

Understanding Sustainable Palm Oil Seminar

Speaker Profile Notes

Ben Dowdle – Unmask Palm Oil

Ben Dowdle is Director of Unmask Palm Oil, a campaign that works across Australia and New Zealand to introduce clearer labelling of vegetable oils in line with EU, US and Canadian standards. Unmask Palm Oil sees Certified Sustainable Palm Oil as the best long term solution to the social and environmental issues associated with the product.

Ben has been leading the campaign for three years now and this brings him into contact with 10 federal, territorial and state governments as well as the business, zoo and not-for-profit sectors giving him a wide range of experience and expertise.

Piers Gillespie – Futureye

Dr Piers Gillespie has been working in the palm oil and natural resources management sector for many years, having been based in Jakarta and working with many of the largest palm oil companies in Indonesia. Piers was on the review committee of the 2013 RSPO Principles and Criteria review, and is an expert advisor to the RSPO Dispute Resolution Facility. Piers focuses on plantation and smallholder related issues as well as whole business supply chain challenges.

Prior to this, Piers was General Manager for Indonesia's largest public affairs firm, managing business critical and crisis management issues for many of the world's largest companies in the challenging business environment that is Indonesia. He has been internationally awarded in New York and Hong Kong for the issues management work he has done.

Chris Lewis – Federated Farmers

Chris Lewis and his wife Caroline, are farming 1100+ cows at Pukeatua near Te Awamutu in the Waikato. Chris is currently the President of Waikato Federated Farmers and is Vice National Dairy chairman. Chris is involved in rugby, scouts and other community organisations.

Recently Chris has been involved in the upper Waikato primary sector partnership with DairyNZ and the Waikato Regional Council giving technical input around improving practises for water quality and effluent monitoring review committee.

Kevin O’Grady – Pinnacle Quality

Kevin has worked in the business sector in the UK, New Zealand, Australia and other countries since graduating with honours in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England. His main area of involvement is sustainability including acting as Australia and New Zealand agent for RSPO certification through BMTRADA (UK).

He has worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), the New Zealand Meat Board and most recently as General Manager, Kiwifruit New Zealand and Head of Sustainability for Timbercorp (Australia). Kevin is currently based in Melbourne Australia and is Principal consultant for Pinnacle Quality.

Pinnacle Quality is a multi-disciplinary group offering a complete range of sustainability and quality based business solutions. We specialise in helping clients work with market-driven standards like RSPO but also the Forestry Stewardship Council, Rain Forest Alliance, Marine Stewardship Council, Australian Forestry Standard and emerging market standards like Water Stewardship.

Grant Rosoman – Greenpeace

Grant Rosoman is Global Forests Solutions Coordinator for Greenpeace International, with a focus on demonstrating solutions to forest destruction globally. This includes in particular strengthening FSC (Forest Stewardship Council), supporting local and regional forest solutions case study examples, and developing the High Carbon Stock (HCS) forest approach as a practical tool for implementing No Deforestation commitments in the tropics with palm oil and pulp & paper sectors. He recently jointly initiated the Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG), and the HCS approach Steering Group as a global governance and standardisation body.

Grant worked for Greenpeace for 20 years in New Zealand, the Pacific, Indonesia and internationally. He has a Bachelor of Agriculture and a Masters of Applied Science (nature conservation). He is a specialist in forest certification, having been involved with FSC since its inception, was on the FSC International board for seven years, and currently sits on the Policy and Standards Committee. Grant has had 15 years’ experience supporting community forestry in Solomon Islands, PNG and Indonesia. He has also worked on timber markets transformation, and REDD national funding approaches.

Grant has authored and produced various papers, articles and reports from critiques of industrial tree plantations, logging and climate change, to conservation planning and community eco-forestry. He is a member of an industry/NGO round table, the NZ Imported Tropical Timber Group (ITTG) for the past 20 years, and member of the NZ Institute of Forestry.