

RT9 Keynote Speech
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Why is it that palm oil remains an area of continuing public interest and controversy, with governments, global businesses and countless civil society organisations all around the world taking a very active interest? Many people remain baffled at this high level of attention, wondering why it is that palm seems to have been “singled out” for disproportionate scrutiny, in comparison to other vegetable oils let alone other commodity crops.

The Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil has sought – with considerable success – to bring together those diverse (and often diverging) interests, and to turn some of the intense challenges associated with “sustainable palm oil” into opportunities for an even more stable and prosperous global industry.

Paradoxically, it is the very success and versatility of palm oil (with growing markets in the food, fuel and feedstock industries), that keeps it in the spotlight. But that merely reinforces the case for leading companies throughout the palm oil value chain to define and deliver the highest possible standards in sustainable land use, production and consumption. With the world facing massive, converging problems around water, accelerating climate change, population growth and food security, there can be no greater challenge (and opportunity) for the global palm oil industry.

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