

RSPO GHG WG2: Outputs and Recommendations

Final Version for Submission to the RSPO Executive Board, November 2011

This document summarises the outputs from the RSPO Greenhouse Gas Working Group 2 (GHG WG2). These include:

- A series of studies, reports and guidance documents (Section 1)
- A series of recommendations (Section 2)

1 Reports and Guidance

GHG WG2 established six workstreams to undertake work in different areas to inform the discussions of the group. The list below summarises the outputs of these various workstreams.

Workstream 1: Emissions from existing operations

Output	Description	Remaining work
PalmGHG	<p>PalmGHG is a spreadsheet-based calculator designed to provide a common framework for monitoring and reporting on GHG emissions from palm oil production.</p> <p>Information on all relevant activities is input and the tool calculates the resulting emissions. This allows producers to identify the main sources of emissions in their operations, to report on the current situation, to monitor changes over time and to compare their performance with other producers</p>	<p>Incorporation of changes resulting from the pilot phase</p> <p>Inclusion of options to produce outputs for different end uses (eg operational management, reporting for different regulatory frameworks such as EU RED) and confirmation that outputs for regulatory purposes will be accepted</p> <p>Elaboration of a module for emissions from peat</p> <p>Incorporation of coefficients for landuse change from other workstreams</p> <p>Development of guidance on auditing the use of the tool</p> <p>Peer review of the finished tool</p>
Information from the pilot testing phase	<p>Pilot testing was undertaken with nine companies to test how the tool works and to collect some baseline information on major GHG emission sources</p>	<p>The pilot phase is almost complete</p>

Workstream 2: Peatland working group

Note: the peatland working group has a remit which is wider than GHG management. However, several of the outputs are relevant to GHG WG2:

Output	Description	Remaining work
Best practice guidance for existing plantations on peat	<p>This guidance has compiled experience of best practice on every aspect of managing existing plantations on peat from many different RSPO members.</p>	<p>The document is in a final draft stage. Guidance for smallholders needs to be finalised.</p> <p>Publication of final guide in both hard and soft copy.</p>

Output	Description	Remaining work
Guidance for restoration on peat	There are instances where it is necessary to restore natural vegetation on peat – for example in riparian areas or in HCV set-aside areas. This report compiles the current knowledge on how this can be done	The document is in a final draft stage. Publication of final guide in both hard and soft copy.
Methodologies for measuring changes of C in peat	Measuring changes in carbon on peat is complex and there are various direct and indirect ways of doing it. This document provides guidance on the various methods available.	The report needs to be condensed to focus only on methodologies and to ensure there is clear information on approaches which can be used routinely for managing and monitoring operations on peat

Workstream 3: Science panel on land-use change

Output	Description	Remaining work
Published, peer-reviewed papers on landuse change and oil palm in Indonesia, Malaysia and PNG	The science panel - made up of leading scientists from Indonesia, Malaysia and elsewhere - have undertaken a major review of landuse change in the main areas where oil palm is produced, including analysis of satellite imagery, to provide a definitive picture of land-use change since 1990 and the role which oil palm expansion has played.	The studies are almost complete and should be in final draft form by November. Once complete they will undergo a rigorous peer review process and then publication. Singapore University Press may be interested in producing a book.
Default coefficients for C-stock change between different land-uses	A crucial component of any calculation of GHG emissions from land-use change is the co-efficient which is used to convert data being input such as area and type of land-use into CO2 equivalent (the measurement used for GHG emissions). The default coefficients for different types of land being provided by the science panel will be used for the calculations within the PalmGHG tool	The co-efficients will be in the final reports

Workstreams 5 and 6: Voluntary actions

Output	Description	Remaining work
Overview of voluntary actions being taken by RSPO members to reduce GHG emissions	RSPO members are committed to taking voluntary actions to reduce their GHG emissions. A survey is underway to collect information on what the different categories of member – including producers, processors, and other members – are currently doing	Collection of information from producers is underway, and collection of information from other types of member is about to begin
Good practice briefings on reducing emissions from operations	Information provided by RSPO members based on the experience gained from their voluntary actions to reduce GHG emissions will be compiled into a series of briefings providing good practice guidance on the different ways to reduce GHG emissions	The good practice guidance on reducing GHG emissions still needs to be prepared

2 RSPO GHG WG2 Recommendations

The original mandate of RSPO GHG WG2 established that the group could not make changes to the existing P&C, but rather its role was to make recommendation to the RSPO Executive Board (EB) or relevant sub-committees. This includes the P&C Revision Task Force (P&C RTF) which is due to begin a revision of the P&C in 2012. Changes will only be binding on members once this revision is complete but in several cases the group has included a suggestion encouraging members to adopt improved approaches voluntarily before this.

1. Use of the recommendations

1.1 Recommendations should not be retrospective before January 2012.

1.2 Where recommendations require changes to the P&C they should be used to inform the work of the P&C Review Task Force.

1.3 Where recommendations do not require changes to the P&C their implementation should be considered and overseen by the EB.

2. Measuring and reporting on GHG emissions

2.1 The group encourages companies to start using the PalmGHG tool (or an equivalent) immediately as a voluntary action to monitor GHG emissions as required by the existing Criterion 5.6 in the RSPO P&C.

2.2 The RSPO P&C should continue to require monitoring and also require reporting of information on GHG emissions resulting from palm oil production. PalmGHG (*developed via consensus, field tested, peer reviewed*) or an equivalent should be used to provide a common framework. – Recommendation to P&C RTF

2.3 The PalmGHG tool should be further developed to provide a mechanism to deliver information for different reporting requirements (eg internal management, EU RED, US biofuels). Information should be provided to demonstrate that the PalmGHG outputs meet the requirements. A module should be developed which deals specifically with plantations on peat. A mechanism to establish equivalence of other calculators should be developed. – Further GHG work

2.4 Auditing requirements and guidance should be developed to allow auditors to check the use of the PalmGHG tool including the accuracy of the inputs and the robustness of the outputs produced. These should aim for equivalence with other systems to avoid need for multiple audits. – Further GHG work.

2.5 The Trade and Traceability Standing Committee should develop requirements for monitoring and reporting on GHG emissions related to palm oil use through the supply chain including buying low-C palm oil. – Recommendation to EB

3. Reducing emissions in existing operations

3.1 The group encourages all RSPO members to begin using all the best practice guidance (management of peat and best practice for reducing emissions) immediately as voluntary action.

3.2 The RSPO P&C should continue to require the development and implementation of a plan to reduce GHG emissions identified in their existing operations. The plan should include reported timebound targets for implementing the measures in the plan. - Recommendation to the P&C RTF

3.3 Good management practice for reduction of GHG emissions from operations including POME should be collected from RSPO members and compiled into a good practice briefing. – Further GHG work

3.4 Plantation and mill management should use the guidance on good practice wherever applicable including that for POME management. - Recommendation to the P&C RTF

3.5 Plantations on peat should be managed at least to the standard set out in the guidance on best management practices (especially water management, fire avoidance, fertiliser use and vegetation cover). – Recommendations to P&C RTF

3.6 There should be regular reporting on progress. – Recommendation to P&C RTF

3.7 The Trade and Traceability Standing Committee should consider requirements for reducing GHG emissions related to palm oil through the supply chain. – Recommendation to the EB

4. Minimising emissions from new operations

4.1 The RSPO P&C should require new operations (plantations and mills) to be designed to decrease GHG emissions. – Recommendation to the P&C RTF

4.2 To achieve this for plantations total carbon emissions (above and below ground) from expansion should not result in a carbon debt greater than that which can be paid back in the period of one rotation over the whole management unit. *Several members of the group strongly urged for a date of January 2012 for calculating the baseline value for the carbon stock debt analysis but consensus was not reached.* It was suggested that it would be useful to check on the ISPO requirement. – Recommendation to P&C RTF

- Guidance 1 Expansion of plantations should be on low C stock ('degraded') land (ie avoiding peat, areas with high biomass etc) or on land which is in current intensive agricultural or plantation use. - Recommendation to P&C RTF
- Guidance 2: Low C-stock/degraded land: A definition needs to be developed – this could be based on the carbon in a mature plantation or the time averaged figure. This can be averaged over the whole expansion area (ie the average of oil palm, riparian areas, forest set-aside etc). – Recommendation to P&C RTF
- Guidance 3: Default figures and an agreed methodology for calculating actual figures will be provided by WS3 – where uncertainties exist WS3 should highlight these (and the impact of using different figures) and the EB will decide which figure to use. The methodology should include practical guidance on options to meet the requirements in different situations. – Further GHG work

4.3 To achieve this for mills they should incorporate low emission management (eg better management of POME, efficient boilers etc). – Recommendation to the P&C RTF

4.4 The group encourages all RSPO members to begin implementing this approach immediately as a voluntary action.

4.5 There should be reporting on approaches used. – Recommendation to P&C RTF

4.6 The Trade and Traceability Standing Committee should consider requirements for requiring new processing and manufacturing facilities to be developed to minimise GHG emissions related to palm oil. – Recommendation to EB

5. Smallholders and small producers

5.1 Consideration should be given to allowing more flexibility in the timing for smallholders and small companies to implement changes recognising their more limited resources and capacity – Recommendation to the P&C RTF

6. Landuse change and oil palm

6.1 The RSPO uses the findings of the landuse change studies, once they are completed and peer reviewed, as its official position on oil palm and land use and land use change. - Recommendation to EB

6.2 RSPO and its member organisations actively promote communication about the role of oil palm in land use based on the findings. - Recommendation to EB

6.3 RSPO could use the information in the reports to inform planning and monitoring of oil palm expansion in other countries. - Recommendation to EB

7. Monitoring progress

7.1 All RSPO members, as part of their annual reporting, should be required to report on progress in reducing GHG emissions. This should be implemented by revising the annual reporting format. - Recommendation to EB

8. Wider dissemination of outputs

8.1 The RSPO, through the Secretariat and Membership, should promote the use of the BMP guidance on peat and operations outside of RSPO. – Recommendation to EB

8.2 The RSPO, through the Secretariat and Membership, should promote the use of default figures for GHG emissions developed by the GHG WG2 workstreams for use outside of RSPO. – Recommendation to EB