MINITES OF MEETING

43rd SSC Meeting

Time: 1500 - 1700 (MYT)

Date: Tuesday, 28th May 2024

Venue: Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/95722324696 Meeting ID: 957 2232 4696 Passcode: 43@SSC

ATTENDEES

Name	Initial	Organisation	
1. Olivier Tichit (Co-Chair)	OT	Musim Mas	P & T – Substantive
2. Lim Sian Choo (Co-Chair)	LSC	Bumitama Group	Grower (INA) - Substantive
3. Lee Kian Wei	LKW	United Plantations	Grower (MY) – Alternate
4. Ian Orrell	IO	NBPOL	Grower (Smallholder) - Substantive
5. Silvia Irawan	SI	Kaleka	SNGO – Substantive
6. Sander Van den Ende	SvE	SIPEF	Grower (RoW) – Substantive
1. Leena Ghosh	LG	RSPO Secretariat	
2. Yen Hun Sung	HS	RSPO Secretariat	
3. Jasmine Ho Abdullah	JH	RSPO Secretariat	
4. Muhammad Shazaley Abdullah	SA	RSPO Secretariat	
5. Ahmad Amirul Ariff	AAA	RSPO Secretariat	
6. Faizzatul Nadia Nasir	FNN	RSPO Secretariat	
7. Sarsongko Wachyutomo	SW	RSPO Secretariat	
8. Premalatha Karisnajunian	PK	RSPO Secretariat	
Absence with apology:			
1. Jenny Walther-Thoss	JWT	WWF Singapore	ENGO – Substantive
2. Jerome Courtaigne	JC	L'Oreal	Consumer Goods Manufacturer – Substantive
3. Brian Lariche	BL	Humana	SNGO – Substantive
4. William Siow	WS	MPOA/IOI	Grower (MY) – Substantive
5. Librian Angraeni	LA	Musim Mas	P & T – Alternate
6. Anne Rosenbarger	AR	WRI	ENGO – Substantive

AGENDA

Time	Item	Agenda	PIC
1500 - 1505	1.0	**Opening**	Co-Chairs
	1.1	Acceptance of agenda	
	1.2	RSPO Antitrust Law	
	1.3	RSPO Consensus-Based Decision Making	
	1.4	RSPO Declaration of Conflict of Interest	
1505 - 1515	2.0	**Meeting Dashboard**	Co-Chairs
	2.1	Confirmation of the 42nd MoM on 25th April 2024	
	2.2	Action Tracker	
	2.3	Progress Update WG/TF/SG under SSC	

1515 - 1545	3.0	**For Update**	
	3.1	Standards Review 2023/2024	HS
	3.2	Certification System Revision	JH
1545 - 1550	4.0	**Any Other Business**	
1550		**END**	

DISCUSSION:

No.	Description	Action Points (PIC)
1.0	**Opening**	
1.1	The Chairs welcomed everyone to the meeting and presented the agenda of the meeting.	
1.2	The RSPO Antitrust Law, Consensus-Based Decision Making, and Declaration of Conflict of Interest were read out to the Committee. No comments were received.	
2.0	**Meeting Dashboard**	
2.1	**Confirmation of the 42nd MoM on 25th April 2024** The minutes of the meeting were adopted.	
2.2	**Action Trackers** There were no action points from the previous meeting.	
2.3	**Progress Update WG/TF/SG under SSC** The progress update for the WG/TF/SG Committee was presented. Committee suggested considering having a tick box to indicate whether there are any membership issues in all the different Working Groups as some groups lack representation from the seven (7) sectors of RSPO Membership that make up the value chain. The Secretariat will take note of this and will incorporate it in the Progress Update so that the Working Groups/Task Forces/ Sub-groups can update and inform the SSC. The Committee highlighted that it is a bit worrying that there has been no update for the Living Wage Task Force (LWTF) for some time. The Secretariat explained that there are no updates as the Standards Revision has taken precedence and is still ongoing. The LWTF plans to have a meeting in June 2024. Once the standards are finalised for public consultation, the LWTF can move forward on socialising the revised LW strategy, and the development of the prevailing wage calculation guidance. The Shared Responsibility Working Group (SRWG) had a meeting recently and	Include in the progress update on membership issue in the WG/TF/SG **Action by: Secretariat**

will provide updates in the next meeting. HS provided a brief update on behalf of SRWG. There will be a decision paper to be presented to the SSC and BoG on making substantive changes to Annual Communication of Progress (ACOP). The Working Group has been looking at regional uptakes, especially for Processors and Traders, which has been identified as a gap. The group is also mandating changes in the way ACOP is being reported, namely RSPO members that have multiple operational profiles that cover multiple membership categories - all of them should also be reporting under ACOP.

The Secretariat provided updates on the Greenhouse Gas Working Group (GHGWG2). The Secretariat has met up with GHG Protocol to review the development of PalmGHG Calculator version 5. There are some gaps identified but the gaps are mainly in language and terms. The calculator includes Scope 1, Scope 2, and some elements of Scope 3. The Secretariat will work with the GHG Protocol over the next few months to tighten all the identified gaps.

The Committee raised a question on what are the gaps that have been identified. Secretariat explained that one of the gaps was in terms of the scope of the calculator. GHG Protocol initially was under the impression that the RSPO Secretariat was trying to create a complete Scope 3 calculator. The Secretariat clarified that the intention was to create a calculator including Scope 1 and Scope 2 with some elements of Scope 3. This is acceptable as it is aligned with the protocol, but the scope of the calculator needs to be clearly stated. Another gap identified is in the definition as GHG Protocol has certain terminology on corporate management units and jurisdiction, while RSPO has different terminology. These terminologies are largely aligned, but there needs to be a common language. There was also discussion on a collaborative relationship with GHG Protocol moving forward particularly on landscape approaches, as they are considering scaling up GHG protocol from a corporate level to the jurisdictional level.

The Committee raised a question whether the estate and mill emissions are along the same line as the Forest, Land and Agriculture (FLAG) and non-FLAG emissions. The Secretariat explained that FLAG is SBTi that is built on the GHG protocol, and they share a common framework. As long as the RSPO PalmGHG calculator is aligned with GHG protocol, it can be used in the SBTI downstream FLAG targets and the net zero targets.

Is it safe to say that the PalmGHG calculator will have the capacity to provide FLAG and non-FLAG emissions reporting? The Secretariat clarified that PalmGHG calculator version 5 is a GHG aligned emissions and data. There are various frameworks for net zero commitments and baselines in the market. It is up to the members if they choose to use it. RSPO aims to move towards the same

	global direction to provide information that can be used and tailor its initiatives and regulations. The Secretariat also highlighted that the Land Sector and Removals Guidance developed by GHG Protocol is due to be issued soon. RSPO has signed an NDA with GHG Protocol and as part of the agreement, they will be previewing the guidance to RSPO in July once the document has been finalised before the endorsement next year. Any adjustments to the calculator can be made then.	
3.0	**For Update**	

3.1	**Standards Review 2023/2024**
	The Secretariat provided updates on Standards Review 2023/2024.
	● The re-drafting of the Standards has been done and is currently pending final round of edits and internal alignment, especially on the Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard.
	● The Secretariat will be releasing the draft by this week to the internal governance bodies, which are the Standing Committees, Working Groups and Task Forces as well as the Steering Group.
	● The Secretariat is planning a full walkthrough of the Standards revision during the BoG meeting in June. The draft will then go for adoption at the General Assembly (GA) in November 2024.
	● The Secretariat also had conversations with HCVN and HCSA and they are positive on the proposed approach to integrate PRiSMA into the HCV-HCS assessment as an initial risk-based requirement.
	● The Public Consultation period has been planned to start in July until the first week of August 2024 for both P&C and ISH Standards as well as socialisation of PRiSMA to the members. The consultations will be conducted in a targeted manner with local language translations. The Secretariat plans to have a Standards Clinic during the workshops, where attendees can speak one-on-one with Secretariat staff on specific issues on the Standards.
	● The physical workshops will take place at the following regions:
	    ○ One in Indonesia (in English and Bahasa Indonesia)
	    ○ One in South Thailand (in Thai) with major focus on the ISH
	    ○ Two in Latin America, at Guatemala and Colombia (in Spanish)
	    ○ Two in Africa region, at Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire (in English and French)
	● There will also be online webinars and virtual public consultation (for Europe, North America, Japan, India and China) that will take place concurrently.
	● Internal targeted consultations are also planned to take place in June.
		A full walkthrough of the Standards Revision at the BoG meeting.
		Action by: Secretariat

	● The Secretariat is discussing with the previous facilitator, IPK, to provide the online commenting platform and other services during the Public Consultation. ● The Secretariat is working with the regional teams to determine the capacity for the workshops. The capacity for each consultation workshop will differ depending on the region. For example, the capacity in Latin America will be around 25 - 30 pax while Indonesia may have a larger capacity. ● The public consultation will be combined with field visits and stakeholder engagement. The Secretariat will be sending teams within the Standards department to the workshops in all the regions, with 5 - 6 representatives in each region to understand the reality of the ground to enrich the standard. The Committee highlighted that: ● The plan for field visit and stakeholder engagement should be presented during the BoG meeting. Committee believed that it is important to mention the planning for mill trips, and the support in Africa for the research paper on wild palms and artisanal mills. The Secretariat notes this and will include these plans in the presentation to the BoG. ● The Committee suggested having consultations with the experts as well, specifically the Technical Committee (TC) members that supported the Task Force (TF) previously as they were quite active in providing suggestions and advice on some of the changes required. They have also expressed that they would like to be consulted again. The Secretariat agreed with this. The plan is to have the expert consultation in June to obtain feedback from the TC or TF members. The Secretariat suggested bringing them into public consultation workshops or online consultations as well. The Secretariat is also planning to reach out to the underrepresented groups to join the consultations.	Include the full plan (field visits and stakeholder engagement activities) of the public consultation in the presentation to the BoG. **Action by: Secretariat**
3.2	**Certification System Revision** The Secretariat provided updates on the Certification System document revision. ● The Certification System revision was previously done after the Standards had been endorsed. In September 2023, the Steering Group for the Standards Review sent a letter to the SSC requesting for the Certification System's review to be done concurrently with the Standards Review. ● The timeline for the Certification System has been aligned with the Standards revision process and the drafting stage has been concluded. Draft 1 has gone through internal consultations within the Secretariat	

and has taken into account issues brought up during the stakeholder consultations.

- The next step is to have a public consultation on the proposed revised draft. This will be done together with the revised Standards. There will be a slot within the public consultation sessions for people to give feedback on the Certification System document to allow a more efficient and holistic process rather than having a separate public consultation.
- Key objectives of the revision to the Certification System document are to improve credibility in the Certification System, improve the certification process and improve clarity in the process itself.
- Some of the key changes in the draft have been highlighted as follows:
  - o Transfer of Certification between CBs
    Previously, written permission from RSPO was required for the transfer of certification between CBs. The current draft aims to improve the mechanism that under exceptional circumstances, the Unit of Certification (UoC) may submit an appeal through PRiSMA for a second transfer with proper justification. One of the current key problems is that the UoC frequently changes CBs. This new requirement aims to prevent the frequent switching of CBs without proper justification which can increase transparency and ease the tracking process.

  - o Impartiality Requirement
    Previously, the CB and members of its assessment teams, including any subcontractors, shall maintain independence from the organisation being assessed within a minimum of three (3) years prior to the audit to be considered not to have a conflict of interest. An additional layer has now been added where they also have to remain independent one year after the audit. This is because it has been observed that there are a lot of cases where some freelance auditors or technical experts provide training/ advisory services after the audit, which will jeopardise the integrity of the audit team. A ban of 3 years from the RSPO certification program was also introduced to increase the transparency and credibility of the audit.

  - o Mandatory Audit Checklist
    The audit checklist was an optional guidance in the current Certification System. Moving forward, this will now be made mandatory. There will be a Compliance Checklist and Compliance Requirements built into the new Standards, and the audit checklist will be based on that which will be integrated

within PRiSMA. This will make the audits more systematic and standardised.

o Audit Personnel & Apprentice Auditor
The role and qualifications for Lead Auditors and Auditors will be improved to ensure the roles are clearer and specified. The position of Apprentice Auditor has also been introduced. The Secretariat would like to obtain feedback during the public consultations on this new requirement as one of the key problems is that there are a lot of complaints about the auditors, but this is difficult to address without a sufficient pool of auditors. Therefore, the idea is to introduce a lower requirement for an auditor who has limited roles and abilities to make decisions but has sufficient background to be qualified as auditor. This opens up the opportunity to groom new talent to increase the pool of auditors and eventually increase requirements for auditors.

o Redefining Scope of Certification
This is not present in the current Certification System. The proposal is where there is legal action with regards to land ownership on the land going for certification, that land will be excluded from certification. This is only for Initial Certification. The reason is because RSPO should not be certifying land where the land ownership is being legitimately and formally questioned. In cases where the legal action is identified after the management unit has been certified, it shall be dealt through the UoC's internal grievance mechanism. In situations where the UoC has already been certified, the CBs will be required to monitor the ongoing court action on the outcome.

o Pre-Audit Requirements
Pre-audit requirements have been introduced as the members fail to submit the documentation before the agreed-upon date by the CBs. With this, prior to the audit, proper information is gathered and submitted which will ensure a more transparent and systematic audit.

o Audit Approach (Semi-announced audits)
The audit approach previously only focused on announced and unannounced audits. Semi-announced audit is introduced where the UoC is provided with a time frame of 6 weeks where an audit can happen at any time during that time frame. This is

to provide as little notice as possible to prevent the UoC from altering their normal activities and ensure that the realistic practices of the UoC is captured during the audit.

o Workers Sampling
This is not in the current Certification System but was included in the Labour Auditing Guidance. The requirement and sampling methodology for selecting workers to be interviewed has been introduced. This is to mandate proper sampling of workers and mechanisms to preserve the integrity of the worker interviews.

o Sampling of Previous Land User
This is not in the current Certification System. The Secretariat is introducing the sample calculation for the previous land user to be interviewed in every certification based on the proposed formula and risk level. This is to provide guidance to the CB in identifying the previous land user(s) and in line with the spirit of assessing FPIC requirements where the CB shall demonstrate that the previous land user has been consulted, and the terms of negotiated agreements are fulfilled.

The Committee raised a question whether this applies to recent changes in land ownership, and does it refer to well established organisations. Has this been taken into consideration as it might be difficult to determine the land user 20 years ago? Secretariat clarified that it was discussed, and it is to the extent in which CB considers to be reasonable and relevant. It will be left to the discretion of CBs depending on their justification. If there is no land conflict, CBs might justify that there is no need to look for previous land users beyond a few previous land users. However, where there is land conflict, this requirement applies.

o Minimum requirements for multiple management units (Time Bound Plan)
The requirement is currently included in the minimum requirements for multiple management units. It has been improved and a clear direction for TBP management is provided, including the deviation process for plan year certification by management units. This will be integrated into PRiSMA, making sure the TBP is registered in PRiSMA. This makes it easier to monitor the TBP records which will be used

for further analysis to achieve 100% certification of all growers' members.

- o Audit Duration Guide
  In the current general guideline, the duration of the site audit of a management unit consisting of one mill and one estate should be nine (9) man-days. An audit duration guide has been introduced for better planning and direction of audit. This provides clear guidance for the CB in allocating the minimum recommended audit days. The audit days guide will serve only as a minimum, and it may be increased by the CB based on circumstance (i.e. risk level).

- o Licence Management
  Licence management is currently included in the Palm Trace Manual. It will now be introduced in the Certification System to clarify each user types (i.e RSPO Member and CB) and it will explain the key function and activity in managing the licence. This will be introduced in PRiSMA. This provides clarity and guidance on the licencing process including the key functions and activities for RSPO members in managing their licence on the RSPO IT platform (PRiSMA), while providing auditability for the CB.

The Committee commented that:
- For the requirement for interview of previous landowner, a cut-off date is required, and the cut-off date should not be too far back. There need to be some limits to how far back in time and how significant the conflict can be.
- Questioned whether the Jurisdictional Approach (JA) has been included in the process. The Secretariat explained that the Certification System is particularly designed for the P&C and ISH Standard and not for JA. JA can be another conversation with a separate Certification System as some aspects might be slightly different. Currently, JA is not at a point to codify a Certification System. The Secretariat tried to design a system that can eventually adapt to JA with some elements considered on how to potentially scale up the system to the jurisdictional level. The Secretariat will discuss this internally.
- The Secretariat to make sure that the Certification System is aligned to the P&C Standard. The Secretariat agreed that this is one of the benefits of doing the revisions in parallel. Upon endorsement of the new Certification System, it will be a progressive development with elements being launched in PRiSMA and elements that may require

	additional procedures to be developed and folded into PRiSMA gradually. This will follow the timeline of the P&C and ISH Standards.	
4.0	**Any Other Business**	
4.1	**Smallholder Representative, Ian Orrell's Resignation from SSC.** Ian Orrell has retired from SD Plantation/NBPOL employment and is no longer employed by a RSPO member organisation. This has been notified to the Smallholder Standing Committee (SHSC) at its last meeting. The SHSC will be appointing another person SHSC to join SSC in Ian's place. This will be discussed again at the next SHSC meeting. Ian will stay on in SSC until his replacement comes on board. The Committee expressed their appreciation to his excellent services and dedication over the years.	
4.2	**Next SSC Meeting** OT will not be able to join the next meeting.	

MEETING ENDED AT 1605 MYT