

NEWS

AquaEco technology boost to palm oil mills

SLUDGE FILTRATION SYSTEM: It also improves oil extraction by up to 0.6pc

FARAH ADILLA
KUALA LUMPUR

farah.adilla@mediaprima.com.my

FOLLOWING encouraging response from the palm oil industry players, Aqua Ecotech Sdn Bhd (AquaEco) affirms that five palm oil mills across the country will be installing its palm oil raw sludge filtration system AquaEco-SRORS next year.

According to AquaEco's director Andrew Liew, the system, which is the world's first, has been installed in two mills in Perak and Sabah.

He said the system has been proven to improve oil extraction rate (OER) by up to 0.6 per cent, enabling the extraction of up to 80 per cent of the oil in the raw palm oil sludge, and reduce bio-gas emissions by 70 per cent.

"Annually, an average mill which processes around 300,000 tonnes of crops would be able to recover about 1,462 tonnes of oil, or 0.5 per cent OER, translating to an increase in revenue of about RM3.8 million with AquaEco-SRORS.

"We already installed this system in two mills in the country and the



AquaEco director **Andrew Liew** (right) and AquaEco corporate and finance head **Ow Eng Haw** demonstrate the palm oil raw sludge filtration system at the press conference yesterday. **The company says the system will enable an increase in revenue of about RM3.8 million.** Pic by Zulfadhli Zulkifli

feedback has been very positive. "Currently, we are in talks with a few more mills to install the system and we are confident of securing deals with four to five players next year," he said at the company's first market introduction of the AquaEco-SRORS, here, yesterday.

The AquaEco-SRORS system will transform the palm oil industry by allowing millers to address long-standing palm oil waste sludge challenges that have been a major industry problem and costly affair for decades, Liew added.

He said based on the two mills that already installed the system,

full returns on investment can be achieved within two to three years.

"This is a really big deal for palm oil millers as this technology drastically reduces the high chemical oxygen demand and biological oxygen demand in waste water, which will make the industry cleaner and more environment-friendly," he said.

He said currently, the average OER of Malaysia's palm oil stands at 20.65 per cent.

"With AquaEco-SRORS, the entire industry's production would increase to 21.15 per cent, with

existing palm oil fruit produce.

"This increase is in line with Performance Management and Delivery Unit's Entry Point Project 4 that targets to increase the country's palm oil industry OER level to 23 per cent by 2020," he added.

Liew said the system uses an innovative, self-cleaning membrane technology to filter out suspended solids and oil — leaving a filtrate for further processing or recovery.

The oil is recovered back as crude palm oil, while the suspended solid is removed as decanter cake in the decanting process.