Working Group. Its 18 members represent different stakeholders in the soy supply chain, including NGOs. In addition the P&C National Interpretation Guides for India, Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil have been disseminated for public consultation, and comments can be submitted until January 15. The next Roundtable Conference on Responsible Soy will take place on June 9 and 10 in San Pablo, Brazil.

Links: www.responsiblesoy.org, [Members of the Traceability and Market Claim Working Group](#), [P&C National Interpretation Guides](#)

Little seed. Big problem. Bold solution.

On September 24, Seventh Generation, Rainforest Action Network and Whole Foods Market held a public seminar that focused on palm oil, its environmental impact and the positive actions that consumers can take. Representatives from Seventh Generation and Whole Foods Market made presentations outlining their own actions on sustainable palm oil. Seventh Generation has committed to sourcing only sustainable palm kernel oil across its entire product line by 2012.

Link: www.seventhgeneration.com

Conference on sustainability certification and climate protection

Held on December 8 in Berlin, Germany, this conference organized by OVID (Germany's edible oils association) and WWF Germany focused on the approach and development of RSPO and other certification schemes like RTRS and the ISCC biomass certification scheme. Over 80 representatives from food and feed processors, manufacturers, traders, the biofuel and bioenergy sector government ministries and NGOs participated. The discussion focused on availability, pricing and supply chains related to palm oil. Participants demonstrated a growing interest in certified palm oil and several companies that are not yet members of the RSPO indicated their readiness to join.

Presentations of note included one by Gernot Klepper (Kiel Institute for the World Economy) on "Climate protection and certification – beyond Copenhagen" and another by Norbert Schmitz (Meo Consulting) on "A practical approach on GHG calculation".

For more information: [Francisika Mey](mailto:Francisika.Mey@wwf.de) (mey@wwf.de)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sustainable oil palm plantation conference

January 21-22, 2010, Jakarta (Indonesia)

Geared to oil palm plantation owners seeking information on complying with sustainable cultivation standards, this conference will provide a complete view of the value chain, the conference will address plantation management, covering land, human resources and fertilizer management, and other agricultural best practices, and even genome technology for improved oil palm yields.

For more information: www.cmtevents.com

Assessing challenges for implementation of biofuels sustainability criteria

January 25-26, 2010, Washington, DC

The Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Environment Program will bring together biofuels producers with sustainability criteria authors and auditors to identify the primary barriers to implementation, identify pilot testing scenarios to assess on the ground implementation, and start to develop potential solutions. The goal of the meeting is to highlight practical challenges in complying with sustainability certification schemes and share experiences on how to overcome specific implementation issues.

ICOPE 2010: International conference on palm oil and environment

February 23-25, 2010, Bali (Indonesia)

The objective of the conference is to highlight environmental issues, sharing experience on possible solutions and resources not only for the benefit of the environment, but also for the industry itself. The conference will address the issues of Green House Gas Balance, biodiversity, environmental impact assessment, and the capacity of the industry to improve productivity through an ecological intensification of cultivation practices in both big plantations and smallholdings.

For more information: www.icope-series.com

Animal feed seminar for Finnish feed sector

WWF Finland will organize an animal feed seminar in March 2010 in Helsinki for Finnish feed sector stakeholders. WWF will introduce its report (currently in draft) on negative social and environmental impacts of soy production and introduce steps to overcome them.

For more information: Sampsa Kiianmaa (sampsakiianmaa@wwf.fi)

PUBLICATIONS

Illegal forest clearance and RSPO greenwash: case studies of Sinar Mas

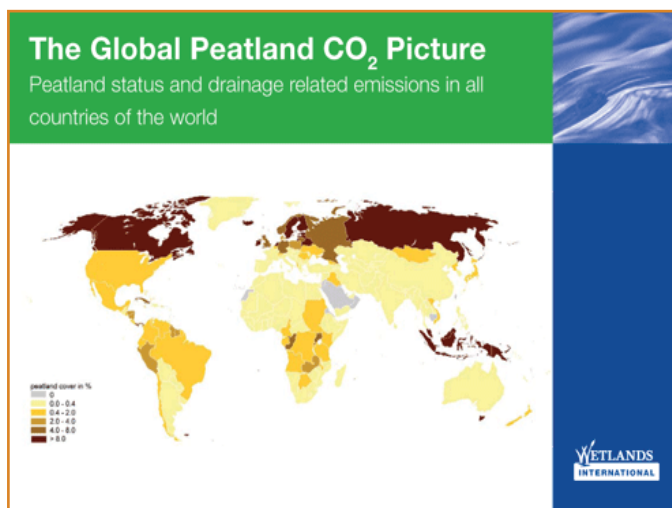
This dossier alleges that, through its palm oil companies, Sinar Mas is engaging in widespread illegal deforestation and peatland clearance in Indonesia.

Download the report

The global peatland CO₂ picture

This overview of peat-carbon stocks and emissions has been produced to facilitate the UNFCCC climate negotiations in response to a call by countries for emission data caused by the Land Use Change and Forestry sector. The information clearly shows that peat-carbon stocks and their emissions due to peatland degradation are not only enormous, but also a global issue, with stocks and emissions in almost all countries.

Download the report



HCV and the RSPO

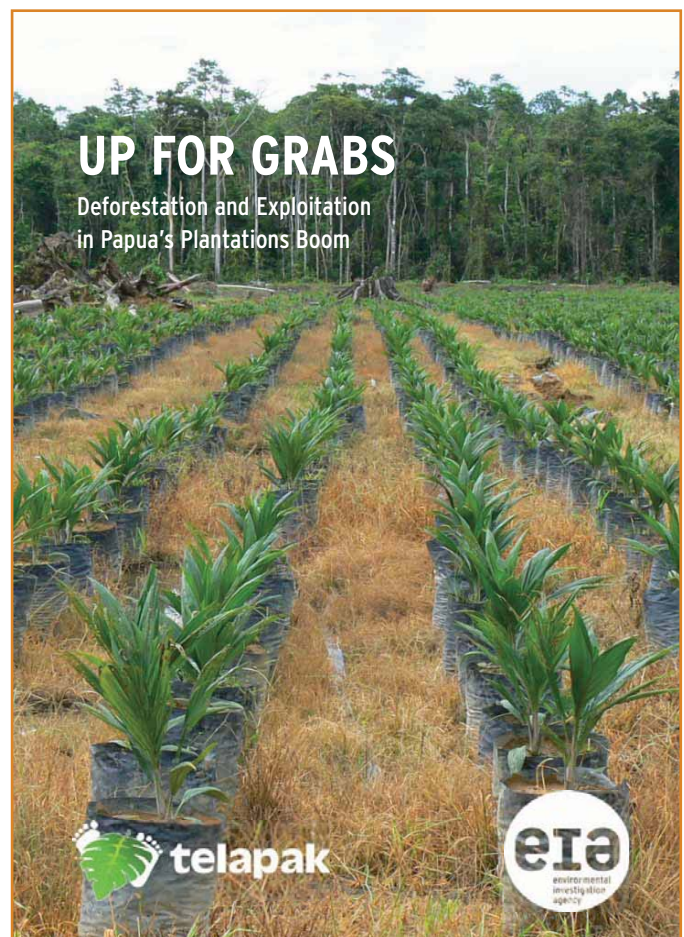
This report by Forest Peoples Programme presents the results of an independent investigation into the effectiveness of the application of High Conservation Value zoning in palm oil development in Indonesia. The conclusion is that the RSPO procedure is not succeeding in securing HCVs in the way envisaged because of the ill-fit between the RSPO approach and the laws and procedures in place in Indonesia. The RSPO has already taken forth one of the report's recommendations and formed a working group to address these issues.

Download the report

Up for grabs

Oil palm developers in the Indonesian half of New Guinea are signing questionable deals that exploit local communities and put important forest ecosystems at risk, alleges this new report from Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and Telapak.

Links: Report, mongabay.com, November 10





ARTICLES

Agro-ecological impacts of genetically modified soy production

This report by the GM Soy Debate presents an analysis of twelve claims about GM soy. It focuses on soy production in Latin America and its environmental aspects. It is the first of a series of publications for the GM Soy Debate reviewing the evidence on sustainability issues related to the cultivation of genetically modified soy (GM Soy).

[Download the report](#)

The impacts and opportunities of oil palm in Southeast Asia

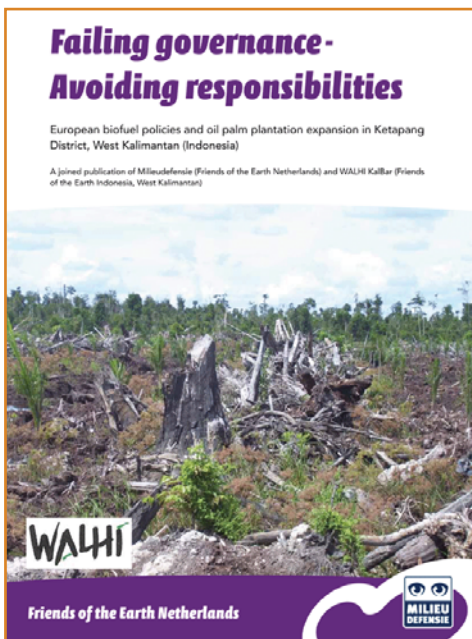
This paper by CIFOR focuses on the ongoing expansion of oil palm plantations in the humid tropics, especially in Southeast Asia, which is generating considerable concern and debate.

[Download the report](#)

Failing governance - avoiding responsibilities

This report by Milieudefensie (Friends of the Earth Netherlands) and WALHI KalBar (Friends of the Earth Indonesia, West Kalimantan) shows for the first time the extent of damage being caused by the European Union's increasing use of biofuels. The research focuses on the massive expansion of palm oil in the Indonesian district of Ketapang and reports on the deforestation, illegal operations and social conflicts caused by the growing demand for palm oil in Europe.

[Download the report](#)



Palm oil production devastating Sumatran forests

CNN, December 11, 2009

In some parts of central Sumatra, a sea of emerald green covers the land. But the rolling hills are not covered in natural forest - instead they're covered in palm plantations.

[Read the article](#)

Impass over gas emissions

December 8, 2009

Malaysian and Indonesian oil palm growers have resisted the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions from their activities as a criterion for certification of their operations.

[Read the article](#)

How Sainsbury's is trying to limit the environmental impact of palm oil

Wall Street Journal, December 7, 2009

The company's sustainability manager spoke to The Wall Street Journal about one of the world's least well-known environmental issues.

[Read the article](#)

Supermarkets get slippery over green palm oil promises

The Guardian, December 4, 2009

Food manufacturers in Europe called for greener palm oil. The growers supplied it. So why aren't supermarkets buying it?

[Read the article](#)

Indonesia could double oil palm plantation area

mongabay.com, December 2, 2009

Indonesia has 18 million hectares of land suitable for oil palm cultivation, nearly twice the 9.7 million hectares that have already been allocated for plantations.

[Read the article](#)

A climate threat rising from Indonesia's peatlands

The Jakarta Globe, November 24, 2009

In Indonesia, peatlands are cleared for oil palm plantations and other reasons, releasing huge amounts of greenhouse gas emissions.

[Read the article](#)

REDD may not be enough to save Sumatra's lowland rainforests

mongabay.com, November 24, 2009

A prominent REDD project in Aceh, Indonesia probably won't be enough to save Northern Sumatra's endangered lowland rainforests from logging and conversion to oil plantations and agriculture, report researchers writing in Environmental Research Letters.

[Read the article](#)

Shame companies into using sustainable palm oil, says minister

The Independent, November 23, 2009

Multinational companies should be "named and shamed" into sourcing sustainable palm oil to protect the world's tropical rainforests, says Britain's Energy Minister, Joan Ruddock.

[Read the article](#)

RSPO still intact despite greenhouse gas contention

The Star, November 21, 2009

Taking care of varied interests in a multi-stakeholder grouping like The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) can't possibly be an easy feat.

[Read the article](#)

Reducing deforestation in Brazil

Green Inc, November 16, 2009

Brazil is among the globe's top 10 greenhouse gas emitters — largely due to burning of forest land for other uses. Brazil has been working to discourage the sale of commodities like beef, soybeans and sugar from ranches and farms built on deforested land.

[Read the article](#)

Palm biodiesel exports rise despite NGO attacks

The Star, November 12, 2009

As at end-August, some 167,846 tonnes of local palm biodiesel had been exported compared with a total of 182,108 tonnes exported in the whole of 2008.

[Read the article](#)

Orangutans get a helping hand

The Jakarta Post, 12 November 2009

Time may be running out for Sumatra's orangutans. The great apes are now only found in northern Sumatra and Aceh, their numbers falling each year with every hectare of lowlands destroyed to make way for palm oil plantations or small-scale farming.

[Read the article](#)

36,000 hectares of Aceh's Leuser ecosystem lost to logging

Jakarta Globe, November 11, 2009

The equivalent of about 10,000 football fields of forest have been lost each year for the past five years in Aceh's Leuser ecosystem due to illegal logging and the clearing of land for palm plantations and new roads.

[Read the article](#)

40% of lowland forests in Sumatra and Indonesian Borneo cleared

mongabay.com, November 10, 2009

Forty per cent of lowland forests in Sumatra and Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo) were cleared from 1990 to 2005, reports a high-resolution assessment of land cover change in Indonesia, mainly due to palm oil as well as pulp and paper industries.

[Read the article](#)

Market needs to recognise sustainable palm oil, says Dompok

Bernamea, November 9, 2009

The premium for certified palm oil should be at US \$50 per tonne compared to US \$8 dollar per tonne currently in order to support the sustainable palm oil industry due to the costly certification process.

[Read the article](#)



RSPO delays greenhouse gas criteria

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) has delayed its greenhouse gas (GHG) criteria for the industry until its new working group comes up with the methodology in a year, president Dr Jan-Kees Vis said.

Read the articles: Palmoil HQ, November 3, The Star, November 6, The Star, November 10

NGO vs CPO

The Star, November 7, 2009

The campaign against palm oil's growth in Borneo and Sumatra may come to a climax soon.

Read the article

New Britain signs palm oil supply agreement with United Biscuits

Food Business Review, October 29, 2009

New Britain Palm Oil (NBPOL), an integrated industrial producer of palm oil, has entered into a two-year supply agreement to provide United Biscuits (UB), a branded snacks business, with segregated, traceable and certified sustainable palm oil.

Read the article

Carbon accounting must not neglect emissions from bioenergy production

mongabay.com, October 29, 2009

Carbon accounting used in the Kyoto Protocol and other climate legislation currently neglects CO2 emissions from the production of biofuels, a loophole that could drive large-scale destruction of tropical forests and exacerbate global warming, warned researchers in the journal Science.

Read the article

Cadbury among Europe's top firms in sourcing eco-friendly palm oil

Birmingham Post, October 29, 2009

Birmingham chocolate giant Cadbury is among the European firms making progress in sourcing eco-friendly palm oil which doesn't contribute to the destruction of rain forests.

Read the article

Sustainable palm oil is expensive – but worth it

The Independent, October 28, 2009

The connection between tropical rainforests and digestive biscuits may not be obvious. That's because most people are unaware that when they sit down for a cup of tea and a biscuit, they are probably consuming palm oil. Most of the world's supply comes from Southeast Asia where countries including Indonesia and Malaysia are clearing thousands of acres of forest to make way for plantations.

Read the article

Orangutans struggle to survive as palm oil booms

The Independent, October 24, 2009

There are about 50,000 to 60,000 orangutans left in the wild. A 2007 assessment by the United Nations Environment Program warned the apes will be virtually eliminated in the wild within two decades if current deforestation trends continue. Oil palm plantations are among the reason for deforestation.

Read the article

Palm oil boom creates danger for orangutans

Redorbit.com, October 22, 2009

Wildlife conservationists say a boom in palm oil - used extensively for biofuel and processed food like margarine - has affected the jungles in Borneo, endangering the already declining orangutan populations, AFP reported.

Read the article

Seventh Generation commits to sustainable palm oil by 2012

Environmental Leader, September 28, 2009

Seventh Generation aims to exclusively use certified sustainable palm oil for its household products by 2012.

Read the article

Forests fight back as Indonesia tackles illegal palm oil

Reuters, September 22, 2009

For decades, the roar of the chainsaw has meant one thing in Indonesia's national parks: illegal loggers ripping down the rainforest. Now, the whirring blades are part of a fight back to cut out illegal palm oil from the international supply chain and slow the deforestation that has pushed Indonesia's carbon emissions sky high, threatening the destruction of some of the world's most ecologically important tropical forests and their animals.

[Read the article](#)

Greenpeace protesters board ship

In mid September, Greenpeace protesters boarded a ship in New Zealand to stop palm kernel destined for the New Zealand dairy industry as cattle feed. It followed a report that highlights the link between palm kernel imports to NZ, the destruction of Indonesian rainforests and climate change.

[Links: stuff.co.nz, September 16, voxy.nz.co, September 16](#)

Dutch Parliament: critical debate on the Round Table on 'Responsible Soy'

Corporate Europe Observatory, September 13, 2009

On September 10, the Dutch Parliament discussed the outcomes of the last RTRS-conference in Brazil last May. The Dutch Parliament had called on both the Ministers of Agriculture and Development Cooperation to be present at the debate. Both Ministries support the RTRS financially and politically. The overall debate was very critical, with the RTRS-criteria being qualified from 'greenwashing' (Greens, SP, Animal Rights Party) to 'very fragile' (Liberals).

[Read the article](#)

Environmentalists welcome halt to palm oil investments

Friends of the Earth International, September 11, 2009

Friends of the Earth International welcomed the announcement by the IFC, the World Bank's private sector arm, that it will stop all palm oil investments.

[Read the article](#)

'Sustainable' palm oil campaign banned by ASA

A press campaign making environmental claims about the controversial product Malaysian Palm Oil, including that it is "sustainable", has been banned as misleading by the British advertising regulator ASA. The Malaysian Palm Oil Council issued a statement reacting to ASA's decision.

[Links: Guardian, September 9, September 09, PR Newswire Europe, September 11](#)

World Bank's IFC suspends lending to palm oil companies

mongabay.com, September 9, 2009

The World Bank has agreed to suspend International Finance Corporation funding of the oil palm sector pending the development of safeguards to ensure that lending doesn't cause social or environmental harm.

[Read the article](#)

Bid to make 'green' palm oil advances

The New York Times, September 9, 2009

Palm plantations are in the cross hairs of consumer groups and corporations in Australia, New Zealand, Europe and the United States.

[Read the article](#)

Avoiding palm oil is good for health and good for orangutans

examiner.com, September 4, 2009

Tropical rain forests are being clear-cut for palm oil plantations. Many forests in Indonesia and Malaysia have been burned and cut.

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Palm oil paradox

The Christian Science Monitor, August 24, 2009

Meeting the demand for biofuel from palm oil means burning rain forests. A new network offers a better way.

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The case against palm oil

Stuff.co.nz, August 17, 2009

Public concerns over palm oil were highlighted when Cadbury revealed it had started using palm oil in its chocolate, prompting a consumer backlash. But Cadbury's use of palm oil is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of the product's use in New Zealand.

[Read the article](#)

Developed countries' demand for biofuels has been 'disastrous'

The Guardian, August 17, 2009

Production of crops such as maize and palm oil are fueling poverty and environmental damage in poor countries, says Christian Aid.

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Oil giants destroy rainforests to make palm oil diesel for motorists

The Times, August 15, 2009

Fuel companies are accelerating the destruction of rainforest by secretly adding palm oil to diesel that is sold to millions of British motorists.

[Read the article](#)

Smaller premiums to slow "green" palm certification

Reuters, August 11, 2009

An 80 percent dive in the premium paid for certified "green" palm oil could discourage producers from applying for certification, an industry official said, marking a setback in efforts to control deforestation.

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World Bank violates its own standards developing oil palm sector in Indonesia

The World Bank's private sector arm – the International Finance Corporation (IFC) – has allowed commercial interests to override its social and environmental standards in making major loans to the oil palm sector in Indonesia, an internal audit reveals.

Links: Bank Information Center, August 10, REDD-Monitor, August 12

Soy farming standards feed sustainability debate

Ecoamericas.com, August 2009

International stakeholders ranging from agribusiness executives to green advocates have drafted standards that they claim will ensure global soybean farming is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sound. But many environmentalists say the standards, issued by the Buenos Aires-based Round Table on Responsible Soy Association, would merely perpetuate a destructive and unsustainable model of monoculture production.

[Read the article](#)

Palm oil development threatens Aceh's orangutans

Orangutan Outreach, June 30, 2009

Conservation campaigners in Britain are calling on supermarkets to stop selling products that contain palm oil harvested from environmentally sensitive areas in Indonesia.

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Oil boom threatens orang-utans

The Independent, June 23, 2009

A famous British company, Jardines, is profiting as the lowland forest – which shelters the few remaining orang-utans – is razed to make way for massive palm oil plantations.

[Read the article](#)

Amazon deforestation in 2009 declines to lowest on record

mongabay.com, June 22, 2009

The global economic downturn drives slowing deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon: Annual deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon fell below 10,000 square kilometers for the first time since record-keeping began, reported Brazil's Environment Minister.

[Read the article](#)

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