

RSPO

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

Minutes of Meeting

RSPO Communications & Claims Standing Committee (C&C SC)

Date: April 1st, 2014

Venue : Conference call

Time : CET 10.30 am – 13.00

ATTENDANCE LIST

Stakeholder Group	Members	Organization
Retailer	Andrea Bolhuis	Royal Ahold
Bank	Olaf Brugman	Rabobank
Association member	Eddy Esselink	MVO
Processors & Traders	Yves Augrandjean	IOI Loders Crocklaan
Grower	Simon Lord	New Britain Palm Oil Limited
Trader	Judith Murdoch	AAK
Service provider	Bob Norman	GreenPalm
Retailer	Agnes Pondaven	Carrefour
Processors & Traders	Caroline Sikking (Chair)	Cargill
Environmental NGO	Carrie Svingen	WWF
Consumer Goods Manufacturer	Tiina Tuominen	Neste Oil
Consumer Goods Manufacturer	Jan Kees Vis	Unilever
Social NGO	Sandra Seeboldt	Oxfam
RSPO	Joycelyn Lee	RSPO Secretariat
RSPO	Danielle Morley	RSPO Secretariat
RSPO	Inke van der Sluijs	RSPO Secretariat
Service provider	Giovanni Colombo	H+K Strategies, Brussels
Apologies		
Grower	Leela Barrock	Sime Darby Malaysia
Service provider	Andy Green	BM TRADA

1. UPDATE FROM RSPO SECRETARIAT – MALAYSIA & INDONESIA

The Secretariat is currently examining two different proposals for a **revamp of the website**. It is also working on the addition to the website of a new knowledge management system, i.e. a search tool to find relevant content. If such content is not found the user will be redirected to a page with a form which will allow him/her to send his/her question to the Secretariat and get a response in 24 hours. This feature will be ready by the EU Roundtable event. However the website revamp will take 4-5 months as it requires a more in-depth analysis of existing content and needs and careful redesign.

The Secretariat is also working on the addition to the website of a special section dedicated to complaints, which will display the latest updates on open complaint cases.

Simon asked the Secretariat to make sure that the certifications of certified growers are easily accessible on the website, because stakeholders and customers are looking for them and currently they are difficult to find. For some years they are not available. This work should be prioritised.

Agnes explained that she could not find the list of CBs available in Finland, and that a list of CBs by country should be available.

Bob suggested that it could be more efficient and easier to have a micro-site for the new Supply Chain Certification system. However Joyce explained that there are too many WGs and related topics which might be entitled to this approach, but this would become too complex and difficult to manage, so it is better to have only one main website.

The Secretariat is also looking for an IP expert to look at the **C&C documents on the TM and at the Code of Conduct**, which need to be tidied up. The aim is to finalise a new draft version of these documents by the June RT in London, for the SC C&C to look at them. The final version would be approved by the RT12 event in November.

Following the **McKinsey report on the membership remodelling**, the Secretariat has conducted a survey among 200 former or inactive RSPO members. The rate of response has been 25%, which is quite low. The Secretariat was aiming for 30% and would welcome suggestions on how to increase this rate.

Andrea explained that normally she does not respond to these surveys, and that 25% is a decent rate and one can live with it.

Next steps on the survey include a presentation of the findings to the BoG, for it to decide whether there is a need to remodel.

Malaysia: the Secretariat is working on engaging consumers, to counter negative press. It is also working with WWF on direct engagement of consumer groups and activists, to educate them on the importance of CSPO.

Activities in **Indonesia** are now on hold because general elections will be held on April 9.

RT12 will be held in KL at the Shangri-La hotel. A save-the-date will be sent immediately after the London RT. The title is 'Sustainability: What's next?'

Agnes suggested to look at the notes of RT11 open space session. Simon asked when the Secretariat is planning to go back to the people who attended the RT11 focus groups. Caroline suggested this could be used as input for the London June event.

ACTIONS:

- Joyce should get back to Simon on the access to certification on the website
- Joyce to circulate draft RT12 programme to SC C&C for feed-back, as soon as it is available

- Joyce to circulate notes of RT11 open space session, to use as basis for discussion of RT12 programme
- Joyce to go back to Simon on timeline regarding feed-back on focus groups

2. UPDATE ON EUROPE

Giovanni gave an update on the status of the national alliances and the palm oil debate in key European markets. He mentioned the activities of the French Alliance during the international agricultural fair in Paris in February, where the Alliance was present with a large sustainable palm oil stand for a whole week. The initiative received interest and positive feedback from a wide number of participants, and contributed to increase awareness about sustainable palm oil in France.

During Danielle's recent visit to Brussels, she met with key media, Greenpeace and spoke at a European Parliament event on palm oil organised by the European Sustainable Palm Oil Advocacy Group (ESPOAG). She also met with Gilles Morelles, Puratos, a member of the Belgian Alliance who explained the issues currently faced by the Alliance, i.e. the lack of funding and the limited commitment of some trade associations.

Giovanni also referred to some rumours about a possible plan to ban palm oil in the feed sector in Norway.

Danielle and Inke presented on the RSPO at a special meeting of a palm oil and soy working group launched recently by the Danish Ministry of Agriculture and are supporting the initiative to develop into a national commitment. Judith explained that AAK is following closely the situation in Denmark. It is important to inform all alliances and key stakeholders in the Nordics about the availability of GP and MB options, as they might not be aware of the details. RSPO should therefore get in touch with the alliances to share this information.

Danielle referred that the Danish Minister of Agriculture is planning a trip to Malaysia to visit a plantation and that this will be a good opportunity for introducing RSPO to him and also explore if he could influence the agenda of other Nordic countries and raise the issue of sustainable palm oil with them. Simon asked that a strategic plan and a timeline to address these issues is formulated, with key deliverables.

Finally Giovanni illustrated briefly the main events in the European calendar of engagements, in which RSPO is planning to participate. However, at the moment the main priority of the H+K work is to support RSPO on the organisation of the London Roundtable event, reaching out to media and stakeholders to raise its visibility.

ACTIONS:

- Danielle to reach out to Nordic alliances to inform them about supply chain options
- Danielle to formulate plan for Nordic outreach

3. UPDATE & DISCUSSION ON EUROPEAN CONSUMER/KOL OUTREACH

Danielle reported about the work done by Futureye (FE) in the past months. FE has applied to RSPO a social maturation curve methodology, and their analysis indicates that RSPO has become associated with problems rather than with solutions. Because RSPO is trying to present itself as fixer, it ends up being defensive because it is not successful in fixing these problems. Danielle has commissioned FE to do a pilot Wikicurve website for RSPO, as well as a stakeholder mapping in the social media space.

She also reported about the work done by FE with focus groups to test and prepare messages which were then discussed in a two-day workshop in London with approx. 35 RSPO members. The main conclusions of this work reveal that it is possible to change consumer perceptions if RSPO works on the right arguments. The London workshop has helped to develop and refine the FE messages and create a community of engaged people who can act as RSPO ambassadors. Danielle wants to get back to the group with an action plan to keep them engaged and active. She then presented an initial overview of the messages and of the elevator pitch.

Caroline agreed that the London seminar was a useful experience and suggested to go back to participants with a summary of the key messages that they can bring back to their organisations, in particular to big companies with a consumer facing role. In this context, RSPO will need to develop a positioning on deforestation and traceability. However, growers need to be comfortable with new way RSPO wants to communicate. This should also be raised in some kind of recommendations to the Board of Governance. The new messages should also be promoted at the RSPO June conference. After June, RSPO should develop an action plan for the next financial year.

Agnes made comments on the draft elevator pitch, saying that she was afraid of the sentence saying “We have to demonstrate we are better than palm oil free.” Members might still do palm-oil free claims and last year the RSPO Complain Panel advised not to do them, but it didn’t give mandatory guidelines. Jan Kees was also sceptical about using this sentence, and recommended to avoid being defensive and to maintain instead a positive message. Eddy recommended to mention that palm oil is versatile and that it is the best solution for many food applications.

ACTIONS:

- SC C&C members to give recommendations on draft messages and elevator pitch
- Danielle to discuss with Darrel and Simon how to share new messaging approach with the BoG
- Danielle to send report on FE activities and proposed next steps
- Danielle to circulate a link on pilot Wikicurve website.

4. UPDATE ON EUROPEAN ROUNDTABLE LONDON CONFERENCE JUNE, 2014

Danielle gave an update on the organisation of the June conference in London, which will be one-day only, on June 4. Danielle explained that she has worked with a Task Force of members & secretariat to develop the programme. On June 3, RSPO will host a meeting of national commitments. Sandra asked about the topic of the first panel debate, because she is concerned that companies do not use RSPO as a basis anymore.

Agnes asked about the revision of the SCC and if RSPO is planning to hold a public consultation on it. This could be discussed during the world café session. Andrea agreed with this suggestion and proposed that this could be an alternative to having an online consultation.

The Indonesian Vice-Minister of Trade asked RSPO to be invited as speaker at the London event. RSPO needs to deal carefully with this request as it is a diplomatic issue. It is not possible to turn down his request. The group decided to welcome him as honourable speaker instead of inviting him to join a panel debate.

ACTIONS:

- Inke to get back to Sc C&C regarding the revision of the SCC and the consultation process.
- SC C&C members to let Danielle know if they want to speak in one of the panels or if they want to recommend someone.
- Danielle to contact Peter Knight, as potential moderator for the event, suggested by Jan Kees.
- Danielle to organise a Doodle poll to see availability of SC c&C member for C&C meeting in London on 3, 4 or 5 June (now postponed to July)

5. UPDATE ON FRENCH ALLIANCE

Laure D’Astorg, Secretary General of the French Alliance, was invited to join the last part of the call. She gave an update on the activities of the Alliance and its plan going forward. Initially its main focus was on KOLs, but then they realised the importance of engaging with consumers on both environment and health issues. She recapped the Alliance’s activities at the agricultural fair in Paris, which has been attended by 700,000 people. She stressed that today consumers have no

information on RSPO. In May-June the Alliance will start an advertising campaign. Meanwhile it is conducting meetings to recruit new member companies.

Agnes believes there is a disconnect between the Alliance's charter and its activities because the former focus on only on sustainability and the latter focus mainly on nutrition and health. In addition, the charter of the Alliance does not mention legal action either. Hence, she has strong reservations on the possible use of legal actions against companies using no-palm oil labelling, given that RSPO has issued only non-mandatory guidelines for its members and cannot take a firmer position.

Laure explained that consumers will reject CSPO if they do not first trust it from a health perspective, no matter if it is sustainable or not. Hence it is important to clear this point. No-palm oil labelling generates a lot of suspicions on the products, but in reality it is only a marketing tactic. Agnes however does not agree with the focus on palm oil as such, she is concerned by the focus on health issues. She does not see a rationale for RSPO to engage in closer cooperation with the Alliance.

Eddy suggested that RSPO should focus only on the activities dealing with sustainability, and stay out from the nutritional debate. Caroline emphasised the need to align messages between RSPO and the Alliance. Danielle confirmed that she will seek opportunities of cooperation only on sustainability issues, but that for the time being it is not possible to give financial support.

ACTIONS:

- Danielle to follow-up with Caroline and Laure to discuss possible areas of cooperation on messaging

*** Meeting adjourned ***