

Proposed Resolution to be adopted at the
5th General Assembly of the
Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil
20 November 2008

TITLE: A moratorium on palm oil from tropical peatlands

SUBMITTED BY: Wetlands International

Recognising peatlands as the most efficient and the largest terrestrial carbon store. Accounting for less than 3% of the global land surface, it stores more carbon than all terrestrial biomass, and twice as much as all forest biomass.

Acknowledging that peatland ecosystems and their natural resources are under great threat as a result of large scale reclamation, deforestation and drainage, causing degradation and soil carbon oxidation.

Noting with concern that emissions of CO₂ from the degraded tropical peatlands contribute disproportionately to climate change, equivalent to 8% of global fossil fuel emissions.

Further noting that an estimated 20 to 25% of current palm oil is produced on peatlands and the majority of new plantations is planned to be on peatlands.

Recalling that at the World Café forum session on “Peatland and idle land” on 21 November 2007 at RT5 in Kuala Lumpur, members of RSPO recommended to put a moratorium on any further peatland development

Further recalling that the Executive Board of the RSPO was mandated by members to establish a committee to investigate and develop principles and criteria for greenhouse gas emissions from land use change.

The 5th General Assembly of the Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil, on 20 November 2008, resolves that:

The precautionary approach, one of the key principles in the RSPO Principles & Criteria, should be applied in the case of tropical peatlands and a moratorium placed on any further development of palm oil on tropical peatlands.

The RSPO adopt that palm oil produced on peatlands be henceforth considered unsustainable until proven otherwise.

Any new development of palm oil plantations should submit their plans in advance, providing clear information on overlaps of the concession with peatlands and how they will ensure that the peatlands will not be negatively affected by the plantation in order to avoid peat related

GHG emissions. The submissions should be centrally registered by RSPO and be made public for at least 60 days prior to conversion of the land.

By the 7th Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil in 2009, the Executive Board would have:

1. Developed the GHG Committee Terms of Reference and appoint its members
2. Developed criteria and or indicators
3. Present recommendations of the GHG Committee to members at the 7th RSPO 2009