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# Edo leads in oil palm devt in Nigeria, recommits to driving sustainable commodities in Africa

By [The Nigerian Observer](#)

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As part of its commitment to ensuring sustainable and responsible production of oil palm, cocoa, coffee, rubber and other tree crops, the Edo State Government has signed the Africa Sustainable Commodities Initiative (ASCI) Declaration at the United Nations (UN) Conference (CoP27) in Sharm el-sheikh, in Egypt.

The Declaration was signed by members from ten countries in Africa, making Edo State the front-runner and only sub-national to seal this process.

According to the UN Conference, the declaration is targeted at ensuring that producer countries in Africa are at the forefront of defining the principles for the sustainable development of cocoa, rubber, palm oil, coffee and other commodities in a way that protects livelihoods and protects natural resources including forests.

The Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, said the event is a call for stakeholders in the tree crop sector to ensure that more sustainable efforts are committed to avert the negative environmental and social impact of tree crop commodities production.

The governor who was represented by the Acting Team Lead, Edo State Oil Palm Programme (ESOPP), Mr. Churchill Oboh, said, “Edo State has developed principles and actions for sustainable oil palm production which addresses issues relating to deforestation, biodiversity protection, respect of community rights. These principles will be extended in the development of other tree crop commodities in the state.

“We are using this medium to encourage other states in Nigeria and other countries in Africa to ensure production of agro commodities are carried out sustainably and in line with global best practices.”

The signing of the Declaration took place at the Ghana pavilion and the signing was done by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Mohammad Abdullahi on behalf of Nigeria. The ASCI builds and expands upon principles agreed at CoP22 in 2016 for the palm oil sector.

Nigeria’s Minister of Environment, Mohammed Abdullahi said the Government of Nigeria is devoted to using oil palm development as a force to encourage reforestation, noting, “At the start of our journey in Edo State, it was agreed that any principles for sustainable oil palm development must include both oil palm and forestry companies, stressing the interconnected nature of the two sectors.

“We want oil palm development to be a route to reforest Nigeria, not a cause for deforestation.”

