



The World Bank

November 25, 2009

Robert B. Zoellick  
President

Ms. Jennifer Kalafut  
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On behalf of:

*International Accountability Project, USA; Center for Environmental Law and Community rights, Papua New Guinea; Accountability Counsel, USA; Bismark Ramu Group, Papua New Guinea; Forest Peoples Programme, UK; PNG Eco-Forestry Forum, Papua New Guinea; Rainforest Action Network, USA*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for your joint letter of November 4, 2009, in which you refer to our decision not to approve new IFC palm oil investments while the International Finance Corporation develops a strategy to guide its future engagement in the sector, and your request that similar actions be taken to ensure that sustainable environmental and social practices in palm oil development are equally applied to the World Bank Group's public sector investment.

As I indicated in my correspondence to Mr. Colchester of August 28, 2009, I understand and share your commitment to sustainable environmental practices. In this context, we are continuing to work on a common approach to oil palm investments throughout the World Bank Group. We will not approve any new World Bank Group public sector investments in oil palm development until such a comprehensive approach is in place.

Let me assure you that we are all committed to ensuring that positive developmental outcomes, including environmental and social sustainability, are at the core of all our activities. We hope to develop this comprehensive approach within the next few months and are confident that it will provide us with an opportunity to analyze broader issues regarding this sector in general.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us.

We look forward  
to continuing to  
work with you  
on this  
topic

Sincerely,

Robert B. Zoellick