



Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

RSPO Secretariat Sdn Bhd
Company No.: 787510-K
Suite A-06-04, Plaza Mont' Kiara
2, Jalan Kiara, 50480 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Telephone : +603-6203 5969
Fax : +603-6203 5869
Email : rspo@rspo.org

RSPO Indonesia Liaison Office (RILO)
Suite 225, Wisma Metropolitan II, 6th Floor
Jalan Jendral Sudirman Kav. 29
Jakarta 12920
Indonesia

Telephone : +62 21 3004 8080
Fax : +62 21 3004 8081
Email : desi@rspo.org

British Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) questions RSPO Certification Scheme

On 9 September 2009, the British Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ruled that an advertorial by the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) in *The Economist* promoting Malaysian Palm Oil was inappropriate for UK media because of purported unsubstantiated claims.

The objection of the ASA was, *inter alia*, “that a palm oil company sustainability certification scheme, through a body called the RSPO (Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil), and the certification of biofuels in general, was “still the subject of debate”. Therefore, making claim that palm oil could be wholly sustainable, which cannot be sustainable, was deemed to be misleading!”

Without going into the rights and wrongs of the MPOC case or the ASA ruling generally the RSPO would like to point out the misconception over its certification scheme for sustainable palm oil.

The RSPO certification scheme has been developed in line with the ISEAL Code of Conduct for Environmental and Social Standards, and practiced since February 2008. The scheme was approved by the RSPO Executive Board among which members are various social and environmental NGOs, like Oxfam and WWF International, and market leaders like Unilever and AarhusKarlshamn.

The scheme was designed by a group of stakeholders representing the environmental and social NGOs, oil palm growers from all growing regions, traders, palm oil processors and food producers who use palm oil. It is based on the RSPO Principles & Criteria that has been deliberated since 2002, even as the RSPO was being formed.

The certification process is rigorous and is undertaken by internationally established and renowned certification bodies like the British Standards Institution, TUV Nord, SGS, Control Union Certifications, etc. who are recognized in the EU for other certification processes.

It has come a long way since being “still the subject of debate”.

RSPO certification has been implemented since 2008 and, palm oil production capacity amounting to 1.75 million tonnes per year has been certified to date and is available for use.