Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (Phase 2)

Development and Implementation of Credible RSPO Standard for Sustainable Palm Oil

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Overview

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is a membership-based organization of growers, processors, traders, manufacturers, NGOs, banks, investors and retailers working to promote the production and use of sustainable palm oil. Growers must abide by eight principles to be RSPO-certified, including environmental responsibility and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity. Fourteen percent of palm oil globally is certified by the RSPO, and that number is growing. RSPO used their grant from BACP to strengthen RSPO standards and educate stakeholders.

Every five years, RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C) for Sustainable Palm Oil Production are updated. Coordinated by Proforest, the RSPO Task Force engaged with working groups, certification bodies and external experts to review and make changes to the P&C. In the final P&C, four new criteria were added that were not present in P&C 2007: ethical conduct (C1.3), forced and trafficked labor (C6.12), respecting human rights (C6.13), and minimising GHG emission from new plantings (C7.8). RSPO then engaged with 22 certification bodies, organizing workshops and performing outreach to educate them about the new P&C.

Key materials produced

- HCV training module
- Simplified HCV toolkit for smallholders
- RSPO training module
- Final revised Principles & Criteria
- Trainings for HCV assessors
RSPO also developed a variety of educational materials. The RSPO Smallholder Working Group recognized that additional guidance is needed for independent smallholder groups to meet High Conservation Value (HCV), social, and environmental requirements, as there is limited awareness and capacity for smallholders to complete the processes required to meet the criteria. RSPO contracted Zoological Society of London (ZSL) to produce a simple management and monitoring HCV toolkit for smallholders. The objective of this toolkit is to simplify the process of HCV Assessment for eligible smallholders with “user-friendly” step-by-step guidance and scaled-down tools, without compromising the integrity of the HCV Assessments safeguards. The toolkit has been shared with groups in Indonesia and Malaysia—the two largest producers of palm oil certified by RSPO—to be adapted for a local context.

RSPO produced a "train the trainers" module focusing on biodiversity and how to effectively and consistently conduct HCV assessments. The chapters cover: HCV approach and definition, requirements in the RSPO standard and new plantings procedures, identification, management and monitoring, and reporting and peer review, and incorporate relevant tools developed by other stakeholders. RSPO contracted with Wild Asia to hold HCV Concept and Application in RSPO training courses for 35 people in Thailand and Cameroon.

RSPO also created training modules to prepare qualified individuals to become RSPO-endorsed trainers of auditors. The modules were delivered in "train the trainer" events which covered topics like supply chain custody and traceability, RSPO certification processes and units of certification, principles of auditing, legislation and policy, monitoring and measurement, and report writing.

Finally, RSPO contracted ZSL to prepare an HCV Threats Monitoring Protocol via collaboration with RSPO grower members. This tool was endorsed by the RSPO Biodiversity and High Conservation Values Working Group in March 2013. It outlines the framework of HCV monitoring system and suggests practical steps for implementation. Terms of Reference (TOR) for National Interpretation of HCV have been issued, and Task Forces in Malaysia and Indonesia have agreed to meet to coordinate this process.

The materials produced by RSPO and contractors will make it easier to train stakeholders and further increase the share of RSPO-certified palm oil on the market.

**Project objectives**

1. Full accreditation of RSPO’s certification bodies
2. Workshops for certification body
3. Training for HCV assessors
4. Simplified HCV toolkit for smallholders
5. Incorporation of HCV guidance/tools onto RSPO website
6. Draft revised National Interpretation

**Major steps taken**

RSPO is committed to conservation and protection of primary forest and High Conservation Value (HCV) areas within oil palm establishment. At the same time, RSPO recognizes the challenges faced by smallholder growers to understand and comply with HCV requirements. RSPO took major steps towards increasing the number of RSPO certified growers by: running an RSPO Accreditation program, holding HCV trainings in Africa and Latin America, producing a smallholder HCV toolkit, and sharing HCV tools and methodologies on their website, and taking steps to facilitate the drafting of National Interpretations of HCV in Malaysia and Indonesia.
## Key results

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Results/ Deliverables</th>
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<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Full accreditation of RSPO’s certification bodies.</td>
<td>A total of 22 Certification Bodies have participated in the RSPO Accreditation program. 1 CB has been recommended for accreditation. The rest is either awaiting for closure of outstanding pre-conditions or suspended. We are waiting for full report from ASI. Workshops for certification body.</td>
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<td>The ASI has reported that 2 CBs will be suspended and announcement will be made after the submission of final report alongside with the announcement of accredited CBs. CB workshop was held on 21-23 May 2013. The next CB workshop is to be held in December 2013. Supply Chain (SC) workshop was held on 2-3 September 2013 in Kuala Lumpur. The next SC workshop will be in Germany on 10 October 2013.</td>
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<td>ii</td>
<td>Training for HCV assessors</td>
<td>HCV Training in Cameroon Training in Cameroon was held from 17-19 September 2013 at Hotel Hilton Yaounde, Cameroon, Africa. HCV training in Latin America (LATAM) HCV training in Latin America is going to be held in Colombia and local partner (Semillas La Cabana) to host the event has been identified. Due to delay, training in Latin America will not be delivered and co-financed by BACP project.</td>
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<td>iii</td>
<td>Simplified HCV toolkit for smallholders</td>
<td>Smallholder HCV toolkit HCV smallholder toolkit was circulated to BHCV working group for comments and inputs have been incorporated into the document. The final draft is ready and will be presented to the smallholder working group for final discussion. The HCV smallholder toolkit will be submitted to the EB for endorsement thereafter.</td>
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<td>iv</td>
<td>Incorporation of HCV guidance/tools onto RSPO website</td>
<td>ZSL HCV monitoring protocol was introduced to Malaysian HCV Toolkit revision group and also Indonesian HCV resource network. Indonesia HCV management and monitoring toolkit (1st Draft) is currently under revision exercise. The revised final draft is ready and it will be presented to the BHCV working group in October for comments. Final document should be ready before RT11. WWF Malaysia had organised a meeting in Kuala Lumpur to</td>
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develop Terms of Reference (TOR) for the revision of HCV toolkit on 29th August 2013. The meeting highlighted the importance of HCV management and monitoring guidance to be comprehensively covered in the revised HCV toolkit. The HCV guidance/tools were mentioned and will be used as a reference document in this exercise.

The announcement of the Threat and Monitoring Protocol document prepared by ZSL was made in June 2013 to RSPO members and it was uploaded on RSPO website in May 2013. The document is ready for download on RSPO website. Click links given below for details.

On public announcement and link to download document: http://www.rspo.org/blog/topic/79/rspo_endorsed_hcv_threat_monitoring_protocol


RSPO tracked the download and view rate of HCV Threat Monitoring Protocol tool and the results are as below.

Download/ view rate of these tools are:
WRI’s tool: 660
ZSL’s tool: 429

Note: to date (13/09/2013) view rate.

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<th>Draft revised National Interpretation</th>
<th>Terms of Reference (TOR) for National Interpretation is available.</th>
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<td>The Malaysian NI taskforce is formed and coordinated by the Malaysian Palm Oil Association.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Indonesian NI taskforce is also formed and coordinated by the Forum Minyak Sawit Berkelanjutan Indonesia (FORMISBI).</td>
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<td>Formal 1st meeting is yet to be undertaken however, both working groups have agreed to meet by end of 2013.</td>
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**Lessons learned**

**Design and planning**

Most BACP funded projects were planned based on lessons learned from previous assignments. Setting clear and focus objectives was found to be important to ensure effective planning to achieve the desired goals. The objectives and activities should also be specifically and appropriately articulated. Resource allocation in terms of scheduling activities and resources required was considered important as we had to ensure all projects were within budgets and time. Certain BACP funded projects were delayed due to unavoidable circumstances and this was observed in RSPO P&C review process as well as CB accreditation. Therefore, time management is necessary as available time is limited and it ensure project
completion time and scope.

Implementation and delivery
An important element in effectively implementing BACP projects was clear statement on roles and responsibilities concerning project management and decision making. Clear and frequent communication between appointed consultants or companies were necessary to ensure projects were on track.

Project team and partners
Identifying credible partners or consultants to undertake the projects was crucial. Partners or project team with local experience and understand local condition should be given priority to implement projects. The appointed project team should also speak the local language and we have found that language is a barrier in non-English speaking countries. This is to ensure the consultants or companies appointed were able to complete the tasks and deliver the project outputs.

Replication opportunities
All training materials produced under BACP fund namely HCV training module and RSPO training module are being used as guidance document for training activities. Revised RSPO P&C will be used as reference to develop national interpretation. Full accreditation of RSPO certification bodies is ongoing and the process will be completed by end of 2013. Simplified HCV toolkit for smallholders will be used as one of the reference to develop HCV toolkit for oil palm sector in the future. HCV training will be carried each year in this region and hopefully other regions in the future. HCV training in Latin America will be planned in the near future and local trainers will be identified to undertake the training.