

Protecting communities, forests and the climate



■ **RSPO-certified smallholders can access the growing market for certified sustainable palm oil**

Palm oil is the world's most widely consumed vegetable oil and, as the population grows, demand is rising. The highest-yielding vegetable oil crop, palm oil requires less than half the land required by other crops to produce the same amount of oil, making it the least expensive vegetable oil in the world.

It is essential for economic development in South East Asia, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia, which together produce over 80% of palm oil. But its cultivation has also become synonymous with negative environmental and social impacts.

In some regions, palm oil cultivation has caused deforestation. Palm oil plantations have been developed without consultation with local communities. Some have even been responsible for forcibly displacing people from their land. Violations of workers' rights to fair payment and safe working conditions have also occurred.

In producing countries, millions of smallholders and their families work in the palm oil sector. Palm oil plays an important role in the reduction of poverty in these areas. In Indonesia and Malaysia, a total of 4.5 million people earn their living from palm oil production. Stopping the production of palm oil altogether would create significant problems for these people who support their families by working in this industry.

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was formed in 2004 to promote the production and use of sustainable palm oil through a credible global standard and engagement of stakeholders. We are an international, not-for-profit, multi-stakeholder association with more than 2,500 members. Over 2.56 million hectares have now been

certified to the RSPO standard for sustainable palm oil, producing more than 20% of global supply.

Smallholders are critical, producing more than 40% of palm oil, but suffering from lower yields. We want to support more smallholders to become RSPO certified, in order to produce more oil using less land, reducing the threat to forests and biodiversity, and raising level of income among poor farmers.

The RSPO Smallholder Support Fund aids smallholders with capacity building to improve agricultural practices and it fully reimburses their audit costs. Smallholders who are certified by RSPO can access the growing market for certified sustainable palm oil and help global consumer goods companies meet their commitments to sustainable palm oil.

To date the RSPO has helped 131,432 individual smallholders gain certification and helped facilitate partnerships between smallholders, NGOs and the private sector. ■

RSPO will transform markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm. More info: www.rspo.org



RSPO

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