

Exploring inclusive palm oil production

ETFRN News 59 – Call for contributions

This edition of ETFRN News will pour intellectual oil on troubled waters, calming the waves of debate by presenting examples of innovative and inclusive palm oil production systems. It will assess what has not worked, but importantly, it will analyse *what positive practices and policies have worked for more inclusive palm oil production and why*, as we strive towards more collective and sustainable solutions to this apparently intractable problem.



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Palm oil is a controversial commodity. But whatever is said about it, it is big business, and getting bigger by the day. But alongside this, the size and depth of the social and environmental debates surrounding its production are also growing. And although much has been done and written over the years, coming to a consensus regarding solutions seems no nearer as opinions tend to polarize and are as such hampering effective dialogue. One side shows how cultivating oil palm provides a higher income to millions of smallholders worldwide and also benefits rural communities by contributing to local infrastructure development and employment. Another side highlights how expansion of oil palm replaces natural forests, peatlands and other fragile ecosystems, thereby negatively impacting biodiversity, the climate as well as communities' resources rights, and how it can have other negative social implications for smallholders and the communities they are part of.

In this context, ETFRN News enters the debate in the same way as it has covered other controversial topics over the past 26 years by seeking and sharing independent and objective analyses. Regarding oil palm, problems and potentials are widely published. However, much more information is needed on what kind of activities, projects and analyses have been done and are being done on the ground to increase the involvement of and benefits to smallholder oil palm growers. How do these actions and their impacts differ between different smallholder 'types' and organizations? How does this differ between countries, regions and corporate contexts? What are the effects of different 'enabling' policy environments? And what do we mean by 'inclusiveness'?

If you are interested in contributing to this ETFRN News, we cordially invite you to send a short outline (half page to a page) to the editors Rosalien Jezeer (rosalien.jezeer@tropenbos.org) and Nick Pasiecznik (npasiecznik@wanadoo.fr) by **15 August 2018**, also indicating which other people/organizations/corporations might be included as co-contributors. Corporations and civil society organizations are strongly encouraged to contribute, and we would also very much like to hear about other success stories or experiences that might be considered. All those who submit an outline or an idea will be contacted by 1 September, and selected authors will be offered a framework and a dedicated editor to assist with the transformation of their summary into illustrated reality. Full papers (2500-3000 words) will be finalized by 20 October 2018, to be published online beginning in November, and compiled into an ETFRN News edition in early 2019.