Palm oil is an important global commodity with a range of benefits and significant sustainability challenges and opportunities. With the global population expected to increase from the current 7 billion people to 9 billion people in 2050, oil palm has the ability to significantly contribute to global food security, nutrition, and poverty alleviation. In response to the urgent need to address concerns and global demand for sustainably-produced palm oil, there has been increasing numbers of sustainability palm oil standards and producers committing to them, such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO), Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil (ISPO), and International Sustainability Carbon Certification (ISCC). This paper describes the current major challenges facing the palm oil industry such as no deforestation, no planting on peatland, and land grabbing; and illustrates how sustainability standards help provide a reliable framework to implement best practices while continuously improving to address emerging issues, and provide benefits to companies for producing palm oil in a sustainable manner.

Keywords: Sime Darby Plantation, RSPO, sustainability certification standards.