

Cooperation and way forward to ensure sustainable vegetable oils

Promotion of mutual understanding on sustainability challenges

and issues of vegetable oils.

The EU-Relevant ASEAN Member States technical webinar on sustainable vegetable oils

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Abstract

There is a limited future for the tropical plantation systems. Indeed, the intensive monoculture system, which has been imposed by colonial powers, has been the norm for most of plantation crops. This system relied on abundant arable land and docile work force, and this situation is not the case anymore under the tropics. More, the 2015 El Nino episode demonstrated the poor climatic resilience of intensive monocrop systems. The CoVid pandemics has also revealed several weaknesses such as the immediate need for mechanization and the recurrent occurrence of labour shortages in plantations. Diversified systems are more able to resist to price volatility (more stable income from multiple activities).

The TRAILS project was initiated in 2020 in Sabah, Malaysia, in order to build on innovative partnership and to engage stakeholders in the plantation of sustainable agroforestry - based systems. The Project builds on a complementary partnership, linking academics with NGOs, private and public stakeholders. TRAILS relies on long-term expertise and multidisciplinary approaches from various science fields: it deals with agronomy, forestry and conservation sciences.

A second program is presently developed by Cirad in Southeast Asia. TALENT is a training program for sustainable plantation landscapes. The program builds on Cirad worldwide expertise in sustainable agriculture, and it benefits from a 1.2 million euros fund from Agence Française de Développement, based in Paris, France.

Cooperation for sustainability is a key topic: indeed, addressing the sustainability of global commodity chains requires cooperation at multiple levels. The public, the funders, the civil society want clear and immediate answers to complex questions: how to define sustainability? How to certify sustainability, and to install credibility? Cooperation is essential, not only between stakeholders (Governments, NGOs, Research, Industry) but also between countries (CPOPC).

The two flagship projects selected herewith are examples of successful undergoing pilot projects implemented on the ground and design to provide science-based answers to key questions about sustainable agriculture.

<https://www.trails-project.org/>

<https://www.talent-programme.org/>