

# RSPO

## Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

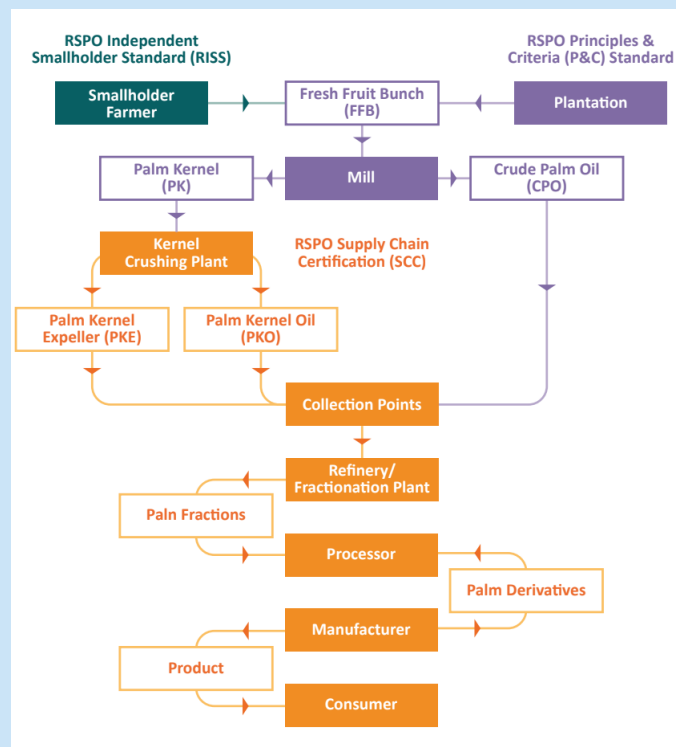
### ISEAL Community Member System Overview

Organisation Name	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)
Year	2022
Version	Version 1.0
1) The <b>STRATEGIES</b> our system employs to meet its sustainability objectives	
<p>The overarching framework and roadmap for RSPO is our Theory of Change (ToC). Developed and published in 2017, the ToC sets out the principles, roles and strategies that RSPO should undertake in order to achieve its vision of ‘transforming markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm’.</p> <p>RSPO’s three roles are as a standards system, an engagement platform (for members), and as a sustainability leader. The vision of ‘transforming markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm’ is supported by our three impact pillars that sets out our intended outcomes to equitably balance People, Planet and Prosperity.</p> <p>The seven strategies identified for RSPO to employ are 1) Innovating Standards and Benchmarks, 2) Credible Certification, Verification and Grievance, 3) Participatory Approach for Smallholders, 4) Jurisdictional Approaches, 5) Generating Demand, Commitments and Uptake, 6) Matching Supply and Demand, and 7) Engaging the Supporting Sector.</p> <p>These seven strategies were condensed into six operational pillars as part of RSPO’s organisational restructure in 2021, with the six pillars being 1) Standards Development, 2) Assurance, 3) Market Transformation, 4) Stakeholder Engagement and Communications, 5) Member Support and 6) Impacts.</p> <p>Information about the RSPO ToC can be found here: <a href="https://rspo.org/impact/theory-of-change">https://rspo.org/impact/theory-of-change</a></p> <p>The RSPO ToC is currently being revised, with an updated version expected in the first half of 2023.</p>	
2) A description of the <b>STANDARD</b> that our system has developed	
<p>RSPO has developed three main standards that cover the upstream production and downstream traceability of certified sustainable palm oil. The flagship Principles &amp; Criteria (P&amp;C) was introduced in 2005 as a pilot, adopted officially in 2007, and revised in 2013 and 2018.</p>	

Another revision is underway, expected to be adopted in 2023. The P&C covers the production of certified Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) and crude certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO) by plantations and mills; the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard (introduced in 2019) covers the production of certified FFB by independent smallholder farmer groups.

Once CSPO is sold downstream by a palm oil mill, traceability of CSPO across the supply chain is covered by the RSPO Supply Chain Certification (SCC) standard. The SCC is primarily a quality management system, with four supply chain models: Identity Preserved (IP), Segregated (SG) and Mass Balance (MB) for physical volumes, and RSPO Credits under the virtual Book & Claim (B&C) model.

A simplified visual guide to the palm oil supply chain and coverage of the RSPO's standards is shown below.

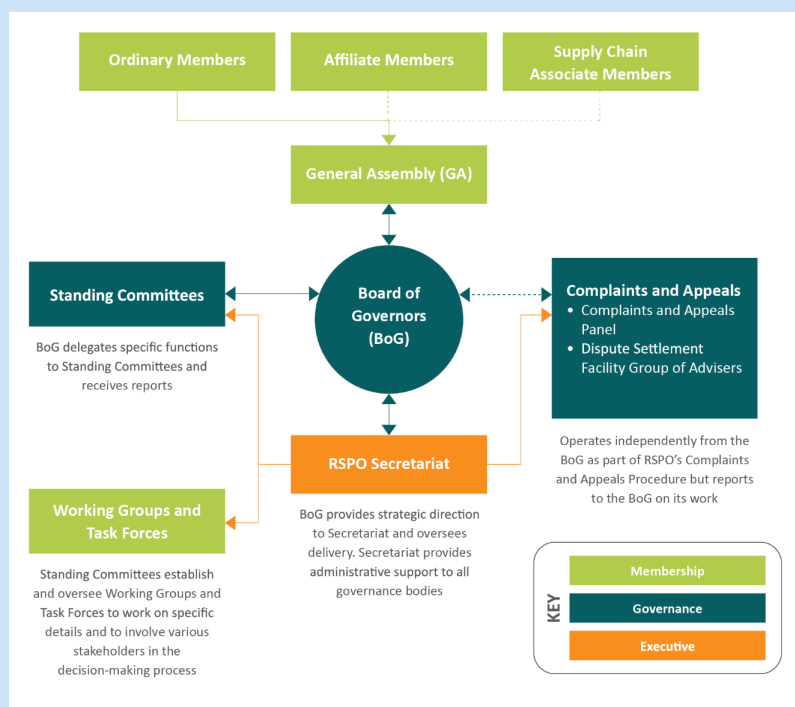


### 3) How we maintain **RESPONSIBILITY** for decisions taken about and by our system

As a membership body that also sets a voluntary sustainability standard for sustainable palm oil, all decisions are driven by RSPO members. A Board of Governors (BoG) comprising 16 representatives from the seven Ordinary membership categories (Oil Palm Growers, Processors and/or Traders, Consumer Goods Manufacturers, Retailers, Banks and Investors, Environmental NGOs, Social NGOs) convenes at least once a quarter to make key decisions, with day-to-day operations handled by the RSPO Secretariat headquartered in Kuala Lumpur with global presence across 19 countries.

An alternate Board of Governors also comprising 16 representatives supports the BoG, with specific functions also delegated to Standing Committees, Working Groups and Task Forces. All decisions within RSPO are made by consensus.

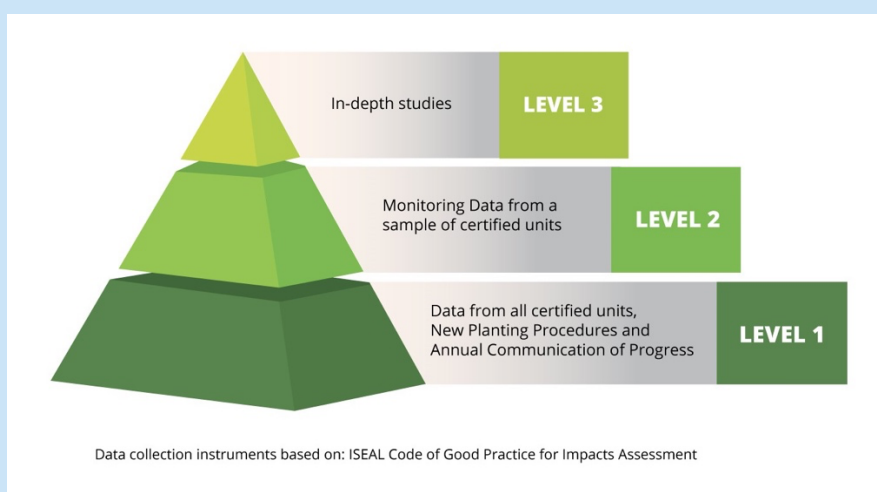
The RSPO membership meets once a year during the General Assembly, to adopt resolutions to set out the direction and drive the future of the organisation.



Assurance is provided using an independent, third-party audit and verification system to avoid conflicts of interest. RSPO has appointed ASI as its global accreditation body, which manages the various Certification Bodies licenced to provide RSPO certification. An independent Grievance system handles Complaints and Appeals to ascertain if members may have been in breach of RSPO standards or key documents.

#### 4) How our system's design demonstrates a **COMMITMENT TO IMPROVEMENT**

Based on the ToC, RSPO monitors and assess its outputs and outcomes to narrate impacts at three levels: Level 1 – direct data, Level 2 – inference through case studies and outcome assessments, Level 3 – evidence through research and quantitative/qualitative studies.



As part of the revision of the RSPO ToC, RSPO has created a new Impact Framework that mapped the various aspects of RSPO standards, systems and procedures with the 248 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators. Through this, an initial list of 67 linkages were identified. The new Impact Framework was introduced in the RSPO Impact Report 2022, with an initial set of 15 Impact Indicators under seven Impact Themes (Respecting Human Rights, Supporting Smallholders, Protecting and Restoring Nature, Preventing Fire, Limiting Climate Change, Advancing Certification, Transforming Markets).

Another output of the ongoing ToC revision will be a Knowledge Management framework, which is intended to create 'learning and feedback' loops to ensure continuous improvement in all aspects of RSPO standards, systems and procedures.

#### 5) How our standard or tool is monitored and reviewed to ensure its **RELEVANCE**

All RSPO standards undergo a review every 5 years. To harmonise timelines, the P&C and RSPO ISH standards (adopted in 2018 and 2019, respectively) are being reviewed together, with expected endorsement in 2023. The Standards review is a sacred process, lead by a Steering Group that comprises representatives from all member categories. Under the Steering Group, a number of Technical Committees have been formed to tackle specific issues requiring subject matter expertise. Two public consultations are planned, allowing all stakeholders to voice their input. For more information on the 2023 Standards Review, please see here: <https://rspo.org/standards/standards-review-2022-2023>

A plethora of data is made publicly available on the RSPO website, including P&C audit reports, P&C/SCC certificates, Grievance case tracking, Annual Communication of Progress, New Planting Procedure (NPP), Remediation and Compensation Procedures (RaCP), etc. Transparency is important to RSPO, and there are no use rights attached to such public data. For confidential data, stakeholders and independent institutions may contact RSPO directly to arrange for a possible information/data sharing agreement, legality permitting.

#### 6) How the standard or tool is **IMPLEMENTED**

Implementation falls under two aspects at RSPO: Technical Guidance/National Interpretations and Assurance/Certification.

Under Technical, guidance documents and best management practices are published to align the expectations of the standards to on-the-ground reality. The National Interpretation (NI) process provides an avenue for national-level stakeholders to adapt the standard to local regulations and customs. A total of 18 NIs have been endorsed to date for P&C 2018, covering 19 countries.

The Assurance division and Certification unit holds regular engagement events with members and Certification Bodies across all regions where RSPO certification is present. This was disrupted by Covid-19 lockdowns that lead such events to go virtual and explore options for remote audits, but has now resumed physically. A feature of such events are 'clinic' sections that allow members or CBs to converse directly with the RSPO Secretariat on issues of interpretation of the standard or specific cases that may be outliers.

Data quality and enhancing data integrity has been a key focus at RSPO since 2019. To take this initiative further, RSPO is codifying a Digitisation and Digitalisation Framework and Roadmap to integrate all data systems and capabilities in a holistic manner. The Framework is expected to be completed in 1H 2023, with implementation in 2024.