

RSPO Standard Operating Procedure for Standard Setting and Review

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I. Introduction

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is a global, multi-stakeholder initiative on sustainable palm oil. Members of the RSPO, and participants in its activities come from many different backgrounds, including plantation companies, manufacturers and retailers of palm oil products, environmental NGOs and social NGOs and from many countries that produce or use palm oil. The principal objective of the RSPO is: “to promote the growth and use of sustainable palm oil through cooperation within the supply chain and open dialogue between its stakeholders”.

The vision and mission of RSPO is to transform markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm and to:

- Advance the production, procurement, finance and use of sustainable palm oil products
- Develop, implement, verify, assure and periodically review credible global standards for the entire supply chain of sustainable palm oil
- Monitor and evaluate the economic, environmental and social impacts of the uptake of sustainable palm oil in the market
- Engage and commit all stakeholders throughout the supply chain, including governments and consumers.

This document outlines the standard operation procedures (SOPs) for all RSPO standard development activities. For National Interpretations (NIs) please refer specifically to section 9 of this document.

Scope of standard development activities

The term ‘RSPO Standards’ (here referred to as ‘Standards’) refers to:

- a) Documents describing the RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C), or related documents, such as National Interpretations (NIs) or all standard documents developed to help implement the RSPO P&C.
- b) Documents describing the RSPO supply chain certification standard, or related documents;

For the purpose of this document both RSPO standards setting and standards review activities shall together be referred to as ‘standard development activities’.

The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures and describe the process by which the RSPO standards are set and reviewed. A specific set of procedures for NIs is detailed in section 9 of this document.

Two standing committees are charged with the oversight of these standards: the RSPO Standards & Certifications Standing Committee (S&C SC) and the Trade & Traceability Standing Committee (T&T SC), who are each responsible for the respective standard development activities as set out below:

Standard development activity	Responsible Standing Committee
Documents describing and related to the RSPO Principles and Criteria	Standards and Certification Standing Committee (S&C SC)
Documents describing the RSPO supply chain certification standard	Trade & Traceability Standing Committee (T&T SC)

For the purposes of this document both of the standing committees are here referred to as ‘standing committees (SC)’, unless there is need to distinguish.

ISEAL Code guidelines

The RSPO is member of ISEAL, and use the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards as the basis for all of their standard development activities - further guidelines on implementing the requirements of this SOP can be found in the current version 6.0 (dated December 2014) ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards.

II. Standard development activities

The procedure that is followed by the RSPO for standard development activities is set out below; this applies to both developing new standards and revision of existing standards.

1. Identification of standard development activities

1.1 Delegation from the RSPO Board of Governors (BoG) to RSPO Standing Committees (SC)

1.1.1 It is the responsibility of the RSPO Board of Governors (BoG) to inform the SC of the need for a standard development activity, resulting from:

- Identification of agreed time for existing standard revision (at least every five years for continued relevance and for effectiveness in meeting its stated objectives. If necessary, revise it in a timely manner, in line with the ISEAL Standard – Setting requirements);
- Identification of need for change, correction or amendment of the existing standard
- The SC may itself suggest a standard development activity to the BoG if they identify a need for change, correction or amendment of the existing standard

1.1.2 The SC then takes responsibility for executing and overseeing the subsequent standard development or standard review and revision activities set out in this SOP, providing oversight throughout the process to a dedicated task force or working group (TF/WG), until a final draft text of the standard is presented to the BoG (see Section 6).

1.2 Review and Revision of existing standards

1.2.1 RSPO standards are reviewed at least every five years from their publication date, and the planned start date of the subsequent review is made publicly available and included in the standard.

1.2.2 As part of preparation for standard development activities (Section 2), an existing standard is reviewed for continued relevance and effectiveness in meeting its stated objectives. Continued relevance of the standard is also assessed through results of ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities. The

decision on the extent on which revisions to the standard are needed (e.g. minor technical or significant changes to scope) should be based on the results of the review process, which incorporates comments received to date. Results of this review are incorporated into the Terms of Reference (Section 2.1), and a summary report submitted to the BoG and made publicly available.

1.2.3 In case of doubt regarding whether an identified change required to the standard is minor or non-critical, consultation shall take place with the BoG. The BoG shall make the final decision regarding subsequent actions required.

1.2.4 For a standard revision activity the SC shall define – through initial standard development activities set out in Section 2 – the level to which it is necessary to conduct stakeholder engagement activities (Section 3), whether a Task Force is required (Section 4) and the extent of the public consultation process (Section 5). This shall be decided according to the relative complexity of the changes required, scope of the revision and the end use of the standard. For example, administrative and non-substantive changes to a standard can be made at the discretion of the SC and BoG without need of a consultation or formal revision process, however any changes must still be publicly announced.

1.3 Composition of the SC

1.3.1 As with all RSPO Standing Committees (SC), the SC comprises of members from the BoG, or their respective alternates, and RSPO members and strives for balanced representation of all membership categories. The BoG, at its sole discretion, may propose changes to the composition of the Standing Committee for it to better serve the RSPO or for specific standard development activities. Membership is honorary and participation voluntary. Lack of positive involvement over a continuous period of 12 months will suggest withdrawal from the SC irrespective of notification or otherwise. The SC shall decide leadership and functionaries from among its members. The SC, at its behest, may invite experts on terms and conditions it prefers, but such experts cannot assume leadership of the SC or have a vote in decision-making. RSPO Secretariat shall provide facilitation resources to all SCs.

1.4 S&C SC Terms of Reference

1.4.1 The S&C SC is responsible for the following:

1. Define sustainable palm oil production through stakeholder expertise and research.
2. Develop principles and criteria (P&C) that singly and in aggregate reflect the definition.
3. Construct measurable indicators for the various criteria.
4. Adapt the criteria and indicators for the various socio-environmental conditions under which palm oil is produced without compromising criteria and definitions.
5. Provide support to RSPO Secretariat to organise a credible mechanism for scrutinising and recording the production of RSPO defined sustainable palm oil in the various environments, including, where deemed necessary, through engagement with government.
6. Provide support to RSPO Secretariat to strengthen capacity to produce palm oil sustainably and resources to support monitoring.

1.5 T&T SC Terms of Reference

1.5.1 The T&T SC is responsible for the following:

1. Develop and provide various options for downstream industrial activities, including the trading in sustainable palm oil for varied markets without diluting the credibility of RSPO certified sustainable palm products.
2. Incorporate sustainable palm oil parameters into existing specifications for trade in palm oil products.
3. Engage expertise to set up a platform & system to track movement of physical sustainable palm oil products and credit trade.
4. Develop safeguards against blurring of delineations between sustainably and unsustainably produced palm oil.

1.6 S&C SC and T&T SC Collaboration

Both SCs work together, e.g. through establishment of specific working groups, when standard development activities concern both the production and supply chain sides.

2. Preparation for standard development activities

2.1 Terms of Reference

Before starting any new standard development activity, the RSPO SC shall – through research and consultation with the RSPO Secretariat and stakeholders – develop or update Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Task Force or Working Group (TF/WG) appropriate to the scale of the activity, which shall include the following elements:

2.1.1 Background introduction and needs justification for the standard development activity, including an assessment of whether the proposed standard development activity shall meet the need identified. This shall include a review of what other RSPO standards exist or are being developed and any potential overlap with the standard involved in the proposal. An assessment of how broadly the final standard is intended to be applied shall also be included.

2.1.2 Clear scope of the standard and its intended coverage (geographical and scale of operation).

2.1.3 Clear social, environmental and economic outcomes that the standard seeks to achieve and how those are linked to the RSPO's intended change.

2.1.4 An assessment of the risks in implementing the standard, and how to mitigate for these risks. This shall include identification of factors that could have a negative impact on the ability of the standard to achieve its objectives, unintended consequences that could arise from its implementation, and possible corrective actions that could be taken to address these potential risks.

2.2 Work programme and reporting requirements

2.2.1 The SC shall oversee production of a work programme for every standard development activity. This shall be made publicly available on the appropriate section of the RSPO website, and be updated at least

every six months (or more regularly if there are significant changes to the work programme) until the point the standard is adopted.

2.2.2 The work programme shall contain:

- The RSPO contact point for the standard development activity;
- Details of the standard activity (e.g. preparation, amendment, revision);
- A brief description of the scope of the standard, including objectives and justification (as given in the TORs, see Section 2.1);
- Proposed timeline for the standard development activity (e.g. process of stakeholder consultation(s), details of when the task force meetings and public consultation meetings shall be held).

2.2.3 The SC shall keep the RSPO BoG well informed of progress made throughout the standard development activity.

2.2.4 At the end of the standard development activity, the SC shall ensure that all parts of the public reporting requirements have been completed – including all associated documents – and that this information has also been submitted to the RSPO Secretariat; See Annex 3. It is however recommended that these public reporting requirements are followed and updated throughout the standard development activity as information becomes available.

2.3 Development of a new or revised standard document

2.3.1 The development of the standard drafts shall take into account:

For the first draft:

- A review of other relevant commodity standards, to identify any major gaps in the coverage of the standard under development;
- A review of the relevant outputs of RSPO working groups and task forces, where those outputs need to be incorporated into the standard;
- For existing standards, incorporation of comments received regarding the Standard since it was last approved (see Section 1.2).

For subsequent drafts:

- A compilation of stakeholder comments submitted during the public consultation period(s) (see Section 5).

3. Stakeholder involvement

3.1 Balance of interests

3.1.1 The RSPO shall ensure, through stakeholder mapping and consultation as set out in Sections 3.2 - 3.4 below, that participation in the standard development activity is open to all stakeholders, and that participation and decision-making reflects a balance of interests among stakeholders in the applicable standard topic and geographical scope.

3.1.2 Constraints on affected disadvantaged stakeholder groups to participate effectively in the standard development activity shall be taken into account, and RSPO shall develop a plan of action for how this

can most effectively be addressed within budget and time constraints, on a scale relevant to the scope of the activity.

3.1.3 A final report summarising how stakeholder involvement requirements were implemented shall be published on the RSPO website (see Annex 3).

3.2 Stakeholder mapping

3.2.1 The RSPO Secretariat shall – through research and consultation with RSPO Secretariat and stakeholders – either carry out a stakeholder mapping exercise for development of new standards, or update existing stakeholder mapping exercises where standards are being reviewed. The purpose of this exercise is to identify major interest membership categories, key affected parties, and disadvantaged stakeholders based on the identified objectives of the standard. The mapping exercise shall include identification of which interest membership categories are relevant and why, and the likely key issues arising for each interest membership category in relation to the standard.

3.2.2 For each membership category, the key stakeholders shall be identified, as well as which means of communication is best to reach them. National stakeholder contacts shall be asked to provide information and contact details about regional stakeholder contacts as appropriate.

3.2.3 Each stakeholder is either materially affected by the activities of the relevant RSPO Standard or has sufficient expertise in the subject, and the SC shall ensure that materially affected stakeholders make up a meaningful section of the subsequent public consultation process. Relevant stakeholders generally include all category of RSPO members (growers, processors & traders, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, financial institutions, social and environmental NGOs), governments, workers' unions, international organizations, researchers and academic bodies, civil societies, indigenous & local communities, other sustainability roundtables, certification and accreditation bodies.

3.2.4 The results of the stakeholder mapping exercise shall be used to provide a database of stakeholders for engagement in the subsequent standard development activity. This shall also be used as a reference throughout the standard development process to ensure that a balance of these identified stakeholders continues to be involved and their positions taken into account. The SC shall consider using the stakeholder database to maintain records of communications and contributions during the consultation process.

3.3 Ensuring stakeholder inclusion in standards development activities

3.3.1 Based on information from the mapping exercise, the SC shall set stakeholder participation goals for each standard development activity. These goals shall identify clear participation targets and success criteria for each stakeholder group. The SC shall review progress towards meeting these objectives during and at the end of the standard development process.

3.3.2 The SC shall ensure that key stakeholders (or representatives as appropriate) identified during the stakeholder mapping process are proactively approached to contribute to the public consultation process.

3.3.3 The SC shall actively promote task force (TF) or working group (WG) members as representatives of their stakeholder interest group during the public consultation process, and ensure that details of how they can be contacted by stakeholders are publicly available (e.g. on the relevant section of the RSPO website).

3.4 Taking comments into account

3.4.1 The SC shall have systems in place to ensure that the task force takes all comments received during the public consultation periods (and for existing standards, comments received since the publication date) into account. This shall ensure that different types of inputs received are weighted equally (e.g. written comments, teleconferences, workshops etc.).

3.4.2 The TF shall compile comments received according to the issues raised, or according to the relevant criterion/indicator. A written synopsis shall be documented and published summarising how each of the comments (or groups of comments) has been addressed in the standard development process, including a brief justification for where a comment has not been incorporated. RSPO shall also send this synopsis to all stakeholders that submitted comments.

3.4.3 When making the synopsis publicly available, RSPO shall consider to what extent the full text of original comments can be published, or where some text may need to be summarised if any text is of a nature personal to individuals or any stakeholders.

4. Task Force

4.1 Establishment of a Task Force (TF)

4.1.1 Where identified as needed for a standard development activity (see Section 1.2.4), the SC shall establish a TF to undertake the detailed standard development and decision-making activities through TF meetings, resulting in recommendations to the BoG. In some cases, an existing RSPO working group (WG) may be tasked with a particular standard setting activity, in which case they shall also follow the procedures as set out in this document and the rules for the TF.

4.1.2 The SC shall keep the BoG updated with key information and progress of the TF throughout the standard development activity, and the BoG can at any time request further information from the SC.

4.1.3 Each stakeholder interest group (as identified by the SC, see Section 4.2) shall nominate their chosen representative(s) and put this forward to the SC. The representative shall join the TF on behalf of their stakeholder interest group. The representative shall also decide to nominate a deputy ('alternate') – see Section 4.6. The members of the TF shall function as defined in the TOR for the TF establishment.

4.1.4 At least one representative of each stakeholder interest category must be an RSPO member, unless an exception is approved by the SC.

As a guidance, the TF may comprise of 24 representatives or in similar ratio by interest category, as shown in the following table:

No.	Member Representatives by Interest Category	Number
1	Palm oil growers incl. smallholder representation*	12
2	Consumer goods manufacturers	2
3	Environmental NGOs	3
4	Social NGOs	3
5	Retailers	1
6	Banks and investors	1
7	Processors and traders	2

*to represent Malaysia (3), Indonesia (3), ROW (3) and smallholders/outgrowers (3)

4.1.5 To avoid conflict of interest and due to the escalated alternative decision-making mechanism as outlined in section 4.4, SC members may not sit on the TF.

4.2 Role of Task Force (TF) Members

4.2.1 The main purpose of the TF shall be to represent a balance of relevant stakeholders at TF meetings. All seven RSPO membership categories shall be represented and the SC may decide on additional stakeholder categories to be included according to the standard development activity, in accordance with the stakeholder mapping exercise (see Section 3.1). The seven RSPO membership categories are:

- **Palm oil growers** – including representation for both larger plantations and smallholder groups, associations, and research.
- **Processors and traders** - including representation for processors, refiners, traders and research.
- **Banks and investors** – including representation for banks, investors, financial institutions, researchers and academics.
- **Environmental interests** – including representation for national and international NGOs, conservation practitioners, researchers and academics.
- **Social interests** – including representation for people affected by the palm oil supply chain and elected representatives of communities impacted by the palm oil supply chain, or NGOs representing them, research organisations and academics.
- **Retailers** – including retail companies, supermarkets and research.
- **Consumer goods manufacturers** – including consumer goods manufacturers and research.

4.2.2 A membership category may request support from the RSPO Secretariat for the selection of nominees. Where agreement on nominations cannot be reached, it is at the discretion of the SC to finalise nominations.

4.2.3 The SC shall ensure that the TF provides representation for different affected countries or regions as appropriate.

4.2.4 Additionally, topic experts may be invited to inform the TF on critical issues, such as HCV, labour, health and safety, chemicals, chain of custody, etc. Topic experts shall not represent any particular membership category and shall not participate in any decision making.

4.3 Task Force (TF) Meetings

4.3.1 The TF shall convene for at least two physical meetings, unless otherwise justified by the SC. It is recommended that each of these meetings are held subsequent to each public consultation period.

4.3.2 The purpose of the TF meetings is to strive for consensus on the content of the standard under development, among a balance of stakeholders.

4.3.3 For the TF meetings, the SC shall decide on whether it is most appropriate for these to be guided by an external facilitator, or chaired by the RSPO Secretariat or other appropriate person(s). The SC shall ensure that the chosen facilitator(s) have no conflict of interest in the standard development activity. The role of the facilitators or chairpersons is to ensure that all TF meetings focus on the objectives as defined in the TOR, and ensure that they are being duly conducted in accordance with the requirements of this SOP (and any other relevant documents).

4.4 Decision making

4.4.1 The TF shall aim to make decisions by consensus.

4.4.2 If consensus is not possible for any specific issue or criteria and this results in a deadlock, i.e. whereby opposing parties come to a point of fundamental disagreement on a significant topic and no progress can be made risking a standstill or stalemate of the entire process, the TF shall refer the matter to the SC, who shall seek to resolve the issue in question by consensus.

4.4.3 Should the SC not be able to resolve the matter and also result in deadlock, they shall defer it to the BoG, who in turn, shall aim to resolve it by consensus.

4.4.4 Should the BoG not be able to resolve the matter and also result in deadlock, it shall be brought to the General Assembly, where decision shall be made by the members through simple majority, as per RSPO Statutes.

4.4.5 Where a decision goes through this escalated decision-making process, the previous language and understanding applies until such time as a new decision is reached.

4.4.6 Deadlock on an issue shall not prevent continuation of the standard development process and the TF shall continue according to the workplan on all other issues not directly affected by the matter causing the deadlock. The SC may consider issuing specific instructions for the continuation of the work.

4.4.7 RSPO shall make public the final decisions on the content of the standard, as well as a summary of deliberations in arriving at the decisions made.

4.5 TF member responsibility and conduct

4.5.1 The RSPO Secretariat shall ensure that each TF member has:

- Signed the Code of Conduct (CoC) for standard development activity (see Template in Annex 2);
- Received the TORs and work programme for the standard development activity (Section 2);
- Received the RSPO SOP for Standards Setting and Review (this document).

4.5.2 Additional requirements can be made to the template Code of Conduct (CoC) by the SC as appropriate, but the minimum requirements as set out in Annex 2 shall be included.

4.5.3 Substantive members commit to attend all TF meetings unless prevented to do so by force majeure¹. Should a member be unable to participate, he/she should be replaced by their nominated alternate in that meeting, whom they shall brief on developments so far.

4.5.4 Substantives commit to fully engaging in the entire process through active participation during the TF meetings, any activities they agree to conduct inbetween meetings, briefing of the alternates in their membership category, engagement with their SC and BoG representatives and outreach to the stakeholders in their membership category.

4.5.5 Lack of active participation over a continuous period of 12 months or missing two consecutive meetings will result in removal from the TF irrespective of notification or otherwise.

4.6 Alternates

4.6.1. If a TF member is unable to be present at a TF meeting, a named alternate may represent the substantive member on the following conditions:

- A single alternate member may represent multiple substantive members only where the substantive members represent the same membership category;
- Where alternate members are present with substantive members at a physical meeting, alternate members are not allowed to actively participate and shall take on the role of observers. However, alternates can be asked or given permission by the facilitator or the chair of TF to contribute, when appropriate.
- Switching between substantive and alternate members within a physical meeting can only take place after a verbal statement made from the substantive and only in the case of force majeure², and formal approval from the facilitator or the chair of TF during the meeting.
- Where alternate members are representing substantive members, their roles are as described in Section 4.5.
- The substantive member being replaced by the alternate has the responsibility to brief the alternate on the debate so far and current discussion points to assure smooth continuation of the discussions.

¹ Force majeure refers to any situation which could not have been avoided even with due care and planning by the TF participant (i.e. was outside of the control of the TF participant). Examples include natural disaster, family illness.

² Force majeure refers to any situation which could not have been avoided even with due care and planning by the TF participant (i.e. was outside of the control of the TF participant). Examples include natural disaster, family illness.

4.6.2 The TF member shall inform the SC of the alternate representative as soon as possible ahead of the first meeting. It is recommended that each membership category nominates a number of alternates corresponding to the number of substantives (i.e. as many alternates as there are substantives) prior to the first meeting, who are kept well briefed on proceedings should the need arise for them to step in.

4.7 Observers and technical experts

4.7.1 Observers and technical experts may attend task force meetings following approval by RSPO Secretariat and facilitators. At no time, observers or technical experts have a decision-making power or vote.

4.8 Financial support and capacity building

4.8.1 TF members are requested by the RSPO to cover their own expenses in attending the physical meetings if possible. RSPO recognises that this will not be possible for all members (e.g. smallholders and disadvantaged stakeholders), and therefore members can apply to RSPO for reimbursement for reasonable travel, accommodation and subsistence costs incurred whilst participating in physical meetings. RSPO has a policy of not paying fees for time spent participating in the TF or expenses incurred during consultation, e-mail and telephone discussions.

4.8.2 RSPO strives to ensure all stakeholders can participate meaningfully and as such the RSPO Secretariat shall facilitate their participation in terms of specific briefings or support to understand documents and processes through additional capacity building if needed.

5. Public consultation

Public consultation is the period of time during which stakeholders outside of the TF have the opportunity to study and comment on the draft document.

5.1 Public consultation periods

5.1.1 Each standard development activity shall include:

- For new standards: at least two rounds of public consultation (allowing submission of comments by stakeholders), with the first one of at least 60 days and the second one of at least 30 days.
- For standard revisions: at least one round of public consultation (allowing submission of comments by stakeholders) of at least 60 days.
- Where substantive, unresolved issues persist after the consultation round(s), or where insufficient feedback was received, additional rounds of consultation shall be carried out as necessary.

5.1.2 The consultation phases shall be used to present new drafts of the standard, as developed by the TF, to the public for comment.

5.1.3 The consultation process is open to all stakeholders and aims to achieve a balance of interests in the subject matter and in the geographical and scale of operation to which the standard applies.

5.1.4 Stakeholder groups that are not adequately represented are identified and being proactively consulted for their contributions to the process, using methods tailored to these stakeholder groups (e.g. physical consultation meetings in their regions)

5.1.5 The SC shall, if requested, support Task Force members to organise at least one regional public consultation meeting in each relevant region or countries.

5.1.6 All comments received during consultation are compiled for the consideration by the TF It is suggested that comments are anonymised to aid neutral consideration. A written synopsis of how each comment has been addressed and, where not followed by an action, a justification is given. This is documented and the synopsis is made publicly available and accessible to all parties that submitted comments.

6. Pilot Testing

6.1. As a compulsory practice, the new or revised standard shall be field tested to assess the feasibility and auditability of requirements in the draft standard or any of its new elements or major alterations.

6.2 The tests can include field trials or mock audits, measurement of impact and evaluation of risk as appropriate.

6.3 Where feasible, multiple pilot tests should be held to trial the new or revised standard in geographical regions which are significantly different from one another.

6.4 Results of the field test shall determine any edits and changes necessary to the draft standard prior to final endorsement.

7. Endorsement of standards

7.1 Process for endorsement of standards

7.1.1 The RSPO Secretariat and SC, with the support of technical experts if needed, shall check that the appropriate requirements of this SOP have been complied with, and shall submit any relevant recommendations and comments to the BoG for consideration.

7.1.2 The final draft standard as approved by the SC– or optional versions where consensus has not been reached (see 4.4.2-4.4.6) – shall be submitted to the BoG for endorsement.

7.1.3 The RSPO BoG shall discuss endorsement of the standard as an agenda item at their next upcoming meeting. The Board’s decision shall be final.

7.1.4 Documents supporting the implementation of the RSPO P&C require endorsement by the RSPO BoG only. They do not need to be brought to the General Assembly.

7.2 General Assembly voting on RSPO P&C Standard

7.2.1 Upon endorsement of the RSPO BoG, the RSPO P&C Standard is then voted on at the RSPO General Assembly, in accordance with the RSPO Statutes – this requires a simple majority of a fixed quorum of ordinary members.

8. Publication and availability of standards

8.1 Publication and availability of standards

8.1.1 The approved final standards shall be published within 2 weeks of approval, and made available for free in electronic format.

8.1.2 The RSPO Secretariat shall inform its stakeholders of the new or revised standard and any applicable transition period, in particular certification bodies and, where feasible, certified enterprises.

8.1.3 The RSPO Secretariat shall inform about implications for other associated documents that are affected by the new or revised standard and indicate timelines for their subsequent adjustments/revisions.

8.1.4 The corresponding standard draft as agreed by the TF shall be made available during the public consultation phases in the standard development process.

8.1.5 Hard copies of public summaries, standards and other available materials related to the standard shall be made available on request at as low cost as possible, and covering only reasonable administrative costs. These materials shall be made available for free in electronic format.

8.1.6 The RSPO Secretariat shall provide translations of the final versions of the standard as appropriate for members. Translations of draft versions of the standard should be made available in the languages of key membership countries. The RSPO secretariat shall strive to provide translations within three months of the standard being endorsed.

8.1.7 All translated documents shall include on their cover page the official language of the original standard and reference of where to find this, and note that in the case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall default to the original English version.

8.2 Standards' structure and content

8.2.1 The SC shall ensure that the social, environmental and/or economic objectives shall be clearly set out in the introduction to the standard as relevant.

8.2.2 The SC shall ensure that the final structure of the standard forms a logical framework such that the requirements clearly contribute to the standard's objectives. A statement of intent shall be developed for each principle, providing a link between the respective criteria and indicators. Each principle, criteria

and indicator shall be clearly numbered and the SC shall check that these terms are being used correctly in the standard as according to the definitions in Annex 1.

8.2.3 Compliance requirements (major or minor indicator) shall be clearly identified in the introduction and throughout the standard.

8.2.4 The proposed date for standard revision shall be noted in the standard along with a transition period by which the revised standard shall come into effect.

9. National Interpretations

9.1 Role and Implementation of National Interpretations

9.1.1. In addition to the RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production (RSPO P&C), National Interpretations (NI) of the generic indicators and guidance contained within the RSPO P&C shall be developed to support the implementation of the RSPO P&C on country level. The NI process shall allow raising awareness across all membership categories and stakeholders in country and facilitate implementation of RSPO P&C indicators by including country references and legal context.

9.1.2 Until an NI has been developed and formally endorsed by RSPO, in the interim, the applicable standard is the generic RSPO P&C, with the understanding that the grower member(s) seeking certification shall call upon all membership categories in country to develop an NI.

9.1.3 When the RSPO P&C have been revised, the NI shall be revised within twelve months of the new P&C's date of full entry into vigour. Until the full entry into vigour of the new P&C (e.g. during a possible transition period) the prevalent standard for auditing will be the existing NI, or the existing generic P&C in case of the absence of an NI. Upon full entry into vigour of the new P&C the prevalent standard for auditing will be the new generic P&C until a new NI has been approved.

9.1.4 The RSPO Secretariat shall have a focal point for NIs, who has the responsibility to liaise with NI working groups (NI WGs) and keep them informed of any changes to procedures or standards by direct notification of all working groups and public announcements on the RSPO website. The focal point is also responsible for providing clarifications to working groups within a reasonable timeframe in order not to delay the ongoing NI process.

9.2 Development of a National Interpretation (NI)

The endorsement by the RSPO BoG, of an RSPO NI shall be dependent on demonstration that the NI development has complied with a set of participation, process and content requirements, which are laid out below.

9.2.1 Participation Requirements

9.2.1.1 The RSPO national interpretation (NI) process shall be initiated by an RSPO member or by several RSPO members. The member(s) shall formally request the permission to start the NI from the RSPO

Secretariat, where a point person for this NI process shall be established. Upon granting of the formal permission, the member(s) may initiate the process. Where more than one member or more than one group of members want to initiate a process, RSPO Secretariat shall request collaboration of all parties as prerequisite for the NI process.

9.2.1.2 The initiating member(s) shall be responsible for assuring that either they themselves or an agreed upon neutral facilitator (the latter is being strongly encouraged by RSPO and is understood to be a person or persons free of conflict of interest), is in charge of stakeholder mapping; invitations to participate; process facilitation; organising meetings; secretarial functions, including liaison with RSPO Secretariat; and for ensuring that documents are posted on the RSPO website and national media for the public consultation process.

9.2.1.3 A working group (WG) is formally established to undertake the detailed NI process by written approval by RSPO Secretariat. The main purpose of the NI WG shall be to represent a balance of relevant stakeholders at WG meetings and shall include self-selected representatives, i.e. each membership category selecting their own representatives, from the seven RSPO membership categories below:

- **Palm oil growers** – including representation for larger plantations and smallholder groups, associations, and research.
- **Processors and traders** - including representation for processors, refiners, traders and research.
- **Banks and investors** – including representation for banks, investors, financial institutions, researchers and academics.
- **Environmental interests** – including representation for national and international NGOs, conservation practitioners, researchers and academics.
- **Social interests** – including representation for people affected by the palm oil supply chain and elected representatives of communities impacted by the palm oil supply chain, or NGOs representing them, research organisations and academics.
- **Retailers** – including retail companies, supermarkets and research.
- **Consumer goods manufacturers** – including consumer goods manufacturers and research.

At least one representative of each membership category shall be an RSPO Member, while other representatives (and their organisation) are not required to be members of the RSPO, but all members of the NI WG do need to abide by the Code of Conduct (CoC) for standard development activity (Annex 2).

As a guidance, the NI WG may comprise of 21 substantive representatives, or in similar ratio by membership category, as shown in the following table:

No.	Member Representatives by Membership category	Number
1	Palm oil growers incl. smallholder representation	3
2	Consumer goods manufacturers	3
3	Environmental NGOs	3
4	Social NGOs	3
5	Retailers	3
6	Banks and investors	3
7	Processors and traders	3

9.2.1.4 Invitations shall be circulated widely and publicised through the RSPO website to ensure adequate opportunity for interested stakeholders to nominate themselves for inclusion. An NI WG may request support from the RSPO Secretariat for the selection of nominees. Where agreement on nominations cannot be reached, it is at the discretion of the SC to finalise nominations.

9.2.1.5 Substantive members commit to attend all NI WG meetings unless prevented to do so by force majeure³. Should a member be unable to participate, he/she should be replaced by their nominated alternate in that meeting, whom they shall brief on developments so far.

9.2.1.6 Substantives commit to fully engaging in the entire process through active participation during the NI WG meetings, any activities they agree to conduct inbetween meetings, briefing of the alternates, and outreach to the stakeholders in their membership category.

9.2.1.7 Lack of active participation over a continuous period of 6 months or missing two consecutive meetings will result in removal from the NI WG irrespective of notification or otherwise.

9.2.1.8 Alternates: If an NI WG member is unable to be present at a meeting, a previously nominated alternate may represent the substantive member on the following conditions:

- A single alternate member may represent multiple substantive members only where the substantive members represent the same membership category;
- Where alternate members are present with substantive members at a physical meeting, alternate members are not allowed to actively participate and shall take on the role of observers. However, alternates can be asked or given permission by the facilitators to contribute, when appropriate.

³ Force majeure refers to any situation which could not have been avoided even with due care and planning by the TF participant (i.e. was outside of the control of the TF participant). Examples include natural disaster, family illness.

- Switching between substantive and alternate members within a physical meeting can only take place after a verbal statement made from the substantive and only in the case of force majeure⁴, and formal approval from the facilitators during the meeting.
- The substantive member being replaced by the alternate has the responsibility to brief the alternate on the debate so far and current discussion points to assure smooth continuation of the discussions.

9.2.1.9 The substantive member shall inform the NI WG or its facilitator of the alternate as soon as possible ahead of the first NI WG meeting. It is recommended that each membership category nominates a number of alternates corresponding to the number of substantives (i.e. as many alternates as there are substantives) at the start of the NI process, who are kept well briefed on proceedings should the need arise for them to step in.

9.2.1.10 The NI WG may consider inviting a number of technical experts to provide technical support for the group’s discussions. Relevant government representatives may also be invited as well as other observers from stakeholder organisations. Technical experts, government representatives and all other observers have no decision-making power or vote in the process.

SPC For Small Producing Countries (SPCs), i.e. those countries who produce not exceeding 5% of global palm oil, the RSPO understands that there may not be sufficient interest or resources in all RSPO membership categories to allow for adequate representation. Upon demonstrating that despite all above stated efforts having been made to achieve adequate representation of all membership categories, the initiator(s) and/or the neutral facilitator(s) may request sign-off by RSPO Secretariat for a different composition of interest categories within the NI WG, according to the stakeholder mapping exercise. Only upon formal permission for the proposed composition of interest categories of the NI WG by RSPO Secretariat, the NI WG may start the process. RSPO may require specific efforts in the public consultation phase of those membership categories that are underrepresented and may indicate specific mechanisms for the NI WG to counter the imbalances. Where resources are a constraint for participation in the NI WG (e.g. for smallholders), RSPO may consider addressing the shortfall, upon request by the initiator(s) and/or the neutral facilitator(s).

9.2.2 Process Requirements

RSPO endorsement of an NI shall require compliance with the following process requirements:

9.2.2.1 The NI WG shall convene for physical meetings on at least two occasions; at least one of which shall be subsequent to the public consultation period.

9.2.2.2 The NI WG shall make decisions based on consensus. For the process of national interpretation, consensus shall mean:

General agreement, characterised by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any NI WG member with voting rights and by a process seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.

⁴ Force majeure refers to any situation which could not have been avoided even with due care and planning by the TF participant (i.e. was outside of the control of the TF participant). Examples include natural disaster, family illness.

(a) If consensus is not possible for any specific issue or criteria and this results in a deadlock, i.e. whereby opposing parties come to a point of fundamental disagreement on a significant topic and no progress can be made risking a standstill or stalemate of the entire process, the TF shall refer the matter to the SC, who shall seek to resolve the issue in question by consensus.

(b) Should the SC not be able to resolve the matter and also result in deadlock, they shall defer it to the BoG, who in turn, shall aim to resolve it by consensus.

(c) Should the BoG not be able to resolve the matter and also result in deadlock, it shall be brought to the General Assembly, where decision shall be made by the members through simple majority, as per RSPO Statutes.

(d) Where a decision goes through this escalated decision-making process, the previous language and understanding applies until such time as a new decision is reached.

(e) Deadlock on an issue shall not prevent continuation of the standard development process and the TF shall continue according to the workplan on all other issues not directly affected by the matter causing the deadlock. The SC may consider issuing specific instructions for the continuation of the work.

(f) NI WGs may agree to establish a different alternative decision-making mechanism at the start of the NI process. Where no such alternative decision-making process has been established, the mechanism as described in clauses **9.2.2.2 (a)-(c)** shall be applied.

9.2.2.3 Public Consultation: The development of an NI shall include a period of time during which stakeholders outside of the NI WG have the opportunity to study and comment on the draft NI document. This is known as a ‘public consultation’.

(a) The public consultation period for obtaining comments on draft requirements shall total at least 60 days.

(b) Draft documents shall be made available in English and /or appropriate national languages and shall be disseminated on the RSPO website as well as a country-based website.

(c) The NI WG shall demonstrate that efforts have been made to solicit input from disadvantaged stakeholder groups, such as smallholders and communities through local outreach events where the content of the document is thoroughly explained in the local language and opportunity given to comment.

(d) The NI WG shall show evidence that it has sought and taken account input from growers, supply chain and financial institutions, environmental NGOs, social NGOs and smallholders.

(e) All comments are duly considered by the NI WG, which indicates how each of the comments has been addressed.

(f) NIs may consider carrying out field testing of their new or revised standards, or the new elements or substantial alterations within.

9.2.2.4 Process Report: The NI WG shall develop a report, that details the NI process and demonstrates compliance with the NI participation, process and content requirements as outlined in this document, and which shall be submitted together with the draft NI document for review by RSPO Secretariat in its endorsement decision.

9.2.3 Content Requirements

RSPO endorsement of an NI shall require compliance with the following content requirements:

9.2.3.1 Interpreting P&C indicators:

SPC

(a) For Small Producing Countries (SPCs), i.e. those countries that produce not exceeding 5% of global palm oil, the NI shall provide specific interpretation at a minimum for those indicators where a national interpretation is explicitly required in the RSPO P&C, but may include all indicators.

For all other countries, the NI shall provide specific interpretation for all indicators, or, where no changes to the P&C indicator were deemed necessary, indicate this in the NI process report.

(b) Indicators may be strengthened and raised from minor indicators to major indicators, but they shall not be weakened nor majors lowered to minors.

(c) Where measurable indicators have been developed in the RSPO P&C, NIs shall include acceptable performance levels for these indicators.

(d) NI's shall be confined to the scope of the RSPO Criteria and not include additional criteria. Where helpful however, additional indicators may be included provided they do not contradict or weaken any part of the standard.

9.2.3.2 Interpreting P&C guidance: The NI shall provide specific interpretation at a minimum for that guidance where a national interpretation is explicitly required in the RSPO P&C, but may include all guidance. In the guidance sections, NIs shall focus on specific national context and reference existing national or regional best practise guidance where applicable. Deletion of any guidance elements should be justified in the process report and it is at the discretion of the SC to accept the proposed deletion.

9.2.3.3 Legal Context: The NI shall include the identification of applicable legal requirements on international, regional and national level. See Annex 4 for guidance on applicable legal requirements.

When there is a difference between an RSPO P&C indicator and a legal requirement, the more demanding requirement shall prevail.

Any actual conflicting requirements between RSPO Criteria and legal requirements shall be referred to the RSPO Secretariat for resolution by the SC, with a suggestion from the NI WG as to how the conflicting elements can be resolved without leading to a lowering of the standard.

9.2.3.4 Smallholders & Outgrowers:

(a) NI's shall develop national definitions for the following terms:

- Smallholders
- Different types of smallholders such as independent smallholders, scheme smallholders, associated smallholders or any such similar concepts existing in the country
- Outgrowers

They shall refer to the existing RSPO definitions (see RSPO P&C) in order to do this.

(b) NI's shall review the RSPO Management System Requirements and Guidance for Group Certification of FFB Production, for the development of the smallholder and outgrower guidance, in particular:

- Section 3 columns for the requirements and guidance for individual group members with up to 50 ha plantation size (i.e. the smallholders as per RSPO definition) and the requirements and guidance for group managers: and either refer to these in their entirety for the NI or include specific smallholder guidance for those areas where additional guidance is needed for the country context within the NI document itself.
- Section 1.3 certification scenarios: to check if all typical organisational set-ups in the country are clearly captured as outlined in table 2. Should there be other organisational set-ups, the working group (WG) or task force (TF) shall propose a suitable certification option within the NI.

9.3 Endorsement and Publication of NIs

9.3.1 NI working groups shall submit, in English, the draft NI together with the comments received during public consultation and an indication how these were addressed in the NI document, as well as the NI process report, to the RSPO Secretariat for RSPO BoG endorsement.

9.3.2 RSPO Secretariat commits to review the submitted documents and respond to the NI WG within 2 weeks either requesting for missing documents or confirming completeness and start of review of the complete set of documents to develop a recommendation for consideration by the SC.

9.3.3 RSPO Secretariat shall notify the NI WG of any non-compliances with the above participation, process and content requirements and issue corresponding corrective action requests, or, in the absence thereof, submit the NI to the SC for further review. The SC shall provide their comments and corrective actions (if any) to the NI WG through the RSPO Secretariat. Once all corrective actions (if any) are addressed, the SC submits the NI to the BoG for endorsement.

RSPO Secretariat and SC commit to sending their respective comments for all identified issues in one set of comments each. RSPO Secretariat shall respond with their set of comments within 1 month of confirming completeness of the submitted documents and confirm within 2 weeks upon receipt of the corrective actions that these were satisfactory and submit the NI to the SC for further review.

The SC commits to review the NI and to issue corrective actions (if any) in their next upcoming meeting. Upon submission of the NI to the BoG, the BoG commits to review the NI for endorsement in its next upcoming BoG meeting.

9.3.4 Following endorsement of the NI, this is accepted as further specification of the indicators and guidance accompanying the generic RSPO P&C and it replaces the generic RSPO P&C as the standard against which audits are carried out in the corresponding country.

9.3.5 NIs endorsed by RSPO must be posted on the RSPO website in English and the appropriate national language within 2 weeks of endorsement by the BoG, together with all documents as outlined in Annex 3, provided the NI WG submitted the national language version together with the English version for the endorsement process. Should a translation be required at this point, the RSPO Secretariat commits to posting the national language version on the RSPO website within 3 months of endorsement.

Step-by-step NI Endorsement Process

Action	Entity	Timeframe
NI WG submits NI documents to RSPO Secretariat	NI WG	n.a.
RSPO Secretariat confirms completeness of NI documents or requests additional documents	RSPO Secretariat	2 weeks If incomplete: 2 weeks after receiving re-submission of NI documents
RSPO Secretariat reviews NI documents and issues CARs	RSPO Secretariat	1 month after confirming completeness
RSPO Secretariat sends NI documents to SC	RSPO Secretariat	In absence of CARs: 1 month after confirming completeness If CARs are issued: 1 month after confirming completeness of the re-submitted NI documents
SC reviews NI documents and issues CARs	SC	At their next upcoming meeting
SC submits NI documents to BoG	SC	In absence of CARs, immediately after their meeting
BoG reviews NI documents for endorsement	BoG	At their next upcoming meeting

9.4 Timeline for NI Revision

When the generic RSPO P&C are amended, appropriate changes to the NI must be made within twelve months (see 9.1.3). Extensions to this period can be agreed at the discretion of the RSPO Secretariat.

NI WG may initiate an earlier process for amendments or appropriate changes to the NI, if a need for this is identified, e.g. due to substantial changes in the national legal context.

9.5 Permanent NI Working Groups

The RSPO strongly encourages the NI WG to continue meeting regularly to provide a consistent forum for further dissemination of relevant new documents and rules, as well as serving as an organ to be consulted in public consultation phases of all RSPO documents.

10. General

10.1 Record keeping

10.1.1 All standards setting and review activities are recorded and documented by the RSPO Secretariat.

10.1.2 To ensure transparency to stakeholders, where possible and appropriate these documents are made publicly available on the relevant section of the RSPO website.

10.1.3 Where not made publicly available on the website, these records are made available to interested stakeholders on request. Stakeholders are made aware of all records available on request through the relevant section of the RSPO website.

10.1.4 The RSPO Secretariat shall ensure that documentation of the standard development process, associated policies and procedures, lists of stakeholders contacted and the stakeholders involved at each stage of the process, comments received and a synopsis of how those comments were taken into account, and all draft and final versions of the standard are kept for a minimum of five years.

10.2 Procedural complaints

10.2.1 The RSPO Complaints System is available with the aim of impartial handling of procedural complaints regarding standard development activities as set out in this SOP. RSPO stakeholders have ready access to this service via the RSPO website online form (<http://www.rspo.org/members/complaints>) or submit directly to email (complaints@rspo.org)

10.2.2 The RSPO Complaints System documents efforts to resolve complaints, and keeps these records for a minimum of 5 years.

10.2.3 Decisions taken on procedural complaints shall be disclosed at least to the affected parties, and where appropriate a summary shall be made publicly available. The SC shall be informed of any complaints and involved as necessary with follow-up actions.

10.3 Substantive complaints and comments related to the Standard

10.3.1 A documented process to receive ongoing substantive complaints, comments and requests for clarification is established and maintained by the RSPO Secretariat upon publication of the initial standard. The RSPO Secretariat is identified as the focal point for standards-related enquiries and for submission of comments, with contact information (certification@rspo.org) or askRSPO made publicly available. These comments shall be taken into account during the subsequent standard revision process (see Sections 2.3 and 3.4).

10.4 RSPO website section for standard development activities

10.4.1 An individual website section is used for standard development activities, with sub-sections created for each standard setting activity. This provides all interested stakeholders with clearly identified access to all relevant information and documents (as set out in this SOP) throughout and after the standard development activity. It is the duty of the RSPO to ensure that information on the website is kept up to date.

10.4.2 During any standard development activities, the RSPO website shall actively be used to alert stakeholders to this (e.g. through promotion on the front page), and direct stakeholders to the appropriate place on the website where more information can be found.

Annex 1. Definitions

Conflict of interest: Situation in which a party has an actual or perceived interest that gives, or could have the appearance of giving, that party an incentive for personal, organizational, or professional gain, such that the party's interest could conflict, or be perceived to conflict with, the conduct of an impartial and objective certification process.

Consensus: Decision taken in absence of any sustained objection

Criteria: The conditions that need to be met in order to fulfil a principle. Criteria add meaning and operationally to a principle without themselves being direct measures of performance.

Deadlock: Whereby opposing parties come to a point of fundamental disagreement on a significant topic and no progress can be made risking a standstill or stalemate of the entire process.

Entry into vigour: To come into force, to come into effect.

Force majeure: refers to any situation which could not have been avoided even with due care and planning by the TF participant (i.e. was outside of the control of the TF participant). Examples include natural disaster, family illness.

Indicators: The measurable states which allow the assessment of whether or not associated criteria are being met. Indicators convey a single, meaningful message or piece of information.

Interest group: Any person or group concerned with or directly affected by a standard.

Materially affected stakeholders: These are stakeholders that will be directly impacted by the application of the standard.

National Interpretation: The National Interpretation (NI) is the interpretation of the RSPO P&C on national level following the procedures as outlined in section 9 of this document.

Principle: A fundamental statement about a desired outcome, often providing greater detail about the objectives.

Procedural complaints: Procedural complaints relate to the way in which the standard was developed. These can include complaints about the process for deciding on the content of the standard, but not about the content of the standard itself.

Public consultation: Public consultation is the defined period or periods during which stakeholder comments are sought about a draft standard or document during a standard development process. Typically, different methods of engagement are used, such as an online comment templates or physical consultation workshops.

Smallholders: Farmers growing oil palm, sometimes along with subsistence production of other crops, where the family provides the majority of labour and the farm provides the principal source of income and where the planted area of oil palm is usually below 50 hectares in size.

- Scheme smallholders – Smallholders that may be structurally bound by contract, credit agreement or by planning to a particular mill, but the association is not necessarily limited to

such linkages. Other terms commonly used for scheme smallholders include associated and/or plasma smallholders.

- Independent smallholders – Smallholders that are not bound by any contract, credit agreement or planning to a particular mill.

Outgrowers: Farmers or oil palm planters with more than 50 hectares in size who produce FFB for sales, but without mill. Outgrowers can be independent, i.e. independent growers, or associated with a mill, e.g. scheme outgrowers. *This definition supersedes the definition described in RSPO P&C 2013 and RSPO Management System Requirements and Guidance for Group Certification of FFB Production 2016.*

Public Consultation: The development of an NI shall include a period of time during which stakeholders outside of the NI WG have the opportunity to study and comment on the draft NI document. This is known as a 'public consultation'.

Small Producing Countries: Small producing countries are those countries, who produce not exceeding 5% of global palm oil.

Standards: A document that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is not mandatory.

Standard development activities: The term used in this document to cover both RSPO standards setting and standards review activities.

Stakeholder: An individual or group with a legitimate and/or demonstrable interest in, or who is directly affected by, the activities of an organisation and the consequences of those activities.

Substantive complaints: Substantive complaints relate to the content of the standard and should be dealt with through the standard development or revision process.

Task Force: The RSPO's task force is normally established to work in specific issue to address complex and difficult challenges and work towards developing solutions. The task force normally establishes under a working group or standing committee and is therefore non-permanent by nature.

Verifiers: The means of verification define the type of information or observations that are used to demonstrate that the required indicator state is being realised. Verifiers provide specific details that reflect a desired condition of an indicator. Verifiable criteria can be checked for compliance through an audit process.

Working Group: The RSPO's working groups are established under Standing committees or directly by the BoG. Its establishment is normally designed to encourage members to address complex and difficult challenges and work towards developing solutions.

Annex 2: Template Code of Conduct for standard development activity

It is fundamental to the integrity, credibility and continued progress of the task force or working group TF/WG that every member supports, promotes and works towards the production and use of Sustainable Palm Oil and the work of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). Every member organization and individual must act in good faith towards this objective and commit to adhering to the principles set out in this Code. This Code applies to all Members of the TF/WG.

Achieving consensus

Each individual member of the TF/WG shall be responsible for seeking to build consensus within the TF/WG on how to address any issues which arise. Members shall recognise that achieving consensus in practice requires all members to be prepared to listen carefully to all the views of the group, and wherever possible actively seek compromises which will allow agreement

The TF/WG meetings are likely to include a number of contentious issues. Members shall at all times be respectful of the opinions of other TF/WG members, and the right of each member to share their expertise and opinions with the Group. Members shall at all times respect and support the role and authority of the chairpersons/facilitators to encourage this.

Attendance

Members shall commit to physical attendance at all physical meetings. If this is not possible, Members are responsible for organising a previously nominated alternate to attend in their place, and shall inform the SC of this.

Representation of stakeholder groups

Each individual member of the TF/WG shall be responsible for consulting with stakeholders not directly represented in the TF/WG and ensuring that their views are expressed within the discussions. Members are expected to play an active role in representing their stakeholders' interests, including ensuring that consultations with their stakeholder group are carried out and putting forward their concerns, comments or ideas to the group. Members are there to represent an interest group within the RSPO, not their own interests or the interests of their own organisation

Members shall provide and allow their contact details to be publicly used by the SC during the standard development activity, to encourage communication from their interest group.

Promotion and Commitment

Member organizations shall acknowledge their membership of the TF/WG and its objectives, the RSPO Principles and Criteria (RSPO P&C) and its implementation process through informed and explicit endorsement. Members of the TF/WG shall promote and communicate this commitment throughout the stakeholder group that they are representing.

Breaches of this Code

Breaches of this Code may lead to exclusion from the TF/WG.

Members shall seek to resolve grievances directly with other member organizations, and shall not make unsubstantiated allegations of breaches against other members.

Prior to taking public action in cases of unresolved allegations of breaches of this Code, members shall report breaches to the SC and their appropriate representative in RSPO Board of Governors (BoG), who shall deal with the alleged breaches in accordance with the RSPO Grievance Procedure.

TF Member agreement

I acknowledge and agree with the terms in the TF/WG ToR and CoC above, and standard development activity requirements as set out in the RSPO SOP for Standards Setting and Review.

Signed by:

Witnessed by:

Name:
Organization:
Date:

Name:
Organization:
Date:

Annex 3. Public Reporting Requirements

All of the following information shall be made publicly available throughout the standard development activity process as it becomes available, and updated as necessary.

1. TF ToR
2. Details of TF Member Representatives
 - Name
 - Position / Title /Organisation
 - Contact email address
 - Stakeholder representation category
3. Work Programme – see Section 2
4. Summary report of stakeholder involvement actions – see Section 3
5. Summary of TF meeting minutes with attendance list
6. Draft standards for public consultation
7. Summary of comments from public consultations
8. Final draft standards for approval by the RSPO BoG
9. Final standard as approved by the RSPO BoG

Annex 4. National Interpretations - Guidance on appropriate legislation

National legislation

Acts and Schedules relating to in general or specific aspects, notably:

Agriculture - all aspects including licenses' and permit requirements, Quarantine, Plant disease and Pests, Extension services and seeds Specifically - Oil palm, production and processing and export

Buildings and Amenities – all aspects of construction including, permits, approvals and inspections, safety, Housing requirements, Building works, Sanitation, Potable water and Industrial Waste

Companies – all legal obligations including Permits and licenses to operate, Registration, Tax and Value added Tax, Customs and Duties, Arbitration and dispute mechanisms, trade and competition, control of security personnel

Factories and industrial Facilities, Ports and storage - all operational aspects including permits and approvals, licenses to operate, control of waste

Employment – all Labour and practices requirements, conditions to be met in accommodation, sanitation, work hours and associations, workers' rights, Trade unions, Specifically – women in the workplace, Apprentices, Industrial Organisation, Workers compensation, Young workers and Children in the workplace, minimum wage determinations

Environment - including all regulations on air, land, water, resources (including Flora and Fauna) and communities. The requirements of Environmental impact assessment. Specifically - Rare threatened and endangered Flora and Fauna (wildlife), Waste and pollution, national Parks and Reserves, Forest, Water resources (Uptake and discharge into) - licenses and permit requirements for operations, Water quality standards and testing, extraction of road and house building material.

Chemicals - Importation, Registration, transport, Storage, Handling and disposal of chemicals used in the mill, plantations and in general use within the operation Specifically - Pesticides, Inflammable, Poisons and Dangerous goods

Hydrocarbons - Storage, Transport, Handling and disposal of all types of mineral oils and fuels Specifically - Fuel, diesel, petrol and lubricants and associated legislation

Medical – including, Facilities, Registration of practitioners, storage and control of drugs, Public Health, births and deaths, child and maternity care, abuse, domestic violence and abuse Specifically – new legislation on AIDS/HIV and other infectious or contagious diseases

Education - all aspect in the control and management of schools and teaching

Land Issues – including Acquisition, Registration, Titles, Survey, Tenure, Land disputes, Land settlement schemes, Formation of land groups, Native customary rights, Indigenous people and their

rights including dispute resolution and judiciary mechanism and Physical and spatial planning and all aspect of agricultural development

Occupational Health and Safety – including aspects on notifications, reporting and linked with various factory or workplace acts together with specific acts on dangerous goods chemicals of practices Specifically – electricity, fire, gas,

Transport – including the licensing of vehicles, traffic regulations, Roads and their maintenance.

Applicable codes of practice

International legislation

Please refer to Annex 1 in RSPO P&C for key international laws and conventions applicable to the production of palm oil.



RSPO will transform markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm

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Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

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