

**Press Conference: Statement by Darrel Weber, Secretary General of the RSPO
9th February 2012**

The recent years has seen an increase concern, globally, about sustainability and how the way we do business affects our environment and people. The palm oil industry was not spared, with accusations of land-grabbing, destruction of the rainforest and killing of the orangutan.

Against this backdrop, in the year 2004, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, in short the RSPO, was formed. Our mission is to continuously advocate a balance between People, Planet & Profit in the palm oil sector. It is, I believe the first concerted voluntary effort to make a global commodity sustainable. We aim to do this through engagement with key players and open dialogue. The RSPO's membership comprises of 7 key stakeholders which are: Oil Palm Growers such as Keresas; Processors & Traders such as Cargill; Banks & Investors such as HSBC; Consumer Goods Manufacturers such as Unilever; Retailers such as Carrefour; Social & developmental NGOs like Oxfam International and Environmental NGOs such as WWF.

One of the biggest achievement of the RSPO is its coming together to form the Principles and Criteria or in short, the P&C, which defines how to sustainably produce palm oil. The P&C standards is unique because it was created through consensus with the above stakeholder groups that represent some biggest names in the world involved in the palm oil sector directly or indirectly.

Using the P&C that forms the RSPO standards, Keresas plantation was certified; achieving the status of the first Sarawakian company to receive RSPO certification. Keresas is setting a good example for Sarawak which has the second largest area in Malaysia covered with oil palm according to the statistics by the Malaysian Palm Oil Board with an area totally 1 million hectare.

We commend the effort and achievements made by Malaysian companies under the RSPO's international certification standard. Continuous determination and perseverance has brought the nation to such noteworthy achievements. Sarawak, a diversified economy, in possession of many natural resources; a diverse ecosystem with rich ancient tropical rainforests and land abundance has enormous potential to further catapult Malaysia's commitment and contribution in the production of CSPO.

Companies like Keresas Plantations are one such example of how Sarawak should transform its cultivation of oil palm to sustainable standards in order to remain ahead of global trends and competition concurrently with responsible and conscientious practices.