

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **EUROPE MUST LEAD ON THE UPTAKE OF SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES, SAYS RSPO AT ITS FIRST EUROPEAN SUMMIT**

*RSPO celebrates the launch of the French Alliance and the German Forum for Sustainable Palm Oil, generating new momentum for the transformation of the European market*

**Berlin, 4 September, 2013 – Over 260 delegates at the very first European Summit in Berlin organised by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) positively acknowledged the launch of the German Forum for Sustainable Palm Oil and French Alliance for Sustainable Palm Oil. These nation-wide commitments to sustainable palm oil show the industry’s willingness to take a step in the right direction. Yet, RSPO emphasised that a greater sense of urgency is required to transform the European market and make the palm oil industry fully sustainable.**

Darrel Webber, Secretary General of the RSPO, stated: *“Industries within Europe have boldly come forward with tangible national commitments for sustainable palm oil. While some countries have been highly successful in reporting year on year increased adoption and use of sustainable palm oil – a few other markets have regressed in their confidence and commitment towards certified sustainable palm oil. This lack of support can discourage growers around the world to continue their efforts towards more sustainable practices in oil palm cultivation.”*

*“European consumers demand greater transparency on the ingredients used in their products. At the same time growers hope to see their efforts matched by those of downstream industries. The time has come for European industries to come together and accelerate their commitment towards sustainable palm oil and inspire large consuming nations, such as India and China, to follow their example.”* Webber concluded.

The RSPO European Summit was organised to encourage European industries to increase the demand for Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO) and create momentum towards the transformation of the palm oil market. Europe’s changing regulatory environment (with EU legislation mandating the labelling of all vegetable oils on food products by December 2014) and the increasing consumer awareness of palm oil are putting the industry under pressure.

Participants urged policymakers in consumer markets to support the sourcing of CSPO and incentivize the industry to adopt CSPO. In producing countries, participants called on governments to integrate strict sustainability standards into national legislation and improve the mapping of concession rights to ensure certainty of land ownership and avoid land conflicts.

However, Jan Kees Vis, President of the RSPO Executive Board and Global Director Sustainable Sourcing Development at Unilever added: *“When it comes to accelerating the uptake of CSPO in consumer markets, the role of companies is much more impactful than those of governments. Obtaining RSPO supply chain certification may take some time but it can be done. This requires*



*cooperation at all levels, within a company, to coordinate the work of different teams and units, and across the supply chain to align one company's operations with those of its suppliers. Cooperation is also essential for the development of national forums and alliances for sustainable palm oil, which can send a strong signal on market uptake to growers.*

*The presence of 260 people in Berlin yesterday and the launch of two new national commitments for sustainable palm oil in France and Germany clearly demonstrate that European stakeholders have understood the need to speed up their efforts, and the need to do it together, in closer cooperation. Stimulating and nurturing this cooperation is part of RSPO's mission in Europe."*

The RSPO European Summit welcomed representatives from the German Forum and the French Alliance for Sustainable Palm Oil – which both officially launched on September 2, 2013. Collective industry commitments to source only CSPO by 2015 are the catalysts to achieve the market transformation process in Europe. France and Germany are following the example of the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK where similar commitments already exist. These commitments play a key role in accelerating demand for CSPO and the formula works: in 2012, CSPO uptake reached 41% in the Netherlands and 31% in Belgium.

The global demand for fats and oils is projected to grow significantly in the next years. Palm oil is the most traded vegetable oil globally and plays a key role in ensuring food security in both Europe and in many other regions. As Europe relies heavily on imports to meet its domestic consumption needs for palm oil, it carries an indirect responsibility for the environmental and social issues associated with palm oil production. However, if produced sustainably and responsibly, palm oil can make a crucial contribution to meet Europe's demand for fats and oils while solving the existing environmental and social issues on the ground.

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**Note to Editors:**

For more information please visit the summit's website <http://www.european-summit.rspo.org/>

**15% of world's palm oil production is now RSPO certified**

The current estimated annual production capacity of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil is 8.2 million metric tonnes, approximately 15% of global palm oil production. Spread over 2.2 million hectares of certified area, about 48.2% of the world's current RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil production capacity comes from Indonesia, followed by 43.9% from Malaysia, and the remaining 7.9% from Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Thailand, Cambodia, Brazil, Colombia and Ivory Coast.

For more data visit:

[Market performance; Membership; Trademark; Certification](#)

[Who is RSPO?](#)

[Support Sustainable Palm Oil Instead](#)

[Consumer Fact Sheet](#)

[Trademark Shopping Guide](#)

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## 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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