

# *RSPO*

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Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

**RSPO Assurance Code Public System Report**

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**submitted to ISEAL Alliance**

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### Assurance System Structure

The RSPO certification scheme assurance system refers to the RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C) and the RSPO Supply Chain (SCC) standard and system.

The RSPO Principles and Criteria was revised in 2013. Next revision will be in 2018. The RSPO P&C defines sustainable practice to produce palm oil. The RSPO P&C is made up of eight core principles that mills and oil palm plantations shall comply to achieve certification. Generic criteria, indicators and guidelines are provided to assist members in addressing the core principles. Key international laws and conventions are also incorporated. Grower members commit to implement P&C and be audited against the P&C across their entire operations, including subsidiaries and joint ventures with major shareholdings and management control. The latest generic RSPO P&C standard is found here <http://www.rspo.org/resources/key-documents/certification/rspo-principles-and-criteria>. Beside the generic P&C, National Interpretations is developed as country specific standard.

The RSPO Supply Chain Standard (SCC) applies to supply chain certification process to ensures that certified sustainable palm oil reaches the end user along the downstream. The supply chain certification standard ensures the integrity of the trade in sustainable palm oil at every stage of the supply chain through RSPO IT trading platform called eTrace. It applies to every facility that makes certified product-related claims regarding the use of certified palm oil products and derivatives. It regulates the handling, storage, transport, trade, refining process, packaging and even labeling of sustainable palm oil products. All certification processes are audited and shall be conducted by accredited third-party certification bodies. The RSPO SCC standard and system can be accessed at: <http://www.rspo.org/resources/key-documents/certification/rspo-supply-chain-certification>

During the 12<sup>th</sup> RSPO General Assembly, through Resolution 6h, Assurance Task Force was formed to ensure the continual improvement of RSPO Assurance System. The detail is available on the RSPO website at: <http://www.rspo.org/about/who-we-are/task-forces/assurance-task-force>

### List of standards that are assessed through the assurance system

The RSPO P&C and the SCC undergo a review by stakeholders once every five years. The RSPO P&C standard was approved in 2007. It was reviewed in 2012 through a wide-ranging consultation of public and members. The standard was revised and adopted in 2013. There were four new criteria and 40 new indicators added to the revised RSPO P&C. Mills will be audited against these revised standards beginning in 2015. The SCC was first published in 2008 and then revised in 2011 and underwent a second review which resulted in the production and adoption of the current RSPO Supply Chain Standard 2014.

The RSPO P&C and SCC requirements were developed in line with ISEAL best practice and with the spirit of consensus. Decisions taken in developing the standards are free from sustained objections. Members can take a position of sustained objection, which allows for further deliberation and discussions before a consensus-based final decision is achieved.

The RSPO Management System Requirements and Guidance for Group Certification of FFB Production

applies to the certification of independent smallholders. Latest revised version can be found at: <http://www.rspo.org/smallholders/smallholders-key-documents>. The definition of smallholders available at: <http://www.rspo.org/smallholders/rspo-smallholders-definition>. Presently, larger independent oil palm growers with estates exceeding 50 ha, or as defined by national interpretations, and without an associated mill are not included in Group Certification.

The standard and systems documents have a built-in contingency to ensure continuous improvement. The RSPO P&C and the SCC undergo a review by stakeholders once every five years. The RSPO systems documents are reviewed when necessary when unclear interpretation issues arise. Through the Accreditation Services International (ASI), a range of assurance systems is in place to ensure regular evaluation of competence of auditor, continuous improvements and quality control of assessments by CB.

### Assessment

The list of accredited certification bodies to provide assurance to the RSPO scheme on behalf of the RSPO can be found at: <http://www.rspo.org/certification/bodies>. ASI accredited certification bodies conduct annual office assessment, witness assessment and compliance assessment on the certification bodies.

Procedures for P&C certification assessment shall include gathering evidence from all relevant stakeholders, including statutory bodies, indigenous peoples, local communities, workers' organizations, smallholders local and national NGOs through the live cycle of the certification, surveillance and re- assessment.

Public announcement by the certification body for initial and re-certification is posted on the RSPO website and CB website for 30 days notification prior of the assessment commencement. The announcement includes details on the company to be assessed, their location, date of assessment, contact detail for both the company and the certification body.

Stakeholders include statutory bodies, indigenous peoples, local communities, workers and workers' organizations, smallholders, and local and national NGOs are invited to attend a stakeholder meeting at beginning of an audit. In areas where estates are being established, the certification body consult directly with all indigenous communities or local communities to assess whether land transfers and/or land use agreements have been developed with their free, prior and informed consent and check compliance with the specific terms of such agreements.

The RSPO complaints system was established in 2009 to provide a framework to address complaints against any RSPO member or the RSPO system itself. The RSPO complaints procedures currently being revised and updated, and going through public consultation.

### Personnel Competence

The certification body fulfills the minimum competencies of lead assessors and the requirements for assessment teams, for both RSPO P&C and supply chain assessments as per the relevant certification system document. As a minimum, this is consistent with the requirements defined in ISO 19011: 2002 Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing, with modifications to take into account the specific scheme requirements as per the P&C and Supply Chain Certification System requirement. The scheme specific system documents can be accessed at: <http://www.rspo.org/key-documents/certification/rspo-certification-systems>

### Oversight

ASI undertakes the evaluation and accreditation of RSPO certification body and their personnel. Each year, the head office and affiliate offices undergoes an office assessment. In addition, sample of all audits is followed through a witness assessment, compliance assessment and document review. Since the appointment of ASI, a number of certification bodies were temporarily suspended and at least two has had its services terminated. A list of certification bodies currently accredited, terminated and those that have recently applied for accreditation can be found: <http://www.accreditation->

[services.com/archives/standards/rspo](http://services.com/archives/standards/rspo)

During a document review, the ASI assessment team examines the documented procedures and other documents submitted by the certification body on their compliance with accreditation requirements.

During an office assessment, the ASI assessment team checks whether certification processes are complying with the requirements of the standard and system document, properly implemented and whether the certification body has the resources to credibly deliver the accredited certification program.

#### **On-going Scrutiny**

The RSPO has provided members with guidelines on making claims in the market. These are outlined in <http://www.rspo.org/key-documents/certification/rspo-supply-chain-certification>

The certification bodies verify claims of certified sustainable palm oil volume produced and traded. Claims made by certificate holders are verified against tonnage of raw materials received at the certified mills, and volumes claimed in the supply chain through identity preserved, segregated, mass balance, and book and claim supply chain models. Fraudulent disclosure of volume produced and sold is a major non-conformity of certification claim and needs to be remediated in 60 days for P&C and 30 days for RSPO SCC.

On 1 June 2011, the RSPO officially launched the RSPO Trademark. As of 30 June 2015, a total of 367 RSPO trademark licenses were issued to companies in 36 countries to indicate their commitment to the use of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO). The trademark is found on product packaging ranging from margarine, chocolate and biscuits to soap and cosmetics.

Stakeholders can submit a complaint about the infringement of RSPO Trademark logo and communications related to RSPO. Complaints will be reviewed, dialogue with the alleged party will take place and steps will be taken on the issue. To date, there are no complaints on trademark infringement. The current list of approved trademark licensees can be found here: <http://www.rspo.org/trademark/current-licensees>