

ACTIAM supports new project to measure levels of biodiversity

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ACTIAM, Fidelity International, NN Investment Partners and Nomura Asset Management are working together on measuring progress towards achieving sustainable supply chains. The investors have sponsored the French company Green PRAXIS to do a pilot study for developing a biodiversity measurement. An investee palm oil producer has agreed to participate in the study which will be conducted in the fall of 2022.

Green PRAXIS is a mission driven organisation aiming to maximise environmental and economic benefits through sustainable vegetation management services and nature-based solutions. As part of their toolbox, they use bioacoustics for analysing the health of an ecosystem. Although not a new technology, it is becoming more widely used for conservation purposes and species tracking. For this study, bioacoustics will be used to measure biodiversity levels within multiple plots of land being used for palm oil production. The observations will be conducted in Indonesia on land owned by the participating company.





for biodiversity. Bioacoustics measurements are complementary to satellite-based monitoring and help to assess whether reforested or standing forests which appear intact in satellite imagery also have high biodiversity conservation value. Bioacoustics offer several advantages including automation, repeatability and scalability. The technology is also less invasive to the surrounding ecosystem compared to other technologies available to measure and monitor biodiversity.

Collaborative efforts involving governments, NGOs, certification schemes and investors are encouraging companies and their suppliers to evolve towards more sustainable commodity production models. Palm oil production if done more sustainably, can boost long term yields, maintain more forested areas and help preserve biodiversity. In addition to using more sustainable practices as a starting point, land should be remediated after deforestation incidents triggered by palm oil (or other commodity production) have occurred. This study aims to measure the levels of biodiversity associated with these scenarios.

Positive impacts of conservation actions (e.g. High Conservation Value and High Conservation Stock approaches) in palm oil plantations on biodiversity will be assessed. Green Praxis will compare recordings collected in both conservation areas and in intensive production areas. Analyses are based on soundscape quality assessment and artificial intelligence to detect key species. These methods can provide an insight into the health of the ecosystem and can be used as estimates of biodiversity levels.

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