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Joint Press Statement 10 March 2016

Innovation Group Delivers a Leap Forward In Efforts To Transform the Palm Oil Industry

Jakarta, Indonesia - Today, the Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG), a leading initiative to transform the palm oil industry, has released a new, robust and field-tested set of verification indicators that will drive much-needed change in the industry. The POIG Charter is already being used by leaders in the palm oil sector to break the link between palm oil, the destruction of forests and peatlands, and the violation of human and labour rights.

The POIG verification indicators will be used by independent third parties to determine if a palm oil company is protecting forests and peatlands that have high biodiversity, carbon and social values, while simultaneously upholding the rights of local communities and workers, and improving livelihoods for local communities. The indicators have been field tested by three palm oil growers who are founding members of POIG, in Brazil, Colombia and Papua New Guinea, and it will soon be put into practice in Indonesia.

“We have shown that it is possible to grow palm oil responsibly and that our claims can be tested and verified in the field by independent third-parties in a cost-effective manner. This is important as consumers want to know that the ingredients in the products they use have been grown to the highest environmental and social standards possible,” said Tulio Dias Brito, Agropalma.

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“Today marks a leap forward in our efforts to transform the palm oil sector. We have developed the first field-tested verification tool that can be used by global brands to third-party verify their suppliers’ compliance with the Palm Oil Innovation Group Charter,” said Annisa Rahmawati, Greenpeace Southeast Asia.

“The Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG) remains the gold standard for the production of responsible palm oil. It builds upon other certification systems, such as the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil, and tackles some of the most challenging issues facing the palm oil sector, such as the destruction of high carbon stock forests and the abuse of the most vulnerable workers,” said Matthias Diemer, Chair of the Palm Oil Innovation Group.

“The time has come for other palm oil producers, traders, retailers and manufacturers to demand, and scale up their efforts to produce truly responsible palm oil that is in line with the leading POIG Charter,” concluded Robin Averbeck, Rainforest Action Network.

The Palm Oil Innovation Group Charter, verification indicators, and summary of the public consultation can be reviewed at <http://www.poig.org/poig-verification-indicators/>

The Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG) is a collective of progressive palm oil companies and brands together with environmental and social NGOs that are working to build on the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil standards and commitments by both demonstrating innovation to implement RSPO existing standards as well as additional critical issues. For more information visit www.poig.org

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Members of the Palm Oil Innovation Group include: Agropalma, Boulder Brands, DAABON, Danone, Ferrero, Forest Peoples Programme, Greenpeace, International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF), Orangutan Land Trust, Musim Mas, Rainforest Action Network, Stephenson, Verité, Wetlands International, and WWF.