

National Interpretation of the International RSPO Principles and Criteria of the Republic of Ghana

Process report
April, 2016

1.0 Introduction

This document outlines the process that was followed in the development of the revised National Interpretation of the Global RSPO Principles and Criteria of Republic of Ghana, carried out from November, 2013 to January, 2015. The process was facilitated by Proforest with Solidaridad West Africa being the Secretariat

In revising the Ghana National Interpretation to conform to the revised Global RSPO P&C (2013), the following documents were taken into consideration

- RSPO Principles and Criteria for the Production of Sustainable Palm Oil 2013
- Ghana National Interpretation of RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil (2011)
- RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable, Palm Oil Production, Guidance on Scheme Smallholders (2009)
- List of national and international laws, conventions and treaties applicable to the sustainable production and use of palm oil in Ghana

2.0 Process, Participation and Timeline

2.1 Initiation of Process

The process for the revision of the National Interpretation (NI) of the International RSPO Principles and Criteria of the Republic of Ghana was initiated by Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC) and the NITF meetings chaired by Benso Oil Palm Plantation.

2.2 Formation of Multi-stakeholder National Interpretation Task Force (NITF)

Following the RSPO requirement that all national interpretations (NI) should be developed by consensus within a multi-stakeholder group, the Ghana National interpretation process started with formation of NITF. Using the TOR provided by the RSPO Secretariat and the ratio 4:2:2:2 for Growers/smallholders, Social NGOs, Environmental NGOs and Supply Chain/Investors, a 10-member NITF was constituted with Proforest as the technical facilitator. The NITF comprises the following companies/institutions.

Category	Name of company/institution
Growers/Smallholders	Benso Oil Palm Plantation Ltd. (BOPP)
	Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC)
	Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP)
	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.
Supply chain/Investors	Root capital
	PZ Cussons
Environmental NGOs	WWF
	Conservation Alliance
Social NGOs	Solidaridad West Africa
	COLANDEF

Membership of the NITF was drawn from the original members that participated in preparing the first version of the Ghana National Interpretation that was approved in March, 2011. This was to make the review process easier and faster.

2.3 Process Management

Having identified the member companies to form the NITF, official letters were sent to the companies to nominate representatives to participate in the review process.

2.4 Technical Committee Meetings

The meetings were held mostly in Accra, the capital city and were facilitated by Proforest. In addition to the NITF members, relevant stakeholders were also invited when necessary. In one of the meetings, the Environmental Protection Agency was invited to discuss the effluent parameters set by the Agency.

During the kick-off meeting, selection of Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and the secretariat was done to ensure effectiveness of the NITF. At the same meeting, the four new criteria added to the 2013 P&C and changes to some existing criteria and indicators were presented by Proforest. Signing of the Code of Conduct (COC) provided by the RSPO Secretariat was also discussed. At the same meeting, 3 sub-working groups were constituted with each group reviewing a set of principles.

At the second meeting, the work done by the sub-working groups were review by the general meeting and the appropriate indicators, working, criteria were adopted.

During the 3rd meeting, the NITF was joined by other industry players to have discussions with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on effluent parameters set for Oil Palm companies. It was agreed at the meeting that influent parameters be carried out by the companies to form the basis for the review of the parameters.

A consultant was contracted to compile new national laws passed after March, 2011 to enable the NITF update the applicable national laws, regulations, conventions, etc. The review and update of the national laws were done during the 4th NITF meeting. At the same meeting the NITF approved the draft document for public consultation.

The fifth meeting was held after the public consultation to review comments received from the public. Only one comment was received which was addressed during the meeting.

The last meeting was held after comments on the draft NI were received from the RSPO Secretariat. Issues raised were looked at and a final document was produced, which was finally submitted to the RSPO Secretariat in January, 2015 for endorsement.

Time Line of the process

No.	Activity	2013		2014												2015
		Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
1	Formation of National Task Force	■														
2	Signing of COC by task force members		■													
3	1 st NITF meeting		■													
4	2 nd NITF meeting			■												
5	3 rd NITF meeting				■											
6	4 th NITF meeting					■										
7	Public Consultation					■	■	■								
8	5 th NITF meeting – Review of comments from Public Consultation										■					
9	Submission of draft document to RSPO Secretariat											■				
10	6 th NITF meeting – Review of comments from RSPO													■		
11	Submission of Final document for endorsement															■

3.0 Public Consultation Period

3.1 Announcement and opportunities to comment

The public consultation on the RSPO National Interpretation for Ghana was initiated on the 29th of March, 2014 through to the 28th of May, 2014. The document was made available in English, sent to RSPO prior to public notification and published on the RSPO website from 29th of March, 2014 through to the 28th of May, 2014. The document and the comments form were also available in English on the RSPO Ghana website; www.rspoghana.org

At the start of the public consultation period the draft document was sent to relevant stakeholders in Ghana including the Oil Palm Research Institute, the Environmental Protection Agency and other oil palm companies for comments.

3.2 Review of comments and finalization of draft

The comments received through the Ghana website and emails were reviewed during the 5th NITF meeting by the task force. The task force members agreed by consensus on the final draft and asked that the document be submitted to the RSPO Secretariat for endorsement.

4.0 Review of comments from the RSPO Secretariat

The NITF received comments from the RSPO Secretariat in November 2014, two months after submission of the final draft. The NITF held the 6th meeting late November, 2014 to review the comments and issues raised by the RSPO Secretariat.

The Secretariat revised the document by incorporating all comments raised by the RSPO, circulated among NITF members and relevant stakeholders before submission of final document in January, 2015.

Annex 1 : Members of the Ghana National Interpretation Task Force

Representative Organization	Interest Category	Name of Representative
Benso Oil Palm Plantation (Wilmar)	Grower/Smallholder	Samuel Avaala
Twifo Oil Palm Plantation	Grower/Smallholder	Charles Sackey
Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	Grower/Smallholder	Charles Mate-Kole
Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC)	Grower/Smallholder	Isabel Schlegel
PZ Cussons Ghana Ltd.	Supply Chain & Investors	Charles B. Janney
Root Capital	Supply Chain & Investors	Barbara Ghansah
Conservation Alliance	Environmental NGOs	Paa Kofi Osei-Wusu
WWF	Environmental NGOs	Glen Asomaning
Colandef	Social NGOs	Nana Ama Yirrah
Solidaridad West Africa	Social NGOs	Rosemary Addico
The Proforest Initiative	Technical Facilitator	Isaac Abban-Mensah

Annex 2: Minutes of Meetings

Minutes of RSPO National Interpretation Taskforce Kick-off Meeting, Ghana

Date: 10th December, 2013

Time: 9.45am to 11.45am

Venue: GOPDC Guest House, Augustino Neto Road 31, Airport Residential Area, Accra

Attendance

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Samuel Avaala	SA	Benso Oil Palm Plantation	Chair
2	Charles Mate-Kole	CMA	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	
3	Isabel Schlegel	IS	GOPDC Ghana Ltd.	Vice Secretary/Secretariat
4	Barbara Ghansah	BG	Root Capital	
5	Charles Janney	CJ	PZ Cussons	Vice Chair
6	Glen Asomaning	GA	WWF	
7	Yaw Osei Owusu	YOW	Conservation Alliance	
8	Rosemary Addico	RA	Solidaridad West Africa	Secretary/Secretariat
9	Isaac Abban-Mensah	IAM	Proforest	Technical Advisor

Absentees

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	David Nunoo	DA	Twifo Oil Palm Plantation	
2	Nana Ama Yirrah	NAY	COLANDEF	

No.	Discussion	Action By
1	Agenda 1 - Welcome and Self introduction	
1.1	IAM welcomed everyone and asked members present to introduce themselves.	
2	Presentation: RSPO NI Review	
2.1	<p>IAM gave a brief presentation on the history of RSPO and updated members on the revised areas of the RSPO P&C and the need for Ghana's NI to be revised by April, 2014 as required by the RSPO Secretariat. In summary, the following four new criteria are added into P&C 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• C1.3 - ethical conduct• C6.12 - forced and trafficked labour• C6.13 - respecting human rights, and• C7.8 - minimizing GHG emission from new plantings. <p>In addition there have been changes to some of the existing criteria and indicators (See Annex 1).</p>	
3	Selection of Chairperson and Secretariat	

3.1	<p>Members present at the meeting elected the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA (BOPP) as the Chairperson for the RSPO NITF CJ (PZ as the Co-Chairperson RA and IS as Secretariat <p>The meeting agreed that in cases where both the Chairperson and the Co-Chairperson are not available to chair a meeting, members present should nominate a member to the chair the meeting. It was also agreed that half the number of committee members (5) form a quorum.</p>													
4	Defining roles and signing of CoC													
4.1	Members read and discussed the roles of the task force members as stated in the TOR. The meeting agreed that the alternates to the substantive company representatives should sign the CoC as witnesses. It was also agreed that all signed COCs should be sent by mail to RA for onward submission to the RSPO Secretariat.	All NITF members												
5	Structure for the NI Review Taskforce/ Working Groups													
5.1	<p>Based on the revisions made to the RSPO P &C, the meeting agreed to the formation of the following sub-working Groups to look at the changes made as shown in the table below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Group</th> <th>Membership</th> <th>Principles to review</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>PZ Cussons, GOPDC, COLANDEF</td> <td>P1, P2,P3, P4,P8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Conservation Alliance, Norpalm, Root Capital, BOPP</td> <td>P4, P5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Solidaridad, WWF, TOPP</td> <td>P6, P7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>GOPDC, Norpalm and Solidaridad were selected to coordinate the activities of Groups 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Members in the sub-groups were asked to decide among themselves when to meet to review the principles assigned to them</p>	Group	Membership	Principles to review	1	PZ Cussons, GOPDC, COLANDEF	P1, P2,P3, P4,P8	2	Conservation Alliance, Norpalm, Root Capital, BOPP	P4, P5	3	Solidaridad, WWF, TOPP	P6, P7	All members
Group	Membership	Principles to review												
1	PZ Cussons, GOPDC, COLANDEF	P1, P2,P3, P4,P8												
2	Conservation Alliance, Norpalm, Root Capital, BOPP	P4, P5												
3	Solidaridad, WWF, TOPP	P6, P7												
5.2	Timelines													
	<p>Members agreed to the timelines below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Activity</th> <th>Timeline</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Submission of suggestions to the new criteria and changes made to the RSPO P & C by the various sub-groups to the Secretariat</td> <td>8th January, 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd NITF meeting</td> <td>15th January, 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Final NITF meeting</td> <td>12th February, 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Submission of Draft revised NI to RSPO Secretariat</td> <td>25th February, 2014</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Activity	Timeline	Submission of suggestions to the new criteria and changes made to the RSPO P & C by the various sub-groups to the Secretariat	8 th January, 2014	2 nd NITF meeting	15 th January, 2014	Final NITF meeting	12 th February, 2014	Submission of Draft revised NI to RSPO Secretariat	25 th February, 2014	All Members		
Activity	Timeline													
Submission of suggestions to the new criteria and changes made to the RSPO P & C by the various sub-groups to the Secretariat	8 th January, 2014													
2 nd NITF meeting	15 th January, 2014													
Final NITF meeting	12 th February, 2014													
Submission of Draft revised NI to RSPO Secretariat	25 th February, 2014													
5.3	Technical expertise needed													
	<p>The meeting agreed that an expert in Green House Gas Emission calculations would be needed to guide members to look at this new addition to the P&C. IAM promised to send a copy of the RSPO Green House Gas Emission toolkit to members for study. It was also agreed that the Environmental Protection Agency be contacted for discussion on the EPA effluent parameters. IS volunteered to make enquiries at the EPA to identify the right people to have the discussions with. NAY was also to be contacted to look for land experts to help the NITF sort out the issue of land title for smallholder farmers. The meeting also agreed that a consultant, Mr. Yawson be contacted to update</p>	IAM, IS, NAY, SA												

	the existing applicable laws and regulations.	
5.4	Issues with existing NI that need to be addressed	
	IAM was tasked to identify issues that need to be addressed in the existing NI based on their work with the existing NI and RSPO baseline audits carried out for companies in Ghana.	IAM
5.5	Closing The Chairperson thanked members for coming. The meeting ended at 11.45am. The next meeting was scheduled for 15 th January, 2013.	

Annex 1: Changes to existing criteria and indicators

Minutes taken by: Rosemary Addico

Checked by: Samuel Avaala

Minutes of 2nd RSPO National Interpretation Taskforce Meeting, Ghana

Date: 15th January, 2014

Time: 9.05am to 12.45pm

Venue: GOPDC Guest House, Augustino Neto Road 31, Airport Residential Area, Accra

Attendance

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Samuel Avaala	SA	Benso Oil Palm Plantation	Chair
2	Nana Ama Yirrah	NAY	COLANDEF	
3	Isabel Schlegel	IS	GOPDC Ghana Ltd.	Vice Secretary/Secretariat
4	Barbara Ghansah	BG	Root Capital	
6	Charles Sackey	CS	Twifo Oil Palm Plantation	
7	Yaw Osei Owusu	YOW	Conservation Alliance	
8	Rosemary Addico	RA	Solidaridad West Africa	Secretary/Secretariat
9	Isaac Abban-Mensah	IAM	Proforest	Technical Advisor

Absentees

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Charles Mate-Kole	CMA	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	With apologies
2	Glen Asomaning	GA	WWF	
3	Charles Janney	CJ	PZ Cussons	

No.	Discussion	Action By
1	Agenda 1 - Welcome	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed everyone and wished all present a Happy and Prosperous New Year.	
2	Minutes of Previous meeting	
2.1	Members went through the minutes of the previous meeting to confirm that all issues discussed during the first meeting were properly documented. With no issues raised by members present, IS moved for the acceptance of the minutes and was seconded by RA.	
3	Matters arising from minutes : Submission of suggestions to the new criteria and changes made to the RSPO P & C by the various sub-groups to the Secretariat	
3.1	Each Group submitted suggestions on the new criteria and changes made. The suggestions were however, not submitted at the agreed time.	
3.2	Principle 4 not part of Principles to be looked at by Group 1	
3.3	On EPA Effluent Parameters, the Chairman informed the meeting about the need to see the EPA to review the existing parameters based on current practices in the major oil palm producing countries in Indonesia and Malaysia. According to him, the standard for effluent for land application in Indonesia is 5,000ppm and in Malaysia, the effluent standard for irrigation is 100ppm.	
4.0	Comments on Existing NI	
4.1	<p>IAM made a presentation on areas in the existing NI that industry players find difficult to comply and the need to critically look at those indicators. These indicators are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 2: 2.2.1 • Principle 4: 4.4.3, 4.5.3, 4.7.6 • Principle 5: 5.4.2, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, and 5.6.3 • Principle 6: 6.1.1 <p>The above issues have to do with POME treatment, monitoring of effluent parameters, measuring pesticide toxicity units, land title and user rights, recording occupational injuries, estimation of energy use and carrying out of social, environmental impact assessment which includes independent smallholders. Other issues raised include definition of decent living wage, legal minimum age and hazardous work.</p>	
4.2	Presentation on New Criteria and changes made from the three (3) Groups	
4.2.1	Presentation for Group 1 was made by IS. The Group looked at P1, P2, P3 and P8. SA made the Group 2 presentation. Group 2 looked at P4 and P5 and RA presented the Group 3 work. Group 3 looked at P6 and P7. See Annex 1 for presentations. Each Group was asked to use the format of the existing NI to make the revised changes. The revised changes in the agreed format to be sent to RA by 22 nd January, 2014.	Group Coordinators
5.0	External Resource Supported Needed	
5.1	The meeting agreed that the services of a lawyer would be needed to update the legal documents. IAM was tasked to get a lawyer to do perform the said task.	IAM
5.2	The meeting asked NAY to follow-up on the issue of land title for smallholders with the Land Commission	NAY

6.0	Other Matters	
6.1	Information on Ghana's Review Process to RSPO Secretariat RA informed the meeting about the request from the RSPO Secretariat on information about Ghana's NI review process to be placed at the RSPO website. The meeting agreed that the signed TOR, minutes of the kick-start meeting and NITF membership list be sent to the RSPO Secretariat	RA
6.2	Closing CS moved for meeting to be adjourned at 12.45 pm. This was seconded by YOW. The next meeting was scheduled for 12 th February, 2014 at 8.30am at the GOPDC Guest House.	

Annex 1: Presentations made by various Groups

Minutes taken by: Rosemary Addico

Checked by: Samuel Avaala

Minutes of 3rd RSPO National Interpretation Taskforce Meeting, Ghana

Date: 12th February, 2014

Time: 9.00am to 12.40pm

Venue: Solidaridad Conference Room, Hse. No. 40, Sir Arku Korsah Road, Airport West, Accra

Attendance

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Samuel Avaala	SA	Benso Oil Palm Plantation	Chair
2	Nana Ama Yirrah	NAY	COLANDEF	
3	Isabel Schlegel	IS	GOPDC Ghana Ltd.	Vice Secretary/Secretariat
4	Barbara Ghansah	BG	Root Capital	
5	Charles Sackey	CS	Twifo Oil Palm Plantation	
6	Yaw Osei Owusu	YOW	Conservation Alliance	
7	Rosemary Addico	RA	Solidaridad West Africa	Secretary/Secretariat
8	Isaac Abban-Mensah	IAM	Proforest	Technical Advisor
9	Charles Mate-Kole	CMK	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	
10	Emmanuel Nagel	EN	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	Non-NITF member
11	Lambert Faabeleuon	LF	Environmental Protection Agency	Environmental Expert
12	Lawrence Mintah	LM	Juaben Oil Mills Ltd.	Non-NITF member

Absentees

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Glen Asomaning	GA	WWF	
2	Charles Janney	CJ	PZ Cussons	With apologies

No.	Discussion	Action By
1	Agenda 1 - Welcome	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed everyone especially non-NITF members who made it to the meeting to discuss the EPA Effluent parameters. He thanked LF for taking time off to meet industry players to deliberate on issues related to effluent management.	
2.0	Discussions with EPA on Effluent Parameters	
2.1	<p>The Chairman informed the meeting that the objective of calling the meeting with EPA was to look at the current EPA effluent parameters which makes it impossible for any company to comply with the parameters as required by RSPO Principles and Criteria. He further stated that one of the issues related to the Akoben rating is inability of oil palm processing companies (with their current capability status) to meet the EPA effluent parameters. He noted that industry cannot remain non-compliant and therefore the need to meet with the EPA to discuss the issue and for industry to progressively meet the parameters. He stated that there were two issues; either the EPA standard for effluent parameters is too high for industry or industry not doing enough to comply. He therefore suggested the use of best practices in countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia who have multiple standards for effluent discharge including effluent for land application.</p> <p>The Chairman therefore wanted to know from the EPA if it was possible to revise the standard to permit use of effluent for land application that may be easy to comply but not destructive to the environment. He further stated that certification enhances the image of companies and therefore must be supported by all stakeholders.</p>	
2.2	<p>In his response to the issues raised by the Chairman, the EPA director, LF said that it was difficult to ignore the palm oil industry since they had come a long way – from artisanal to industrial.</p> <p>According to him, a lot of discussions had been held with industry and what EPA needed from industry was for industry to provide information on what should be done during the raining season to avoid palm oil effluent entering into water bodies. He further indicated the need to analyze effluent (influent) samples for BODs (minimum and maximum) of the various companies to determine whether it is uniform or different. EPA can then use the information to determine the parameters on case by case basis. It was therefore agreed that the companies present should agree on dates to pick samples for influent analyses for the following parameters; BOD, COD, Nitrate, TDS, Total Phosphorus, TSS, Oil and Grease. A meeting will be held to look at the results at a later date</p>	

	<p>LF informed the meeting about giving moratorium for some periods where some parameters would not be held against the companies; especially for effluent used for land application. He recommended the need to work together to get the parameters right and work to progressively comply with. He also advised industry players to negotiate with EPA for permit schedules/conditions and also to check whether parameters to comply with are possible and if not possible, companies to go back for renegotiation.</p>	
2.3	<p>In reaction to the issues raised by EPA, industry players suggested the need for EPA to witness use of effluent for land application on the fields owned by the mills. This can be done at Norpalm, BOPP and TOPP who are already applying palm oil mill effluent (POME) on their fields. Industry players also suggested that EPA should add samples from water courses to the effluent analysis to confirm that water/rivers/streams have not been contaminated. It was also agreed that a documentary on palm oil production in Ghana to be produced to educate decision makers.</p>	
2.4	<p>The Chairman had to leave the meeting to attend a Board meeting so CMK was appointed as the acting chairman. He thanked non-NITF members, especially EPA for coming. NITF meeting continued afterwards.</p>	
3.0	Minutes of Previous meeting	
3.1	<p>Members went through the minutes of the previous meeting to confirm that all issues discussed during the first meeting were properly documented. With no issues raised by members present, CS moved for the acceptance of the minutes and was seconded by YOW.</p>	
3.2	<p>Matters arising from minutes : C5.2 Land Title for Smallholders NAY informed members that it is cumbersome for smallholders to get title deeds for their acquired lands and where possible, it is very expensive. She therefore recommended the use of a simplified template as recommended by the Conveyance degree for use by the farmers. She also suggested the need for sensitization before the introduction of the use of the template to allay the fears of land owners and users. She also recommended the endorsement of the traditional council/traditional authority/family head to the transaction between the landowner and the farmer.</p>	
4.0	Presentation of Draft NI	
4.1	<p>IAM presented the draft NI with some few changes made to some of the indicators. Changes made include; 2.3.2 – from Major to Minor (3.1.1 – Wording to be checked 4.3.1 - where applicable was added</p> <p>The meeting agreed that the draft NI should be sent to members for their comments to speed up the process. Members were to send their comments to the Secretariat by 21st February, 2014.</p>	RA & Members
4.2	Outcome of Legal Review	
4.2.1	<p>IAM informed the meeting that he had not received any information from the legal expert yet. He informed the meeting that the information required is list of applicable laws after 2010 and list of relevant laws for oil palm</p>	

	production and processing.	
5.0	Closing After fruitful deliberations and absence of any issue for discussion, BG moved for the meeting to be adjourned at 12.40 pm. This was seconded by YOW. The venue and date for the next meeting was to be communicated to members.	RA

Minutes taken by: Rosemary Addico

Checked by: Samuel Avaala and Charles Mate-Kole

Minutes of 4th RSPO National Interpretation Taskforce Meeting, Ghana

Date: 12th March, 2014

Time: 9.45am to 3.30pm

Venue: GOPDC Guest House, Augustino Neto Road 31, Airport Residential Area, Accra

Attendance

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Samuel Avaala	SA	Benso Oil Palm Plantation	Chair
2	Charles Sackey	CS	Twifo Oil Palm Plantation	Member
3	Isabel Schlegel	IS	GOPDC Ghana Ltd.	Vice Secretary/Secretariat
4	Barbara Ghansah	BG	Root Capital	Member
5	Rosemary Addico	RA	Solidaridad West Africa	Secretary/Secretariat
6	Isaac Abban-Mensah	IAM	Proforest	Technical Advisor

Absentees

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Glen Asomaning	GA	WWF	Member
2	Charles Janney	CJ	PZ Cussons	Member
3	Nana Ama Yirrah	NAY	COLANDEF	Member
4	Yaw Osei Owusu	YOW	Conservation Alliance	Member
5	Charles Mate-Kole	CMK	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	Member(with apologies)

No.	Discussion	Action By
1	Agenda 1 - Welcome	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed all members present and called the meeting to order at 9.45am	

2.0	Minutes of Previous meeting	
2.1	Members read through the minutes of the previous meeting and with no issues raised by members present, CS moved for the acceptance of the minutes and was seconded by IS.	
2.2	As a follow-up to the Influent Analyses requested by EPA, Rosemary informed members that the first consignment of influent from TOPP, BOPP, GOPDC, Norpalm and Juaben Oil Mills had been sent to the Water Research Institute for analysis. She further informed members that Lambert of EPA had asked the EPA laboratory to perform subsequent analyses and that the second sample would be taken to the EPA laboratory. She requested members present to support the project by ensuring prompt delivery of samples for analyses.	
2.3	In response to Lambert's request for sample standards for use of POME for land application from other countries, the meeting agreed that members should make efforts to look for standards used in Indonesia and Malaysia to guide the EPA in setting Ghana's standard.	All
2.4	The meeting agreed that SA and IS should see Lambert for a letter to support companies going for RSPO certification while we wait for revised EPA effluent parameters since it could take some time for the standards to be revised.	SA & IS
3.0	Updating of Applicable Laws and Regulations	
3.1	Members went through the Ghana Legal Register: 2010 – 2013 to identify new and/or amended applicable laws and regulations since the approval of Ghana's NI in March, 2011. This was to enable the NITF update the applicable laws and regulations in the revised NI.	
3.2.1	The following Acts, Laws and regulations were added to the existing laws in the approved NI <i>Criterion 1.1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and Organized Crime Act, 2010 (Act 804) • Registration of Business Names (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 837) 	
3.2.2	<i>Criterion 1.2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ghana Constitution 1992 (Because of Human Rights Policy) • Incorporated Private Partnerships (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 836) 	
3.2.3	<i>Criterion 1.3</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and Organized Crime Act, 2010 (Act 804) 	
3.3.3	<i>Criterion 2.1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering Council Act, 2011 (Act 819) • Export Development And Investment Fund (Amendment) Act, 2011 (Act 823) • Ghana Shipping (Amendment) Act, 2011 (Act 826) • Health Institutions and Facilities Act, 2011 (Act 829) • Companies (Amendment) Act, 2012 Act (835) • Incorporated Private Partnerships (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 836) • Registration of Business Names (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 837) • Internal Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 839) • Customs and Excise Duties and Other Taxes (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 840) • Immigration (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 848) • Criminal Offences (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 849) • Internal Revenue (Tax Amnesty) Act, 2012 (Act 853) • Customs and Excise (Duties and Other Taxes) Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 855) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Professions Regulatory Act, 2013 (Act 857) • Internal Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2013 (859) • Value Added Tax (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Act 860) • Special Import Levy Tax Act, 2013 (Act 861) • Customs and Excise (Duties and Other Taxes (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Act 863) • Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act, 2013, Act 865I 	
3.3.4	<p><i>Criterion 3.1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customs and Excise (Duties and Other Taxes) Amendment Act, (Act 809) • Value Added Tax (Amendment) Act 2010, (Act 810) • Internal Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2010 (Act 814) • Export Development And Investment Fund (Amendment) Act, 2011 (Act 823) • Companies (Amendment) Act, 2012 Act (835) • Internal Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 839) • Customs and Excise Duties and Other Taxes (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 840) • Internal Revenue (Tax Amnesty) Act, 2012 (Act 853) • Customs and Excise (Duties and Other Taxes) Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 855) • Internal Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2013 (859) • Value Added Tax (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Act 860) • Special Import Levy Tax Act, 2013 (Act 861) • Customs and Excise (Duties and Other Taxes (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Act 863) • Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act, 2013, Act 865 	
3.3.5	<p><i>Criterion 4.2, 4.3, 5.1 and 5.2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plants and Fertilizer Act, 2010 (Act 803) 	
3.3.6	<p><i>Criterion 4.5</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plants and Fertilizer Act, 2010 (Act 803) • Bio Safety Act, 2011 (Act 831) 	
3.3.7	<p><i>Criterion 4.7</i></p> <p>National Health Insurance Act, 2012 (Act 852) replaces National Health Insurance Act (2003)</p>	
3.3.8	<p><i>Criterion 4.8</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Act, 2012 (Act 851) • National Health Insurance Act, 2012 (Act 852) 	
3.3.9	<p><i>Criterion 5.4</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable Energy Act, 2011 (Act 832) 	
3.3.10	<p><i>Criterion 6.2 and 6.4</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2010 (Act 798) • Local Government Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 834) 	
3.3.11	<p><i>Criterion 6.3</i></p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2010 (Act 798) 	
3.3.12	<i>Criterion 6.5</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Institutions and Facilities Act, 2011 (Act 829) Public Health Act, 2012 (Act 851) National Health Insurance Act, 2012 (Act 852) Health Professions Regulatory Act, 2013 (Act 857) 	
3.3.13	<i>Criterion 6.6</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2010 (Act 798) 	
3.3.14	<i>Criterion 6.12</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Act, Act 651 (2003) Ghana Constitution 1992 Labour Regulations, LI 1833 (2007) Immigration (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 848) 	
3.3.15	<i>Criterion 6.13</i> Ghana Constitution 1992	
3.3.16	<i>Criterion 8.1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customs and Excise (Duties and Other Taxes) Amendment Act, (Act 809) Value Added Tax (Amendment) Act 2010, (Act 810) Internal Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2010 (Act 814) Electronic Transaction (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 838) 	
4.0	Circulation of draft revised NI	
	The meeting agreed that the draft revised NI be circulated among members for comments before sending to the RSPO Secretariat for public consultation.	RA
5.0	Closing In the absence of any issue for discussion, CS moved for the meeting to be adjourned at 3.30pm. This was seconded by BG.	

Minutes taken by: Rosemary Addico

Checked by: Samuel Avaala

Minutes of 5th RSPO National Interpretation Taskforce Meeting, Ghana

Date: 8th August, 2014

Time: 9.00am – 11am

Venue: Solidaridad West Africa, Conference Room, House No. 18 Okine Street, East Legon, Accra

Attendance

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Samuel Avaala	SA	Benso Oil Palm Plantation	Chair
2	Charles Sackey	CS	Twifo Oil Palm Plantation	Member

3	Isabel Schlegel	IS	GOPDC Ghana Ltd.	Vice Secretary/Secretariat
4	Rosemary Addico	RA	Solidaridad West Africa	Secretary/Secretariat
5	Isaac Abban-Mensah	IAM	Proforest	Technical Advisor

Absentees

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Glen Asomaning	GA	WWF	Member
2	Charles Janney	CJ	PZ Cussons	Member
3	Nana Ama Yirrah	NAY	COLANDEF	Member (with apologies)
4	Yaw Osei Owusu	YOW	Conservation Alliance	Member (with apologies)
5	Charles Mate-Kole	CMK	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	Member
6	Barbara Ghansah	BG	Root Capital	Member

No.	Discussion	Action By
1	Agenda 1 - Welcome	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed all members present and called the meeting to order at 9.00am	
2.0	Minutes of Previous meeting	
2.1	Members read through the minutes of the previous meeting and with no issues raised by members present, IS moved for the acceptance of the minutes and was seconded by CS	
	Update on Public Consultation	
2.2	Rosemary informed the meeting that she did not receive any comment on the NI during the public consultation period. There was however, a comment from Water Resources Commission posted at our website www.rspoghana.org To better understand the comments, the meeting called the lady who issued the comments for further explanation, which she provided. The issues raised were addressed in the guidance under Criterion 4.4	
3.0	Revisions made to the revised NI	
	Revisions were made especially to the guidance of the following Criteria. Criterion 1.2 The information below was added to the Guidance on confidential information. This indicator does not apply to confidential information. Where information disclosure could result in potential negative environmental and social outcomes, such information should be treated as confidential. Examples of information where disclosure could result in potential negative environmental or social outcomes include information on sites of rare species where disclosure could increase the risk of hunting or capture for trade, or sacred sites which a community wishes to maintain as private. Examples of commercially confidential information include financial data such as costs and income, and details relating to customers and/or suppliers. Data that affects personal privacy should also be confidential.	

	<p>Ongoing disputes (within or outside of a legal mechanism) can be considered as confidential information where disclosure could result in potential negative outcomes for all parties involved. However, affected stakeholders and those seeking resolution to conflict should have access to relevant information.</p> <p>Criterion 2.2 Under the guidance for Criterion 2.2, the use of dogs during conflicts was deleted</p> <p>Criterion 4.4 From the comments raised by the Water Resources Commission, the guidance document was revised to read “Apply to Water Resources Commission (WRC) to ensure that the implemented Water Management Plan is in line with WRC and EPA standards</p> <p>Criterion 6.5 “Where access to food may be a problem for workers, Growers and Millers should ensure that access to food is facilitated” was included in the guidance</p>	
4.0	Submission of Draft revised NI to RSPO Secretariat for Endorsement	
4.1	It was agreed that the revised NI be sent for endorsement as soon as possible.	
5.0	<p>Closing</p> <p>In the absence of any issue for discussion, CS moved for the meeting to be adjourned at 11.00am. This was seconded by IS.</p>	

Minutes taken by: Rosemary Addico

Checked by: Samuel Avaala

Minutes of 6th RSPO National Interpretation Taskforce Meeting, Ghana

Date: 24th November, 2014

Time: 9.45am to 1.15pm

Venue: Solidaridad West Africa, Conference Room, House No. 18 Okine Street, East Legon, Accra

Attendance

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Samuel Avaala	SA	Benso Oil Palm Plantation	Chair
2	Charles Sackey	CS	Twifo Oil Palm Plantation	Member
3	Isabel Schlegel	IS	GOPDC Ghana Ltd.	Vice Secretary/Secretariat
4	Barbara Ghansah	BG	Root Capital	Member
5	Rosemary Addico	RA	Solidaridad West Africa	Secretary/Secretariat
6	Isaac Abban-Mensah	IAM	Proforest	Technical Advisor

Absentees

No.	Name	Initials	Organization	Notes
1	Charles Mate-Kole	CMK	Norpalm Ghana Ltd.	Member(with apologies)
2	Charles Janney	CJ	PZ Cussons	Member(with apologies)
3	Glen Asomaning	GA	WWF	Member
4	Nana Ama Yirrah	NAY	COLANDEF	Member
5	Yaw Osei Owusu	YOW	Conservation Alliance	Member

No.	Discussion	Action By
1	Agenda 1 - Welcome	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed all members present and called the meeting to order at 9.45am	
2.0	Minutes of Previous meeting	
2.1	<p>Members read through the minutes of the previous meeting and the following corrections were made;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omission of decision to send Effluent Parameters/Standards of other countries to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for study • 1st paragraph of 2.2 to read “Rosemary informed the meeting that she did not receive any comment on Ghana’s NI during the public consultation through her mail”. • “Issued” in line under 2.2 to read “issues” <p>CS moved for the acceptance of the minutes after the above corrections and was seconded by IS.</p>	
3.0	Review of Comments from RSPO	
3.1	Members present went through the comments received from the RSPO Secretariat and agreed on the following;	All
3.2	Content: The March date stated on the submitted NI was an oversight and should be corrected to reflect the month of submission of the NI. The meeting also agreed that the kick-off meeting should be back-dated to date that the stakeholder groups were selected at the IFC-Proforest Smallholder Models validation workshop in November, 2013. IAM was to provide the exact date.	IAM
3.3	<p>Participation: the meeting agreed that it should be on record that GOPDC initiated the process and BOPP chaired the NITF committee. It was agreed that all minutes should be sent to the RSPO Secretariat. On the issue of whether invitations to participate were circulated widely and publicized through the RSPO website, the meeting agreed that the selection process should be explained; i.e. the NIWG at the Kick-off meeting in November, 2013 selected the task force to review the NI.</p> <p>On the issue of non-involvement of relevant government representatives, members present suggested that RSPO be notified that all relevant government agencies were involved in the initial NI process and that for the review, they were involved as and when necessary (this is because it was not going to be possible to have representatives from these government institutions attending all the</p>	

	meetings all the time). Members agreed that our interactions and activities with EPA as reported in our minutes should be sent to the RSPO. The meeting also proposed a validation workshop involving all stakeholders be held to review the NI before submission of final document to RSPO. There was also a suggestion to organize a side meeting with relevant government agencies during a scheduled Ghana Oil Palm Development Association (GOPDA) meeting in Cape Coast on the 26 th of November, 2014.	
4.0	Content	
4.1	<p><i>Criterion 1.2</i></p> <p>On the issue of missing text in the guidance under criterion 1.2, the meeting agreed to adopt the text in the RSPO guidance document which reads “Examples of commercially confidential information include financial data such as costs and income, and details relating to customers and/or suppliers. Data that affects personal privacy should also be confidential.</p> <p>“Examples of information where disclosure could result in potential negative environmental or social outcomes include information on sites of rare species where disclosure could increase the risk of hunting or capture for trade, or sacred sites which a community wishes to maintain as private”.</p>	
4.2	<p><i>Criterion 2.1</i></p> <p>Under this criterion, the issue raised has to do with the ratification status of Ghana on the international laws, standards and Conventions listed. The Secretariat was therefore tasked to check on the international laws and conventions that Ghana has ratified.</p>	Secretariat
4.3	<p><i>Criterion 2.2</i></p> <p>It was recommended that appropriate National Laws and Regulations applicable to Criterion 2.2 to be included in the Annex.</p>	
4.3	<p><i>Criterion 2.3</i></p> <p>The meeting agreed that further clarification is needed from the RSPO Secretariat on the comment made under Criterion 2.3.</p>	
4.4	<p><i>Criterion 4.1</i></p> <p>The comment raised under 4.1 has to do with non-reference to national Code of Good Agricultural Practice for Oil Palm. IS was therefore tasked to find out from MOFA for such a code and if they are indeed available.</p>	IS
4.5	<p><i>Criterion 4.3</i></p> <p>To answer to issues raised under Criterion 4.3, members agreed that an explanation be given why Criteria 4.3.4 and 4.3.5 were left in Ghana’s NI since we do not have peat soils in Ghana, thus our Criterion 4.3.4 is Criterion 4.3.6 in the RSPO P&C</p> <p>On the inadequacy of national laws and regulations provided under Criterion 4.3, members agreed to contact MOFA, Soil Research Institute, CSIR, etc. for additional applicable laws and regulations if available. An sms feedback from Dr. Tetteh of Soil Research Institute showed that there was none.</p>	All
4.6	<p><i>Criterion 4.4</i></p> <p>National Buffer Policy and WRC Act to be included under Criterion 4.4 in the Annex 3. IS was also tasked to follow-up on WRC guidelines with WRI.</p>	IS

4.7	<p><i>Criterion 4.5</i></p> <p>The meeting agreed that the response to the issue of inadequate provision on specific guidelines on best practices at national level on IPM practices which are appropriate to smallholders, should be that Ghana does not have a National Policy on BMP and that BMP practices are performed based on site specific</p>	
4.8	<p><i>Criterion 4.6</i></p> <p>Members suggested that the latest EPA approved chemical list be included in the annex. IS was tasked to provide the latest approved list. The meeting also agreed that the list of banned chemicals be included in the annex. It was also agreed the Guidance be reviewed by deleting “allowed by national guidelines”.</p>	IS
4.9	<p><i>Criterion 4.7</i></p> <p>In response to the issue of defining the metrics for LTA and to provide specific legal requirement, SA was tasked to follow-up with the Factories and Inspectorate Department to check for the existence of a law/regulation that defines the metrics for LTA.</p> <p>On the definition of what is hazardous, members agreed that the definition for hazardous as stated in the Children’s Act, Act 560, Section 91 be used.</p>	SA
4.10	<p><i>Criterion 4.8</i></p> <p>The Labour Act (section 118, sub-section 2c) and the Factories, Offices and Shops Act, Act 328 (1970) Section 36) were identified to provide identification of “occupational training qualifications”</p>	
5.0	<p><i>Criterion 5.1</i></p> <p>The comment on Criterion 5.1 was a clarification as to whether indicator 5.1.1 is in conflict with the Specific Guidance which states an EPA permit is required for land clearing for more than 40 ha.</p> <p>Upon referring to the said indicator, members agreed that indeed there is a conflict with the Generic PC. It was therefore suggested that an explanation be given that the EPA regulations states that EIA is required for 40 ha and above and that it is not economical to conduct an EIA for land less than 40 ha.</p>	
5.1	<p><i>Criterion 5.2</i></p> <p><i>The issue raised under this criterion is the verification of inclusion of national or international list of threatened species, etc. in the laws on wildlife, conservation, wetlands, water resources, etc. referred to under Criterion 5.2. To this end, IAM was tasked to verify whether the stated laws contained the national or international list of threatened species.</i></p>	IAM
5.2	<p><i>Criterion 5.3</i></p> <p><i>The meeting asked IS to check with EPA on guidelines whether the related laws on environmental regulations listed in annex 3 under Criterion 5.3 contains list of waste types, types of disposal, best practice guidelines on recycling or re-use, managing effluent ponds, etc.</i></p>	
5.3	<p><i>Criterion 5.5</i></p> <p><i>The comment has to do with “Approval” of use of fire for land preparation in the Generic P & C not equivalent to “justification” for use as stated in Ghana’s NI. IS and IAM were tasked to check with EPA and the Ghana National Fire Service on the use of fire for land preparation.</i></p>	

5.4	<p><i>Criterion 5.6</i> <i>Members agreed to adopt the preamble in the Generic P&C</i></p>	
6.0	<p><i>Criterion 6.1</i> <i>There was a request to list laws that address social impact since all listed laws are related to environmental protection and assessment and it is not evident that the laws fulfill the requirements of social impact.</i></p> <p><i>Members agreed that there should be an explanation that social impacts are embedded in the Environmental Impact Assessment. It was also agreed that relevant national laws related to EIA be listed under Criterion 6.1 in the annex.</i></p>	
6.1	<p>Criterion 6.5 Issues raised are the definition of Decent Living Wage and the need to be specific on which of the laws stated in the annex addresses Criterion 6.5. Members agreed to include the Labour Act Section 113/sub-section 1A and 2 on the laws listed under Criterion 6.5 in the annex.</p>	
6.2	<p>Criterion 6.6 There was a recommendation that Ghana’s NI should provide definition of migrant and transmigrant workers. CS was tasked to check with Ghana Immigration Service for such definitions. Members agreed that explanatory notes be provided if no legal definition is available.</p>	CS
6.3	<p>Criterion 6.7 There was a comment on addition to the wording of this criterion in Ghana’s NI which is not in the Generic P&C. Members agreed to ask for further clarification since this is how Ghana wishes this criterion to read</p>	
6.4	<p>Criteria 6.9 Members agreed to adopt the statement in the Generic P&C</p>	
6.5	<p>Criterion 6.11 Members indicated that there is no law in Ghana binding oil palm companies to contribute to the development of local communities in their operational areas.</p>	
7.0	<p>Criterion 7.1 It was agreed that an explanatory note be sent to RSPO Secretariat that Ghana does not have accredited independent experts to carry out SEIA but EPA gives comments and approves the SEIA.</p>	
7.1	<p>Criterion 7.2 Members accepted the suggestion to make Criterion 7.2 a Minor and also to inform RSPO that Ghana does not have a national code for good practice on oil palm.</p>	
7.2	<p>Criterion 7.3 Members accepted the recommended “Minor” for this criterion and also tasked IAM to provide HCV definitions.</p>	IAM
7.3	<p>Criterion 7.4 The recommendation for indicator 7.4.1 to be a “Minor” and Indicator 7.4.2 to be a “Major” was accepted by members. It was agreed that the statement “No planting on slopes above 30° should be moved to the Guidance under Criterion 7.4 and to adopt the wording in the Generic P&C for indicator 7.4.1</p>	
7.4	<p>Criterion 7.6 Members agreed to use the wording in the Generic P&C</p>	

7.5	<p>Criterion 7.7</p> <p>The comment under this criterion has to do with “... there shall be justification” for use of fire for burning in Ghana’s NI whereas the in Generic P&C, it mentioned that “There shall be evidence of prior approval of the controlled burning...” and also no mention of specific situations where such use of fire may be acceptable. It was therefore agreed that checks would be made at the Ghana National Fire Service and the EPA.</p>	IAM, IS
7.6	<p>Criterion 7.8 (Preamble)</p> <p>Members agreed to use the preamble in the Generic P&C</p>	
7.7	<p>Criterion 7.8</p> <p>On the comment on non-conclusive guidance in defining the threshold for High Carbon Stock or emission reduction requirements in Ghana’s NI, members agreed that the NITF is not in a position to this.</p>	
8.0	<p>Criterion 8.1</p> <p>The issue raised has to do with no guidance on IPM. Members agreed Ghana does not have a National Policy on BMP and that BMP practices are performed based on site specific.</p>	
9.0	<p>A.O.B</p> <p>Members tasked to make follow-ups were asked to provide feedback by Friday, 28th November, 2014.</p> <p>Members also agreed to send draft NI to relevant government agencies (Soil Research Institute, EPA, MOFA, OPRI, and WRI) for comments</p>	All
10.0	<p>Closing</p> <p>In the absence of any issue for further discussion, SA moved for the meeting to be adjourned at 1.15pm. This was seconded by IS.</p>	

Minutes taken by: Rosemary Addico

Checked by: Samuel Avaala