

Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods?

The Coalition for Sustainable Livelihoods (CSL) is a group of civil society and private sector organizations—with a shared interest in sustainable development, active investments in Aceh and North Sumatra, and a strong desire to work collaboratively with government—that have agreed to work collectively to achieve common objectives for smallholder livelihoods, sustainable agricultural production and conservation in North Sumatra and Aceh. This initial group knows that the Coalition will not achieve its objectives without collaboration and seeks to build the CSL through long-term partnership.

2. Why is the Coalition needed?

There are numerous government, private sector and civil society initiatives aiming to advance economic, social and environmental sustainability but many of these efforts are only addressing part of the solution, are disconnected from other solutions, and therefore not achieving scale or desired impacts. Encouraging alignment between these initiatives through sustainable landscape approaches can bring tangible gains for smallholder producers, improve their access to markets seeking sustainable products and help generate additional investments. Improving alignment with government programs and policy is essential for long-term scale and sustainability.

3. What is the Coalition trying to achieve?

The Coalition aims to create sustainable commodity value chains that create business and livelihood opportunities for the people of Aceh and N. Sumatra.

4. How will the Coalition measure success?

Long term, the Coalition will be successful if we can show improvement in:

- Farmer productivity, income and diversified livelihoods;
- Continuous agricultural improvement through use of good agricultural practices and inputs; and
- Improved management of soil, forest, water and other natural resources.

In the short and medium term, key milestones will include:

- Number of farmers implementing good agricultural practices and/or agroforestry systems where appropriate.
- Training and implementation of government programs such as ISPO, the National Action Plan for Sustainable Palm Oil (NAP), and the Aceh Green Initiative.
- Implementation of participatory land-use planning and management processes.
- Increased investment and financing directed towards these programs in key landscapes.

Additional indicators, metrics and milestones will be developed together with key stakeholders.

5. Is the Coalition only focused on palm oil?

No. There is strong interest in sustainable palm oil, but sustainability and economic development in producing regions such as N. Sumatra and Aceh depends on management of resources and farming

systems in the wider landscape as well as improving farmer resilience through diversification. That means we must also include other key cash crops produced in the region such as coffee, cocoa and rubber and also support improvements in the production of staple crops.

6. Why is a sustainable landscape approach appealing to government?

A sustainable landscape approach considers the economic, social and environmental context of a specific district or province and can directly contribute to the advancement of government objectives such as smallholder development, reduction of risks from floods and landslides, as well as implementation of specific programs and priorities such as the NAP or ISPO. Strengthening sustainable landscape initiatives focused on improving agricultural production offers significant opportunities to reduce poverty, drive economic development and improve natural resources management.

7. What will the Coalition do and how will it achieve its objectives?

The Coalition will work simultaneously at two levels:

1.) Provincial: It will coordinate and align with government programs and initiatives such as FoKSBI, ISPO, Green Aceh Initiative to support implementation and advancement of these programs' objectives.

2.) Landscape: It will invest in strengthening existing or developing new sustainable landscape initiatives in districts where government, civil society and private sector actors are working together towards sustainable development outcomes. Landscape initiatives will link to supply chains and will focus on issues such as:

- *Training programs* to build smallholder farmer capacity and ability to implement Good Agricultural Practices. This aligns with ISPO Principles and Criteria 2 and 7 and NAP components B1.1 and B1.2.
- *Clarifying smallholder land rights* in appropriate production areas. This aligns with ISPO Principles and Criteria 1 and NAP components A1.1 and A1.2.
- *Raising awareness* of existing regulations for production and building implementation and enforcement capacity as a foundation for sustainability as per ISPO and NAP component 2.
- *Improving spatial analysis and landscape planning capabilities* to identify the most appropriate areas for commodity production in support of NAP components 2.6 and 3.1.
- *Improving forest management* and protection of environmental services as flood and landslide prevention as identified in NAP 2.6.
- *Building capacity for smallholder service provision* and monitoring in support of NAP component A.1.1.
- *Securing financing* to support smallholder replanting of oil palm and restoration of degraded lands through agroforestry systems involving both staple and cash crops.

8. Where will the Coalition work?

The Coalition is focused on N. Sumatra and Aceh provinces. It will begin initially with landscape initiatives ('projects') in the regencies of Tapanuli Selatan, Aceh Tamiang, and Aceh Timur, but the ambition is to scale up province wide through replication and implementation of government programs and policy.

9. Why focus on N. Sumatra and Aceh?

North Sumatra and Aceh are important production regions for key commodities such as palm oil, cocoa, coffee, rubber, timber and many others and these crops represent a critical component of local, regional and national economies. For palm oil, these provinces produce a significant portion of the product that flows through refineries and port facilities in Belawan and Kuala Tanjung to markets interested in sustainable products. Both provinces contain significant areas of natural forest that are home to threatened species such as tigers, clouded leopard and orangutan. These forests also provide ecosystem services such as freshwater provision, climate regulation and storm damage mitigation that are critically important to human well-being at local, national and international levels.

10. Who has supported the development of the Coalition?

Initial and early supporting organizations in the development of the Coalition, with their time and financial resources, include Barry Callebaut, Conservation International (CI), Danone, Earthworm Foundation (formerly The Forest Trust), The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH), The Livelihoods Fund, Mars Wrigley, Mondelez International, PepsiCo, Unilever and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). These organizations have a shared interest in sustainable development, active investments in Aceh and N. Sumatra and a desire to work collaboratively with government, farmers, communities and other key stakeholders to achieve common objectives for livelihoods, agricultural production and conservation in N. Sumatra and Aceh. The initial partners recognize that the Coalition cannot achieve its objectives working in isolation and see collaboration and collective action as essential to achieving shared outcomes. We welcome and are actively seeking additional partners.

11. Is the Coalition starting a completely new initiative or building on existing initiatives and programs?

The Coalition aims to help strengthen and align existing programs where useful and appropriate and is building on the work of the Global Environment Facility funded Good Growth Partnership as well as earlier successful initiatives such as the Joint Secretariat for Sustainable Palm Oil in N. Sumatra (SEKBER). The Coalition partners will start new initiatives where useful and necessary.

12. Is the focus of the Coalition only on legal compliance?

No, but our experience shows there are immediate and direct opportunities to make tangible progress towards the objectives of the Coalition working through key elements of existing legal and regulatory frameworks.

13. For companies sourcing from N. Sumatra and/or Aceh, is participation in the Coalition an alternative to supply chain management?

No. Activities of the Coalition, especially where they align at the landscape level, will complement and build upon supply chain initiatives and investments.

14. What is the timeframe?

The initial Coalition partners view the challenges we seek to address as urgent, but also recognize that there are few easy “quick fixes.” Our vision is long-term and the development of the Coalition will be an iterative and inclusive process that drives sustained investment in the region. The first step was bringing a subset of stakeholders together at a workshop in Medan in September 2018 to align on vision, joint strategies and a workplan to guide the first 12 months of the Coalition.

15. What happened at the September 2018 workshop?

More than 130 representatives from across government, private sector, financial institutions and civil society came together in a two-day workshop to align on vision and joint strategies and to define a pathway forward. Among other outcomes, participants agreed on:

- A common unifying objective to strengthen farmer livelihoods, recognizing the strong links between farmer livelihoods, sustainable agriculture and sound natural resource management.
- The importance of building solutions with government, aligning with government programs such as ISPO and the National Action Plan for Sustainable Palm Oil, and supporting legal and regulatory frameworks.
- A two-prong strategy for the Coalition including a series of landscape level initiatives and provincial level dialogue and policy engagement to support replication and scaling.

Please refer to the workshop report ([English](#), [Bahasa](#)) for further details.

16. What is the governance of the Coalition?

Details of the governance and structure of the Coalition are still being defined and will be the topic of a working group.

17. Who can join the Coalition?

We invite government representatives, producers, private sector, finance institutions, civil society, indigenous groups and NGOs to join us in this journey for collective action for sustainable development. Interested stakeholders can participate in activities at the provincial or Coalition level, in landscape level initiatives, or both. To learn more about the Coalition, please visit www.conservation.org/CSL.

18. What are the next steps of the Coalition?

A series of working groups are being organized to address questions raised at the Medan workshop. These include:

- What are the specific action plans for Coalition regency/landscape level pilot initiatives?
- How will the Coalition define success?
- How will the Coalition grow and expand beyond the initial regency level pilots?
- How do interested institutions and organizations “join” and participate in the Coalition?

These working groups will operate primarily through conference calls and their outputs will inform the next Coalition workshop to be organized in 2019. If you would like to participate in a working group, please contact Katie Thomason (kthomason@conservation.org) and indicate which working group and whether you are most comfortable in English, Bahasa or either.