

## Resolution GA15-6e

Proposed Resolution to be adopted at the 15th General Assembly of the  
Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

15<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**Title:** TO EXTEND THE MANDATE OF THE SMALLHOLDER INTERIM GROUP (SHIG) TO  
FINALISE A SIMPLIFIED SYSTEM WHICH PROMOTES SMALLHOLDER INCLUSION INTO RSPO  
CERTIFICATION

**Submitted by:** Oxfam (co-chair of SHIG)

**Supported by:** Solidaridad, Royal Ahold Delhaize NV, Unilever, ALDI International  
Services GmbH & Co. oHG

### **Background:**

Following GA Resolution GA12-6f at the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2015, the RSPO has developed and approved a comprehensive [Smallholder Strategy](#). Moreover, the 13<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2016, resolved to review the New Planting Procedure (NPP) process as applied to smallholders.

One of the three objectives of the Smallholder Strategy is being implemented through the current development of a simplified standard for smallholders, that is easier to access and implement for smallholders. The P&C Review Taskforce proposed this to be a separate standard. The Smallholder Interim Group (SHIG) was set up and mandated to deliver this work, supporting the Secretariat as the sub-unit for smallholder work. SHIG operates under the auspices of the P&C Review Steering Group, for optimal exchange and consistency.

This Steering Group, however, will be dissolved when it delivers the new P&Cs, while SHIG work remains unfinished. Still, the general direction of travel is ready for GA endorsement.

The SHIG has extensively deliberated how a sufficient level of assurance of practices compliant with current NDPE commitments (No Deforestation, Peat, and Exploitation), could be balanced with the desire to become more inclusive. The second round of public consultation showed support for a simplified independent smallholder standard, striking a balance between robustness and inclusivity.

[As determined by the SHIG](#), the simplified RSPO Smallholder Standard will be applicable to independent smallholders. The generic Principles and Criteria will remain applicable to mills and supply base, including smallholder schemes. Eligibility rules ensure safeguards for entry and for receiving support to reach full compliance with the simplified Principles and Criteria. Peer controls and group management provide assurance. Other parts of the certification system, notably on smallholder specific verification and certificate trade, complete a truly holistic solution for smallholder inclusion. The total social and environmental impact will be much more positive when RSPO enables high numbers of smallholders to come on board.

This is work in progress which will benefit more from quality than from speed. To get to the new Independent Smallholder Standard next steps consist of finalisation of its Principles and Criteria with indicators, including a 30 day public consultation and focus group discussions with smallholders in various regions; endorsement of all new elements related to the new system by the Board of Governors (March) and releasing these i) for four month pilot testing; and ii) for national interpretations; to hand over to the new smallholder governance structure (standing committee to be established, RSPO Secretariat smallholder sub-unit to be completed); and approval of final version incorporating pilot results at the GA in 2019.

All this will need to be adequately resourced in terms of secretariat staff capacity and smallholder participation. Approval of this resolution will ensure the work remains high on the agenda of the RSPO Secretariat and Board of Governors.

**THIS RESOLUTION PROPOSES:**

**That the RSPO Board of Governors to prioritise and extend the mandate of the Smallholder Interim Group to finalise a system which is simplified and inclusive for most independent smallholders instead of high and exclusive for a few.**

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