



## **NEWSFLASH : New Interactive Mapping Tool aids in identification of land for oil palm cultivation, shows great potential for minimizing pressure on rainforests in Borneo, and provides opportunity to add value to Best Management Practices**

January 09, 2013. Penang, Malaysia – The World Resources Institute (WRI) has developed an online mapping application that allows users to identify potentially suitable areas for sustainable palm oil development in Indonesia. Currently Indonesia has one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world.

Launched at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) in October 2012, the Suitability Mapper is an interactive tool that enables palm oil producers, investors and government planners to use WRI's maps and single out low-carbon sink areas with little biodiversity as potential sites for oil palm plantations. By applying a set of criteria such as peat depth, soil type and rainfall, users can create customized maps that highlight these degraded land areas.

This freely available tool, which meets certification standards of the RSPO, is ready for use in Kalimantan, Indonesia. According to the Suitability Mapper, there are 14 million hectares of land in the region that may be established as oil palm plantations to meet global demands sustainably, without needing to clear anymore rainforest or peat land in Indonesia. The 14 million hectares include areas where forests or natural vegetation were previously cleared but have not recovered, or un-used like the alang-alang grasslands.

The Suitability Mapper would be useful in assessing policy options to support the conversion of degraded lands of acceptable quality for cultivation of oil palm. Evidence shows that improved agronomic plantation management is a viable strategy to intensify yield production on plantations.

The International Plant Nutrition Institute – Southeast Asia Program has been working with Indonesian plantation groups in Kalimantan over several years to identify and develop site-specific Best Management Practices (BMP) in areas with supposedly unfavourable soil conditions. Following the implementation of BMP in these sites, crude palm oil (CPO) yield levels increased well above the national Indonesian average of 3.5 - 4 t CPO per hectare.

With oil palm playing a major role in contributing to the global production of edible oils, expansion measures will take a toll on forest lands. The incorporation of degraded land for palm oil production coupled with BMP implementation would yield good results and be profitable. These practices would also decrease the pressure on rainforest land, biodiversity and reduce the carbon foot print that indiscriminate land expansions cause.

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### **About IPNI**

The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) is a not-for-profit, science-based organization dedicated to the responsible management of plant nutrition for the benefit of people. Through cooperation and partnerships with respected institutions around the world, IPNI adds its strength to agronomic research, education, demonstrations, training, and other endeavors. Best management practices for nutrient stewardship encourage the concept of 4Rs - applying the right nutrient source, at the right rate, at the right time, and in the right place. To learn more about IPNI, please visit: [www.ipni.net](http://www.ipni.net)

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