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Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil Certification Standards

SANATH KUMARAN K AND MOHD HASBOLLAH SUPARYONO

Malaysian Palm Oil Certification Council, 15th Floor, Bangunan Getah Asli (Menara), 148 Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Credible oil palm certification assessments encompass much more than just auditing the planting, maintenance, harvesting, and milling practices and operations by accredited third party auditors. In the context of the Malaysian palm oil industry, presently there are at least three certification schemes under which a management unit or entity can be certified to provide assurance of compliance to agreed sustainability standards. The three main schemes are: (i) the Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Certification Scheme, (ii) the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Scheme and (iii) the International Sustainability and Carbon Certification (ISCC) Scheme. The MSPO Certification Scheme was developed as the national scheme in Malaysia for oil palm plantations, independent and organised smallholdings, and palm oil processing facilities which can be certified against the requirements of the MSPO Standards. MPOCC is the scheme owner and governing body for the MSPO Certification Scheme. The MSPO Standards used under the scheme cover a range of Principles and Criteria that consider the environmental, social and economic aspects in oil palm plantation management, palm oil milling and supply chain traceability systems. However, the depth and level of details in the MSPO Principles, Criteria, Indicators and its requirements vary in consideration of plantings by independent smallholders and organised smallholders. To complete the value chain of the Malaysian palm oil sector, the MSPO Supply Chain Certification Standard (SCCS) was launched on 1 October 2018. This paper reviews the establishment of MPOCC, the institutional set-up of the MSPO Certification Scheme, and the development and key compliance requirements of the MSPO Standards. The paper also highlights some of the issues and challenges faced by the scheme.

Keywords: MSPO, MPOCC, certification scheme, oil palm, sustainability standards.

