Palm oil is the most widely used vegetable oil in the world with approximately 60 million tonnes produced each year, but when produced unsustainably it can have negative consequences on the environment and biodiversity.

Cultivated from the African oil palm (Elaeis guineensis), the majority of palm oil is produced in Southeast Asia, although in recent years oil palm plantations have been expanding rapidly in Africa as well as Central and South America. Due to its high yield, producing up to ten times more oil per hectare than any other crop in the world, the demand for it is increasing. This high demand has resulted in palm oil being produced unsustainably, causing an array of negative environmental and social consequences, including mass deforestation, biodiversity loss and complex human welfare issues. Fortunately, sustainably produced palm oil limits or eliminates these issues while benefiting people and aiding economies. Currently only 19% of palm oil is certified as sustainable.

To help promote a world where all palm oil is 100% sustainably produced, Bristol Zoological Society has developed the Global Alliance for Sustainable Palm Oil in collaboration with San Diego Zoo Global, Uganda Wildlife Education Centre, Wildlife Reserves Singapore and Zoos Victoria. Together, we are promoting certified sustainable palm oil by working with consumers and companies. The Alliance acts as a supportive platform for organisations to collaborate, communicate and share ideas, and aims to develop a global behaviour change campaign which can be delivered by both zoo and non-zoo organisations.

Five year objectives:
• To create a strong Alliance that supports members in promoting certified sustainable palm oil
• To create a behaviour change campaign that influences consumers to actively seek out certified sustainable palm oil in products they purchase
• To collaborate with zoo and non-zoo organisations on the Alliance’s work and in delivering the behaviour change campaign
• To conduct sound research which demonstrates the effect of the behaviour change campaign on consumers knowledge and purchasing behaviour
• For Bristol Zoological Society to update its palm oil policy and to only purchase products that contain palm oil certified as sustainable