

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABILITY STANDARD FOR THE NEXT LEVEL

Jan Kees Vis, RSPO President

The RSPO is currently undergoing the first review of its Principles & Criteria (P&C) after five years of implementation.

Phase 1, which has been completed, was a pre-consultation review of the continuing relevance of the P&Cs to give all stakeholders the opportunity to pose some of the more open, fundamental or cross-cutting questions about the P&Cs and how to make it more relevant to sustainability in palm oil. It was supplemented with a process of commissioning opinions from external parties and drawing together the knowledge and recommendations from the various working groups and task forces of the RSPO over the years; as well as making comparisons with other standards.

These comments have been compiled to feed back into the Phase 2 of the review process by P&C Review Task Force. The P&C Review Task Force (TF) is composed of 21 representatives. All were in attendance and/or represented by their respective alternates from the same stakeholder group.

A draft revised P&C was prepared by the P&C Review Task Force and it is currently being published on the RSPO's website for a 60 day consultation period beginning 1st October till 31st November.

While this means that the P&C review process will not be completed by GA9, as originally planned. The key intention is to enable the RT10 which will witness the presence of members from all around the globe to be used as a platform to generate comments and contributions as part of the second public consultation period.

After the second public consultation, the P&C Review Taskforce will organize a final meeting to finalize the draft P&C and other relevant guidance or reports such as BMPs to reduce emissions from oil palm operations and a guidance to draw together current HCV, soil and SEIA assessments with practical tools to identify and estimate potential sources of GHG emissions and carbon sequestration associated with new developments.

The final content of the revised P&C is aimed to be ready for members' endorsement by the first quarter of 2013.