



RSPO is an international non-profit organisation formed in 2004 with the objective to promote the growth and use of sustainable oil palm products through credible global standards and engagement of stakeholders.

Factsheet on “Paving the Way for Transformation and Acceleration of the Implementation of Sustainable Palm Oil Standard by Independent Smallholders in Indonesia”-FORTASBI Indonesia



About



FORTASBI (Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil Farmers Forum) was established on August 14, 2014, in Jambi by NGOs and oil palm farmer organizations. It aims to help independent oil palm farmers in Indonesia achieve sustainable certification under schemes like RSPO, ISPO, and ISCC. The forum serves as a platform for collaboration, discussion, and learning, supporting farmers in improving their practices and gaining or working towards sustainability certification.

Background

Sustainable oil palm certification is not new in Indonesia, especially among independent smallholders. Despite RSPO's efforts to promote sustainable practices globally and nationally, progress has been slow. According to the Directorate General of Plantations of Indonesia, there are 2.5 million independent smallholders managing nearly 5.9 million hectares. By December 2022, only 15,485 smallholders, managing 36,533 hectares across 52 groups, had been certified under RSPO.

This shows that only a small number of smallholders in Indonesia have adopted sustainable practices. The current level of certification is still far from making the country's smallholder-driven palm oil industry fully sustainable.



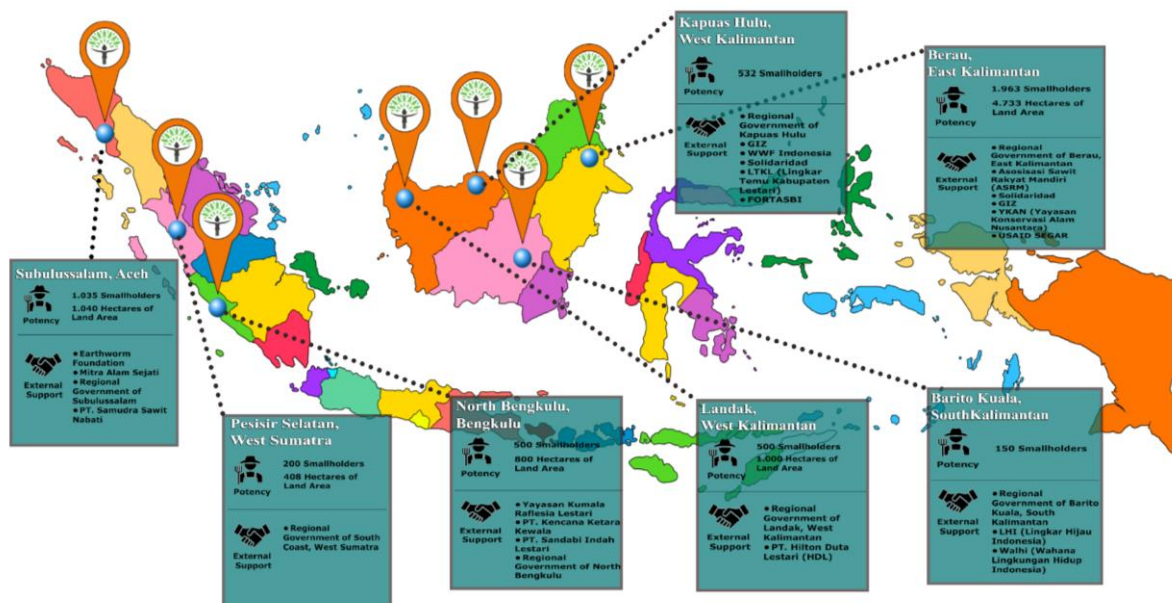
Objectives

1. Identifying, mapping and encouraging key actors/local stakeholders in supporting independent smallholders to implementing sustainable palm oil standards.
2. Compiling independent smallholders' success stories, lessons learnt and challenges in implementing sustainable palm oil standards to serve as a communication medium for other stakeholders.
3. Opening direct access to RSPO's services for Indonesian independent smallholders.

Project Approaches

FORTASBI will collaborate with designated stakeholders (NGO, Governments, KOPERASI), and all RSPO-certified independent smallholder groups in various districts of Indonesia. FORTASBI will develop *Smallholders Engagement Strategies in Seven Districts* document to help independent oil palm smallholders pursue the RSPO certification. We hope the document can help enrich RSPO's strategies to increase the number of independent smallholders practicing sustainable cultivation, also expected to become a useful database to foster sustainable green ecosystems as wide as possible.

Project Area



Deliverables

Capacity Building for Smallholders: Training and Mentorship: Programs like the GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) training and workshops provided knowledge on sustainable palm oil cultivation, pest management, and certification standards.

Cooperatives as Change Agents: The formation of cooperatives, such as the Sada Kata Cooperative in Subulussalam, helped smallholders organize for certification readiness. Cooperatives also facilitated peer learning and resource-sharing.

Stakeholder Collaboration: Government Involvement: Regional governments demonstrated commitment through initiatives like RAD-KSB (Regional Action Plans for Sustainable Palm Oil), aimed at harmonizing local policies with sustainable practices.

NGOs and Private Sector: The role of NGOs, such as FORTASBI, was instrumental in bridging gaps between smallholders, governments, and RSPO. However, collaboration with private companies often lacked depth, with many companies remaining disengaged.

Factsheet on

“Promoting RSPO’s Responsiveness to Enhance the Effectiveness of Remedy Mechanism by Strengthening the Civil Society Consolidation and Engaging with the Business Association and National Human Rights Institution” – ELSAM Indonesia



ELSAM Indonesia, since its founding on August 14, 1993, the Institute for Community Studies and Advocacy (ELSAM) has developed a strategy to combine the work methods of think tank organizations and the human rights movement (HAM), in its operations. This character is what makes ELSAM unique, as a movement-based think tank, with two main focuses: studies using a rights-based approach and carrying out policy advocacy. ELSAM strives to continue to encourage the presence of evidence-based policies to strengthen respect, fulfillment and protection of human rights.

Background

ELSAM opt a strategy to collaborate with RSPO because we perceive that strategic alliance with civil society organization, corporation and government has a huge potential to effectively address the social problems, including the human rights issues. This view cannot be separated with the fact that most of the current challenges are unable to be solved by merely one stakeholder.

In this context, RSPO is one of the most strategic advocacy mediums for ELSAM to implement the organization’s mandate in advancing the protection of human rights as the RSPO system has shown a lot of positive development.



Objectives

1. Ensuring local communities and other local people's needs, priorities and rights are effectively addressed vis-a-vis oil palm plantations
2. Strengthening the RSPO System plays an important role in improving the responsibility of palm oil plantation companies and related stakeholders to protect the rights of affected communities by the palm oil plantation industry.

Project Approaches

Transforming RSPO as a responsive institution towards human rights values, including providing remedies towards the local community who are affected with the palm oil industry activities

Strengthening the standard of sustainable palm oil pursuant to human rights values, including to provide various channels (forums) of dispute (conflict) settlement for the local community affected using the *alternative dispute resolution approach*.

Ensuring the synergic cooperation between multi-stakeholder's initiative and business association to support sustainable palm oil products.

Increasing the acceptance and trust of civil society organization, affected community and labour, including women's community towards RSPO mechanism as a tool of remedy.

Improving the capacities of local government and national human rights institution in responding and handling the human rights issues in the context of the palm oil industry

Project Area

This program will be implemented in four areas in Indonesia, namely: Sumatera, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Papua, it encompasses engagement with the network of ELSAM with Government Institutions, Academia, Social NGO and grassroot organizations.

Deliverables

Capacity Building and Advocacy: The program enhanced the ability of local communities, smallholders, and labour groups, including women, to use the RSPO system effectively. It involved training civil society organizations (CSOs) and local communities in human rights, dispute resolution, and advocacy mechanisms.

Engagement with Stakeholders: ELSAM facilitated connections between local communities, NGOs, and RSPO, helping them utilize RSPO complaint mechanisms for conflict resolution. Multiparty dialogues were organized to address structural challenges in palm oil governance, focusing on human rights, environmental impacts, and labour issues.

Advocacy on Specific Cases: The program addressed numerous land and labour disputes involving palm oil companies, using the RSPO complaint system and local advocacy strategies. It highlighted gaps in corporate compliance with RSPO standards, emphasizing the need for improved transparency and stronger enforcement.

Community Empowerment: By educating indigenous and local communities on legal rights and advocacy methods, the program empowered them to defend their land and resources effectively. Women's groups were supported to take a more active role in addressing the social and economic impacts of large-scale plantations.

Find out more at rspo.org