



# I-SPOC

## 13<sup>th</sup> Members Meeting **REPORT**

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## Sustainable Palm Oil Coalition for India (I-SPOC)

### 13th Members Meeting

**Date:** 5 December 2025

**Time:** 1145-1345 hrs (IST)

### Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome Remarks by the Secretariat
2. Updates from the Secretariat
  - Advancements in the Domestic Palm Oil Production Landscape
  - Efforts to Advance Palm Oil Traceability
  - I-SPOC's Initiatives at the Policy Level
3. Members' Roundtable: Priorities & Collaboration for 2026
4. Presentation of I-SPOC's New Discussion Paper: Opportunities and Challenges for Promoting Sustainable Trade of Palm Oil in India
5. Any Other Business (AOB)
6. Closing Remarks by the Founders

### Summary of Proceedings

#### 1) Welcome Remarks and Context Setting

The 13th Members Meeting of the Sustainable Palm Oil Coalition for India (I-SPOC) was convened with the objective of reflecting on the coalition's progress, sharing key updates from the Secretariat, and placing members' perspectives at the centre of the planning process for 2026. The Secretariat welcomed members and observers and outlined the intent of the meeting to foster an open, forward-looking dialogue that would inform I-SPOC's priorities and collective action in the coming year.

Members were encouraged to share candid reflections on their organizational priorities, challenges, and expectations from the platform, particularly in the context of evolving market, policy, and sustainability dynamics related to palm oil in India.

#### 2) Updates from the Secretariat

##### I-SPOC's State Engagement on Sustainable Palm Oil

The Secretariat provided updates on I-SPOC's engagement at the state level, with a focus on advancing sustainable palm oil production in alignment with domestic policy priorities. Members were briefed on the Stakeholder Dialogue on Sustainable Palm Oil in Telangana, held on 17

July 2025 in Hyderabad. The dialogue was organised by CRB and RSPO, with support from the National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, and brought together over 60 participants representing government, industry, civil society, and other key stakeholders.

The primary objective of the dialogue was to facilitate a multi-stakeholder discussion on sustainable palm oil production in Telangana, while recognising and strengthening the State's ongoing efforts to integrate sustainability considerations into oil palm expansion. The Department of Horticulture and Sericulture was represented by Smt. V. Sarojini Devi, Additional Director, who shared insights on the State's approach and priorities.

Key takeaways from the dialogue included recognition of the strong momentum in oil palm expansion within the State, alongside the need to systematically document and showcase emerging sustainability practices. Discussions highlighted the importance of aligning state-level efforts with global sustainability trends, integrating sustainability considerations into agro-marketing strategies, and strengthening collaboration among government, private sector, and civil society actors. Participants also underscored the need for deeper engagement at the district level and with private sector players, while flagging concerns related to the quality of planting material, genetic variability, and water management. In this context, the need for a state-specific study on water use and management was highlighted.

As part of the way forward, the Secretariat informed members about follow-up engagement with the Director of Horticulture and Sericulture, Government of Telangana. Proposed next steps include convening a joint workshop with private sector companies associated with the oil palm sector in the State to deliberate on the imperatives and benefits of adopting sustainability principles, as well as documenting good practices in palm oil plantations to highlight benefits for smallholders, the local environment, and the State economy.

## **I-SPOC's Capacity Building Initiatives**

The Secretariat shared updates on I-SPOC's ongoing capacity-building efforts, with a focus on strengthening understanding of palm oil traceability. Members were informed about the launch of the Masterclass on Traceability Series titled 'Achieving Traceability in the Palm Oil Value Chain' in 2025. The series aims to build awareness of traceability among key stakeholders and provide a practical understanding of how traceability can be achieved using existing tools and approaches.

The first session, held on 6 May 2025, focused on PRISMA by RSPO, the Palm Resource Information and Sustainability Management platform, and introduced participants to its functionalities and application. The second session, held on 25 August 2025, featured a detailed discussion on palm oil traceability tools and approaches, led by the Earthworm Foundation. Members noted the relevance of these sessions in demystifying traceability and supporting context-specific application within the Indian palm oil value chain.

## **I-SPOC's Initiatives at the Policy Level**

An update was provided on progress under I-SPOC's policy engagement work. Members were informed that deliberations held during last year's Policy Engagement Group meeting focused extensively on the production dimension of sustainable palm oil, resulting in the development of a draft policy recommendation. This draft has since undergone additional rounds of review and is nearing finalisation.

The Secretariat also noted that discussions on trade-related aspects of sustainable palm oil have commenced. Policy dialogues continue both within the Policy Engagement Group and through bilateral engagements with relevant stakeholders.

### **3) Members' Roundtable: Priorities and Collaboration for 2026**

#### **Members' Roundtable: Priorities and Collaboration for 2026**

The Members' Roundtable formed the core of the meeting and provided a platform for members to share their organisational priorities, reflect on emerging challenges, and identify opportunities for collective action in 2026. Members also shared perspectives on how I-SPOC can continue to support their sustainability and responsible sourcing journeys.

##### **a) Towards a Unified Sustainability Approach**

Members emphasized the need for a unified approach to sustainability in the Indian palm oil context. It was noted that sustainability must be viewed through multiple lenses, including the policy perspective of the Government of India, evolving consumer expectations for sustainable palm oil, the realities faced by farmers and producers on the ground, and the operational and commercial considerations of industry actors. Members highlighted that aligning these perspectives is critical for advancing sustainable palm oil at scale, and that I-SPOC has a key role to play in facilitating dialogue and convergence across these dimensions.

##### **b) Advancing Traceability as a Strategic Opportunity**

Traceability was identified as a priority area where I-SPOC can further deepen its engagement. Members noted that, in addition to ongoing initiatives, there is scope for organising additional workshops focused on more traceability tools and practical implementation. Particular emphasis was placed on exploring how traceability systems can be adapted for domestic palm oil production and on the possibility of tailored sessions for members at different stages of readiness. Members viewed traceability as an important enabler of transparency, credibility, and informed decision-making across the value chain.

##### **c) Supporting Members' Sustainability and Responsible Sourcing Journeys**

Members highlighted the need for practical and India-specific support to help organisations progress along their sustainability journeys. This was seen as particularly important for small and medium enterprises and first-time adopters of sustainable palm oil. Members suggested that targeted capacity-building efforts, simplified guidance materials, and opportunities for peer

learning would help address implementation challenges and support more effective uptake of sustainable sourcing practices.

#### **d) Policy, Trade, and Domestic Production Considerations**

Members discussed the evolving policy environment, including changes in tariff structures and their implications for domestic palm oil production. It was noted that periodic tariff changes influence sourcing decisions, competitiveness, and sustainability outcomes. Members emphasized the importance of I-SPOC serving as a platform for collective deliberation on these developments, enabling members to better understand their impacts and reflect on the role of sustainability within a shifting production and trade landscape.

#### **e) Strengthening Collective Impact and Collaboration**

Members underscored the value of I-SPOC as a trusted convening platform for cross-sector dialogue and collective problem-solving. There was encouragement for the Secretariat to facilitate deeper collaboration among members through joint initiatives, focused discussions on shared challenges, and coordinated engagement with policymakers and market actors. Members noted that leveraging the collective expertise and capacity within the coalition would be essential to strengthening impact in 2026.

### **Presentation of the Discussion Paper on Sustainable Palm Oil Trade**

The Secretariat presented I-SPOC's new discussion paper titled Opportunities and Challenges for Promoting Sustainable Trade of Palm Oil in India. The presentation provided a brief walkthrough of the paper's key insights, including trade-related barriers, market dynamics, and opportunities to promote sustainable sourcing within India's import-dependent palm oil landscape.

Members welcomed the paper as a timely and relevant contribution to ongoing discussions on sustainable palm oil trade. The discussion underscored the importance of addressing trade-related sustainability risks alongside domestic production efforts and using the paper as a basis for further dialogue with policymakers, industry, and other stakeholders.

### **Closing Remarks**

The meeting concluded with closing remarks from the Founders, who thanked members for their active participation and constructive inputs. The Founders reiterated the coalition's commitment to working collaboratively with members to advance sustainable palm oil in India and encouraged continued engagement as I-SPOC moves into the 2026 planning phase.

## Action Points

Based on the discussions and member inputs during the meeting, the following action points were identified:

- The Secretariat will integrate members' inputs and priorities into the finalization of I-SPOC's work plan and activities for 2026.
- The Secretariat will explore opportunities for deeper member collaboration, including thematic discussions, joint initiatives, and closed-door dialogues on specific challenges in advancing sustainable palm oil.
- The discussion paper on Opportunities and Challenges for Promoting Sustainable Trade of Palm Oil in India will be used as a basis for further engagement with members, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders.
- Priority will be given to strengthening efforts on traceability, certification awareness, and practical guidance for responsible sourcing, particularly for SMEs and first-time adopters of sustainable palm oil.
- Communication and outreach efforts will be strengthened to enhance visibility of I-SPOC's work and collective achievements, and to encourage continued and active member engagement.

## Annex: List of Participants

S.No.	Name	Company/ Organization
1	Sudhakar Desai	IVPA & Emami
2	Nainu Joseph	INDOCERT
3	Romit Sen	HSBC
4	Srinivas Prasad	Navbharat
5	Sanjay Trivedi	IHPCIA
6	Prashant Deo	IHPCIA
7	Swapnil Patil	IFFCO Allana
8	Jagjeet Singh Kandal	IDH
9	Aarti Rishi	IDH
10	Kamal Seth	WWF-Singapore

11	Vishal Dev	WWF- India
12	Pratibha Baveja	WWF-India
13	Ashwin Selvaraj	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)
14	Bhavit Pant	Rainforest Alliance
15	Rijit Senguta	Centre for Responsible Business (CRB)
16	Nidhi Choudhary	Centre for Responsible Business (CRB)
17	Praseetha P Kumar	Centre for Responsible Business (CRB)