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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Interview Session (TRANSCRIPT)



Interviewee : Dika Dwi Darmawan - Executive, Smallholder Program
Indonesia at Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

Interviewer : Arista Salsabilla Van Gobel (the author)

Date : August 7th, 2023

Topic : The role of RSPO in Indonesia palm oil sustainability

Note : A refers to **the author**

I refers to **the Interviewee**

- A : What was the basis for establishing the RSPO and how does this certification standard contribute to the sustainable promotion of palm oil in Indonesia?
- I : So, the RSPO was founded in 2004, which was based on issues that exist in the palm oil industry such as deforestation, greenhouse gases, biodiversity and then there are also social issues regarding the impact of this industry on local indigenous communities. Then there are 7 stakeholders who play an active role in contributing to the formation of the RSPO, namely Growers, Consumer Goods Manufacturers, ENGOs, SNGOs, Banks and Investors, Retailers, Processors and Traders. These 7 stakeholders gathered and discussed in a "round table" hence the name Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil to make the palm oil industry more sustainable.
- A : So, how does the RSPO help and overcome environmental issues such as deforestation that occurs in Indonesia, which is often associated with the palm oil industry?
- I : The RSPO itself created a standard in the form of P&C "rules of the game" which discusses the rules that must be complied with, such as whether companies or independent smallholders can produce sustainable palm oil. There are two categories of P&C, namely for companies and smallholder because these two actors cannot be equated. For their own companies, they have more financial and human resources, whereas independent smallholders only work individually and with limited financial support. This P&C regulates how to cultivate oil palm properly, so there are ways to increase productivity, workers' human rights, environmental protection. So there are already points such as 'If companies or smallholder join as members of the RSPO they are not allowed to clear land by burning it'.

RSPO is voluntary, which is different from ISPO which is mandatory, so there is no law or anyone forcing you to adopt RSPO.

A : As you explained previously, the RSPO is voluntary, so what if the company cannot comply with the P&C from the RSPO?

I : Generally, large companies have demands from the global market, so palm oil companies that want to export overseas usually require clear production, which they are very sensitive to environmental issues. So even though RSPO certification is not mandatory, companies need to export to the global market, as we know that Indonesia is the largest producer of CPO in the world and this global market has its own rules, namely wanting to source CPO from an environmentally friendly industry. These are the things that encourage companies to follow RSPO standards

A : Then how do you ensure that the processing process actually complies with existing standards?

I : Companies and independent smallholders must ensure that RSPO standards are complied with by passing the audit process. So that after companies and smallholders obtain RSPO certification, they have received justification that they have truly passed sustainable standards

A : How does the RSPO help and ensure that the rights of workers and indigenous communities around oil palm areas are protected?

I : This has been stated and P&C No. 3 regarding human rights, the RSPO ensures that the rights of workers and smallholders are protected regarding their wages, working hours, facilities, security and the rights of the surrounding community, etc. Actually, the essence of this answer is quite simple, 'if sawadaya growers or companies adopt RSPO certification then they must comply with these principles. So things that are feared to be issues have been implemented in the RSPO P&C.

- A : The next question is related to smallholders. Perhaps you could explain what type of training the RSPO provides to help independent smallholders implement sustainable practices?
- I : The training provided was carried out so that independent smallholders could comply with the P&C, so not all of the training was provided or if the training was really needed by independent smallholders at that time, such as Good Agricultural Practice, K3 training, which is knowledge about the dangers that exist around them. workers and how to prevent it, training on HCV protection etc. This training is not just for them to comply with the RSPO P&C but this is actually what is needed, knowledge that will eventually be able to produce sustainable palm oil.
- A : What obstacles does the RSPO currently face regarding the sustainability of the Indonesian palm oil industry?
- I : I have two points of view, for companies the challenge is the lack of awareness regarding sustainability issues. If you say that there are already many companies that have been RSPO certified, it turns out that there are still many that have not been certified because based on what I have seen, usually they are small companies and there are no authority to export which is still local in scope. And for smallholders, the challenge is the same as for companies, namely their awareness, especially for smallholders, to think in detail about sustainability is still very far away, they only know about gardening, fertilizing, harvesting and earning money. Therefore, the RSPO tries to provide intensive assistance in the field. So, many companies and NGOs have projects to assist smallholders in getting RSPO certification. Currently, there are approximately 18,000 independent smallholders who have been certified and they are the result of assistance from companies and NGOs. Especially in Indonesia itself, where 40% of the percentage is managed by smallholders.

- A : The final question, namely, what are your hopes from this RSPO certification system?
- I : Talking about the background of Indonesian smallholders, there are 2.6 million Indonesian smallholders and 18,000 have only been RSPO certified, which is still a very low figure. For this reason, the RSPO hopes that more and more self-supporting smallholders will be included in this sustainability system, namely by trying to build an engagement network with companies, NGOs, namely assistants to independent smallholders, to jointly organize independent smallholders who were initially individuals into a group.
- A : Has there been any previous collaboration between RSPO and ISPO?
- I : We have done a lot of collaboration with the Indonesian government or ISPO. Previously it must be underlined that these two certifications are not competitors, we actually complement each other. The RSPO itself has also carried out several collaborations, one of which is with the Jambi government in the form of a jurisdictional approach or regional/regency certification, so the RSPO is working with the Jambi government to encourage ISPO & RSPO certification within the scope of independent smallholders. And in the future we will try to scale up in collaboration with the government.