



NEWS RELEASE

784 DELEGATES FROM 30 COUNTRIES GATHER IN THE WORLD'S LARGEST MEETING OF SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL IN NORTH SUMATRA

First Indonesian and Malaysian independent smallholders officially receive RSPO certification at the 11th Annual Roundtable Meeting on Sustainable Palm Oil held in Medan

MEDAN, 12 NOVEMBER 2013 –The 11th Annual Roundtable Meeting on Sustainable Palm Oil (RT11), the largest sustainable palm oil meeting in the world, opened today in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. 784 delegates from 30 countries are attending RT11, which is being convened by the international multi-stakeholder organisation the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).

International experts from different countries, companies and NGOs, presented during the opening day of RT11. In line with the theme “*RSPO Standard 2013: Understand. Apply. Embrace*”, the RT11 focuses on communicating to RSPO members the organization’s newly revised Principles & Criteria (P&C), which are revised every five years. The revisions are part of the RSPO’s continuing effort to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the P&C for its members in the journey towards achieving the organization’s vision and mission of transforming the market towards sustainable certified palm oil.

Dr. Bayu Krishnamurti, Indonesian Vice Minister of Trade, was the guest of honour at the event, held at Santika Premier Dyandra Hotel and Convention, Medan. Following his opening speech, Dr. Krishnamurti presented RSPO certifications to AMANAH Independent Smallholders Association from Indonesia and the Wild Asia Smallholders Group from Malaysia, who recently attained RSPO certification, becoming Indonesia’s and Malaysia’s first independent smallholders to achieve this notable milestone. Solidaridad, a Netherlands-based NGO, was also awarded as the first receiver of RSPO Smallholders Support Fund (RSSF) and Neste Oil received the first RSPO Reductions Emissions Directive (RSPO RED) supply chain certificate for its biofuels supply into the E.U.

“Medan is significant in that it is at the heart of Indonesia’s palm oil sector, so we appreciate that RSPO chose to hold its 11th annual meeting in Medan, as it means that palm oil has come home”, said Dr. Krishnamurti. “As a good citizen of the world, we intend to work with RSPO to find the best way to ensure that sustainability is in the best interest of all stakeholders along the supply chain. We would welcome a partnership with RSPO to socialize our objectives and build better understanding about palm oil in the society and consumers”.

A highlight at today’s opening was the thought-provoking keynote address by renowned international expert and UK Global Food Security Champion, Professor Tim Benton, on the long term future of food security and the critical role of sustainable certified palm oil, in a presentation on “*The Challenge of Food Security in 2050: Can We Do It Sustainably*”. The keynote address was followed by presentations by Dr. Alain Rival from CiradBioS-UMR DIADE on “*The Amazing Palm Oil: From Biological Model to Poverty Alleviation*” and by Jannick Hoejrup Schmidt from 2.-0 LCA Consultants on “*Five Edible Oils: A Comparison*”, and a panel discussion on “*The Power of Consumers to Push the Industry to Adopt*

Sustainable Palm Oil. How Important is this Segment Compared to Industry Players and Governments?”, which presented panelists from Carrefour Group, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Zoos Australia and Orangutan Land Trust.

“This 11th year is a highly significant milestone for RSPO. The strong international participation from palm oil stakeholders at RT11 is testimony of the stakeholders’ agreement to the importance to ensure that the RSPO P&C is properly understood, applied and embraced by our members”, said Mr. Darrel Webber, Secretary General of the RSPO. “We have come a long way in the last 11 years, but there is still much room for growth. This is a very exciting time for the palm oil sector as it advances ever closer to making sustainable palm oil the norm worldwide, as now sustainable palm oil production and business practices are no longer an option but a must for the long-term good of the industry. I am optimistic that we will see many fruitful discussions and dynamic exchanges of ideas at RT11.”

RT11 will continue until 14 November. It brings together the palm oil producers, international buyers and NGOs. As a multi-stakeholder forum, the open space format of the RT11 provides all participants with the opportunity to freely explore the issues and challenges faced by the palm oil industry as well as to share good practices and develop innovative practices and commitments to action, to further strengthen on-going efforts towards transforming the market.

Open space discussion is also brought by RSPO to RT11 in order to reflect the concerns and priorities of stakeholders as the RSPO continues to strive towards market transformation. The stakeholders of interactive sessions to be organized over the period of the conference cover topics on “*Understanding the Changes in RSPO Standard 2013*”, “*The Essence of RSPO Standard 2013 to Our Aspirations*” and “*RSPO Standard 2013 - Inspired Direction and Action*”.

For more information about RT11, please log on to <http://www.rt11.rspo.org>.

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About RT11

Positioned as the world’s largest sustainable palm oil conference and held since 2003, the annual roundtable or RT is a platform to exchange views and experiences among various stakeholders in developed and developing countries; to strengthen their co-operation and support in promoting sustainable palm oil. The annual roundtable is positioned as an industry event organized to seek participation from players within the palm oil sector from all around the world. Last year, the event attracted over 800 delegates from 37 countries representing various stakeholder groups in the palm oil supply chain.

This year, RT11 will be held from November 12 – November 14 2013 in Santika Premiere Dyandra Hotel & Convention, Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. RT11 will be organized over 3 days comprising presentation papers, workshops, breakout sessions, and dialogue. More information about the RT11 is available at <http://rt11.rspo.org>.

About RSPO

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. The seat of the association is in Zurich, Switzerland, while the secretariat is currently 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.

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 make decisions by consensus.

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