

JOINT STATEMENT

16th September 2014

Steering Group Established to Oversee the High Carbon Stock (HCS) Approach for Implementing 'No Deforestation' Commitments

A group of leading plantation companies with commitments to eliminate deforestation from their supply chains, NGOs and technical support organisations met on 25th and 26th August in Singapore to establish a governance and standardisation body for the methodology, known as the High Carbon Stock (HCS) Approach, to be used to implement these commitments.

The group will work together to demonstrate that immediate action can be taken to break the link between deforestation and high-risk commodities, such as palm oil and pulp and paper. The companies involved are Asia Pulp and Paper (APP), Cargill, Golden Agri-Resources (GAR), Golden Veroleum Liberia, Wilmar and the producer members of the Palm Oil Innovation Group, Agropalma and New Britain Palm Oil. All have agreed to stop any further land clearing for plantations until High Carbon Stock assessments have been completed and management plans enacted to protect High Carbon Stock areas.

The international NGOs involved include Conservation International, Forest Heroes, Forest Peoples' Programme (FPP), Greenpeace, National Wildlife Federation, Rainforest Action Network, Rainforest Alliance, Union of Concerned Scientists and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and as observers, The Nature Conservancy and World Resources Institute as well as the technical support organisations Daemeter, Proforest and The Forest Trust (TFT).

The HCS Approach is being developed as a tool to help companies and others implement commitments to end deforestation. The methodology to implement the approach aims to provide a practical and credible way to identify degraded areas suitable for plantation development and forest areas that merit protection to maintain and enhance carbon, biodiversity and social values. In practice the approach is to integrate HCS assessments with High Conservation Value (HCV) assessments, protection of peatlands, and processes to accommodate local communities' livelihoods and aspirations, respect their rights to their lands and to give or withhold their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) to proposed developments.

The mission of the HCS Steering Group is *'To ensure that there is a practical, transparent, robust, and scientifically credible approach that is widely accepted to implement commitments to halt deforestation in the tropics while ensuring that the rights, livelihoods and aspirations of local peoples are respected.'*

The HCS Approach was first developed by Golden Agri Resources, TFT and Greenpeace in 2011. Since then, it has gained wider support from companies as part of a suite of actions to deliver on their commitments to prevent further deforestation. Various consumer companies including Mars, Nestle, Colgate Palmolive, Neste Oil and Unilever, refer to the HCS methodology in their responsible sourcing policies.

The group which met in Singapore nominated an HCS Steering Group to lead a process for further development and global standardisation of the HCS methodology. This includes seeking review and advice from a science committee and expert guidance based on a range of field trials. To assist its widespread adoption, the Steering Group will develop a process to ensure quality control of the use of the methodology, in coordination with institutions including the RSPO, FSC and the High Conservation Value Resource Network. The HCS Steering Group is also intending to reach out to other parties developing thinking on HCS assessments.

The initial Steering Group is comprised of the following organisations: NGOs FPP, Greenpeace and WWF; plantation companies: Agropalma, APP, GAR and Wilmar and the technical support company TFT. A 'Consultative Forum' will be formed to ensure that the Steering Group receives feedback from any interested stakeholder and can share progress of the HCS Approach. The Steering Group invites all relevant stakeholders to participate in this forum.

Joint statement by:

Conservation International / Forest Heroes / Forest Peoples' Programme / Greenpeace / National Wildlife Federation / Rainforest Action Network / Rainforest Alliance / Union of Concerned Scientists / World Wide Fund for Nature / Agropalma / Asia Pulp and Paper / Cargill / Golden Agri-Resources / Golden Veroleum Liberia / New Britain Palm Oil / Wilmar / Daemeter / Proforest / The Forest Trust

The members of the Steering Group:

- Agropalma / Marcello Brillo / marcello@agropalma.com.br
- APP/ Aida Greenbury / Aida_greenbury@app.co.id
- Forest Peoples Program / Patrick Anderson / patrick@forestpeoples.org
- Golden Agri Resources / Peter Heng / peterheng@goldenagri.com.sg
- Greenpeace / Grant Rosoman / grosoman@greenpeace.org
- The Forest Trust / Claire Adam / c.adam@tft-forests.org
- Wilmar / Sharon Chong / sharon.chong@wilmar.com.sg
- WWF/ Aditya Bayunanda / ABayunanda@wwf.or.id

For more information or for those interested to participate in the Consultative Forum, please contact Grant Rosoman (grosoman@greenpeace.org, +642148415) or Suzanne Kroger (skroger@greenpeace.org, +628118800420)