

# **A Proposed Tool for Assessing Carbon Sink and Emission Associated with New Planting Development: Progress Update**

Melissa Chin & Surin Sukswan

RSPO Secretariat

Unit A-33A-2, Menara UOA Bangsar,

No.5 Jalan Bangsar Utama 1

59000 Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

Although palm oil is increasingly recognised as an indispensable commodity to meet the edible oil needs of an ever-expanding global population, its production has received much criticism due to widespread perception of its contribution to global carbon emission primarily from the conversion of high carbon areas in new planting development.

As part of continuing efforts to improve the sustainability of palm oil production, the RSPO Principles & Criteria (P&C) Review taskforce has proposed a new criterion , requiring the identification and estimation of potential sources of emission and sinks of carbon associated with new planting developments. This is with a view that new developments should be designed to minimise emissions and maximise sequestration, carbon stock conservation and emission avoidance. The P&C review committee has requested the RSPO Secretariat to provide a tool containing practical methodologies that can assist palm oil producers to do this. It is recognised that the proposed tool should be as simple and practical as possible and potentially able to be part of the existing HCV assessment and baseline soil survey carried out by companies. In developing this tool, the methodology included gathering experience of carbon and emission assessments from oil palm producers, consultants and academic institutions, and inputs from remote sensing experts in Indonesia and Malaysia on how to use readily available imagery to estimate carbon stocks. In simplifying the methodology for assessing carbon stock and emission, the use of forest and land use classification as a proxy for carbon estimation is being explored.

The purpose of this presentation is to update RSPO members on the progress of this work as well as to solicit feedback.