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**Joint Press Statement
28 November 2016**

Palm Oil Innovation Group Presents Leading Labour Practices to Uphold Workers' Rights

New publication on labour rights comes at critical time as growing body of research highlights widespread labour rights issues in conventional palm oil industry.

Singapore - Today, the Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG) released a publication titled, "[Palm Oil Innovations: Labour Rights](#)" on the heels of the 14th annual meeting of the [Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil \(RSPO\)](#) in Bangkok, Thailand which highlighted worker exploitation issues in the palm oil sector.

This publication—the first in a series from POIG—highlights some of the innovations being implemented by POIG members with respect to labour practices. It builds upon the group's work to define and independently verify fair labour conditions for workers on palm oil plantations using its Palm Oil Charter and associated verification indicators.

A growing body of evidence on palm oil labour brings to light critical issues such as forced and child labour, human trafficking, low wages and poor working conditions for a large number of workers on plantations across Indonesia and Malaysia. The publication presents improvements that can be put into practice by palm oil producers and the RSPO to uphold workers' rights and break the link between palm oil and labour exploitation. Key recommendations include:

- Paying a decent living wage, as agreed through the participation of workers and independent unions;
- No fees or costs are charged to workers, directly or indirectly, for recruitment or employment services;
- No retention of passports, other government issued identification and any personal valuables;
- Limiting precarious work by ensuring that casual, temporary and day labour is limited to jobs that are genuinely temporary or seasonal, and account for no more than 20% of the workforce;
- Providing access to accessible, equitable and legitimate grievance mechanisms.

A major strength of the Palm Oil Innovation Group is that its grower members have completed, or are currently undergoing, third party assessments of their compliance with requirements to halt deforestation, development on peatlands and the exploitation of communities or workers' rights. It is an open forum and new members are encouraged to apply.



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The *Palm Oil Innovations: Labour Rights* publication can be downloaded at:

<http://poig.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/POIG-Innovations-Publication-Labour-Rights-November-2016.pdf>

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The Palm Oil Innovation Group is a multi-stakeholder initiative that strives to achieve the adoption of responsible palm oil production practices by key players in the supply chain through developing and sharing a credible and verifiable benchmark that builds upon the RSPO, and creating and promoting innovations.

Its members include leading brands like Ferrero, Danone, Stephenson and Boulder Brands, palm oil growers and traders Agropalma and DAABON and Musim Mas Group along with international NGOs including Greenpeace, WWF, Rainforest Action Network (RAN), Forest Peoples Programme (FPP), International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF), Verite, Orangutan Land Trust, Sumatran Orangutan Society and Wetlands International.

For more information visit www.poig.org