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**ZSL**  
LET'S WORK  
FOR WILDLIFE

# COMMITTED TO SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL?

## ANALYSIS OF 2019 ACOP REPORTING BY RSPO MEMBER COMPANIES

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) unites thousands of stakeholders from across the palm oil industry to develop and implement global standards for sustainable palm oil.

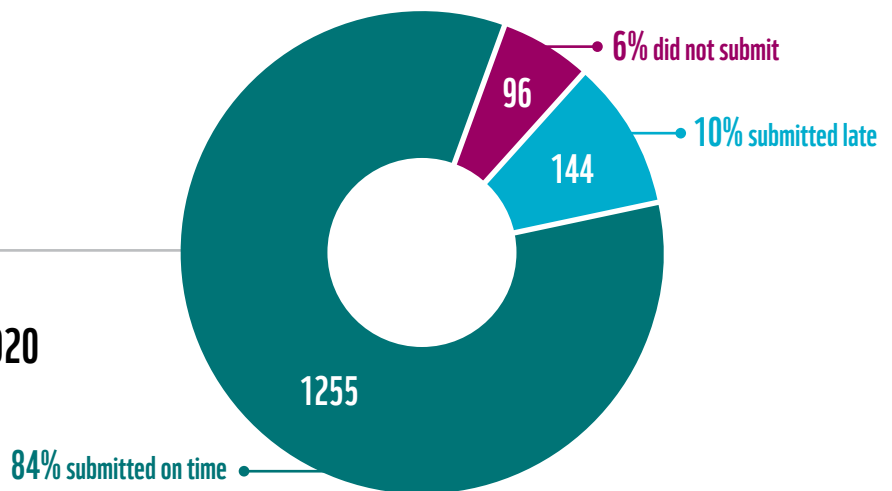
Each year, Ordinary and Affiliate members are required to submit an Annual Communication of Progress (ACOP) report to measure progress towards the RSPO's shared vision of "making sustainable palm oil the norm".

In this second edition of 'Committed to Sustainable Palm Oil?', WWF and ZSL (Zoological Society of London) analyse the ACOP reports submitted by RSPO members this year, detailing progress made by companies in 2019. Diving into the data from four key RSPO membership sectors (growers, processors and traders, consumer goods manufacturers [CGMs] and retailers), the WWF-ZSL analysis found that:

- Company response rates have improved slightly – increasing from 80% in 2017 to 84% in 2019<sup>1</sup> – but several RSPO member companies still did not submit an ACOP report.
- Uptake of 100% RSPO certification is on the rise across all membership categories, with downstream companies leading the way compared to their upstream counterparts; however, all companies need to take more immediate and meaningful action to close the certification gap.
- While several companies have made progress in meeting their commitments to be 100% RSPO-certified, many of the biggest palm oil producers and buyers are still falling short.

1,495

RSPO COMPANY MEMBERS WERE  
REQUIRED TO SUBMIT AN ACOP IN 2020



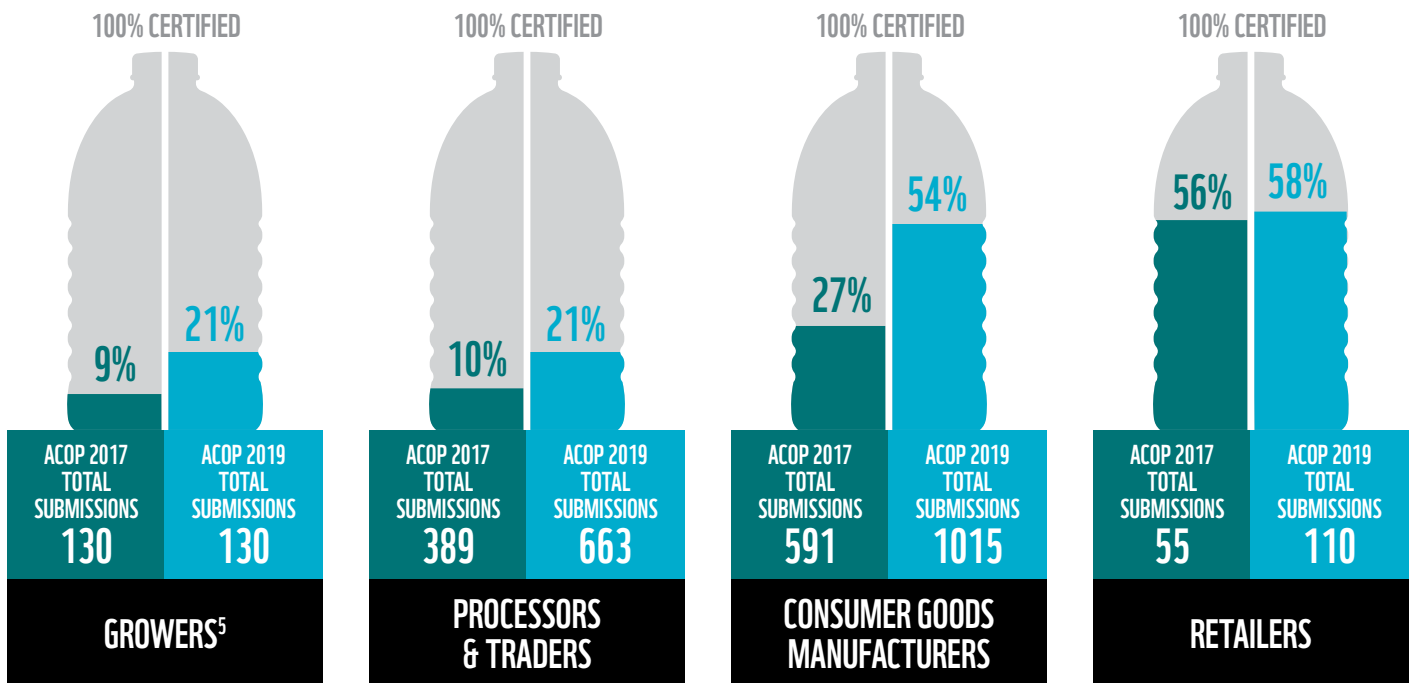
<sup>1</sup> Does not include companies that submitted ACOP responses outside of the official submission period. Late submitters risk suspension or termination of their membership if they fail to submit an ACOP next year.

# PROGRESS TOWARDS 100% RSPO CERTIFICATION IS ON THE RISE, BUT MUCH MORE REMAINS TO BE DONE

Despite a commendable increase in the number of RSPO company members that were 100% RSPO-certified by the end of 2019, still too few companies are likely to close the certification gap in the near future<sup>2</sup>, calling into question the urgency with which companies are acting to deliver against 2020 deforestation-free commitments.

- Uptake of 100% certification is on the rise: 41% of all RSPO members reported being 100% certified<sup>3</sup> by the end of 2019. This is considerably higher than in 2017, when only 21% of companies reported achieving 100% RSPO certification.
- However, progress towards 100% certification still remains too slow, particularly for upstream companies. Of the 282 growers, processors and traders that reported a commitment to achieve 100% RSPO certification within the next three years, 15% were still 0% certified at the end of 2019, while 24% were still less than 50% certified.
- A closer look at time-bound commitments shows that more immediate and meaningful action is needed. Only 34% of all RSPO member companies have targets to be 100% RSPO-certified by 2020, while 47% have a time-bound commitment to be 100% certified between 2021-2030, and 18% still have no time-bound plan.

## REACHING 100% RSPO CERTIFICATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN 2017<sup>4</sup> AND 2019 ACOP REPORTING

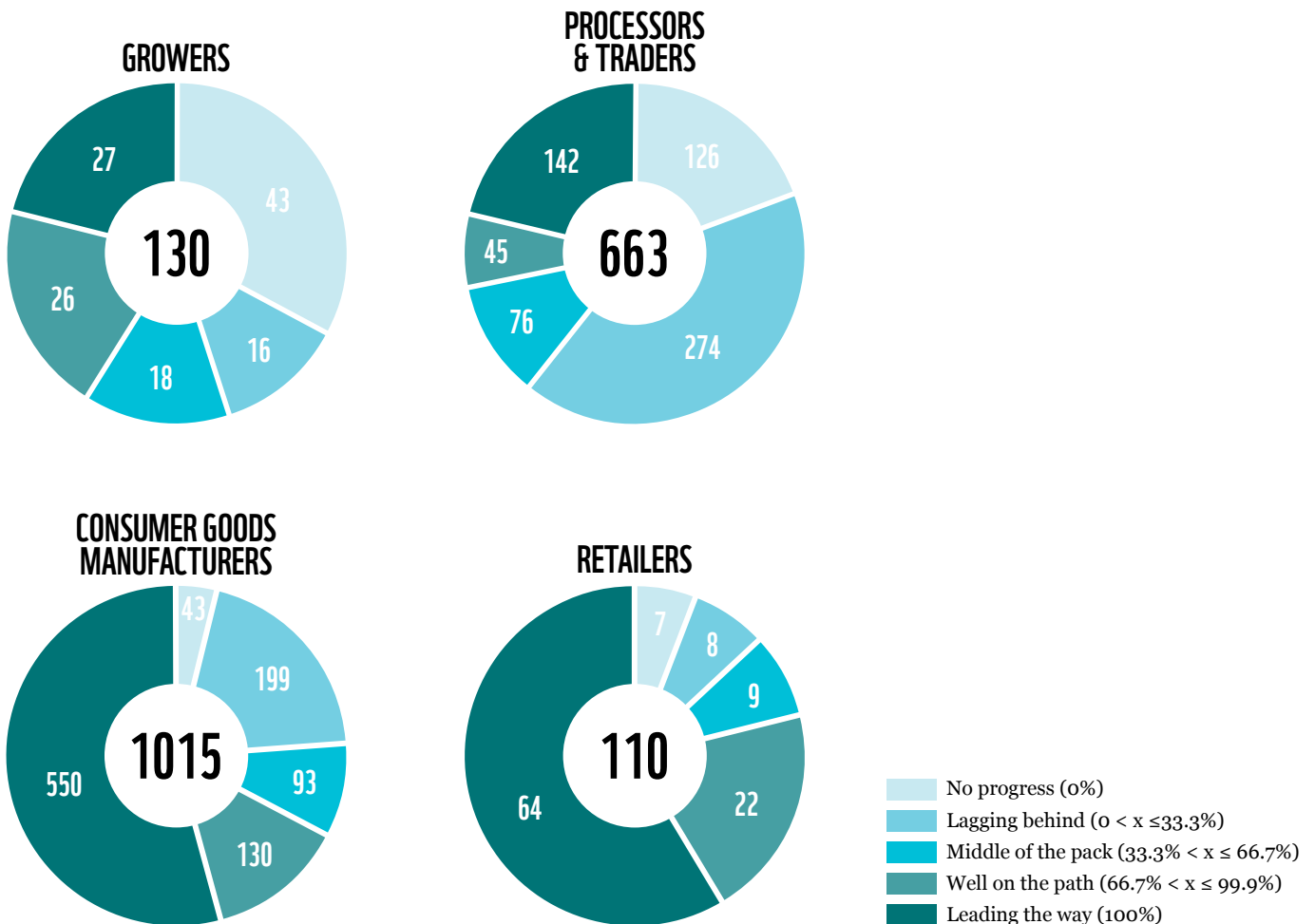


<sup>2</sup> Sixty-one companies that reported sourcing or producing zero volumes of palm oil were excluded from this analysis.  
<sup>3</sup> 100% certification refers to all palm oil that a company produces (including from scheme smallholders) or sources.  
<sup>4</sup> The 2017 data reflects submissions from Ordinary members only, whereas the 2019 data includes submissions from both Ordinary and Associate members.  
<sup>5</sup> Smallholders were excluded from our analysis of growers.

# CERTIFICATION PROGRESS VARIES BY SECTOR

A comparison of palm oil volumes across RSPO membership sectors indicates some significant differences in the certification progress across the supply chain. While 100% certification is more challenging to achieve for growers as well as companies sourcing large volumes of palm oil, all companies have a shared responsibility to support increased production and uptake of sustainable palm oil.

- Downstream companies are leading the way in achieving 100% RSPO certification, well ahead of their upstream counterparts.
- A significant share of upstream companies have made no progress or are lagging behind. In total, 33% of all growers and 19% of processors and traders reported no certified landbank or volumes by the end of 2019. Meanwhile, only 21% of growers, processors and traders had 100% of their landbank or volumes RSPO-certified.
- CGMs and retailers are making more progress. At the end of 2019, 54% of CGMs and 58% of retailers reported achieving 100% certification. An additional 13% of all CGMs and 20% of retailers were well on the path to reaching this goal as well, with at least two thirds of their volumes being RSPO-certified.



# COMPANIES AS A WHOLE ARE MAKING PROGRESS, BUT MANY OF THE BIGGEST PLAYERS ARE FALLING SHORT

Given their leverage, the biggest players along the palm oil supply chain have a unique responsibility to lead the way by providing and demanding certified sustainable palm oil. But many are not stepping up to the challenge.

- The ten largest companies within each membership sector<sup>5</sup> control on average more than half (52%) of the total volumes or production area reported by the sector. Yet progress by many of the biggest players is disappointingly low.
- Seven of the ten largest grower members are less than 50% certified.
- Nine of the ten biggest processors and traders are less than 30% certified, and half are less than 10% certified.
- Six of the ten largest CGMs are less than 50% certified, and four are less than 10% certified.
- While seven of the ten largest retailers are between 90 to 100% certified, one retailer is still 0% certified.

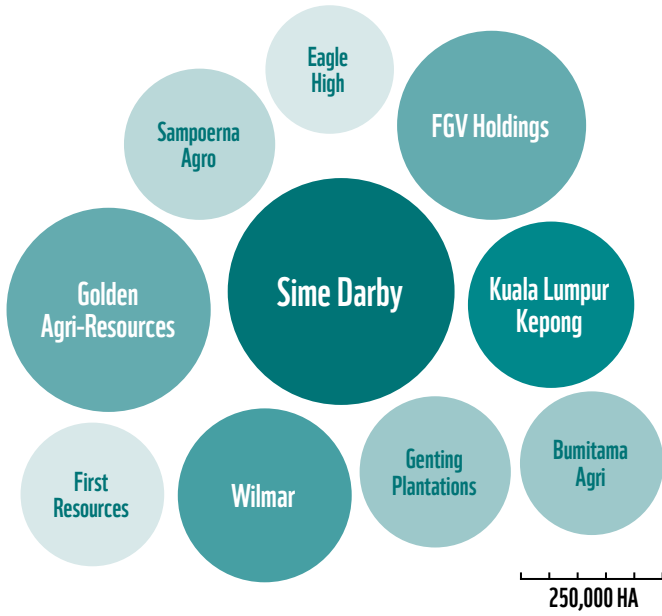


**THE BIGGEST PLAYERS ALONG THE PALM OIL SUPPLY CHAIN SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE ON SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL. BUT MANY ARE NOT RISING TO THE CHALLENGE.**

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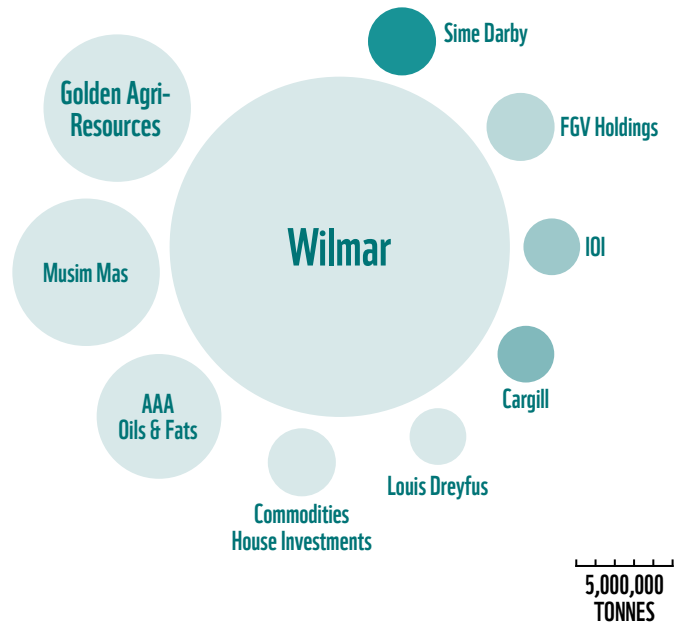
## GROWERS

0% % CERTIFIED 100%



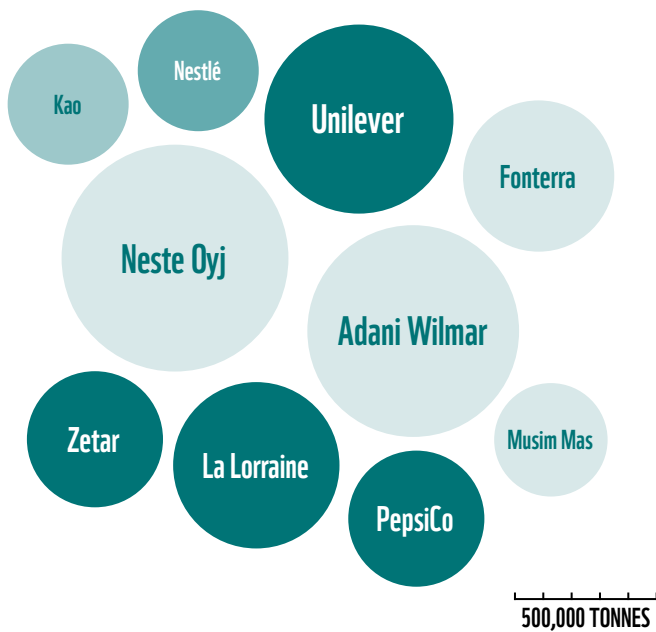
## PROCESSORS & TRADERS

0% % CERTIFIED 100%



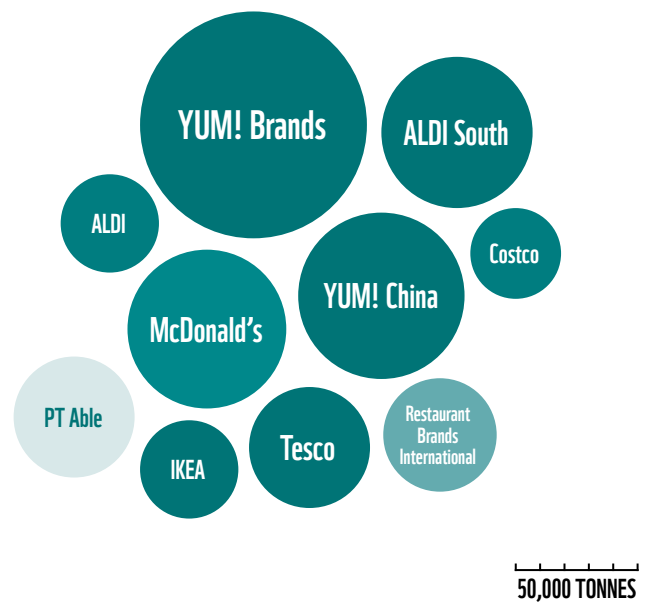
## CONSUMER GOODS MANUFACTURERS

0% % CERTIFIED 100%



## RETAILERS

0% % CERTIFIED 100%





## URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED

With 2020 deforestation deadlines fast approaching, it is more urgent than ever for all actors in the supply chain to take their share of responsibility to deliver a sustainable palm oil industry that benefits both people and nature.

WWF and ZSL call on all RSPO members to accelerate progress in meeting their time-bound certification commitments, to regularly and accurately report progress against these, and to support actions beyond their own supply chain to deliver a sustainable and responsible palm oil industry.

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## ABOUT WWF

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations with a mission to stop the degradation of the earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[panda.org](https://www.panda.org)

The WWF Palm Oil Buyers Scorecard assesses manufacturer and retailer commitments and actions for sustainable palm oil and helps build a culture of transparency around palm oil use.

[palmoilscorecard.panda.org](https://www.palmoilscorecard.panda.org)



## ABOUT ZSL

ZSL (Zoological Society of London) is an international conservation charity working to create a world where wildlife thrives. From investigating the health threats facing animals to helping people and wildlife live alongside each other, ZSL is committed to bringing wildlife back from the brink of extinction. Our work is realised through our ground-breaking science, our field conservation around the world and engaging millions of people through our two zoos, ZSL London Zoo and ZSL Whipsnade Zoo.

[www.zsl.org](https://www.zsl.org)