

RSPO

Roundtable on
Sustainable Palm Oil

RSPO ROAD TO COP26 TASKFORCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ENDORSED BY MDSC – 19 JANUARY, 2021

The Road to COP26 Taskforce Terms of Reference

1. BACKGROUND

In 2018, the RSPO Board of Governors (BoG) endorsed the [RSPO Theory of Change](#) (ToC) with the overall vision of transforming markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm.

One of the seven key Strategies identified in the TOC was the **Engagement of the Supporting Sector**

- creating an enabling environment through being a catalyst, advocate, and partner for policies and incentives, investment, regulation, and enforcement.

Despite vocal support from Members citing the importance of this Strategy, progress on the development and delivery of the five approaches outlined in the Theory of Change has been negligible:

- X Advocacy and government engagement and dialogue
- ✓ Communication of sustainable palm oil production's contribution to the SDGs
- X Engagement with other systems (national schemes/ standards/initiatives)
- X Leveraging banks, investors, banking associations, and/or banking regulators
- X Engagement with donors

In 2020, the RSPO BoG instructed the Secretariat to design a new operational strategy to accelerate delivery of all seven strategies of the Theory of Change and to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat. As part of this new operational plan, **Engagement of the Supporting Sector** has been reinstated as an urgent and overlooked priority.

In February, the Secretariat will invite the BoG to endorse a revised Business Plan for 2021/22, which will include a suite of new investment proposals behind some of these under-resourced activities.

Ahead of this meeting, an immediate opportunity exists for the RSPO to launch a one-off awareness-building campaign and to position itself as a global solution-provider to governments and policymakers ahead of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) while leveraging the fact that WEF's 'Davos' event will be held in Singapore this year.

A 12-month campaign is being developed by the Secretariat and, in keeping with RSPO's distributed management system, the formation of a Taskforce will allow the RSPO to tap into the considerable knowledge and expertise of its Members.

In accordance with the RSPO Governance Manual (2018), RSPO's Taskforces operate on similar principles to Working Groups but bring together a specific set of skills to accomplish a short-term task within a defined timeframe. Individuals are selected for their expertise, their history in the organisation, and their interest in the project. Task forces are not necessarily representative of all stakeholder constituencies and may be competency-based.

2. TASKFORCE OBJECTIVES

The objective of the **Road to COP26 Taskforce** is to provide strategic guidance and advice to the RSPO Secretariat in the development and execution of a twelve-month outreach campaign, and to provide access to high level spokespeople and C-Suite leaders in the context of COP26, WEF/Davos and other key events between January and December 2021.

Members of the Taskforce will collectively and individually be invited to assist with the development of a high-level communications strategy and will contribute to the strategic development and deployment of creative content and educational collateral that (budget-permitting) will be commissioned by the Secretariat to achieve the objectives of the campaign.

Key deliverables will be agreed by the Taskforce and will include but not limited to:

- The development of white papers, education materials and policy documents to support an informed debate among key opinion leaders, trade negotiators, and policymakers about the importance of certified sustainable palm oil in the context of regulatory frameworks, trade deals, and multilateral agreements.
- Members' handbooks and communication toolkits for WEF and COP26, including Key messaging on how RSPO can assist Governments to meet their climate change commitments to the COP21 Paris Agreement, as well as their 2030 SDG targets for environmental, social, and economic development.
- FAQs and educational material to build awareness and support for RSPO's Independent Smallholder Strategy and jurisdictional approaches framework.
- A call to action for public-private partnerships and multi-stakeholder strategic alliances to help address gaps in the assurance system in emerging economies and to accelerate adoption and enforcement of certification, as well as engagement in areas of high-risk of deforestation (e.g. HCV, HCS, peatlands, national parks, frontier development areas, high forest cover landscapes) while protecting and supporting the livelihoods of those who rely most on these landscapes.
- A proposal to ASEAN member states and UN partners to establish an ASEAN Centre of Excellence and a training academy to enhance capacity building, train-the-trainer courses, and regional skill development in auditing, traceability, and accreditation for sustainable supply chains.

3. STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION OF THE TASKFORCE

The Road to COP26 Taskforce is a time bound subgroup of the Market Development Standing Committee (MDSC).

A member of the MDSC will be appointed by the MDSC Co-Chairs to Chair the Taskforce. This must be a senior leader from a Member organisation who has extensive experience in global advocacy and climate change, and who can contribute a significant amount of her/his time to this role for twelve months. The MDSC shall instruct the Taskforce on its reporting requirements.

The Taskforce shall comprise RSPO members' representatives and non-member experts with specialist knowledge and expertise in government relations, trade policy & advocacy, campaign management, and C-Suite communications.

Participation is individual rather than institutional and shall be based on an individual's availability and access to key decision-makers, and their ability to meet fast-moving deadlines. To ensure effective discussions and decision-making, the number of Member representatives will be limited to nine.

The Taskforce Chair shall, in consultation with the RSPO CEO, review nominations to verify that they meet the requirements of participation. In the event there are more nominations than vacancies, the Taskforce

Chair shall, in consultation with the CEO, agree a transparent, fair, and impartial process for deciding who is appointed to the Taskforce.

Appointments to the Taskforce are for twelve months.

The Taskforce may invite non-member experts to participate in discussions requiring specific expertise in COP26, World Economic Forum, Government Relations, 'Green' Trade Policy, and Regulatory Affairs. Other invited experts may be appointed at the discretion of the Taskforce.

4. MEETINGS

The Taskforce will endeavour to meet monthly, via teleconference with frequent exchange of electronic communications. The Chair of the Taskforce and the RSPO CEO will have frequent communication updates for arrangement of such meetings.

Minutes of meetings will be shared no later than one month after every meeting. Members of the Taskforce shall respect "Chatham House Rules" in their reporting of Taskforce discussions.

This means that while remarks made during meetings may be repeated, they should not be attributed to an individual contributor, except where an attributed comment has been included in the approved minutes of that meeting.

5. ROLE OF RSPO SECRETARIAT

The RSPO Secretariat shall provide the administrative and logistical support that the Taskforce requires to meet and conduct its business. One of the first tasks of the Taskforce will be to oversee the development and promotion of a Campaign Fund, which shall be open to all Members to contribute funds in the form of donations and sponsorship to secure the appointment of a full time Campaigns Manager and to commission compelling third-party creative collateral, including videos and outreach materials.

All funds shall be administered and managed by the RSPO Secretariat in accordance with the RSPO Statutes and bylaws.

The Campaign Manager will be the primary source of assistance and support to the Taskforce, with additional assistance from the CEO Office and the Stakeholder Engagement Division.

The RSPO Secretariat, upon consulting the Chair, will make all necessary arrangements to call for all meetings and will coordinate and facilitate the operations of the Taskforce as well as take the lead in implementing the desired activities and deliverables of the Taskforce, which may include identifying and appointing appropriate, project management, research, and consultants to undertake mandated tasks.

6. MANAGEMENT

Each member must declare any conflict of interest on any matters on the agenda and/or matters arising at the beginning or during Taskforce meetings. Should a conflict of interest exist, the member concerned must recuse themselves from the decision-making process or sensitive discussions.

Members and invited experts who have been privy to the discussions shall not use their position on the Taskforce and/or information obtained to obtain monetary gain or bid for any projects commissioned by the Taskforce directly or indirectly through organisation with whom they are associated.

For example, members and invited experts who observe discussions about developing project ToRs will not be allowed to tender, and/or participate in the tender evaluation/selection processes.

All outcomes and decisions are made on a consensus basis. If consensus is not possible for any specific issue, at least 75% of the Taskforce members are required to vote in favour for the adoption of a decision.

Consensus is defined by ISO as "general agreement, characterised by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments".



7. ACTIVE PERIOD

It is proposed that the Taskforce undertakes its work for a period of one year, with the first physical meeting scheduled in January 2021. At the end of the active period, the RSPO secretariat will resume full responsibility for reviewing, reporting, and verifying the implementation of the activities identified by the Taskforce, and by making recommendations to the MDSC or Board of Governors.