

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **THAILAND'S FIRST SHIPMENT OF CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL**

*History in the Making as World's Third Largest Producer of Palm oil Exports First Shipment of RSPO Certified Sustainable Palm Oil*

**Thailand, July 10, 2013** – Thailand, the third largest palm oil producer in the world, joined the ranks of other markets producing Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO) under the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) certification scheme. The other CSPO producers are Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Brazil, Colombia and Ivory Coast.

Univanich Palm Oil PCL, attributed to this significant milestone, recently announced its first sale of CSPO, which is a 1,000 tons consignment that will be exported to the European market.

According to John Clendon, Managing Director of Univanich, "This international recognition of Univanich in its ability to meet the stringent RSPO sustainability criteria and the premium price this certified oil can achieve in world markets, augurs well for Thailand being recognized as a future source of sustainably produced palm oil."

He further added, "This is also significant for the 160 members of the Univanich PlaiPraya Community Enterprise Group that were recently recognized as the world's first independent smallholders to be RSPO certified through group certification. We hope this affirmative development encourages other smallholders who supply fresh fruit bunches (FFB) to companies to aspire towards RSPO certification and reap the advantages which include access to international demand markets for sustainable palm oil; longer term efficiencies in terms of yield and productivity as well as effective cost management."

Darrel Webber, Secretary General of the RSPO, commended Univanich for this progressive step forward, "The RSPO applauds Univanich for blazing the trail for Thailand in embracing international standards in the production of sustainable palm oil. This allows us to advance one more step closer to our vision of making sustainable palm oil the norm in the market"

"The oil palm industry in Thailand predominantly comprises of more than 80 percent of smallholders. This achievement truly attests to the fact that it is indeed possible for independent smallholders to be RSPO certified with the right level of commitment from responsible companies and government impetus", he also mentioned.

He further elaborated, "Among the challenges faced by smallholders in becoming certified include the lack of accessibility to support in terms of funding, expertise or capacity as well as the low awareness levels on the benefits of being certified; which is why RSPO is committed to put in place various strategic initiatives aimed at addressing such issues".

The RSPO recently launched the **RSPO Smallholders Support Fund (RSSF)** for eligible oil palm growers amongst smallholders around the world. The RSSF is introduced in acknowledgement of the imperative and dominant role smallholders around the world play in the palm oil sector to promote and increase the production of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO) so that market transformation is realized. More information can be obtained at: [http://www.rspo.org/en/rspo\\_smallholders\\_support\\_fund](http://www.rspo.org/en/rspo_smallholders_support_fund).

## **15% of world's palm oil production is now RSPO certified**

The current estimated annual production capacity of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil is 8.6 million metric tons, approximately 15 percent of global crude palm oil. Spread over 2.4 million hectares of certified area, about 46.8% of the world's current RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil production capacity comes from Indonesia, followed by 45.3% from Malaysia, and the remaining 7.9% from Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Brazil, Thailand, Colombia and Ivory Coast.

## **About RSPO**

In response to the urgent and pressing global call for sustainably-produced palm oil, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was formed in 2004 with the objective of promoting the growth and use of sustainable oil palm products through credible global standards and engagement of stakeholders. The seat of the association is in Zurich, Switzerland, while the secretariat is currently based in Kuala Lumpur with a satellite office in Jakarta.

RSPO is a not-for-profit association that unites stakeholders from seven sectors of the palm oil industry - oil palm producers, palm oil processors or traders, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, banks and investors, environmental or nature conservation NGOs and social or developmental NGOs - to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil.

Such multi-stakeholder representation is mirrored in the governance structure of RSPO such that seats in the Executive Board and project-level Working Groups are fairly allocated to each sector. In this way, RSPO lives out the philosophy of the "roundtable" by giving equal rights to each stakeholder group to bring group-specific agendas to the roundtable, facilitating traditionally adversarial stakeholders and business competitors to work together towards a common objective and make decisions by consensus.

*For more information, please contact:*

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