

## PRESS STATEMENT

**Jakarta, Indonesia.** The need for the sustainable production and use of palm oil was reaffirmed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Roundtable Meeting on Sustainable Palm Oil (RT2) that was held on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> October at the Grand Hyatt Jakarta. This meeting attracted the participation of more than 300 people from 17 countries representing various stakeholder groups in the palm oil supply chain. Representation from oil palm growers and civil society was very significant; 19 environmental and social NGOs from various parts of the world were represented. RT2 provided the opportunity for exchanging views and experiences among various stakeholders in developed and developing countries and to strengthen their co-operation and support in promoting sustainable palm oil. Participants at RT2 also endorsed 13 projects that are designed to facilitate the implementation of sustainable best practices along the palm oil supply chain.

In his keynote opening address, the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Indonesia, Prof. Dr Ir Bungaran Saragih, stated that the oil palm industry has been a major contributor to the Indonesian economy and has played a significant role in poverty alleviation. He gave his assurance that Indonesia is determined to promote the application of good agricultural practices in the oil palm industry. "...perhaps the most acceptable way to promote sustainable palm oil industry is through a tightly disciplined application of good agricultural practices. Towards this end, we need a practical protocol of good agricultural practices in the industry", said Prof Bungaran.

The RT2 meeting was the result of a multi-stakeholder collaboration among the Indonesian Palm Oil Commission (IPOC), the Indonesian Palm Oil Producers Association (GAPKI) and WWF-Indonesia, together with the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). RSPO is a new global multi-stakeholder initiative on sustainable palm oil that was established under Swiss Civil Code on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2004. With members representing major stakeholders along the palm oil supply chain, RSPO provides a unique platform for pragmatic co-operation for the promotion of production and use of sustainable palm oil. The RSPO currently has 44 Ordinary and 11 Affiliate Members. Immediately prior to and during RT2 an additional 5 organizations applied for membership, highlighting the growing interest in the RSPO.

Development of criteria to define sustainable palm oil was a primary focus at RT2. A 25-member working group representing major stakeholders in the supply chain has been appointed by RSPO to develop a set of credible criteria that is acceptable to all stakeholders. Participants at the RT2 meeting had the opportunity to review and to provide inputs to the - framework for developing the criteria. It is expected that the process for developing the final criteria, which includes public consultation, would take about 12 months.

In conjunction with the RT2 meeting, the 1<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of RSPO was held on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2004. Members present elected a new Executive Board for a two-year term. Mr Jan Kees Vis of Unilever was re-elected President while Dr Matthias Diemer (WWF Switzerland) and Ms Fausta Borsani (Migros) were re-elected as Vice-President and Treasurer respectively. Messrs M.R. Chandran (Malaysian Palm Oil Association), Derom Bangun (Indonesian Palm Oil Producers Association) and J. Mesa-Dishington (Fedepalma) were also elected as Vice-Presidents.

For further information:

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