

Particulars

About Your Organisation

1.1 Member Name

SSA Group, LLC

1.2 Membership Number

8-0167-15-000-00

1.3 Membership Sector

Organisations

1.4 Membership Category

Affiliate

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 am a bank or financial institution that finances or supports companies or organisations that produce or manufacture palm oil, palm kernel oil or related products
- I am a conservation and environmental NGO supporting the sustainable development of the palm oil industry
- I am a social and human development NGO supporting the sustainable development of the palm oil industry
- I am an Affiliate member of the RSPO, indirectly involved in the palm oil industry

Affiliates

1. Operational Profile

1.1 What are the main activities of your organisation?

The SSA Group is a family owned and operated guest services company providing retail, culinary and admissions operations for over 60 million visitors annually in zoos, aquariums and museums across the United States. The diverse team at SSA works to assure our guests the highest level of experience while visiting our partner institutions. The SSA Group manages operations at over 65 partner locations.

We are currently listed as an Affiliate Member but are working with Cameron Plese on reclassification for the 2022 ACOP.

1.2 What activities has your organisation undertaken to promote sustainable palm oil, the RSPO and/or RSPO members in the reporting period?

The team at the SSA Group has continued to engage its top vendor US Foods to become a full RSPO member and have been pleased with the progress over the past three years since US Foods published its 2018 palm oil goals with RSPO a fixture of these efforts.

Monitoring the progress for US Foods will be a continued focus into 2021 and beyond as we fortify our sustainability role and partnership with their organization.

Internally, the SSA Group has a Conservation Team at every account throughout the USA and partners with host institutions to share news, information, activities as well as develop increased awareness with our over 6,000 employees nationwide. We have promoted the RSPO and the collaboration at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo to all of our teams and staff with the core goal of raising both the level of awareness on-site and for our employees own personal actions when they make purchase decisions at home. We have also promoted via social media platforms including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

In addition, Andrew Fischer, Vice President of Sustainability & Conservation for the SSA Group has engaged with US Foods to continue to drive home the importance of RSPO support and compliance.

Andrew also is a representative on the AZA (Association of Zoo and Aquarium) Green Science and Advisory Group who focuses on sustainability at the 240 AZA facilities.. He is also a member of the Conservation Education Committee with AZA and has been a part of the discussion of RSPO education within Zoo and Aquarium facilities nationwide.

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

5.0%

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

No

1.5 Does your organisation have any past or on-going 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)?

No

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

SSA Group ownership continues to have a solid commitment with sustainability and conservation organizations who work with our partner institutions to make a difference. SSA supports the RSPO efforts in this area by having Andrew Fischer, Vice President of Sustainability & Conservation involved with these organizations.

2. Actions for Next Reporting Period

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

The SSA Group will continue via our culinary leadership supported by Andrew Fischer, Vice President of Sustainability and Conservation to communicate with our vendors including our primary supplier US Foods to become full RSPO members. We have offered our support in bringing together both Cameron Plese from the RSPO and Anthony Kingsley from US Foods, and we have been supporting these efforts for the past three years.

We will also continue to spread the word within our cultural attractions community on the importance of being a supporter of the RSPO. Andrew will continue to work also work with the national SSA Group culinary procurement team and our partner institutions on developing increased awareness for our guests in the cafe's and restaurants nationally as well as our employees.

We are currently listed as an Affiliate Member but are working with Cameron Plese on reclassification for the 2022 ACOP.

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

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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?

- Communication and/or engagement to transform the negative perception of palm oil
- Engagement with business partners or consumers on the use of CSPO
- Engagement with government agencies
- Engagement with peers and clients
- Promotion of CSPO through off product claims
- 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

The SSA Group has a Conservation Team at every account throughout the USA and partners with host institutions to share news, information, activities as well as develop increased awareness with our over 5,000 employees nationwide. We have promoted the RSPO and the collaboration at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo to all of our teams and staff with the core goal of raising both the level of awareness on-site and for our employees own personal actions when they make purchase decisions at home.

In addition, Andrew Fischer, Vice President of Sustainability & Conservation for the SSA Group has engaged with US Foods to continue to drive home the importance of RSPO support and compliance.

Andrew also is a representative on the AZA (Association of Zoo and Aquarium) Green Science and Advisory Group who focus on sustainability of environments here and around the world. He is also a member of the Conservation Education Committee with AZA and has been a part of the discussion of RSPO education within Zoo and Aquarium facilities nationwide.

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

Not at this time though as we transition our membership status from Affiliate to the appropriate category we will have some additional information.
