Malaysian Palm Oil Council: Documentary Production Proposal

Presented to
Tan Sri Datuk Dr Yusof Basiron, CEO, MPOC
Executive Summary

PALM OIL’S SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: MYTH OR REALITY?

Palm oil, despite its widespread use in foodstuffs and increasingly for biofuels, remains surrounded by controversy with its production methods triggering fierce debate and harsh criticism from the ‘green lobby’. But the palm oil sector is not standing still in its efforts to create a sustainable industry.

On the global stage, plans to create a sustainable palm oil industry are set to take a major step forward next month when the World Bank Group (WBG) presents a long-awaited strategy detailing how it could lift its moratorium on new palm oil investments as part of efforts to enhance the sector’s sustainability practices.

The following slides outline FBC’s production strategy for producing editorially credible content for placement on international, pan-regional broadcasters, helping re-set the debate around palm oil and its sustainability and initiating a wider, more objective dialogue.
TV Production

Documentary Production

FBC will produce and manage an international broadcast quality documentary for placement in a prime time slot on a pan-regional channel such as BBC World, Bloomberg, CNBC or Channel News Asia.

FBC will manage the whole production process including documentary concept, script, on-location filming, organising interviews, crew travel and accommodation and the placement of the documentary on a respected international broadcast platform.

Possible interviews within the programme could include Tan Sri Datuk Dr Yusof Barison and other key MPOC leaders, complemented by supporting interviews with Malaysian government officials, industry leaders and Western third party champions.
The documentary will look at the overarching theme of **sustainability**, looking at controversial industries such as **petroleum** and **logging** as well as **palm oil production**. That allows us to illustrate the positive efforts specifically by the palm oil industry. It will also put palm oil in the context of other industries.

The main objective is to tackle the issues surrounding the environmental sustainability of the world's most controversial extractive and natural resource-based industries.
To keep the reporting balanced, we will interview NGOs leveling criticism at the industry, but then getting responses from the key players in palm oil production from countries such as Malaysia, where sustainable certification is promoted and forest conservation efforts are underway. The programme will look at how the certification programmes are enforced, and what results the conservation projects are having.

We will also have voices from the industry express their views in particular, we will try to highlight how advanced the certification mechanisms are in the palm oil industry compared to others, as well as the positive and proactive cooperation between producers and the food industry.
Efforts to find sector-based solutions, including the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) for palm oil and credible certification standards such as those of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for wood and paper will also be scrutinised in the show.

The programme will put a particular focus on small farm holders – to emphasise the often overlooked fact that these constitute the majority of players in an industry too often associated to large corporate interests.
Some of the **questions** to be addressed are:

Can petroleum resources, timber and palm oil be extracted, harvested and developed in an environmentally sustainable way?

What are the challenges?

What will drive change?

And where are the opportunities?
The production schedule is as follow:

**Week 1:** Pre-Production – research

**Week 2:** Fixing – 1st Shoot – *Petroleum*

**Week 3:** Filming Location 1

**Week 4:** Fixing – 2nd Shoot – *Logging*

**Week 5:** Filming Location 2

**Week 6:** Fixing 3rd Shoot – *Oil palm*

**Week 7:** Filming Location 3

**Week 8:** Paper edit

**Week 9:** Edit Week 1 off-line

**Week 10:** Edit Week 2 off-line

**Week 11:** Viewing/changes

**Week 12:** Online/grade/dub

**End Wk 12:** Delivery to broadcaster
The series will also examine a new report by world-renowned think-tank the Adam Smith Institute entitled “Dispelling the myths: Palm oil and the environmental lobby”. The ASI argues it is time to reassess many assumptions about the environmental impact of industry in the developing world and makes the explosive conclusion: “Adopting high-profile endangered animals is a cynical device to win more support and funding for green NGOs such as Friends of the Earth and WWF. We should take the Malaysian example as a sign to reassess many assumptions about the environmental impact of industry in the developing world, and remember that our well-meaning sentimentality can have profoundly negative consequences for people trying to work their way out of poverty.”
Three-Part TV News Report Series on ‘World Business’

FBC will produce a special three-part TV series, broadcast on our syndicated network to over 400 million households across the globe, guaranteeing global distribution and controlled messaging to over 400 million households.

The three-part series will consist of 5-6 minute in-depth TV reports, coverage could include:

1. The significant economic development benefits to emerging nations such as Malaysia provided by the cultivation and commoditisation of palm oil
2. An in-depth look at the new technologies being developed for bio-fuels
3. The future for sustainable palm oil

The coverage would address the complexities of the debate around palm oil and biofuel production in particular, making a distinction between Malaysia’s environmental profile in palm oil production and those of other nations in the region. Interviewees would include Tan Sri Datuk Dr Yusof Barison, key MPOC leaders as well as third party ambassadors.
Next Steps

FBC would be honoured to promote the interests of Malaysia’s palm oil industry internationally and looks forward to your feedback and initialising the campaign.