

Wilmar's Human Rights Defenders Policy



Source: Stock Image

Wilmar published a standalone [Human Rights Defenders \(HRDs\) policy](#) to encapsulate our commitment to protect and respect the rights of HRDs and to prevent and mitigate associated human rights risks that would adversely impact such rights. The policy is in line with the United Nations (UN) Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) while following the principles of international conventions and declarations that stipulate the protection of HRDs.

Wilmar's HRD policy, which was developed in collaboration with Proforest¹, was initiated following the stakeholder consultations that were held before the publication of our No Exploitation Protocol in September 2020. The policy is consistent with the guiding Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) HRD policy.

A gap analysis of the RSPO HRD policy against best practice guidance per international standards was carried out prior to the development of Wilmar's HRD policy. This was followed by engagements with three key HRD expert international organisations to understand challenges which include threats and violations faced by HRDs.

¹ Proforest is a global non-profit organisation that supports sustainable agricultural commodity production and sourcing. More information on Proforest is available at <https://www.proforest.net/>

Who are Human Rights Defenders?

Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) are all persons, who individually or in association with others, act to promote or protect human rights peacefully. HRDs seek the promotion and protection of civil and political rights as well as the promotion, protection and realisation of economic, social and cultural rights. As a result of their commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, HRDs tend to become targets of retaliation or victims of harassment, threats, abuses, violence or other forms of aggression.

Wilmar's Commitment to Human Rights



Our sustainability webinar which included sharing of our 'No Exploitation Protocol' as well as the development of the HRD policy held in November 2020 was warmly received by close to 100 bankers, analysts and portfolio managers based in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Norway and the Netherlands.

The journey to developing the policy commenced when Wilmar commissioned a gap assessment between internationally recognised human rights standards to which we are committed and national legislation in Malaysia and Indonesia. This was to understand where the legal compliance fell short of the standards we wanted to adhere to and where there may be higher risks to HRDs' rights. Despite the hurdles the journey entailed, we held on fast in realising the vision of having the policy as a guiding principle not just within the organisation but for all the suppliers and contractors.

The newly drafted HRD policy sets out our commitment to respect HRD rights across Wilmar's global operations, including our subsidiaries, joint-ventures, and third party suppliers. This policy further strengthens Wilmar's 'No Deforestation, No Peat and No Exploitation (NDPE)' policy, which captures our overall sustainability commitment.

Central to our approach to human rights are our Grievance Procedure and Whistleblowing Policy which enables stakeholders to provide information, raise grievances or flag concerns through formal channels, anonymously and without the fear of reprisal.

Wilmar's No Exploitation Protocol, which was published in September 2020, supports our Grievance Procedure in addressing breaches by our third-party suppliers related to the 'no exploitation' component of our NDPE policy. The protocol was developed with support from the Consortium of Resource Experts (CORE)², in collaboration with a technical working group consisting of labour rights and land rights specialists Verité, Landesa and Earthworm Foundation.

² <https://www.proforest.net/what-we-do/projects/procedures-to-remediate-serious-human-rights-issues-13746/>

The development of the protocol involved extensive stakeholder consultation processes and outlines expectations for suppliers to address and resolve grievances related to HRDs, whistleblowers, complainants, or community spokespersons, including remediation, corrective actions and group level systemic change.

Wilmar was instrumental in the development of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) 'Policy on Human Rights Defenders, Whistleblowers, Complainants and Community Spokespersons', which was driven by the resolution that was passed at the RSPO's 13th General Assembly and was subsequently adopted by the RSPO Board of Governors in September 2018.

Moving Forward

Proforest led two independent socialisation and engagement webinars, on 29th October and 3rd November 2021, with Malaysian and Indonesian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) following the finalisation of the initial draft of the policy. The objectives of the webinars were to socialise the policy with local NGOs working on human rights and HRDs and to provide an opportunity for engagement with NGOs on the policy and efforts by Wilmar to address risks and impacts to the rights of HRDs.

Complemented by our Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) and grievance mechanism, Wilmar commits to proactively and constructively engage with HRDs acting in good faith. Any non-compliance to the HRD policy will be investigated under Wilmar's Grievance Procedure. Wilmar will take steps to incorporate the protection of rights of HRDs into our HRDD mechanisms, management and monitoring processes that will allow Wilmar to prevent, identify, mitigate or remediate adverse human rights impacts in our operations and throughout our supply chain.

To learn more about Wilmar's Policy on Human Rights Defenders (available in [Bahasa Indonesia](#), [Spanish](#) and [French](#)), please visit <https://bit.ly/3lCrGFQ>.

For further information, kindly contact us at csr@wilmar.com.sg.

WILMAR REFERENCES

- NDPE Policy:
https://www.wilmar-international.com/docs/default-source/default-document-library/sustainability/policies/wilmar-ndpe-policy---2019.pdf?sfvrsn=7870af13_2
- Grievance Procedure:
https://www.wilmar-international.com/docs/default-source/default-document-library/sustainability/grievance/grievance-sop/grievance-procedure_final.pdf?sfvrsn=7670cea2_2
- Whistleblowing Policy:
<https://www.wilmar-international.com/docs/default-source/default-document-library/sustainability/policies/wilmar-whistleblowing-policy.pdf>
- No Exploitation Protocol:
https://www.wilmar-international.com/docs/default-source/default-document-library/sustainability/policies/wilmar-no-exploitation-protocol.pdf?sfvrsn=e2b8c921_2

RSPO REFERENCES

- Policy on Human Rights Defenders, Whistleblowers, Complainants and Community Spokespersons: <https://www.rspo.org/articles/download/ec7f0524fa7c9ac>