

**Proposed Resolution to be adopted at the 6th General Assembly of the
Roundtable of Sustainable Palm Oil, 4 November, 2009**

**TITLE: Establishment of a working group to provide recommendations on how to
deal with existing plantations on peatlands**

SUBMITTED BY: Wetlands International

Background

Noting that peatlands are the most efficient and the largest terrestrial carbon store. Accounting for less than 3% of the global land surface, they store 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;

Recalling that the RSPO established a Working Group to investigate and develop principles and criteria for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from land use change, and that this group failed to reach a consensus on the pertinent issue of how to deal with existing palm oil plantations on peat;

Recognizing that even the minimum estimates of CO₂ emissions from existing oil palm plantations on peatlands mean that palm oil from these plantations is not sustainable;

Further recognizing that besides GHG issues, in many cases palm oil plantations on peat in the long-term may also result in significant on- and off-site hydrological impacts as a result of soil subsidence and reduced water retention capacity,

Wetlands International proposes the resolution set out below.

**THE 6th RSPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY GATHERED IN KUALA LUMPUR ON
AGREES TO THE FOLLOWING:**

A Committee will be established to explore and develop business models for optimizing sustainability of existing oil palm plantations on peatlands, including options for restoration and development of alternative economic uses.

By the 8th RSPO in 2010:

1. The Executive Board will have developed the terms of reference for the Committee, and appointed its members;
2. The Committee will have developed business models for sustainable options for current oil palm plantations on peatlands. This will include exploring water management regimes appropriate to reduce emissions, mechanisms that facilitate restoration of peatlands and recommendations on after-use of plantation areas on peat.
3. Recommendations will be ready for presentation to the members of the 8th RSPO 2010.

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