



**TÜVRheinland**®  
Precisely Right.

**RSPO**


**RSPO NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED  
NEW PLANTING**

**New Planting Project name:  
Adum Smallholder Oil Palm Project (ASHOPP),  
Trebom, Mpohor District, Western Region, Ghana**

<b>Document Verification</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>4 February 2019 &amp; 3 May 2019</b>
<b>Field Verification</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>3 May 2019</b>
<b>1st Satellite Imagery Reassurance</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>3 May 2019</b>
<b>2nd Reassurance Verification Satellite Imagery</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Name of Grower</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Wilmar International Limited</b>
<b>Name of Subsidiary</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Benso Oil Palm Plantation Ltd.</b>
<b>RSPO Membership No.</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>2-0017-05-000-00</b>
<b>Date of Joining RSPO</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>15 August 2005</b>

**NPP Notification Statement (Including Verification Statement by CB)**

1.	Date of Notification	9 May 2019															
2.	Name of Grower	Wilmar International Limited															
3.	Name of Subsidiary (if any)	Benso Oil Palm Plantation Ltd.															
4.	RSPO Membership No.	2-0017-05-000-00															
5.	Legal land entity	<p>The Trebuom stool land area to undergo the new planting process is not owned by Benso Oil Palm Plantation (BOPP), but it is owned by the Trebuom community and partially cultivated by members of other communities, i.e. the Dominase and Ampeasem communities. These communities have requested BOPP to open their land for oil palm cultivation to benefit the communities. As it is community land, no official land title is issued by the Ghana Lands Commission for this land. Legal ownership of the land is demonstrated in the Statutory Declaration from Nana Kwao Kwofie III Ohene of Trebuom, Divisional Chief of Wassa Fiase state in the Wassa Fiase Mpohor District of the Western Region of the Republic of Ghana, dated 28 August 1980. The declaration states that the Trebuom stool (royal family) of Nana Kwao Kwofie III is the owner in possession of the Trebuom land, which is an approximate area of 21.64 square miles. The statutory declaration is stamped as acknowledgment by the Lands Commission of Ghana and also stamped as received by the Assistant Stamp Commissioner's in Fioe.</p> <p>Benso Oil Palm Plantation Ltd. (BOPP) has received the mandate from the Trebuom, and other beneficial communities, Dominase and Ampeasem, to proceed with the new planting of the Trebuom land area as seen from a signed Memorandum of Agreement between BOPP and the Trebuom Chief dated 30th October 2018.</p>															
6.	Location of proposed new planting:	Trebuom, Mpohor District, Western Region, Ghana, West Africa															
	i. Grower Address	Benso Oil Palm Plantation, Adum Bansa Estate, P.O. BOX 470, Takoradi, Ghana, West Africa															
	ii. Size total (ha)	1,477.96 ha															
	iii. Size proposed for NPP (ha)	1,388.15 ha															
	iv. Contact person	Mr. Samuel Avaala (General Manager)															
	v. Phone/Fax	+233 24 210 9409															
	vi. E-mail address	samuel.avaala@gh.wilmar-intl.com															
	vii. Geographical location																
	North	Buri River, Agravi community village (north-west of the land area)															
	East	Dominase community village															
	South	Trebuom community village (south-east of the land area) and Ayiem community village (south-west of the land area)															
	West	Buri River, Agravi community village (north-west of the land area)															
	viii. Spatial Reference	N 5°0'15" – N 5°3'13", W 1°55'10" – W 1°57'5"															
	ix. Hydrology	Buri River, Butre River															
	x. Boundary map	See Figure 1 for boundary map															
	xi. Area and time plan for new planting	<p>Table 1: Project phases over a 3 year period</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Phase</th> <th>Year</th> <th>Hectare</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2019</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>2020</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>2021</td> <td>388.15</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>1,388.15</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(Source: Adum Smallholder Oil Palm Project – Final Environmental Impact Statement)</p>	Phase	Year	Hectare	1	2019	500	2	2020	500	3	2021	388.15	<b>Total</b>		<b>1,388.15</b>
Phase	Year	Hectare															
1	2019	500															
2	2020	500															
3	2021	388.15															
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,388.15</b>															
7.	Current condition	The proposed NPP area is cultivated with various crops including palm trees, rubber trees, bamboo, and cocoa by the Trebuom community and other surrounding communities. The area is interspersed with other tree species like <i>Hura Crepitans</i> and grasses/herbs. The site is also filled with agricultural plants such as cassava, plantain and coconut.															
8.	Statement of Acceptance of Responsibility for NPP	The management of Wilmar International Limited (member of the RSPO since 15 August 2015) and its subsidiary Benso Oil Palm Plantation Ltd. acknowledge the veracity of this report. We commit															

		ourselves to making every effort to comply with its provisions and to implement the mitigation action plans of the various assessments related to the new planting procedures and the studies carried out to realize it.
9.	Name of Grower	Benso Oil Palm Plantation Ltd.
	Name of Person Responsible	Mr. Samuel Avaala
	Position	General Manager
	Signed	
	Date	8 May 2019
10.	Verification Statement by Certification Body (CB)	
	<p><b>(a) The NPP verification process</b></p> <p>The NPP verification of the proposed new planting project, referred to as the Adum Smallholder Oil Palm Project (ASHOPP) conducted through document verification and on site visit. A team of two TUV Rheinland auditors and a local expert conducted preliminary document review on 4th February 2019. This was follow up with onsite visit verification to the proposed area for new planting site an on 3 May 2019. The information on the proposed new planting has been communicated transparently to the surrounding communities. During on-site visit, at least 20 members of the Trebuom, Ampeasem and Dominase communities were visited and interviewed at the Trebuom community hall. It was confirmed that the land area planned for the new planting activities belonged to the Trebuom community and was being cultivated by members of the 3 communities with various crops. It was also confirmed that the communities had requested for BOPP’s assistance to open the land for new plantings of oil palm in order to benefit the community, although several areas with valuable cash crops would not be replanted yet with oil palm, as agreed with respective community members. The FPIC process carried out by BOPP for this project was also verified and it confirmed that BOPP has taken extensive measure to follows the FPIC process through regular meetings with the Trebuom and surrounding communities to explain the project and benefits as well as potential issues to the communities, as seen from records of meeting minutes as below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>01) Minutes of FPIC Meeting between BOPP and Trebuom Community on 17 November 2016</li> <li>02) Minutes of Meeting with the Chief and People of Dominase Community on the Trebuom Project – 28th November 2016</li> <li>03) 20 - 27 April 2017 Report on Community Engagement with Trebuom</li> <li>04) Community Engagement Meeting on the Proposed Adum Smallholder Project – Final Consultation Meeting with Key Stakeholders from Adum Trebuom, Adum Dominase, Ampeasem, Adum Banso and Government Officials and Mpohor District Assembly on 12-12-2017</li> <li>05) Minutes of Meeting between BOPP Management and Chief and Elders of Trebuom, Adum Banso and Dominase at the Mpohor District, Chief Executive’s Office on Tuesday, April 11, 2018</li> </ol> <p>The regular FPIC meetings held by BOPP with the communities were confirmed during the interviews with the local communities conducted by the audit team on 3 May 2019.</p> <p>It was also confirmed from site visit to the NPP area that the area is planted with various crops such as rubber, oil palm and cocoa, and also has areas of wild vegetation and shrubs. At the time of field verification, clearing and preparation for planting had not commenced (concession area still not opened by company). It was further verified by satellite imagery on 3 May 2019 (using Google maps) that no new planting activities has been conducted by the company.</p> <p><b>(b) Summary of assessments and plans for the proposed NPP area</b></p> <p>Assessment reports and management plans prepared for the Adum Smallholder Oil Palm Project (ASHOPP) were reviewed and confirmed to be comprehensive, of professional quality, in compliance with the RSPO Principle &amp; Criteria Ghana National Interpretation 2015 and the New Planting Procedure 2015. While BOPP does not have the have legal ownership of the land, the legal ownership of the land belongs to the stool (royal family) of the Trebuom community, which confirms their agreement for BOPP to carry out new planting of oil palm on their land as seen from the MOU dated 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018.</p> <p>Below is a summary of the NPP assessment documents:</p> <p><b>i) Social and Environmental Impact Assessments</b></p>	

The Social Impact Assessment is dated 20 April 2018 and the assessment carried out in 2017, while the Environmental Impact Statement is dated September 2018. Both are less than 3 years older at the time of NPP submission.

The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) was conducted by a team of 5 experts from independent consulting company, Proforest. The SIA team was lead by Mr. John Kwesi Gyakye Amonoo, who is a Senior Project Manager at Proforest with over 17 years' experience in natural resource management, specializing in agroforestry, sustainable forest management and capacity building. His SIA team includes Mr. Abraham Baffoe who is also an approved ALS assessor. Stakeholder consultation to identify social impacts was conducted from 12 – 17 July 2017 to the various local communities, including Treboum, Dominase and Ampeasem, as well as with the Mpohor District Assembly and with Colendef (NGO). Based on this, BOPP prepared an Social Impacts Management Plan dated November 2018 which covers employment creation, community development, health and safety, training for employees and smallholders, food security, pollution, gender issues, protection of rivers, and improving productivity. Responsible persons and timelines for implementation are identified.

The Environmental Impact Statement was conducted by a team of 4 experts from Maiden Environmental Services. The team leader, Mr. Edward Dwomoh-Appiah, has 35 years post-graduation experience in the field of environmental consultancy, property development and valuation, project management, community development and investment promotion. The statement includes an Environmental Action Plan. The plan includes action plans, objectives, targets, budget, time frame and responsible persons for the following areas:

- Soil conservation
- Road construction
- Monitoring
- Waste management
- Health & Safety Programmes
- Medical Monitoring
- Security Operations

#### **ii) High Conservation Value (HCV) assessment**

The High Conservation Value (HCV) report entitled 'Full High Conservation Values Assessment in BOPP's proposed Adum Smallholder Project Site' was prepared by Proforest and is dated December 2017 (less than 3 years from the time of NPP submission). The HCV assessment team comprised of 8 members, and lead by Mr. Abraham Baffoe who is also an approved ALS assessor (ALS15006AB). A number of stakeholder meetings were carried out between March to December 2017 to identify the relevant HCVs. The meetings were held with the 3 main local communities, Treboum, Dominase and Ampeasem, 3 NGO's and the Mpohor District Assembly. The team identified the following HCV areas as present in the project area:

- HCV 4: The riparian vegetation along Rivers Buri and Butre as well as other streams, and their tributaries within the proposed land, which is estimated to be **89.56** hectares
- HCV 6: The burial site of the Ampeasem community which falls within the proposed area and is estimated to cover an area of **0.25** ha, is HCV 6, because of the traditional and cultural importance of the site to the people of Ampeasem.

No sanction or RaCP is applied for this project.

The HCV report was submitted to the HCVRN for review on 9 January 2018 with results sent on 20 March 2018 as returned as **satisfactory**.

The NPP verification was conducted after the approval of the HCV assessment report by the HCVRN. Based on this, BOPP has prepared an HCV Management and Monitoring Action Plan for 2018-2022. Although only 2 HCV areas were identified, the plan includes action plans, responsible persons and timeframe for management of HCV 1.2, 1.2, and HCV 6, as well as plans for erosion control, and monitoring of flora and fauna species.

#### **iii) Land Use Change (LUC) analysis**

A description of the land use change was described in the High Carbon Stock report for the Adum Smallholder Oil Palm Project entitled 'Carbon Stock Assessment Report for BOPP Treboum Project

in the Western Region of Ghana, which was prepared by Proforest and dated 18 September 2018 (less than 1 year from the time of NPP submission).

Wilmar's internal IS team also developed maps showing land use of the project area after November 2005, after January 2010, after May 2014 and on January 2015.

The land use change shows progressive conversion of the land from mainly grassy and cleared area in November 2005 (with some planted rubber) to increased planting of oil palm, rubber and other crops. The land use distribution map (Figure 5) as per the HCS report shows the dominant land use form in the landscape of the project area in July 2018 was agricultural land (52.7%) followed by agricultural commodities plantations (35.8%) such as rubber, oil palm and cocoa.

#### **iv) Soil Suitability Survey**

A soil survey was conducted by the HCV assessment team and described in the High Conservation Value (HCV) report for the Adum Smallholder Oil Palm Project dated December 2017 (less than 3 years from the time of NPP submission). The report includes a soil map of the assessment area. The assessment states that there are four main categories of rocks and soil types in the Mpohor district. These are the Lower and Upper Birimian, the Dahomeyan and the Tarkwaian. The assessment area contains two main soil types, namely acrisols (about 20%) and ferrasols (about 80%). No fragile or marginal soils were identified. The report also includes a topography and drainage map which shows the general project area consist of flat to undulating low-lying plains, with most slopes below 25°. Field observations however, recorded a few occurrences of significant steep outcrops within the assessment area, although these were all below 25°, and thus were not identified as HCV areas. Therefore there are no areas identified as being too steep to plant.

#### **v) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) and HCS assessment.**

A GHG report for the project area entitled 'Greenhouse Gas Emission Estimation Report for BOPP Trebuom Project in the Western Region of Ghana' dated 18 June 2018, and a HCS report entitled 'Carbon Stock Assessment Report for BOPP Trebuom Project in the Western Region of Ghana' dated 18 September 2018 were both prepared by Proforest (less than 3 years from the time of NPP submission).


The GHG report includes analysis of 5 scenarios of GHG emission estimations, i.e.:

- Scenario 1: Default scenario is based on the assumption that there is full development of the project area which means that the entire project area is converted into oil palm with no set aside area for conservation purposes (0 ha set aside)
- Scenario 2: No clearance of mature rubber plantations that exist in the project area (148.4 ha set aside)
- Scenario 3: No clearance of mature rubber plantations and degraded small patches of forest that exist in the project area (157.8 ha set aside)
- Scenario 4: No clearance of mature rubber plantations, degraded small patches of forest and agricultural land that exist in the project area (936.8 ha set aside)
- Scenario 5: No clearance of mature rubber plantation, degraded small patches of forest and the identified HCVs that exist in the project area (247.61 ha set aside)

With a net sequestration of 7,917 tCO<sub>2e</sub> and a carbon credit of 597 tCO<sub>2e</sub>, the scenario 5 which assumes a set aside of 247.61 ha (16.8% of the project area) was recommended as it ensures the most efficient use of land with balance between carbon stock and commercial return

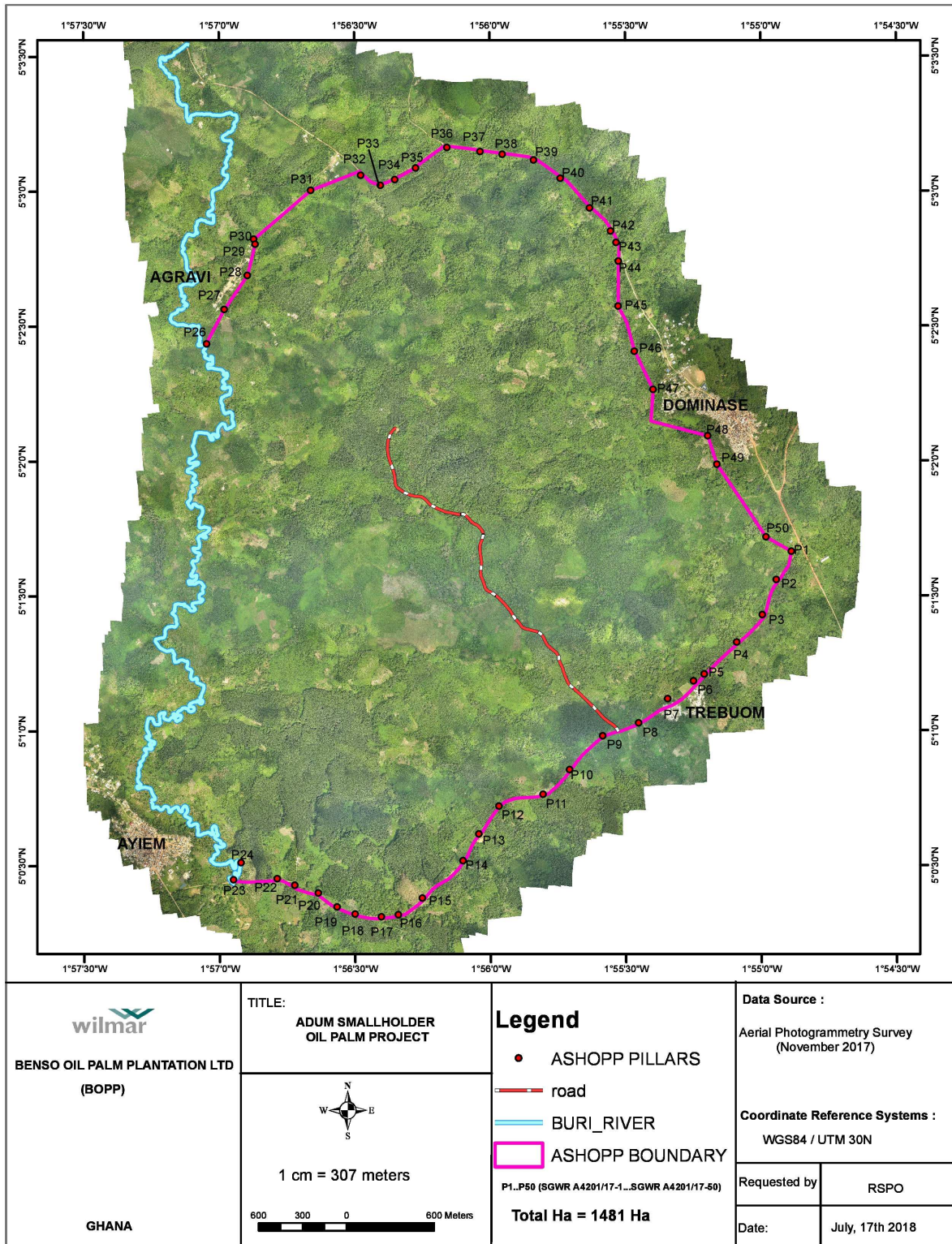
All satellite imagery used in the HCS assessment was obtained in July 2018. From the HCS report, it was concluded that the estimated total carbon stock varies from 2.34 tC/ha for open land to 27.70 tC/ha for the mature rubber plantation. A total of 19,274.85 tons of Carbon was obtained for the proposed 1,477 ha land. This translates to an average of 13.05 tC/ha which is significantly low compared to carbon stock/ha of a matured forest in the region.

The assessment teams for both reports include experienced forestry management consultants with experience in carbon stock assessments and remote sensing technology, headed by S.I. Armand Yevide as Senior Project Manager and Carbon Stock Assessor for the GHG Assessment and Carbon Stock Assessment.

	<p><b>Conclusion:</b>                  The TUV Rheinland auditors were present with the management team of Benso Oil Palm Plantation on-site to verify the findings of the desk study and held further discussions on the review and verification conducted. It is the opinion of the TUV Rheinland auditors that the HCV, SEIA, GHG, HCS and LUCA assessment and management plan, FPIC of Benso Oil Palm Plantation are comprehensive, professional and complies with the RSPO principles, criteria and indicators and NPP requirements .</p>	
11.	Signed	Signed on behalf of TUV Rheinland Indonesia  <hr/> Carol Ng (Lead Auditor)
	Date	8 May 2019

**Annex of maps:**

**Figure 1: Location and boundary map of Adum Smallholder Oil Palm Project, Trebuom, MpoHOR, Ghana**



**Figure 2: HCV map**

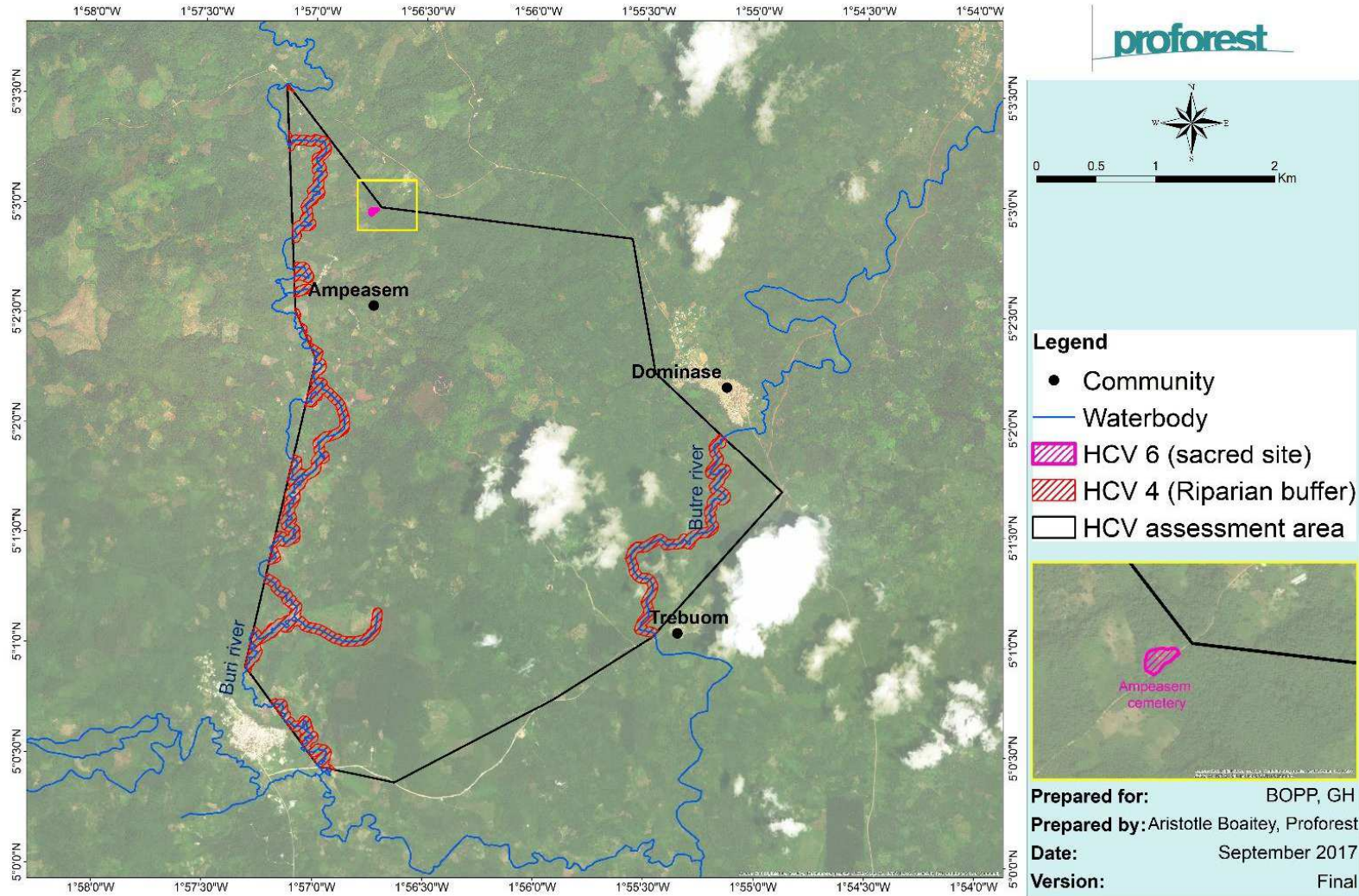
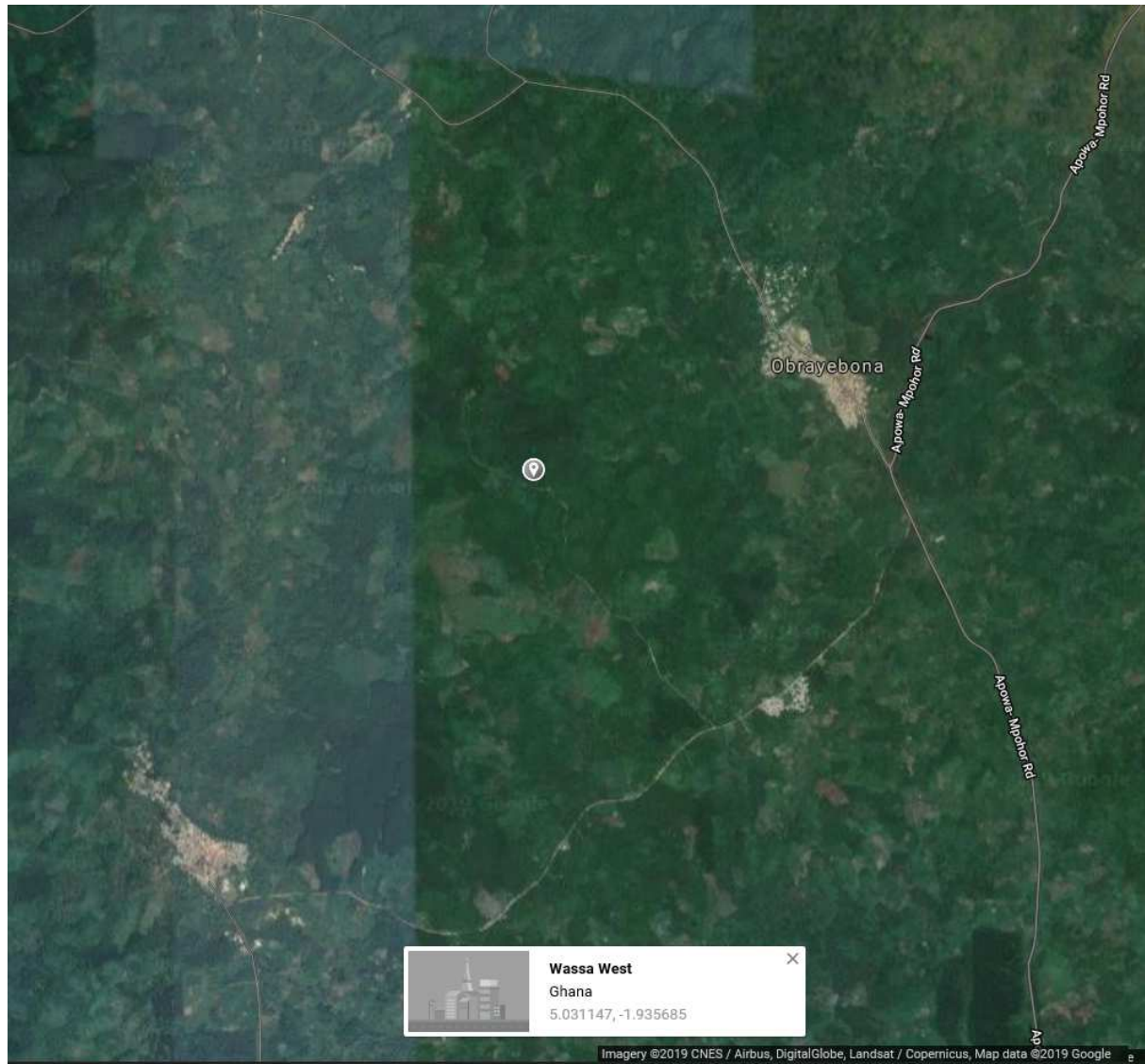




Figure 3: Result of Satellite Imagery to ensure there is no activity in NPP proposed area in Treboum community area

(Source: [www.maps.google.com](http://www.maps.google.com). Date: 3 May 2019. Geographical information N 5° 01' 52"; W 1° 56' 08")



**Figure 4a & b: Photographic verification to show no ongoing new planting activity at NPP proposed area on 3 May 2019** (Note: Area is a mixed of cultivated oil palm, rubber & other crops, with some unplanted areas)



Figure 5a & b: Photographic verification of audit team meeting with Trebuum, Dominase & Ampeasem communities on 3 May 2019

