

Guilt-free doughnuts: UN summit hails palm oil pledges

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A worker carries a freshly harvested fruit of the palm oil tree in Langkat, Indonesia on May 10, 2014

Dunkin' Donuts and Krispy Kreme joined a raft of international food companies pledging Tuesday at a UN Summit to stop using palm oil, considered a major contributor to deforestation.

And the world's three largest [palm oil](#) companies—Wilmar, Golden Agri-

Resources and Cargill—said they would cooperate to end [deforestation](#) and encourage Indonesia's incoming president Joko Widodo to implement policies on the issue.

Environmentalists have campaigned for years against palm oil, lamenting the destruction of tropical forests to plant the lucrative trees, whose oil is also used in cosmetics and soap.

The United Nations said that, after a year-long effort, a growing percentage of palm oil producers had pledged to use forest land that hadn't been illegally cleared, now representing up to 60 percent of the global production.

Cargill CEO Dave MacLennan, appearing with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, pledged that the company would go further by avoiding deforestation in all its products—not just palm oil.

"We understand that this sort of commitment cannot be limited to just select commodities or supply chains," MacLennan said.

Deforestation contributes to climate change, as lush rainforests that counteract the effects of the planet's carbon emissions are lost.

Logging for palm oil has also been blamed for the loss of habitat for critically endangered orangutans in Indonesia.

Ban called the UN summit in hopes of building momentum for a landmark climate agreement at talks late next year in Paris.

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