

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

NEWSLETTER

For RSPO Members

Issue #10

January-March 2007



Children in palm oil plantations.

Read more about RSPO Members Borneo Child Aid Society (pages 15-16) and Sime Plantations' (pages 11-14) projects on the ground.

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Members of RSPO

RSPO

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

RSPO

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is a global multi-stakeholder initiative on sustainable palm oil that was formally established under Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code on 8 April 2004. The not-for-profit Association will have members representing major players along the palm oil supply chain. The RSPO is a unique platform for pragmatic co-operation to contribute to the expansion of sustainably produced palm oil and its uses.

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Dear sustainable palm oil supporters,

The whole world seems to be worried about climate change these days. The EU Spring Summit two weeks ago was dominated by the topic, if you believed what the media reported on the meeting. Ambitious targets

were agreed, which is what happens when you put large numbers of politicians in a room. The nickname of the deal is 20-20-20: by the year 2020, 20 % reduction in energy consumption and 20 % reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990 levels). And, at least 10 % biofuels in transportation. And, if other countries commit to similar ambitions, the EU will commit to a 30 % reduction. Björn Lomborg, Danish statistician, known from the book "The sceptical environmentalist", wrote the following in the Guardian on March 19: "But nobody sees fit to reveal the agreement's dirty little secret: it will do next to no good, and again at very high cost. According to one well-established and peer-reviewed model, the effect of the EU cutting emissions by 20% will postpone warming in 2100 by just two years, yet the cost will be about \$90 bn annually. It will be costly, because Europe is a costly place to cut CO2, and it will be inconsequential, because the EU will account for only about 6% of all emissions in the 21st century. So the new treaty will be an even less efficient use of our resources than the old Kyoto Protocol!"

I do not know whether Mr Lomborg is right. But if I were the EU Council, I would take the position that we could not afford to be wrong, so I would check his statements.

The question how big a role palm oil can play in this market is still hot. Several criteria setting initiatives now exist. Some of them talk to each other. The RSPO Executive Board has created a little working group to keep track of the debate and to prepare an RSPO position.

We have by the way also created a working group on communications, and one on supply chain. The Verification Working Group is almost back in play, with some additional members. Unfortunately, the Tripartite Programme for Market Access between Indonesia, Malaysia and the Netherlands have not approved requests from the Task Force on Smallholders for financial support for the TFS itself and for a series of workshops on Free, Prior and Informed Consent. So we will have to look for support elsewhere. I would like to take the opportunity though to express my disappointment in the fact that the Tripartite Partnership apparently only feels like sponsoring own activities. I know that government officials of all three countries have been very positive and supportive of RSPO in the past; we know all three agree on the importance of involving smallholders, so it escapes me why these proposals were not granted.

Finally, two more things: the RSPO EB met in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, in January. We used the opportunity to visit the new IOI refinery in Rotterdam and the Unilever margarine factory. Port of Rotterdam hosted a boat trip in between these locations, which we used to discuss biofuel markets.

The Roundtable on Responsible Soy will have its first general assembly meeting on May 7-8, in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

I will keep you informed.

Jan Kees Vis

Update: Verification Working Group (VWG)



Update on RSPO VWG

A decision was taken at the RSPO General Assembly in November 2006 to enhance the Verification Working Group (VWG) process, to ensure that there is active involvement by a VWG membership that reflects a balanced representation of all key interested groups. Therefore it was agreed that:

- The VWG will be reconstituted to ensure adequate representation of RSPO interest categories; and
- The reconstituted VWG will continue with the work of the initial VWG to finalise the RSPO verification protocols.

The project will be facilitated by ProForest, and will involve two main areas:

- The current draft verification systems developed to date by the Verification Working Group (VWG) require RSPO to develop certain accompanying documents. All such required documents will be developed through a consultative process, including two physical consultation workshops.
- Finalisation of the RSPO Verification Systems through a formal, representative process, involving one physical meeting of a reconstituted VWG.

The process will be completed by 31 May 2007.

New Verification Documents Public Consultation

The draft RSPO Verification Systems document includes references to the following documents that are necessary for the completion of RSPO's systems:

- RSPO process for endorsement of National Interpretations of the RSPO Criteria
- RSPO procedure for approval and review of verifiers
- RSPO procedures for complaints and grievances relating to the performance of verification bodies
- RSPO requirements for control of claims

Drafts of these documents are now available for public comment on the RSPO website, until 30 April 2007.

This consultation process will also allow further comments to be gathered on the main verifications systems document. An updated version of the main verifications systems document is also available for comment on the RSPO website until 30 April 2007.

Downloads

RSPO draft Verification Systems [PDF/74 KB]:

http://www.rspo.org/resource_centre/RSPO%20verification%20systems%20draft%20020307.pdf

RSPO process for endorsement of National Interpretations of the RSPO Criteria [PDF/25 KB]:

http://www.rspo.org/resource_centre/RSPO%20NI%20approval%20procedure%20v1.pdf

RSPO procedure for approval and review of verifiers [PDF/33 KB]:

http://www.rspo.org/resource_centre/RSPO%20verifier%20approval%20procedure%20v1.pdf

RSPO procedures for complaints and grievances relating to the performance of verification bodies [PDF/32 KB]:

http://www.rspo.org/resource_centre/RSPO%20Verification%20Complaints%20v1.pdf

RSPO requirements for control of claims [PDF/32 KB]:

http://www.rspo.org/resource_centre/RSPO%20control%20of%20claims%20v1.pdf

Please send all comments to Pep George at ProForest (pep@proforest.net).

Public Consultation Workshops

Drafts of the RSPO verification documents are now available for public comment on the RSPO website, until 30 April 2007. RSPO wishes to announce that the two public workshops organised as part of the consultation process will be held at the following venues:

- *Amsterdam (Akantes Multifunctioneel Centrum, Nieuwe Herengracht 95, 1011 RX Amsterdam) on 19-20 April; and*
- *Kuala Lumpur (Sunrise Auditorium 1, Mont' Kiara Business Centre, Suite D-03-01, Plaza Mont' Kiara, 50480 Kuala Lumpur) on 26-27 April*

The public consultation workshops will consist of two separate activities:

Day 1: verification training course, including sessions on elements of a verification scheme, accreditation, verification processes, and comparisons of various verification schemes.

Day 2: consultation on draft RSPO verification systems, with sessions on key documents; this will be an opportunity to share views and submit comments.

Booking is essential. Attendance at each day can be booked separately. Please confirm your attendance by completing the booking form (downloadable below). The deadlines for booking places at these workshops are 12 April for Amsterdam, and 16 April for Kuala Lumpur to enable us to plan adequately for numbers. Please send booking forms directly to Ishmael Dadoo at ProForest (ishmael@proforest.net).

All of the draft verification documents can be found on the RSPO website. All comments should be sent to pep@proforest.net. Written comments will be collated following discussions at the workshops up to the deadline on 30 April.

Please do not hesitate to contact Ishmael Dadoo at ProForest (+44 1865 243439; ishmael@proforest.net) if you have any questions or you need any clarification.

Download Booking form for VWG public consultation workshops [MS Word/133 KB]:

http://www.rspo.org/resource_centre/Public%20consultation%20participants%20form.doc

Indonesia

GAPKI (Indonesia Palm Oil Association) has initiated the National Interpretation process of RSPO Principles & Criteria (P&C) for Indonesia within its own organization since July 2006 when Consultative Working Group (CWG) on National Interpretation established by GAPKI. The CWG GAPKI has produced National Interpretation Draft to be used as guidance on RSPO P&C implementation by all GAPKI members and also to be offered to the Indonesian National Interpretation Working Group as a reference.

On 13th November 2006, GAPKI organized a kick-off meeting on National Interpretation of RSPO P&C and invited wider stakeholders among palm oil supply chain, e.g. plantations, NGOs, smallholders' representatives, financial institutions and government officials. The objectives of the meeting were to introduce RSPO and its P&C and to seek initial agreement on format and content of National Interpretation of P&C for Indonesia developed earlier by GAPKI. The meeting also called for participation and cooperation among stakeholders. The meeting agreed on principal with the format of National Interpretation of P&C developed by GAPKI and appointed a few key-persons to take charge of the formation of the Indonesian National Interpretation Working Group.

A follow up meeting was held on 11th January 2007 to establish the Indonesian National Interpretation Working Group (INA-NIWG), which is led by Mr. Daud Dharsono of PT. SMART Tbk, the catalyst in the formation of CWG GAPKI in July 2006, and who's also Head of GAPKI Research and Environmental Affairs.

The Organization structure of INA-NIWG is as follows:

1. Chairman – Mr. Daud Dharsono (GAPKI)
2. Secretary – Mr. Ismu Zulfikar (GAPKI)
3. INA-NIWG comprises of 4 Groups and led by the following:

Group 1 - Legal, License & Social Issues

Led by : Mr. Rudy Lumuru (Sawit Watch).

Members : Ministry of Environment, IPOC, GAPKI, National Land Agency, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Industry.

Group 2 – Agronomy and Mill Practices

Led by : Dr. Darnoko (GAPKI).

Members : RSPO Producer members, GAPKI, Ministry of Agriculture,

Group 3 - Environment and Natural Resources

Led by : Dr. Rosediana. S (IPOC)

Members : WWF-Indonesia, GAPKI, RSPO Producer Members, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment

Group 4 – Economics and Labor

Led by : Mr. Steaven Halim (GAPKI)

Members : Indonesian Association of Vegetable oils, GAPKI, Association of Oleo chemicals, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Industry, and Banks / Financial Institutions such as; Mega Bank, Permata Bank, Mandiri Bank, Standard Chartered Bank.

Currently, each group is appointed on specific Principle & Criteria, and draft NI proposed by GAPKI which ever relevant to their groups, is used as preliminary reference guidance. All groups will provide their first drafts of National Interpretation RSPO P&C for Indonesia by end of March 2007, and they will be discussed in the Plenary Meeting on 9 - 10 April 2007.



CWG GAPKI Plenary Meeting on NI-RSPO P&C during 1-2 Nov 2006.

Malaysia

The Malaysian National Interpretation Working Group (MY-NIWG) held its inaugural meeting on 14 March 2007. It was attended by 50 representatives from industry, government (ministries / agencies), trade associations and NGOs. Proposed Terms of Reference (TOR), Code of Conduct (CoC), structure and composition of the MY-NIWG were agreed upon by the meeting. Proposals for further participation by others not present were also noted pending acceptance by those nominated during the meeting. The proposed work programme and timeline targets were also discussed. The 3 Work Groups had break-out sessions to discuss the tasks allocated to each group and the next steps, led by the respective Group Leaders, followed by plenary. The next meeting is proposed in about a month's time and members were urged to come prepared for the meeting in order to speed up the process.

UPDATE: RSPO Indonesia Liaison Office (RILO)

RILO was established in November 2006 to support the RSPO Secretariat in Kuala Lumpur and promote overall RSPO objectives in Indonesia. It officially started operation in the premises of Indonesia Palm Oil Commission (IPOC) on 1st December 2006. Specific functions of RILO include services to members in Indonesia, communications, organization of RSPO meetings and stakeholder sessions in Indonesia and assist in the implementation and monitoring of progress of RSPO projects in Indonesia, including the engagement of smallholders within the context of RSPO P&C.

A separate section has been created in the RSPO website to cover activities and reports of RILO (in Bahasa), including translations of key RSPO documents. We invite Indonesian stakeholders to visit the section or to contribute materials or news items on their activities or views relating to sustainable palm oil issues in Indonesia.

Meetings organized by RILO since its establishment were RSPO workshops for NGOs, RILO side meeting during RT4 in Singapore, and RSPO meeting on engaging smallholders in the context of RSPO P&C (proceedings of each meeting are available in Bahasa at RILO section). RILO has also been invited to attend meetings or functions organized by members or related stakeholders. The Liaison Officer made a presentation on RSPO and the P&C during WWF-Indonesia's socialization on Heart of Borneo (HoB) initiative to local government, forestry and oil palm plantation companies in Nunukan District, East Kalimantan in January 2007. In the effort to recruit more RSPO members in Indonesia, the Liaison Officer visited organizations which have shown interest in RSPO or expressed the intention to become members. The Liaison Officer attended the RSPO EB meeting in Rotterdam in January, 2007.

Future events being organized by RILO in Jakarta are:

1. 2-year P&C trial implementation update meeting on 26th March 2007 – a call for Indonesian RSPO members involved with the 2-year P&C Trial Implementation to share on progress of results and strategies on best ways forward to meet the requirements of RSPO P&C and to feed national interpretation of the P&C for Indonesia

2. RSPO Public Forum on 15th May 2007 – to update stakeholders on the progress achieved to date by RSPO and its members and stakeholders in Indonesia. A Forum on Palm Oil Biofuel and Sustainability will be held in the afternoon after the Public Forum.

For further information, please contact Desi Kusumadewi, RSPO Liaison Officer at desi@rspo.org.

Smallholders as Sustainable Palm Oil Producers

Given that smallholders contribute significantly to the global production of palm oil and in Indonesia, they account for about 30% of the national output, it is vital that their needs are given due consideration by RSPO when implementing the RSPO P&C and verification protocol. The aim is to ensure that smallholders are active participants in the production of sustainable palm oil. Towards this end, the 2nd General Assembly in 2005 established a Smallholder Task Force to address smallholder concerns. Among the proposed activities, the STF is to conduct trials on the application of the P&C with smallholders in order to test the suitability of the P&C and verification procedures and to suggest modifications to better suit smallholders' interests, without compromising the goals of the RSPO.

As the STF has a wide mandate covering smallholders in all producing countries, an exploratory meeting with key RSPO members and stakeholders was held by RSPO Liaison Office in Jakarta on 18 January 2007 for determining the best approach in co-ordinating and expediting the Smallholders Task Force (STF) related activities specifically for Indonesia. The primary objective of the meeting was to review the current efforts being undertaken by various players and to discuss ways of improving cooperation among the key organizations in smallholder engagement with particular emphasis of making the RSPO P&C relevant and applicable to smallholders.



A plan has been set in motion for the commencement of the working group on smallholders composed of RSPO members and stakeholders to deliberate, develop, test and promote a smallholder P&C for Indonesia, which is vital for smallholder's becoming sustainable palm oil producers.

Members of the National Working Group (NWG) on Smallholders are:

- **Government** – Ministry of Agriculture, (IPOC)
- **NGOs** – Sawit Watch, WWF-Indonesia
- **Growers** – GAPKI
- **Smallholders' representatives** – APKASINDO, ASPEKPIR, SPKS

Dr. Asril Darussamin of IPOC and Mr. Suhandri of WWF-Indonesia were elected Chairman and Vice-chairman of the working group, respectively, and Mr. Norman Jiwan of Sawit Watch as secretary. RILO serves as the facilitator for the National Working Group.

The preliminary terms of reference for the working group are:

- to prepare draft of P&C and Guidance for smallholders (using draft of P&C proposed by IPOC and WWF-Indonesia as preliminary reference guidance)
- to produce draft of P&C and guidance for smallholders - organized and independent smallholders
- to conduct public consultation on draft of P&C and guidance for smallholders
- to conduct pilot testing for implementation of draft of P&C and guidance by smallholders – in Sumatera, Kalimantan, Sulawesi
- to modify draft of P&C and guidance for smallholders (based on pilot phase results) and to produce final P&C and guidance, that are relevant and applicable for smallholders in Indonesia, for further approval by RSPO EB

Proposed draft of smallholders P&C & Guidance, provided by IPOC and WWF-Indonesia, is now being circulated to all members for comments. Written comments will be collated for further discussion when the working group reconvenes on the 3rd week of April 2007 in Jakarta.

Secretary-General's Report



As a multi-stakeholder organisation set-up to provide equal footing to competing stakeholder interests in a constructive environment, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil is a pioneer. For those seeking an example of a functioning multi-stakeholder grouping with reasonable credibility, RSPO is a strong case study. However, we are not without our problems, especially those associated with the fact we are a multi-stakeholder association.

We have encouraged expression of concerns and interest from all sectors of society in general, while we provide unprecedented access to the decision-making process through inputting in key initiatives like with the RSPO P&C as well as Verification protocol now. Each sector is represented within the EB, while relative weighting in the EB composition reflects the different responsibilities and roles expected of our EB members. This is precisely why there are higher numbers of producer and NGO representatives vis-à-vis the rest of the supply chain in the EB.

Over the course of the past 2-years, we have witnessed interest in our novel approaching organisation grow to demand for supplying the world with palm oil that is acceptable to consumer needs for sustainability. Same time, we have witnessed the rise of bio-fuels as a result of spiralling oil prices and concern over climate change. A backlash is now possible against bio-fuels like palm oil as reports over carbon balance in peatland agriculture and concerns over rampant expansion into High Conservation Value Forests by oil palm growers triggered by bio-energy demand.

Demand for sustainable palm oil is now becoming a loud clamouring for certified sustainable palm oil. The very fact that rather than moving away from palm oil use altogether and instead demanding for certified sustainable palm oil is proof of the effectiveness of RSPO's multi-stakeholder platform. This is clearly reflected in material coming out of NGOs in recent years as these campaigns now clearly target to educate the public as well as criticise the palm oil industry. To be fair, the prevailing trend in campaigns amongst credible NGOs is to move away from boycotts altogether but demand for palm oil that is certified to meet RSPO standards as defined in our Principles & Criteria (P&C).

By November at the next Roundtable Meeting (RT5) we will be sure of where we stand in positioning ourselves as the primary source of defining all things associated to sustainable palm oil. An ambitious programme for the rest of the year includes completing (that includes testing) the verification protocol to fast-track certifying palm oil against the RSPO P&C, National interpretation of the P&C (namely in Indonesia and Malaysia), rolling out the Code of Conduct as well as the test application and review of the P&C.

More than ever, much hinges on our success at meeting our own deadlines as set out above. Increased pressure to deliver sustainable palm oil to the market is responding to stakeholders voicing concern and even impatience. The RSPO is made up of its members – it stands as one of the key characteristics that provides for success and credibility. In the next 8 months the entire RSPO Membership needs to come together in providing support, from participation to results to funds or resources to the key activities I mention here.

The future of palm oil trade and perception towards it could very much depend on how well we perform as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil.

5th Roundtable Meeting on Sustainable Palm Oil

RT5

We are proud to announce that the 5th Roundtable Meeting (RT5) on Sustainable Palm Oil will be held from 20 to 22 November 2007 at Shangri-La Hotel Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Please note that this year, RT5 will be conducted over two and a half days.

The 4th annual RSPO General Assembly (GA4) is also scheduled to commence immediately after RT5 on 22 November 2007. Official announcements for both events will be distributed soon. Meanwhile, please keep the above dates free and we look forward to your active participation.

Resolution on guiding principles for RSPO evaluation of proposed supply chain models (i.e. traceability) of sustainable palm oil

The RSPO shall incorporate the following as 'guiding principles' in any future review, comparison or endorsement of existing or proposed supply chain mechanisms for sustainable palm oil as defined by RSPO:

- RSPO endorsement of a given mechanism shall be contingent upon the development of a rigorous independent supply chain verification system, which shall be specific to the mechanism and include a verification standard, accreditation requirements and verification process requirements.
- The RSPO shall control the use of claims and labels to ensure they are not misleading and only state that which can be truly verified through a particular mechanism and its accompanying verification system.
- The mechanism should be functionally practical
- The mechanism and accompanying verification system must have credibility with producers and users of palm oil as well as stakeholders (including NGOs, consumers and other interested parties).
- The mechanism should demonstrably achieve real impacts on the ground by encouraging producers to supply RSPO oil, to expand supply and to continuously improve performance against RSPO Principles and Criteria.
- Costs and other burdens associated with supplying RSPO oil through the mechanism should be fairly shared amongst users along the supply chain and contained and/or compensated by market incentives. Likewise, benefits should be fairly shared along the supply chain.
- The mechanism should accommodate and support a future scenario in which the palm oil trade is dominated by material from RSPO-compliant producers
- The mechanism should not discriminate against small-holders, independent millers or any other stakeholder in the supply chain willing to produce, use or supply sustainable palm oil
- RSPO endorsement of more than one mechanism shall be contingent upon the creation of a robust accounting system to avoid double counting of any particular consignment of oil.

RSPO Annual Communication of Progress

RSPO Members are required to communicate on an annual basis on progress towards the production and use of sustainable palm oil. By networking and cooperating within the multi-stakeholder platform provided by RSPO, members can ensure a constructive and transparent operation throughout the palm oil supply chain as well as participate in activities promoting sustainable palm oil production, procurement and consumption, as articulated through the RSPO Code of Conduct (2.2 *Members are required to report annually on progress against this Code*). This way of working has become the standard by which RSPO is identified and gains repute and credibility from.

These 2-page write-ups from each RSPO member should cover activities like efforts in producing, procuring and/or utilizing sustainable palm oil, implementation and/or sponsorship of projects/initiatives and outlook of planned activities over a 12-month period. As with previous years, please submit annual reports to us from now until **30 September 2007**.

Download the recommended format of the RSPO Annual Communication of Progress [MS Word/42 KB]:

http://www.rspo.org/resource_centre/RSPO%20Annual%20Communication%20of%20Progress%202006.doc

RSPO Affiliate Members due for upgrading to Ordinary Membership

Several RSPO Affiliate Members were granted membership based on the condition that companies must agree to convert to RSPO Ordinary Membership once they are physically involved in anyway with the palm oil supply chain, i.e. buy, trade, process, or use palm oil. This announcement serves a friendly reminder for current Affiliate Members to voluntarily upgrade their membership status when appropriate. The RSPO Secretariat will also begin contacting these companies over the next few weeks.



News & Views from Members

This column provides the platform for discourse among members to share experiences and ideas on the achievement of RSPO's objective of promoting the growth and use of sustainable palm oil.

Members could use this space to:

- Communicate their views and experiences on sustainable palm oil
- Critique on RSPO activities or decisions
- Provide suggestions for new projects
- Provide ideas for funding of new projects or activities
- Solicit partners for collaborative projects or activities
- Network, etc.

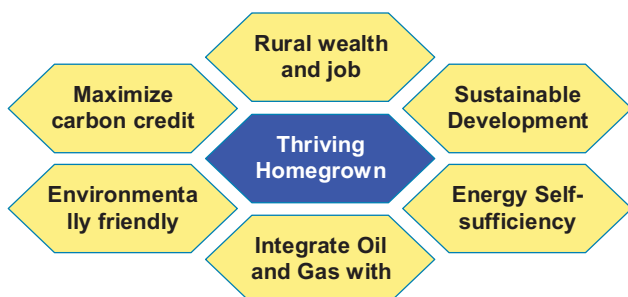
We invite contributions from all members, in any form they consider appropriate. Articles could include pictures, graphs, figures, etc. For inclusion in the next issue of the RSPO newsletter (Apr-Jun 2007), please submit your contributions to us by **15 June 2007**.



Heralding Nigeria's Biofuel Programme

The Bio-fuels programme in Nigeria was launched by the Federal Government which gave a mandate to NNPC in August 2005 to spearhead the initiative. The NNPC in compliance, created the Renewable Energy Division (RED) to drive the implementation of the programme through partnerships with privately-led domestic and foreign agro-industry leaders.

The main thrust of the Biofuel Programme is the generation of a thriving homegrown industry that will spin-off the following benefits:



The Bio-fuel Programme has a horizon of 10 years and three anchors:

- Domestic bio-fuel programme which focuses on launching a series of ethanol and bio-diesel projects in Nigeria over the next 10 years
- Ethanol seeding programme which focuses on establishing an E10 market in Nigeria in the near term
- Policy enactment whose immediate objective is to set up the proper policy environment to stimulate domestic and foreign investment in bio-fuel projects

The Nigerian Biofuel Programme has come to stay thanks to a number of actions already taken and plans being pursued:

- NNPC has secured contiguous locations (5*20,000ha. for Sugar Ethanol and 2*15,000ha. for Cassava Ethanol) for the projects from local / State authorities and initiated detailed feasibility studies with international experts and public institutions. More large scale land areas are planned to be secured in the coming year.
- NNPC has commenced pre-feasibility on Palm Biodiesel Program to leverage on the enormous potential for development of large scale Palm Plantations.
- NNPC is seeking to create JVs with strategic investors with proven international operational expertise in managing the various crops and plants envisaged for the programme. NNPC opts to take minority ownership in each of the JVs and let the operations of the JV be managed by strategic investors.
- NNPC is encouraging third party initiatives with or without NNPC equity but with NNPC committed to guarantee 100% off-take for Biofuels produced from such initiatives.
- Biofuel Policy which provides incentives such as tax breaks for the pioneer investors in biofuel projects, for the first 10 years is in place.

We seek respective Governments to support and encourage investors from their countries to invest in the Nigerian Biofuel Program.

Further information may be obtained from:

Group General Manager
 Renewable Energy Division (RED)
 Block "B" Room 06.04
 Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)
 Herbert Macaulay Way, Central Business District, Garki
 Abuja, Nigeria

Attn : Engr. O A Anyaoku
 Tel : 234-09200-82093
 Email : onochieanyaoku@yahoo.com
onochieanyaoku@nnpcgroup.com



News & Views from Members

A view of the Langkat River taken from the Carey Island jetty.

Biodiversity Conservation Through Sustainable Plantation Practices on Carey Island



By Arnina Hussin and Siti Norralakmam Yahya

Golden Hope Plantations Berhad and Universiti Malaya collaborated in research and development pertaining to conservation and development of biodiversity and natural resources at Carey Island in Selangor Darul Ehsan. Carey Island, being an oil palm plantation but within the new development purview will gradually transform into a suburban region in due time. We want the development to be shaped by sufficient consideration for a balanced landscape that has a heritage value which will enhance both educational and recreational aspect for the resident and visitors on and around Carey Island.

A seminar on "Biodiversity Conservation through Sustainable Plantation Practices on Carey Island" held in November 2006 was one of the deliverable for the Golden Hope - Universiti Malaya collaboration. The seminar was organised to show our contribution in conserving the environment through sustainable plantations. Its becomes the initial platform in creating awareness on the initiatives that going to take place in the organisation. With more information and knowledge given to the participants, we hope to receive more proposals on how Golden Hope can be the role model on environment conservations.

Nine papers were presented in the plenary session with 10 others stood up as poster presentation. The papers were presented by Universiti Malaya and Golden Hope's researchers who were involved in the project.

The title of papers and posters presented were as follows:

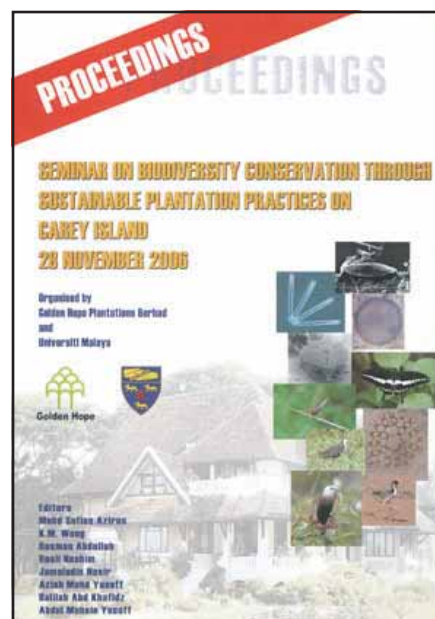
Papers:

- Biodiversity And Carey Island
- Diversity Of Algae At Carey Island, Banting Selangor
- Floristic Survey Of Carey Island
- The Biology of *Pluchea indica* (L) Less.
- Biodiversity – Compliance To Roundtable Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Principles & Criteria
- Promoting Biodiversity Conservation In Carey Islands: Focus On Dragonflies

- Preliminary SEM Study Of The Antenna Of Mudlobster *Thalassina anomala* (Crustacea, Thalassinidae) On Carey Island, Selangor
- Ecology And Management Of Mud Lobsters In The Golden Hope Oil Palm Plantation, Carey Island
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification In Golden Hope

Posters

- Diversity Of Algae At Carey Island, Banting, Selangor
- Mushroom Of Carey Island
- Leaf Anatomy And Pollen Morphology Of *Fagraea crenulata* Clarke (Loganiaceae)
- Morphological, Anatomical And Tissue Culture Studies Of *Xylocarpus granatum*
- Butterfly Diversity Of Carey Island
- The Aerial Acrobats Of Carey Island (Insecta: Odonata)
- Preliminary Salinity Tolerance Study Of Mudlobster *Thalassina anomala* (Crustacea, Thalassinidae) On Carey Island
- Avifaunal Diversity Of Carey Island
- The Influence Of POME On The Growth Of Selected Medicinal & Aromatic Plants
- Mud Lobsters – Ecological Engineers or Pests?



Proceedings for the seminar.



News & Views from Members

Some snapshots during the seminar:



Under this project also, two books were produced namely Birds of Carey Island and Phytoplankton of Carey Island.



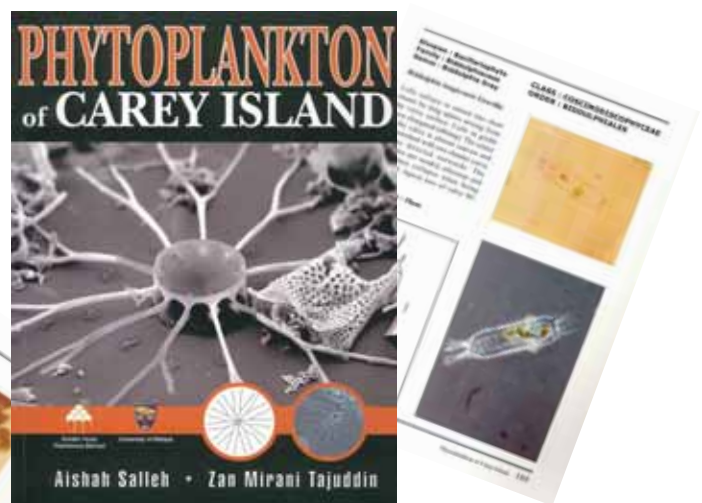
Birds of Carey Island

This book illustrated 65 species of birds that can be found at Carey Island. It has been beautifully photographed and accompanied by a short description to ensure easy understanding about the species and to facilitate species identification.



Phytoplankton of Carey Island

This handbook contains a list of phytoplankton found at Carey Island. From the sampling, a total of 195 species from six main divisions of phytoplankton from 63 genera were recorded and presented in this book.



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News & Views from Members



Updates on the Sime-WildAsia trial project: News from the field

As of March 2007, Sime Plantations had completed its biodiversity and social impact assessments in 3 of its 7 Business Units (BU), covering a total of 31,000 hectares. Each BU was selected for its uniqueness - BU2 in Lower Perak (Peninsular Malaysia) was chosen for its plantations establishment in an urban setting, BU9 in Sandakan, Sabah (Borneo) for its biodiversity-rich surroundings and BU10 in Sanggau (West Kalimantan, Indonesia) for its new plantings and social complexity.

RSPO's Criterion 5.2 and the whole of Principle 6 (and other criteria linked to it) were examined in great detail by the 10-member team of Wild Asia and Sime.

BU2, being the 'green lung' within a congested sub-urban township and having the state's large rivers running alongside it, demonstrates the importance of maintaining riverine corridors and large trees as buffer zones and wildlife habitats.



Sime had the privilege to work with some of Malaysia's top biodiversity experts Dennis Yong, Lim Kim Chye and John Howes.



Two budding environmental researchers currently assisting Malaysia's key aquatic invertebrate expert, Dr Catherine Yule.



News & Views from Members

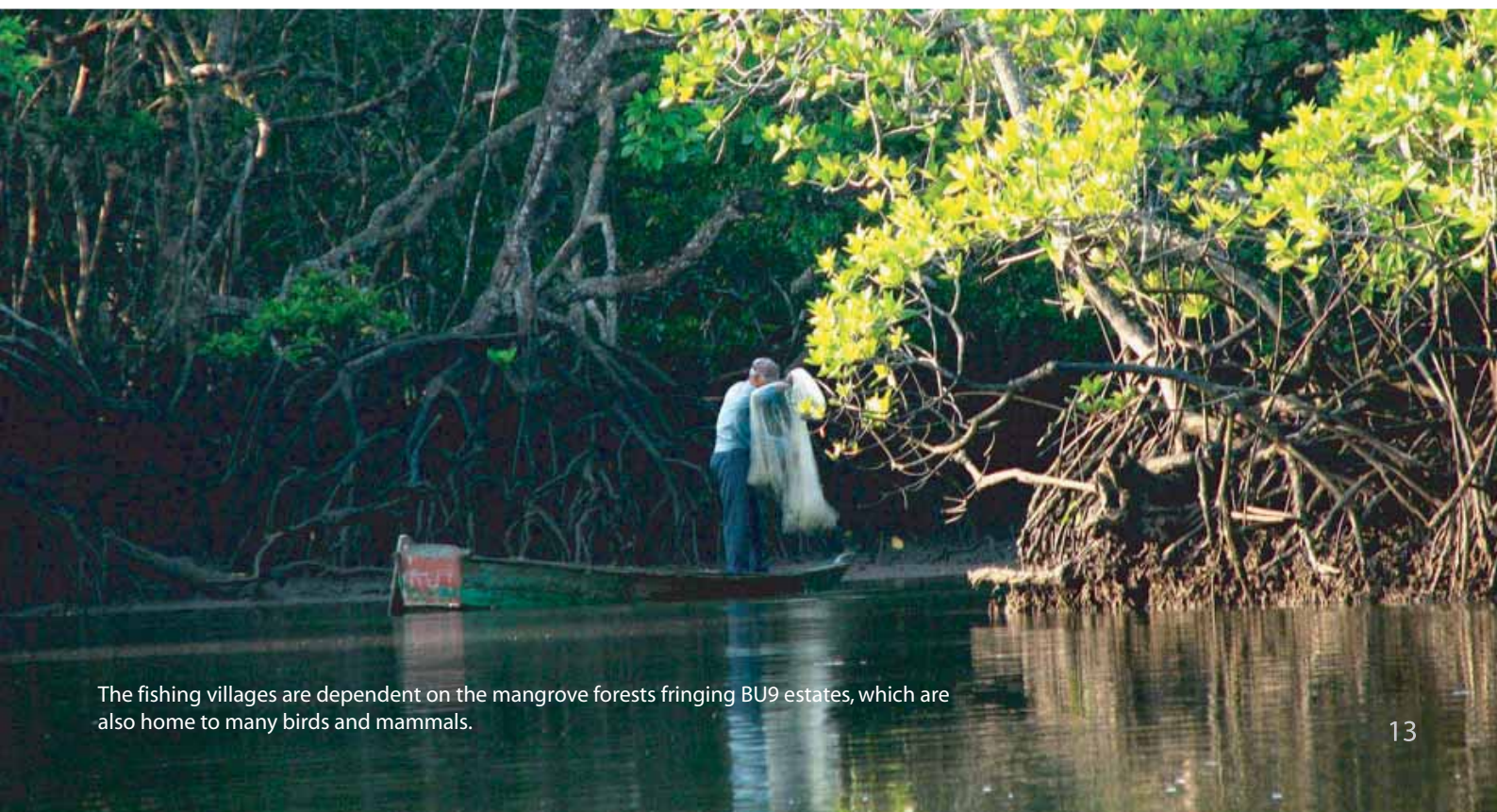
A waterfall within the Sei Mawang project area in BU10 is often used by the predominantly Catholic Dayak communities of the Sanggau District of West Kalimantan for tourism and religious activities.



BU9 was an exciting experience for the team when birds and mammals, especially species of global significance such as the IUCN Endangered Storm's Stork and IUCN Vulnerable Wallace's Hawk-Eagle, were discovered within the plantations. The team also learnt the role of predators and the importance of conserving and managing the forest patches within the estates, as well as the mangroves fringing them. 109 different bird species were recorded during the 5-day assessment in BU9, 16 of which were IUCN Endangered, Vulnerable and Near-Threatened. Orang utan nests were also sighted.

On the other hand, BU10, which is located in the West Kalimantan Province of Indonesia, did not have much to offer in terms of species biodiversity, mainly due to hunting pressure. However, the native communities are very dependent on community forests or 'hutan adat', and the rivers running through them, for domestic needs and for religious purposes. It is very important for BU10's Management to take this into account, especially during expansion or land-clearing activities.

These identified high social and biodiversity conservation value areas will be mapped and plans on how to better manage them will be developed.



The fishing villages are dependent on the mangrove forests fringing BU9 estates, which are also home to many birds and mammals.



News & Views from Members



Native communities are completely dependent on *hutan adat*, or community forests, for domestic and religious needs.



Dwi (far right) having a chat with the workers



Ganip (far right) facilitating a discussion with workers' group leaders (Ketua Kelompok)

For the social aspect of the study, Wild Asia worked with experienced assessors Dwi Rahmad Muhtaman and Ganip Gunawan (from Bogor, Indonesia); and Badrinath Gulur from Bangalore.

In BU10, the workers, local communities and other stakeholders who were consulted, such as Koperasi Unit Desa (Cooperative), Serikat Petani Kelapa Sawit (Oil Palm Smallholders Association) and Sawit Watch, appreciated the effort put in by Sime to conduct these assessments in an independent and comprehensive manner. One key observation stressed upon by Wild Asia is that Sime has to explore ways to better communicate with, and manage, its workers of different ethnicities and backgrounds as well as with native communities that are totally dependent on land that they have inherited from their forefathers.

"Sime is now at a critical stage where we are morphing into a very much larger entity", says Sime Plantations Managing Director, Encik Azhar Abdul Hamid. "The assessments have given us essential insights as to the complexities of issues and challenges regularly faced by our operations teams. It also indicates the environmental and social impacts we need to consider in every aspect of our operational conduct – the bad things we need to improve on and the good



News & Views from Members



Development of a tool to calculate greenhouse gas balances

By Arjen Brinkmann and Petra Meekers
Sustainability Managers BioX Group bv

things we never knew we had all along. While the relationship between Sime and its workers are fairly straightforward in its Malaysian plantations, the structure is vastly different in Indonesia", he added.

DOEN representative, Eric Wakker, attended BU10's closing meeting on March 20th and commented that he is satisfied with the way the project has progressed so far. Eric remarked that issues highlighted by the assessors are manageable and that DOEN would support follow-up work. He was also pleased to note that formal constructive dialogues have taken place between BU10 and its stakeholders.

For the assessment's social component, it was observed that Sime has already taken cognisance of the importance of stakeholder consultation in this whole process and being transparent in its developmental and management plans. Wild Asia's Executive Director, Dr Reza Azmi, opined that there is a strong correlation in terms of making the company's relationship with communities and other stakeholders work, which will then translate into better productivity and hence the bottom line.

As for the biodiversity conservation and management plans, Sime would probably have to consider forming strategic partnerships with others in order to link its internal plans with other larger landscape issues.

Submitted by:
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Sime Plantations Sdn Bhd
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In the last RSPO Newsletter (December 2006) we gave an update on the development of a system of sustainability criteria for biomass in the Netherlands (the 'Cramer Commission').

In most countries, bio-energy and biofuels play a dominant role in attaining the renewable energy objectives and are therefore, promoted by national policies and using various incentives. Despite the opportunities of bio-energy and biofuels, there are concerns about the sustainability of the biomass supply. This is also recognized by the Dutch government who has commissioned the Cramer Commission to propose a sustainability criteria system.

This system aims to ensure that biomass which in the future will be used for production of biofuels or bio-energy (electricity/heat) has been produced in a sustainable way, taking into the account the environmental, social and economic aspects. It includes both locally and internationally produced biomass, including palm oil products. As for palm oil, the Dutch system shows great similarity with the RSPO Principles and Criteria.

An important additional criterion in the Cramer system is the greenhouse gas balance (GHGbalance). This criterion requests that greenhouse gas emissions which occur during production, processing and transport of biomass are taken into account when calculating the greenhouse gas emission reduction potential for biofuels or bio-energy in a specific application. This includes for example nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions related to the production and application of fertilisers, and emissions from diesel required for biomass transport. Also CO₂-emissions arising from land use change, e.g. the conversion of forestland into plantation and emissions from peatlands shall be taken into account.

The overall GHG-balance shall be significantly negative, i.e. show net emission reductions as compared to fossil fuel reference. Minimum requirements set for the GHG-balance are 30% reduction for biofuels, and 50-70% for bio-energy applications of biomass. Biomass chains which do not meet these minimum requirements will not be eligible for subsidies, tax exemptions and not count towards the mandatory targets for biofuels.



News & Views from Members

RSPO Members help sending Plantation Kids to School

Between 20,000 and 34,000 children in Sabah's oil palm plantations for the first time have a real chance for a basic education, which has not been possible before due to the unsettled status of children of immigrant plantation labourers.

Since August 2006 an important agreement has been in effect between the Governments of Malaysia and Indonesia, which should enable all the plantation children to get a basic education. Borneo Child Aid Society (Humana) has been assigned by the Malaysian government to facilitate the project in cooperation with the plantation companies. 51 educated teachers from Indonesia are already integrated with our society's teachers. The programme is contributing positively to strengthening relations between Malaysia and Indonesia, and the promise of education for these children has got quite a lot of attention in both countries, as could be seen from the recent press coverage of the awarding of the "Adi Pradana" (the highest Indonesian order given to a foreign head of state) to Malaysia's Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi.

The success of the project, which has been introduced in previous RSPO newsletters, fully depends on the participation and the support of the plantation companies. In our opinion RSPO members have their natural place at the forefront of this.



Give them a bright future, Syarimo 2 Estate, IOI Corporation.

It is an enormous task, which lies ahead of us to expand our project from the present 4300 children, who are already benefiting from the programme, to more than 20,000 children, who are still without education. We are getting a fantastic support from our partners among the plantation companies, with which we are already running 60 learning centres. IOI Corporation has now 20 learning centres, Asiatic Development Berhad has 7 centres and Hap Seng Consolidated has 5 centres (Hap Seng has furthermore through its Lau Gek Poh Foundation recently supported our work with a considerable Donation). These companies and others have taken the necessary steps to provide a suitable building, transportation for the children and basic funding for the education of the plantation children. IJM and PBB plantations are starting the first schools in within the next two months.

In order to be able to use the GHG-balance as a taxation or subsidy tool in the near future, the Dutch government is currently developing a calculation tool which allows unambiguous calculation of all GHG-emission factors along the various biomass chains. This tool will subsequently be filled with quantitative default values, i.e. average data for a specific biomass chain, which then calculates the overall default GHG-value for the chain. Once the calculation tool is operational, individual market players may fill it with own (better) GHG-emission factors, provided that sufficient evidence to support the values claimed has been made available. The UK government is working on a comparable tool, with frequent liaison taking place between Dutch and UK officials. Also the European Commission is considering introducing GHG-balance as a sustainability criterion for biofuels.

A Steering Group of various representatives from the industry, including BioX, as well as NGOs has been established to guide the development of the GHG-calculation tool. One of the tasks of this Steering Group is to provide best available industry data for various biomass chains. BioX will provide specific input on the palm oil biomass chains.

It is of the up most importance that representative palm oil industry data are being used, as this will provide realistic default values for the calculation tool in the Netherlands and the UK, and later on a more European level. We would like to take this opportunity to ask RSPO members to submit any available data on GHG-emissions along the palm oil chain (e.g. on fertiliser usage, mill energy requirements, etc.) to us.

For more information and submission of data:

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News & Views from Members

But some of the major plantation companies have not yet taken the step to provide education for their children. I sincerely welcome these to approach me. There are of course many questions, of which I will try to answer a few here:

1) Is the teaching going to be according to Indonesian curriculum?

Answer: No. Our curriculum is based on Malaysian curriculum with inclusion of subjects about Indonesia. We teach the children up to primary 6 level.

2) Is Borneo Child Aid (Humana) an organization with specific religious or political aims?

Answer: No. Our interest is solely the education of the children as described in the UN's convention for children. We have an entirely practical approach and a positive cooperation with our partners among the estates.

3) What are the costs of starting a school or learning centre for the children?

Answer: It depends on the plantation company. Some companies are building new centres at RM 50-100.000

each. Others convert a present labourline, hall or store to a usable classroom at minimum cost. Besides the plantation pays a monthly contribution of RM 1250-1500 for one centre of 50-60 children. With this amount, our society will cover all salaries and all other operating expenses.

4) How soon can it be started?

Answer: We can be ready to start a new learning centre within a month from making an agreement about this.

5) How is the effect on the plantation?

Answer: First of all the children will have a quite different life, where learning and hopes for the future will be part. The parents will be satisfied to know that their children are in school and they highly appreciate the gift of a school for their children, which is shown by remaining loyally with the same estate. Many of the children will be ideal future staff in plantations and oil mills, where already many of our former students are working.

If your company is interested in starting a school or in supporting education for plantation kids, you are most welcome to contact me:

Torben Venning, Project Director
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Email : info@borneochildaid.org / tor_ven@yahoo.com
Website : www.borneochildaid.org
Tel : +60 (0)89-866857 (office) / +60 (0)19-8084402 (H/P)
Fax : 60 (0)3-21784113



Indonesian Teacher Puji with child.

Plantation Girl in Asiatic Mewah Estate with little sister on arm.

Members of RSPO

as of 31 March 2007

RSPO Ordinary Members (166)

Oil Palm Growers (34)

Agropalma Group / Asiatic Development Berhad / Boustead Plantations Berhad / CTP Holdings Pte Ltd / FEDEPALMA - National Federation of Oil Palm Growers of Colombia / FELDA * / Golden Hope Plantations Berhad / Hap Seng Consolidated Berhad / IJM Plantations Berhad / Indonesian Palm Oil Producers Association (GAPKI) * / KL Kepong Berhad / Kulim (Malaysia) Berhad / Kumpulan Guthrie Berhad / M P Evans Group PLC / Malaysian Palm Oil Association * / New Britain Palm Oil Ltd * / PPB Oil Palms Berhad / PT Agro Bukit / PT Agro Indomas / PT Austindo Nusantara Jaya Agri / PT Inti Indosawit Subur / PT Perkebunan Nusantara III / PT PP London Sumatra Indonesia / PT Selapan Jaya / PT SMART Tbk / PT Tunas Baru Lampung Tbk / Sawit Mas Group / SIAT SA / Sime Plantations Sdn Bhd / SIPEF Group / Socfin Group (PT Socfindo & Socfinco SA) / TH Plantations Sdn Bhd / United Plantations Bhd / YPJ Oil Palm Estate Sdn Bhd

Palm Oil Processors and/or Traders (69)

3E-European-Envirotec-Enterprises GmbH / Aarhus Karlshamn UK * / Aarhus Karlshamn Sweden / AB Fortum Värme samägt med Stockholm stad / Alfred C Toepfer International GmbH / Archer Daniels Midland Europe BV / Biofuels Corporation PLC / BioX / BP / Britannia Food Ingredients / Cargill BV / Cargill Palm Products Sdn Bhd / Carotino Sdn Bhd (a member of JC Chang Group) / Cefetra / China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Corp / CI FAMAR SA / CMS Resources / Cognis Deutschland GmbH & Co KG / Continental BioEnergy Singapore Pte Ltd / D1 Oils PLC / Daabon Organic CI Tequendama SA / Danisco Emulsifiers / ED&F MAN / Essent Energy Trading BV / EUROENERGIE AG / Florin AG / Fuji Oil Group / Gardner Smith Pty Ltd / Gipp Energy / Glencore Grain BV / Godrej Industries Limited / Greenery Biofuels Ltd / Imperium Renewables Inc / Intercontinental Specialty Fats Sdn Bhd / IOI Group (Malaysia / Netherlands) * / Itochu Corporation / Jin Wei (M) Sdn Bhd / Just Oil & Grain Pte Ltd / kemOleo Pte Ltd / KOG Edible Oils BV / Kuok Oils & Grains Pte Ltd / Lipidos Santiga / Mewah Oils Sdn Bhd / Midwest BD Limited / Mitsubishi Corporation (KL Branch) / Natural Fuel Group / Nidera Handelscompagnie BV / Nutriswiss AG / OLEON / Pan Century Edible Oils Sdn Bhd / Permata Hijau Group / Peter Cremer (S) GmbH / PT Agro Jaya Perdana / PT Flora Sawita Chemindo / PT Musim Mas / Renewable Power & Light PLC / Royal Dutch Shell plc / Spsychiger Oil Trading AG / Sumi Asih Oleochemical / Unigrà S.p.A. / Unimills BV / Uniqema (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd / UR POWER GmbH / US Food Group / Vance Bioenergy Sdn Berhad / Vegoil EP AB / Vinmar / WALTER RAU Neusser Öl und Fett AG / Wilmar International Ltd

Consumer Goods Manufacturers (25)

Burton's Foods Ltd / Cadbury Schweppes plc * / Cloetta Fazer AB / ConAgra Trade Group, Inc / CO-OP CLEAN Co Ltd / CSM NV / Dragsbaek A/S / Ecologico Packaging Sdn Bhd / Ferrero SPA / Goodman Fielder Ltd / H J Heinz Company Ltd / Johnson & Johnson Consumer Companies, Inc / L'Oreal / Lion Corporation / NESTE Oil Corporation / Northern Foods plc / Reckitt Benckiser plc / RHM / Santa Maria AB / Saraya Co Ltd / SAS Devineau / Unilever * / United Biscuits / W Jordans (Cereals) Limited / Walter Rau Lebensmittelwerke GmbH & Co KG

Retailers (20)

Ahold NV / Asda stores / Carrefour / Coop / Co-operative Group / Earthcycle Packaging Ltd / EDF Energy / Federation of Migros Cooperatives * / IKEA / Marks & Spencer / Musgrave Budgens Londis / RWE npower / Sainsbury's Supermarkets / SPE / Stadtwerke Uelzen GmbH / Tesco Stores Ltd / The Body Shop International * / The Boots Group plc / Waitrose Limited / WM Morrison Supermarkets PLC

Banks/Investors (8)

Co-operative Insurance Society * / EcoSecurities Group PLC / International Finance Corporation (IFC) / HSBC Bank Malaysia Berhad * / HSBC Indonesia / Rabobank / Standard Chartered Bank / WestLB AG

Environmental/Nature Conservation NGOs (6)

Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOS) / Global Environment Centre / PanEco / WWF-Indonesia * / WWF-Malaysia / WWF Switzerland *

Social/Developmental NGOs (4)

Both ENDS / Oxfam GB/Novib * / Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Asia and the Pacific / Sawit Watch *

* RSPO Executive Board Member

Members of RSPO

as of 31 March 2007

RSPO Affiliate Members (64)

Organizations (61)

AES AgriVerde Services (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd / Alterra (Wageningen - UR) / Applied Agricultural Resources Sdn Bhd / Bayer CropScience AG / Bayer CropScience (M) Sdn Bhd / Behn Meyer & Co (M) Sdn Bhd / Bio-Venta / Biodiesel SP Sdn Bhd / Biofutures International plc / BIOPETROL TRADING ZUG AG / Biotech Alliance International Sdn Bhd / Borneo Child Aid (Humana Child Aid Society) / Cirad Tree Crops Department / Control Union (Indonesia) / Control Union (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd / DXN Biofuels Sdn Bhd / DXN Oleochemicals Sdn Bhd / EcoOils Sdn Bhd / Environmental Management & Monitoring Pty Ltd / EPChem International Pte Ltd / FEDIOL (EC Seed Crushers' & Oil Processors Federation) / Grenidea Technologies Pte Ltd / HIF TECH Sdn Bhd / ICI / International Association of Seed Crushers (IASC) / IOPRI (Indonesian Oil Palm Research Institute) / Jonganeel Agencies BV / Liebenauer Feld GmbH / London Commodity Brokers Ltd / Malaysia Oleochemical Manufacturers Group (MOMG) / Malaysian Estate Owners' Association / Margarine & Spreads Association / National Edible Oil Distributors' Association / Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation / Oilpalmworld Sdn Bhd / OMV Refining & Marketing GmbH / PALMBASE (M) Sdn Bhd / PalmPool / Palm Oil Refiners Association of Malaysia / Papua New Guinea Oil Palm Research Association Inc / PME Biofuels Limited / POIC Sabah Sdn Bhd / Pon Power BV / Product Board for Margarine, Fats and Oils / PT Syngenta Indonesia / qa plus asia-pacific Sdn Bhd / Quality, Training and Research Centre (QTRC) / Rainbow Energy Corporation / rapidOil AG / Renewable Fuel Supply Ltd / SAI Platform / Schutter International BV / Seattle Biofuels / Southeast Asia Program (SEAP) of PPI/PPIC and IPI / SGS (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd / SIRIM QAS International Sdn Bhd / Syngenta Crop Protection AG / Syngenta Crop Protection Sdn Bhd / Transworld Commodity Consultants (TCC) / Tropical Oil Products / TSL (Trading Services London)

Individuals (3)

Dr Reza Azmi / Dato' Henry S Barlow / Mr Fritz Moedinger

RSPO Honorary Members (1)

Individuals (1)

Mr MR Chandran