

## Sawit Kinabalu aims to be fully sustainability-compliant by 2022

BEAUFORT: State-owned oil palm corporation Sawit Kinabalu aims to be fully sustainability-compliant by 2022.

It will abide fully the sustainability criteria of the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and Malaysia's own sustainability label – the Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) certification by June 2019 followed by RSPO by 2022.

This was revealed by Nazlan Mohd, Sawit Kinabalu's Senior Manager for Sustainability, when he briefed a group of German parliamentarians at Sawit's Lumadan palm oil mill near here on Saturday.

The 10-member German delegation, which included Germany's Ambassador to Malaysia Nicholas G Lambsdorff, was on an Asean-wide visit to have an overview of sustainability issues and measures undertaken.

The group was led by Ms Renate Knenast, who belongs to The Green

Party. It also counted parliamentarians from The Left Party as well as members from the ruling Christian Democratic Union of whom current Chancellor Angela Merkel is a member.

Germany is the ninth highest buyer of palm oil in 2017 with a total of 797 million metric tonnes. The country, who is a member of the European Union which has decided to ban the use of crude palm oil for biofuel, plans to import only sustainability-certified palm oil by 2020.

The visitors whose visit was coordinated by POIC Sabah Sdn Bhd were told of wide-ranging efforts towards palm oil sustainability whose criteria covers issues of deforestation, local community interest, wildlife and environment protection.

Sawit Kinabalu has set aside 5,400 hectares of its land as a conservation area. It has been involved in the creation

of a wildlife corridor and subscribes to Jurisdictional Certification scheme initiated in Sabah towards certification of all oil palm plantation (totalling about 1.6 million hectares) in the state by 2025.

The company has begun an initiative to install methane-capture facilities at all of its eight palm oil mills to generate electricity. The Lumadan mill is one of two that trap methane from its POME (palm oil mill effluent) ponds. The other is at the Apas Balung mill in Tawau.

Meanwhile, Ismail Salkilan, who is Sawit Kinabalu's General Manager for Corporate Planning & Communication, stressed to the visitors the importance of the oil palm industry to tens of thousands of workers in related fields, as well as small holders.

He later led the visitors to tour an oil palm plantation for a fresh fruit harvest demonstration, POME ponds and Lumadan's biogas facility.