

2024

**RSPO Independent Smallholder
Standard**

for

*the Production of Sustainable Palm Oil
and Oil Palm Products*

IS_V2-0

Adopted at the 21st RSPO General Assembly on 13 November 2024
(Non-final design)

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HSBC	Wild Asia
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HUTAN Kinabatangan Orang-utan Conservation Programme	WIRE Consulting
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Impactt Ltd.	World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) Cameroon
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I. Introduction

1.1 Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was established in 2004 as a non-profit membership association (under Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code) with the aim of convening the palm oil industry through a multi-stakeholder platform to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil and oil palm products. Our objective is to promote the growth and use of certified sustainable palm oil and oil palm products through cooperation and shared responsibility within the supply chain and the wider palm oil value chain.

1.1.1 The RSPO Vision

RSPO is a global partnership to make palm oil sustainable.

We convene stakeholders across the palm oil value chain to act together as partners for progress and positive impact, facilitating global change through the production, consumption, and awareness of sustainable palm oil. To provide assurance, we set the standards of certification. To inspire change, we communicate environmental, social, and economic/commercial benefits. To make progress, we catalyse collaboration. RSPO, therefore, represents a collective ambition to ensure the palm oil value chain equitably balances the interests of our three Impact Pillars - People, Planet, and Prosperity.

The RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard is a foundational mechanism within RSPO's wider library of standards, systems, and procedures. While the ISH Standard is not the only mechanism RSPO has developed as a global partnership to make palm oil sustainable, it is a critical one that ensures that RSPO activities are designed and structured to include oil palm smallholders, of which there are at least 7 million worldwide.

1.1.2 The RSPO Theory of Change

The first RSPO Theory of Change (ToC) was published in 2017 and revised in September 2024 for relevance, in compliance with the ISEAL Impacts Code of Good Practice Version 2.0. The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard has been aligned with the revised RSPO ToC.

The revised ToC is presented in two visual diagrams: the full ToC and a simplified ToC (see [Appendix A](#)). The full ToC is intended for a detailed and more technical understanding of the ToC's causal pathways, while the simplified ToC is intended to show the essence of expected change for general understanding and communication.

1.1.3 The RSPO Information System

RSPO has developed a unified digital certification, trade, and traceability Information System, titled prisma (referenced as 'RSPO Information System' in this document). Information concerning compliance and certification under 2024 ISH Standard (unless specifically mentioned as an exception) will be reported and stored in prisma, which will provide critical digital traceability pathways to connect RSPO certified independent smallholders to the wider RSPO palm oil market and value chain. The development of prisma, and the transmission of data within the system, shall respect confidentiality and operational/business rights of RSPO members and smallholders.

II. Preamble

2.1 The RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard

The RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard was developed in response to the growing recognition by stakeholders for the need to increase smallholders' inclusion into the RSPO system through a mechanism that takes into consideration the diversity of challenges and situations faced by smallholders globally, together with their varying needs and concerns.

The ISH Standard responds to the needs and challenges of independent smallholders with simple and straightforward requirements, and cost-effective tools that consider diversity, capacity, and incentives. As part of the simplification process, the standard places larger responsibility on group managers, when compared to the past group certification systems. The standard complements and is organised in alignment with the RSPO Principles and Criteria, with both standards structured against the RSPO's three Impact Pillars - People, Planet, Prosperity - using the RSPO Theory of Change as a framework.

The ISH Standard is part of the wider library of RSPO standards, systems, and procedures that includes other tools and mechanisms to support independent smallholders towards sustainability and livelihood improvements, such as the RSPO Smallholder Trainer Academy (STA), the RSPO Smallholder Support Fund (RSSF), and the RSPO Smallholder Engagement Platform (RSEP).

Background to 2024 ISH Standard (IS_V2-0)

RSPO has always recognised the importance of smallholders and the need for increasing their inclusion. The RSPO Smallholder Strategy, endorsed by the RSPO Board of Governors (BoG) in June 2017, mandates a simplification of the RSPO certification system and standard to better meet the needs and contexts of smallholders. In 2017, the first RSPO Theory of Change (ToC) identified a goal of including more smallholders into the RSPO system, so that they cultivate oil palms for palm oil production sustainably while achieving a sustainable livelihood. This is reflected in the revised RSPO ToC, with the goal of ensuring that smallholders derive value and utility from complying to RSPO standards, systems, and procedures.

Per the RSPO Smallholder Strategy (2017), developing an RSPO standard tailored to the needs of smallholders that reduces unnecessary burdens to certification should lead smallholders to be more organised in well-managed, professional groups that provide resources and value to group members, have access to tools and trainings that respond to their specific needs, achieve higher yields as a result of improved capacity for farming practices and agronomy, and can ensure sustainable livelihoods by providing market access. Following two years of development, the first RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard was adopted at the 16th RSPO Annual General Assembly in Bangkok on 16 November 2019, simplifying certification requirements for smallholders, to whom the RSPO Principles and Criteria previously applied.

In February 2022, RSPO began a comprehensive Standards Review and Revision process to assess relevance of the 2018 RSPO P&C (Version 3-1) and the 2019 RSPO ISH Standard (IS_V1-0), in line with the 'RSPO Standard Operating Procedure for Standard Setting and Review (2020)', and in compliance with the 'ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards Version 6.0'.

The revision - the 2024 ISH Standard (IS_V2-0) - is the second version of the RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard, adopted at the 21st RSPO General Assembly on 13 November 2024, to replace the previous 2019 RSPO ISH Standard.

Version*	Description	Date
IS_V1-0* (ISH 2019)	The first standalone RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard was adopted at the 16th RSPO General Assembly on 6 November 2019. The ISH Standard applies to independent smallholder groups.	16 Nov 2019

IS_V2-0* (ISH 2024)	The first revision of the ISH Standard was adopted at the 21st RSPO General Assembly on 13 November 2024. The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard applies to independent smallholder groups.	13 Nov 2024
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**RSPO standards without official version numbers, which have been retroactively applied for document control purposes .*

2.1.1 Structure

The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard is composed of eight sections, with normative and informative elements. In reference to the “ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, Principles and Rules for the Structure and Drafting of ISO and IEC documents”, the definition of normative and informative is:

- **Normative:** Sets out mandatory provisions
- **Informative:** Information to assist the understanding or use of the document, or to provide contextual information about content or relationship with other documents

Section	Title	Applicability
I	Introduction	Informative
II	Preamble	Normative
III	Scope and Approach	Normative
IV	Change Log	Informative
V	Normative Requirements of the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard	Normative
VI	Principles, Criteria, and Indicators	Normative
VII	Annexes	
<i>Annex 1</i>	<i>Terms and definitions</i>	<i>Normative</i>
<i>Annex 2</i>	<i>Smallholder Declaration</i>	<i>Normative</i>
<i>Annex 3</i>	<i>Compliance Requirements and Informative Guidance</i>	<i>Informative</i>
<i>Annex 4</i>	<i>Supporting documents of ISH 2024</i>	<i>Normative / Informative</i>
VIII	Appendices	
<i>Appendix 1</i>	<i>RSPO Theory of Change</i>	<i>Informative</i>
<i>Appendix 2</i>	<i>List of National Interpretations of ISH 2019</i>	<i>Informative</i>

Supporting Documents

Implementation of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard shall be facilitated by a library of supporting documents, which include guidance documents and/or Best Management Practices (BMPs) for specific indicators, formally-adopted procedures (e.g., the RSPO Simplified High Conservation Value (HCV) Approach for Smallholders), and National Interpretations of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard.

A list of supporting documents to facilitate implementation of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is available in [Annex 4](#), and can be referenced on the RSPO website.

National Interpretations

The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard provides general requirements for sustainable cultivation of oil palms that are applicable to smallholders globally. The National Interpretation (NI) process, as specified in the “RSPO Standard Operating Procedure for Standard Setting and Review (2020)”, allows the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard to be contextualised at a national level for smallholders in specific countries.

RSPO allows for members in a particular country to initiate a National Interpretation process. Until a NI has been developed for smallholders in a specific country and endorsed by the RSPO Board of Governors, the applicable standard for smallholders in that country is the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard.

The RSPO Secretariat will provide guidance and facilitation support. A NI process may be initiated through a formal request addressed to the RSPO Secretariat (standard.development@rspo.org), and written approval from RSPO shall be required to proceed. A NI process may be initiated within 24 months of the formal adoption of the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard, and development of any initiated NI should be concluded no later than 36 months from the formal adoption of the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard.

A National Interpretation shall be confined to the scope of the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard. Additional criteria shall not be developed. A NI may strengthen criteria, indicators, and guidance, or develop acceptable performance levels to measure indicators that are contextualised for smallholders in a specific country, as long as such changes do not represent a diminution of the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard. New indicators and guidance may be developed, as long as such additions do not contradict or weaken any other part of the NI or the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard.

A list of currently effective National Interpretations of 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is available in [Appendix B](#).

Translation Accuracy Disclaimer

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard (as well as associated supplementary and derivative documents) is written in English, with translations into Bahasa Malaysia, Bahasa Indonesia, Thai, French, and Spanish. Translation accuracy of these RSPO documents in languages other than English is a priority, but is not guaranteed or implied. Any discrepancies or differences in translations is not binding nor enforceable; in such cases, the official English version of the RSPO document shall prevail.

Legal Precedence

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard (as well as associated supplementary and derivative documents) may include criteria, indicators, and/or requirements that overlap with prevailing national, regional, or local regulations or laws in countries in which oil palm cultivation and palm oil production occurs. In cases where the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard differs from such regulations or laws, the higher or stricter of the two shall always prevail. The National Interpretation (NI) process may adapt the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard to account for local context, against a reference list of applicable regulations and laws in the specific country. In the absence of an NI, the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard shall prevail.

2.2 Drafting Guidelines

The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard has been drafted based on a simplified adaptation of the “ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, Principles and Rules for the Structure and Drafting of ISO and IEC documents”, in particular Section 7 “Verbals Forms for Expression of Provisions”. This is to ensure that the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is written, and can be read or interpreted, in a consistent manner and style across the entire document. The following drafting rules were generally applied during the revision process for the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard.

2.2.1 Wording and Intention

The compulsory nature of each requirement is expressed using a simplified adaptation of the ISO “Verbals Forms for Expression of Provisions”, to capture the specific intention of provisional clauses within in a criterion or an indicator. The types of clauses based on intention should be:

Clause/Intention	Preferred verbal form	Alternate verbal forms
Requirement: Indicates instructions or requirements to be followed strictly for compliance to the standard <i>Example: The smallholder group shall develop a policy....</i>	Shall	Is required to Has to
	Shall not	Is not allowed to Do/does not
Recommendation: Indicates a recommended option(s) deemed as suitable among several possibilities (without mentioning or excluding others) for compliance to the standard <i>Example: The plan should prioritise training for smallholders relevant to the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard...</i>	Should	It is recommended that
	Should not	It is not recommended that
Permission: Indicates a course of action permissible within the limits of the standard <i>Example: Smallholders may refer to other available methodologies...</i>	May	Is permitted / allowed to
	May not	Is not permitted / allowed to
Possibility/Capability: Indicates a course of action or scenarios of possibility (whether material, physical, or causal) permissible within the limits of the standard <i>Example: Contractors hired by smallholders can demonstrate evidence of...</i>	Can	Is able to
	Cannot	Is not able to
External constraints: Indicates constraints or obligations beyond requirements of the standard <i>Example: Smallholders must take into account weather forecasts when planning...</i>	Must	-
	Must not	-

2.2.2 Syntax

The following guidelines have been generally used in the drafting of criteria and indicators in the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard, aiming to be:

- **Clear:** Plain language and common words should be used so that a criterion or an indicator is easily understandable. Sentences should be as short and concise as possible.
- **Specific:** For indicators, only a single aspect should be evaluated. An indicator with more than one aspect to be evaluated should be subdivided or separated.
- **Measurable:** For indicators that are outcome-based, the indicator should specify the outcome/levels of expected performance, which should be measurable and auditable during an assessment at a reasonable cost. For indicators that are practice-based, the indicator should specify the minimum requirements necessary, and may also specify recommendations, permissions, and/or possibilities that advance effectiveness or results of the practice.

- **Achievable:** A criterion or an indicator should be objective and not descriptive, and should not reference any specific third-party tools, technology, or patent, unless terms of usage are formally agreed with RSPO.
- **Tangible:** A criterion or an indicator should be written in a clear and consistent vocabulary and style. Subjective elements should be avoided e.g., 'proactive(ly)', 'substantial', 'adequate(ly)'.
- **Current:** A criterion or an indicator should express requirements that should be in place and present during the time of assessment, and not at a future date.

2.2.3 Lists and usage of serial commas

The purpose of a list shall be made clear by its context, with items separated into individual components and numbered. In the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard, the preferred numbering convention within lists should be based on alphabetical bullets i.e., A), B), C), D)....

Where a list is not separated and used within paragraph text, a serial comma shall be used to avoid misinterpretation and ambiguity. A serial comma is a comma placed immediately after the penultimate (second-to-last) term in a list. An example of the usage and intention of the usage of a serial comma is:

- "marketing, storing, packing for shipment, or distribution of palm oil", where it is made clear that 'packing for shipment (of palm oil)' and 'distribution (of palm oil)' are separate activities.

2.2.4 Terms and definitions

A list of key terms and definitions used in the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard and the 2024 RSPO Principles and Criteria is provided in [Annex 1](#), aligned for consistency across both standards. The first instance of a key term with a definition in each criterion and in each indicator will be underlined, and linked to the relevant section of Annex 1.

III. Scope and Approach

3.1 Scope - Understanding the Who, What, and How of the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard

The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard provides a holistic approach for the sustainable cultivation of oil palms by independent smallholder farmers, focusing on significant social, environmental, and economic/commercial aspects associated with the planting and harvesting of oil palms. The scope of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is defined as:

- A. The *Elaeis* genus of oil palms, including all botanical hybrids, breeds, varieties and/or forms derived from the African oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis*) or the American oil palm (*Elaeis oleifera*) e.g., variants or forms such as *E.guineensis fo. tenera*, *Elaeis guineensis fo. dura*, *Elaeis guineensis var. Pisifera*.
- B. Planting, replanting, expansion, and cultivation of oil palms by independent smallholders (including land, activities, and workers associated with such developments and/or operations)
- C. Production, harvesting, distribution, and sales of Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) from oil palms by independent smallholders (including land, activities, and workers associated with such developments and/or operations)

3.1.1 Scope (Who?)

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard applies to RSPO members involved in activities covered by the scope of the standard, regardless of category or sector of RSPO membership. In this document, RSPO members within scope shall be referred to as 'smallholders'.

Who is a smallholder?

A smallholder is an oil palm grower with a total accumulative planted area of oil palm that is smaller than or equal to 50 hectares (ha). The definition of a smallholder farmer and threshold of planted area of oil palm may vary by country, to be determined by the relevant National Interpretation of the RSPO P&C and/or the RSPO ISH Standard. In the absence of an NI developed for a specific country that has been formally endorsed by the RSPO Board of Governors, the definition of a smallholder in the general RSPO P&C and RSPO ISH Standard shall apply.

Who is an independent smallholder?

An independent smallholder is an oil palm grower who has the following characteristics:

- Has enforceable decision-making power on the operation of the land and production practices;
- Has the ability and freedom to choose how the land and type of planted crops is organised, managed, and financed;
- Meets any further criteria or definition relative to the applicability of the RSPO P&C and RSPO ISH Standards, provided in the relevant National Interpretation for a specific country;
- The total size of their oil palm production area is smaller than or equal to 50 hectares (ha) if no threshold is defined in a National Interpretation; OR smaller than or equal to the maximum size defined in a National Interpretation (e.g., for Indonesia, this implies the threshold size is 20 ha or below; for Ecuador the threshold is 75 ha or below); and
- Is not a scheme smallholder (defined as a smallholder who supplies FFB to a specific RSPO P&C Unit of Certification and its mill(s) under a formal and legal contractual FFB sourcing agreement).

Who can use the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard to pursue RSPO Certification?

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is only applicable to those smallholders who qualify as independent smallholders. Independent smallholders can be both men and women.

3.1.2 Scope (What?)

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard applies to the total combined plots of an individual smallholder in a group that are under oil palm cultivation/production. This is provided that the total area belonging to the individual smallholder does not exceed the defined size threshold (smaller than or equal to 50 hectares, or as defined in a National Interpretation).

To what does the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard apply to?

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is applicable for:

- Existing plots under oil palm production;
- Plots that are allocated for replanting or new planting of oil palm; and
- Plots that are, or may potentially, be allocated for new planting of oil palm

What is the definition of the total size of an oil palm production area?

The oil palm production area is defined by accumulating all plots of land owned by a smallholder (or its entity), regardless of where they are located.

This includes existing plots of land with oil palm planting (including areas allocated for replanting), as well as areas allocated for new oil palm planting that are owned by the individual smallholder (or its entity) within or outside the Unit of Certification i.e., the group that the smallholder (or its entity) is part of.

This means if a smallholder (or its entity) owns and operates oil palm plots outside the group (the Unit of Certification) that is being certified, it is also counted as part of the cumulative hectareage of the individual smallholder's oil palm production area, even if the plot(s) are in another village or another region.

The total size of all oil palm plots owned by an individual smallholder (or its entity) shall be disclosed during the RSPO Membership application process, or disclosed to the RSPO Secretariat for smallholders joining an existing group that is already a member of RSPO.

3.1.3 Scope (How?)

The Unit of Certification (UoC) for the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is the group manager and all individual members of the group. The certificate holder is the group.

How to get certified under the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard?

The independent smallholder:

- Must be a member of a group of independent smallholders seeking certification;
- Can form a new group or join an existing group; and
- Must sign the Smallholder Declaration committing the smallholder to meeting full compliance with all requirements of the RSPO ISH Standard (*Refer to [Annex 2](#)*).

The group:

- Must be a legally formed entity, as defined under the national laws of the country where the group is located;
- Must appoint a group manager that meets all the requirements of the Internal Control System (*Refer to [The Internal Control System Requirements for Smallholder Groups](#)*); and
- Can have members that are at different phases in the certification process (*Refer to [RSPO Phased Approach for Independent Smallholder Certification](#)*) e.g., the group can have members working towards compliance with Eligibility, Milestone A, and/or Milestone B. Members can join at different phases and times, and the membership of the group can continue to grow.

How should a group be structured?

Not all groups look alike.

- The group manager can be a representative of a mill, an organisation, or an individual
- The group can either be legally registered as an individual or as an organisation
- The group needs to have a minimum of one member. There is no maximum number
- The total number of hectares that form part of the group has no upper limit. There is only an upper limit per individual member (*Refer to [Section 3.1.2](#)*).

How can I proceed if the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard does not apply to me?

If the 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard is not applicable because the requirements of an individual smallholder or group certification cannot be met, it is still possible to get certified under the RSPO certification system by using one of the following approaches:

- The RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C)
- Group Certification for FFB production

3.2 RSPO Phased Approach for Independent Smallholder Certification

The RSPO ISH Standard uses a phased approach to enable independent smallholders to achieve compliance over a specified period of time, as presented in **Figure 2**. The approach includes three phases:

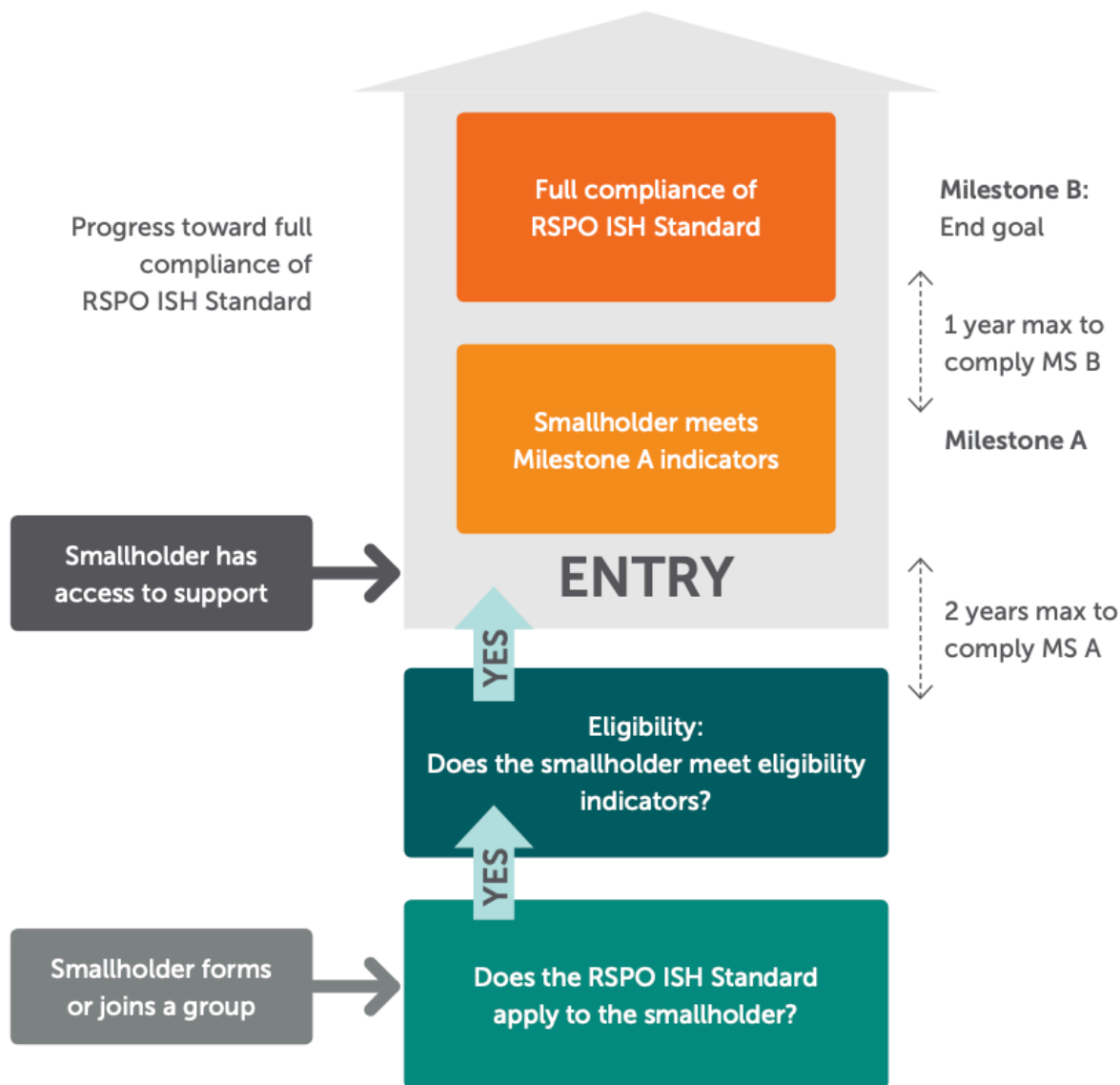
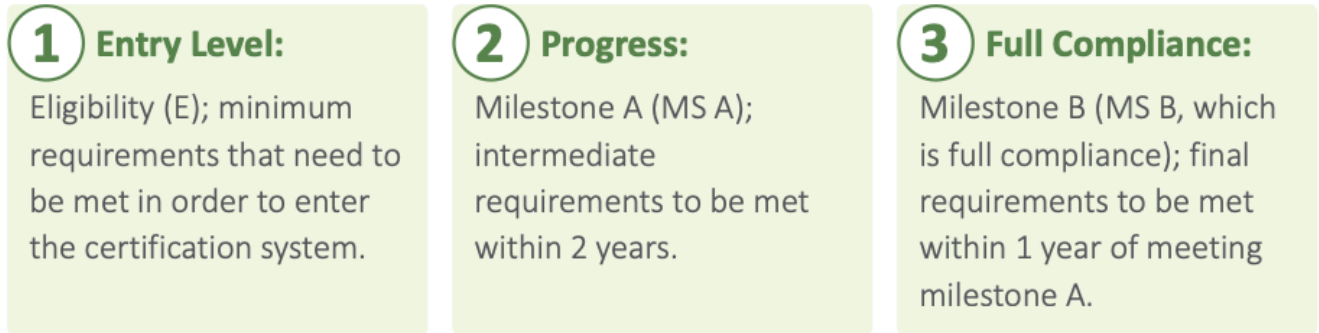


Figure 2: Phased approach for smallholder certification against the ISH Standard

The phased approach allows a smallholder to enter the RSPO system once they are part of a group and can meet all Eligibility indicators. This approach is designed to screen smallholders for the most unsustainable practices and then, for those who are eligible, allow time for continual improvement and progress towards meeting all requirements of the RSPO ISH Standard. Key requirements of this approach are:

- The group needs to demonstrate progress in moving from meeting Eligibility indicators, to indicators listed under Milestone A and finally meeting the indicators of Milestone B.
- Progress must occur within a set timeframe;
 1. Two years to progress from Eligibility to Milestone A.
 2. One more year to progress from Milestone A to Milestone B.
- Compliance at every milestone is measured by fulfilling all the requirements of the current milestone and all preceding milestones, e.g. to be compliant with Milestone A, the smallholder group has to demonstrate compliance to the Eligibility requirements and requirements of Milestone A.
- A smallholder can progress directly to Milestone B if at Eligibility they can demonstrate compliance with Milestones A and B. They can move forward and be audited for Milestones A and B at the same point of time, as assessed by the group manager and third-party auditors. This is also applicable for any trainings (Milestone A) where the group manager assesses the smallholder already possesses the relevant capabilities.
- At Milestone B, the smallholder needs to be able to demonstrate compliance with and will be audited against all indicators, including those under Eligibility, Milestone A and Milestone B.

3.3 Certification, Claims, and Benefits

The certification system for the RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard consists of three phases, where each phase has its own requirements for assessing compliance and claims that an independent smallholder can make, as well as benefits for the smallholder. This is intended to be a continual improvement process tied to incentives.

The governing document for compliance and certification against the RSPO ISH Standard is the 'RSPO Certification System for P&C and ISH Standards'.

- At each phase, compliance of the group and its members towards meeting the indicators is assessed through a field-based audit by an accredited Certification Body.
- Claim refers to the status the smallholders can assign to the fresh fruit bunches (FFB) they produce, which is expressed as certified crude palm oil or palm kernel oil (CPO/PKO) equivalence, and can be sold as certified oil through all supply chain models, either via smallholder credits or as physical trade (only at Milestone B).
- Benefit refers to the incentives the smallholders can receive through the sales of certified FFB as RSPO Credits or through the physical supply chain models (Identity Preserved- IP, Segregated - SG, or Mass Balance - MB). Buyers are able to purchase certified oil from smallholders and communicate externally about their sources.
→see [here](#) for further info about RSPO Credits.

Principle for converting certified FFB to certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO)

Smallholders can sell their certified FFB to a certified mill through a physical supply chain model or as RSPO Credits equivalent. Eligibility for selling under a physical supply chain model only applies once ISHs reach Milestone B. One tonne of FFB is transferred to tonnes of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO) Credits using a default oil extraction rate (OER) of 20%, subject to an auditor's verification and confirmation.

Hence, 100 tonnes of certified sustainable FFB is equal to 20 tonnes of CSPO which is equal to 20 credits. Default Kernel Extraction Rate (KER) also exists for kernel oil or kernel expeller (see figure).



The sections below present the general assurance requirements, claims and benefits at each of the three phases, as summarised in Figure 3.

2.1.1 Eligibility - entry level

Assurance Requirements

- To demonstrate compliance with eligibility indicators, a field-based audit needs to be conducted by an RSPO accredited Certification Body¹, as listed by RSPO here (<https://www.rspo.org/certification/bodies>)
- All individual members of the group that are ready to be certified at entry level have to meet all Eligibility indicators.

Claims and Benefits

- Up to 40% of FFB can be sold as RSPO Smallholder Credits (as equivalent to CSPO, CSPKO or CSPKE credits) through the RSPO IT platform and trading system,
- Once Eligibility indicators have been verified, the group may continue to claim the FFB produced as CSPO equivalent and sell as RSPO Smallholder Credits
- The FFB produced cannot be sold through the physical supply chain (IP or SG).

¹ Groups can submit a request to the RSPO Smallholder Support Fund (RSSF) to cover the costs of the first audit of Eligibility indicators.

2.1.2 Milestone A – continual improvement and progress

Assurance Requirements

- To demonstrate progress, group members have to meet 100% of the Milestone A indicators while also maintaining compliance with 100% of the Eligibility indicators
- All individual members of the group have to meet all Eligibility indicators and Milestone A indicators
- An accredited Certification Body has to conduct a field-based audit.

Claims and Benefits

- Groups can demonstrate meeting Milestone A indicators within a maximum of two-years from being certified at the Eligibility phase
- Up to 70% of FFB can be sold as RSPO Smallholder Credits (as equivalent to CSPO, CSPKO or CSPKE Credits) through the RSPO IT platform and trading system The FFB produced cannot be sold through the physical supply chain (IP or SG).

2.1.3 Milestone B – continual improvement and full compliance

Assurance Requirements

- A field-based audit of the group is conducted by an accredited Certification Body
- All individual members of the group have to meet 100% of the Milestone B indicators, and also maintain compliance with 100% of the Eligibility indicators and 100% of the Milestone A indicators.

Claims and Benefits

- Groups can demonstrate meeting Milestone B indicators within a maximum one year from being certified at Milestone A phase
- 100% FFB can be sold as certified to a certified mill through the physical supply chain models (IP, SG or MB); OR
- 100% of FFB can be sold as RSPO Credits CSPO, CSPKO or CSPKE Credits through the RSPO IT platform and trading system; OR
- 100% of FFB can be sold through a combination of physical supply chains and as RSPO Credits.

Assurance

100% of smallholders compliant with indicators

Smallholder Credits

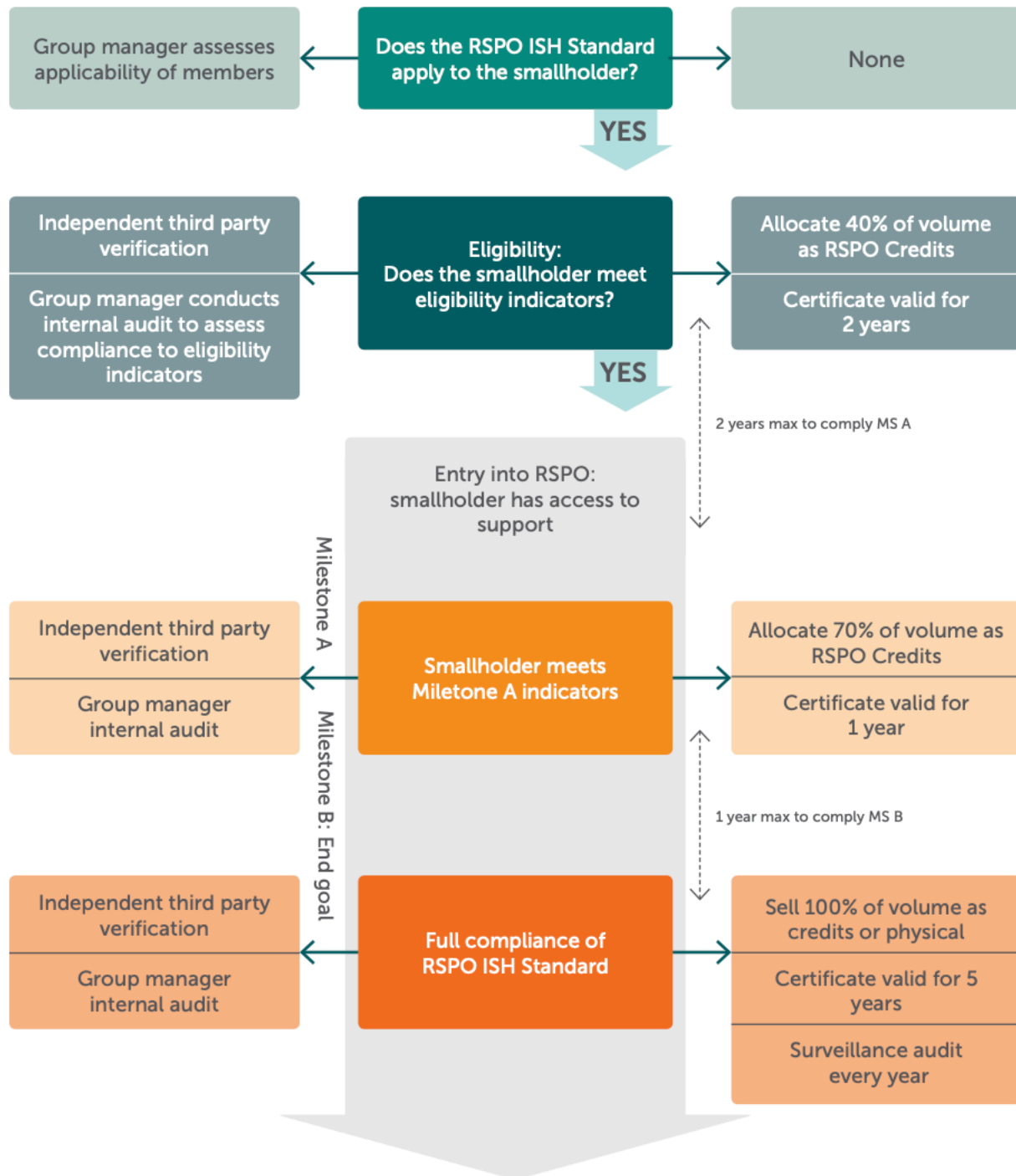


Figure 3: Assurance and smallholder credit claims system

3.4 Adoption, Implementation, Review, and Revision

This section defines the schedule and timeline for the implementation and reporting of compliance to the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard, and the subsequent future reviews and/or revisions.

3.4.1 Adoption Date

The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard was formally adopted at the 21st RSPO General Assembly on 13 November 2024.

3.4.2 Effective Date

The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard shall become effective and binding 12 months after the adoption date i.e., 13 November 2025. Prior to this effective date, the 2019 RSPO ISH Standard (IS_V1-0) shall continue to apply for all existing or potential Units of Certification (i.e., groups). This 12-month transition period is formally adopted to assist RSPO smallholders, group managers, and members in the change management activities necessary to implement the revised standard..

RSPO shall support RSPO members on any initiated National Interpretations (NI) processes within this 12-month transition period. If a NI update or development for a specific country is not completed within the 12 months, the general 2024 RSPO ISH Standard shall apply until the NI update or development is completed and endorsed by the RSPO Board of Governors.

If a supporting document necessary for implementation of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard is not able to be an updated or developed within the 12 months, RSPO shall provide an indicative status or timeline for completion.

3.4.3 Interim Revision I

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard includes an Interim Revision I mechanism, intended to allow flexibility to urgently adapt or adjust the standard if any unintended consequences or unforeseen challenges are encountered in implementation by smallholders and/or group managers. Within the formal 12-month transition period following adoption of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard, RSPO shall assess and review issues of interpretation or content of requirements reported by smallholders, group managers, members, and other stakeholders regarding the implementation of the standard, with a transparent oversight structure.

If necessary, Interim Revision I may trigger a minor revision of the standard to ensure auditability, implementability, and clarity, supported by appropriate document/process control procedures (e.g., revising IS_V2-0 to IS_V2-1). Interim Revision I is in line with Clause 5.8 of the "ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards Version 6.0" and Clause 6.12 of the "ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems Version 1.0".

3.4.4 Interim Revision II

The 2024 RSPO ISH Standard includes an Interim Revision II mechanism, intended to allow flexibility to urgently adapt or adjust if procedural/process issues or challenges are encountered in the implementation of the standard. Interim Revision II shall be active for the 12 months following the effective date of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard (i.e., 13 November 2025). During the Interim Revision II period, RSPO shall assess and review reported issues or challenges in the procedures/processes regarding requirements and implementation of the standard by smallholders, group managers, members, and other stakeholders, under a transparent oversight structure.

If necessary, Interim Revision II may trigger a minor revision of the standard to ensure clarity in the auditability and implementability of the standard, supported by appropriate document/process control procedures (e.g., revising IS_V2-1 to IS_V2-2). Interim Revision II is in line with Clause 5.8 of the "ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards Version 6.0" and Clause 6.12 of the "ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems Version 1.0".

3.4.5 Formal Review of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard

Clause 5.8, Item 1 of the “ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards Version 6.0” and Clause 6.14 of the “ISEAL (combined) Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems Version 1.0” requires that RSPO shall:

- A. Review the standard at least once every five years for continued relevance and for effectiveness in meeting its stated objectives; and
- B. If necessary, revise the standard in a timely manner, in line with the relevant requirements (of the ISEAL Code)

For compliance with the ISEAL Code, a formal review of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard shall be conducted no later than November 2029 (five years from the date of adoption).

RSPO shall also assess the continued relevance of the standard against evolving market and regulatory trends or risks. If necessary, an urgent formal review of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard may be initiated before the stipulated five year timeframe elapses.

3.4.6 Revision of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard

If the formal review of 2024 RSPO ISH Standard concludes that a major revision is required for continued relevance and to ensure effectiveness, RSPO shall revise the standard in line with the other relevant requirements of the ISEAL Code.

The revision should be completed within a recommended timeframe of 12 months or less, for adoption by RSPO members at an RSPO General Assembly. This is in line with Clause 5.8, Item 1 in the “ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards Version 6.0” and Clause 6.14 of the “ISEAL (combined) Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems Version 1.0”.

IV. Change Log (2024 ISH Standard from 2019 ISH Standard)

The following is a summary of the main changes made in the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard to the previous version (the 2019 RSPO ISH Standard). The revision covers the changes made to the document following recommendations and proposals from the comprehensive formal Standards Review and Revision process that began in 2022. Changes are categorised as an **Addition** or an **Amendment**. Minor changes (e.g., correction of phrasings or spelling mistakes, aligning formatting or content style) are not listed.

Section	Type of Change	Summary of Change	Rationale of Change
e.g., Section X	e.g., Addition	e.g., added definition for the term 'xxx'	e.g., to address lack of clarity
e.g., Criterion X	e.g., Amendment	e.g., amended wording from 'yyy' to 'xxx'	e.g., to assist auditing, as 'yyy' is not auditable
e.g., Indicator X			

This section of the document shall be completed following adoption of the revised standard by RSPO members, with an expected completion by end-March 2025.

V. Normative Requirements of the RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard

The 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard is composed of 4 Principles, 22 Criteria, and 66 Indicators, organised along the RSPO impact areas: Prosperity, People, Planet. The requirements of principles, criteria, and indicators in the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard are applicable to both smallholders (as individual group members) and group managers.

'The Internal Control System Requirements for Smallholder Groups' section includes an additional 7 Criteria and 42 Indicators, which are applicable to the group manager with the support of individual smallholder members of the group.

System requirements for Group Formation and Management (including the Internal Control System) are only applicable to the group manager (and not to individual smallholder members of the group).

The indicators are presented in three columns, reflecting the three phases toward full compliance.

- Eligibility indicators must be met to enter into the system
- Milestone A indicators must be met to demonstrate that the group continues to make progress towards meeting full compliance
- Milestone B must be met to reach full compliance with the RSPO ISH Standard
- Indicators are cumulative; as such
 - At Eligibility, 100% of indicators are required for compliance;
 - At Milestone A, 100% of Eligibility indicators + 100% of Milestone A indicators are required for compliance;
 - At Milestone B, 100% of Eligibility indicators + 100% of Milestone A indicators + 100% of Milestone B indicators are required for compliance.

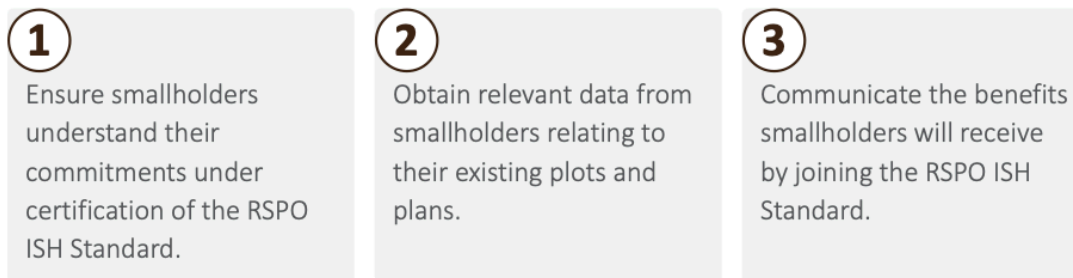
5.1 Guidance to interpret the Principles, Criteria, and Indicators

The principles, criteria, and indicators of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard should be read and used in conjunction with other RSPO tools and resources, as well as the Compliance Requirements and Informative Guidance in [Annex 3](#) (Note: the Compliance Requirements and Informative Guidance shall be finalised following endorsement and adoption of the revised standard).

5.2 Smallholder Declaration

Within the principles, criteria, and indicators, several references are made to a Smallholder Declaration. This refers to a short and simple, non-legally binding statement that the group manager will present to smallholders joining or forming a group. The content and intent of the Declaration shall be explained to the smallholders prior to requiring any signature (or thumbprint) and commitment to the content of the Declaration. As part of the Eligibility phase, every smallholder in a group will need to sign a Smallholder Declaration (*Refer to Indicator 1.2 E and [Annex 2](#)*).

The Smallholder Declaration is a normative requirement of the 2024 RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard. The objective of the Smallholder Declaration is to:



5.3 Skipping Criteria and Indicators that are not applicable

There are three (3) instances where criteria or indicators may be skipped if the smallholder can demonstrate that these do not apply to them - Criterion 4.3 (and its Indicators), Criterion 4.4 (and its Indicators), and Criterion 4.5 (and its Indicators). For example, if a smallholder does not intend to expand their plots or plant any new oil palm, the criterion specific to new plantings does not apply and may be skipped. These are clearly marked in the table of criteria and indicators.

5.4 Support for Smallholders

Training Needs

Training and support for smallholders and group managers is a fundamental component of the RSPO ISH Standard. The exact type of training required will vary and depend on the individual smallholder's needs. It falls under the responsibility of the group manager to ensure that smallholders in the group have access to training(s). Accordingly, the group manager will assess the training needs of group members during their entry to the group.

The RSPO ISH Standard is designed with the assumption that not all smallholders have the capacity and resources to comply with all indicators upon entry at the Eligibility phase. Within the phased approach, the RSPO ISH Standard includes a substantial training component (generally in Milestone A) presented as indicators that require smallholders to receive and/or complete training(s). Not all smallholders require participation in all training(s); compliance with such indicators that refer to training(s) shall depend on the level of capacity and support needs of group members.

Sources of Training(s)

There are multiple sources of training material(s) made available by RSPO for trainers, group managers, and smallholders. Training content ranges from the formation of groups to meeting technical requirements such as pesticide use, from templates that support with record keeping to guidance to identify precautionary practices for the protection of areas of High Conservation Values (HCVs).

Please see the Smallholders section of the RSPO website for a complete list of current tools and training materials available for smallholders and group managers (online; at <https://rspo.org/resources/?category=smallholders-key-documents>).

Sources of Training Materials for Group Managers and Smallholders

The RSPO Smallholder Trainer Academy (STA) provides a series of training modules for group managers and smallholders through a 'Train-the-Trainer' approach. The training modules available through the Smallholder Trainer Academy are thus specifically tailored to trainers (which can include group managers) rather than the smallholders themselves.

RSPO is also developing tools and resources (e.g., templates, guidelines) to further support and direct smallholders and smallholder groups toward progress in certification and becoming fully compliant. These will be related to documentation and meeting particular technical requirements. Examples of topics where training materials, tools, and guidelines shall be provided include (but are not limited to): peat drainability assessments, pesticide use and storage, and simplified FPIC for smallholders.

RSPO also provides training and tools specifically to ensure that group managers are equipped to conduct the tasks that are expected of them. Examples of tools and training that shall be available for group managers include training on the HCV application for smallholders, training on the Smallholder Declaration, and templates for group's Internal Control System (ICS).

The RSPO Smallholder Support Fund (RSSF) provides financial support to group managers and the group's members. Additionally, in alignment with the RSPO Smallholder Strategy (2017), further support either in the form of technical capacity and the provision of tools and guidance, or financial support, can also be provided through the RSSF to the group manager and the group's members. This includes financial resources for the first/initial audit(s) to assess Eligibility.

5.5 Gender Inclusivity

As reflected in the RSPO Principles and Criteria and in alignment with the RSPO Theory of Change towards the goal for the protection, respect, and remediation of human rights, the RSPO ISH Standard mandates practices that are gender inclusive. This refers to the provision of equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for all regardless of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity (including men, women, girls and boys, and other gender identities as described by the individual). This principle shall be applied to all smallholders and group managers, particularly in relation to labour practices and the treatment of workers.

Within the RSPO ISH Standard, and in particular within the principles, criteria, and indicators, whenever the term smallholder, farmer, group manager, or worker is used, this term can represent a woman or a man and is not subjected to any specific gender identity.

5.6 Additional Considerations

Unless otherwise specified, 'smallholder' refers to individual smallholders that form part of a group. In cases where the smallholder's plot is managed by a hired person or leased to another person, the term 'smallholder' shall also include the designated representatives or delegates responsible for the plot/farm's operations.

For the purposes of non-conformities during audits for compliance for certification under the RSPO ISH Standard, there is no distinction of criticality among the indicators i.e., no designation of Critical versus Non-Critical Indicators.

VI. Principles, Criteria, and Indicators

Adopted 13 Nov 2024

Principle 1

RSPO Smallholders implement professional operations to optimise productivity and secure sustainable livelihood improvements

Impact Goals

The Criteria and Indicators in Principle 1 are linked to the following Long-term Outcomes in the RSPO Theory of Change:



PEOPLE

L1

Value and utility is derived by palm oil producers of all sizes (smallholders, medium & large growers) from complying to RSPO Standards, systems and procedures *



PLANET

L4

Effective climate mitigation actions are implemented, resulting in greenhouse gas emissions reduction and carbon sequestration *

L5

Sustainable environmental practices are demonstrated by RSPO Members and partners, offering a scalable model to other agricultural commodities *

L6

Sustainable ecosystem management is implemented to achieve no deforestation and promote restoration of environmental value *



PROSPERITY

L9

Contemporary environmental and social expectations are met by constant progress and innovation in standards, operations and certification, improving prosperity for all *

Criteria		Indicator/Phase		
1.1	Smallholders have the capacity to effectively manage their smallholder plot(s).	1.1 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to participating in the capacity building programme developed by the Group Manager.
		1.1 MS A	Milestone A	<p>Smallholders shall have undergone capacity building programme(s) e.g., training(s) organised by group manager on farm business planning, operations, and monitoring.</p> <p>The training(s)* shall include: A) Record keeping for production data (including inputs, cost, yields, use of labour, etc.); and B) Record keeping for transaction data of Fresh Fruit Bunch (FFB) sales</p> <p><i>*Refer to the relevant topics under Indicator A2.3 E in the 'Internal Control System Requirements for Smallholder Groups'</i></p>
		1.1 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall manage Smallholder Plots effectively, and maintain records of FFB production and sales of all FFB (i.e., separate records for certified and non-certified, if any) from smallholder plots.
1.2	Smallholders implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their plots.	1.2 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to implementing relevant Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their plots.
		1.2 MS A	Milestone A	<p>Smallholders shall have completed training(s) on relevant Best Management Practices (BMPs) that includes Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).</p> <p><i>Procedural Note</i> <i>RSPO shall establish a list of minimum required Best Management Practices for independent smallholders</i></p>
		1.2 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall implement relevant Best Management Practices (BMPs) that includes Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in their plots.

Principle 2

RSPO Smallholders comply with the law and respect communities' rights

Impact Goals

The Criteria and Indicators in Principle 2 are linked to the following Long-term Outcomes in the RSPO Theory of Change:



PEOPLE

L1

Value and utility is derived by palm oil producers of all sizes (smallholders, medium & large growers) from complying to RSPO Standards, systems and procedures *

L2

Labour and social benefits are enhanced across the palm oil value chain, including in human rights, living wages and non-discrimination *

L3

Stakeholder equity (especially for women and Affected Communities) in palm oil production is increased *



PLANET

L6

Sustainable ecosystem management is implemented to achieve no deforestation and promote restoration of environmental value *



PROSPERITY

L9

Contemporary environmental and social expectations are met by constant progress and innovation in standards, operations and certification, improving prosperity for all *

Criteria		Indicator/Phase		
2.1	Smallholders have the rights to use the land in accordance with national, local, or customary practices.	2.1 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall make available evidence of Rights to use the land, or that they are in the process of obtaining recognition of the Rights. This shall include coordinates and maps of smallholders plots.
		2.1 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		2.1 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall provide evidence of land ownership or Rights to use the land, and clearly demarcate the boundaries of Smallholders Plots. Smallholders shall maintain the demarcation, and only operate within the boundaries.
2.2	Smallholders have not acquired lands from indigenous peoples, local communities, or other users without their Free, Prior and Informed consent (FPIC), based on a simplified FPIC approach.	2.2 E	Eligibility	For existing plots, smallholders can demonstrate that they have not acquired land without Free, Prior and Informed consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples, local communities, or other users. <i>Procedural Note</i> <i>Upon completion of the RSPO Simplified FPIC approach for ISH, 2.2 Milestone A and 2.2 Milestone B will be revisited for potential revision. For existing certified independent smallholders, transitional measures will be put in place if 2.2 Milestone A and 2.2 Milestone B are revised.</i>
		2.2 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		2.2 MS B	Milestone B	Same as Eligibility.
2.3	Smallholders shall implement processes to manage conflict on land and resource use.	2.3 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall declare existing disputes on land and resources, if any, and commit to resolve them.
		2.3 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders shall be trained on management of conflict on land and resources.
		2.3 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall demonstrate that they are managing conflict(s) on Smallholder Plot, where applicable.
2.4	Smallholder plots are located outside of areas classified as national parks or protected areas, as defined by national, regional, or local law(s), or as specified in National Interpretations.	2.4 E	Eligibility	Smallholder Plots are located outside of areas classified as national parks or protected areas as defined by national, regional, or local law(s), or as specified in National Interpretations.
		2.4 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		2.4 MS B	Milestone B	Same as Eligibility.
2.5	For new plantings, smallholders shall not clear any land without obtaining free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) from the Affected Communities. <i>Procedural Note</i> <i>A simplified FPIC process for independent smallholders shall be developed by RSPO.</i>	2.5 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to identify Affected Communities, if any, and conduct the simplified FPIC process on areas of new plantings.
		2.5 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders shall be trained on the simplified FPIC process on new plantings.
		2.5 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall conduct the simplified FPIC process where Affected Communities are found in areas of new planting.

<u>Compliance for Criteria 2.5 and its Indicators shall be inactive until the RSPO Simplified FPIC approach for ISH is endorsed and adopted for implementation.</u>			
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Adopted 13 Nov 2024

Principle 3

RSPO Smallholders safeguard human rights, protect workers' rights, and ensure safe and decent working conditions

Impact Goals

The Criteria and Indicators in Principle 3 are linked to the following Long-term Outcomes in the RSPO Theory of Change:



PEOPLE

L2

Labour and social benefits are enhanced across the palm oil value chain, including in human rights, living wages and non-discrimination *

L3

Stakeholder equity (especially for women and Affected Communities) in palm oil production is increased *



PROSPERITY

L9

Contemporary environmental and social expectations are met by constant progress and innovation in standards, operations and certification, improving prosperity for all *

Adopted 13 Nov 2024

Criteria		Indicator/Phase	
3.1	There shall be no forced labour in the smallholder plots.	3.1 E	Eligibility Smallholders shall commit to not use forced labour, and commit to complete training on awareness and prevention of forced labour on their plots. Smallholders shall address and end forced labour on smallholder plots from the Eligibility stage, if any. Smallholders shall comply with legal requirements prescribed by national, state, or provincial regulations when hiring workers.
		3.1 MS A	Milestone A Smallholders shall complete training on awareness and prevention of forced labour, including the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Indicators of Forced Labour.
		3.1 MS B	Milestone B There shall be no evidence of forced labour on smallholder plots. The following practices are prohibited, but not limited to: A) Payment of recruitment fees by workers; B) Contract substitution; C) Restriction of worker's movement by locking them in worksite or accommodation; D) Intentional isolation of workers by denying them means of communication; E) Physical and sexual violence; F) Intimidation and threats; G) Retention of identity and personal documents, including (but not limited to) passports; H) Withholding of wages; I) Debt bondage; J) Involuntary and excessive overtime; K) Lack of freedom of workers to resign; and L) Abusive working and living conditions
3.2	Smallholders shall not hire or exploit children in the operation(s) at the smallholder plots. Assistance by children living in the smallholder's household is acceptable on family farms under adult supervision, and must not interfere with their education programmes. Children shall not be exposed to hazardous working conditions.	3.2 E	Eligibility Smallholders shall commit to not use child labour in their plots. Smallholders shall also commit to complete training on prevention of child labour. Smallholders shall address and end child labour on smallholder plots from the Eligibility stage, if any.
		3.2 MS A	Milestone A Smallholders shall complete training on awareness and prevention of child labour. Training on child labour shall include, but is not limited to: A) Child labour awareness; B) Compliance with the minimum age of workers as defined by local, state, or national law, or international law in the absence of local, state, or national laws; C) Not exposing children to hazardous work; D) Providing adult supervision of children on family farm and/or young workers on the smallholder plots; and E) Ensuring the practice of children's right to education is

				unrestricted and respected
		3.2 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall not use child labour in smallholder plots. The following conditions must be met when children living in Smallholder Households assist in Family Farms, or where young workers are hired in smallholder plots: A) Shall be under adult supervision; B) Shall not interfere with their health, safety and education; and C) Shall not be exposed to hazardous working conditions
3.3	Smallholders shall ensure workers (if any) are paid at least the legal minimum wage	3.3 E	Eligibility	Where there are workers at the smallholder plot(s), smallholders shall commit to pay at least the legal minimum wage without discrimination against vulnerable groups, including women and migrant workers.
		3.3 MS A	Milestone A	Where there are workers at the smallholder plot(s), smallholders shall pay at least the legal minimum wage (excluding overtime premiums) without discrimination against vulnerable groups, including women and migrant workers.
		3.3 MS B	Milestone B	same as MS A.
3.4	Workers understand their rights, have access without retaliation to file a complaint or grievance to the Group Manager or relevant third parties, including RSPO.	3.4 E	Eligibility	Where there are workers at the smallholder plot(s), smallholders shall commit to respect the rights of workers to file a complaint or grievance without retaliation.
		3.4 MS A	Milestone A	Where there are workers at the smallholder plot(s), smallholders shall complete training on handling workers' complaint(s) or grievance(s), and socialise to workers their rights and the mechanism to file a complaint or grievance.
		3.4 MS B	Milestone B	Where there are workers at the smallholder plot(s), smallholders shall ensure that the workers are aware of, and have access to, the complaint or grievance mechanism(s) without retaliation.
3.5	Working conditions and facilities are safe and meet minimum legal requirements.	3.5 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to providing safe working conditions and facilities, based on the health and safety risk identification, conducted together with Group Manager.
		3.5 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders shall complete training(s) on health and safety risks associated with farm work (including chemical use) and how to mitigate them. Smallholders shall ensure that workers, and family or household members (if any), working at the smallholder plot(s) are able to demonstrate awareness of the same.
		3.5 MS B	Milestone B	Workers, and family or household members (if any), working at the smallholder plot(s) shall have access to safe working conditions and facilities, based on health and safety risk identification as follows, but not limited to: A) Safe and adequate housing, where applicable; B) Basic first aid supplies; C) Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), for the type of work; D) Adequate drinking water; E) Access to sanitation facilities, where appropriate; and F) Access to toilets

3.6	There is no discrimination, intimidation and harassment (including threats), sexual harassment, abuse, and/or violence in smallholder plots.	3.6 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to no discrimination, no intimidation, no harassment (including threats), no sexual harassment, no abuse, and no violence in smallholder plots.
		3.6 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders shall complete training(s) on discrimination, intimidation and harassment (including threats), sexual harassment, abuse, and violence, and are aware of the need for a safe workspace.
		3.6 MS B	Milestone B	Workers shall be able to access the complaint or grievance mechanism(s) (<i>Refer to Indicator 3.4 MS B</i>) in the event there are incidents on discrimination, intimidation and harassment (including threats), sexual harassment, abuse, and/or violence in smallholder plots.

Adopted 13 Nov 2024

Principle 4

RSPO Smallholders protect the environment, conserve biodiversity, enhance ecosystems, and sustainably manage natural resources

Impact Goals

The Criteria and Indicators in Principle 4 are linked to the following Long-term Outcomes in the RSPO Theory of Change:



PEOPLE

L1

Value and utility is derived by palm oil producers of all sizes (smallholders, medium & large growers) from complying to RSPO Standards, systems and procedures *

L2

Labour and social benefits are enhanced across the palm oil value chain, including in human rights, living wages and non-discrimination *



PLANET

L4

Effective climate mitigation actions are implemented, resulting in greenhouse gas emissions reduction and carbon sequestration *

L5

Sustainable environmental practices are demonstrated by RSPO Members and partners, offering a scalable model to other agricultural commodities *

L6

Sustainable ecosystem management is implemented to achieve no deforestation and promote restoration of environmental value *



PROSPERITY

L9

Contemporary environmental and social expectations are met by constant progress and innovation in standards, operations and certification, improving prosperity for all *

Preamble for Principle 4

High Conservation Values (HCVs) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) forests

Objective: The RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard aligns with the RSPO Smallholder Strategy (2017) to promote smallholder inclusion and improve livelihoods through better practices, while upholding key sustainability commitments. Central to this is the protection of HCVs and HCS forests.

Methodology Overview: The RSPO has introduced a Simplified High Conservation Value (HCV) Approach for Smallholders, providing clear guidance for identifying, protecting, and managing HCVs in both existing and new plantings.

Since the 2019 mandate to safeguard HCS forests, the Independent Smallholder Land Use Risk Identification (IS-LURI) tool has been used to differentiate between 'Low Risk' and 'Risk' areas. This tool serves as an interim measure until the development of a combined HCV-HCS approach by the Independent Smallholder No Deforestation Task Force (IS-NDTF). Until this integrated tool is available, new plantings are only permitted in 'Low Risk' areas.

In the meantime, independent smallholders are required to protect or enhance HCV and HCS forests, as part of their commitment under the Smallholder Declaration.

Remediation and Compensation Procedure (RaCP)

Under the RaCP procedure, remediation and compensation is required for any land clearing since November 2005 without prior HCV assessment (*Refer to Criterion 4.2*) and any clearance since November 2019 without prior HCS assessment.

The requirements as outlined in the RaCP (2015) is not fully applicable for independent smallholders. For independent smallholders, the RSPO ISH Standard is focused on developing an appropriate RaCP mechanism that is contextually appropriate to the scale of independent smallholder production while enabling independent smallholders to maximise positive environmental impacts. The requirement means that quantified liability is disclosed and assessed through a land use change analysis (LUCA) supported by the RSPO Secretariat. The new version of the RaCP procedure is being developed to account for appropriate applicability to independent smallholders, to provide improved clarity on implementing the indicators of Criterion 4.2.

Criteria		Indicator/Phase		
4.1	High Conservation Values (HCVs) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) forests in smallholder plots, identified through the RSPO Simplified HCV Approach and Independent Smallholder - Land Use Risk Identification (IS-LURI) are managed to ensure that they are maintained and/or enhanced.	4.1 E	Eligibility	Smallholder shall commit to avoiding development in, and protect, HCVs and HCS forests, and to manage rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) species, if any, based on the results of the Land Use Change Analysis (LUCA) conducted in the pre-membership stage assisted by the RSPO Secretariat.
		4.1 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders and permanent workers, if any, shall complete training on management of HCVs and HCS forests, application of precautionary practices, and are aware of identified HCVs, HCS forests, RTE species, and important ecosystems, if any.
		4.1 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall implement precautionary practices to manage HCVs and HCS forests, and to manage and maintain RTE species, where applicable.
4.2	Where the existing smallholder plot has been planted and cleared after November 2005, or is on an area identified as HCS forest after November 2019 up to the Eligibility period, a RSPO Remediation and Compensation Procedure (RaCP) process for smallholders is applicable.	4.2 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall provide information on all owned smallholder plots (planted with oil palm and unplanted) after November 2005 to Group Manager based on the results of Land Use Change Analysis (LUCA) conducted in the pre-membership stage assisted by the RSPO Secretariat.
		4.2 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders and Group Manager(s) shall develop a remediation and compensation plan through a participatory process, based on the RSPO Remediation and Compensation Procedure (RaCP) process for smallholders.
		4.2 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholder shall implement the approved remediation plan.
4.3	<p>Do any smallholders within the group have plans for new planting of oil palm? If no, SKIP</p> <p>Since November 2019, new planting by independent smallholders, if any:</p> <p>A) Do not replace any HCVs;</p> <p>B) Do not replace any HCS forests as defined by RSPO Simplified HCV Approach and IS-LURI;</p> <p>C) Are not on steep slopes (more than 25 degrees, or as in National Interpretations);</p> <p>D) Are not on peat areas of any depth;</p> <p>E) Are not located in restricted areas or protected by national laws; and</p> <p>F) Are not on riparian</p>	4.3 E	Eligibility	<p>If no plan(s) for new planting, SKIP</p> <p>Smallholders shall commit to provide information on all planned new planting, including*:</p> <p>A) No new planting on HCVs or HCS forests;</p> <p>B) No new planting on steep slopes (more than 25 degrees, or as in the National Interpretation);</p> <p>C) No new planting on peat until HCVs and/or HCS forest(s) are identified;</p> <p>D) No new planting in restricted areas or protected by national laws; and/or</p> <p>E) No new planting on riparian reserves.</p> <p><i>*Refer to Indicator A1.2.E and Annex 2 - Smallholder Declaration</i></p>
		4.3 MS A	Milestone A	For any new planting, before any land preparation commences, smallholders with the support of the Group Manager shall develop an integrated management plan through a participatory process to maintain or enhance HCVs, as well as HCS forests after November 2019, as identified by the RSPO Simplified HCV Approach and Independent Smallholder - Land Use Risk Identification

	reserves.			(IS-LURI).
		4.3 MS B	Milestone B	For any new planting, smallholders shall have and implement an RSPO approved integrated management plan, that is shared with those involved in the participatory process before any land preparation commences.
4.4	Do any smallholders within the group have existing plots on peat? If no, SKIP For existing planting on peat, subsidence and degradation of peat soils are minimised by use of Best Management Practices (BMPs).	4.4 E	Eligibility	For existing planting on peat, smallholders shall commit to minimising subsidence and degradation of peat soils* according to the latest version of the 'RSPO Smallholder Best Management Practices Manual for Existing Oil Palm Cultivation on Peat'. The Group Manager shall confirm presence of peat on existing plots within the smallholder plots. <i>*Refer to Indicator A1.2.E and Annex 2 - Smallholder Declaration</i>
		4.4 MS A	Milestone A	For existing planting on peat, smallholders shall have undergone training(s) and develop an action plan, together with the Group Manager, to minimise risk of fire, to apply BMPs for planting on peat, and to manage water systems in the certification unit, according to the latest version of the 'RSPO Smallholder Best Management Practices Manual for Existing Oil Palm Cultivation on Peat'.
		4.4 MS B	Milestone B	For existing plots on peat, smallholders shall implement the action plan conducted by Group Manager, according to the latest version of the 'RSPO Smallholder Best Management Practices Manual for Existing Oil Palm Cultivation on Peat', including fire and water management, and monitoring of subsidence rate(s) for existing planting on peat.
4.5	Do any smallholders within the group have plans for replanting plots that are located on peat? If no, SKIP Smallholder plots on peat are replanted only on areas with low risk of flooding or saline intrusion, as demonstrated by a risk assessment.	4.5 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to providing information on all plans for replanting and commit that replanting will only be in areas with low risk of flooding or saline intrusion* based on an approved flood risk assessment, in accordance with the latest version of the 'RSPO ISH Flood Risk Assessment Template' <i>*Refer to Indicator A1.2.E and Annex 2 - Smallholder Declaration</i>
		4.5 MS A	Milestone A	For existing planting on peat, smallholders shall have undergone training(s), as organised by Group Manager, on identification of future risks of flooding or saline intrusion based on the latest version of the 'RSPO ISH Flood Risk Assessment Template' and alternate land development strategies.
		4.5 MS B	Milestone B	Prior to replanting on peat, smallholders shall participate in a risk assessment process conducted by Group Manager according to the latest version of the 'RSPO ISH Flood Risk Assessment Template'. Where there are plots identified as high risk, smallholders shall halt any replanting programme(s) and adopt alternate land

				development strategies, where applicable.
4.6	Fire is not used on the smallholder plots for land preparation or for pest and disease management, and no open burning for waste management within the smallholder plots*. <i>*For country-specific implementation, National Interpretations should be used as a reference.</i>	4.6 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to not using fire for land preparation, or for pest and disease management unless in exceptional circumstances, and no open burning for waste management within the smallholder plots*. The Group Manager shall record evidence of prior open burning by members joining the group. <i>*Refer to Indicator A1.2.E and Annex 2 - Smallholder Declaration</i>
		4.6 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders shall not have physical evidence of using fire for land preparation, or for pest and disease management unless in exceptional circumstances, and no open burning for waste management within the smallholder plots (after Eligibility). Smallholders shall have undergone training(s) as organised by Group Manager. The training(s) shall include: A) Alternatives to fire for land preparation and farm waste management (where appropriate and possible); B) Alternatives to fire for pest and disease management; C) Fire prevention and how to respond to and manage fires in their community and village; and D) List of relevant national and local agencies i.e., Fire and Rescue Department / Fire and Rescue Service, local government authorities, national disaster management agencies (if any) and their roles in regulations, and strategies aimed at preventing and managing fire incidents.
		4.6 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall not use fire for land preparation, or for pest and disease management, and no open burning for waste management within the smallholder plots (after Eligibility). For pest and disease management, fire may be used only in exceptional circumstances, where no other effective measures exist and with prior approval of relevant authority(ies).
4.7	Riparian reserves are identified and managed to ensure maintenance and/or improvement, in accordance with national legislation or the latest version of the 'RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual for Management and Rehabilitation of Riparian Reserves'.	4.7 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to no new planting in riparian reserves to ensure its maintenance and/or improvement in accordance with national legislation or the latest version of the 'RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual for Management and Rehabilitation of Riparian Reserves' (whichever standard is higher shall prevail). The Group Manager shall identify riparian reserves within the smallholder plots.

		4.7 MS A	Milestone A	Where riparian reserves exist within and/or along the boundaries of the smallholder plots, smallholders shall have undergone training(s) as organised by the Group Manager, and demonstrate awareness of riparian reserve management. Smallholders shall develop an action plan, with the support of the Group Manager to maintain and/or enhance the riparian reserves.
		4.7 MS B	Milestone B	Where riparian reserves exist within and/or along the boundaries of the smallholder plots, smallholders shall implement the action plan developed with the support of the Group Manager to maintain and/or enhance the riparian reserve, in accordance with national legislation or the latest version of 'RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual for Management and Rehabilitation of Riparian Reserves' (whichever standard is higher shall prevail).
4.8	Pesticides are used in ways that do not endanger the health and safety of workers, family, communities, and/or the environment.	4.8 E	Eligibility	<p>Smallholders shall commit to perform Best Management Practices (BMPs) for pesticides, and phasing out paraquat and prohibited pesticides by MS B, with the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Immediately stop purchasing these pesticides; B) Phase out use of remaining stock by MS A; C) Provide information for the Group Manager to keep record of pesticide purchase and use; and D) Has proper management in handling pesticide containers. <p>The prohibited pesticides shall include prohibited pesticides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Categorised under World Health Organization Class 1A or 1B; B) Meeting the criteria for carcinogenicity Categories 1A and 1B, mutagenicity Categories 1A and 1B, or reproductive toxicity Categories 1A and 1B, according to the Globally Harmonized System on Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS); C) Listed by the Stockholm or Rotterdam Conventions; and/or D) Restricted or prohibited under national regulations.
		4.8 MS A	Milestone A	<p>Smallholders shall have undergone training(s) as organised by the Group Manager on BMPs for pesticides and prohibited pesticides.</p> <p>The training(s) shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Identifying list of safe chemical use, record keeping of pesticide, handling, storage and safe disposal of pesticides and pesticide containers; B) Awareness on the risks for pregnant and breastfeeding women and young workers; C) Prohibited pesticides that are categorised as World Health Organization (WHO) Class 1A or 1B, or meet the

				<p>criteria for carcinogenicity Categories 1A and 1B, mutagenicity Categories 1A and 1B, or reproductive toxicity Categories 1A and 1B, according to the Globally Harmonized System on Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS), or are listed by the Stockholm or Rotterdam Conventions or national regulations, or paraquat; and</p> <p>D) The use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to handle pesticides.</p>
		4.8 MS B	Milestone B	<p>Smallholders shall implement BMPs for all pesticide use and end the use of prohibited pesticides. The implementation of BMPs on pesticide use shall include:</p> <p>A) Pesticides and pesticide containers handling, storage and disposal;</p> <p>B) Prohibiting use of pesticides by pregnant and breastfeeding women and young workers; and</p> <p>C) Elimination of paraquat and pesticides listed as WHO Class 1A or 1B, Categories 1A and 1B under GHS, and/or the Stockholm or Rotterdam Conventions, unless when authorised by relevant authorities for pest outbreaks.</p>
4.9	Pests and diseases, weeds and invasive species are managed using appropriate techniques, including Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	4.9 E	Eligibility	Smallholders shall commit to managing pests and diseases, weeds and invasive species, if any, using appropriate techniques, including Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
		4.9 MS A	Milestone A	Smallholders shall have undergone training(s) as organised by the Group Manager and demonstrate awareness on Best Management Practices (BMPs) for managing pests and diseases, weeds, and invasive species using appropriate techniques, including Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and safe chemical use.
		4.9 MS B	Milestone B	Smallholders shall implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approaches to minimise use of pesticides at the smallholder plots.

The Internal Control System Requirements for Smallholder Groups

Criteria		Indicator/Phase		
A1	The smallholder group is established as an independent legal entity.	A1.1 E	Eligibility	The smallholder group shall appoint a Group Manager.
		A1.1 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		A1.1 MS B	Milestone B	Same as Eligibility.
		A1.2 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall have and maintain documented evidence of the smallholder group's RSPO membership that include: A) Legal formation (if necessary as per country of register requirements); B) Fair and transparent decision-making and governance; and C) Additional documents per requirements for group formation and management, where applicable
		A1.2 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		A1.2 MS B	Milestone B	Same as Eligibility.
		A1.3 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall establish group membership requirements in consultation with group members and implement the requirements for smallholders participating as group members.
		A1.3 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		A1.3 MS B	Milestone B	Same as Eligibility.
		A1.4 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall ensure all members understand the group's membership requirements and the commitments stated in the Smallholder Declaration (<i>Refer to Indicator A1.2 E and Annex 2</i>).
		A1.4 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		A1.4 MS B	Milestone B	Same as Eligibility.
A2	The group manager is responsible for managing the group for certification.	A2.1 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall establish an Internal Control System (ICS) with participation or in consultation with members.
		A2.1 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall implement the Internal Control System (ICS) on all members.
		A2.1 MS B	Milestone B	Same as MS A.
		A2.2 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall demonstrate understanding of the standard's requirements and have access to sufficient resources to manage the group.
		A2.2 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall have sufficient capacity, including resources, to implement the standard's requirements.
		A2.2 MS B	Milestone B	Same as MS A.

		A2.3 E	Eligibility	<p>The Group Manager shall establish and make accessible capacity building programme(s) for all members that covers the following:</p> <p>A) RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard; B) Applicable requirements on ISH in RSPO Certification Systems for P&C and RSPO ISH Standard; C) Best Management Practices (BMPs) guided by the latest RSPO documents (<i>Refer to Annex 4</i>); D) The RSPO Information System; E) Record keeping requirements on segregation of certified and non-certified FFB production and sales; F) Overview of human rights and Human Rights Due Diligence; and G) Other applicable requirements</p>
		A2.3 MS A	Milestone A	<p>The Group Manager shall implement capacity building programme(s) based on phased approach for all members that covers the following;</p> <p>A) RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) Standard; B) Applicable requirements on ISH in RSPO Certification Systems for P&C and RSPO ISH Standard; C) Best Management Practices (BMPs) guided by the latest RSPO documents (<i>Refer to Annex 4</i>); D) The RSPO Information System; E) Record keeping requirements on segregation of certified and non-certified FFB production and sales; and F) Overview of human rights and Human Rights Due Diligence</p>
		A2.3 MS B	Milestone B	<p>The Group Manager shall ensure all members have attended training(s) and able to demonstrate understanding of the following:</p> <p>A) RSPO Independent Smallholder (ISH) standard's requirements; B) Best Management Practices (BMPs) guided by the latest RSPO documents (<i>Refer to Annex 4</i>); C) Record keeping requirements on segregation of certified and non-certified FFB production and sales; and D) other applicable requirements</p>
B1	The Smallholder group's Internal Control System (ICS) shall contain documented policies, procedures, and group management requirements.	B1.1 E	Eligibility	The smallholder group's Internal Control System (ICS) shall contain operational management on internal audit procedures.
		B1.1 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall implement the Internal Control System (ICS), including conducting an annual internal audit based on a minimum sample of 'x' smallholder members, where $x = (\sqrt{y}) \times (2.5) \times (1.5)$ and where y is the total number of smallholders in the group.
		B1.1 MS B	Milestone B	The Group Manager shall implement the Internal Control System (ICS), including conducting an annual internal audit based on a minimum sample of 'x' smallholder members,

				where $x = (\sqrt{y}) \times (2.5) \times (2)$ and where y is the total number of smallholders in the group.
		B1.2 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall have and maintain information as required in the Smallholder Declaration (<i>Refer to Indicator A1.2 E and Annex 2</i>) and relevant documentation (where applicable) from all members.
		B1.2 MS A	Milestone A	Same as Eligibility.
		B1.2 MS B	Milestone B	Same as Eligibility.
C1	The smallholder group's business plan is established with the participation and contribution of the group members.	C1.1 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall establish a group business plan with the participation and contribution of the members. The business plan shall include the following: A) Production and income forecasting based on historical records; B) Expansion plan; C) Replanting plans; D) FFB production cost; and E) Operational cost(s)
		C1.1 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall implement the group business plan and review it every two years.
		C1.1 MS B	Milestone B	The Group Manager shall implement the group business plan and assess the group's ability to support itself financially, with results according to the business plan. The group business plan shall be reviewed every two years.
C2	The smallholder group's Internal Control System (ICS) is integrated with the group's management plan.	C2.1 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall establish a group management plan that contains the following: A) Capacity building programme(s) including training(s) to improve farm productivity and understanding of the group members; B) Approach to strengthen group relationship(s) within the RSPO supply chain; and C) Continuous improvement plan.
		C2.1 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall ensure the implementation of the group management plan by the group members, and review it every two years.
		C2.1 MS B	Milestone B	Same as MS A.
D1	The smallholder group develops and implements procedure(s) and system(s) for tracking of FFB production (i.e., separate record for certified and non-certified, if any) by the group members.	D1.1 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall develop and implement procedure(s) and system(s) to keep track of the FFB production and sales of certified volumes of the smallholder group at least every 6 months, including traceability to smallholder plots and buyers e.g., mill(s) and trader(s).
		D1.1 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall maintain record(s) of FFB production and sales of certified volumes of the group at least every 6 months, including traceability to smallholder plots and buyers e.g., mill(s) and trader(s).
		D1.1 MS B	Milestone B	Same as MS A.
		D1.2 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall establish and implement a documented procedure to monitor the actual FFB production.

		D1.2 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall monitor the implementation of the documented procedure to monitor the actual FFB production (i.e., separate record for certified and non-certified, if any) of all group members, to ensure no overselling of RSPO Credits in the RSPO Information System.
		D1.2 MS B	Milestone B	The Group Manager shall monitor the implementation of the documented procedure to monitor the actual FFB production (i.e., separate record(s) for certified and non-certified, if any) and FFB sales of all group members through physical and/or RSPO Credits in the RSPO Information System, to ensure no overselling of FFB Certified Volume(s).
D2	The group has a procedure and system for premium distribution.	D2.1 E	Eligibility	The Group Manager shall establish a documented mechanism of the group's financial gain (i.e., premium) distribution, with the participation of group members.
		D2.1 MS A	Milestone A	The Group Manager shall implemented the agreed documented mechanism of the group's financial gain (i.e., premium) distribution.
		D2.1 MS B	Milestone B	Same as MS A.

Adopted 13 Nov 2014

VII. Annexes

Adopted 13 Nov 2024

Annex 1 - Terms and definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Active ingredients	Chemical substances that provide the pesticidal actions.	Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (FAO & WHO, 2016)
Adapt	To modify or adjust the previously developed management & monitoring plan in response to changing conditions, outcomes, or new information, ensuring the continuous protection and enhancement of key elements (such as HCVs and HCS forests). This process includes streamlining documentation and findings from other processes, such as accident logs and grievance mechanisms.	RSPO P&C 2024
Aerial spraying	Application of pesticides from an aircraft (plane or helicopter)	Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (FAO & WHO, 2016)
Abuse of vulnerability	Taking advantage of any worker of their vulnerabilities for the purposes of exploitation or gain. Abuse of a position of vulnerability refers to any situation in which the worker involved believes he or she has no real and acceptable alternative except to submit to the abuse.	RSPO P&C 2024
Affected Communities	All communities that are likely to be affected directly and significantly by the proposed development, i.e., those with land holdings and usage rights within the affected area who must be included in the assessment and FPIC process. Other communities that are likely to be affected only indirectly, e.g., by possible longer-term changes to the ecosystem services provisions due to the water usage of the operation, also need to be taken into account.	RSPO Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guide (2022)
Agreement	An arrangement or decision by two or more parties to do or not to do something. This can be formal or informal, and depending on the common intention of the parties may be enforceable by law.	RSPO P&C 2024
Alternate Land Development Strategies	Allocation of smallholder plot(s) as conservation or restoration areas with the main objective to improve and maintain peatland ecosystem integrity.	RSPO ISH standard 2024
Annual Surveillance Audit	Annual systematic repetition of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of RSPO certification.	RSPO Certification Systems for Principles & Criteria and Independent Smallholder Standards (2024)
Associated Development	Developments including establishing mills, kernel crushers, nurseries, housing/camps and offices, roads/tracks, drainage, effluent treatment plants, fruit collection centres, terracing, earthworks, scheme smallholdings/outgrower plots, and any other development relevant to the operations of a new oil palm development.	RSPO New Planting Procedure (2015)
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	Biochemical Oxygen Demand is the amount of dissolved oxygen (DO) needed (i.e., demanded) by aerobic biological organisms to break down organic material present in a given water sample at a certain temperature over a specific time period.	RSPO P&C 2024
Biological control agent	Refers to the use of natural or modified organisms, genes, or gene products to reduce the effects of undesirable organisms and to favour desirable organisms such as crops, beneficial insects, and microorganisms	Biological Control Agents: Diversity, Ecological Significances, and Biotechnological Applications' (Singh et al., 2020)

Bribery	The offering, promising, giving, accepting, or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for an action which is illegal, unethical, or a breach of trust. Inducements can take the form of money, gifts, loans, fees, rewards, or other advantages (taxes, services, donations, favours etc.).	Global Anti Bribery Guidance (Transparency International, 2017)
Child/Children	The term child applies to all persons under the age of 18.	ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
Child labour	<p>Child labour is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. The term applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All children under 18 involved in the “worst forms of child labour”, per the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); - All children aged under 12 taking part in economic activity; and - All 12 to 14-year-olds engaged in more than light work. <p>The ILO defines 'light work' as work that is not likely to be harmful to children's health or development and not likely to be detrimental to their attendance at school or vocational training.</p> <p>Those under 18 years old should not engage in hazardous work that might jeopardise their physical, mental, or moral well-being, either because of its nature or the conditions under which it is carried out.</p> <p>For young workers above the legal minimum age but below 18, there should be restrictions on hours of work and overtime; working at dangerous heights; with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools; transport of heavy loads; exposure to hazardous substances or processes; and difficult conditions such as night work at night.</p>	<p>ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)</p> <p>ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)</p> <p>International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), ILO (1992)</p>
Child labour remediation	Child labour remediation refers to the process of removing a child from a child labour situation to ensure safe and adequate alternatives for them, such as reintegrating them into the education system or, if they are above the minimum age for work, creating an opportunity for them to work in a non-hazardous job.	RSPO Guidance on Child Rights for Palm Oil Producers (2020)
Communities	Communities refer to indigenous peoples, tribal peoples, local communities (including women, children, and people with disabilities), displaced persons, migrants, and other land users.	RSPO P&C 2018
Confidential information/Confidentiality	<p>Examples of commercially confidential information include financial data such as costs and income, and details relating to customers and/or suppliers. Data that affects personal privacy should also be confidential.</p> <p>Ongoing disputes (within or outside of a legal mechanism) can be considered as confidential information where disclosure could result in potential negative outcomes for all parties involved. However, affected stakeholders and those seeking resolution to conflict should have access to relevant information.</p>	RSPO P&C 2024

	Examples of information where disclosure could result in potential negative environmental or social outcomes include information on sites of rare species where disclosure could increase the risk of hunting or capture for trade, or sacred sites which a community wishes to maintain as private.	
Conflict resolution process	A Conflict resolution process is any process that can either prevent, diffuse, or address conflict effectively, whether such conflict occurs between the Unit of Certification and Communities, or between Affected Communities themselves.	Adapted from <u>Designing Conflict Resolution Systems (Mediators Beyond Borders, online; accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://mediatorsbeyondborders.org/what-we-do/conflict-literacy-framework/cr-systems-design)</u>
Contract	An agreement between two or more parties that, by its terms, is legally binding and enforceable in a court of law.	RSPO P&C 2024
Contract substitution	The practice of substituting or changing the terms of employment to which the worker originally agreed, either in writing or verbally, which results in worse conditions or less benefits. Changes to the employment agreement or contract are prohibited unless these changes are made to meet local law and provide equal or better terms.	ILO Report of the Committee examining alleged non-observance by Qatar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), (ILO, 2014)
Contributing family members	Family or smallholder household members who do not receive a wage/salary or profit in return for the work performed on the smallholder plot. They may benefit in-kind or receive irregular payments in cash as a result of the outputs of their work. Please refer to other related definitions: 'smallholder household' and 'family members'.	Adapted from the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18) Manual 2023; and the ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181)
Contractor	A person, firm, organisation, or company that undertakes a contract with the Unit of Certification to provide materials or services (including labour)	RSPO P&C 2024
Core work	The primary area or activity that a company was founded to do or focuses on in its business operations. Core work pertains to work that is essential and desirable to the growth of the company. All agricultural and milling activities are considered core work, e.g. planting, harvesting, fertilising, maintenance, FFB sorting and grading, machine-technical maintenance; and machine operation.	RSPO P&C 2018
Debt bondage	Debt bondage is work exchanged for a debt. It is also known as bonded labour or debt slavery, which occurs when individuals are compelled to work in exchange for repayment of a debt. Workers are often coerced into labour under the pretext of settling their own debts or those of family members.	ILO Helpdesk: <u>Business and Forced Labour (online; accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://www.ilo.org/resource/other/ilo-helpdesk-business-and-forced-labour)</u>

Deception	Deception pertains to the act of providing false representations and failing to fulfill promises made to workers, whether communicated verbally or in writing. Deceptive recruitment practices can include false promises regarding working conditions and wages, but also regarding the type of work, housing and living conditions, acquisition of regular migration status, job location, or the identity of the employer.	Adapted from the ILO '11 Indicators on Forced Labour' (International Labour Organization, 2012)
Deforestation	<p>The conversion of forests - including primary, regenerated (second-growth), and managed natural forests, as well as areas identified through High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) assessments required by the RSPO - into non-forest land use. This process involves the removal of trees and the alteration of ecosystems, resulting in the loss of species composition, ecological structure, and function.</p> <p>Forests at risk of deforestation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary forests, which have developed naturally without significant human intervention. - Regenerated forests, which have recovered from past impacts but now function similarly to natural ecosystems. - Managed natural forests, where human activities like timber harvesting or low-intensity agriculture occur without severely impacting the forest's ecological integrity. - Partially degraded forests, where degradation has not resulted in a complete transformation of land use or a sustained reduction in ecological function. <p>HCV and HCS assessments help identify these forests as critical for biodiversity, ecosystem services and carbon storage. Deforestation of such areas compromises both environmental sustainability and efforts to combat climate change, emphasising the need for strong safeguards and responsible land management practices.</p>	RSPO P&C 2024
Development	Development refers to alteration of landscape in any number of ways: from natural or semi-natural state of the land, to land for the purposes of palm oil production. This includes the carrying out of building (construction, installation or expansion of a building or other structure), engineering, creation of impervious surfaces; or other operations in, on, over, or under land; or making of any material change in the use of any building or other land.	RSPO P&C 2024
Discrimination	Any distinction, exclusion, or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation; Such other distinction, exclusion, or preference which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation as may be determined after consultation with representative employers' and workers' organisations, where such exist, and with other appropriate bodies.	United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

Drainability Assessment Procedure	A methodology for determining how the projected future subsidence would affect the relative level of the fields and the respective drainage outlet from the plantation and the ability of water to drain by gravity in the future. In implementing the DAP, the Unit of Certification shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the characteristics of the plantation and the proposed replanting area; - Determine drainage zone(s) and identify the final water outlets; - Determine the average ground elevation and calculate elevation of peatland replanting area; - Determine the annual water level at the final water outlets; - Measure the peat thickness and calculate average peat thickness of peatland replanting area; - Calculate average Natural Drainage Limit (NDL) of each peatland replanting area; - Calculate the depth to NDL of each peatland replanting area; - Use the default subsidence rate or calculate the average subsidence rate of each peatland replanting area; and - Project the future drainability of peatland replanting area. 	RSPO Drainability Assessment Procedure 2021
Due diligence	A risk management process implemented by a company to identify, prevent, mitigate, and account for how it addresses environmental and social risks and impacts in its operations, supply chains, and investments.	Adapted from the Accountability Framework Initiative (2020)
Engage	The act of participating, becoming involved, entering into, or maintaining an agreement or contract.	RSPO P&C 2024
Expropriation	The act by authorities (governments and/or any other institution exercising governmental functions) to acquire private property or divesting interest in land without obtaining agreement and consent, and which may or may not be with the payment of compensation.	RSPO P&C 2024
Ethical recruitment	Hiring workers lawfully and in a fair and transparent manner that respects and protects their rights	IRIS Standards: Ethical Recruitment, (International Organization for Migration, 2020)
Existing Plantations	Land planted with oil palm and associated development owned and/or directly managed by an RSPO member prior to its RSPO membership. This includes newly acquired oil palm plantations by an RSPO member.	RSPO P&C 2024
Extensive replanting on steep terrain	Any individual, contiguous replanted area on steep terrain (>25 degrees) greater than 25 hectares within the replanting area.	RSPO P&C 2024
Family farm	A farm operated and mostly owned by a family, for the growing of oil palm, sometimes along with subsistence production of other crops, and where the family provides the majority of the labour used. Such farms provide the principal source of income, and the planted area of oil palm is below 50 hectares in size.	Adapted from Free, Prior and Informed Consent Guide for RSPO Members (2015)
Family members	Family members refer specifically to individuals within the nuclear family structure. This includes parents, siblings, and children who are directly related by blood, marriage, or adopted. Excluded from this definition are extended family members such as aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins. The focus is on the immediate family unit, emphasising the core relationships that typically reside within the same household. Please refer to other related definitions: 'smallholder household' and 'contributing family members'.	RSPO ISH standard 2024
Forced labour	All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty, and for which said person has not offered him or herself voluntarily.	ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

Forest	<p>Natural ecosystem characterised by a significant tree cover, with species composition, structure, and ecological functions that support biodiversity, carbon storage, and other ecosystem services as identified through High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) assessments required by the RSPO.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary forests, untouched by significant human activities and developed through natural processes. - Regenerated forests, which have recovered after past disturbances and now resemble natural ecosystems in terms of structure and function. - Managed natural forests, where human activities like timber extraction or small-scale agriculture occur, but the forest retains its overall ecological integrity. - Partially degraded forests, which have been impacted by natural or anthropogenic factors but still maintain enough tree cover and ecological functions to be classified as forests. 	RSPO P&C 2024
Fragile soil	<p>A soil that is susceptible to degradation (i.e., reduction in fertility) when disturbed. A soil is particularly fragile if the degradation rapidly leads to an unacceptably low level of fertility or if it is irreversible using economically feasible management inputs.</p> <p>Please also refer to other related definitions: 'marginal soil'.</p>	RSPO P&C 2018
Gender Sensitive	<p>To understand and give consideration to socio-cultural norms and discriminations in order to acknowledge the different rights, roles, and responsibilities of women, and men, in the community and the relationships between them. Policies and programmes that take into account the particularities pertaining to the lives of both women, and men, while aiming to eliminate inequalities or imbalance between women, and men, and promote gender equality, including an equal distribution of resources.</p>	Adapted from Women Empowerment Development Organisation (WEDO), 2013 (online)
Geolocation	<p>Geographical location of a plot of land described by means of latitude and longitude coordinates corresponding to at least one latitude and one longitude point, and using at least six decimal digits; for plots of land of more than four hectares used for the production of the relevant commodities other than cattle, this shall be provided using polygons with sufficient latitude and longitude points to describe the perimeter of each plot of land.</p>	Article 2 (28), Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council (2023)
Good faith	<p>The principle of good faith implies that the parties make every effort to reach an agreement, conduct genuine and constructive negotiations, avoid unjustified delays in negotiations, respect agreements concluded, and give sufficient time to discuss and settle collective disputes. In the case of multinational enterprises, such companies should not threaten to transfer the whole or part of an operating unit from the country concerned in order to unfairly influence negotiations.</p>	Adapted from ILO Q&As on business and collective bargaining (online; accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://www.ilo.org/resource/qas-business-and-collective-bargaining-0)
Greenhouse gas	<p>Gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, that absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of infrared radiation emitted by the Earth's surface, the atmosphere, and clouds.</p>	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2021)
Group manager	<p>A person, a group of people or an organisation responsible for running the internal control system and managing the independent smallholder group. This can be a mill, an organisation, or an individual.</p>	RSPO ISH standard 2019

Growers	<p>Growers are beneficial owners, land owners, or businesses with more than 500 hectares (accumulative) of cultivated and harvested oil palms.</p> <p>Please also refer to other related definitions: 'medium grower', 'smallholder'.</p>	RSPO P&C 2024
Health and Safety (H&S) Committee	<p>A Health and Safety Committee is a representative group composed of both management and worker representatives, tasked with the development of safety and health rules, and safe systems of work. It is responsible for identifying hazards, assessing risks, developing and implementing measures to prevent accidents and injuries, and ensuring compliance with relevant health and safety regulations and standards. It reviews the effectiveness of safety and health programmes, conducts investigations on trends of accidents that occur at the place of work, reviews the health and safety policies, and makes recommendations.</p>	RSPO P&C 2024
Hazardous waste	<p>Hazardous waste is a waste with properties that make it dangerous or capable of having a harmful effect on human health or the environment.</p>	<p><u>United States Environment Protection Agency (EPA), Learn the Basic of Hazardous Waste (online; accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://www.epa.gov/hw/learn-basics-hazardous-waste)</u></p>
Hazardous work for children	<p>Hazardous work for children is defined as “any work which is likely to jeopardise children’s physical, mental or moral health, safety or morals” and which “should not be done by anyone under the age of 18.” (https://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm). This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; (d) work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; (e) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer. 	<p>Adapted from Article 3 (d) of the ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182)</p> <p>and</p> <p>from Article (II) - Hazardous Work, of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190)</p>

<p>High Conservation Value (HCV) areas</p>	<p>The areas necessary to maintain or enhance one or more High Conservation Values (HCVs):</p> <p>HCV 1 – Species diversity. Concentrations of biological diversity including endemic species, and rare threatened or endangered (RTE) species, that are significant at global, regional, or national levels.</p> <p>HCV 2 – Landscape-level ecosystems, ecosystem mosaics, and Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL). Large landscape-level ecosystems, ecosystem mosaics, and IFL that are significant at global, regional, or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.</p> <p>HCV 3 – Ecosystems and habitats. RTE ecosystems, habitats, or refugia.</p> <p>HCV 4 – Ecosystem services. Basic ecosystem services in critical situations, including protection of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.</p> <p>HCV 5 – Community needs. Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities or indigenous peoples (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.), identified through engagement with these communities or indigenous peoples.</p> <p>HCV 6 – Cultural values. Sites, resources, habitats, and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological, or historical significance, and/or of critical cultural, ecological, economic, or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities or indigenous peoples, identified through engagement with these local communities or indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>High Conservation Value Resource Network (HCVRN) Common Guidance for Identification of HCVs (2017)</p>
<p>High Carbon Stock</p>	<p>High Carbon Stock forests are defined as forests with above and below ground carbon stores, where the sequestered carbon losses as a result of land use change are greater than the potential gains in carbon stock within the new development area (including set aside and non-planted areas) over the period of one planting cycle.</p>	<p>RSPO P&C 2024, adapted from RSPO P&C 2013</p>
<p>High Forest Cover Country (HFCC)</p>	<p>Countries assessed as having >60% forest cover (based on recent, trusted REDD+ and/or national data); <1% oil palm cover; a deforestation trajectory that is historically low but is increasing or constant; and a known frontier area for oil palm or where major areas have been allocated for development.</p>	<p>RSPO No Deforestation consultancy: HFCC (Proforest, 2018)</p>
<p>High Forest Cover Landscape (HFCL)</p>	<p>Landscapes having >80% forest cover. Landscape defined as "the size of a landscape may be determined by</p> <p>A) Identifying the watershed or the geographical land unit containing a cluster of interacting ecosystems;</p> <p>B) Selecting a unit size that encompasses the plantation concession and a buffer of the surrounding area (e.g. 50,000 ha or 100,000 ha); or</p> <p>C) Using a radius of 5 km from the area of interest (for instance, the planned concession)."</p>	<p>Adapted from Module 5 of the HCSA Toolkit Version 2.0 (High Carbon Stock Approach, May 2017)</p>

Highly Hazardous Pesticide	Pesticides that are acknowledged to present particularly high levels of acute or chronic hazards to health or the environment according to internationally accepted classification systems such as the World Health Organization (WHO), or the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), or their listing in relevant binding international agreements or conventions. In addition, pesticides that appear to cause severe or irreversible harm to health or the environment under conditions of use in a country may be considered to be, and treated as, highly hazardous.	Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (FAO & WHO, 2016)
Human Rights Defenders (HRD)	People who, individually or with others, act to promote and protect human rights in a peaceful way.	Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (United Nations General Assembly, 1998)
Human Rights Due Diligence	Human rights due diligence is a way for businesses to proactively manage potential and actual adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved. It involves requiring businesses to identify, prevent, mitigate, and account for how they address actual and potential impacts on human rights.	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2011)
Identity Preserved	<p>A mill is deemed to be Identity Preserved (IP) if the FFB processed by the mill is only sourced from plantations/estates that are certified against the RSPO Principles and Criteria, or against the RSPO Group Certification scheme.</p> <p>Certification for mills is necessary to verify the volumes and sources of certified FFB entering the mill, the implementation of any processing controls (e.g., if physical separation is used), and volume sales of RSPO certified palm oil and oil palm products. If a mill processes certified and uncertified FFB without physically separating them, then only the Mass Balance supply chain module is applicable.</p>	RSPO Supply Chain Certification standard (2020)
Independent Smallholder	<p>An oil palm grower who has the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enforceable decision-making power on the operation of the land and production practices; - Ability and freedom to choose how the land and type of planted crops is organised, managed, and financed; - Meet any further criteria or definition relative to the applicability of the RSPO P&C and ISH standards, provided in the relevant National Interpretation for a specific country; - The total size of their oil palm production area is smaller than or equal to 50 hectares (ha) if no threshold is defined in a National Interpretation; OR smaller than or equal to the maximum size defined in a National Interpretation (e.g., for Indonesia this implies the threshold size is 20 ha or below; for Ecuador 75 ha or below); and - Not a scheme smallholder <p>Please refer to other related definitions: 'smallholder' and 'scheme smallholder'.</p>	Adapted from RSPO P&C 2018 and ISH 2019 standards

Indigenous peoples	<p>Indigenous peoples refer to those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-identify as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member - Have historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies that developed on their territories - Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources - Consider themselves as having distinct social, economic or political systems from other sector of the societies in the area where they live - Distinct language, culture, and beliefs - Form non-dominant groups of society - Resolve to maintain, develop, and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems to future generations as distinctive peoples and communities. <p>When considering the factors above, no single one shall be determinative. Indigenous peoples are defined as such regardless of the local, national, and regional terms that may be applied to them, such as 'tribal people,' 'first peoples,' 'secluded tribes,' 'hill people,' or others.</p>	<p>Adapted from the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Factsheet (online, accessed on 11 September 2024 at https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf)</p>
Initial Certification	<p>The beginning stage of the certification cycle where the decision of certification and issuance of certificate is done.</p>	<p>RSPO Certification Systems for Principles & Criteria and RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard (2020)</p>
Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	<p>A careful consideration of all available plant protection methods and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of populations of harmful organisms and keep the use of plant protection products and other forms of intervention to levels that are economically and ecologically justified, and reduce or minimise risks to human health and the environment. 'Integrated pest management' emphasises the growth of a healthy crop with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems and encourages natural pest control mechanisms.</p>	<p>Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (FAO & WHO, 2016)</p>
Internal Control System (ICS)	<p>A set of rules, policies, and procedures which an organisation implements to provide direction, increase efficiency, and strengthen adherence to policies to manage a group.</p>	<p>RSPO ISH standard 2019</p>
International accepted scientific protocol	<p>A predefined science-based procedure which is either published by an international scientific network or union, or referenced frequently in the international scientific literature.</p>	<p>FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship FSC-STD-01-001 (V5-2, 2018)</p>

Intimidation and harassment (including threats)	<p>Refers to a range of unacceptable behaviour that results in physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm. Examples include:</p> <p><u>Communities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Any threats of dispossession of land, forced removal, or relocation B) Any threat to deny access to resources on land e.g. water, agriculture, sacred grounds etc. C) Any threats against community members during receipt of grievances D) Any threats and abuse of power by military, paramilitaries, or security personnel (contracted by the Unit of Certification) against community members (includes sexual favours) E) Any threats and coercion against community members in signing agreements related to relinquishing of land rights or resources F) Persistent verbal abuse <p><u>Workers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Loss of income and/or restricted access to the workplace, housing, and/or land B) Threats of dismissal from employment or against workers who wish to resign C) Threats against workers during receipt of grievances regarding working and living conditions via internal (labour dispute mechanisms) and/or external (eg. embassy, NGO, etc.) grievance channels D) Threats to terminate employment of family members E) Withdrawal of rights such as the rights to leave the workplace F) Verbal abuse <p>It may also include undermining of workers, i.e., psychological coercion, designed to increase the sense of vulnerability.</p> <p><u>Human Rights Defenders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Loss of income due to/resulting in organisational restrictions B) Any threats of dismissal from employment, restrictions on travel, and restrictions to the environment in which the HRDs operate C) Any deliberate obstruction to holding of meetings between HRDs D) Any hostility within the community the HRDs lives as claims may be seen to jeopardise the community's honour and culture (this may especially be the case with women HRDs). E) Any character assassination of HRDs in the form of discrediting or defamation campaigns F) Any arbitrary use of security forces surveillance G) Any SLAPP suits (Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation) due to his or her work and/or in the course of his/her activities, H) Any threats of physical violence and death threats. Special attention is needed to avoid gender-specific violence such as rape or threats of sexual violence used to silence women. 	RSPO P&C 2024
Labour recruiters	Includes all labour recruiters (both public and private employment services/agencies) and all other intermediaries or sub-agents that offer labour recruitment and placement services. This includes labour recruiters in countries of origin that assist, or are sub-contracted to, the labour recruiter that is directly engaged by the Unit of Certification, and any recruiters engaged by the sub-contractor.	RSPO P&C 2024

Legal due diligence	The term 'legal due diligence' is commonly defined as an investigation, review performed, and/or research conducted on a company or business asset or a business, to confirm the facts of a matter under consideration before entering into an agreement with the another party. Once the facts are collected and analysed, an informed decision can be made.	RSPO P&C 2024
Legal registration	Official license and/or permission from the relevant government authorities for an entity to operate as an enterprise, with rights to buy and sell products and/or services commercially. The licence or permissions can apply to an individual, a privately-owned enterprise. or a publicly-owned corporate entity.	RSPO P&C 2024
Livelihood	<p>A person's or a group's way of making a living, from their environment or in the economy, including how they provision their basic needs, and assure themselves and following generations secure access to food, clean water, health, education, housing, and the materials needed for their life and comfort either through their own direct use of natural resources or through exchange, barter, trade, or engagement in the market.</p> <p>A livelihood includes not just access to resources but the knowledge and institutions that make this possible such as time for community participation and integration, personal, local, or traditional ecological knowledge, skills, endowments, and practices, the assets that are intrinsic to that way of making a living (e.g. farms, fields, pastures, crops, stock, natural resources, tools, machinery, and intangible cultural properties) and their position in the legal, political, and social fabric of society.</p> <p>The risk of livelihood failure determines the level of vulnerability of a person or a group to income, food, health, and nutritional insecurity. Therefore, livelihoods are secure when they have secure ownership of, or access to, resources and income earning activities, including reserves and assets, to offset risks, ease shocks, and meet contingencies.</p>	<p>Compiled and adapted from various definitions of livelihoods from the Department for International Development (DfID), the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), the FAO, and academic texts in 'The Household Livelihood Security Concept' (Frankenberger & McCaston, 1998; online, accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://www.fao.org/4/x0051t/x0051t05.htm)</p>
Living Wage	The remuneration received for a standard workweek by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and her or his family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transportation, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events.	<p>What is a Living Wage? (Global Living Wage Coalition; online, accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://www.globallivingwage.org/about/what-is-a-living-wage/)</p>
Local Community	Refer to a community in a particular place where local people share common concern around local facilities, services and environment, and which may at times depart from traditional or state definitions. Generally, local communities attach particular meaning to land and natural resources as sources of culture, customs, history, and identity, and depend on them to sustain their livelihoods, social organisation, culture and traditions, beliefs, environment, and ecology.	RSPO Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guide (2022)
Managed area	The land containing oil palm and associated land uses such as infrastructure (e.g., roads, buildings), riparian zones, and set-aside conservation areas.	RSPO P&C 2018
Management documents	Management documents are documented information and evidence to interact with the RSPO P&C standard. It shall be in the form of manual, working procedures, reports, and records that subject to be audited and reviewed periodically.	RSPO P&C 2018
Management Review	Management Reviews are an opportunity to evaluate the systems and controls that are in place, to review feedback, make improvements and track corrective action, to assure that changes are monitored, reported and evaluated, and to determine the overall effectiveness of the quality programme (QMS).	ISO 9001: 2015 - Quality Management Systems

Marginal soil	A soil that is unlikely to produce acceptable economic returns for the proposed crop at reasonable projections of crop value and costs of amelioration. Degraded soils are not marginal soils if their amelioration, and resulting productivity, is cost effective. Please also refer to other related definitions: 'fragile soil'.	RSPO P&C 2018
Mass Balance	A mill is deemed to be Mass Balance (MB) if the mill processes FFB from both RSPO certified and uncertified plantations/estates. A mill may take delivery of FFB from uncertified growers, in addition to those from its own and 3rd party certified supply base(s). In that scenario, the mill can only claim the volume of palm oil and oil palm products produced from processing of the certified FFB as Mass Balance.	RSPO Supply Chain Certification standard (2020)
Maternal Health	Maternal health refers to the health of women during pregnancy, childbirth and the post-natal period.	<u>Maternal Health (World Health Organisation; online, accessed January 2023 at https://www.who.int/health-topics/maternal-health)</u>
Medium Grower	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. Please also refer to other related definitions: 'grower', 'smallholder'.	RSPO P&C 2024
Migrant Worker	A person who migrates or who has migrated whether within a country (internal migrant) or from one country to another (international migrant) to work.	RSPO P&C 2024
Migrant Worker Status	Workers who have registered to be regularised under national labour recalibration/regularisation programs.	RSPO P&C 2024
National law	A binding rule or body of rules prescribed by the government of a sovereign state that holds force throughout the regions and territories within the government's dominion. In the context of international law, a State party to an international treaty must ensure that its own domestic law and practice are consistent with what is required by the treaty. National laws includes subsidiary legislations, regulations, by-laws, rules, and orders issued by the government.	<u>National Law (UN Environment Programme; online, accessed January 2023 at https://leap.unep.org/en/knowledge/glossary/national-law)</u>
Negative action	Negative action against affected stakeholders is any act of retaliation; intimidation, harassment and threats; violence (physical, sexual and gender-based) and torture; instigating violence or use of any form of harassment, including the use of mercenaries and paramilitaries in their operations; exploitation; discrimination; and detention, disappearance or killing.	RSPO P&C 2024
New planting/New land clearing	The planned or proposed establishment of oil palm plantations and associated developments on lands not previously cultivated with oil palm, owned and/or directly managed by an RSPO member.	RSPO P&C 2024
Non-judicial process	Non-judicial process refers to mechanisms that do not involve formal national court proceedings or the direct involvement of the judiciary. These processes are often carried out by administrative or executive bodies such as mediations or arbitrations. This may also include dialogue-based or other culturally appropriate compatible processes. It can be used by individuals, workers, communities, and/or civil society organisations e.g., labour tribunals, national human rights institutions, ombudsperson offices, community tribunals, etc.	RSPO P&C 2024
Oil Extraction Rate (OER)	Proportion of crude palm oil extracted from Fresh Fruit Bunches, using either the dry or wet extraction method.	RSPO P&C 2024

Operations	All activities planned and/or undertaken by the Unit of Certification, which includes its contractors, within the boundaries of its palm oil mill and its estates/plantations.	RSPO P&C 2024
Other conservation areas	Areas (in addition to HCVs, HCS forests, and peatland conservation areas) that are required to be conserved by the RSPO P&C standard e.g., riparian areas, steep slopes, other areas allocated by the Unit of Certification.	RSPO P&C 2018
Outgrower	Farmer(s), where the sale of their FFB is exclusively contracted to the Unit of Certification. Outgrowers may be smallholders.	RSPO P&C 2013
Paludiculture	Productive land use on rewetted peatland with crops that are adapted to the high water levels in peatlands. Paludiculture is classified as a peatland rehabilitation strategy. Plant species can be cultivated as part of the paludiculture are swam jelutong (<i>dyera polyphylla</i>), alternative pulp species, tengkawang (<i>shorea spp.</i>), sago (<i>metroxylon spp.</i>), rattan, and medicinal plants.	RSPO Manual on BMPs for Management and Rehabilitation of Peatlands (2019)
Participatory Mapping	Participatory mapping, also known as 'community mapping', is based on the premise that communities have knowledge of their customary tenure and surrounding environments, which can be expressed in simple maps. It allows communities to bring their local knowledge and perspectives to the attention of authorities and the UoC. This is done jointly by the Unit of Certification and the Communities.	Adapted from RSPO Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guide (2022)
Peat	A soil with cumulative organic layer(s) comprising more than half of the upper 80 cm or 100 cm of the soil surface, containing 35% or more of organic matter (35% or more Loss on Ignition) or 18% or more organic carbon. Note for management of existing plantations in Malaysia and Indonesia, a narrower definition has been used, based on national regulations, namely: soil with an organic layer of more than 50% in the top 100 cm, containing more than 65% organic matter.	RSPO Peatland Working Group 2 (PLWG2), July 2018. Derived from FAO and USDA definition for histosols (organic soils) (FAO 1998, 2006/7; USDA 2014)
Pesticide	Substances or a mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest, or regulating plant growth. Pesticides are categorised into four main substituent chemicals: herbicides; fungicides; insecticides; and bactericides.	RSPO P&C 2013
Plan	A time-bound and detailed scheme, programme, or method for achieving objective(s) and desired outcome(s). Plans shall have clear targets with timelines for delivery, actions to be taken, and a process for monitoring progress to adapt plans to changing circumstances and reporting. Plans shall also include the identification of named individuals or positions responsible for the delivery of the plan. There shall be evidence that sufficient resources are available to carry out the plan and the plan is implemented in full.	RSPO P&C 2013
Plantation	The land on which oil palm is grown.	RSPO P&C 2018
Precautionary Approach	An approach requiring that when the available information indicates that management activities pose a threat of severe or irreversible damage to the environment or a threat to human welfare, The organisation will take explicit and effective measures to prevent the damage and avoid the risks to welfare, even when the scientific information is incomplete or inconclusive, and when the vulnerability and sensitivity of environmental values are uncertain A precautionary approach applies explicit and effective measures when there is a threat of severe or irreversible damage to the environment or a threat to human welfare, to prevent the damage and reduce the risks. These measures are applied even when the scientific information is incomplete or inconclusive, and when the vulnerability and sensitivity of values are uncertain.	Rio Declaration on Environment and Development A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I) (United Nations General Assembly, 1992)
Prevailing wage	The remuneration earned by a worker during normal working hours. It includes basic wage (cash), certain types of in-kind benefits, allowances, and bonuses .	RSPO Guidance on Calculating Prevailing Wages (2019)

Primary forest	<p>Forest that has never been logged and has developed following natural disturbances and under natural processes, regardless of its age. Also included as primary are forests that are used inconsequentially by indigenous and local communities living traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. The present cover is normally relatively close to the natural composition and has arisen (predominantly) through natural regeneration.</p> <p>Applicability: <i>The RSPO standards have evolved in addressing deforestation, shifting from terms like “primary forest” in earlier iterations to more recent concepts such as “High Conservation Values (HCVs)” and “High Carbon Stock Forests (HCS)” in 2018. These updated terms are used within the RSPO system to ensure compliance with the standards relevant at the time of deforestation risk assessment, conducted during membership application. For new members (since November 2005) and existing members planning new planting (since January 2010), the definition of “primary forest” is applied to determine if deforestation occurred within a specified time frame.</i></p>	RSPO P&C 2024
Private Employment Agency	<p>Any natural or legal person, independent of the public authorities, which provides one or more of the following labour market services:</p> <p>A) Services for matching offers of and applications for employment, without the private employment agency becoming a party to the employment relationships which may arise therefrom B) Services consisting of employing workers with a view to making them available to a third party, who may be a natural or legal person (referred to below as a "user enterprise") which assigns their tasks and supervises the execution of these tasks C) Other services relating to jobseeking, determined by the competent authority after consulting the most representative employers and workers organizations, such as the provision of information, that do not set out to match specific offers of and applications for employment.</p>	RSPO P&C 2024
Prophylactic	A treatment or course of action applied as a preventive measure.	RSPO P&C 2013
Publicly available	Refers to information or documents are accessible free of charge to anyone in the general public, without the need for special qualifications, permissions, or privileges.	RSPO P&C 2024
Rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) species	<p>Rare species: Species that are uncommon or scarce, but not classified as threatened. These species are located in geographically restricted areas or specific habitats, or are scantily scattered on a large scale. They are approximately equivalent to the IUCN (2001) category of Near Threatened (NT), including species that are close to qualifying for, or are likely to qualify for, a threatened category in the near future. They are also approximately equivalent to imperiled species.</p> <p>Threatened species: Species that meet the IUCN (2001) criteria for Vulnerable (VU), Endangered (EN) or Critically Endangered (CR), and are facing a high, very high, or extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. These categories may be reinterpreted according to official national classifications (which have legal significance) and to local conditions and population densities (which should affect decisions about appropriate conservation measures).</p> <p>Endangered species: A taxon is Endangered when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of the criteria A to E for Endangered (see Section V), and it is therefore considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.</p>	IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria Version 3.1 (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2001)

Recruitment fees and related costs	The terms 'recruitment fees' or 'related costs' refer to any fees or costs incurred in the recruitment process in order for workers to secure employment or placement, regardless of the manner, timing, or location of their imposition or collection.	ILO General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and definition of recruitment fees and related costs (International Labour Organization, 2019)
Remediation	<p>Remediation refers to both the process and the outcome of addressing adverse human rights impacts. Remedies available should be adequate and appropriate, proportional to the gravity of the violation, and adapted to the circumstances of the case. Assistance provided to each aggrieved party will depend on the individual needs of the aggrieved party.</p> <p>Below are some examples of remediation that may be considered by the Unit of Certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Shelter and accommodation B) Medical and health-care services and counselling, including mental health and psychosocial support C) Compensation/repayment D) Financial assistance E) Legal assistance F) Return assistance G) Reintegration assistance H) Satisfaction (acknowledgement fault/apology) I) Restitution (restoration of situation) J) Guarantee of non-repetition 	Adapted from the Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights: An Interpretive Guide (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2012)
Replanting	Replanting oil palm with a subsequent oil palm crop.	RSPO New Planting Procedure (NPP) 2021
Restoration	The process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem, and its associated conservation values, that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed.	Adapted from the Accountability Framework Initiative (2020)

Rights	<p>Rights are legal, social or ethical principles of freedom or entitlement, in accordance with the International Bill of Rights and other relevant international human rights instruments, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customary rights: Patterns of long-standing community land and resource usage in accordance with indigenous peoples' customary laws, values, customs, and traditions, including seasonal or cyclical use rather than formal legal title to land and resources issued by the State. - Legal rights: Rights given to individual(s), entities, and others through applicable local, national, or ratified international laws and regulations. - User rights: Rights for the use of land and resources that can be defined by local custom, mutual agreements, or prescribed by other entities holding access rights. - Demonstrable rights: Indigenous peoples, local communities, and users may have informal or customary rights in land that are not registered or recognised by the government or national laws. Demonstrable rights are distinguished from spurious claims by direct engagement with local communities, so they have adequate opportunities to justify their claims, and are best ascertained through participatory mapping with the involvement of neighbouring communities 	RSPO Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Guide (2022)
Riparian	Riparian is used to refer to land located next to natural lakes, as well as streams and rivers, although the latter are more commonly found within oil palm concessions.	RSPO Manual for the Management and Rehabilitation of Riparian Reserves (2018)
Risk assessment	<p>A systematic process of identifying and evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.</p> <p>It enables a weighing up of whether enough precautions are in place or whether more should be done to prevent harm to those at risk, including workers and members of the public.</p>	Adapted from ILO 'A 5 step guide for employers, workers and their representatives on conducting workplace risk assessments' (International Labour Organization, 2014)
Safe drinking water	Safe drinking water, also known as 'potable water' or 'improved drinking water', is water that is of sufficient quality to be used for drinking (as well as for cooking and personal/domestic hygiene) without causing risk to health.	Adapted from Module 1: Water in 'WASH@Work: a self-training handbook' (International Labour Office, 2016)
Scheme Smallholder	<p>All smallholder farmers who are not Independent Smallholders, under a formal and legal contractual FFB sourcing agreement with a Unit of Certification.</p> <p>Please also refer to other related definitions: 'smallholder' and 'independent smallholder'.</p>	RSPO P&C 2024
Segregated	<p>The Segregated (SG) supply chain model assures that RSPO certified palm oil and oil palm products delivered to the end user is only from RSPO certified sources (a mixture of Identity Preserved/IP products).</p> <p>Please also refer to other related definitions: 'Identity Preserved'</p>	RSPO Supply Chain Certification standard (2020)

Sexual Harassment	Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders.	Adapted from the ILO Briefing note ' <u>Sexual harassment in the world of work</u> ' (International Labour Organization; online, accessed on 8 April 2024 at https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@gender/documents/briefingnote/wcms_738115.pdf) and <u>UN Women 'Harassment Policy including sexual harassment'</u> (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; online, accessed on 8 April 2024 at https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osag/new/fpsexualharassment.htm)
Sexual violence	Includes rape, threats of sexual violence, and/or abuse. Sexual violence also includes forcing (directly or indirectly) workers/community members to engage in sexual activities.	Adapted from the ILO '11 Indicators on Forced Labour' (International Labour Organization, 2012)
Significant air pollutant	Significant air pollutants are chemical or biological substances that substantially degrade air quality. These may include pollutants from sources such as palm oil mill effluent (POME), sewage, wastewater, sediment, fertilisers, pesticides, fuels, and other palm oil operations, which exceeds the threshold in accordance with national regulations and international standards.	RSPO P&C 2024
Smallholder	An oil palm grower with a total accumulative planted area of oil palm that is smaller than or equal to 50 hectares (ha). The definition of a smallholder farmer and threshold of planted area of oil palm may vary by country, to be determined by the relevant National Interpretation of the RSPO P&C and ISH standards. In the absence of an NI developed for a specific country that has been formally endorsed by the RSPO Board of Governors, the definition of a smallholder farmer in the generic RSPO P&C shall prevail. Please refer to other related definitions: 'independent smallholder' and 'scheme smallholder'.	Adapted from RSPO P&C 2018 and ISH 2019 standards
Smallholder plot	Land where smallholders have Rights, and is planted with oil palm or allocated for new planting with oil palm or replanting.	RSPO ISH standard 2024
Smallholder household	A smallholder household refers to persons or groups that may be related or unrelated that live together and make common provision for food and other essentials for living. Please refer to other related definitions: 'family members' and 'contributing family members'.	RSPO ISH standard 2024

Social and Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA)	An analysis and planning process to be carried out prior to new plantings or operations. This process incorporates relevant environmental and social data, as well as stakeholder consultations, in order to identify the baseline condition and potential impacts (both direct and indirect) to the site; and to determine whether these impacts can be satisfactorily addressed, in which case the proponent also defines specific actions to minimise and mitigate potential negative impacts in a resulting social and environmental management & monitoring plan.	RSPO P&C 2024
Socialise	A process of sharing knowledge and/or skills through providing information to, and interacting with, stakeholders.	RSPO P&C 2024
Stakeholder(s)	An individual or group with a legitimate and/or demonstrable interest in, or who may or may not be directly affected by, the activities of an organisation and the consequences of those activities. Stakeholders include suppliers, internal staff members, workers, family members living on-site, communities, smallholders, customers, regulators, purchasers, clients, owners, trade unions, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).	RSPO P&C 2018
Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)	SOP is a set of step-by-step instructions compiled by an organisation to help workers carry out routine operations. SOPs aim to achieve efficiency, quality output, and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication and failure to comply.	RSPO P&C 2024
Steep terrain	Areas with a slope greater than 25 degrees, or otherwise defined through a National Interpretation (NI) process.	RSPO P&C 2013
Supplier(s)	Person(s) or organisation(s) that supply Fresh Fruit Bunches to the Unit of Certification.	RSPO P&C 2024
Supply chain	The series of processes/steps through which agricultural raw materials pass from the primary producer through to the end-product manufacturer (i.e. oil palm cultivation, harvesting, milling, storage, transport, refining, distribution, processing, manufacturing, retailing, etc.)	RSPO Supply Chain Certification standard 2020
Traders	Person(s), business(es), or organisation(s) that buy and sell Fresh Fruit Bunches	RSPO P&C 2024
Trafficking in Persons	The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;	United Nations 'Protocols to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children....' (United Nations General Assembly, 2000)
Tribal peoples	Persons, or groups of persons, that can be identified or characterised as follows: - People who self-identify as tribal people and are accepted as such by their community - Social, cultural, and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community - Status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions, or by special laws or regulations	RSPO P&C 2024
Unit of Certification	The Unit of Certification is the collective area proposed for certification under the RSPO P&C standard, including: A) The mill(s) and its supply base(s), which shall include both directly managed land (and estates) and scheme smallholders, where estates have been legally established with proportions of lands allocated to each; B) Oil palm production areas managed by growers, medium growers, and/or smallholders; and	RSPO P&C 2024

	C) Set-aside conservation areas within the concession area under the management control of the UoC.	
Unlawful wage deductions	Unlawful wage deductions refer to wage deductions that are not stipulated in the national laws or collective bargaining agreement. In circumstances where the national law or collective bargaining agreement is silent on deductions, the Unit of Certification shall obtain approval from the relevant authorities for the said deductions.	RSPO P&C 2024

Adopted 13 Nov 2024

<p>Violence</p>	<p>Violence may take many forms. It consists of acts that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering. This includes threats of such acts, coercion, or withdrawal of rights, occurring within the Unit of Certification, as well as the use of violence as a disciplinary measure and/or as a result of gender-based discrimination.</p> <p>Violence humiliates, degrades or damages a person's well-being, value, or dignity. Violence can be perpetrated either directly or indirectly. It includes:</p> <p>A) Physical violence B) Sexual violence C) Psychological violence</p> <p>Physical Violence The use of physical force against another person or group that results in physical, sexual, or psychological harm.</p> <p>Sexual Violence Any form or attempt of non-consensual sexual activity or coercion perpetrated against an individual. This includes rape, forced or coerced penetration of the vulva, anus, or any other body orifice with a penis, body part, or object. Sexual violence extends beyond physical acts to include psychological coercion, verbal harassment, and any behavior aimed at exploiting or violating an individual's sexual autonomy and dignity</p> <p>Psychological Violence Any intentional conduct that seriously impairs another person's psychological integrity through coercion or threats. Psychological violence can take the form of coercion, defamation, verbal abuse, threats, or harassment. It may also include threat of physical force, against another person or group that result in harm to mental, spiritual, moral, or social development, as well as bullying/mobbing.</p> <p><u>Additional notes and information</u></p> <p>Gender-based violence Gender-based violence is violence directed against a person because of that person's gender or violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. It is rooted in gender inequality the abuse of power and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk of multiple forms of violence. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." While women and girls suffer disproportionately from GBV, men and boys can also be targeted.</p> <p>Violence against Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of physical violence against community members in signing agreements related to relinquishing of land rights or resources - Forced dispossession of land, removal, or relocation through the use of violence 	<p>Adapted from the ILO Department of Statistics 'Work-related violence and its integration into existing surveys' paper from the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in Geneva (International Labour Organization, October 2013; online, accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_222231.pdf)</p> <p>and</p> <p>UN Women 'Frequently asked questions: Types of violence against women and girls' (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; online, accessed on 8 April 2024 at https://africa.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence-1)</p> <p>and</p> <p>(for communities) Adapted from United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Mandated Areas - Human Rights (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; online, accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://social.desa.un.org/issues/indigenous-peoples/unpfii-mandated-areas-human-rights)</p>
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	- Excessive use of force by military or security personnel (contracted by the Unit of Certification) against community members	
Voluntary isolation	Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation are indigenous peoples or segments of indigenous peoples who do not maintain sustained contacts with the majority non-indigenous population, and who generally reject any type of contact with persons not part of their own people. They may also be peoples or segments of peoples previously contacted and who, after intermittent contact with the non-indigenous societies, have returned to a situation of isolation and broke the relations of contact that they may have had with those societies. In line with the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), RSPO prohibits oil palm expansion in these peoples' territories.	IAHCR 'Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact in the Americas' (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights & Organization of American States, 2013)
Vulnerable groups	Any group or sector of society that is at higher risk or being subjected to social exclusion, discriminatory practices, violence, natural or environmental disaster, or economic hardship than other groups, such as indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, migrants, disabled people, the homeless, isolated elderly people, women, and children.	RSPO P&C 2018
Waste	Any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard	Article 3 (1), Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (19 November 2008)
Waste management	The collection, transport, recovery, and disposal of waste, including the supervision of such operations and the after-care of disposal sites, and including actions taken as a dealer or broker.	Article 3 (9), Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (19 November 2008)
Watercourse	A watercourse is a natural or artificial channel through which water flows and/or a stream of water (such as a river, a brook, or an underground stream).	RSPO P&C 2024
Water security	The capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability	<u>UN-Water Analytical Brief 'Water Security and the Global Water Agenda' (United Nations Water, 2013; online, accessed on 3 April 2024 at https://www.unwater.org/publications/water-security-and-global-water-agenda)</u>
Whistleblower	Individuals who are employees or former employees who report on illegal, irregular, dangerous, or unethical practices or actions by employers which contravene the RSPO Code of Conduct and related RSPO key documents, and who may potentially be at risk of reprisal. This includes individuals who are outside the traditional employee-employer relationship, such as contract workers, temporary workers, consultants, contractors, trainees/interns, volunteers, student workers, and former employees.	RSPO Policy on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Whistleblowers, Complainants and Community Spokespersons (2018)

Worker(s)	<p>Individual(s) that perform work for pay. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Permanent workers: Workers with an ongoing employment relationship with the Unit of Certification and do not have a predetermined end date for their employment. - Fixed-term workers: Workers with an ongoing employment relationship with the Unit of Certification and who have an agreed minimum number of hours of work for a period of 3 months or more. - Short-term workers: Workers with an ongoing employment relationship with the Unit of Certification and who have an agreed minimum number of hours of work for a period of less than 3 months. (Seasonal workers with guaranteed work or number of working hours for a period of less than 3 months can be considered a short-term worker.) - Casual workers: Workers with an ongoing employment relationship with the Unit of Certification and who have no guarantee of employment for a certain number of hours during a specified period but may have arrangements of an ongoing or recurring nature. (Day workers can be considered as a casual worker if they have no guarantee of work or a minimum number of hours during a specified period.) - Third-party contracted workers: Workers employed by private employment agencies and deployed to a Unit of Certification which assigns and supervises the execution of their tasks. <p>Seasonal, contract, day, and temporary workers would fall into one of the above categories depending on the terms of the employment contract (permanency/duration, minimum number of working hours, pay structure, etc.)</p> <p>In the context of smallholders, family members who receive a wage/salary in return for the work performed may fall under one of the above categories of workers depending on the employment permanency/duration, nature of work, and minimum number of working hours.</p>	RSPO P&C 2024
Workforce	The total number of workers employed by the Unit of Certification either directly or indirectly. This includes contract workers and consultants.	RSPO P&C 2013
Worker Organisation	Any organisation or group formed by workers to advocate their rights and interests in the workplace. These organisations may include trade unions, labor unions, workers' associations, or similar entities dedicated to promoting workers' rights, improving working conditions, and fostering engagement between the Unit of Certification and workers.	RSPO P&C 2024
Work Target	An achievable output of work to be delivered by a worker within standard working hours in order to receive a full daily/monthly wage. It can also be referred to as 'quota'.	Adapted from 'Guideline for Indonesian Palm Oil Companies: Fair Target-Setting and Wage Policies in Oil Palm Plantations' (Earthworm Foundation, 2020)

Worst forms of child labour	The worst forms of child labour comprises: A) All forms of slavery, or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, and forced or compulsory labour (including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict); B) The use, procuring, or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic performances; C) The use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; and D) Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.	ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182)
Yield	Fresh Fruit Bunch (FFB) production in metric tonnes (MT) per hectare of production area.	RSPO P&C 2024
Young workers	Young workers are those who are from the age of 15 (or above the national minimum age, if higher) but under the age of 18.	RSPO P&C 2024

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Annex 2 - Smallholder Declaration

Smallholder Declaration

By signing this Smallholder Declaration, I assert that:

- A** I recognise the importance of sustainable production.
- B** I will join a smallholder group to pursue group certification of the RSPO ISH standard, and comply with the principles and their relevant criteria and indicators.
- C** I will provide the following information about my plot to my group manager:

		ISH Criteria
1	All land holdings	2.1, 2.4
2	Location (coordinates) of all plots currently planted with oil palm	2.1, 2.4
3	Ownership and land use status	2.1, 2.3, 4.2
4	Details on plans for replanting and expansion of oil palm	2.5, 4.3
5	Any existing land disputes	2.3
6	Source of farm labour	3.1
7	Information on all plots converted and planted with oil palm after 2005	4.2
8	Any plots located on steep slopes	4.2
9	Any plots located on peat	4.4
10	All plans for replanting	4.6
11	List of existing stocks in the inventory of paraquat and pesticides categorised as WHO Class 1A or 1B, carcinogenicity Categories 1A and 1B, mutagenicity Categories 1A and 1B, or reproductive toxicity Categories 1A and 1B under GHS, listed by the Stockholm or Rotterdam Conventions, and restricted or prohibited under national regulations	4.8
12	Pests and diseases, weeds and invasive species in smallholder plots	4.9

I commit to the following:

1	Continue to progress along the standard and meet the required milestones for progress	All Principles in ISH
2	Participate in training(s)/capacity building programme(s) in the group as required in the standard	P1 - P4, 1.1
3	Implement relevant Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their plots	1.2
4	Resolve any existing disputes	2.3
5	(For new planting) Identify affected communities, if any. If affected communities are identified, to commit to negotiate with affected communities to obtain consent for land use prior to cultivation and to commit to discuss impacts and measures for the mitigation and management of any impact <i>Note: This clause of the Declaration shall be updated when the RSPO Simplified FPIC approach for ISH has been endorsed and approved for implementation</i>	2.5
6	Ensure no forced labour on smallholder plot(s) and end any existing forced labour	3.1
7	Ensure no child labour on smallholder plot(s) and end any existing child labour	3.2
8	Pay-at least the legal minimum wage without discrimination against vulnerable groups, including women and migrant workers	3.3
9	Respect the rights of workers to file a complaint/grievance without retaliation	3.4
10	Provide safe working conditions and facilities based on the health and safety risk identification, conducted together with Group Manager	3.5

11	No discrimination, no intimidation, no harassment (including threats), no sexual harassment, no abuse, and no violence in smallholder plots	3.6
12	Avoid development in, and protect, HCVs and HCS forests, and to manage rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) species, if any, based on the results of the Land Use Change Analysis (LUCA) conducted in the pre-membership stage assisted by the RSPO Secretariat	4.1
13	A) No new planting on HCVs or HCS forests; B) No new planting on steep slopes (more than 25 degrees, or as in the National Interpretation); C) No new planting on peat until HCVs and/or HCS forest(s) are identified; D) No new planting in restricted areas or protected by national laws; and/or E) No new planting on riparian reserves	4.3
14	For existing planting on peat, minimise subsidence and degradation of peat soils according to the latest version of the 'RSPO Smallholder Best Management Practices Manual for Existing Oil Palm Cultivation on Peat'	4.4
15	Replanting will only be in areas with low risk of flooding or saline intrusion based on an approved flood risk assessment, in accordance with the latest version of the 'RSPO ISH Flood Risk Assessment Template'	4.5
16	No use of fire for land preparation, or for pest and disease management unless in exceptional circumstances, and no open burning for waste management within the smallholder plots	4.6
17	No new planting in riparian reserves to ensure its maintenance and/or improvement in accordance with national legislation or the latest version of the 'RSPO Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual for Management and Rehabilitation of Riparian Reserves' (whichever standard is higher shall prevail)	4.7
18	Perform Best Management Practices (BMPs) for pesticides, and phasing out paraquat and prohibited pesticides by MS B	4.8

Smallholder Benefits

By adopting sustainable farming practices and complying to the RSPO ISH standard, I understand I will have:

- 1 Knowledge on how to optimise productivity and yields by implementing the good and sustainable agricultural practices that I have been trained on;
- 2 Knowledge on how to trade and participate in the market for sustainable palm oil and manage my farm professionally and become financially sustainable; and
- 3 Structure as well as agency to be able to take the necessary steps towards a sustainable livelihood for my family and my community.

I recognise I will have access to technical support and financial support, as well as access to trade in the market for sustainable palm oil offered by RSPO and RSPO members, to enable me to realise the benefits of sustainable farming practices.

Annex 3 - Compliance Requirements and Informative Guidance

This section of the document shall be completed following endorsement and adoption of the revised standard. Finalisation of Annex 3 is expected by end-March 2025.

Content of this annex shall be finalised in consultation with members and approved by the RSPO Standards Standing Committee (SSC) for inclusion in this document.

Compliance Requirements provide further details and explanation on requirements as an interpretation of an indicator to assist the smallholders and group managers in implementation and demonstrating compliance. Compliance Requirements will be aligned fully and finalised together with the Audit Checklist in the revised 'RSPO Certification System for P&C and ISH Standards', to reduce interpretation risk and align expectations with the verifications/checks to be performed by auditors when assessing compliance to an indicator.

Informative Guidance provides additional information, advice, guidelines, suggestions, or references to assist the smallholders and group managers in understanding and implementing an indicator.

Adopted 13 Nov 2024

Annex 4 - Supporting documents of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard

The following is a list of currently effective, to be updated*, to be developed*, and in development* supporting documents of the 2024 RSPO ISH Standard.

*Status of supporting document as of **13 November 2024**

Supplementary or Derivative document	Reference to Criteria	Applicability
RSPO Certification System for P&C and ISH Standards - to be updated	All Criteria and Indicators	Normative
Minimum required Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Independent Smallholders - to be developed	1.2	Normative
RSPO Simplified Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) approach for Independent Smallholders - to be developed	2.2 ; 2.5	Informative
Guidance on Child Rights for Smallholders and Group Managers	3.2	Informative
Guidance Document on the Simplified High Conservation Value (HCV) Approach for Smallholders in the RSPO - Introduction Document (Phases 1 and 2)	4.1	Normative
Guidance Document for Smallholders on Managing High Conservation Values (HCVs) in Established Oil Palm Plantations - Existing Plantings (Phases 3 and 4)	4.1	Normative
Guidance Document on the Simplified High Conservation Value (HCV) Approach for Smallholders in the RSPO - HCV Procedures for New Plantings (Phases 3 and 4)	4.1 ; 4.3	Normative
Guidance for ISH Group Manager Independent Smallholder - Land Use Risk Identification (IS-LURI) - to be updated	4.1 ; 4.3	Normative
Forest Protection Approach (name to be finalised) - in development <u>Procedural Note</u> <i>The FPA is an integrated guidance outlining the simplified HCV-HCS approach for independent smallholders that is intended to merge the RSPO Simplified HCV Approach with a methodology for assessing HCS forests. This approach will replace the interim IS-LURI measure once approved for implementation. This document is to be developed by IS-NDTF (Independent Smallholder No Deforestation Task Force) in consultation with the Smallholder Standing Committee (SHSC), and to be approved by the Standards Standing Committee (SSC).</i>	4.1 ; 4.3	Normative
RSPO Remediation and Compensation Procedure (RaCP) process for smallholders - RaCP Version 2 in development	4.2	Normative
RSPO Smallholder Best Management Practices Manual for	4.4 ; 4.5	Informative

Existing Oil Palm Cultivation on Peat		
RSPO ISH Flood Risk Assessment Template	4.5	Informative
Simplified Guide Management and Rehabilitation of Riparian Reserves	4.7	Informative

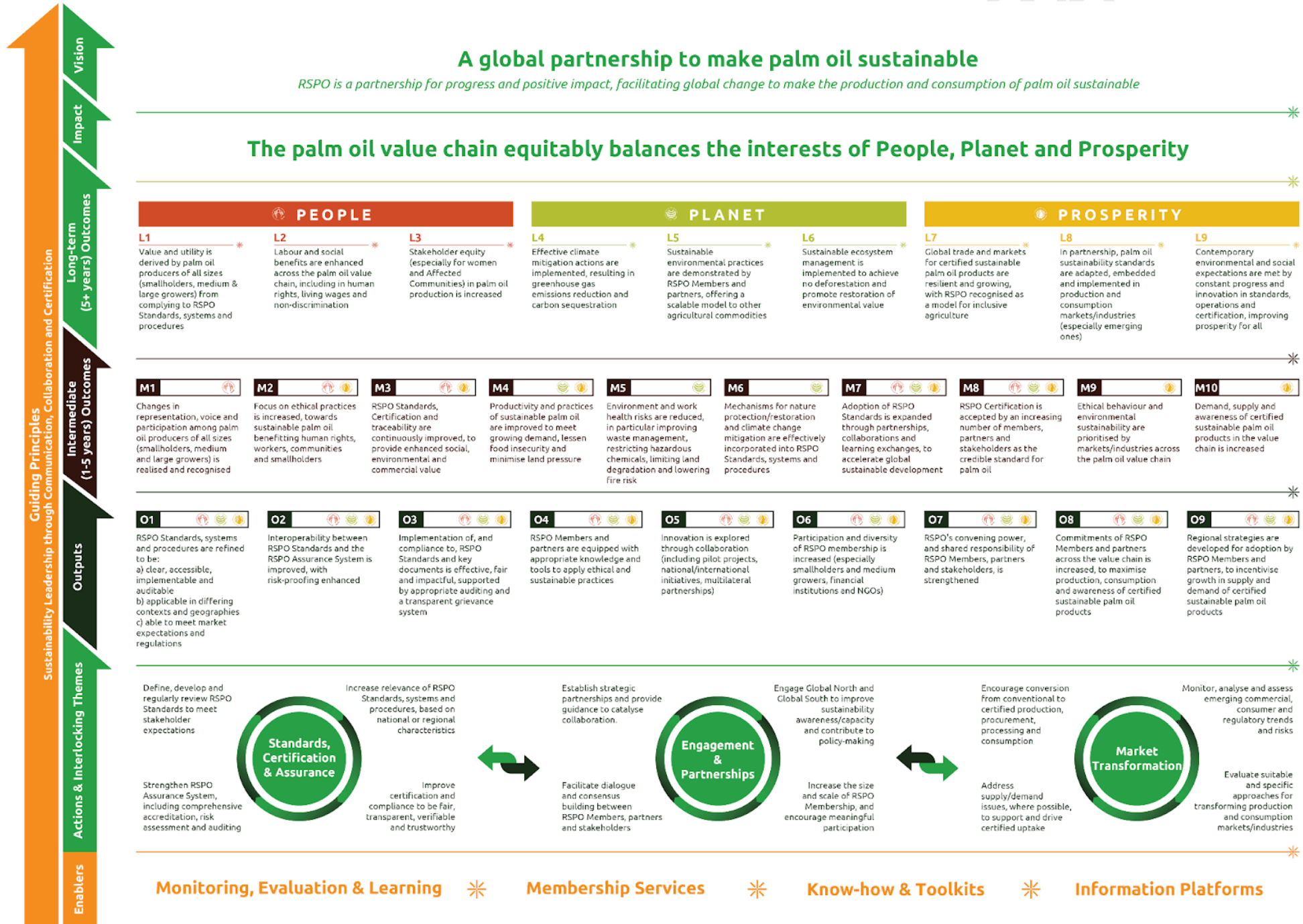
Adopted 13 Nov 2024

VIII. Appendices

Adopted 13 Nov 2024

Appendix A - RSPO Theory of Change

Theory of Change (Full Diagram)



A Global Partnership to Make Palm Oil Sustainable



LEGEND

Outputs

Intermediate outcomes

Long-term outcomes

Appendix B - National Interpretations of the 2019 RSPO ISH Standard

National Interpretations of the 2019 RSPO ISH Standard	Date of Endorsement by RSPO Board of Governors
Côte d'Ivoire Local Interpretation	10 June 2021
Indonesia National Interpretation	14 February 2022

Adopted 13 Nov 2024