



## Terms of Reference

### RSPO MEMBERSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

#### 1. Background

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is recognised within the palm oil agricultural sector as a standard setting and certification organisation for sustainably produced palm oil. As such, it is also recognised as the leading global body responsible for convening multi-stakeholder discussions around the positive role and impact of certified sustainable palm oil. Many stakeholders of various levels of influence have frequently referred to RSPO Certification and Standards in international and regional dialogues and processes concerning sustainable commodity production. Recently, however, this trend appears to have slowed down.

An overall improvement of reputation and increase of global awareness is crucial if RSPO is to reverse the damage incurred by negative campaigns on palm oil and growing scepticism around the positive impact generated through sustainability certification. This can be achieved through well-funded, collaborative, and evidence-based communication and engagement strategies.

Going forward, strategy and advocacy must be underpinned by the most rigorously collected data and evidence. It is therefore necessary to carry out a baseline study of RSPO stakeholder sentiment in order to identify and understand where and how improvement in reputation and awareness can be best designed and targeted to inform the implementation of stakeholder engagement and communication work.

The RSPO Stakeholder Engagement Survey, which started in 2022, formed the first baseline results for this study. From the year 2026 onwards, the three (3) year Stakeholder Engagement Survey was combined with the RSPO membership survey for a more comprehensive and new baseline result. Moving forward, the Stakeholder Engagement Survey and the Membership Survey will be executed as one combined survey.

#### 2. Objective

To increase RSPO's understanding of the knowledge, perception, interest and attitudes of relevant stakeholders, in Section 3.a., towards certified sustainable palm oil and their views on the relevance and impact of RSPO as a key actor in this space for the year 2027. This will be based on a year-on-year comparison between this planned survey for 2027, against the survey which was conducted in the previous three (3) years (2022 to 2025) and the RSPO membership survey.

This new survey will align and combine with the metrics in the previous surveys.



### 3. Methodology and consultation

The selected consultant is expected to:

- a. Generate a prospectus of key stakeholders and stakeholder groups most appropriate to target for the purposes of the survey from consultation with RSPO and other relevant palm oil industry actors and representatives. These key stakeholders and groups are listed below:
  - Oil palm growers
  - Traders and refiners
  - Consumer goods manufacturers
  - Retailers
  - Non-governmental organisations (environmental and social)
  - Inter-governmental organisations
  - Zoos
  - Banks and financial institutions
  - Academia/ Research institutions / Think tanks
  - Others
- b. To the highest possible standard, develop a scientifically designed survey to be shared to the aforementioned stakeholders. This standard is defined by:
  1. Scientific Methodology: Using recognised, statistically sound methodologies to ensure data validity and representativeness, while utilising the most effective platform/format to accurately gauge sentiment.
  2. Comprehensive Scope: Covering the knowledge, perception, interest, and attitudes of all relevant stakeholders regarding certified sustainable palm oil and RSPO's impact.
  3. Global Execution: Having the operational capacity for multilingual surveys across diverse geographies.
  4. Statistical Reporting: Employing the most rigorous statistical methods for analysis and clear report generation.
  5. Data Security: Strict adherence to international data privacy regulations.
- c. Recommend - in consultation and with final approval from the RSPO representative(s) - the most effective platform, format or combination thereof (e.g., online web portal, individual paper or electronic survey, etc.) through which to carry out the survey.
- d. The combination of survey platform(s) and/or format(s) shall gauge stakeholder sentiment.
- e. Recommend the most appropriate and effective method of survey questionnaire dissemination for the agreed upon stakeholders.



- f. Conduct the survey on behalf of RSPO.

#### 4. Timeframe and forecasted budget

The survey will be conducted next year in 2027. The survey period will occur between March and April 2027, with presentation of findings in May to June 2027.

The budget should be determined by the agency's ability to meet the output and deliverables stated by RSPO. Budget and overall cost of the project will be weighted in the review of the tender/RFP proposals.

#### 5. Deliverables

- A. Track and consolidate all survey results obtained from all stakeholders across various membership sectors, regions and countries.
- B. The delivery of findings should provide a year on year comparison between this survey conducted next year in 2027, with the survey which was conducted in the previous years 2022 to 2025.
- C. Employing the most rigorous statistical methods, carry out an analysis of the data and generate a report that details and interprets the results in both narrative and visual formats. Visual formats are to be data-based and as easily interpreted as reasonably possible in the form of Powerpoint slides.
- D. Develop Comprehensive Recommendations for Strategic Improvement and Future Steps:
  - Identifying key areas for intervention: Clearly delineate the specific aspects of RSPO's operations, communications, governance, or market engagement that require immediate attention or long-term strategic adjustments based on stakeholder feedback and perception gaps.
  - Formulating strategic communication enhancements: Propose specific improvements for RSPO's communication strategies, including messaging refinement, channel optimization, and targeted outreach programs to better inform and influence critical stakeholder groups (e.g., NGOs, supply chain members, governments, and consumers).
  - Defining operational and policy adjustments: Based on reputational insights, recommend necessary adjustments to existing RSPO policies, certification procedures, complaints system, or governance structure to enhance transparency, credibility, and impact.
  - Outlining next steps for stakeholder engagement: Develop a clear roadmap for subsequent stakeholder engagement activities, including suggestions for follow-up dialogues, focused workshops, or the development of specific initiatives to address concerns raised in the survey.
  - Establishing measurable success metrics: For each recommendation, define clear, quantifiable metrics (Key Performance Indicators or KPIs) that RSPO can use to track the implementation progress and measure the effectiveness of the



proposed improvements in subsequent years and surveys.

The final report must present these recommendations in a structured, prioritised, and evidence-based manner, ensuring they are readily translatable into RSPO's strategic planning.

## 6. Minimum requirements for eligibility

To ensure the successful execution of this high-profile global survey, bidders must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. **Global Reach:** The vendor must possess verifiable experience and operational capacity to conduct comprehensive, multilingual surveys across diverse geographies, specifically in key palm oil producing and consumer regions (e.g., Southeast Asia, India, China, Europe, North America).
2. **Specialisation in Reputation/Stakeholder Surveys:** A minimum of five (5) years of experience in designing, executing, analysing, and presenting findings for large-scale, complex stakeholder awareness and reputation surveys, preferably for international non-profit organisations, standard-setting bodies, or commodity associations.
3. **Proven Data Rigour and Statistical Expertise:** The vendor must employ recognised, statistically sound methodologies to ensure data validity, reliability, and representativeness across various stakeholder segments (as listed in Section 3.a.).
4. **Relevant Sector Experience:** Direct experience or clear understanding of the agricultural sustainability, commodity certification, or palm oil sector is highly desirable.
5. **Confidentiality and Data Security Protocols:** The vendor must demonstrate strict adherence to international data privacy regulations (e.g., GDPR compliant methodologies) and maintain robust protocols for securing stakeholder data.
6. **Team Qualification:** The proposal must include a core project team with documented expertise in quantitative and qualitative research, data analysis, and strategic communications.

## 7. Proposal submission guidelines and requirements

- A. The following submission guidelines and requirements apply to this ToR:
- B. Only qualified vendors with prior experience on projects such as this should submit proposals in response to this ToR. The proposal must provide:
  - i. A company profile
  - ii. Executive summary on how the objectives will be met
  - iii. Scope of work aligned to the methodology
  - iv. Previous experience in developing, quantifying, analysing and presenting surveys
  - v. An outline of the strategy and tools/ platforms to be used
  - vi. Proposed timelines with milestones from kickoff to launch to presentation



- vii. Proposed working team with overview of experience
- viii. Budget with expenses, if any
- ix. Additional resources required for support (e.g. vendors, consultants, IT platforms).

- C. The price proposal should indicate the overall fixed price for the duration of the project, as well as approximate costing of additional hourly rates for work performed outside of the scope of this ToR.
- D. Proposals must be signed by a representative authorised to commit the bidder's company.
- E. Proposals must remain valid for a period of 60 days upon closing date for proposal submission.

### **Tender process**

Interested agencies may submit their tender proposal to [grace.ong@rspo.org](mailto:grace.ong@rspo.org) and [soochin.oi@rspo.org](mailto:soochin.oi@rspo.org), and CC: [tender@rspo.org](mailto:tender@rspo.org).

With the email subject title: Stakeholder Awareness & Reputation Survey 2027 - [VENDOR NAME] [DATE OF EMAIL]

The closing date for proposal submission is **Friday, 20 March 2026 at 11:59 PM MYT (GMT+8)**.

No formal in-person presentations will be required but a video conference may be arranged with shortlisted agencies to have more in depth discussions before awarding one of these agencies. For the full tender and queries relating to this tender, please contact [grace.ong@rspo.org](mailto:grace.ong@rspo.org) and [soochin.oi@rspo.org](mailto:soochin.oi@rspo.org)