



Agreement Paper

# **DANISH ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSIBLE SOY**

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## Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy

### Background

Soy is used for various purposes in food production, predominantly for animal feed, but also to a lesser extent for finished products such as soy milk or soybeans. Soy is the most protein-rich crop per hectare compared to other crops. However, parts of soybean production are associated with significant challenges, as global soybean production occupies an area of over 1 million square kilometers and parts of soybean production have negative environmental and social consequences. It concerns i.e. deforestation, especially in South America and the consequent consequences for climate and biodiversity, as well as high consumption of pesticides suspected of causing serious, hereditary diseases and damage to the local population in some production areas.

Soy is imported to Denmark as soybeans, oats or oil and indirectly within finished products (for example, imported meat products from animals whose feed contains, among other things, soy). Denmark's annual import of soy is approximately 1.7 million tons, primarily in the form of soybean meal. Almost all soy is used for animal feed, primarily for pigs, but also chickens and cattle (for both dairy products and beef)<sup>1</sup>.

In recent years, Denmark has politically sought to actively address global deforestation through international cooperation. In December 2015, the Danish government, together with six other European countries, joined the Amsterdam Declarations, which support sustainable and deforestation-free value chains in agriculture in 2020, with a special focus on raw materials such as palm oil, soy and cocoa. In the autumn of 2018, the Danish Minister for Environment and Food, as chair of the partnership under the Amsterdam Declarations, sent a letter to the European Commission calling on the Commission to present a European action plan to address deforestation. In December 2018, the European Commission presented a roadmap, and in July 2019, a communication on deforestation followed. The UN's Sustainable Development Goal 15, life on land, also has the goal of stopping deforestation in 2020, just as Denmark has joined the so-called "New York Declaration on Forests", which contains goals to halve deforestation in 2020 and completely eliminate deforestation in 2030.

However, in Denmark we are far from achieving our goals to ensure deforestation-free soy. A report from Dutch IDH published in the spring of 2019 thus estimates that only approximately 20% of Danish soy consumption is certified or verified deforestation-free.

In 2017, the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative (DIEH) established a working group focusing on responsible soy production. The group includes representatives of the grocery retail industry (Aldi, COOP, Dagrofa, Lidl, Rema1000 and Salling Group), business organizations (DAKOFO, Danish Chamber of Commerce, DSK and the Danish Agriculture & Food Council), NGOs (WWF and NEPCon) and authorities (Ministry of Environment and Food). Since its establishment, the group has held a number of meetings, through which a larger knowledge base has been created, and lessons learned from other countries on how to promote the use of responsibly produced soy have been obtained. Based on this experience, the working group has seen a need to accelerate the desired development towards the use of responsibly produced soy in Denmark. The group therefore decided to prepare a proposal for a binding initiative for the use of responsible soy in

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January 2019. The starting point is the internationally recognized framework set by the Accountability Framework Initiative and reference is made, among other things, to definitions given herein.

Against this background, the group is now launching a new partnership initiative under the heading "Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy".

### **Purpose**

The initiative aims to bring together relevant Danish actors in a binding collaboration to ensure progress towards responsibly produced soy. By participating in the alliance, the stakeholders can help to promote responsibly produced soy, and the stakeholders also commit to the alliance's vision and commitments.

### **Vision and commitments**

The Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy recognizes the need for concrete measures to ensure responsibly produced proteins to Denmark.

#### **Vision**

**The alliance's vision is that all soy imported to Denmark is produced responsibly, including legally produced and does not contribute to deforestation or conversion of other natural vegetation.**

#### **Obligations**

**To achieve the vision, participants undertake to:**

- 1) Publish an action plan for responsible soy, incl. a time schedule, no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, which describes initiatives to ensure progress towards the vision.**
- 2) Report progress annually to the Alliance Secretariat - for the first time before the end of May 2021.**

The alliance's vision includes both soy as a product (in the form of, for example, soybeans, oats or oil) as well as soy embedded in products on the Danish market (e.g. soy embedded in beef).

### **Organization of the alliance**

Participants in the Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy are divided into one of the following two groups:

- *Participating companies* include representatives from e.g. retail, food service, animal feed producers, industrial companies and food producers. Participating companies must comply with the alliance's obligations - i.e. publish an action plan and report annually on progress.

- *Support members* include NGOs, authorities, universities, business and industry organizations, the trade union movement and the like. Support members are not obliged to publish an action plan and report on

progress, but undertake to actively support the initiative, e.g. through contributions with professional knowledge and communication about the initiative.

The Danish Ethical Tradin Initiative (DIEH) acts as secretariat for the alliance. The Secretariat supports participants of the alliance through guidance and counseling. DIEH members can join the alliance for free, while other participants pay an annual fee. DIEH's working group for responsible soy production acts as a steering group for the alliance. The steering group expects to carry out an evaluation of the initiative in 2022.

Participation in the alliance is done by contacting DIEH's secretariat. Alliance participants who sign up later than November 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, undertake to publish an action plan within six months of joining the alliance - instead of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.

### **Monitoring and reporting**

Participants in the alliance undertake to publish an action plan for responsible soy, incl. a schedule that describes initiatives to ensure progress towards the vision that all soy imported to Denmark is produced responsibly, including that it does not contribute to deforestation or conversion of other natural vegetation. In addition, the action plan may also contain and highlight participants' initiatives and efforts that contribute to a more sustainable production of soy in other contexts, but do not directly live up to the definition given above.

The participants in the alliance undertake to publish an action plan for responsible soy by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Thereafter, the participants are obliged to report once a year to the alliance's secretariat (DIEH) on progress. The reporting is done confidentially and by filling out a questionnaire. The reporting must i.e. contain specific information on the tools used (certification schemes, other verification methods, etc.). Participants' data is collected by DIEH in an aggregated, anonymized format to protect commercially sensitive data. The secretariat prepares a comprehensive status report, which presents the participants' results and progress towards the vision in an anonymized manner. The publication of results enables participants to highlight changes and progress over the course of a year, and at the same time acts as a 'roadmap' of steps towards the overall vision. The annual publication of results obtained from the implementation of the action plan is crucial for the credibility and success of the initiative.

### **Exclusion**

Participants who do not fulfill the alliance's obligations to actively support the initiative and the initiative's vision and (for participating companies) to publish an action plan for responsible soy and report progress within the deadlines set out in the alliance's commitments may be excluded.

### **Communication**

The members of the alliance can communicate that they participate in the Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy, and this means that they support the vision for responsibly produced soy. Participating companies can also communicate that they undertake to publish an action plan and annually report on progress towards the vision. An annual public event is held, taking stock of the alliance's progress.

## Definition of responsible soy

The Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy defines "responsibly produced soy" as soy production that meets the following criteria:

1. Comply with relevant legislation.
2. Production is subject to thorough environmental considerations, including protection of endangered species, wetlands and wide zones, soil conditions, water and air quality, etc.
3. The production does not contribute to deforestation or conversion of other habitats of high conservation value (i.e. high conservation value, cf. Accountability Framework Initiative).
4. Safe handling of agro-chemicals and prohibition or phasing out of highly toxic chemicals. This includes chemicals listed in the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions.
5. Abolition of all forms of forced labor; effective abolition of child labor; abolition of discrimination in employment and occupation. There are secure working conditions, freedom of association and decent wages.
6. Respect for legal and established land rights.
7. Third party verified or third party certified to a standard that meets the above criteria.

Responsibly produced soy can be achieved, for example, through third-party verification or through the following certification schemes: RTRS (incl. RTRS credits), ProTerra, EU-organic, ISCC Plus (biofuels), Donau Soja and Europe Soya Standards or IFOAM, (the list is not exhaustive). For a description of certification schemes, see the website of the Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy at [www.dieh.dk](http://www.dieh.dk).

## Participants in The Danish Alliance for Responsible Soy

In November 2020 the alliance counts the following members:

Participating companies (companies taking on obligations of the alliance):













Supporting members (organizations supporting the alliance):








