

## **Resolution 6h**

Proposed Resolution to be adopted at the 12th General Assembly of the  
Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

19<sup>th</sup> of November 2015

**TITLE:** ENSURING QUALITY, OVERSIGHT AND CREDIBILITY OF RSPO ASSESSMENTS

**Submitted By:** Forest Peoples Programme

**Co-signed By:** Sumatran Orangutan Society, Aidenvironment

### **Background:**

Noting that:

- The RSPO relies on Auditors, Assessors and Certification Bodies (hereafter collectively 'Auditors') to conduct independent, third-party inspections to ensure that members conform to its standard.
- Auditors play a critical role in carrying out participatory Social and Environmental Impact Assessments (SEIAs), identifying of High Conservation Value (HCV) areas, and in determining whether processes are in place for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).
- Robust and effective assessments can ensure violations of the standard are identified and addressed at the earliest stages of plantation development, through the New Planting Procedure (NPP), serving as a critical control point within the certification process.
- Effective assessments form the bedrock of credibility for the RSPO, providing assurance to CSPO buyers and preventing growers from entering into costly Complaints proceedings.
- The RSPO currently lacks clear and/or complete mandatory guidelines on minimum standards of quality for HCV assessments, FPIC and NPP plans.
- The RSPO currently lacks an effective system of monitoring and oversight for Auditors.
- The Complaints Panel has upheld allegations that growers have submitted documents predicated on 'fraudulent' assessments, which have not been screened out by Auditors.
- 87% of complaints submitted to the Complaints Panel (as of Sep 2015) are linked to certification-decisions or components of it.
- Improving the quality and oversight of assessments, and the monitoring of Auditors, is the most effective means of ensuring future supply of CSPO and market credibility.

### **THIS RESOLUTION PROPOSES:**

**To mandate the Secretariat, acting in coordination with members and in accordance with ISEAL procedures, to:**

- 1. Develop clear, mandatory guidelines on the minimum acceptable quality of HCV assessments;**
- 2. Develop clear, mandatory guidelines on assessments of FPIC in the New Planting Procedure;**
- 3. Develop and institute a transparent and robust system for monitoring the quality of assessments;**
- 4. Monitor the quality and performance of Auditors and pursue suspensions or sanctions against underperforming or persistent offenders;**
- 5. Monitor RSPO members' adherence to required procedures and report all members that omit submitting NPP notifications before clearing lands to the Complaints Panel.**

**Contact Information:**

Marcus Colchester, Senior Policy Advisor, Forest Peoples Programme.

Email: [marcus@forestpeoples.org](mailto:marcus@forestpeoples.org) Tel: + 44 1608 652893.