

NEWS RELEASE

GHANA CREATES HISTORY FOR AFRICA

RSPO approves National Interpretation of the Principles and Criteria for sustainable palm oil in Ghana

Kuala Lumpur, March 2, 2011 - The RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil) is pleased to announce that a National Interpretation (NI) of the RSPO Principles and Criteria for sustainable palm oil has been approved in Ghana, the first country in Africa to receive this endorsement.

The NI paves the way for RSPO certification of oil palm growers in Ghana, setting out clear indicators for the development of sustainable palm oil appropriate to the local context.

Darrel Webber, the Secretary General of the RSPO Secretariat based in Kuala Lumpur commented that: "This leap towards promoting sustainable palm oil in Ghana is a landmark achievement for Africa, the new frontier for sustainable palm oil, blazing the trail for other countries within this continent to emulate.

"This signifies a historical milestone for Africa, in particular West Africa, the very origin of oil palm (*elaeis guineensis*), which we hope will catapult the continent onto the sustainable pathway for the benefit of People, Plant and Prosperity.

"It is indeed inspiring to see people and nations coming together to play an instrumental role in shaping change for a sustainable future. The RSPO congratulates the NI Working Group and encourages all oil palm growers in Ghana and eventually, others within the African continent to seek certification." Webber concluded.

Central to the philosophy of RSPO as a multi stakeholder organization, is that the NI is developed as a result of intense research, dialogue, feedback and collaboration within a Working Group comprising key constituents in markets involved; which usually includes representatives from each stakeholder group in the palm oil supply chain; local communities; regulatory and governmental bodies; and NGOs.

The Ghana National Interpretation Working Group (GNIWG) comprised experts from various areas of Agronomy, Milling and Research; Environment and Natural Resources; Legal License and Social; and Economics and Labour; in order to embody diverse perspectives.

Gert Vandersmissen, Chairman of GNIWG further commented that: "In the beginning, we faced some challenges in getting the various stakeholders together but as soon as all parties realized the significance of this initiative, we had support beyond expectations. We are thrilled about the first Ghanaian Certified Palm Oil and what the future holds for sustainable palm oil in Africa."

About RSPO

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was established in 2004 with the objective promoting the growth and use of sustainable oil palm products through credible global standards and engagement of stakeholders. The Secretariat is based in Kuala Lumpur with a satellite office in Jakarta.

RSPO is a not-for-profit association that unites stakeholders from 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. For further information, please refer to our website: www.rspo.org

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