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## Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate publication

### **RSPO celebrates first 25,000 certified palm oil family farms**

**JAKARTA, 11 November, 2010 – The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) today celebrated the recent certification of more than twenty five thousand palm oil farm smallholders and their contribution to the production of sustainable palm oil.**

Palm oil farmers from five smallholder communities, together with the palm oil mill owners that they supply, were honored by RSPO President Jan Kees Vis as part of the RSPO's annual Roundtable meeting on Sustainable Palm Oil, held this week in Jakarta, Indonesia.

"These smallholders prove that the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil is not and should not be just about large palm oil producers and users," Mr. Vis said. "Over the next few years, hundreds of thousands more smallholders will become certified producers of sustainable palm oil."

The RSPO estimates that there are about three million smallholders globally, more than a million of which live in Indonesia. Millions more, such as their family members, depend on those same oil palm farms. Smallholders typically cultivate just a few hectares of land, with yields far below those of large-scale plantations. Getting training and agricultural resources can help them multiply yields, grow their income and increase palm oil supply without the need to convert forests into plantations.

In recent years, an RSPO Task Force on Smallholders has created special rules that enable smallholders to become certified just like bigger plantations. RSPO has also pledged to use a significant part of the price premiums paid for sustainable palm oil for helping other smallholders reach certification, e.g. by helping them finance certification audits.

"RSPO must and will continue to reach out to smallholders and enable far more of them to participate in the supply of certified sustainable palm oil," Mr. Vis said in Jakarta.

The ceremony honored two Malaysian companies (Felda and Keresia Plantations), two Indonesian companies (PT. Hindoli and PT. Agrowiratama), and two companies in Papua New Guinea (New Britain Palm Oil Ltd and Hargy Oil Palms Ltd).

#### **Sustainable palm oil**

Oil palms have become the world's primary suppliers of vegetable oil, thanks in part to their exceptionally high yields per hectare. Oil palms grow in tropical regions only, at present mostly in Southeast Asia. It is estimated that about half of packed products in today's supermarkets, including margarines, detergents, cosmetics and candles, contain palm ingredients, often in small quantities.

Growing palm cultivation has caused loss of primary tropical forests and other high-conservation-value areas. The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil was formed to generate a supply of palm oil that did

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not violate social and environmental standards. A multi-stakeholder organization, the RSPO brings together close to 400 palm growers, palm oil processors and traders, retailers, investors and leading NGOs such as WWF and Oxfam International. The RSPO sets production standards and oversees certification systems that guard the entire supply chain of sustainable palm products. Before being certified, companies are inspected by third-party auditors. Marketing rules ensure that companies accurately inform consumers on their production or use of sustainable palm oil. Earlier this week, the RSPO announced a new trademark logo that will mark consumer products for which certified sustainable palm oil was used.

Since August 2008, more than 3 million tonnes of certified sustainable palm oil have been produced by certified growers, and the supply is growing rapidly. Uptake by the market has grown as well: more than 60 % of certified sustainable palm oil produced in the first 10 months of 2010 was purchased as such.

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**Notes for editors, not for publication:**

More information on how the RSPO is working to make all palm oil production sustainable can be found at [www.rspo.org](http://www.rspo.org) and [www.rspo.asia](http://www.rspo.asia). The latter site includes a 'Press Room' with recent news, fact sheets, slide presentations, frequently asked questions, and still and video images. A 'Market Center' provides up-to-date numbers and charts on supply and sales of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil.

You can contact RSPO's communications team at [communications@rspo.asia](mailto:communications@rspo.asia), T +32 2 231 50 19.