RSPO Africa Roadshow-Côte d’Ivoire

Report on capacity building and awareness-raising events in Côte d’Ivoire

April 2013
About The RSPO Africa Roadshow

The RSPO Africa Roadshow is an initiative aimed at raising awareness about sustainability in the oil palm industry and creating an enabling environment for the uptake and implementation of sustainability requirements in the production, trade and use of palm oil. This is delivered through:

- Awareness raising and capacity building events in the region
- Facilitating the development of support tools such as HCV National interpretations
- Promoting the development of workable and sustainable smallholder schemes in the region (working together with SHARP)

The programme is coordinated by The Proforest Initiative working together with a number of partners including the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, Conservation International, Solidaridad/West Arica Fair Fruits, WWF, The HCV Resource Network, GIZ and ZSL, with funding support from the Biodiversity and Agricultural Commodities Programme, Unilever and Olam International.

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1 Introduction

The RSPO Africa Roadshow aims at promoting the uptake of sustainability requirements in the palm oil industry in West and Central Africa. The first phase of the programme consisted of awareness raising and a series of training and capacity building events for relevant stakeholder groups in three selected countries in the region- Ghana, Gabon and Liberia. This has subsequently been scaled up to other countries in the region, namely Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Nigeria. The target groups for the programme include government institutions charged with overseeing land-use planning activities, development and investment in the agricultural sector; civil society organisations working on sustainable development, poverty reduction, human rights and nature conservation; and private and public sector actors with interest in investments in the oil palm plantation industry.

The RSPO Africa Roadshow took place in Ivory Coast at the beginning of April 2013. The three-day workshop followed a model developed in the first wave countries, and the modules covered were identified during the inception meeting in Accra, Ghana in May 2012 by actors of the sector.

This report presents an overview of activities conducted to promote sustainable palm oil and the RSPO in Ivory Coast, as well as the feedback obtained from stakeholders in the country.

2 Activities

The RSPO Roadshow in Ivory Coast involved three key activities:

- Awareness raising, consultations and one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders (February 2013)
- Training and capacity building for relevant actors in the palm oil industry, followed by a multi-stakeholder workshop on challenges and opportunities for implementing sustainability requirements in Ivory Coast (April 2013)

The Roadshow activities in Ivory Coast were implemented by Solidaridad Ghana/West Africa Fair Fruits (WAFF) working together with the Francophone Delivery team for the RSPO Roadshow. The Delivery team was made up of staff from Proforest who have extensive experience on RSPO, HCV and FPIC in the region. Details of the activities carried out in the country are described below.

2.1 Consultations with key stakeholders

Prior to holding the training and capacity building workshops in Abidjan, the team met and consulted with a number of key actors in the oil palm sector in Ivory Coast. The aims of these consultations were to:

i) Present the programme and the key concepts being promoted (RSPO, HCV and FPIC) to some of the key stakeholders
ii) Obtain an understanding of the oil palm sector in Ivory Coast, as well as current and projected strategies for oil palm development at the national level

iii) Get information on areas where capacity building is most needed and also explore possible avenues for collaborations.

The meetings were also used to present WAFF’s new programme, the Sustainable West Africa Palm-Oil Programme (SWAPP) to key government officials and actors of the sector. SWAPP is a four year programme aimed at improving incomes and livelihoods through increased productivity and mill efficiencies, whilst also promoting the use of best practices (including the RSPO) across the production and supply chains of palm oil in the region.

The consultation process provided the opportunity for the RSPO Roadshow delivery team to get a better understanding of the organisation of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast, the government’s current policies and strategies on oil palm and the needs of the sector, thereby enriching the training workshop discussions. This initial consultation also allowed the team to get a better sense of what would be considered as the main challenges facing actors of the sector when considering compliance with the RSPO and a sustainable palm oil production in Ghana.

2.1.1 Organisation of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast

The palm oil production was traditionally a state owned industry in Ivory Coast. Following the privatisation of the sector in 1997, the plantations until then in the public sector were split and sold to three companies: PALM-CI, SIPEF-CI and PALMAFRIQUE. Today the main palm oil producing companies in Ivory Coast are PALM-CI (70% of the national CPO production), SIPEF-CI (12%), SOGB (7-8%) and PALMAFRIQUE (7%).

Due to a complete detachment of the government from the sector following its privatisation, the stakeholders of the Ivorian palm oil sector developed their own internal organisation in order to facilitate a better communication between the different actors of the palm oil industry at the national level. Each level of production is now represented by a dedicated structure, and representatives, which take part in the development of strategies and policies under the umbrella of the “interprofession” (see Figure 1 below):

- FENACOPAH-CI (Fédération nationale des coopératives et unions des coopératives des planteurs de palmier à huile de Côte d’Ivoire)
- APROSAP-CI (Association Professionnelle des Sociétés Agricoles du Palmier de Côte d’Ivoire)
- GiTHP (Groupement Ivoirien des transformateurs de l’Huile de Palme)
- AIPH (Association Interprofessionnelle de la filière Palmier à Huile)
- FER-PALMIER (Fonds d’Extension et de Renouvellement pour le développement de la culture du palmier à huile)
- CNRA (Centre National de Recherche Agronomique de Côte d’Ivoire)
- FIRCA (Fonds Interprofessionnel de Recherche et Conseil Agricole)
**Figure 1: The palm oil sector in Ivory Coast.**

**2.1.1.1 FENACOPAH-CI, Mr Christian Kouame Bi, previously Technical Director**

The team met and consulted with the ex-Technical Director at FENACOPAH-CI, the national association of producers of Ivory Coast to present the RSPO Roadshow and SWAPP and to gather more information on the palm oil sector in the region.

FENACOPAH-CI was created in 2003 and now counts 33 cooperatives and unions of cooperatives, in total ca. 36,500 planters with 167,500 ha across the three main palm oil producing regions of Ivory Coast: South Est (Bonoua Aboissa), Centre South (Divo, Sikensi, Irobo), and the vast South West, for a total annual FFB production of approximately 800,000 metric tons (mt). The association is responsible for defending the interest of its members but also to disseminate to them any information gathered at the central level. For more efficiency to that effect, the association has set up a technical committee and helped structure the cooperatives of producers in order to facilitate the sharing of information and technical knowledge all the way to the producers.

FENACOPAH-CI has established its strategic plan for 2013-2018, which includes engagement in RSPO as one of the objective for the sector. AIPH in parallel with this demand has prioritised the development of a national interpretation of the global RSPO principles and criteria in a plan that was validated in 2012.

However while at the moment a couple of CPO producers (Agrivar and Palmafrique, see below) are at different stages of their engagement towards RSPO certification, the issue was raised in this meeting of what is the advantage of such a process for smallholders in Ivory Coast. There is a grave need for more solid information on the RSPO and the certification process, and the dissemination of this information to the smallholder producers. This is particularly important as the predominance of land tenure issues increases following the allocation of leases of land to ex-civil servants after the
privatisation of the sector, which now have to be renewed on the basis of new compensations.

According to Mr Kouame Bi, PALM-CI has also had issues with an environmental NGO in the species-rich wetland Ehy Tanoé when a proposed plan to expand their plantations threatened to destroy the wetland ecosystem and the primate species thriving in the area.

Mr Kouame Bi, while he is not working in the palm oil sector anymore is very open to further discussions and information sharing, no concrete area of collaboration could be identified however.

2.1.1.2 APROSAP-CI, Mr Franck Diby, Executive Secretary

The team met and consulted with the Executive Secretary at APROSAP-CI, the national association of the agro industrial companies (small, medium and big) operating in Ivory Coast to produce CPO, to present the RSPO Roadshow and SWAPP and to gather more information on the palm oil sector in the region.

APROSAP-CI was created to represent companies such as PALM-CI, PALMAFRIQUE, SIPEF-CI, SOGB, ADAMAFRIQUE, COSAV and smaller mills like Agrivar and Dekel Oil. In total the association counts 15 mills with a processing capacity between 20 and 90 t/h, and 30 small mills with a processing capacity between 1 and 5 t/h. The supply base of these mills can be an industrial plantation and smallholders or solely smallholders: the APROSAP-CI members process approximately 1,700,000 mt FFB a year (40% from industrial estates) to produce ca. 360,000 mt CPO.

Membership to APROSAP-CI is not compulsory for mills, but benefits to members include information on opportunities in the sector, an active representation between them and the government, and a referee in case of conflict between members. The APROSAP-CI, together with the other associations under the AIPH umbrella also have the responsibility of setting the price of FFB and CPO, which is reviewed on a monthly basis.

At the moment several members of APROSAP-CI, including PALM-CI, still think that the RSPO certification process is too expensive, mainly due to the number of units some of them have to certify, and have chosen to engage in ISO certification instead. Members are unclear on the differences that exist between ISO and RSPO, and according to APROSAP-CI need to be encouraged and informed. The different association under AIPH are keen to start the process and the engagement in the RSPO process in Ivory Coast.

APROSAP-CI is committed to supporting the RSPO Roadshow activities and will contact its members to attend. They also want to spearhead the creation of a working group for the national interpretation of the global RSPO principles and criteria. The rationale would then be to target small and medium mill to get certified and provide support to these companies that can least afford the process, leaving the bigger companies, at the moment quite reticent, to follow the momentum when advantages of certification become obvious.

2.1.1.3 AIPH, Mr Marcel Louo, Infrastructures manager

The meeting at the AIPH on February 26th, 2013 confirmed previous conversations with representatives of FENACOPAH-CI and APROSAP-CI.
The “interprofession” is convinced of the benefits of the RSPO for the development of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast, and very keen to push the issue as a priority on its agenda. The AIPH has recently developed its strategic plan for 2013-2018, which echoes that of APROSAP-CI in terms of sustainability. Some main axes of the document include reinforcing production performance, including increasing yields and promoting best management practices, as well as improving both internal and external environmental issues relevant to the sector.

For the implementation of these aspects, the AIPH considers RSPO certification a powerful tool, and as such has included the facilitation of the national interpretation of the global RSPO principles and criteria in Ivory Coast as one of its priority. To find the best facilitator for this process, AIPH is currently developing ToR for a call to tender in collaboration with the Agriculture Research Financing Body (FIRCA).

On all aspects of this strategic development, AIPH considers collaboration with programmes such as the RSPO Roadshow and SWAPP as crucial and is ready to support the dissemination of information through their activities.

2.1.1.4 FIRCA, Mr Oumar N’Diaye, Commodities Director (responsible for the development of 12 out of 18 commodities, including palm oil)

The team met with the Director in charge of the development of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast at the Agriculture Research Financing Body (FIRCA) on February 27th, 2013 in order to present the RSPO Roadshow and SWAPP and to gather more information on the palm oil sector in the region.

FIRCA was set up in 2003 by the government and stakeholders of the agricultural sector in order to mobilise funding and finance project development for different actors. Relevant fields are (i) applied agricultural research, (ii) agricultural support and extension services, (iii) training, and (iv) capacity building. FIRCA is a professional tool that stakeholders can direct their issues to: it is not an implementation body, but it develops ToR (project definition) and then opens competitive bidding for the best resolution of problems encountered in the agricultural sector in Ivory Coast. They also review progress and provide quality control: payment is only sent out to consultants contracted once the recipients of projects have confirmed their satisfaction with services provided.

In the palm oil sector, the principal need clearly identified by different stakeholders has been the growing importance of RSPO certified products on the international market, and the limited access to this market for palm oil producers in Ivory Coast resulting from a lack of information on the standard itself, and the RSPO certification process. To respond to this, FIRCA has developed ToR in collaboration with AIPH in order to contract a consultant to (i) carry out an analysis of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast with regards to RSPO certification, (ii) facilitate the national interpretation of the RSPO principles and criteria in Ivory Coast, and (iii) promote the certification process (implementation guidelines). Funding for this project is expected to come from the palm oil sector itself, as well as FIRCA and possibly the government.

FIRCA has expressed a keen interest to work in collaboration with Proforest and Solidaridad on these issues to ensure the efforts of both programmes are in agreement and the sector can progress as quickly as possible. FIRCA will attend the RSPO roadshow and will share the ToR of the project above with Proforest/Solidaridad for comments.
2.1.2 The SIFCA group

The SIFCA group is made up of several companies active in the production of a range of commodities in several countries in West Africa (see figure 2). The entire group in Ivory Coast employs ca. 28,000 people, making it the second biggest employer in the country, directly after the government itself. Its two main members in the palm oil sector are PALM-CI (producer) and SANIA (refiner).

Figure 2: The SIFCA group (Source: www.groupesifca.com).

2.1.2.1 Meeting with Mr Jean-Marie Monsoh, Operations Manager at PALM-CI

The team met with the Operations Manager at PALM-CI, the principal producer of CPO in Ivory Coast, on February 25th, 2013.

PALM-CI is part of the SIFCA group since 1997 and its operations counts 8 sites in the country (see figure 3), representing a total of 40,000 ha feeding 10 mills. Approximately 30% of the total production area of the company is made up of its own estate (industrial plantations), the rest (ca. 70%) are smallholders, with plot areas ranging between 2 and 60
ha, under contract with the company. Most of PALM-CI operations are located in the Southern half of the country.

Figure 3: The SIFCA group operations in Ivory Coast. The yellow triangles are PALM-CI palm oil production sites (Source: www.groupesifca.com).

Objective of the meeting: To present the RSPO, the Roadshow and SWAPP and to identify possible areas of collaboration.

While PALM-CI is at 25.5% owned by NAUVU JV Company, a joint venture between Olam and Wilmar, both of which are members of the RSPO and have started the certification of their palm producing operations, this does not seem to influence the intentions of the company to become RSPO certified. For lack of authority in the area, the operations manager remained quite superficial in the discussion, and after a brief overview of the company, no more detail was given to the team on the exact plans of the sustainability department. The company, in line with requirements from the group, is pursuing ISO 9001, 14001 and 18001 certification.

No area of collaboration could be identified.

2.1.2.2 Meeting with Mr Jean-Louis Kodo, Assistant Managing Director SANIA
The team met with the Assistant Managing Director at SANIA, the biggest palm oil refinery in Africa, on February 28th, 2013.

SANIA is part of the SIFCA group since 2008, its operations are located in Abidjan and it has a processing capacity of 1,500 t CPO/day. PALM-CI is its main supplier of CPO, from which are produced refined palm oil (brands Dinor and Palme d’Or), margarine (St Avé), fatty acids and stearin; these are sold on the national market as well as exported to approximately 10 countries in West Africa, including Burkina Faso by train, Senegal, Mali and Nigeria.
Objective of the meeting: To present the RSPO, the Roadshow and SWAPP and to identify possible areas of collaboration.

SANIA also follows the sustainability charter applicable to all the companies of the group, which contains policies on the environment, socioeconomics and other health considerations to be addressed by the companies. As such, and much like PALM-CI, SANIA is engaging in the ISO certification process, in particular ISO 9001 and 14001 for their quality systems. The sustainability programme internally put in place by the company includes local development support, health and safety policies, etc.

The management of SANIA are very aware of the existence of the RSPO and its sustainability standard, however, again, there is no real intention to engage in the process at all, unless there were to be a clear demand for it, which at the moment is very much put to doubt by the company. In that respect, the clear question of cost of the RSPO certification was asked, especially in terms of potential benefits to gain when their market is local and regional.

Mr Kodo raised the issue of yield in the field as crucial to the sustainability of the sector, since most of the FFB he uses are produced in smallholdings.

No area of collaboration could be identified.

2.1.3 Ministry of Agriculture, Mr Goore Bi, Cash Crops Department

The team met with Mr Goore Bi, the Director at the Cash crops Department of the Ministry of Agriculture on February 26th, 2013. The objective of the meeting was to present the Roadshow and SWAPP programme and enquire on the role of the government in the development of the palm oil sector, and the potential existence of a strategy for the sector at the national level.

Mr Goore Bi confirmed that the government has a limited part to play in the development of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast, and that they rely heavily on the AIPH to spearhead the sector. The government does however participate in the orientation of an overall strategy and is at the moment finalising a “Troisième Plan Palmier” to analyse gaps, constraints and opportunities for palm oil development. This document will be more adapted to the current structure of the sector, following its privatisation in the 1990s, and answer specific issues that have arised as a direct consequence, such as land tenure conflicts.

As far as the Ministry sees it, environmental and social issues directly linked to palm oil production are not as predominant as in South East Asia because most plantations are smallholdings and have been developed on existing agricultural land, without forest conversion. This would be the main reason why a direct support to the RSPO certification has not been made a priority at the Ministry level. Such sustainability strategies are left to the private sector and while the Ministries (Agriculture and Environment) are well aware of actors like Agrivar, and follow the efforts of the AIPH in developing a national interpretation for the RSPO global principles and criteria, it will wait until these initiatives reach a certain momentum in the private sector before actively intervening to provide regulations and safeguards.

No specific area of collaboration could be identified at this stage.
2.1.4 PALMAFRIQUE, Mr Edy Germain, Director of Agriculture

The team met with Mr Edy Germain, Director of Agriculture at PALMAFRIQUE on February 26th, 2013. The objective of the meeting was to present the Roadshow and SWAPP programme and enquire on possible collaboration opportunities.

PALMAFRIQUE accounts for ca. 7% of the Ivorian CPO production (approximately 30,000 t CPO/year), with two mills across three sites:

- **Eloka**  
  - processing capacity 20 t FFB/h  
  - 2,081 ha estate  
  - smallholder supply base

- **Anguededou**  
  - no mill  
  - 2,359 ha estate  
  - smallholder supply base

- **Dabou**  
  - processing capacity 40 t FFB/h  
  - 2,800 ha estate  
  - smallholder supply base

Their CPO production is mainly sold on to SANIA and COSAV, but some of it also goes to individual smaller buyers, and AGRIVAR (for export). Their kernels are exported to Nigeria.

Influenced by the success of AGRIVAR (see below), PALMAFRIQUE has started to look into RSPO certification. A baseline assessment of their activities against the RSPO global principles and criteria was completed by the consultancy ENVAL, which should submit a list of recommendations and a programme to work towards compliance.

As such PALMAFRIQUE are keen to attend the RSPO workshop and will consider how to collaborate under the SWAPP programme depending on the conclusions drawn by ENVAL on their activities.

2.1.5 AGRIVAR, Visit of the mill, Bonoua

The team visited the operations of AGRIVAR, the first RSPO certified mill in Ivory Coast and Africa on February 27th, 2013. At their site in Bonoua, we met with representatives from 4 of the 5 smallholder cooperatives supplying the mill (Biopalm, Cooplato, Coopham, Cocafe), as well as Mr Hermann Brou, Quality Systems Manager, and Mr Athanase Niamien, General Manager. The objective of the meeting was to present the RSPO, the Roadshow and SWAPP and to identify possible areas of collaboration.

AGRIVAR was founded in 1998, but its operations only started in 2001. It now employs 200 employees, 25% of which are women. Its supply base consists solely of smallholders organised in 5 growers cooperatives. It is currently certified EU organic, RSPO and in the process of certification under Bio Suisse.

Before certification, AGRIVAR employed 65 employees, only 5 of which were under permanent contracts, and received FFB from 150 independents smallholders, who weren’t then organised in cooperatives. It could then process 3 t FFB/jour, with an OER of 17%.

AGRIVAR sought RSPO certification in 2009 to comply with quality requirements from one of their major clients (Nutriswiss), which provided technical and financial support for the
process. The independent consultancy ENVAL was contacted in June 2010 to develop a local interpretation of the global RSPO principles and criteria, carry out a baseline assessment of their activities and help in the development of an action plan towards RSPO certification. In April 2011 AGRIVAR became ordinary member of the RSPO, which in June of the same year validated the local interpretation of their P&Cs. AGRIVAR and its supply base (4 cooperatives) achieved RSPO certification in November 2011, with a management and monitoring plan spanning 2011-2016.

In January 2013 a fifth smallholder cooperative joined the supply base of AGRIVAR and became certified during the surveillance visit. AGRIVAR now processes FFB from approximately 8,500 ha: its production capacity is 16 t CPO/jour, with an OER of 22%.

AGRIVAR has developed a support programme for its smallholders and provides technical training, as well as selected Tenera trees, and organic fertilisers produced from treated waste at a third of the price of chemical fertilisers normally available on the market to smallholders. The premium they now get on certified CPO sold to international buyers such as Nutriswiss is passed on to smallholders who sell their FFB to AGRIVAR.

AGRIVAR is now leading the RSPO certified market in Ivory Coast and has agreed to take part in the RSPO Roadshow as such, to present the benefits gained from certification and explain the certification process as they went through it during a short presentation to the participants of the workshop to be organised in Abidjan in April 2013. They are also keen to develop their activities further and to collaborate under the SWAPP activities, in particular for the improvement of their effluent treatment system, and the development of a methane digestion plant, which could potentially give them access to the carbon credit market.
2.2 Training and capacity building workshops

The second key component of the RSPO Africa Roadshow events in Ivory Coast was the training and capacity building workshops for key stakeholders in the oil palm sector in Abidjan organised on April 3rd, 4th and 5th 2013. The three day workshop was designed to introduce participants to sustainable palm oil and associated concepts such as Free Prior and Informed Consent and High Conservation Values. See section 5 for the programme. The three days were attended by stakeholders from industry, government and civil society organisations, including social and environmental NGOs.

2.2.1 Training workshop-Day 1:

Day 1 of the training workshop was designed to introduce participants to the concept of sustainable palm oil, the RSPO, its Principles and Criteria (P&C) and certification processes. Throughout the day, group discussion and plenary sessions were used to identify what would be the main issues in the sector and how the RSPO could be used to address some social and environmental concerns in palm oil production in Ivory Coast.

2.2.1.1 Attendance

There were 25 participants for Day 1 of the workshop. These included several oil palm plantation companies in Ivory Coast (see attendance list attached to the report), however while small and medium size companies such as SOGB were present, the major companies (PALM-CI, SIPEF-CI) were notably absent from the meeting. The Ministry of Agriculture was represented (Oil cash crops department), as well as two NGO and research institutions, and a representative each from the World Bank and the IFC.

2.2.1.2 Modules

Four separate modules were presented during the day:

- **Module 1**: An introduction to the concept of sustainability in the agricultural commodities sector and the use of certification as a tool to promote sustainability. This module explored some of the underlying issues serving as drivers for sustainable production of agricultural commodities. The module also discussed how certification has been used as a tool for promoting best-practices, the key components of certification and the operations of certification systems.

- **Module 2**: An introduction to the RSPO, its aims and goals, memberships and governance structure, decision making process, and its evolution over the years.

- **Case study**: after discussing sustainability in the palm oil sector and a brief introduction to the RSPO, AGRIVAR presented their operations and the certification process as they underwent it. Mr Hermann Brou (Quality systems Manager at AGRIVAR) recounted the history of AGRIVAR since the beginning of its operations in 2003, and the benefits brought after their certification. This case study was followed by a Q&A session.
  
  - The discussions raised the issue of compliance for the smallholder supply base and how to get them on board with certification and then organise training and capacity building, as well as subsequent monitoring, for best
management practices. AGRIVAR’s process was participative and developed after consultation of the smallholders supplying the mill.

- Another issue was the cost of certification to AGRIVAR, who funded this, and what was the final incentive/benefit, if any, perceived from certification. AGRIVAR recently negotiated a premium on certified CPO, which will be passed on to their supply base on the price of FFB. On top of that monetary advantage, smallholders received access to selected material (Tenera) and cheaper organic fertilisers.

- **Module 3**: The RSPO Standard. This module introduced participants to the RSPO Principles and Criteria for existing plantations as well as the New Plantings Procedure, and how growers and millers demonstrate compliance in practice. Key discussions centred on how companies can implement these requirements, how the legal and regulatory environment in the country could promote a more rapid uptake of the requirements and some challenges the companies face in demonstrating compliance.
  
  - The RSPO certification seems to focus on the situation of bigger companies, which is not adapted to the local context, mainly centred on smallholders. This will have consequences both in terms of certification process and impact both social and environmental.
  
  - AGRIVAR raised the issue of access to legal requirements when developing the local interpretation of the global RSPO P&C as one of the main barriers they faced in the certification process.

- **Module 4**: The RSPO certification processes and systems including requirements for third party auditing, accreditation, RSPO requirements for certification of large organisations and their subsidiaries, grievance resolution mechanisms and national interpretation processes. The module focussed on how the RSPO certification systems work in practice and the existing checks that help ensure a robust and consistent application of the requirements.
Most of the discussion following this module focussed on the national interpretation process, which is considered a major gap for certification to go forward in Ivory Coast. Major uncertainty concentrated on who should start and own the process.

Local organisations need to be encouraged to get engaged in RSPO certification. The presence of AGRIVAR in Ivory Coast is a major advantage to showcase the benefits of certification, however a few organisations are very concerned about the cost of the process. In that respect, programmes such as SWAPP are sought and likely to facilitate the uptake of RSPO at least within the small and medium companies in the country.

2.2.1.3 Group activities and plenary discussions

The presentations were complemented by several discussion sessions and group activities. Participants were asked in particular to focus on potential sustainability issues that may arise in the Ivory Coast context, and what could be done to address these.

The issue of land tenure and conflicts surrounding access to land and compensations that followed privatisation of the sector at the end of the 1990s was one of the principal points discussed. The development of new plantations should not be a priority but rather government and research organisations should support smallholders in order to increase the yields gained from their plantations. The access to selected strands of oil palm (Tenera) has not proved sufficient, and more should be done in the development of best management practices, access to affordable fertilisers, etc. Both the government and the “interprofession” should support such initiatives. Through limitation of the amount of expansion, other issues identified such as loss of habitat and biodiversity, and local development could easily be addressed.

2.2.2 Training workshop - Day 2

Day 2 of the workshops focussed on the issue of smallholders under the RSPO, High Conservation Values and the concept of Free Prior and Informed Consent.

2.2.2.1 Attendance

The same 25 participants who attended Day 1 of the workshop were present on the second day.

2.2.2.2 Modules

Three modules were presented on the day

- **Module 1**: Smallholders and oil palm, challenges faced and certification under the RSPO. This interactive module aimed at exploring some of the day to day challenges faced by smallholders, certification requirements for smallholders associated with nucleus estates and certification for independent smallholders under the RSPO.
  - Participants reiterated some frustration at what appears like a bias of the RSPO towards industrial mills and plantations, which is not the predominant model for palm oil production in Africa. There needs to be clearer guidance
in practice and more practical, step-by-step tools to assist independent smallholders that seek certification. The discussion highlighted the difficulty for government and non-governmental organisations, as well as mills, to encourage the certification of smallholders if they cannot clearly demonstrate benefits in practice.

- **Module 2**: An introduction to the concept of Free Prior and Informed Consent, and its application under the RSPO.
  
  - During the discussion that followed this module, several interesting points were made on the structure of the administrative system in Ivory Coast, and who to consult during the FPIC process. The issue of privatization of the sector was also revisited, with the complex issue of compensations for the lease of customary land.

- **Module 3**: Introduction to the HCV concept, the six HCVs, the identification, management and monitoring of High Conservation Values, and the national interpretation process for the global definitions of the six HCVs. The module was followed by an activity to put in practice the identification and management of HCVs for the development of a new plantation.

### 2.2.2.3 Group activities and plenary discussions- Day 2

Three activities were conducted during the day.

**Activity 2.1**: Group activity on identifying challenges that smallholders face and how these may be addressed.

**Activity 2.2**: Plenary activity on case studies involving FPIC. Discussions centred on whether FPIC may or may not have been obtained in those situations, and whether such situations might be acceptable given the RSPO P&C.

**Activity 2.3**: Group activity on case studies involving HCV identification, management and monitoring. Activity aimed also aimed to help participants assess the adequacy of recommendations for management.

### 2.3 Multi-stakeholder workshop/Dialogue platform

The third day of the workshop (April 5th, 2013) two plenary sessions were organised for participants to discuss (i) the key challenges and opportunities for implementing sustainability requirements in Ivory Coast, and (ii) what is the way forward, what could be implemented to promote the process and who could take responsibility for the next steps.

Some of the key points that were discussed by participants during the session are presented below:

#### 2.3.1 Benefits as discussed by participants

- Increase in productivity: better yields, reduced operational costs, etc.
• Reduction of the number and size of extensions, which would also alleviate pressure over land resources
• Benefit to the local communities and the environment through a more regulated use of agrochemicals
• Reinforcement of applicable laws and regulations
• Socioeconomic benefits to local communities through the respect of labour laws, and an improvement in the working conditions of employees
• Reduction in the number of conflicts over land tenure and customary land rights with local communities, which would result in a better public image of the sector, and peace for operations
• Opening of new market opportunities on the international scene, which could open more funding opportunities

2.3.2 Current constraints against sustainability/certification
Participants agreed that certification had a number of potential benefits to the sector. However the engagement in RSPO certification is likely not going to be as fast as some may hope, for several reasons listed below.
• The primary reason for the lack of engagement in the RSPO certification process seems to be the absence of a national interpretation of the RSPO global principles and criteria. While the presence of AGRIVAR is a reminder that such an interpretation is not strictly necessary for certification, there is a sense that should the NI be carried out, it would remove some of the barriers that still exist for several organisations.
• Some participants, in particular representatives of the public sector, have highlighted the changing nature of communities and engagements taken, in particular with regards the FPIC process: this would have consequences for companies who would...
have to constantly renegotiate, probably with different members of the community, in order to keep their consent with the ongoing operations.

- Lack of information and guidelines to meet the requirements, especially for smallholders.
- Lack of technical capacity and funding to support the implementation of the process. Companies do not have trained staff that can effectively support the structure in meeting some of the requirements set out for certification. There is a limited amount of local structures that have such a knowledge and getting information and training from outside the Ivory Coast proves too expensive to most small and medium sized structures.
- Lack of incentive for most structure who sell their production at the national or regional (West Africa) level, where there is no real demand for certified products. This is seen by most producers as a costly, long term effort for which they might not have the resources now, and have no guarantee of return.

### 2.3.3 Needed interventions/actions

- Need to set up a working group that will build on the information received in order to push forward the development of a national interpretation of the global RSPO principles and criteria.
- Need to raise awareness on the RSPO certification process and requirements and build capacity within the stakeholders for its implementation.
- Identification of the sector’s needs at different levels: training, funding, technical support, development of a information sharing system on existing sources of funding and other technical support available. Dissemination of this information through the different levels of production and their corresponding professional associations.
- Collaboration between all the stakeholders, including the private sector, the government, NGOs, and research institutes.
Group restitution on activities
3 Programme evaluation

A total of 24 organisations attended the training workshops. These included 10 palm oil producers; 3 professional associations; 2 sector specific funding organisations; 2 government institutions; 6 non-governmental organisations & development partners and 1 consultancy. Eighteen programme evaluation forms were completed and returned. The sections below give an overview of the feedback obtained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you rate the content of the training on:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The RSPO Standard and certification process</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Prior and Informed Consent</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smallholders and RSPO certification</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Conservation Values</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on how they can be improved:
- More practical information on the benefits to smallholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you rate the briefing notes in terms of:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How information is presented</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and layout</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on how they can be improved:
- 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you rate:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The quality of the presentations and activities in this training?</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on how they can be improved:
- 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainers response to questions:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Were there any additional topics that should have been included in this training?
- More information on the auditing process
- Financial aspects in particular with respect to financial support available to the organisations that are willing to engage in the RSPO process
- Land grabbing by agro industrial organisations

Please rate your overall satisfaction with the course: 11% 61% 28% -
Any additional comments on the training session:

- The workshop should be a day longer because some aspects could have benefited from more time (FPIC and HCV)
- The workshop was good but it should be followed by the creation of a structure/working group at the national level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please rate:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training facilities, logistics and organization:</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on how they can be improved:

- 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please rate:</th>
<th>Very beneficial</th>
<th>Useful</th>
<th>Not at all useful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall benefit of the training workshops to you</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful to better understand the RSPO standard and process</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful to better understand the FPIC process</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful to better understand HCV</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

- We now have to put into practice the knowledge gained
4 Conclusions and next steps

The original consultation of key stakeholders gave an accurate overview of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast, even in spite of the limited amount of time available in which to meet stakeholders individually. During the Roadshow workshop, the overall structure and organisation of the palm oil sector in Ivory Coast, with a very limited influence of the governmental structures, was further highlighted. The sector seems nonetheless dynamic and keen to progress.

The Roadshow event in Ivory Coast thus managed to reach most stakeholders of the palm oil sector and present a detailed overview of the RSPO organisation, standard and certification process and its more difficult aspects, as well as focus an ongoing discussion between the different actors of the sector. While the biggest palm oil producers at the national level systematically ignored and for some actively refused to engage with the team and the activities proposed, including attending the workshop, the professional associations present at the Roadshow are not worried and consider that it is much more important for smaller structures to have access to information and potentially technical support through such programmes as SWAPP, and let this pull the sector towards certification.

Overall the feedback received has been positive and the awareness raising activities rated mostly quite beneficial. However it is quite clear from discussions throughout the three days that there are a number of major issues still prevailing that will, if unaddressed, hinder the certification process in Ivory Coast.

The national interpretation of the RSPO global principles and criteria is unanimously the first step towards engagement in the certification process. Two palm oil producers have openly admitted to having started taking measures to follow AGRIVAR’s lead through baseline assessments of their activities against the RSPO global P&Cs: SOGB and PALMAFRIQUE, while smaller structures in development such as DEKEL OIL (mill still under construction, projected capacity of 60 t CPO/h) have expressed their will to pursue certification as soon as operations start. However in both cases, the lack of a national interpretation is perceived as a major hindrance.

The lack of technical capacity also raised several times throughout the three day workshop is the second aspect to address as soon as possible. Indeed, even with a national interpretation of the RSPO standard, most of the organisations currently operating in Ivory Coast lack the practical knowledge or financial means to subcontract this knowledge in order to reach certification and guarantee ongoing compliance with the RSPO requirements. Such companies should benefit from practical field training for the development and implementation of best management practices.

Such practical tools have been recommended for smallholders too, in order for governments and other institutions to encourage the uptake of RSPO requirements by independent smallholders. At the moment the cost and challenge of certification is too much for a group of smallholders to pursue it of their own accord, and coupled with the apparent lack of real incentive, these do not make for an easy case to be made by the government.
Participants thus clearly expressed the need for practical guidance and guidelines for implementation of the RSPO requirements for both industrial scale plantations and smallholders.

As well as guidelines, the organisations mentioned above have indicated their need for technical support and their interest in the initiation of the SWAPP programme in Ivory Coast. The Roadshow also created momentum and saw the initiation of a voluntary working group by APROSAP-CI in order to disseminate information provided during the workshop and build on the knowledge gained to push forward the next steps identified, starting with the national interpretation process.

The workshop was also attended by a representative from the consultancy ENVAL, which was contracted by AGRIVAR and subsequently PALMAFRIQUE in order to provide technical support for RSPO certification. While the consultancy is competent with other certifications such as ISO, they admittedly lack capacity for RSPO. As a result of the programme, one of their staff is attending the Lead Auditor Training Course organised in Ghana in April 2013, which could be the start to building local capacity in the country.

The week-long consultation and training were well received and contributed in raising the profile and understanding of RSPO requirements in Ivory Coast. It is therefore recommended that opportunities are explored for expansion of the programme to other countries such as Nigeria and the Congo Basin countries where oil palm expansion is increasingly becoming a major land-use activity.
## Annex 1. Programme for RSPO Africa Roadshow

**Wednesday April 3rd, 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horaire</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30 – 9.00</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 – 9.30</td>
<td>Official Opening&lt;br&gt;Introduction of Proforest and Solidaridad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.30 – 10.00</td>
<td>Introduction of the participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00 – 10.30</td>
<td>Certification as a sustainability tool – the case of oil palm&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Activity 1 – Issues in sustainable palm oil production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 – 11.00</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 – 11.15</td>
<td>The Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Brief introduction to the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15– 12.00</td>
<td>AGRIVAR First RSPO certified producer in Ivory Coast and Africa&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Q&amp;A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00– 13.00</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.00 – 14.30</td>
<td>The RSPO certification standard&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Detailed presentation of the RSPO P&amp;Cs for existing plantations and New Planting Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.30 – 15.15</td>
<td>Discussion – Opportunities and Challenges for oil palm certification in Ivory Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.15 – 15.45</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.45 – 17.00</td>
<td>The certification process&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;The RSPO certification process, national interpretation and grievance procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>End of day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Thursday April 4th, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horaire</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00 – 9.15</td>
<td>Summary of Day 1 and agenda for the day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9.15 – 10.30 | Smallholders  
  *Their place in palm oil production in Ivory Coast (foreword by AIPH), and the RSPO certification for smallholders* |
| 10.30 – 11.00 | Coffee Break                                                               |
| 11.00 – 12.30 | The FPIC process  
  *Engaging local communities in RSPO using the FPIC process*            |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch break                                                                |
| 13.30 – 15.00 | The High Conservation Value concept  
  *Introduction to HVC, HVC in RSPO and the 6 HCV*                        |
| 15.00 – 15.30 | Coffee break                                                               |
| 15.30 – 17.00 | HCV identification, management and monitoring  
  *Activity and discussion on identifying, managing and monitoring HCVs, and the link with RSPO* |
| 17.00     | End of day                                                                 |

### Friday April 5th, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horaire</th>
<th>Présentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00 – 9.15</td>
<td>Summary of Day 2 and agenda for the day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9.15 – 10.45 | Discussion  
  *The aim is to facilitate a dialogue between the different stakeholders on opportunities and challenges for the development of a sustainable palm oil sector in Ivory Coast* |
| 10.45 – 11.15 | Coffee break                                                               |
| 11.15 – 12.30 | Plenary discussions based on group activities  
  *What is needed for the development of sustainable palm oil in Ivory Coast? Who is responsible? Next steps.* |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch break                                                                |
Annex 2. List of participants

See document attached.