Is RSPO Having an Impact? - Why We Need the SEnSOR Programme

What do we hope RSPO's impact is?

- Halting deforestation
- Safe, happy, fairly paid workers
- Avoiding biodiversity losses
- Conservation of soil and water resources
- Avoiding pollution
- Encouraging sustainable growth and development
- Opportunities for local communities
- Minimising GHG emissions
- Safe, happy, fairly paid workers
- Conservation of soil and water resources
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- Opportunities for local communities
But how do we know whether our efforts are effective - are we actually changing anything?

How not to do it...

In the mid 90s and early 2000s the EU spent 23.4bn euros on agri environment schemes

In 2003 scientists conducted a review of the evidence for whether the schemes had benefitted biodiversity

Result: INCLONCLUSIVE - research, monitoring and assessment insufficient to determine any impact (Kleijn & Sutherland 2003)

We don't know what worked and what didn't

We don't know how to improve

There is no way of showing that it is worth while spending more money on these schemes
What is the SEnSOR Programme?

The Socially and Environmentally Sustainable Oil palm Research (SEnSOR) programme:

an integrated multi-disciplinary research programme designed to test the impact of RSPO and find ways to improve.

...developed as a result of a scoping study commissioned by RSPO

Scientific literature review

Expert opinion

Reports and policy papers
Research structure

**Soil and water** - how effective are riparian buffers, erosion and runoff prevention

**Greenhouse gases** - maximising Carbon storage, reducing nitrogen and Methane emissions

**Biodiversity** - effectiveness of HCVs and biodiversity friendly agricultural practices, avoiding deforestation

**Participatory Process and Rights** - effectiveness of FPIC, community engagement and labour organisation

**Livelihoods** - uptake of sustainable practices, economic improvement in smallholders, implementation of ILO standards
World class scientists

SEARRP South East Asia Rainforest Research Programme
Swansea University Priyysigol Abertawe

The University of York

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Lancaster University

Wageningen UR
For quality of life

Communication

SEARRP South East Asia Rainforest Research Programme

A project coordinated by the Royal Society SEARRP
**Key reasons for supporting SEnSOR**

Create confidence in RSPO certified palm oil among consumers, investors and the public

Ensure that growers’ efforts and investment in sustainability are delivering cost effective benefits that have market value

Safeguard the environment and society for the long term through the rigorous, evidence-based testing, development and improvement of RSPO principles and criteria

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**Decisions & actions**

Is it OK to assume that RSPO certification delivers the intended benefits?

*If not:*

Then a rapid, concerted, coordinated, cross-sector approach to raise funding for SEnSOR is essential
Thank you for listening

For more details of the proposed research please find me or download the brochure from www.sensorproject.net