



REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE
Union - Discipline - Work



**SUPPORT PROJECT TO THE OIL PALM SECTOR FOR THE NATIONAL
INTERPRETATION OF THE RSPO STANDARD**

**INTERPRETATION PROCESS OF RSPO GENERIC
INDICATORS FOR COTE D'IVOIRE**

PROCESS REPORT

March 2019

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1- Introduction

This document is the summary required by the RSPO for the process to follow for the development of the National Interpretation (NI) of the RSPO Generic Principles and Criteria for Côte d'Ivoire, conducted between July 2014 and December 2018.

The process of developing the national interpretation of the RSPO standard in Côte d'Ivoire was supervised by the Interprofessional Association of the Oil Palm Industry (AIPH) in conjunction with the Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Advisory Services (FIRCA) and led by the ENVAL, CONTROL UNION and DAVID OGG AND PARTNERS Consortium. The process involved all stakeholders, including oil palm sector actors in Côte d'Ivoire (AIPH, APPROAPCI, FENACOPAH-CI and GITHP), environmental and social NGOs (Génie Bio, JVE, AMISTAD, TFT, SOLIDARIDAD), trade union organizations (UGTCI, DIGNITE, FESACI) representatives of the administration and structures under the supervision of Ministries in charge of: Economy and Finance, Industry, Mines, Trade, Planning, Environment, Sustainable Development, Agriculture, Employment, Social Protection), customary authorities and other experts on the environment, socio-economics and participatory mapping.

At the end of the process, stakeholders in the Ivorian palm oil sector developed and validated the National Interpretation for Côte d'Ivoire of the Generic RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&C). This interpretation was sent to the RSPO for approval. The National Interpretation documentation includes:

- the 2013 RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production;
- National Interpretation for twenty-eight (28) specific criteria, according to requirements of the RSPO Standards and Certification Committee on what NIs should consider;
- a list of national and international laws, conventions and treaties relevant to the production and sustainable use of palm oil in Côte d'Ivoire;
- the definition of a small producer in the Ivorian context, developed during the national interpretation process;
- other specific definitions, for example: loss-of-time accident measurement parameters (LTAs); hazardous operations in the local context; temporary labour; migrant labour; special work policy; contract substitution and salary for a decent living standard (following guidelines for the development of a detailed NI for criterion 6.12).

2- Summary of the Process

The process was carried out according to the following main steps:

- 1- **29 July 2014:** Organization of the launching ceremony that aimed to sensitize stakeholders and project partners and encourage their support. During this ceremony, the Steering Committee, represented by the ENVAL- DAVID OGG AND PARTNERS - CONTROL UNION and SOLIDARIDAD West Africa consortium was confirmed.
- 2- **From 7 to 11 October 2014:** Stakeholder mapping and sensitization of oil palm industry stakeholders from all production areas during meetings held in five (5) localities (Aboisso, Dabou, San Pedro, Tabou and Divo).
- 3- **From 11 to 18 October 2014:** Conduct of a diagnostic survey aimed at assessing the sector with regard to the sustainable production of palm oil.

- 4- **In February 2015:** Constitution of technical committees¹
 - **Agriculture Technical Committee:** Good agricultural practices, development of new plantations, agricultural inputs;
 - **Technical Committee on Working Conditions:** Occupational safety and health, compliance with labour laws and regulations;
 - **Technical Committee on Environment:** Environmental protection, waste management, high conservation values (HCVs);
 - **Technical Committee on Land Issues:** Land rights and customary rights
 - **Viability and Development Technical Committee:** Economic viability, development for local communities, fair wages and purchase prices to producers.
- 5- **From 20 to 24 July 2015:** Organization of a training workshop for technical committee members to better understand the RSPO approach, their role and the working methodology.
- 6- **From 08 to 10 September 2015:** Work in a national workshop of technical committees to interpret the RSPO standard. The workshop recorded the participation of seventy (70) representatives of all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, environmental protection organizations, oil palm producers, production and processing units, customary authorities of local communities on industrial palm oil plantation sites, Ministries directly concerned (Agriculture, Environment, Water and Forestry, Labour, Economy and Finance). This workshop led to the identification of good national practices corresponding to the implementation of RSPO standard indicators and to the adapting of these indicators to Ivorian realities.
- 7- **12 November 2015:** Organization of the first meeting of the National Technical Working Group (NTWG) aimed at consolidating the results of technical committee work in a provisional RSPO draft national interpretation document.
- 8- **From 10 July to 10 September 2016:** Public consultation on provisional draft national interpretation document.
- 9- **06 October 2016:** Organization of the second WPNT meeting to decide on observations gathered during public consultation.
- 10- **From 28 to 31 March 2017:** Further public consultation of oil palm producers for comments. The consortium updated the provisional draft national interpretation document by incorporating comments made by the said public consultation.
- 11- **From 10 to 14 July 2017:** Conduct of application tests (audit - test) of the provisional draft national interpretation document at value chain level in order to evaluate the applicability and the measurability of the interpreted indicators.
- 12- **18 August 2017:** Organization of the fourth WPNT meeting to validate the application test (audit-test) report and update the provisional national interpretation document.
- 13- **05 September 2017:** Meeting of the RSPO National Secretariat to validate the provisional national interpretation document and authorize its transmission to the RSPO General Secretariat for approval.
- 14- **08 September 2017:** Transmission of the provisional national interpretation document to the RSPO General Secretariat.
- 15- **26 October 2017:** Receipt of comments from the General Secretariat on the provisional national interpretation document.

¹ The complete list of Technical Committee members is attached to this National RSPO Interpretation document.

- 16-15 December 2017:** Organization of a working session with RSPO's Africa Technical Manager to take into account comments made on the provisional national interpretation document.
- 17-30 January 2018:** Organization of the fourth WPNT meeting to amend the draft national interpretation document, taking into account the comments made.
- 18-07 March 2018:** Organization of a workshop with stakeholders to define the concept of "small oil palm farmer" in the national context.
- 19-From 20 June to 19 August 2018:** Publication of the provisional national interpretation document on the RSPO website as part of a second 60-day public consultation.
- 20-06 September 2018:** Organization of the fifth WPNT meeting to decide on comments made at public consultations and improve the amended provisional national interpretation document.
- 21-From 03 to 05 December 2018:** Implementation of application tests (2nd audit - test) of the revised provisional national interpretation document at value chain level to assess the applicability and measurability of the interpreted indicators.
- 22-14 February 2019:** Organization of the WPNT sixth meeting to validate the application test (2nd audit test) report and update the revised national interpretation document.
- 23-18 March 2019:** Meeting of the RSPO National Secretariat to validate the provisional national interpretation document and authorize its transmission to the RSPO General Secretariat for approval.

3- Process, Participation and Timeline

3.1. Project Entry

Implementation of the project for the national interpretation of the RSPO standard for Côte d'Ivoire was entrusted to the Consortium ENVAL-Control Union Certification-DAVID OGGs & PARTNERS. This project is planned to be implemented in four steps:

Step 1: Awareness campaign and diagnostic survey;

Step 2: Implementation of national interpretation and guidance document;

Step 3: Validation of the guidance document;

Step 4: Restitution of the works and promotion of the RSPO certification process with actors of the sector.

The process was formally initiated on 29 July 2014 during the project launch ceremony held in Abidjan. This ceremony recorded the participation of most key Ivorian oil palm sector stakeholders. From 7 to 11 October 2014, sensitization of stakeholders and local partners in the oil palm sector was led by ENVAL in conjunction with FIRCA and AIPH.

Seventy (70) representatives of different stakeholder groups in Côte d'Ivoire attended the launch event, including: civil society organizations, national and regional agrochemical management organizations, stakeholders of the oil palm sector in Côte d'Ivoire (AIPH, APPROSAPCI, FENACOPAH-CI and GITHP), environmental and social NGOs (Génie Bio, JVE, AMISTAD, TFT, SOLIDARIDAD), trade union organizations (UGTCI, DIGNITE, FESACI) representatives of the administration and structures under the supervision of Ministries in charge of: Economy and Finance, Industry, Mines, Trade, Planning, Environment,

Sustainable Development, Agriculture, Employment and Social Protection), customary authorities and experts of the environment, socio-economics and participatory mapping.

3.2. Legal Review

A legal review was conducted systematically for each of the RSPO criteria in 2014, following a legal and institutional review of the sector and discussions with Ivorian law specialists. The report of the Legal Review was then reviewed by the relevant departments of the ministries concerned (environment, labour, water, health, sustainable development), as well as by legal experts in Côte d'Ivoire. The final Legal Review was presented at National Technical Committee meetings in September 2015. The document was updated in 2018 to incorporate any legislative changes that occurred during the intervention period.

3.3. Technical Committees

The RSPO encourages countries developing a national interpretation to set up working groups composed of representatives of different stakeholders to ensure a participatory process. As a result, the Consortium ENVAL-Control Union Certification -DAVID OGGES & PARTNERS set up five (5) Technical Committees (TCs) around which the NI process was articulated. Members of the five (5) Technical Committees registered voluntarily into it during the sensitization of the actors that took place from 7 to 11 October 2014.

The TCs organized a series of workshops and meetings from 2015 to 2018 according to the following themes:

- Agriculture;
- Working Conditions;
- Environment;
- Land Issues;
- Viability and Development.

These TCs were responsible for developing national indicators and corresponding guidelines for the part of the P&C assigned to them. Each TC should propose indicators for RSPO criteria corresponding to their theme, according to the following list:

- TC1: criteria 1.1; 2.1; 4.4; 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 5.6; 6.1; 6.2; 7.1; 7.2; 7.3 and 7.8;
- TC2: criteria 2.1; 4.7; 4.8; 6.5; 6.6; 6.7; 6.8; 6.9; 6.12 and 6.13;
- TC3: criteria 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 6.3; 6.4; 7.5 and 7.6;
- TC4: criteria 1.2; 1.3; 3.1; 4.1; 6.10; 6.11 and 8.1;
- TC5: criteria 2.1; 4.2; 4.3; 4.5; 4.6; 5.5; 7.4 and 7.7.

The agendas, minutes and lists of participants for TC meetings can be found in the Annexes (provided in a separate document, submitted with this report.)

3.4. Summary for Each Meeting:

The first TC meetings were held at the Belle Côte Hotel in Abidjan. It should be noted that the meetings of each TC took place simultaneously in the said hotel. The TCs were as follows:

- **Technical Committee on Environment (TC1)** worked on criteria 1.1, 2.1, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.8;
- **Technical Committee on Working Conditions (TC2)** worked on criteria 2.1, 4.7, 4.8, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9, 6.12 and 6.13;
- **Technical Committee on Land Issues (TC3)** worked on criteria 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 6.3, 6.4, 7.5 and 7.6;
- **Technical Committee Viability and Development (TC4)** worked on criteria 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 4.1, 6.10, 6.11 and 8.1;
- **Agriculture Technical Committee (TC5)** worked on criteria 2.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 5.5, 7.4 and 7.7.

At the end of their meetings, each TC summarized its work and it submitted it to the Consortium. The latter has compiled the various summaries obtained by the TCs.

The WPNT validated the summary of TC work consolidated by the consortium. The National Technical Secretariat authorized the transmission of the National Interpretation document to the RSPO General Secretariat for approval.

During meetings, each TC discussed, modified or complemented and validated the indicators and proposals of each participant. When a member disagreed with their group, a period of time was made available to discuss the issue and make a proposal to discuss or complement the indicator, and to approve or reject it.

Several stakeholders participated in the Technical Committees, including:

- Local NGOs: Génie Bio, JVE, AMISTAD;
- International NGOs: TFT, SOLIDARIDAD;
- Traditional kings and rulers;
- Representatives of the administration and structures under the supervision of Ministries in charge of: Economy and Finance, Industry, Mines, Trade, Planning, Environment, Sustainable Development, Agriculture, Employment, Social Protection;
- Technical consultants: ENVAL CONSULTANCY, CONTROL UNION, DAVID OGG & PARTNERS;
- Oil palm sector actors in Côte d'Ivoire (AIPH, APPROSAPCI, FENACOPAH-CI and GITHP);
- Trade union organizations: UGTCl, DIGNITE, FESACI;
- The media: national television (RTI1 and RTI2) and the written press (Fraternité Matin, Soir Info, Net Abidjan).

The Steering Committee also targeted especially two other important groups: (1) small producers, and (2) companies in the palm oil value chain: they are agro-businesses (PALMCI, SIPEFCI, DEKEL Oil, PALMAFRIQUE, ADAM AFRICA, AGRIVAR, etc.) and small groups of village producers.

3.5. Public Consultation

The first phases of public consultation took place over a period of three months: from July to September 2016 and during the month of March 2017. The second phase of the public consultation was held over sixty days, that is, from July to September 2018. These consultations implemented three distinct methods:

1. **dissemination of information letters to national stakeholders to inform them about the opening of the public consultation, in addition to the draft interpretation document.** Mail distribution was carried out during the period from 10 July to 10 September 2016, during the month of March 2017, and from June to August 2018;
2. **the RSPO site** from 10 July to 10 September 2016 and from 19 June to 18 August 2018;
3. **meetings with local communities and small palm oil producers** from 28 to 30 March 2017 respectively in Aboisso, Sikensi and San Pedro and from 13 to 17 August 2018 in Aboisso, Divo and San Pedro.

After the public consultation period, a technical review of the NI version of the RSPO P&C for Côte d'Ivoire was conducted by the National Technical Working Group to integrate comments and proposals received online and during workshops with local communities and groups of small individual producers. Outcomes of the proceedings were submitted to the national technical secretariat, which will have to approve the version of the national interpretation document to be submitted to the RSPO secretariat. A new draft version of the NI was published in September 2018, which incorporated all comments in the format required by the RSPO, during a meeting of the National Technical Working Group held on 6 September 2018. This document was the subject of field trials from 3 to 6 December 2018 before being validated by the national technical secretariat on 8 February 2019. Following its validation, the national RSPO P&C interpretation document for Côte d'Ivoire was submitted to the RSPO for approval.

4- Amendment by the RSPO

The new version of the NI of the RSPO P & C for Cote d'Ivoire (September 2017 version) was submitted to the RSPO on 8 September 2017 for their comments. The NI Steering Committee for Côte d'Ivoire received feedback from the RSPO on 26 October 2017.

5- Validation workshop

National validation workshops were held from 13 to 17 August 2018 in the localities of Aboisso, Divo and San-Pedro, then on 6 September 2018 at the AIPH headquarters. These workshops were facilitated by ENVAL in coordination with AIPH and FIRCA. In preparation for these workshops, ENVAL had reviewed the draft NI, responded to the RSPO comments and produced a new version of the NI document.

The validation workshops were organized one day per locality in the three localities mentioned above; and involved a total of 38 participants who were all members of Technical Committees. These were broken down into about 12 participants per locality: voting participants and observers. Both voting participants and observers discussed the guidelines advanced in the NI, criterion by criterion. During the validation workshop, participants focused in particular on the 28 criteria for which the RSPO requires NIs to develop specific guidelines. Voting participants were divided into four (4) rooms: HCV and biodiversity; pesticides and best practices; land and customary law; and health, safety and labour law; the workshop facilitators ensured that the four rooms were equal in number, with four

participants each. After a participatory discussion on each of the criteria, a vote was taken. Where disagreements persisted on the adoption of guidelines, the steering committee was tasked to provide more information so that participants could agree and validate the amended guidelines. They were then the subject of further discussion, and another vote. This process continued until the unanimous adoption of the 28 criteria.

6- Transmission to the RSPO for Approval

The Steering Committee for Côte d'Ivoire forwarded the following documents to the RSPO for validation March 2019:

- 1. Comprehensive national interpretation of the RSPO P & C for Côte d'Ivoire in English
- 2. Definition of small producers for Côte d'Ivoire
- 3. Review of laws, and applicable conventions
- 4. Report on the process followed for the NI (this report)

7- Chronology

	2014		2015				2016		2017					2018					2019
	Feb	Oct	Feb	Jul	Sep	Nov	Jul	Oct	Mar	Jul	August	Sep	Oct	Jan	Mar	June	Sep	Dec	Feb
Launch ceremony	X																		
Stakeholder mapping		X																	
Diagnostic survey		X																	
Constitution of technical committees (TCs)			X																
Training of TC members				X															
TC workshop proceedings					X														
Meeting of the National Technical Working Group (NTWG)						X		X			X	X		x			X		X
Public Consultation							X		X							X			
NI RSPO application tests										X								X	
National Technical Secretariat (STN) meeting												X							
Transmission of the September 2017 version of the NI RSPO to the RSPO General Secretariat												X							
Reception of RSPO comments on the September 2017 version of the NI RSPO													X						
Workshop on the definition of the term 'small oil palm farmer'															x				