

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **INDIA SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL**

#### ***Industry leaders shift towards sustainable solutions of palm oil India's palm oil footprint stands at approximately 2 million hectares!***

**India, 26 March, 2012** – The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), a multi-stakeholder organization that aims to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil, reaffirmed that keeping in line with the overall sustainable development goals for 2015, Indian majors and RSPO members have demonstrated affirmative inclination and measures forward.

HUL (Hindustan Unilever) is the one of the main player in the Indian market so far to procure certificates from GreenPalm's Book & Claim system, aligned with its overall vision of Unilever, a long term committed member of the RSPO.

**Commenting on this, Nitin Paranjpe, CEO and Managing Director, HUL, said,** "There is a clear linkage between deforestation and climate change, therefore companies can play an important role by adopting sustainable practices. We are committed to work with like-minded companies and NGO's to influence the sourcing of CSPO into India.

*The NGO's play an important role by engaging with the companies that source Palm Oil and thereby securing commitment. We need to raise the level of consciousness regarding the direct link of unsustainable palm oil practices and deforestation. I am happy that RSPO is creating awareness about certified and sustainable palm oil through media. There is also an urgent need to create more forums to bring Indian refiners and traders together to discuss how we can actively promote the import of sustainably produced palm oil into India."*

**Further to discussions with stakeholders in India, Cherie Tan, Procurement Operations Director, Sustainable Sourcing, Renewables and small holder development, Unilever, said,** "By 2015, Unilever will buy 100% certified sustainable palm oil. At present, Unilever started buying RSPO segregated Palm oil in Europe. 63% of the palm oil we use in Unilever is covered by Green Palm Certificates. At present we have enough GreenPalm Certificates to cover all our businesses in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, North America, Latin America, Indonesia, Malaysia, India and China. In 2012, we will source palm oil only from RSPO members.

Further, RSPO revealed that the Indian players are also planning to review their procurement policies in line with the global trends and forecast for palm oil imports. Key palm oil buyers in the market, Godrej Industries Limited, VVF and Kamani, all members of the RSPO, have therefore shared their intent to support certified sustainable palm oil in the near future.

**Darrel Webber, Secretary General RSPO** adds: *“India is an influential and significant new economy for sustainable palm across the world. When India does adopt strategic policies towards Certified Sustainable Palm Oil, it will set a benchmark around the world from a global reputational perspective as it clearly demonstrates the nation’s commitment and contribution towards international sustainable endeavors. The RSPO is committed to continuing the momentum of engagement and collaboration with the government of India and directly with the industry. Our outreach and advocacy efforts India are one of our strategic pillars for 2012 to accelerate the uptake of CSPO. Whilst Book & Claim is the predominant method of supporting production of CSPO, there has also been a steady growth in the physical trade of CSPO using the Segregated and Mass Balance supply chain mechanisms, which has grown from zero in 2008 to 33% over the total CSPO traded.”*

**Commenting on this initiative Mr. Nadir Godrej- Managing Director, Godrej Industries** said, *“We all are global citizens and are together responsible to save the environment. At Godrej Industries we plan to buy green palm certificates and Godrej Agrovet is also studying the procedures for certifying domestic production of Palm Oil.”*

WWF-India has been playing a large part in pushing policy for sustainable palm oil at one level and promoting the RSPO principles amongst key industry players here in India, at the other. WWF-India, reiterates that as deliberation over palm oil and its role in deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions increases, so do calls for the oil to be made more sustainably. India is the largest consumer and importer of palm oil in the world today with more than 90% of palm oil is being used as cooking oil in the country, and the rest is used in the processed food and items like soaps, chocolate, ice-cream, cosmetics and cleaning agent, etc. Being the largest source of edible oil globally, palm oil today features high on environment related agendas across the globe. With the changing consumption patterns, large import sizes and the environmental repercussions (deforestations, clearing through fires, land use, etc), the need for sustainability in Indian industry is key.

**Mr. Ravi Singh, Secretary General and CEO of WWF-India** said, *“We are pleased that Godrej Industries has announced that they are will be buying GreenPalm certificates in the near future. We believe that this is a positive first step that will encourage other key players in the industry to move towards sustainable palm oil procurement”.*

Adding to the momentum, international RSPO members with Indian footprints like Cargill & Wal-Mart have also shown their commitments with corporate sustainability policies. Palm oil products supplied to Cargill customers in Europe, United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand will be RSPO certified by 2015. This commitment will be extended to India & China by 2020.

In light of above, the certification of the commodity was first launched by the RSPO in 2008. The Growth Interpretation Narrative (2011 GIN) reported the upward trend in the supply and sale of sustainable palm oil [http://www.rspo.org/files/pdf/2011%20RSPO%20CSPO%20GIN\\_web.pdf](http://www.rspo.org/files/pdf/2011%20RSPO%20CSPO%20GIN_web.pdf).

### **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.*

### **About WWF-India**

*WWF-India is one of the largest conservation organisations engaged in wildlife and nature conservation in the country. Established as a Charitable Trust on November 27, 1969, it has an experience of over four decades in the field. Its mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment, which addresses through its work in biodiversity conservation and reduction on humanity's ecological footprint.*

*A challenging, constructive, science-based organisation WWF addresses issues like the survival of species and habitats, climate change and energy, sustainable forest management, water resources/ river basin management, sustainable agriculture as well as marine and freshwater conservation. The programmes work across sector and regions in various parts of the country.*

*In addition to conservation of biodiversity through field work WWF-India also aims to transform the policies and practices of key industrial sectors to reduce their ecological footprint and develop innovative sustainable solutions.*

*WWF-India has identified Palm Oil as a priority commodity and is looking to influence the market towards sustainable consumption, in collaboration with key players.*

*For further information, kindly contact:*

#### **Contact for RSPO Secretariat:**

*Anne Gabriel, Communications Director*

*T:+603-22012053*

*[AnneGabriel@rspo.org](mailto:AnneGabriel@rspo.org)*

#### **Contact for IPAN Hill & Knowlton**

*Arneeta Vasudeva*

*T- + 91-124-4967316*

*[avasudeva@ipanhillandknowlton.com](mailto:avasudeva@ipanhillandknowlton.com)*

*Laila Wilfred, Communications Coordinator*

*T:+603-22012053*

*[laila.wilfred@rspo.org](mailto:laila.wilfred@rspo.org)*

*Amandeep Arora*

*T + 91-9650177559*

*[amandeep.arora@ipanhillandknowlton.com](mailto:amandeep.arora@ipanhillandknowlton.com)*

#### **Contact for WWF-India:**

*Neha Simlai, Manager – Communications, Sustainable Business*

*T:+91-11- 43083429*

*[nsimlai@wwfindia.net](mailto:nsimlai@wwfindia.net)*

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