

Other Multistakeholders Initiatives

Dr Ruth Nussbaum, Proforest

RSPO is not alone. The last decade has seen the emergence of a wide range of different multistakeholder initiatives in the natural resources sector which have been gaining momentum recently, both individually and collectively. This presentation will provide a brief overview of what these different initiatives are, how they relate to each other and how RSPO fits within this wider universe of initiatives.

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The EU and palm oil: what's going on?

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In 2010 the EU was Malaysia's third export market for palm oil products after China and Pakistan, and the main export market for biofuels, accounting for 12.5% and 40% of Malaysia's exports respectively. The imports are on the rise but so is consumer awareness about (sustainable) palm oil.

The EU Renewable Energy Directive (RED) is one piece of legislation of significant importance for palm oil in the EU. By setting a specific target of 10% for renewable energy in transport, the Directive gives a boost to renewable energy, in particular biofuels. The Directive foresees incentives for sustainably produced biofuels, which fulfil the sustainability criteria. To be eligible, palm-based biodiesel needs to be sustainably produced. To help operators comply with the Directive, the European Commission adopted additional guidelines earlier this year. Most recently, in July, the Commission also adopted first voluntary certification schemes.

In another palm oil-related development, on 6 July 2011 the European Parliament adopted a Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers. The objective of the Regulation is to facilitate the choice of consumers. It includes specific provisions on labelling vegetable oils and fats, which includes palm oil.

While in general the tariffs in the EU are going down, there is a fast-evolving trend – both government- and consumer-driven – for standards and other non-tariff measures, especially with regard to environmental sustainability of products. This process applies to producers in the EU market as well as to importers. They will all need to adapt. Those who do so fast, will reap the earliest benefits.

On the Threshold of Meaningful Transformation

Beth Gingold, World Resources Institute

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In April 2011, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) boldly declared in its new vision statement a revitalized commitment to “transform markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm.” While the media continues to present the “controversy” and “debate” around palm oil as a clash of extremes, the RSPO has created a space for actors across the supply chain—including growers, traders, processors, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, financial institutions, and civil society—to find common ground.

This presentation will challenge participants to reflect on the vision, mission, and history of the RSPO. Looking toward the future, it will encourage all participants—from across the supply chain, civil society and government—to consider their own role in contributing to market transformation for the palm oil sector. The presentation will provide thought-provoking examples of how new technologies, such as remote sensing and mapping software, can provide transparent, objective, and accurate information which can contribute to the RSPO’s mission regarding advancing the production, procurement, finance, and use of sustainable palm oil products.

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REDD+ and Roundtables: shared opportunities and constraints

Justin Mundy, Director of The Prince's Charities' International Sustainability Unit

There are many initiatives that seek to address the global challenges of climate change and food security, including REDD+, the agricultural commodity Roundtables, Climate Smart Agriculture, and the Global Partnership for Forest Landscape Restoration.

Most initiatives anticipate constructive partnerships between the public and private sectors. However, frequently, albeit for very understandable reasons, the allocation and disbursement of public sector funds is slow and the linkages to private sector activities can lack coherence and traction. This leads to a somewhat sub-optimal attainment of objectives. However, conversely, addressing these issues would provide opportunities for increased synergy between programmes as well as potential for their accelerated implementation.

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