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Towards Low GHG Emission in New Oil Palm Development – Results of RSPO's Approach

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Responsible low emission in new oil palm development is becoming a necessity for the industry. The results of projected greenhouse gas (GHG) emission associated with new oil palm development by Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) members in Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, South America and Africa are presented. These results were obtained from GHG Assessment Report submissions (through RSPO New Planting Procedure) from the year 2015 to 2017, demonstrated the use of RSPO GHG Assessment Procedure for New Development in land use planning to ensure that new plantation developments are designed to minimise net GHG emission. These new oil palm developments are planned on 193 857.24 ha of which 127 620 ha (66%) is proposed to be developed and the balance in set-aside areas resulting in a projected net emission reduction of about 2 million tCO_2eq or 1.54 tCO_2eq/tCPO. The emission reduction comes from avoiding planting on peat and establishing conservation areas which accounted for about 34 per cent of the areas as well as adopting other emission reduction strategies. It also demonstrated the commitment to public reporting. The results also showed that the RSPO GHG Assessment Procedure for New Development is a useful tool to assist growers in achieving low carbon new oil palm development. Identification and estimation of the potential sources of emission and sinks of carbon from plantations enables designing of new oil palm development, including mitigation plan in minimising net GHG emissions.

***Keywords**: Oil palm, RSPO, criterion 7.8, GHG emission, PalmGHG, emission hotspots, LCA.*