

FINDING SOLUTIONS WITH SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL

Feeding a growing population

The world population hit 8 billion in November 2022, the world's consumption of vegetable oils has more than doubled in the past two decades from 87 million tonnes in 2001 to 208 million tonnes in 2021, making them one of the most important sources of calories worldwide.

Therefore, we need **a diverse mix of vegetable oils**: Providing oils from multiple crops ensures that supply in case of crises in one region is guaranteed, which stabilises prices as well as supply chains. Global demand for palm oil and other vegetable oils is inevitable and growing. **RSPO is the leading standard** for sustainable palm oil production and ensures the sustainable production and thus improves greenhouse gas emissions, working conditions and the environmental impact. **Growing geographic spread in palm oil production**: Between 2009 and 2021, the number of countries with RSPO certification rose from 4 to 21 with key expansions in Latin America and Africa. Indonesia and Malaysia remain the largest producers, accounting for more than 80 % of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO) volumes.



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Measurable environmental impacts as a result of RSPO standards and guidelines:

GHG emissions: RSPO has avoided a cumulative 1.83 million MT of CO₂ equivalent per year (tCO₂e/year) as of 2021, corresponding to nearly 400,000 passenger cars driven annually (which is a figure larger than the motor vehicle fleet of at least 56 countries) [RSPO Impact Report 2022].

Compared to non-certified palm oil: 35 % lower global warming impact, 20 % lower biodiversity impact from land use changes [research paper: Detailed LifeCycle Assessment study].

Comparisons to other vegetable crops: Oil palm is the highest-yielding vegetable crop globally, using between four and ten times less land than other crops, such as soy, rapeseed, sunflower, and olive, to produce the same amount of oil. Oil palms produce roughly 35 % of the world's vegetable oil on less than 10 % of the land allocated to oil crops. Certified palm oil mills have a lower average water footprint than other vegetable oils such as soybean and rapeseed.

Environmental impact: An area of 301,020 ha, more than 30 times the size of Paris, has been conserved and protected through RSPO certification.

Preventing deforestation: The RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C) contain mandatory requirements to protect primary and secondary forests and ensure the habitats of wildlife are not harmed whilst ensuring that the rights and livelihoods of communities and workers are respected.



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Sustainable Development through CSPO

Sustainable palm oil can drive an economic model that balances sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction with the need to conserve, protect and enhance ecosystems. A climate-resilient and sustainable palm oil sector can also generate social empowerment by strengthening workforce capacity, creating jobs, and fostering economic development in communities where palm oil is grown.

Respect and protection of human rights are essential for sustainable development. Labour and human rights have been a part of the RSPO standards since its inception and are reviewed every five years to ensure the standards remain relevant and continue to address the dynamic challenges and opportunities within the industry.

Involving communities and building capacity can strengthen protection: The sustainable palm oil sector protects and improves rural livelihoods and social wellbeing, allowing people to participate in processes that affect them with shared access and benefits. The RSPO certification and assurance scheme, ongoing capacity-building efforts, and platforms for discussion present strong opportunities for plantation workers and smallholders to play an integral role in the sustainable palm oil supply chain. RSPO estimates more than **7 million smallholders** globally depend on palm oil production for their livelihoods.