



Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **WORLD'S LARGEST GATHERING ON SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL KICKS OFF**

November 22, 2011, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah - The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), a multi-stakeholder organization that promotes sustainable practices in the palm oil industry, today officially opened its 9<sup>th</sup> annual Roundtable Meeting or RT9, themed "RSPO Certified. Transforming the Market. Together." The event, which is attended by over 1,000 delegates from 34 countries around the world from both grower and consumer markets, was officially opened by Yang Berhormat Tan Sri Bernard Giluk Dompok, the Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities of Malaysia.

"The convening of RT9 and the overwhelming response to this event reflects the seriousness of all the stakeholders in the industry on the issue of sustainability. It is also heartening to know the cross-section of the participants present here today, to deliberate on the approach towards sustainability," said Yang Berhormat Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, in his opening speech.

"Malaysia will continue to undertake measures towards making the palm oil industry environmentally friendly by encouraging the industry to trap methane and research into utilization of the palm biomass. I am optimistic that the aggregation of all these measures will further enhance the development of the Malaysian palm oil industry, and without doubt boost the image of the palm oil produced by Malaysia. I also wish to reiterate that Malaysia is committed towards sustainable management of its forest resources and ensures a balance between developmental needs and environmental preservation." Yang Berhormat Tan Sri Bernard Dompok continued.

Yang Berhormat Tan Sri Bernard Dompok's opening speech was followed by a key note speech by Jonathon Porritt, co-founder and director of the Forum for the Future and former advisor to the UK government, who is one of the many experts in their respective fields who will exchange valuable insight and share their own unique experience during the course of RT9.

Jan Kees, RSPO President and Global Director Sustainable Sourcing Development Unilever applauded the efforts by producer members of RSPO: "Over 5 million tonnes of production capacity has been certified since RSPO certification of production of palm oil began in 2008. This deserves praise to all the producers who have gone through the effort of adapting their management systems and practices towards certification. All praise to all those who are in the process."

Jan Kees further added that: "RSPO aims to communicate that its certified palm oil has been produced in a sustainable way, providing assurance that good agronomic practices have been applied; biodiversity is protected; that no high conservation value areas have been converted; that free and prior and informed consent has been deployed to reach agreement with local communities; that proper working conditions are guaranteed; and the list of considerations continue."

The presence of such prominent figures and experts from all over the world underscores a dire need for the palm oil industry to embrace sustainability standards of the highest order. The RT9 provides an active platform for these great minds to enlighten every party associated with palm oil, empowering them to bolster their collective effort to realize RSPO's mission, which is to make sustainable palm oil as the norm.

The RT9 opening kick-starts a healthy variety of panel discussions and seminars that boast an impressive line-up of speakers who are experts in various subject matters. These in-depth sessions feature world's leading environmentalists, sustainability advocates, policy makers, government representatives, academics, diplomatic envoys, private sector captains of industries, international financiers, and philanthropists. The panel discussions will cover a variety of key themes that are integral for market transformation. Some of these key themes include the significance of Green House Gasses, the impact and role of smallholders in the market transformation, the emergence of new frontiers (new producing countries in for example West Africa and Latin America) and also transparency, communications and claims (including trademark) as well as trade and traceability. Also, the efforts to also move the sustainability needle in very important consumer markets such as India and China will receive due attention.

"The variety of topics from diverse disciplines at the RT9 reflects RSPO's principles to involve all sides of the roundtable, ensuring that all parties are not left out and all considerations are taken into account. We believe that market transformation should be driven by everyone who will be affected by it. In that way, everyone's interest is accommodated, and everyone's concerns are addressed," concluded Darrel Webber, Secretary General of RSPO.

Participants of the RT9 opening also witnessed the unveiling of products with the RSPO trademark that was launched in June this year. The trademarked products include soap products from Waitrose and a number of food products. The RSPO trademark in these products' packaging makes it possible for consumers to make a well-informed choice for products containing sustainable palm oil. The trademark is also expected to stimulate all parties across the supply chain to step up their efforts and boost global demand for sustainable palm oil.

"RSPO has been at the forefront of various efforts to ensure sustainability in the palm oil industry. I am pleased to note that the industry has made tremendous progress in certification under the RSPO. I also hope that RSPO will engage more smallholders, smallholder's organizations and growers' associations towards obtaining the certification process. This in the longer term will allow more areas to be covered under the ambit of RSPO." concludes Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, in his opening address.

#### **About RT9:**

Positioned as the world's largest sustainable palm oil conference and held since 2003, the annual roundtable or RT is a platform to exchange views and experiences among various stakeholders in developed and developing countries; to strengthen their co-operation and support in promoting sustainable palm oil. The annual roundtable is positioned as an industry event organized to seek participation from players within the palm oil sector from all around the world. Last year, the event attracted over 700 other delegates from all around the world representing various stakeholder groups in the palm oil supply chain.

This year, RT9 will be held from November 22, 2011 in Sutera Harbour Hotel, Sabah, Kota Kinabalu. RT9 will be organized over 3 days comprising presentation papers; workshops; breakout sessions; dialogues. More information about the RT9 can be accessed at [www.rt9.rspo.org](http://www.rt9.rspo.org).

The RT9 is held at Sutera Harbour Resort, Kota Kinabaku, Sabah, and will last until 24 November 2011. Main sponsors for this year's RT9 include Sime Darby; Musim Mas; Agropalma; Cargill; HSBC and Rabobank. Exhibitors include Sawit Watch; GreenPalm; Proforest Sdn Bhd; Control Union (M) Sdn Bhd; UTZ CERTIFIED Good Inside; Wild Asia Sdn Bhd; Credent Technology (Asia) Pte Ltd; NGOs; World Resources Institute; Daemeter Consulting; PT REA Kaltim Plantations; Solidaridad Network; EcoOils Limited; IPALM (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd; PT Earthline; Roundtable On

Sustainable Palm Oil; BORNEO CONSERVATION TRUST; Bayer Co. (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd; UNICEF. Media partners comprise Mongabay (social media); ENDS Report (UK); Agro Asia (Indonesia); Jakarta Globe (Indonesia); Daily Express (Sabah) and collaboration with China Food News (China).

## **About RSPO**

In response to the urgent and pressing global call for sustainably produced palm oil, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was formed in 2004 with the objective of promoting the growth and use of sustainable oil palm products through credible global standards and engagement of stakeholders. The seat of the association is in Zurich, Switzerland, while the secretariat is currently based in Kuala Lumpur with a satellite office in Jakarta.

RSPO is a not-for-profit association that unites stakeholders from seven sectors of the palm oil industry - oil palm producers, palm oil processors or traders, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, banks and investors, environmental or nature conservation NGOs and social or developmental NGOs - to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil.

Such multi-stakeholder representation is mirrored in the governance structure of RSPO such that seats in the Executive Board and project level Working Groups are fairly allocated to each sector. In this way, RSPO lives out the philosophy of the "roundtable" by giving equal rights to each stakeholder group to bring group-specific agendas to the roundtable, facilitating traditionally adversarial stakeholders and business competitors to work together towards a common objective and making decisions by consensus.

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**A SNAPSHOT OF KEY FACTS:**

Total volume of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil to date:	5,191,340 metric tonnes
Total volume of Certified Sustainable Palm Kernel to date:	1,210,302 metric tonnes
Total production area of CSPO:	1,023,435 ha
Number of grower companies certified:	28
Number of mills certified:	123
Number of supply chains certified:	114
Number of supply chain facilities certified:	226
Year on year CSPO Uptake:	2008 (certification began): 2.7% 2009: 25.3% 2010: 46.2%
% of CSPO of global Crude Palm Oil	Over 10%
CSPO producer markets in the world:	Malaysia; 48% Indonesia: 40% Rest of the world (Papua New Guinea; Solomon Island; Brazil; Columbia): 12%
Total number of members:	Total: 685 members Ordinary Members: 520 members Affiliate Members: 96 members Supply Chain Associates 69 members

Top 5 largest membership by country:	Malaysia: 18.6% United Kingdom: 16.9% Indonesia: 15.9% Netherlands: 10% Germany: 10%
Top 3 largest membership by stakeholder group:	Processors & Traders: 37.5% Consumer Goods Manufacturers: 32.1% Growers: 17.5%