



Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

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NEWS RELEASE

MAJOR HEADWAY FOR THE UNITED STATES IN THE RSPO

Formidable parties from key sectors; retail, financial & consumer goods, underline commitment to certified sustainable palm oil drive

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, August 1, 2011 – World’s major consumer market, the United States of America (US), has made significant headway in a multi stakeholder initiative, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), that aims to promote the growth and use of sustainable palm oil in the world.

Three US headquartered global companies, retailer Walmart, confectionery producer The Hershey Company and financial services leader Citigroup recently became members of RSPO, joining the organization’s 650 member organizations from 50 countries around the globe. Currently, the United States (US) sits as the 7th largest membership base in the RSPO represented by a broad spectrum of industries from consumer goods manufacturers, cosmetics; processors & traders; financial sector; retailers; and non- governmental organizations.

Darrel Webber, secretary general of RSPO, is delighted to welcome Walmart, The Hershey Company and Citi on board: “We are in the threshold of significant transformation in the pursuit of responsible and sustainable endeavors. Developments such as this that mark the entry of very established businesses from such an advanced and progressive market as the US, only further fortifies our conviction that not only is change possible, it is inevitable. The RSPO applauds Walmart, The Hershey Company and Citigroup for the determination and commitment towards the goal of promoting sustainable palm oil.

With the recent launch of the trademark, RSPO will complete its aspiration to involve the entire supply chain by reaching out to the consumer. And clearly the American consumer is a very important one in our global drive for certified sustainable palm oil.

Just within this year in the past 6 months, the RSPO has had its membership portfolio increased by close to 20% from organizations across stakeholder groups and countries around the globe. This increasing and expanding diversity within the RSPO, allows us to further comprehend and empathize with the various dynamics and challenges while celebrating the attainments within the sustainable palm oil arena.” Webber concluded.

For confectioner Hershey's, becoming a member of the RSPO fits with its long history of being a socially responsible company. "Our commitment to the communities where we live, work and do business traces back to our founder, Milton Hershey, who cared deeply about consumers, the community and children. Joining the RSPO is a logical step in our commitment to conduct our business in a socially responsible and environmentally sustainable manner.," said Andy McCormick, Vice President of Public Affairs at The Hershey Company.

"For our palm oil clients, one of their challenges is finding ways to balance economic, environmental and social needs. As part of Citi's commitment to Responsible Finance, Citi is proud to join our clients and NGO partners as members of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). Indeed, we have incorporated the RSPO's Principles and Criteria into Citi's environmental and social policies and standards, and we look forward to partnering with our clients jointly to achieve greater sustainability in the sector moving forward," joint statement issued today by Tigor M. Siahaan, Citi Country Officer Indonesia and Courtney Lowrance, a Director within Citi's global Environmental and Social Risk Management Unit based in New York.

As a member of RSPO, all these organizations are coming together to be a part of an ever increasing group of companies that are united behind one important mission: to transform the market for palm oil to one that is sustainable, environmentally and socially. The move is particularly significant as it underscores the RSPO as a truly global organization.

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 making decisions by consensus.

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