

RSPO

RSPO NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED NEW PLANTING

This notification shall be on the RSPO website for 30 days as required by the RSPO procedure for new plantings (<http://www.rspo.org/?q=page/535>). It has also been posted on local on-site notice boards.

Date of Notification:

Tick whichever is appropriate

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This is a completely new development and stakeholders may submit comments.
<input type="checkbox"/>	This is part of an ongoing planting and is meant for notification only.

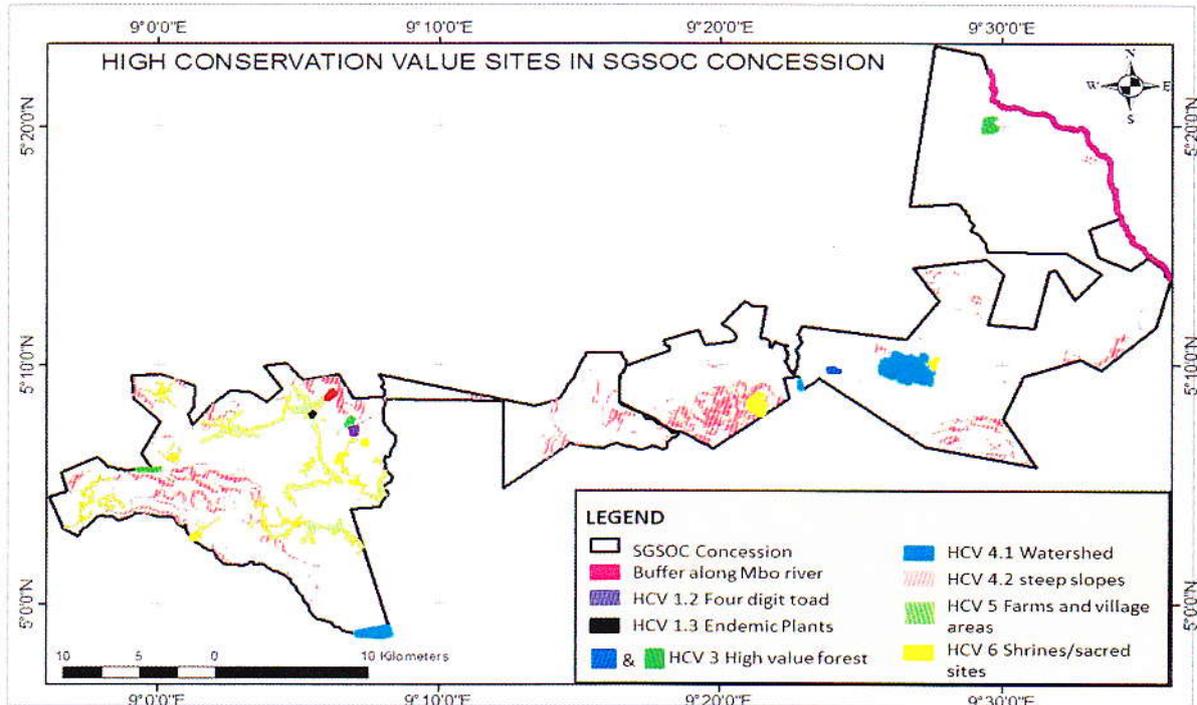
COMPANY: HERAKLES FARMS Cooperatief, UA

SUBSIDIARY: SG Sustainable Oils Cameroon Limited

RSPO Membership No.: 1-0050-08-000-00

Location of Proposed New Planting: Nguti, Mundemba and Toko subdivisions of the South West Region, Cameroon

Company address	P.O. Box 64 Limbe, No.5 Nambeke Street, South West Region, Cameroon
Business permit	Establishment Convention, September 17, 2009
Type of business	Oil Palm Plantation and Palm Oil Mill Operation
Location size	69,975 ha
Contact persons	Carmine Farnan, Senior Vice President, Herakles Farms
Email	farnan@heraklescapital.com
Geographical location	Nguti, Mundemba and Toko Subdivisions of the South West Region
Spatial reference	East 8° 55' 0"; 9° 35' 0" North 4° 55' 0"; 5° 25' 0"



SUMMARY FROM ESI ASSESSMENTS

SG Sustainable Oils Cameroon (SGSOC) operates in the Nguti subdivision of the Kupe-Manenguba Division, and in the Mundemba subdivision of the Ndian Division of Cameroon. The total concession area is approximately 69,975 ha. The land-use of the proposed site is overwhelmingly secondary forest that has been logged and heavily farmed repeatedly. SGSOC has prepared an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for its proposed development of 60,000 ha of oil palm (the remaining ha will be set aside as biodiversity plots to be protected, as well as buffer zones to protected areas, areas for infrastructure and areas for buildings). The ESIA complies with the guidelines of Cameroon’s environmental regulatory body, the Ministry of Environment and Protection of Nature (MINEP), and with RSPO’s Principles and Criteria for new plantings (New Planting Procedures, or NPP). The ESIA process included a both a review of existing literature and research, followed by field studies including public consultations and surveys of local communities in and around the concession. The annexes of the ESIA include details and outcomes of the consultations. The ESIA takes a thorough and comprehensive approach to identifying all major significant impacts of the proposed plantation development project, and it makes recommendations to mitigate the potential negative impacts, as well as recommendations to enhance positive impacts. The project will create significant job opportunities, improve the livelihood of communities, enhance food security in a country that is a net-importer of palm oil (a dietary staple) and improve infrastructure such as roads and health centers.

SUMMARY FROM HCV ASSESSMENT

SGSOC conducted a HCV assessment and has identified the presence of social and environmental HCVs within the concession that could be affected negatively by the plantation development. The HCV assessment report clearly indicates that the existing vegetation of the concession is predominantly a mosaic of secondary forest, actively cultivated farmlands, fallows, and relic patches of evergreen forest at various stages of degradation. The concession as a whole is not and does not

contain protected areas; hence, it does not constitute HCVF under criterion 1 (HCV1). However, some parts of the concession are identified as HCV under criteria 1.2, 1.3, 3, 4.1, 4.2, 5 and 6. With the exception of the four-digit toad, *Didynamipus sjostedti*, found near the village of Lipenja, classified by the IUCN Red List as endangered and for which SGSOC is drafting a management plan, the baseline survey did not identify any high concentrations of rare, endangered and threatened species that are not widespread outside of the concession. The survey did find that the African forest elephant, *Loxodonta Africana*, listed as Vulnerable (VU) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, occasionally migrates from the neighboring Banyang Mbo Wildlife Sanctuary (BMWS). Although SGSOC is adopting a management plan for the elephant in line with RSPO and WWF best practices, this area of the concession is not an area of critical temporal use. All other large mammal species were found in varied abundance in both secondary and remnant primary forest patches, and all were species of least concern (LC) in IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN, 2011). Of the birds, five species were listed in CITES Appendix II, out of which one listed as near threatened (NT) and three as LC (IUCN, 2011). In case of herpetofauna, three amphibians found were listed as NT or higher on the Red List of Threatened Species. This included the endangered (EN) *Didynamipus sjostedti*, for which SGSOC is developing a management plan. In addition, food remains of one vulnerable lizard were found, and local informants indicated possible presence of a Cameroonian protected crocodile in the concession. SGSOC values the biodiversity in its concession and has committed to performing additional HCV assessments prior to each land clearing phase through which it can reconfirm such findings.

Approximately 6% of the total floral species recorded on the concession are on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, but they are all abundant in the lowland rainforest region of Cameroon, and none are endemic to the concession. None of the species found were listed on either Appendix II of the CITES list or the list of protected species under the Cameroon wildlife Law (Source: Article 2 of the Order of 14 August 1998). Eight tree species on the IUCN Red List were identified, with six being classified as VU, one EN, and one as NT. All of these species are abundant in the lowland rain forest region of Cameroon and are not endemic to the concession. In terms of global rarity, the flora species recorded included one Black Star species (*Cylicomorpha solmsii*), which is endemic to Cameroon in a monotypic genus. Six Gold Star species (*Afrostryax lepidophyllus*, *Amanoa strobilacea*, *Cola buntingii*, *Dicranolepis disticha*, *Dasylepis racemosa* and *Dichapetalum tomentosum*) were recorded, but are widespread outside of the concession. The concession on the whole does not have a high concentration of globally rare plant species and is consequently low in bioquality value.

Examples of some identified HCV sites are summarized in the below table.

Table 1: Examples of Some HCV Areas in the Concession

Area Name	Estimated Land Area (Ha)	Description	HCV Criteria
High concentration of endemic plants	2.82	Forest area in relatively good condition with high concentration of the globally threatened and endemic plant <i>Cylicomorpha solmsii</i> ; fairly good multistory forest; undergrowth dense with climbers	HCV 1.2 & 1.3
Threatened species	21.687	Forest area near the Lipenja nursery where the endangered four-digit toad, <i>Didynamipus sjostedti</i> , was found	HCV 1.2
Shrine	6,91	A sacred site located at Lipenja	HCV 6
Shrine	7,45	A sacred site located at Meta	HCV 6
NTFP	46,02	Covered with <i>Gnetum Africanum</i> , a valuable NTFP	HCV 5

Area Name	Estimated Land Area (Ha)	Description	HCV Criteria
		which the community depend on for their livelihood	
Shrine	19,73	This sacred site is located at Esoki	HCV 6
Shrine	12,58	This sacred site is located at Lowe	HCV 6
Swamp Forest	15,54	This is a riverine forest (riparian strip), south-east of Talangaye village, bordering the SGSOC oil palm nursery with good multi-story close canopy forest	HCV 3
Shrine (Gorilla Hill)	20,25	A forested hilly area west of Talangaye locally referred to as the Gorilla Hill; the site is traditionally regarded as a shrine by the Upper Balong Tribe	HCV 6
Watershed	20,25	A forested hilly area west of Talangaye which is the source of several rivers and stream (e.g. River Bakebe); a steep sided forested hill	HCV 4.1
Watershed	153.409	Near the Rumpi Hills, a hilly area as well as watershed for important river such as the Mana River and several other rivers and streams	HCV4.1
Watershed	11.687	Bakossi Hill, hilly areas as well as watershed for several rivers and streams	HCV 4.1
Watershed	565,4	A water source located at Mungo Ndor	HCV 4.1
Shrine (Mokandiba)	109.349	A water source located at Mungo Ndor	HCV 6
Steep slopes	1,355	Areas above 25 degree	HCV 4.2

The HCV assessment includes a HCV Management and Monitoring plan for maintaining and enhancing the identified HCVs within the concession and a training program for HCV awareness of all staff and field workers. The HCV assessment was conducted by Augustus Asamoah of the Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS), a RSPO-approved HCV Lead Assessor.

SUMMARY OF PLAN

SGSOC's plan is to adopt best practices for palm oil production, including those recommended by RSPO and those used by well-managed oil palm producing companies in Malaysia and Indonesia. While implementing best practices, recommendations from the ESIA and HCV assessment reports, as well as the RSPO Principles and Criteria for new plantings, will be strictly respected. SGSOC plans to address any complaints from the affected communities in a fair and open dialogue with the respective stakeholders and has developed policies for managing grievances through a Grievance Committee. The HCV plan will be part of a broader Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

VERIFICATION STATEMENT

The ESIA and HCV Assessments were prepared by the assessors and SGSOC was checked through desktop study. Documents related with the new development was checked and verified. The ESIA and HCV assessments are comprehensive, professional and comply with the applicable RSPO Principles and Criteria for new planting.

Signed for on half of
BSI Group Singapore Pte Ltd


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Signed for on behalf of
Herakles Farms

For 
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