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******EMBARGOED MEDIA ADVISORY******
NEW REPORT PLUS VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON EVENT
Wednesday, June 14, 9:00 a.m. Central//10 a.m. Eastern
Wayzata, Minnesota

**New Report Highlights Agribusiness Giants Heirs' Connection to
Deforestation, Rights Violations and Child Slavery Abroad**

Report authors will hand-deliver report and open letter to the billionaire family owners of the Wayzata, Minnesota-based behemoth, calling for the family to step in and take action on the company's human rights and environmental violations

Amid growing concern over the destruction of forests and other critical ecosystems, and following recent evidence that child and slave labor is still rampant in food production, researchers and advocates will release a new report detailing how one of the world's largest privately-owned companies is fueling violence in Indigenous communities, using child slavery in cocoa plantations across Africa, and destroying forests and other natural ecosystems in Brazil and worldwide.

At a hybrid (virtual and in-person) event in downtown Wayzata, Minnesota—home of the family's investment office, which handles their more than \$65 billion in wealth—representatives from conservation organization Stand.earth, sustainability researchers AidEnvironment and Rio-based investigative journalism agency Repórter Brasil will present their findings. Following the report launch, they will hand-deliver copies of the report, dolly-carts full of documents detailing recent violations and a letter calling on the family — among the top five richest in America — to take accountability for the company's wrongdoings and set it on a better path. The open letter will be published as full-page ads in the New York Times and the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

WHO:

- **Todd J. Paglia**, J.D., L.L.M., Executive Director, Stand.earth
- **Joana Faggin**, Senior Researcher, AidEnvironment
- **Marcel Gomes**, Executive Director, Repórter Brasil

WHAT:

A hybrid press briefing to lay out the report findings and call on the family to preserve their legacy. The report offers the most comprehensive documentation to date of the company's dozens of broken promises on deforestation, child labor, Indigenous land-grabbing and more. The open letter to the family will run as advertisements in the New York Times and the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

WHEN: 9 a.m. Central//10 a.m. Eastern on 14 June 2023; Embargo lifts 9 a.m. Central//10 a.m. Eastern on 14 June 2023

WHERE: The press briefing — which will also be available via Zoom — will take place at Hotel Landing, 925 Lake St E, Wayzata, MN 55391. If you are based in Minneapolis and would like to attend in person, or request the Zoom details, RSVP with Susan Tonassi (stonassi@burness.com; +1 202 716 9665).

MORE INFORMATION:

[Recent studies](#) show that agricultural land use — including cropland, pastures and tree crops — is the largest driver of tropical deforestation in the world, accounting for more than 90% of tree loss. This forest loss plays a mammoth role in driving climate change, biodiversity loss, and the displacement and rights violations of Indigenous and local communities who depend on these ecosystems for food, water, shelter, and cultural survival.

In 2014, to address the impact of agriculture on forests, hundreds of companies signed the New York Declaration on Forests alongside governments and the United Nations to remove illegal deforestation and human rights violations from their supply chains.

In the years since the signing of the NYDF, however, tropical deforestation has continued to climb at an alarming rate with more than 81 million acres of primary tropical forest lost since 2014. This is equivalent to a rate of deforestation 40% higher than in the same period prior to the signing of the declaration (81 million acres versus 58 million acres).