

**Najib: Malaysia, Indonesia resolve to counter latest threat to palm oil**  
**Free Malaysia Today**  
**April 30, 2017**

**Najib Razak says resolution by European Parliament that EU phase out palm oil by 2020 will have a devastating effect on the country's 600,000 smallholders.**

MANILA: Malaysia, Indonesia, as well as Thailand will be involved in efforts to combat the latest threat to the palm oil industry as the European Parliament has linked it to deforestation.

Prime Minister Najib Razak said the issue, which was raised by him, had gained strong support from Indonesian President Joko Widodo (Jokowi).

A resolution by the European Parliament recently called for the European Union (EU) to phase out by 2020 the use of vegetable oils in biodiesel that are allegedly produced in an unsustainable way leading to deforestation. The resolution includes palm oil.

"If this resolution were to be enforced, it will have a devastating effect on our national interest, particularly the (livelihood of) 600,000 (oil palm) smallholders in Malaysia and 2.4 million in Indonesia," Najib told a press conference after attending the Asean Summit 2017 here.

"President Jokowi has expressed strong support for the proposal that Malaysia, Indonesia, as well as Thailand get involved in efforts to combat this latest threat.

"And for that we will try to influence the EU not to enforce the resolution due to its impact as it would close the EU market to palm oil from Malaysia and Indonesia," he said.

Najib said he also proposed a motion that Asean introduce a scorecard method to determine the measures and time frame for the reduction of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) and Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) to be achieved.

The NTBs and NTMs increased from 1,634 in 2000 to 5,975 in 2015.

"It's a very significant improvement," the prime minister said.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/04/30/najib-malaysia-indonesia-resolve-to-counter-latest-threat-to-palm-oil/>