



PRESS RELEASE

The Netherlands aim for 100% Sustainable Palm Oil in Europe

Europe is to switch to 100% sustainable palm oil by the year 2020. Minister Ploumen (Ministry of International Trade and Development Cooperation) supports this ambition of European Sustainable Palm Oil (ESPO), a new initiative of MVO – The Netherlands Oils and Fats Industry, and IDH (The Sustainable Trade Initiative). ‘The Netherlands are ahead in their achievements: by the end of this year we hope to have switched to 100% sustainable palm oil. It is time that other European countries are also progressing in making their supply chains more sustainable’, according to the Minister.

Ploumen talked today to Frans Claassen, director of MVO, the organization that represents the Netherlands Oils and Fats Industry and to Darrel Webber, Secretary General of the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), about making the palm oil supply chain more sustainable. In the longer term, the Minister aims to achieve 100% palm oil worldwide. ‘Palm oil import in Europe is 14% of the international palm oil import. When we reach the 100% goal here, we may very well start a worldwide race to the top’. The Minister strives for alliances with other major users of palm oil such as China and India, to jointly work towards a healthier environment and better social conditions within the palm oil sector.

In the Netherlands the trade and industry has almost completely switched to sustainable palm oil during the last five year. Initiatives for sustainable palm oil have also been established in other European countries. ESPO will harmonize the existing initiatives on sustainable palm oil and provide a platform for exchanging practices to increase the uptake of sustainable palm oil on an European level. Trade and industry will be stimulated to commit to the ambitions and the European supply chains for palm oil have to be mapped and surveyed. In the Netherlands, ESPO will be supported by MVO, whereas IDH will act as the European convener

Palm oil is widely used within the food industry. Almost all of the palm oil being imported in Europe is grown in Indonesia and Malaysia. In these countries the production of palm oil may cause problems such as land grabbing and deforestation. RSPO addresses these problems by training small farmers in better land use and higher productivity. Also RSPO helps farmers to make the transition to sustainable palm oil.

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