

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Private sector commits to 100% sustainable palm oil in Europe Game changer for sustainable palm oil**

*Monday 7 December 2015* - European private sector organizations join forces for a first time to ensure a fully sustainable palm oil supply chain in Europe by 2020. At the EU and Global Value Chains' high-level conference, the Commitment to Support 100% Sustainable Palm Oil in Europe was presented to the Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Lilianne Ploumen. The Netherlands with four other European countries (Denmark, France, Germany, United Kingdom) declared governmental support by presenting the Amsterdam Palm Oil Declaration.

At a country level, national initiatives are already working to increase the uptake of sustainable palm oil. These parties have now agreed to work closer together to promote the use and growth of sustainable palm oil across Europe.

Joost Oorthuizen, executive director at IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative said: "A harmonized, European approach will speed up the use of sustainable palm oil in Europe and act as an example for other regions. Europe is the second largest importer of palm oil in the world and this brings along the responsibility for European companies and governments to work towards a fully sustainable palm oil supply chain in Europe. Palm oil production must be sustainable in order to stop deforestation, peat and forest fires and haze. The Indonesian government also has a role and a responsibility, and as part of this IDH last week signed an ambitious plan with the Governor of South Sumatra to end peat fires. With combined government forces here and there and the purchasing power of Europe we can start tackling the issues.

The oil palm tree is the most efficient oil crop in terms of land use. It has the highest yield compared to other oil crops per hectare of land. Oil palms use 6% of global cultivated land dedicated to vegetable oil production, while it delivers 32% of total vegetable oil volume.

Palm oil is the most produced and traded vegetable oil in the world, and global demand has grown at more than 5% a year over the last decade. If not managed correctly, this growing demand is putting pressure on land use, often at the expense of local communities, fragile ecosystems and tropical forests and affects climate change in several and substantial ways.

MVO represents the Dutch oils and fats chain and, together with IDH, has been the founder of the type of national initiatives that have brought us to where we stand today. Frans Claassen, managing director of MVO said: 'The results of the Dutch task force show that a common goal and collaborative approach towards sustainable palm oil are effective. While having started a national sustainable palm oil initiative in the Netherlands, currently there are already 8 EU-members which similar initiatives. It's now time to move forward and share knowledge and experience across the whole of Europe and the major importing countries India and China, changing the whole palm oil supply chain.

Over the last year, IDH and MVO have convened the European Sustainable Palm Oil (ESPO) project to stimulate the uptake of more sustainable palm oil in Europe by working in close collaboration with national palm oil initiatives, the RSPO and umbrella EU associations FEDIOL, Caobisco and IMACE,

collaborating within the European Sustainable Palm Advocacy Group (ESPOAG). The project has two key objectives: assuring the involvement of companies, sectors and countries that do not yet have a national sustainable palm oil commitment, and strengthening the existing national initiatives; by facilitating knowledge exchange, providing support in setting up an European network, and providing financial backing when required.

Sustainable management and production of palm oil with environmental protection and socio-economic benefits is possible and certified sustainable palm oil products (RSPO or equivalent), are available.

The Commitment to Support is an initiative of ESPO, and is signed and supported by the following organizations:

- Belgian Alliance Sustainable Palm Oil
- Caobisco, the Association of Chocolate, Biscuit and Confectionery Industries of Europe
- Danish Food and Drink Federation Initiative
- Dutch Alliance Sustainable Palm Oil
- German Forum Sustainable Palm Oil
- FEDIOL, European Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry Federation
- French Alliance Sustainable Palm Oil
- Food and Drink Federation - UK Statement on Sustainable Palm Oil signatory
- IMACE, European Margarine Association
- Italian Union for Sustainable Palm Oil
- Swedish Initiative for Sustainable Palm Oil

Besides this, the Amsterdam Declaration, in support of a fully sustainable palm oil supply by 2020, was signed by the governments of Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

#### **About IDH**

IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) is a non-profit organization that brings together front-running companies, civil society, knowledge and financial institutions and governments in public private partnerships to transform markets towards more environmentally and socially sustainable production and trade. Founded in 2008 with a co-funding grant from the Dutch government, IDH - now funded by the Dutch, Danish and Swiss governments - operates globally in 11 commodity sectors ranging from coffee and tea to aquaculture and soy. Together with its over 350 public and private partners, IDH develops, implements, co-funds and evaluates innovative scalable business models to deliver global impact on the Sustainable Development Goals. Recently IDH started also a landscape program (ISLA) in seven landscapes on three continents. [www.idhsustainabletrade.com](http://www.idhsustainabletrade.com)

#### **About MVO – The Netherlands Oils and Fats Industry**

MVO – The Netherlands Oils and Fats Industry represents the interest of the companies in the Dutch oils and fats supply chain. MVO stands for an international competitive and sustainable oils and fats sector and has a strong focus on sustainable palm oil. MVO initiated the Dutch Alliance Sustainable Palm Oil and is actively involved in promoting the use and production of certified sustainable palm oil. [www.mvo.nl](http://www.mvo.nl)

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### Note to editors

For more information please contact Elske Stevenson, communication manager at IDH: +31 (0)30-230 7872 / +31 (0)6-21147951 or [stevenson@idhsustainabletrade.com](mailto:stevenson@idhsustainabletrade.com) or Nicole Vervaet at MVO: +31(0)793634358 or [vervaet@mvo.nl](mailto:vervaet@mvo.nl).