

## Particulars

### About Your Organisation

#### 1.1 Member Name

Conservation International

#### 1.2 Membership number

6-0010-08-000-00

#### 1.3 Membership sector

Environmental or Nature Conservation Organisations (Non Governmental Organisations)

#### 1.4 Membership category

Ordinary

#### 1.5 Country

United States

#### 2.0 Does your company or organisation produce, process, consume or sell any palm oil or any products containing derivatives of palm oil?

No

#### 2.2 Please select all the sectors that best describe the business activities of your company or organisation, including your primary RSPO membership sector. You may select multiple sectors and will be required to complete the ACOP form for the relevant sectors

- I finance or support companies or organisations that produce or manufacture palm oil, palm kernel oil or related products
- I support the sustainable development of the palm oil industry as a conservation and environmental NGO
- I support the sustainable development of the palm oil industry as a social and human development NGO
- I am an Affiliate member of the RSPO, indirectly involved in the palm oil industry

## NGOs

### 1. Operational Profile

#### 1.1 What are the main activities of your organisation?

**MISSION:**

Building upon a strong foundation of science, partnership and field demonstration, CI empowers societies to responsibly and sustainably care for nature, our global biodiversity, for the well-being of humanity.

**STRATEGY:**

Through science, policy and field work, CI works to protect the resources that we all depend on. We help communities, countries and societies protect tropical forests, lush grasslands, rivers, wetlands, abundant lakes and the sea. Only through properly valuing the essential services these ecosystems provide can we create a sustainable development path that will benefit all people for generations to come.

Our scientists, field staff and policy experts are: measuring the contribution of healthy ecosystems to human well-being; assessing the implications of development decisions; putting cutting-edge, rigorously tested information in the hands of decision-makers and the public; and demonstrating through field models how economic opportunity and the stewardship of natural resources can leverage change at an international scale.

Our strategy is built around three pillars:

1. Protecting critical natural capital, biodiversity and ecosystems that provide the foundation for human well-being.
2. Fostering effective governance at local, national, and international levels.
3. Promoting sustainable production practices.

The palm oil sector is particularly important to CI's mission because it can be an important driver of economic growth in developing countries, can create employment opportunities in rural areas, is the highest yielding oil crop per hectare and is a globally important foodstuff. However, poorly planned and managed oil palm cultivation can result in forest conversion, undermining the biodiversity and ecosystem health upon which agriculture and ultimately human well-being depend. Effective and constructive engagement with the palm oil sector, and related agribusiness sectors, is extremely important to forging joint solutions based on identification and implementation of better practices for oil palm cultivation, promotion of science-based land use planning and zoning, and the development of government and market policies with the goal of protecting environmental values, supporting economic growth and improving rural livelihoods.

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#### 1.2 What activities has your organisation undertaken to publicise programmes to support the RSPO, RSPO certification, the uptake of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil and oil palm products, or to support good standing RSPO members during the reporting period?

CI is working at multiple levels to promote sustainable palm oil. At the global level, we participate in and support the RSPO and we maintain engagements with several major corporations that produce, trade, or purchase palm oil in their products. Through these engagements, CI provides support to companies seeking to develop and implement sustainable sourcing policies, including the purchase of CSPO. We also work directly with companies and through multi-stakeholder platforms to encourage companies across the palm oil supply chain to invest in and support jurisdictional and landscape initiatives that include sustainable production and livelihoods, including palm oil. CI aims to create a supportive policy environment for sustainable palm oil in producer countries such as Indonesia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Liberia, as well as in consumer markets such as the EU and the US. At the local level, we continue to support small producers with certification as well as through seeking certification and implementation of better management practices.

Highlights of this work include:

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**GLOBAL:**

- CI has developed a Palm Oil Risk Tool (PORT) to prioritize due diligence for deforestation risk from oil palm expansion in Indonesia. Factors considered include expansion risk, independent producer risk, standing forests, and industry concentration. Risk results are presented at both the district and mill level, and information can be used by companies and other stakeholders to proactively target key areas for enhanced due diligence, outreach, and/or investment to try and get ahead of deforestation, rather than reacting to alerts. A simplified version of the PORT analysis has now been completed for the global Universal Mill List, and has been socialized with some NGO partners, multi-stakeholder initiatives including the Palm Oil Collaborative Group, and bilaterally with five companies across the palm oil supply chain. The tool has recently been expanded to include Peat Risk in Indonesia.
- CI is a member of the High Carbon Stock Approach Steering Group. We participate in several working groups, including:
  - o Protection Working Group, which seeks to ensure the ongoing protection of HCS forests and HCV areas through integration in land use planning, sustainable finance mechanisms and conservation incentives;
  - o Government & Regional Engagement Task Force, which seeks to engage stakeholders on the application of HCSA in other regions, including West and Central Africa and Latin America; and
  - o RSPO & HCSA No Deforestation Joint Steering Group, which seeks to understand the challenges, align HCSA & RSPO stakeholders and support application of RSPO No Deforestation criteria in High Forest Cover Countries.
- CI is also supporting broader multi-stakeholder initiatives and efforts including the Palm Oil Collaborative Group, the CGF Forest-Positive Coalition, and TFA, among others.

**US:**

- In the U.S., CI consistently engages with actors within the supply chain as well as other relevant key stakeholders (NGOs, finance, etc.) to provide support on policy implementation, to promote dialogue, and to encourage innovation and action that leads to sectoral, not just supply chain, transformation. In 2020, CI continued to advise private sector/agribusinesses in their commitments to sustainable palm oil.
- CI served as a member of NASPON, participating in the segregated working group aimed at understanding current challenges in the North American market to sourcing physical CSPO as well as opportunities for reducing supply chain barriers to sustainability.

**EUROPE:**

- CI has provided presentations highlighting the opportunities and experiences of CI's projects in producer countries, in particular sustainable landscapes and jurisdictions, to encourage prioritization and increased funding for those initiatives.
- CI participates in the Sustainable Palm Oil Choice initiative, which aims to increase the uptake of sustainable palm oil in Europe.
- CI has been engaging with the European Union for several years to ensure a sound implementation of the 2019 communication to "step up EU efforts to protect and the restore the world's forests", in particular the future demand-side legislation that will be presented by the European Commission by the end of 2021. CI has been calling for mandatory due diligence, with criteria that are based on existing initiatives and standards, as well as a range of measures both at the demand and supply sides, including increasing the transparency and traceability of supply chains and increasing technical and financial support to producer countries to address the drivers of deforestation.

**INDONESIA:**

CI Indonesia has continued to engage provincial stakeholders in North Sumatra as well as district level stakeholders in a range of activities to promote sustainable palm oil, including continued dialog and policy advocacy, to increase understanding of conservation and restoration issues as well as leverage sustainable production, particularly for palm oil. Some of the program activities that have been undertaken to support sustainable palm oil are captured below:

- Since 2019, CI and Unilever have partnered to build a sustainable supply chain in Tapanuli Selatan, North Sumatra and empower smallholders. As part of this work, CI is focusing on continuing development of the Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods (CSL); strengthening capacity for forest governance; piloting a 100 ha restoration plot to support livelihoods and reduce deforestation; and training 1,000 farmers in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) as well as supporting 800 farmers in receiving RSPO certification. By the end of 2020, over 1,000 farmers had begun a series of RSPO trainings, 309 had received GAP training, and 230 farmers received their land legality certificates, as a precursor to RSPO certification.
- CI and Unilever have also supported the establishment of 2 Forest Farmer Groups (FFGs) – each composed of 74 and 67 farmers – through processes for obtaining social forestry licenses for agroforestry. Agroforestry will not only provide income but also legal access to sustainably manage the forest and restore degraded areas. This effort directly supports smallholder livelihoods and directly contributes to the District Action Plan for Sustainable Palm Oil. CI has also identified a 100 ha pilot area to serve as a restoration demonstration plot to support those farmers obtaining social forestry licenses. A community nursery was developed, which will be managed by the local community and benefit a FFG with access to seedlings.

- CI continued playing a key facilitation role in the Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods (CSL), a multi-stakeholder place-based platform aimed at aligning and scaling initiatives, financing opportunities and local, government and market interests to collectively drive improved livelihoods for farming communities, economic development and improved natural resource management in North Sumatra and Aceh. CSL's initial supporters and contributors include: Barry Callebaut, Conservation International (CI), Danone, Earthworm Foundation, The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH), The Livelihoods Fund, Mars Wrigley, Mondelēz International, PepsiCo, Unilever and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Through our role, CI continued facilitating quarterly meetings with the initiative's Interim Steering Group, which serves as the interim governing body of CSL. Through a grant from the Walmart Foundation, we also launched implementation of CSL's phase 3 workplan to support the establishment of a local governance structure for CSL which will guide the future of the initiative and its continued support to smallholders and sustainable production – including sustainable palm oil.

#### LIBERIA:

- CI is working with partners, including companies, communities, government and civil society to support integrated, participatory land use planning that includes sustainable agriculture and oil palm production, forest conservation, and job creation. In this landscape, we are supporting the operator of a 220,000-ha concession to establish commitments to sustainable palm oil and forest conservation, including membership and certification through RSPO.
- CI is sharing the challenges, lessons and solutions of our landscape engagements through our participation and leadership in national and regional platforms. These include:
  - o National Oil Palm Platform of Liberia (NOPPOL), which is made up of representatives from growers, government and civil society and supports collaboration to ensure a sustainable and profitable oil palm sector that benefits Liberians. As a member of the National Oil Palm Platform in Liberia (NOPPOL), CI-Liberia was a member of the Technical working group with other agencies that led the development of RSPO P&C National Interpretations. CI-Liberia led the working group on conservation, and community engagement. We also support the public consultation but due to COVID, feedback was given virtually.
  - o TFA Africa Palm Oil Initiative (APOI), which facilitates national and regional commitments to sustainable oil palm across 10 producing countries in Africa and in which CI serves as the Focal Point for Liberia.

#### ECUADOR:

- CI-Ecuador continues to be a member of the Interinstitutional Committee on Sustainable Palm Oil, which seeks to achieve the RSPO jurisdictional certification of palm oil beginning in the Ecuadorean Amazon.

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**1.3 What percentage of your organisation's overall activities focus on palm oil?**

10%

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**1.4 Did members of your organisation participate in RSPO working groups and/or taskforces during the reporting period?**

Yes

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**1.5 Does your organisation have any collaborations with public or private sector palm oil industry players to support them in their efforts to increase the production or consumption of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO)?**

Yes

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**1.6 How is your organisation's work on palm oil funded?**

CI's work with palm oil is funded by a wide range of donors including foundation, government and private sector partners, as well as individual supporters. For more information on CI's financials, please see: [www.conservation.org/financials](http://www.conservation.org/financials).

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**2. TimeBound Plan**

**2.1 Which year did your organisation start or expects to start participating in RSPO working groups and/or taskforces?**

2008

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**2.2 Which year did your organisation start or expects to start undertaking and publicising programmes to support the RSPO, RSPO certification, uptake of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil and oil palm products and/or good standing RSPO member?**

2008

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### 3. Actions for Next Reporting Period

#### 3.1 Please outline activities that your organisation will take in the coming year to promote the production or consumption of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO)

Over the next year, CI will work to build upon its 2020 achievements to advance the objectives of RSPO and promote increased uptake for certified sustainable palm oil. Our actions over the next year will focus on the following complementary strategies:

##### ENSURING SUSTAINABLE AND RELIABLE DEMAND FOR SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL IN KEY MARKETS:

CI will provide technical advice and support to corporate partners in their efforts to establish and fulfill commitments to purchase 100% certified sustainable palm oil.

CI and partners will provide technical advice and policy support to strengthen industry efforts aimed at transitioning the North American and European market to 100% sustainable palm oil, linked with investment and sourcing incentives for sustainable palm oil origins.

##### CONTRIBUTING TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF RSPO:

CI will contribute to ongoing industry discussions aimed at clarifying and defining best practice models for key sustainability issues that build on RSPO's principles and criteria. This includes exploring opportunities to leverage CI's core strengths of science, partnership and field demonstration to support and advance emerging initiatives, including jurisdictional approaches/certification.

##### PILOTING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS IN OIL PALM LANDSCAPES:

CI will continue to develop and pilot projects that combine the identification and protection of critical natural capital with productivity improvements, capacity building initiatives and improved governance in palm oil production areas.

Regional activities and targets in the coming year include the following:

##### GLOBAL:

- Provide guidance and advise companies in improving their current sustainable palm oil sourcing strategies as well as prioritize collective action and engagement in jurisdictional initiatives, such as the Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods in North Sumatra and Aceh, to scale impacts for sectoral transformation.
- Seek opportunities with partners to publish CI's revised palm oil risk assessment tool to aid companies in assessing deforestation risks in their supply chains in order to prioritize action and investment in sustainable palm oil.
- Participate in collaborative networks for promoting sustainable palm oil, including the RSPO, HCSA, the Palm Oil Collaborative Group, CGF Forest Positive Coalition, and others.

##### US:

- Continue participation in NASPON and related working groups to support sustainable palm oil in the US market.

##### EUROPE:

- Participating in the sustainable palm oil choice with corporate actors and other organizations to provide a range of good examples on sustainable palm oil and to support informed decision-making on these issues.
- Continue engaging with corporate actors to familiarize them and involve them in the implementation process of the EU communication on "Stepping up EU Action to Protect and Restore the World's Forests", including the future regulation on minimizing the risk of deforestation associated with products placed on the EU market, and related mandatory due diligence provisions.
- Participate in the Multistakeholder Platform on Deforestation set up by the European Commission to inform the implementation of the EU communication on "Stepping up EU Action to Protect and Restore the World's Forests" and continue exchanging with the other members (including companies)
- Continue working as trusted advisors to European member states to support the development of national strategies on imported deforestation and sustainable commodities.
- CI and partner organizations are working to launch a campaign on deforestation-free finance ahead of the COP 26, with the aim to mobilise finance institutions to phase out investments linked to deforestation in their portfolios.
- Continue promoting a science-based approach to support decision-making, with tools like trase.earth (CI has an MoU with Trase)

**INDONESIA:**

- CI will continue support and facilitation of smallholder trainings in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and RSPO certification as well as implementation of other activities that were postponed or decelerated due to COVID-19. Activities include supporting HCV/HCS self-assessments for smallholders, RSPO trainings (i.e. environmental assessments, human rights for workers, gender, FPIC, child labor, waste management, GHG and others trainings), RSPO audits for 800 farmers, smallholder assistance for obtaining and registering RSPO certificates, establishing GAP demoplots, forming farmers cooperatives, etc.
- Establish a 100 ha restoration pilot
- Support establishment of the Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods' governance structure and continued implementation of the phase 3 workplan in North Sumatra and Aceh.

**LIBERIA:**

- CI will continue to work with partners, including companies, communities, NGOs and government stakeholders, to develop an integrated land use and landscape plan, supported by sustainable, community-driven oil palm models linked with forest conservation.
- CI will continue to support a local grower to develop robust and locally appropriate commitments to sustainable palm oil production, supported by action plans and targets to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of progress.
- CI will continue to engage at the national and regional level, bringing technical and field experience to support the NOPPOL and APOI objectives around sustainable production, conservation and human well-being, and we will provide feedback and insight from these engagements into international dialogues such as efforts by the RSPO, HCSA and NDJSG.
- Work with partners to finalize and launch a GEF-FOLUR Project for reducing deforestation from oil palm and cocoa value chains

**ECUADOR:**

- CI-Ecuador will participate in the National Interpretation of Principles and Standards for Independent Smallholder Producers (to be implemented in 2021).



## Shared Responsibility

*The Board of Governors of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil approved new Shared Responsibility rules on 31 October 2019, requiring all members to share sustainability requirements and obligations. Reporting of Shared Responsibility indicators will be done through several channels, including ACOP. As the implementation of Shared Responsibility reporting is still on-going and in development, the Shared Responsibility section in ACOP is not yet final and may change in future ACOP cycles. For more information on Shared Responsibility, please go to <https://rspo.org/news-and-events/news/what-are-the-new-shared-responsibility-rules> or email the ACOP team at [acop@rspo.org](mailto:acop@rspo.org)*

### Labour & Labour Rights

**1.1 Does your company have a publicly-available policy covering Labour & Labour Rights?**

Yes

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**1.1.1 Does the policy cover:**

- No discrimination
- Wage and working conditions
- Freedom of association
- No child labour
- No harassment
- No forced or trafficked labour

### Ethical Conduct & Human Rights

**1.2 Does your company have a publicly-available Policy covering Ethical Conduct & Human Rights?**

Yes

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**1.2.1 Does the policy cover:**

- Recruitment
- Contractors
- Sub-Contractors & Third-Party Contractors

### Occupational Health & Safety

**1.4 Does your company have a publicly-available Policy covering Occupational Health & Safety?**

No

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**Climate Change & Greenhouse Gas (GHG)****1.5 Does your company have a publicly-available policy covering Climate Change & Greenhouse Gas (GHG)?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

**1.5.1 Does the policy cover:**

- Identification and assessment of GHG
- Monitored implementation plan to reduce or minimise GHG emissions

**Complaints & Grievances****1.6 Does your company have a Complaints & Grievances Mechanism?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

**1.6.1 Is your Complaints & Grievance mechanism in line with the principles of the RSPO's grievance mechanism, which are the elements of fairness, transparency, and impartiality?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

**Smallholders****1.7 Does your company support oil palm independent smallholder groups?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

**1.7.1 Does this support cover:**

- Fair and transparent dealings with Smallholders
- Improved Smallholder livelihoods

### 1.7.2 How is your company supporting them?

CI works in established cultivation areas in Indonesia and Brazil, as well as expanding frontier areas in places like Liberia, to develop and test models of sustainable cultivation most relevant to those producing regions. This reflects our integrated approach to sustainable production, one that combines conservation, production improvements and constructive engagement with governments, producers and communities aimed at building local capacity for sustainable oil palm cultivation. Through this work, CI aims to help smallholders and communities adopt more sustainable production practices and increase the amount of palm oil they produce, while protecting forests and improving livelihoods.

CI is also developing with partners the Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods in Indonesia, which aims to capture the value of diverse collaboration through a sustainable landscape approach in contributing to sustainable livelihoods and improved natural resources management, as well as to improve smallholder productivity and sustainable development in Aceh and North Sumatra. Regional highlights are captured below:

#### INDONESIA:

As previously described, we have continued to support the government of Tapanuli Selatan in North Sumatra to train 1,000 smallholder farmers, through a sustainable palm oil field school, on Good Agricultural Practices for oil palm production and to achieve RSPO certification.

In addition, we are collaborating with the government of Tapanuli Selatan to initiate an agroforestry plot, starting with 100 ha, to provide sustainable livelihood options for smallholder producers. This initiative will serve as a best practice model for transitioning smallholders production methods, for the larger district restoration priority target of 21,000 ha and for broader provincial restoration initiatives. This work has also supported the establishment of Forest Farmer Groups (FFGs) through processes for obtaining social forestry licenses. Agroforestry will not only provide income but also legal access to sustainably manage the forest and restore degraded areas. Through this project, we also supported development of community nurseries with over 10,000 seedlings which will be used for restoration activities.

In addition, CI is supporting smallholder farmers rehabilitate their palm on peatland by constructing canal blocking to manage water levels. Revegetation is being carried out on the plantation with native peat species. Local communities are being supported through alternative livelihoods, such as fisheries, to build community resilience. A total of 200 ha of palm oil on peat is currently being rehabilitated in collaboration with communities.

#### LIBERIA:

• Established landscape forum under Good Growth Partnership and signed conservation agreements with three communities to address deforestation of HCV/HCS areas from charcoal production; these communities are interested in oil palm production and proactively managing deforestation threats and drivers will help them to continue to participate in sustainable palm oil dialogues. Conservation agreements provide alternative livelihoods and income generation activities to support smallholders and local communities.

• At the National level through NOPPOL, we work with independent smallholder groups to register with the Ministry of Agriculture and get involved with RSPO membership for smallholders.

**Sustainable Palm Oil Policy**

**1.8 Does your company have a publicly-available Policy covering the implementation of RSPO Shared Responsibility principles?**

No

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**Waste Management**

**1.9 Does your company have a waste management plan?**

Yes

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**Water Management**

**1.10 Does your company have a water management plan?**

Yes

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**Energy Use**

**1.11 Does your company have an energy use plan covering fossil fuels and renewable energy?**

No

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**RSPO Services and Support**

**1.12 Does your company provide services and support to the RSPO, eg. participation in RSPO Working Groups and Task Forces**

Yes

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**Shared Responsibility Resourcing**

**1.13 Does your company have a plan to commit resources to ensure effective implementation of RSPO Shared Responsibility principles?**

Yes

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## Challenges and Support

### 1.1 What significant obstacles or challenges has your company encountered in the promotion of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO)? What efforts has your company taken to address these obstacles or challenges?

- Awareness of RSPO in the market
- Difficulties in the certification process
- Certification of smallholders
- Competition with non-RSPO members
- High costs in achieving or adhering to certification
- Human rights issues
- Insufficient demand for RSPO-certified palm oil
- Low usage of palm oil
- Reputation of palm oil in the market
- Reputation of RSPO in the market
- Supply issues
- Traceability issues
- No challenges faced
- Others

#### Others

- We are learning and adapting to RSPO's new Shared Responsibility strategy and finding ways to align and adapt. For example, some of our policies are not in the public domain and we are working internally to better adapt our website and online materials to reflect internal policies and frameworks which are aligned with RSPO's shared responsibility requirements.

- Several stakeholders in Europe question the robustness and impact of certification schemes (e.g. Greenpeace report of March 2021), including RSPO, and consider these are not valuable instruments to improve the sustainability of supply chains.

- In Liberia, there is a challenge in private sector understanding the business value of producing sustainable palm oil, especially in cases with no links to global value chains. CI continues to work with other stakeholders to raise more awareness at the national and local level on the economic and environmental value of producing sustainable palm oil.

### 1.2 In addition to the actions already reported in this ACOP report, what other ways has your company supported the vision of the RSPO to transform markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm?

- Engagement with business partners or consumers on the use of CSPO
- Engagement with government agencies
- Promotion of CSPO outside of RSPO venues such as trade workshops or industry associations
- Promotion of physical CSPO
- Providing funding or support for CSPO development efforts
- Research & Development support
- Stakeholder engagement
- No actions taken
- Others

#### Others

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**1.3 If your company has any other publicly-available reports or information regarding its palm oil-related policies and activities, please provide the links here**

<https://www.conservation.org/projects/sustainable-palm-oil>

<https://www.conservation.org/projects/coalition-for-sustainable-livelihoods>

<https://www.mongabay.co.id/2020/11/01/upaya-petani-mandiri-di-tapanuli-selatan-benahi-tata-keloka-kebun-sawit/>

<http://dmsi.or.id/index.php/public/beritadmsi/detail/1857/Perjuangan-Petani-Dapatkan-Standar-Sawit-Hijau-di-Tapanuli-Selatan>

[www.sustainablepalmoilchoice.eu](http://www.sustainablepalmoilchoice.eu)

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