

RSPO

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production

Preamble

As members of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), we are embarking together on a long journey. We endorse these principles and criteria as the best approach to sustainable palm oil production in the light of current knowledge. Members will support each other in good faith in applying the principles and criteria to as great an extent as possible. In addition, members from the various sectors of RSPO will actively promote the use of sustainable palm oil.

Sustainable palm oil production is comprised of legal, economically viable, environmentally appropriate and socially beneficial management and operations. This is delivered through the application of the following set of principles and criteria, and the accompanying draft guidance and definitions.

There is no genetically modified (GM) palm oil available in the market, and there will not be for many years to come. Hence no criterion on GM oil palm is included.

These criteria will be applied for an initial pilot implementation period of two years from the date of adoption, and will be reviewed at the end of this period. The objective of the pilot implementation period is to enable field testing of the principles and criteria, and thereby allow guidance to be improved. Guidance for application of the principles and criteria by smallholders will be an important aspect of this. During this initial period, national interpretations will also be developed.

No public claims relating to compliance with the RSPO principles and criteria can be made without third party verification and authorisation by RSPO.

Principles and Criteria

Principle 1: Commitment to transparency

Criterion 1.1 Oil palm growers and millers provide adequate information to other stakeholders on environmental, social and legal issues relevant to RSPO Criteria, in appropriate languages & forms to allow for effective participation in decision making.

Criterion 1.2 Management documents are publicly available, except where this is prevented by commercial confidentiality or where disclosure of information would result in negative environmental or social outcomes

Principle 2: Compliance with applicable laws and regulations

Criterion 2.1 There is compliance with all applicable local, national and ratified international laws and regulations

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Criterion 2.2 The right to use the land can be demonstrated, and is not legitimately contested by local communities with demonstrable rights.

Criterion 2.3 Use of the land for oil palm does not diminish the legal rights, or customary rights, of other users, without their free, prior and informed consent

Principle 3: Commitment to long-term economic and financial viability

Criterion 3.1 There is an implemented management plan that aims to achieve long-term economic and financial viability.

Principle 4: Use of appropriate best practices by growers and millers

Criterion 4.1 Operating procedures are appropriately documented and consistently implemented and monitored.

Criterion 4.2 Practices maintain soil fertility at, or where possible improve soil fertility to, a level that ensures optimal and sustained yield.

Criterion 4.3 Practices minimise and control erosion and degradation of soils.

Criterion 4.4 Practices maintain the quality and availability of surface and ground water.

Criterion 4.5 Pests, diseases, weeds and invasive introduced species are effectively managed using appropriate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques.

Criterion 4.6 Agrochemicals are used in a way that does not endanger health or the environment. There is no prophylactic use, and where agrochemicals are used that are categorised as World Health Organisation Type 1A or 1B, or are listed by the Stockholm or Rotterdam Conventions, growers are actively seeking to identify alternatives, and this is documented.

Criterion 4.7 An occupational health and safety plan is documented, effectively communicated and implemented.

Criterion 4.8 All staff, workers, smallholders and contractors are appropriately trained.

Principle 5: Environmental responsibility and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity

Criterion 5.1 Aspects of plantation and mill management that have environmental impacts are identified, and plans to mitigate the negative impacts and promote the positive ones are made, implemented and monitored, to demonstrate continuous improvement.

Criterion 5.2 The status of rare, threatened or endangered species and high conservation value habitats, if any, that exist in the plantation or that could be affected by plantation or mill management, shall be identified and their conservation taken into account in management plans and operations.

Criterion 5.3 Waste is reduced, recycled, re-used and disposed of in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.

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- Criterion 5.4 Efficiency of energy use and use of renewable energy is maximised.
- Criterion 5.5 Use of fire for waste disposal and for preparing land for replanting is avoided except in specific situations, as identified in the ASEAN guidelines or other regional best practice.
- Criterion 5.6 Plans to reduce pollution and emissions, including greenhouse gases, are developed, implemented and monitored.

Principle 6: Responsible consideration of employees and of individuals and communities affected by growers and mills

- Criterion 6.1 Aspects of plantation and mill management that have social impacts are identified in a participatory way, and plans to mitigate the negative impacts and promote the positive ones are made, implemented and monitored, to demonstrate continuous improvement.
- Criterion 6.2 There are open and transparent methods for communication and consultation between growers and/or millers, local communities and other affected or interested parties.
- Criterion 6.3 There is a mutually agreed and documented system for dealing with complaints and grievances, which is implemented and accepted by all parties.
- Criterion 6.4 Any negotiations concerning compensation for loss of legal or customary rights are dealt with through a documented system that enables indigenous peoples, local communities and other stakeholders to express their views through their own representative institutions.
- Criterion 6.5 Pay and conditions for employees and for employees of contractors always meet at least legal or industry minimum standards and are sufficient to meet basic needs of personnel and to provide some discretionary income.
- Criterion 6.6 The employer respects the right of all personnel to form and join trade unions of their choice and to bargain collectively. Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining are restricted under law, the employer facilitates parallel means of independent and free association and bargaining for all such personnel.
- Criterion 6.7 Child labour is not used. Children are not exposed to hazardous working conditions. Work by children is acceptable on family farms, under adult supervision, and when not interfering with education programmes.
- Criterion 6.8 The employer shall not engage in or support discrimination based on race, caste, national origin, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, union membership, political affiliation, or age.
- Criterion 6.9 A policy to prevent sexual harassment and all other forms of violence against women and to protect their reproductive rights is developed and applied.

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Criterion 6.10 Growers and millers deal fairly and transparently with smallholders and other local businesses.

Criterion 6.11 Growers and millers contribute to local sustainable development wherever appropriate.

Principle 7: Responsible development of new plantings

Criterion 7.1 A comprehensive and participatory independent social and environmental impact assessment is undertaken prior to establishing new plantings or operations, or expanding existing ones, and the results incorporated into planning, management and operations.

Criterion 7.2 Soil surveys and topographic information are used for site planning in the establishment of new plantings, and the results are incorporated into plans and operations.

Criterion 7.3 New plantings since November 2005 (which is the expected date of adoption of these criteria by the RSPO membership), have not replaced primary forest or any area containing one or more High Conservation Values.

Criterion 7.4 Extensive planting on steep terrain, and/or on marginal and fragile soils, is avoided.

Criterion 7.5 No new plantings are established on local peoples' land without their free, prior and informed consent, dealt with through a documented system that enables indigenous peoples, local communities and other stakeholders to express their views through their own representative institutions.

Criterion 7.6 Local people are compensated for any agreed land acquisitions and relinquishment of rights, subject to their free, prior and informed consent and negotiated agreements.

Criterion 7.7 Use of fire in the preparation of new plantings is avoided other than in specific situations, as identified in the ASEAN guidelines or other regional best practice.

Principle 8: Commitment to continuous improvement in key areas of activity

Criterion 8.1 Growers and millers regularly monitor and review their activities and develop and implement action plans that allow demonstrable continuous improvement in key operations