

WWF-Malaysia and SD Guthrie pilot five-year regenerative agriculture programme for palm oil

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World Wide Fund for Nature Malaysia (WWF-Malaysia) and leading palm oil company SD Guthrie are piloting a five-year regenerative agriculture programme for palm oil in Malaysia's Sabah district.

The initiative is a pilot under WWF's Reconnect Borneo Initiative – a regional effort to restore ecological connectivity across Borneo through a network of wildlife corridors.

As part of the collaboration, the partners said they would work together to establish a wildlife corridor, strengthen biodiversity conservation and implement WWF's global regenerative palm oil framework, in real operating conditions.

The initiative's aim was to move beyond certification towards measurable improvements for biodiversity, climate resilience and communities while optimising long-term productivity, they added.

“These approaches go beyond RSPO and MSPO certification to deliver measurable improvements for biodiversity, climate resilience and communities, while recognising the economic importance of palm oil to Malaysia and the global market,” said Sophia Lim, WWF-Malaysia's CEO.

“This partnership reflects a shared understanding that transformation cannot happen in silos – conservation organisations, industry leaders and value-chain stakeholders must work together to co-create practical, science-based and scalable solutions.”

SD Guthrie – formerly known as Sime Darby Plantation (SD Plantation) – said the collaboration reinforced its “Beyond Zero” sustainability framework, which listed piloting a Regenerative Agriculture Framework for the palm oil sector by 2028 as a key goal.

The company has also committed to restoring and conserving 100,000ha of land across and beyond its value chain by 2030 to enhance biodiversity and environmental resilience.

“With this initiative, we will go above and beyond certification requirements, aiming not only to minimise and mitigate our negative impacts, but also ensure that we actively cultivate positive outcomes in the landscapes where we operate,” said Mohd Haris Mohd Arshad, SD Guthrie’s Group managing director.

As part of the initiative, RSPO- and Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MSPO)-certified plantations and conservation areas would be subject to independent audits, risk reviews and WWF governance controls.