

Cargill, McDonald's join UN pledge on forests

<IMAGE.jpg>

By [Meetingplace Editors](#) on 9/24/2014

Cargill and McDonald's are among 39 companies and 32 countries endorsing a formal commitment to halt and reverse the loss of forests around the globe.

The companies, which include Wal-Mart and Nestle among others, and governments including the United States on Tuesday signed the New York Declaration on Forests during the United Nations Climate Summit in Manhattan.

The declaration calls for cutting in half the loss of the world's forests by 2020 and ending deforestation by 2030. Participants also agreed to restore more than 1 million square miles of forest worldwide by 2030.

McDonald's has pledged about \$2 million to support global field projects on beef sustainability and earlier this month launched one such project in Canada, Chief Executive Don Thompson said in remarks prepared for a summit agricultural session.

He also highlighted an initiative called the Global Roundtable on Sustainable Beef, for which McDonald's has committed to begin purchasing a portion of its beef from verified sustainable sources in 2016 and has set a 2020 sustainable beef goal.

McDonald's said it has also set goals for sourcing all of its fiber-based packaging from certified or recycled sources and all of its palm oil from sources verified as supporting sustainable production.

Primary forests absorb greenhouse gas emissions that mitigate climate change.

Cargill said it has a long record of tackling deforestation issues mainly in its soy and palm oil supply chains, including working with The Nature Conservancy since 2004 to combat deforestation in Brazil.

"We are proud of our track record tackling deforestation. Today, I am here to say that we are going to do more," Cargill Chief Executive Dave MacLennan said in prepared remarks for a scheduled appearance with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and other leaders.

Countries including Canada, France and the European Union supported the forest initiative, but Brazil did not. However, three Brazilian states — Acre, Amapa and Amazonas — agreed to participate.