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The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL)

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*** New infographic available ***

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE TO PROVIDE BUSINESS CASE FOR SAFEGUARDING NATURE

The world's leading food, beverage and forestry companies are being invited to join business leaders already working with the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), to identify new commercial opportunities from protecting the natural environment.

The call to action is included in a 'must read' report launched by CISL today (17 February 2015), targeting international companies that rely heavily on 'natural capital' – natural resources such as water, soil and timber, that underpin global supply chains and provide commercial value.

Through collaboration with household names including Nestlé, Asda and Mars, the CISL report also sheds light on the different responses businesses are already making to enhance natural capital, and where they are generating business benefits.

Last month, the UK Government's independent advisory body, the Natural Capital Committee, warned that the decline of the country's natural environment is harming the economy. The CISL report says this has implications for businesses, not only in the UK but globally, as environmental degradation increases worldwide.

Through innovative thinking, CISL hopes to build the business case for companies to manage the natural capital throughout their operations and supply chains more sustainably.

Andy Clarke, Chief Executive of Asda said: "Retail, at its heart, is meeting our customers' needs for now and for the future. We rely on products which in turn rely on the resources underpinning our supply chains like water, soil and timber. These are under increasing pressure from weather volatility, population growth and changing consumption patterns. Businesses must show leadership on this crucial issue. As a first step, Asda is working with CISL to make more companies aware of the business case for better management of natural capital."

Chris Brown, General Manager for Environmental Sustainability at global agribusiness Olam International commented: "With agricultural supply chains encompassing 65 countries and products as diverse as almonds, rubber, cocoa and rice, we are acutely aware of the challenges facing natural capital today. However, these challenges can never be tackled by businesses in splendid isolation, but instead require holistic thinking and concerted collaboration between many and diverse partners - platforms like CISL offer a forum to do just that."

Polly Courtice, Director of the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) said:

"Many of the companies we work with at CISL are already implementing measures to reduce their impact on natural capital across their supply chains, but we all recognise the need to go further and to get many more businesses involved."

“By developing a body of evidence in partnership with a group of companies we aim to translate the management of natural capital into tangible commercial benefits – highlighting in real terms the financial savings, security of supply, and brand enhancement on offer.”

ENDS

Notes to editor

1. CISL’s new ‘Doing business with nature’ report includes supportive business quotes and case studies of actions already being taken by companies working with CISL, including:
Anglian Water – www.anglianwater.co.uk
Asda – www.asda.com
Ingredion Incorporated – www.ingredion.com
Mars – www.mars.com
Mondi – www.mondigroup.com
Nestlé – www.nestle.com
Olam – www.olamgroup.com
Volac – www.volac.com
The report is available to download from CISL’s website:
http://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/publications/doing_business_with_nature_report.
2. Alongside the report, CISL will also be launching a new, shareable, colour infographic showing which natural resources are at threat and identifying the key business opportunities around their better management.
3. The Natural Capital Committee’s third State of Natural Capital report is available at:
<https://www.naturalcapitalcommittee.org/>.
4. The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) brings together business, government and academia to find solutions to critical sustainability challenges, deepening leaders' insight and creating opportunities for collaborative action through groups such as the Natural Capital Leaders Platform. For more information visit www.cisl.cam.ac.uk.