

ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL



WHAT IS THE RSPO?

RSPO is a not-for-profit association that unites stakeholders from the seven sectors of the palm oil industry - oil palm producers, palm oil processors or traders, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, banks and investors, environmental or nature conservation NGOs and social or developmental NGOs - to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil.

Such multi-stakeholder representation is mirrored in the governance structure of RSPO such that seats in the Executive Board and project level Working Groups are fairly allocated to each sector. In this way, RSPO lives out the philosophy of the “roundtable” by giving equal rights to each stakeholder group to bring group-specific agendas to the Roundtable, facilitating traditionally adversarial stakeholders and business competitors to work together towards a common objective and making decisions by consensus..

WHEN AND WHY WAS RSPO ESTABLISHED?

In 2001, WWF commenced exploring the possibilities for a roundtable on sustainable palm oil. The result was an informal co-operation among Aarhus United UK Ltd, Golden Hope Plantations Berhad, Migros, Malaysian Palm Oil Association, Sainsbury's and Unilever together with WWF in 2002.

In response to the urgent and pressing global call for sustainably-produced palm oil, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was formed in 2004 with the objective of promoting the growth and use of sustainable oil palm products through credible global standards and engagement of stakeholders. Founding members include Aarhus United UK Ltd., Karlshamns AB (Sweden), Malaysian Palm Oil Association (MPOA), Migros Genossenschafts Bund (Switzerland), Unilever NV (Netherlands) and Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). Also active on the RSPO's Executive Board from the beginning were Golden Hope Plantations Berhad (Malaysia), Loders Crokiaan (Netherlands), Pacic Rim Palm Oil Ltd (Singapore) and The Body Shop (UK). The seat of the association is located in Zurich, Switzerland, while the secretariat is currently based in Kuala Lumpur, with a satellite office in Jakarta.

RSPO'S OBJECTIVES

The Roundtable promotes palm oil production practices that help reduce deforestation, preserve biodiversity, and respect the livelihoods of rural communities in oil-producing countries. It ensures that no new primary forest or other high conservation value areas are sacrificed for palm oil plantations, that plantations apply accepted best practices and that the basic rights and living conditions of millions of plantation workers, smallholders and indigenous people are wholly respected.

It is with this view that the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) proactively engages with oil palm growers, oil processors, food companies, retailers, NGOs and investors to work together towards a global supply of palm oil that is produced in a socially and environmentally responsible way.

VISION

RSPO will transform markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm.

MISSION

- To advance the production, procurement, finance and use of sustainable palm oil products;
- To develop, implement, verify, assure and periodically review credible global standards for the entire supply chain of sustainable palm oil;
- To monitor and evaluate the economic, environmental and social impacts of the uptake of sustainable palm oil in the market;
- To engage and commit all stakeholders throughout the supply chain, including governments and consumers.
- The supply chain includes ecosystems, communities, growers, traders, processors, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, financial institutions, and civil society.

RSPO PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

The RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production (RSPO P&C) are the global guidelines for producing palm oil sustainably. The Roundtable has defined 8 principles and 39 practical criteria to define sustainable production of palm oil. They ensure that fundamental rights of previous land owners, local communities, plantation workers, small farmers and their families are respected and fully taken into account, that no new primary forests or high conservation value areas have been cleared for palm oil production since November 2005, and that mills and plantation owners minimize their environmental footprint.

The Roundtable has set up two certification systems based on the RSPO P&C: one to ensure that palm oil is produced sustainably; and one to ensure the integrity of the trade in sustainable palm oil, i.e. that palm oil sold as sustainable indeed corresponds with oil produced at certified plantations. Both systems involve third-party certification bodies. Thanks to such rigorous certification systems, oil processors and consumers can be sure that their products indeed contain or support sustainable palm oil.

RSPO's P&C must be reviewed every five years. While the Executive Board of the RSPO believes that these remain relevant and needed, reviewing these on a regular basis ensure that they can be made more effective. As such, the Generic P&C document is reviewed in 2012. Proposed changes to this will be voted on in the General Assembly (GA9) in November 2012.

The 8 Principles include:

- **Principle 1:** Commitment to transparency; NGO
- **Principle 2:** Compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- **Principle 3:** Commitment to long-term economic and financial viability
- **Principle 4:** Use of appropriate best practices by growers and millers
- **Principle 5:** Environmental responsibility and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity
- **Principle 6:** Responsible consideration of employees as well as individuals and communities affected by growers and mills (case study)
- **Principle 7:** Responsible development of new plantations
- **Principle 8:** Commitment to continuous improvement in key areas of activity

MEMBERSHIP

By June 2012, RSPO comprises close to 900 member companies from over 50 countries around the world.

RSPO membership offers organizations from diverse sectors the following benefits:

Reputation:

- RSPO CSPO is recognized internationally.
- Membership demonstrates the first step towards going sustainable.

Supply chain representation:

- Members represent 7 stakeholder groups within the supply chain
- Completes the demand & supply loop and everything in between

Market Access:

- Domestic/National consumption
- International

Members shape RSPO policies and decisions:

- A strategic platform to create and influence RSPO policies and key decisions

Access to best practices:

- On agricultural; environmental and social aspect

Enhances the value of palm oil:

- As the largest traded commodity/edible oil that is certified

THE RSPO TRADEMARK



The RSPO Trademark was introduced to the market in June 2011 and enables RSPO members to proactively demonstrate their commitment to CSPO and other sustainable palm-derived products.

Members can use the Trademark in on-pack communications for products that contain sustainable palm oil-derived ingredients. These ingredients must be sourced and be in compliance with one or more of the three supply chain systems: Identity Preserved, Segregated and Mass Balance.

As of June 2012, 61 RSPO Trademark licenses had been issued to companies from 13 countries across the world, includes the key palm oil markets. This Trademark is the ultimate vehicle to bring the subject of sustainable palm oil closer to consumers, boost demand of CSPO and encourage market uptake.

MILESTONES

2003	August	First Roundtable meeting (RT) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Attended by 200 participants from 16 countries.
2004	April	RSPO formally established under Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code.
	August	47 organizations sign a Statement of Intent declaring their intention to participate in the RSPO.
2005	November	RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C) adopted for initial pilot implementation period of two years by 14 companies.
2006		Creation and adoption of Members' Code of Conduct; RSPO Indonesian Liaison Office (RILO) established in Jakarta.
2007	October	Review of P&C by RSPO Criteria Working Group (CWG). Included public consultations, input from National Interpretations (NIs), smallholder taskforce deliberations and pilot field trial results.
	November	RSPO Certification System approved by RSPO Executive Board, adopted by General Assembly (GA4) and officially launched at RT5 by then Hon. Minister of Plantations Industries & Commodities, Malaysia, Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui in Malaysia.
2008		NIs of generic P&C for Indonesia, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea approved.
	August	Approval of 1st P&C certification for United Plantations. Inaugural shipment of CSPO arrives in Rotterdam in November.
	August	RSPO Supply Chain Certification Systems (SCCS) developed and finalized.
2009	November	RSPO SCCS reviewed and adopted.
2010		First RSPO certificate issued to Daabon Group, Colombia
	October	RSPO membership reaches 500 Ordinary Members.
2011	June	RSPO Trademark launched
	August	First million hectares of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO) production area.
	August	Inaugural certification of CSPO in Brazil by Agropalma.
	August	5 million tonnes of global CSPO production, or 10% total global palm oil production.
	November	Over 1000 people from over 20 countries attend RT9.
2012	May	Achieved 6 million metric tonnes of RSPO CSPO in annual production capacity
	June	Anniversary of Trademark launch: 60 Trademark licences in 13 countries have been issued

If you are interested in receiving more details on RSPO, please contact:

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