

Making RSPO Certification work for Independent Smallholders in Indonesia

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The fact that the palm oil smallholders contribute to over 40 % of palm oil supply in Indonesia has made it a key driver to transform the value chain of sustainable palm oil in Indonesia. Of importance, independent smallholders dwell in a major portion of the smallholders plantations in the country. Huge challenges span between the current and sustainable practices by the independent smallholders: poor agricultural practices, massive and uncontrolled expansion which threaten the protected areas, lacking access to finance and so forth.

WWF Indonesia embraces the challenges and takes into account the urgency and importance of independent smallholders in the pathways to transform the palm oil value chain in Indonesia. Its strategy intervention began through the National Smallholder Working Group to establish enabling system in supporting the implementation of sustainable practices by palmoil smallholders in meeting RSPO standard. A business case is inevitably essential to demonstrate that RSPO certification also works for the independent smallholders. WWF-Indonesia, therefore, opted to be the pioneer working directly with a group of independent smallholders in District of Pelalawan-Riau with an ambitious yet embracing resource constraint target to deliver the first RSPO certified independent smallholders.

A series of capacity building activities are underway to improve performance of the group by incorporating environmental and social requirements stipulated in the RSPO P&C while keeping up the economic interest. In establishing strong foundation, the independent smallholders were organized to strengthen their communal institution through group certification and setting up an internal control system (ICS). The ICS functions to administer the farmers to be able to incessantly comply with the guidance on better management practices.

WWF-Indonesia anticipates that the group will be able to undergo assessment by RSPO certification body and ultimately obtain the certificate by the end of 2012. This project is made possible with the support of Carrefour foundation, PT. Inti Indo Sawit Subur and RSPO Indonesia Liasion Office (RILO).