

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS FOR GLOBAL VEGETABLE OIL

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### RESUME

*In 2015, United Nations (UN) launched Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a new platform for global development for 2015-2030. The achievement of the SDGs must be carried out by all stakeholders in the global development sectors, both by government and private institutions, at the level of industry/companies or sectors, or in regional, national to global scale. Therefore, SDGs need to be used as the main reference and guideline both in economic activities such as trade and the drafting of quality standards in each field.*

*SDGs has 17 main goals and can be grouped into three pillars namely: economic, social and environment. The combination of these pillars also presents a global paradigm and new values, this concept are relatively, holistic, global, participatory, and multidimensional. However, many international trade policies and sustainability certification systems established by each country dont reflect this concept, thus inhibiting the achievement of SDGs.*

*It should be if the trade policies or sustainability certification systems has adopted this concept, there is no vegetable oil that is categorized as sustainable or unsustainable, but the existing term is vegetable oil is more sustainable than others, so that it can encourage all vegetable oils to collaborate to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2015, United Nations (UN) launched Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a new platform for global development for 2015-2030. This platform replaces the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which occurred in the 2000-2015. Unlike MDGs which focus only on government institutions, the achievement of the SDGs must be carried out by all stakeholders in the global development sectors, both by government and private institutions, at the level of industry/companies or sectors, or in regional, national to global scale.

As a development platform that has been approved by the entire global community, so that whatever the role and wherever the level/location is, it is necessary to position ourselves as part of the solution for achieving the SDGs. The paradigm, orientation, values, and standards that are used in all aspects of global community's life should be adopt that values and support the achievement of the SDGs. This means that how much a company or industry contributes to achievement of the SDGs is a very important indicator of progress in global development.

On the other hand, linking international trade with the achievement of the SDGs is an important thing. International trade is part of a "vehicle" to achieve the SDGs (Hable and Shepherd, 2017). For example, the global vegetable oil trade must be seen and placed as part of the effort to achieve the SDGs through the creation and distribution of the gain of trade that is generated from global vegetable oils.

## NEW GLOBAL VALUE

SDGs as global development platform has 17 main goals and 169 targets, which are planned to be achieved in 2030 (UN, 2018). In the 17 main goals in SDGs can be grouped into three pillars as follows.

**The Economic Pillar** which is consists of seven SDGs goals, namely SDGs-1 (No Poverty), SDGs-2 (Zero Hunger), SDGs-7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDGs-8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). In addition, SDGs in the economic pillar also

include SDGs-9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), SDGs-10 (Reducing inequality), and SDGs-12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

**The Social Pillar** also consists of seven SDGs goals, namely SDGs-3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDGs-4 (Quality Education), SDGs-5 (Gender Equality), SDGs-6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDGs-11 (Sustainable city and community). Two other goals of SDGs in social pillar are related to policy and governance, namely SDGs-16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institution) and SDGs-17 (Partnership for the goals). And the last is **the Environmental Pillar** which are consists of three goals of SDGs, namely SDGs-13 (Climate action), SDGs-14 (Life Below Water), and SDGs-15 (Life on Land).

The combination of these three pillars of the SDGs goals also presents a global paradigm and new values that have been agreed upon as shared (our) values and paradigms, namely;

**First**, sustainability is multidimensional. It is not enough for development activity to be economically sustainable as adopted by developmentalist, or only to be ecologically sustainable which is adopted by the environmentalist. Sustainability is sustainable both economically, socially, and ecologically which is achieved simultaneously.

**Second**, sustainability is holistic. The global community is in the same ecosystem namely the earth's ecosystem. As stated by Panoyotou (1993) and World Bank (2012), an ecosystem cannot be separated (divisibility) between North-South, East-West, Upstream-Downstream, Land-Water, but is integrated with one another and inclusive. Earth's ecosystem cannot be sustainable if only a few countries or a few sectors or several industries are sustainable. This means that sustainability will be achieved globally if the 17 SDGs goals are achieved in each country.

**Third**, the degree of sustainability of the SDGs is relative. The sustainability is unlimited, so it's relative. This concept can be translated into the sustainability of a sector or industry in a relatively more sustainable than other sectors or that sector is more sustainable than the previous year. This relative concept is different from the

absolute concept of sustainability which only recognizes black Vs white or sustainability Vs unsustainability.

**Fourth**, the achievement of the 17 SDGs must involve the participation and synergy of the global community. To achieve the sustainability of the Earth by fulfilling the indicators of the 17 SDGs, it's cannot be achieved if it is only achieved by developed countries only or developing countries only. Sustainability can only be achieved through the synergistic participation of the global community by involving all companies, industries, and sectors in all countries.

### **SDGs AS SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS FOR VEGETABLE OIL**

So far, the sustainability is issue has often discussed in the global vegetable oil market. Every country uses its own criteria as sustainability measures. In many cases, this issue also used as a shield to protect domestic interests.

With the presence of SDGs as a global development platform, the sustainability indicators contained in the 17 SDGs should also be applied in the global vegetable oil market. All activities in this market such as production, trade, and consumption must be considered as actors or vehicles to contribute to the achievement of SDGs.

If the global community believes and agrees that achieving the 17 SDGs will make life on planet earth more prosperous or more sustainable, then these goals must be the main tool to measure the sustainability of all economic activity, including production, consumption and trade of global vegetable oils.

The degree of sustainability of a vegetable oil can be measured by how much (netto) it's contributes to the achievement of SDGs goals both on a local, national, and global scale. If a vegetable oil has contributes more to the achievement of SDGs should be accepted by the global community as more sustainable vegetable oil.

Likewise, global vegetable oil trade policies are closely related to the realization of the SDGs. At present, international trade policies that are implemented by a country are widely used as an instrument of

protection that actually hinders and inhibit their trade, so that the achievement of SDGs become less optimal. This trade policy should have been agreed to be a cross-countries instrument that aims to maximize the achievement of sustainability and share the gain of trade/benefits of achieving the sustainability of vegetable oil on a wider scale.

The sustainability principles and indicators are contained in the SDGs are also as main components in the sustainability certification system that exists in each country, such as the sustainability certification for several vegetable oil products. For example, in the palm oil commodity, sustainability systems certification have developed such as Indonesia Sustainable Palm Oil (ISPO), Malaysia Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO), Roundtable Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), and Europe Sustainable Palm Oil (ESPO). Besides that, sustainability certification systems have also been developed for soybean oil commodities such as the Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS), Certified Responsible Soy (CRS), and Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP). There is also an International Sustainability Carbon Certification (ISCC) as sustainability certification system for all commodity.

However, some of sustainability certification systems shows that the concept of sustainability is more absolute, partial, and local. How can a plantation company or vegetable oil producer be required to contribute and achieve its sustainability? Meanwhile, there are many companies or economic sectors around that company are unsustainable and even not aware of these sustainability indicators. Besides that, how can all the plantations (producers) of vegetable oil have the same sustainability quality?

This is not suitable with the concept of sustainability in the SDGs which is relative, holistic, global, participatory, and multidimensional. In other words, the existence of the SDGs platform indicates the need for a paradigm shift adopted by international trade and sustainability certification system for a product/commodity. In addition, the contribution of trade policies and

sustainability certification system to the achievement of the SDGs can also be used as an important and main measure in achieving sustainability.

Thus, there is no vegetable oil is categorized as sustainable or unsustainable. The exist term is only a vegetable oil more sustainable than others. In addition, adopting this new concept is also expected to create a common perspective and provide the same playing field for all vegetable oils so that there is no more discrimination against certain vegetable oils. Even this new concept also encourages all vegetable oils to collaborate to contribute to achieving the SDGs.

### CONCLUSION

The global community has adopted the SDGs as a platform, paradigm, and new norms for global development platform for the 2015-2030. Therefore, SDGs need to be used as the main reference and guideline both in economic activities such as trade and the drafting of quality standards in each field.

The trade policy and sustainability system certification of vegetable oils need to adopt SDGs principles with a relatively, holistic, global, participatory, and multidimensional concept. A vegetable oil

trade policy is an instrument that will maximize and share the benefits of the sustainability of vegetable oil. In addition, the concept of sustainability in sustainability certification system should also measure how much contribution a vegetable oil has in achieving the SDGs. By adopting this concept, there is no vegetable oil that is categorized as sustainable or unsustainable, but the existing term is vegetable oil is more sustainable than others, so that it can encourage all vegetable oils to collaborate to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

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