

## Resolution GA16-6b

Proposed Resolution to be adopted at the 16th General Assembly of the  
Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

6<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Title:** Ensuring Transparency and Multi-stakeholder Engagement in the Quality Assurance of  
Assessments and Audits

**Submitted by:** Forest Peoples Programme

### Background:

Recognising that:

- High quality audits and assessments are fundamental to the credibility of the RSPO certification system;
- Resolution 6h was adopted at the 12<sup>th</sup> RSPO General Assembly in 2015 on “Ensuring quality, oversight and credibility of RSPO assessments”<sup>1</sup>;
- The Assurance Task Force (ATF) was subsequently established with a multi-stakeholder composition including co-opted experts with the main goal of implementing this Resolution 6h;
- As a consequence of Resolution 6h and the ATF, ASI has instituted some changes to manage and control audits and that some other improvements in quality assurance have been adopted such as additional guidance, certification body training and performance monitoring;
- The last progress report from the RSPO on the ATF in December 2018 identified that 55% of actions were still outstanding<sup>2</sup> and the ATF has not been convened since November 2018;
- The ATF was dissolved in July 2019 upon the establishment of the Assurance Standing Committee (ASC), when it had yet to complete all of the tasks to which it had committed;
- The new Assurance Standing Committee (ASC)<sup>3</sup> comprised of only RSPO members only held its first meeting in September 2019;
- The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the ASC and/or its work programme can be further strengthened based on a full review of the implementation of Resolution 6h.<sup>4</sup>

### THIS RESOLUTION PROPOSES:

To mandate the Board of Governors (BoG), in coordination with the ASC, to commission an implementation review of Resolution 6h. In carrying out this task, the BoG will ensure, inter alia:

1. The implementation review of Resolution 6h is conducted by a contracted, neutral, third-party that is appointed by the ASC;
2. The scope of evaluation will include the entire role, set-up, activities, achievements and impacts of the ATF;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rspo.org/file/ga12/GA12-Resolution6h.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rspo.org/resources/archive/751>

<sup>3</sup> <https://rspo.org/news-and-events/announcements/calling-for-participation-and-nomination-of-assurance-standing-committee-members>

<sup>4</sup> <https://rspo.org/articles/download/55e9050faf103d8>

3. The evaluation will address issues that remain unaddressed, points of contention or conflict, and assess what have been the barriers to effective implementation of Resolution 6h;
4. The results of this evaluation be made public and its results and recommendations will be fully taken into account by the newly formed ASC.

**Potential Benefit/Risk:**

The quality of the assurance systems of the RSPO are paramount to the credibility of the RSPO system and its members. This would be of benefit, as by conducting an independent review of Resolution 6h, the RSPO will gain credibility that it is ensuring this resolution has and will be fully addressed. This will be of further benefit by informing the work of the newly created ASC.

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**References:**