

## MINUTES OF MEETING

### 53<sup>rd</sup> SSC Meeting

**Time:** 1500 - 1700 (MYT)

**Date:** Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Venue:** Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/97577799223> Meeting ID: 975 7779 9223 Passcode: 53@SSC

### ATTENDEES

Name	Initial	Organisation	Representative Category
1. Lim Sian Choo (Co-Chair)	LSC	Bumitama Group	Grower (INA) - Substantive
2. Olivier Tichit (Co-Chair)	OT	Musim Mas	P & T – Substantive
3. William Siow	WS	MPOA/IOI	Grower (MY) – Substantive
4. Andrew Aeria	AA	PEMANGKIN	SNGO – Substantive
5. Sander Van den Ende	SvE	SIPEF	Grower (RoW) – Substantive
6. Lee Kian Wei	LKW	United Plantations	Grower (MY) – Alternate
7. Guillaume Lacaze	GL	L'Oreal	Consumer Goods Manufacturer – Substantive
1. Yen Hun Sung	HS	RSPO Secretariat	
2. Leena Ghosh	LG	RSPO Secretariat	
3. Jasmine Ho Abdullah	JH	RSPO Secretariat	
4. Maria Papadopoulou	MP	RSPO Secretariat	
5. Hanib Libon	HL	RSPO Secretariat	
6. Ruzita Abd Gani	RG	RSPO Secretariat	
<i>Absence with apology:</i>			
1. Anne Rosenbarger	AR	WRI	ENGO – Substantive
2. Jenny Walther-Thoss	JWT	WWF Singapore	ENGO – Substantive
3. Suzan Cornelissen	SC	CNV	SNGO – Substantive
4. Brian Lariche	BL	Humana	SNGO – Alternate
5. Librian Angraeni	LA	Musim Mas	P & T – Alternate

### AGENDA

Time	Item	Agenda	PIC
1500 - 1505	1.0	<b>Opening</b>	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	<b>Meeting Dashboard</b>	Co-Chairs
	2.1	Confirmation of the 52 <sup>nd</sup> MoM on 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	
	2.2	Action Tracker	
	2.2.1	List of Supplementary/Derivative Documents of P&C and ISH Standard 2024	
	2.3	Progress Update WG/TF/SG under SSC	
	2.4	Progress Update of National Interpretation	
1515 – 1535	3.0	<b>For Endorsement</b>	
	3.1	Interim Interpretation on Tracing Beyond Refinery in the Supply Chain Certification Standard	HS

	3.2	Procedural Update of 2024 RSPO P&C and ISH Standard	HS
1535 - 1555	4.0	<b>For Update</b>	
	4.1	Independent Review of the RSPO Standards Review and Revision Process	HS/LG
	4.2	Supply Chain Certification Standard Review	MP
1555 – 1620	5.0	<b>For Discussion</b>	
	5.1	SSC Members Participation in Standards Related TFs	LG
1620 – 1625	6.0	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
1625		<b>END</b>	

**DISCUSSION:**

No.	Description	Action Points (PIC)
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Opening</b>	
1.1	The Chairs welcomed everyone to the meeting and presented the agenda of the meeting. The agenda was approved.	
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.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Meeting Dashboard</b>	
2.1	<b><u>Confirmation of the 52<sup>nd</sup> MoM on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025</u></b> The minutes of the meeting were adopted.	
2.2	<b><u>Action Trackers</u></b> The action tracker of the previous meeting was presented. No other comments were received.	
2.2.1	<b><u>List of Supplementary/Derivative Documents of P&amp;C and ISH Standard 2024</u></b> The Secretariat presented the list of supplementary/derivation documents of P&C and ISH Standard 2024. No comments were received.  The Secretariat also provided an update on the list of documents to be developed under BHCVWG. The current focus of BHCVWG is the Remediation and Compensation Procedure (RaCP) version 2 document. There are several documents that only need to be updated, which the Secretariat will handle. The other two remaining documents that will be developed within the BHCVWG are Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Soil and RSPO Guidance on Changes in HCV Conditions and Status. However, these two documents are not expected to be ready by November 2025. The BHCVWG will begin considering whether interim measures are needed. This will be discussed by	

	the BHCVWG, and an update will be provided to the SSC in June for further action and follow-up.	
2.3	<p><b><u>Progress Update WG/TF/SG under SSC</u></b></p> <p>The progress update for the WG/TF/SG Committee was presented. No other comments were received.</p>	
2.4	<p><b><u>Progress Update of National Interpretations of the 2024 P&amp;C and ISH Standard</u></b></p> <p>The progress update for National Interpretations (NI) of the 2024 P&amp;C and ISH Standard was presented. Colombia has verbally expressed interest; however, they have not yet been included in the list as its still in preliminary stages. It will be added once a formal expression of interest is received. No other comments were received.</p>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>For Endorsement</b>	
3.1	<p><b><u>Interim interpretation on tracing beyond refinery in the Supply Chain Certification Standard</u></b></p> <p>The Secretariat presented the revised decision paper on the interim interpretation on tracing beyond refinery in the Supply Chain Certification Standard (SCCS).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the 52<sup>nd</sup> SSC meeting on 24 April 2025, the SSC called for a focused meeting with the Secretariat to discuss the decision paper on Interim Interpretation on Tracing Beyond Refinery in the Supply Chain Certification Standard. Following the focused meeting on 30 April 2025, members of the SSC agreed to add further wordings in the proposed text of the Interim Interpretation, in clause 5.7.2 (C).</li> <li>It was agreed during the focused meeting to distribute the updated paper by email. The updated decision paper was circulated to all SSC members after the focused meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025. There is only one change to the decision paper, which is in clause 5.7.2 (c) on “inputs and outputs being allowed for announcements”. The Secretariat is presenting this again in this SSC meeting for a formal approval.</li> </ul>	

- The revised wording is shown below:

**5.7.2**

*a) Shipping Announcement: Shall be carried out by the mills when RSPO certified products are sold as RSPO certified to refineries, crushers, and traders not more than three months after dispatch with the dispatch date being the date recorded on the Bill of Lading or the dispatch documentation.*

*b) Confirm on Shipping Announcement: Shall be carried out by refineries, crushers, and traders within three months of the issue of the Shipping Announcement.*

*c) Announcement: Shall be carried out by refineries, crushers, and traders when RSPO certified products in the yield scheme (Figure 2 and Figure 3, Annex 1) is sold as RSPO certified. The announcement shall be carried out within three months of the physical delivery of the products. For post-refinery sales of RSPO certified products (inputs and outputs) sold as RSPO certified by refineries, crushers, traders and other midstream/downstream supply chain actors, Announcements can be carried out on an optional basis.*

*d) Confirm on Announcement: Shall be carried out by refineries and traders within three months of receipt of the certified products. For post-refinery sales of RSPO certified products sold as RSPO certified by refineries, crushers, traders and other midstream/downstream supply chain actors, Confirm Announcements can be carried out on an optional basis.*

*e) Trace: Shall be carried out by the refineries and traders when RSPO certified products are sold as RSPO certified to actors in the supply chain beyond the refinery, unless an optional post-refinery Announcement has been carried out for the sale. The volume shall be traced within three months after physical delivery. Tracing triggers the generation of a trace document with a unique traceability number. For inputs and outputs at a refinery level, Tracing can be carried out on an optional basis. Tracing can be done in a consolidated way.*

- During the focused meeting, two supplementary topics were also discussed. The first relates to tracing and making announcements to non-RSPO members. In this context, the Secretariat has discussed the issue with IOI and developed a potential interim measure or workaround to address their concerns.
- The second topic concerns the process flow within the prisma system. It was noted that some flexibility needs to be put in place in the current process. The Secretariat has already initiated discussions with the prisma team, and further engagements have taken place with both Agridence and the SDT team to work on implementing these adjustments. While the system is largely ready to be rolled out, the product list for post-refinery announcements still needs to be updated as the current list is incomplete. This update is expected to take some time.

The Committee commented:

- The Committee raised a question that since the wording has already been refined following the focused group discussion, it was previously agreed that the document will then be distributed for endorsement via email. Is it necessary to proceed with another round of endorsement? The Secretariat clarified that the proper process is to bring the document back to the full SSC for official approval, ensuring that all members have the opportunity to review and provide comments if needed. A short deadline of one week can be set for the endorsement via email.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no further comments or objections on the revised text. The document will be circulated via email to all SSC members, with a short deadline for responses.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretariat highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to discuss the interim workaround that was developed with IOI regarding tracing and announcements to non-RSPO members.</li> <li>The Secretariat had a meeting with IOI last week to discuss possible interim workarounds that could be implemented within the existing system, without requiring additional development. Two options were proposed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Special Trading Account per Non-RSPO Member:</u> The first option is that the refinery or seller creates an additional trading account specifically for the non-RSPO member. The trading licence application for this account would need to be supported by documentation from the non-RSPO member, stating that the entity in question is unable to become an RSPO member. Once the licence is approved, transactions would occur from the refinery's trading account to this special trading account. This approach enables trade to take place, allows for stock movement and accounting within the system, and gives the Secretariat the ability to conduct due diligence and risk assessment on a case-by-case basis. It prevents the system from becoming entirely open while still facilitating necessary transactions.</li> <li><u>Special Trading Account Under a Generic RSPO Membership:</u> The second suggestion is to create a special trading account under a generic RSPO membership that belongs to the non-RSPO member or managed by the Secretariat, instead of individual refineries. This account could be managed centrally and still operate within the existing rules of the system. It would allow for stock activities to proceed while maintaining oversight. While the membership and account creation would fall under the Secretariat, the rights to manage the account would be assigned to the non-RSPO member, allowing them to operate it directly.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The legal counsel within RSPO Secretariat has advised that allowing tracing and announcements to non-RSPO members does carry potential risks, particularly because tracing documents are currently issued as PDFs, which can be falsified. If a false claim were made using these documents, it could result in reputational damage to RSPO and potential legal liability for the member involved. Therefore, these</li> </ul>	
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	<p>proposed interim solutions would allow for controlled announcements rather than full tracing, aligning with the current system setup. This approach shows that the Secretariat has done due diligence and risk assessment while enabling essential trade functions to continue, without the need for immediate system development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main distinction for both options lies in who creates the trading account on behalf of the non-member. In Option 1, the RSPO member (e.g., the refinery or seller) creates and applies for a new trading account licence, accompanied by documentation confirming that the client cannot become an RSPO member or falls under exceptional circumstances. The Secretariat would then review and approve the trading licence based on this documentation, ensuring a certain level of due diligence and risk assessment has been carried out. In Option 2, the Secretariat creates the trading account on behalf of the non-member. It makes more sense for the non-member to operate a single trading account, rather than having multiple accounts tied to each refinery. This setup allows the Secretariat to maintain oversight and carry out due diligence, while avoiding the need for any major system development.</li> <li>• The Secretariat proposed to proceed with the second option, but this is an interim workaround that is quite specific for IOI, it has the potential to be scalable and could be applied more broadly to other members facing similar situations. The Secretariat is seeking the SSC's advice on the possibility of rolling this out as a general interim measure. This would remain in place until the SCCS Review Task Force has the capacity and time to formally address the issue.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are valid reasons for some organisations that cannot become an RSPO member. However, the potential risks were also recognised in this situation. Looking ahead, these risks should be addressed collaboratively as part of a long-term solution. For now, this interim measure is a necessary response to an unexpected change in the current system. This is just a workaround and a proper discussion on how to address these types of situations more systematically will need to take place. While this may be an exceptional case, we should avoid relying on workarounds as a general approach for all similar circumstances.</li> <li>• The Committee raised a question whether it is trace or an announcement? The Secretariat clarified that both options are possible. Since it is a trading account, and sits under a separate subsidiary—in this case, a generic RSPO member—either a trace or an announcement can be made. However, if an announcement is used, it is a bit clearer and more transparent.</li> </ul>	
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3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A question was raised for Option 1 whether both the trading account and the trading licence would be created, or just the trading account.</li> <li>• The Secretariat responded that a new trading account must be based on a valid trading licence. Therefore, the trading licence must first be approved before a trading account can be created. Under this process, the organisation would need to submit a request to the Secretariat. Upon approval of the trading licence, the Secretariat would then proceed to create the trading account on behalf of the organisation. If this process is to be adopted as a general interim workaround for all members, it must be clearly communicated to ensure proper implementation and consistency.</li> <li>• The Committee highlighted that this should be treated on a case-by-case basis. A more extensive discussion involving a deeper dive into every single element or whether this approach should apply to all non-members would require more time.</li> <li>• The Committee agreed for a workable interim solution in place for this particular case. A longer and more in-depth discussion should be scheduled as part of the upcoming SCCS revision process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>The SSC has approved this decision paper. The Secretariat will seek approval from SSC members who are not present via email.</p> <p><b>Procedural Update for 2024 RSPO Standards</b></p> <p>The Secretariat presented the decision paper on the procedural updates identified in the 2024 RSPO P&amp;C and ISH Standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Per Clause 2.4.3 and 2.4.4 of the P&amp;C 2024 and Clause 3.4.3 and 3.4.4 of the ISH Standard 2024 (Interim Revision I and Interim Revision II in the Preamble Section), the 2024 RSPO standards allows for procedural updates to the adopted text of the standard in order to avoid any unintended consequences or unforeseen challenges during implementation. Such procedural updates are for clarity and not for substantive changes to the intent of the criterion and/or indicators, subject to approval through a transparent oversight structure (SSC).</li> <li>• At the 52nd SSC Meeting on 24 April 2025, the list of identified procedural updates of the 2024 standards was discussed. Following the discussion, the SSC agreed for the Secretariat to present the procedural updates to the Committee as a formal decision paper.</li> <li>• The Secretariat is seeking SSC's endorsement to the 6 procedural updates, summarised in the decision paper, as shown below:</li> </ul>	<p>Seek approval from SSC members via email</p> <p><b>Action by:</b> <b>Secretariat</b></p>
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## No. 1

Section	Text requiring clarity (with explanation)	Proposed change
ICS, Indicator A1.2 E  Annex 3	<p>The Group Manager shall have and maintain documented evidence of the smallholder group's RSPO <b>membership</b> that include:</p> <p>A) Legal formation (if necessary as per country of register requirements);</p> <p>B) Fair and transparent decision-making and governance; and</p> <p>C) Additional documents per requirements for group formation and management, where applicable</p> <p><b>Context:</b> The requirements of this indicator concern how an ISH group is established, not how the group became an RSPO membership. An ISH group's RSPO membership must happen after the group has been legally formed (requirement A). However, requirements B and C may happen before or after membership. The current wording implies that all three requirements must be met at the point of RSPO membership.</p>	<p>Update the text for clarity to:</p> <p>The Group Manager shall have and maintain documented evidence of the smallholder group's RSPO <b>establishment</b> that include: ...</p> <p>Include guidance note in Annex 3 (Guidance) to define 'establishment' as:</p> <p><i>RSPO establishment refers to the foundational elements regarding the formation, governance and operational management of the smallholder group. This can occur prior to, or after, a group's RSPO membership. Updates to these foundational elements are allowed.</i></p>

## No. 2

Section	Text requiring clarity (with explanation)	Proposed change			
Annex 6  Indicator 6.8.3 (C)	<p><b>Context:</b> In the list of supplementary and derivative documents of the 2024 P&amp;C, the RSPO document on Repayment of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs is incorrectly labelled as normative.</p> <p>The title of the document is also misleading, as a Procedure should be normative, while an informative document should be a Guidance</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>RSPO Procedure for the Repayment of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs - <b>in development</b></td> <td>6.8 / 6.8.3 (C)</td> <td>Normative</td> </tr> </table>	RSPO Procedure for the Repayment of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs - <b>in development</b>	6.8 / 6.8.3 (C)	Normative	<p>Update the title and applicability for clarity to:</p> <p>RSPO <b>Guidance</b> for the Repayment of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs</p> <p>Applicability: <b>Informative</b></p>
RSPO Procedure for the Repayment of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs - <b>in development</b>	6.8 / 6.8.3 (C)	Normative			

## No. 3

Section	Text requiring clarity (with explanation)		Proposed change
Criteria 6.8	<p><b>Context:</b> In the adopted text of the 2024 P&amp;C, there is a guidance note in Criteria 6.8 directing National Interpretations to provide additional information on national regulations.</p> <p>The note is written using normative language with the strictest verb form 'shall'. However, a Criterion is not subject to audit. The position of the note in the Criterion could cause interpretation issues if an NI does not provide the required information or in countries where there are no NIs.</p>	<div><div>6.8</div><div>Forced Labour and Trafficking in persons is prohibited. Prevention and remediation procedures are in place.</div><div><i>*National Interpretations shall include information on national regulations governing recruitment fees and related costs, where applicable.</i></div></div>	<p>Move the guidance note to Annex 5 (Guidance) to reflect its applicability</p> <p>To update the text to a less strict verb form:</p> <p><i>*National Interpretations <b>should</b> include information or national regulations governing recruitment fees and related costs, where applicable.</i></p>

## No. 4

Section	Text requiring clarity (with explanation)	Proposed change
Indicator 7.3.4 (C)	<p>In the event there is any replanting on marginal soil(s) and/or fragile soil(s), the Unit of Certification <b>shall manage the area in accordance</b> with the 'RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Soil'.</p> <p>Procedural Note : RSPO shall develop the 'RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Soil' guidance document.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Identified during the MYNI TF. The text of the adopted indicator contains an inherent contradiction, in that the indicator uses the strictest verb form – 'shall' – but in reference to a guidance document, which is informative and not normative. The guidance is also unlikely to be ready by November 2025, which raises compliance risks. Based on the discussion notes from the MSCTF (September 2024), the intention of the guidance was as a supplementary informative document without precluding the use of other soil management approaches.</p>	<p>Update the text for clarity to:</p> <p>In the event there is any replanting on marginal soil(s) and/or fragile soil(s), the Unit of Certification <b>should manage the area in line</b> with the 'RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Soil'.</p> <p>Procedural Note: RSPO shall develop the RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Soil' guidance document. <b>Other soil management approaches to maintain the environmental integrity of marginal soil(s) and/or fragile soil(s) may apply.</b></p>



## No. 5

Section	Text requiring clarity (with explanation)	Proposed change
Terms and Definitions	<p><b>Medium Grower</b> Medium Growers are beneficial owners, land owners, or businesses with more than 50 hectares (ha) and up to 500 ha (accumulative) of cultivated and harvested oil palms. <small>Please also refer to other related definitions: "grower", "smallholder"</small></p> <p><b>Context: The definition of Medium Grower (MG) in the adopted text does not reflect the <a href="#">updated definition endorsed by the RSPO BoG in September 2021 per the recommendations of the Medium Grower Task Force</a>.</b></p> <p>1. The interim definition of Medium Growers:</p> <p>Medium Growers are land owners or small businesses with more than 50 ha and up to 500 ha (accumulative), who cultivate and harvest oil palms using hired labour rather than family labour. They may have diverse sources of income including from multiple crops, may not reside near their oil palm plantings and may employ administrative staff. (National Interpretation is encouraged).</p> <p><b>MG may operate mills or only produce FFB (outgrowers). Different certification pathways apply. MG without mills can seek P&amp;C certification of their FFB through Group Certification. MG with mills fall under P&amp;C certification.</b></p>	<p>Update the definition of Medium Grower (with additional clarity) to:</p> <p><i>Medium Growers are land owners or small businesses with more than 50 ha and up to 500 ha (accumulative), who cultivate and harvest oil palms using hired labour rather than family labour. They may have diverse sources of income including from multiple crops, may not reside near their oil palm plantings and may employ administrative staff. <u>Medium growers may or may not operate mills. (National Interpretation is encouraged).</u></i></p>

## No. 6

Section	Text requiring clarity (with explanation)	Proposed change
Annex 5 (P&C) Annex 3 (ISH)	<p>The title of Annex 5 and Annex 3 in the adopted text is Compliance Requirements and Informative Guidance, reflecting the previous understanding of the Annex's applicability. This applicability has been superseded by the decision to make Annex 5/3 informative.</p> <p><b><u>Annex 5 - Compliance Requirements and Informative Guidance</u></b></p>	<p>Update the title of Annex 5/3 for clarity to reflect the correct level of applicability:</p> <p><i>Annex 5/3 - <u>Guidance</u> <del>Compliance Requirements and Informative Guidance</del></i></p>

The Committee highlighted:

- In reviewing the Annex, there were several areas of concern that were identified, specifically on documents that should be informative and are currently presented as normative. Therefore, one of the Committee suggested that, since the National Interpretation (NI) process is ongoing, it would be beneficial to allow the NI Task Force (TF) to review the Annex and provide their comments and feedback. Final endorsement of the Annex can then take place after the NI teams have completed their review and submitted their feedback.
- The Committee suggested that since the document has already been presented, it can be accepted for now. A note can then be sent to the NITFs, requesting them to review their procedures and Annexes. If they identify any necessary changes, they can submit recommendations accordingly. The Committee agreed that the process should not be delayed while waiting for the NI feedback. There is a possibility that the NIs may not identify the issue, and relying solely on their input could stall progress. The NITFs will have sufficient time ahead to raise any additional concerns or propose further refinements as needed.
- The Committee agreed that rather than expecting immediate, comprehensive feedback, it is better to allow the NITFs to carry out their work at their own pace. The document prepared today will be shared with them, with the understanding that they are welcome to bring back further comments or proposed edits.
- The Secretariat raised a question that since there is no quorum in this meeting, the decision paper cannot receive full approval and cannot be

	<p>formally shared with the NIs yet. The Secretariat asked whether it would be prudent to circulate the paper to the NIs following this meeting, with a clear caveat that it is still pending formal endorsement—so that the NIs are at least aware of its content ahead of their upcoming meetings—or whether it would be better to wait for formal SSC approval. The Committee responded that it is better to follow the proper process and only circulate the document after it has received formal approval from the SSC. The Committee proposed giving a short deadline for approval via email (five working days) as the matter is urgent.</p> <p><b>Decision</b> The SSC has approved this decision paper. The Secretariat will seek approval from SSC members who are not present via email with a short deadline.</p>	<p>Seek approval from SSC members via email <b>Action by:</b> <b>Secretariat</b></p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>For Update</b>	
4.1	<p><b><u>Independent Review of the RSPO Standards Review and Revision Process</u></b></p> <p>The Secretariat provided an update on the independent review of the RSPO Standards Review and Revision Process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Secretariat has shared the 3 proposals received by the three consultants (Solbert Consulting, Singapore Agri-Food Innovation Lab (SAIL), Nanyang Technological University and Peterson Solutions) with the SSC members.</li> <li>• The Secretariat proposed to proceed with Solbert Consulting as they have conducted standards review and are familiar with ISEAL. Their project proposal also meets the criteria of engaging stakeholders and members.</li> <li>• As SSC manages the oversight of the whole independent review, the Secretariat is presenting this for SSC's discussion.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee has no further comments as long as the usual consultant selection process was followed and among the 3 proposals, Solbert Consulting appears to be the most qualified and is currently the most cost-effective option. Given that Solbert Consulting has prior experience conducting standard reviews and is familiar with ISEAL requirements, their expertise is the most suitable. For now, their proposal seems affordable, but it will be important to manage the scope carefully to avoid additional costs.</li> <li>• The Secretariat suggested having the consultant join the next SSC meeting as it would be beneficial for all SSC members to meet the consultant, raise any concerns, and ask further questions. The</li> </ul>	<p>Invite consultant to join the next SSC meeting</p>

Secretariat will make arrangements to invite the consultant to the next SSC meeting.

**Action by:**  
**Secretariat**

#### 4.2 Supply Chain Certification Standard Review 2025

The Secretariat provided an update on the Supply Chain Certification Standard (SCCS) Review 2025.

- The first physical SCCS Review TF meeting was held in Paris on 22-23 May 2025 with the RSPO Secretariat as the facilitator. Both substantive members and observers were present at the meeting and there were also members that joined the meeting virtually.
- The Chair of the TF was decided during the meeting and the co-chair is still to be decided.
- The next TF meeting will take place in June or July 2025.
- There were a few discussion points during the meeting as shown below:

Topic	Who	Action for following TF meetings
Presentation of the 2020 RSPO SCC Standard		
Initial Public Consultation on 2020 RSPO SCCS		
Topics Proposed for Potential Inclusion in the SCC Standard		
Social Requirements	TC to be established	TC to explore the potential, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of including social standards on an optional basis within the SCC.
Environmental Requirements / Legal Compliance	To be discussed in next meeting	
Strengthening the MB Model		TC to explore on how to strengthen MB model and possibilities to include certified FFB traders
Improving Conversion Rules - 1:1 rule and yield scheme		Technical Committee to address one-to-one conversion rules and safeguards as part of on Strengthening Mass Balance.
Certified FFB Traders	TC to be established	Explore the possibility of including FFB Traders / Secretariat has started this process.
Supply Chain Traceability beyond Refinery	RSPO Secretariat / TF	Prepare documentation for post-refinery announcements on an optional basis since Prisma team has been working on a product list for post-refinery announcements.
Palm based feedstock –Waste/ by-Products	RSPO Secretariat	Provide more information about potential markets and products for palm-based waste/byproducts certification.
Additional Chain of Custody Model		

Topic	Who	Action
Annex 6 - RSPO Rules for Oleochemicals and Its Derivatives	TC to be established	TC to review and simplify the oleochemicals Annex 6 - including CB representatives.
Structure of the SCC Standard	RSPO Secretariat	Review and align the structure of management system requirements and traceability requirements in the standard and clarify specific requirements and applicability for different supply chain actors (e.g. refineries, traders) in the standard. Prioritize developing options for restructuring the SCCS standard.
Checking the validity of supplier via RSPO website	RSPO Secretariat / TF	Explore how this requirement may evolve, as it is partially addressed in PRISMA for sectors that register their transactions
Trader license and distributor license	RSPO Secretariat / TF	Prepare and distribute a list of existing trade and distributor licenses tied to membership.
Outsourcing activities	RSPO Secretariat / TF	Explore how this requirement can be made more clear
Multi-site certification , Group Certification	RSPO Secretariat / TF	Clarify specific requirements and applicability for different supply chain actors (e.g. refineries, traders) in the standard.
Complaint	To be discussed in next meeting	Explore how the requirement can be more specific potentially by defining what qualifies as a complaint and providing clear guidance on how organizations can establish and maintain documented procedures for receiving and resolving stakeholder complaints
Reporting of volume of certified materials	RSPO Secretariat / TF	Secretary to evaluate consistency and clarity of auditor reporting templates across all CBs.
Claims	To be discussed in next meeting	Explore how the SCC Standard aligns with and influences the RSPO Rules on Market Communications & Claims (2022).
Annex 7 Food service companies	Focus Group /RSPO Secretariat	Secretary to gather data on the scale and prevalence of food service company certifications.

The Committee raised question:

- A question was raised regarding whether this discussion was intended for decision-making or simply an update—particularly in light of sustained objections to including environmental and social aspects.
- The Secretariat clarified that this is only an update and not a decision-making point. During the TF meeting, no decisions were made as it was

	<p>the first meeting. The discussion on environmental requirements was mainly that some of the participants objected to including these requirements while the others suggested exploring the issue further. There was no sustained objection formally raised during the TF meeting. Rather, it was raised as a potential sustained objection by an observer. The discussion on environmental and social requirements specifically focused on the benefits of including general environmental and social requirements in the standard, particularly in relation to independent palm oil mills. These mills are becoming a point of concern because they produce Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO) but are not subject to the same criteria and indicators as mills with their own supply base. The TF agreed that this requires further review, and it may be linked to the structure of the standards. There may be a need to consider different levels of requirements, depending on the actor's position within the supply chain. The matter will be carried forward for continued discussion at the next TF meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Social NGO Committee member raised a question on who will participate in the Technical Committee on social issues with the necessary understanding of how these matters are linked to supply chains? This situation once again places pressure on the Social NGO caucus to find more participants with relevant expertise. Without adequate SNGO representation, there are valid concerns about the legitimacy and representativeness of any consensus-based decision-making process. Furthermore, when the matter is brought to the SSC, there is a risk that individuals who were not part of the TF discussions may not fully understand the context.</li> <li>• The Committee agreed to observe how the discussions and developments progress over time. As this was only the initial meeting, the process is still in its early stages, and it is too soon to draw conclusions. Since it has been agreed that SSC members can join the TF, this should help ensure better representation and more balanced perspectives moving forward.</li> </ul>	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	<p><b><u>SSC Members Participation in Standards Related TFs</u></b></p> <p>The Secretariat presented a discussion point on the participation of SSC Members in Standards Related Task Forces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As discussed at the last SSC meeting in April 2025, the SOP for Standard Setting and Review and the ToR for Supply Chain Certification Standard Review Task Force have restrictions as shown below: <u>RSPO SOP for Standard Setting Review (2020)</u></li> </ul>	

4.1.5 As a guidance, the TF may comprise of 24 representatives or in similar ratio by interest category, as shown in the following table:

No.	Member Representatives by Interest Category	Number
1	Palm oil growers incl. smallholder representation*	12
2	Consumer goods manufacturers	2
3	Environmental NGOs	3

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4	Social NGOs	3
5	Retailers	1
6	Banks and investors	1
7	Processors and traders	2

\*Representation Malaysia (3), Indonesia (3), ROW (3) and Smallholders/outgrowers (3)

4.1.6 To avoid conflict of interest and due to the escalated alternative decision-making mechanism as outlined in section 4.4, Standard SC members (as individuals) shall not sit on the TF.

#### ToR for SCCS Review Task Force was stated below:

The RSPO Standard Standing Committee (SSC) will ensure that the appropriate requirements outlined in this ToR and in the RSPO Standard Operating Procedure for Standard Setting and Review 2020 have been complied with, and shall then be recommended for RSPO BoG endorsement.

To avoid conflict of interest and due to the escalated alternative decision-making mechanism as outlined in section 4.4 of the RSPO Standard Operating Procedure for Standard Setting and Review 2020, SSC members (as individuals) shall not sit on the TF.

- The activities referred to as standard development activities are as such:
  - RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C)
  - National Interpretations (NI's)
  - RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard
  - RSPO Medium Grower Standard
  - RSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard
- There are currently 2 SSC members who have requested to join the SCCS Review TF, AA and GL. There are 3 SSC members currently participating in the Malaysia NITF: WS, LKW and AA.
- The Secretariat proposed three options for consideration:
  - Strict application of the rule: SSC members will need to resign from SSC if they wish to take part in any standards development processes as mentioned above.
  - Alternatively, organisations may nominate different individuals to participate in either SSC or TF.
  - Full flexibility option: In the event an SSC member chooses to participate in a TF, they must recuse themselves from any

	<p>related discussions during SSC proceedings to avoid any conflict of interest. However, if a member temporarily steps down from the SSC to join a TF and later returns to the SSC, complications may arise should the SSC need to revisit or clarify an issue linked to the TF's work. For a long-term solution, it was suggested that the governance documents be amended to reflect this process as a formal policy moving forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Secretariat also presented a question for discussion: If the SOP only refers to the Standards, what about working groups or task forces that are developing supplementary documents related to the Standards? Are SSC members allowed to participate in the WGs/TFs?</li> </ul> <p>The Committee commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee pointed out that within Option 3, there are actually two different approaches: the first is for a member to recuse themselves from a specific discussion, while the second involves temporarily stepping down from their role which is slightly different. Option 3 needs to be clarified specifically to differentiate between the more practical approach and the original framing of the option.</li> <li>• AA has officially withdrawn from the SCCS Review Task Force. Discussions on participation are still ongoing with the Social and Environmental NGOs caucuses, and a more definitive update is expected soon.</li> <li>• The Committee commented that among the options considered, Option 3 seems to be the most workable. If an individual participates in the TF, then at the SSC level, their role would be limited to endorsing what the Secretariat presents from the TF discussions. However, concerns remain when there were intense discussions and sustained objections as seen in the previous TF for the 2024 P&amp;C. Given current capacity constraints, more time is needed to fully assess and address these challenges. The lack of resources and people remains one of the biggest obstacles especially for smaller caucuses such as the Social NGO.</li> <li>• GL was proposed to be an observer in the SCCS Review TF and will be able to remain as an SSC member. This could be another possible option for consideration as being an observer would mean no voting rights and no involvement in decision-making, thus helping to avoid any conflict of interest. The core issue around conflict of interest lies in decision-making, not necessarily in participation. Option 2 does not fully address the conflict of interest, since the colleague would still represent the same company or team. The preferred option is to allow participation in the TF as an observer, which would provide an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the issues under discussion. This is particularly important for those who are not yet fully</li> </ul>	
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	<p>familiar with the standards and is far more effective than only reviewing documents shortly before SSC meetings, which can be challenging and may not provide the necessary context for informed decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee noted that participating in the TF as an observer rather than a substantive member could be an additional option to consider, or at the very least, it should be clearly specified within the exclusions or participation guidelines. If a member is an observer in a TF, then they should retain the right to participate in decision-making at the SSC on matters related to that TF's work. However, if a member is a substantive participant in a TF, they should recuse themselves from decision-making at the SSC when the relevant issues are being considered. The Committee recommended carrying this point forward for further discussion at the next meeting.</li> <li>• The Committee commented that the options under consideration should not be limited to just the three currently presented. If a more practical or workable solution emerges, it should be considered. All TFs and Working Groups (WGs) are ultimately established to support the development and improvement of the standards. The Committee encouraged viewing member participation in TFs and WGs from a positive perspective in the value of contributions made from different angles instead of focusing on the issue of conflict of interest. Participation in these groups results in deeper insights that enhance the discussion at the SSC level as the members have hands-on experience and detailed understanding of the topics being addressed.</li> <li>• The Committee suggested that for Option 3, instead of stepping down entirely, members could recuse themselves when consensus-based decisions are being made on topics where they are directly involved in the TF. If necessary, relevant documents and procedures including the SOP could be revised to ensure any proposed solutions are practical and implementable.</li> <li>• The Committee stated that Option 1 is not preferable, as it is already difficult to secure sufficient SSC membership, and requiring members to resign and rejoin would further weaken representation. As a Standing Committee, the SSC must maintain consistent and full representation to carry out its critical role related to standards. The Committee also commented that members should voluntarily declare any conflict of interest when necessary.</li> <li>• The Committee commented that any SSC member who is also participating in a TF or WG should recuse themselves from the decision-making process at the SSC level, but will still be allowed to participate in discussions and debates. Should the guidelines be made more specific, for example, stating that SSC members cannot serve as substantive members in a TF, but may participate as observers, provided they have</li> </ul>	
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	<p>no decision-making role within the TF? Or to keep it broad, that regardless of their role in the TF (member or observer), SSC members must recuse themselves from any SSC decisions on topics they have been involved in at the TF level. Being an observer should not constitute a conflict of interest, but this is open for further discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee stated that the approach can remain broad and flexible. However, participating as an observer in the TF often limits meaningful engagement. Observers may not be able to contribute fully to the debate or discussion. Therefore, the Committee suggested that there should be sufficient flexibility allowed for SSC members to continue actively contributing within TFs or WGs, while maintaining transparency and appropriate safeguards when it comes to decision-making at the SSC.</li> <li>• The Committee raised a concern regarding the role of substantive participants in a TF, particularly in situations where they have raised a sustained objection. If such a participant is also a member of the SSC, then in practice, their ability to influence the SSC's final decision may be limited, especially if they are required to recuse themselves from decision-making due to their involvement in the TF.</li> <li>• In the case of an SNGO representative, if the SNGO is the only representative of its constituency in the SSC, then recusal from decision-making could mean losing the only vote representing that caucus. This applies to the other caucuses as well. For example, if the Malaysian growers' representative also had to refrain from making a decision due to their involvement in a TF, their vote would also be lost. In such cases, the SSC would proceed without full representation, potentially undermining the consensus-based nature of SSC decisions. This issue may need to be addressed more carefully to ensure balanced and inclusive decision-making.</li> <li>• A final solution has not yet been endorsed, but the general understanding is that the member does not need to step down from the SSC. He may serve as a substantive member of the TF, but would then be required to recuse himself from decision-making or voting when the matter returns to the SSC. While there is general agreement around Option 3, a few key concerns remain—particularly the issue of dual voting at both the TF and SSC levels. This is seen as a potential conflict of interest, and currently represents the main blocking point for full endorsement.</li> <li>• The Committee noted that there is already a procedure in place to manage conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting, where members are required to declare any conflicts and may recuse themselves from voting on specific topics if necessary. Given this existing safeguard, and acknowledging the reality that quorum and</li> </ul>	
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	<p>participation are often limited, introducing further restrictions could unnecessarily slow down the process. Streamlining decision-making and ensuring that the work continues to progress efficiently is more important. The structure of both the TFs and SSC is already balanced, with representation from diverse stakeholder groups, providing a built-in system of checks and balances. Therefore, the risk of perceived bias is minimal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee raised an important question for consideration: is it preferable for a member to serve as a substantive in a TF and be a non-voting member of the SSC, or to serve as an observer in the TF, with limited participation, but retain full voting rights at the SSC, including the ability to raise a sustained objection? Procedurally the TF comes first. If the TF reaches consensus, the matter may not proceed to the SSC for further decision. However, if consensus is not achieved at the TF level, the issue is elevated to the SSC, at which point a member who was not substantively involved in the TF would still have the opportunity to raise an objection or participate in the decision.</li> <li>• The Committee suggested that a clear framework should be developed outlining circumstances where exemptions can be made or where members must formally declare potential conflicts, in order to allow participation as a substantive member in a TF while still retaining voting rights in the SSC.</li> <li>• The Committee proposed a tentative agreement to proceed with Option 3, with the understanding that it can be refined further in the next meeting. The key principle is that this option should not prevent SSC members from joining TFs, especially given the limited number of people who are willing and able to engage across SSC, TFs, and WGs. These individuals are often the most informed and experienced regarding ongoing standard development work.</li> <li>• The Committee agreed to temporarily lift the restriction on SSC members joining TFs. SSC members may now participate in TFs while the refinement of Option 3 continues. However, the Committee also noted the need to maintain integrity in the process, as having the same individuals involved at every level of decision-making could raise concerns about transparency and governance.</li> <li>• The Committee proposed to make this a discussion point for the next SSC meeting, allowing more time to reflect on whether to revert to previous practices or maintain the current approach. The discussion should consider the fact that the multistakeholder composition of the SSC should maintain checks and balances, and evaluate if there is a need to introduce additional rules or safeguards. The Committee also recommended circulating the decision to the other Standing</li> </ul>	<p>1. Discussion point for the next SSC Meeting</p> <p>2. Circulate any decision to the other Standing Committees for their consideration.</p>
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	Committees (SCs) for their consideration. The Secretariat takes note of this.	<b>Action by: Secretariat</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
6.1	<p><b><u>Next SSC Meeting</u></b></p> <p>The Co-chairs of SSC will not be available on 19 June 2025.</p> <p>The Secretariat proposed to postpone the meeting to 26 June 2025. The Secretariat will send out the new calendar invite to all SSC members.</p>	<p>Send a new calendar invite for the meeting in June</p> <p><b>Action by: Secretariat</b></p>

**MEETING ENDED AT 1646 MYT**