

REPORT

GRAIN
September 2014

PLANET PALM OIL

Peasants pay the price
for cheap vegetable oil



CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	iv
Introduction	1
PART I. THE GLOBAL EXPANSION OF OIL PALM PLANTATIONS	
1. Cheap oil	5
2. Cash crop	10
3. A scramble for lands	15
4. Communities lose out to oil palm plantations	22
5. New frontiers for oil palm expansion	30
PART II. ANOTHER SIDE OF PALM OIL, IN AFRICA	
6. A long history and vast biodiversity	38
7. Oil palm production in West and Central Africa	47
8. The global land grab for oil palm plantations hits Africa	55
9. Well oiled resistance	57
Annex 1 : land grabs for oil palm plantations	61
Annex 2: land grabs for oil palm plantations in the Papuas of Indonesia and New Guinea	80
	85

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

GRAIN would like to warmly thank all the resource people, and the peasant and local development organisations who contributed to this publication.

Thanks also to our partners: RADD (Réseau des Acteurs du Développement Durable – Cameroun), INADES Formation (Institut Africain pour le Développement Economique et Social – Côte d’Ivoire), CEPECO (Centre pour la Promotion et l’Éducation des Communautés de base – Congo), ADAPE (Association pour le Développement Durable et la Protection de l’Environnement – Guinée), the South India Coordination Committee of Farmers Movement (SICCFM – India), Kerala Coconut Farmers Association (India), Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (WALHI/FoE Indonesia), Bismarck Ramu Group (Papua New Guinea) and the Central Sepik Rural Development Foundation (Papua New Guinea) for their collaboration, and to the interviewees who agreed to share information with us.

INTRODUCTION

Palm oil is ubiquitous in our food systems. Look at the ingredients on any packaged food, and chances are you will find it there. Food companies love it, because it's cheap and abundant, so they use it whenever they can.



Cameroonian women sorting palm fruits. (Photo : Nature Cameroon)

Demand is set to grow even further, as free trade agreements come on line that make it easier to import palm oil as a substitute for local animal or vegetable oils, as multinational food companies and supermarkets

expand sales of processed and packaged foods in the South, and as national mandates for biofuels, especially in Europe, create new markets for vegetable oils that indirectly increase demand for palm oil.

But it's not just demand that is driving the expansion. Oil palm plantations are a hot target for investors, whether from agribusiness, pension funds or corrupt tycoons looking for a safe and profitable way to launder funds. These days money is flowing into the bank accounts of palm oil companies, and they are using this cash to expand their land banks.

Producing all this cheap palm oil exacts a high price. Destruction of rainforests, labour exploitation, and brutal land grabbing: these are just a few of the nasty consequences that come with today's oil palm plantations. And, with growing demand, those consequences are spreading out to more parts of the planet.

The global expansion of oil palm plantations can only extend so far however. Since oil palms can only be cultivated economically in tropical areas near to the equator where there are high levels of rain fall, the global expansion of oil palm plantations is concentrated in certain parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America where these conditions exist. It so happens that these lands are occupied by peasants and indigenous peoples and the tropical forests that they depend on.

The expansion of oil palm plantations, therefore, is necessarily a story about the displacement of these people and the destruction of their forests and farms to make way for monoculture plantations.

Africa is at the centre of the current push to expand oil palm plantations. Oil palms are not new to the continent. Africa is where the history of palm oil began. For generations, Africans have used oil palms to produce vegetable oils, wines, medicines and numerous other products that are central to their economies, cultures and daily lives. Various attempts were made by the European powers to turn the crop into an industrial, export commodity, produced on large plantations. But most of their efforts eventually crumbled and industrial production only took off in Malaysia and Indonesia, where African oil palms were introduced at the turn of the 20th century. In Africa, palm oil remains mainly a product of small scale production and processing, in the hands of millions of peasants, most of them women.

This is on the verge of changing drastically. With lands in Indonesia and Malaysia becoming more difficult for palm oil companies to acquire, attention is shifting to Africa as a new frontier for low cost palm oil production for export. Over the past decade and a half, foreign companies have signed over 60 deals covering nearly 4 million hectares in central and western Africa for the development of oil palm

plantations. The land grabs are already generating violent conflicts in several African countries.

The situation in Africa is a reminder that this brutal expansion of oil palm is not simply about land. It is about a larger struggle over food systems and models of development. Will African palm oil be produced by African peasants or multinational corporations? Will it be produced by peasants on mixed farms and semi-wild palm groves? Or will these peasants be displaced to make way for large scale, industrial plantations? These questions have implications beyond Africa. If the continent becomes a new frontier for low cost palm oil, exports from Africa will affect farmers growing vegetable oil crops in other countries, such as India and Mexico. There is therefore solidarity in the struggles of Cameroon peasants against oil palm plantations and the struggles of coconut farmers in India against palm oil imports. Solidarity is also to be found with the peasants of the Aguan Valley in Honduras, who are fighting against big landlords to stop the violent take over of their small oil palm farms and cooperatives that serve local markets.

This booklet is divided into two parts. The first part looks at the global expansion of oil palm plantations, and seeks to explain what are the main drivers behind the expansion, the mechanisms facilitating it and the areas being targeted. The second part looks at traditional oil palm production in west and central Africa, providing a very different model of a palm oil supply chain than the one being so heavily promoted by governments and corporations. The African model serves local food markets and is largely in the hands of rural women. Production is based on agroecological practices and biodiversity. The industrial plantation model, on the other hand, serves export markets and concentrates control and profits in the hands of the owners of large companies. It maximises profit by exploiting labour and the environment, and by grabbing lands and water from local communities.

This report also contains, as annexes, two tables. One provides information on over 60 large scale land grabs in Africa for oil palm plantations by foreign companies since 2000. The second covers land grabs for palm oil in the Papuas of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

PART 1

**THE GLOBAL EXPANSION OF OIL
PALM PLANTATIONS**

CHAPTER 1

CHEAP OIL



Processing palm oil fruits at a factory in Medan, Indonesia. (Photo: ATAR/AFP/Getty Images)

Fifty years ago you would be hard pressed to find foods made with palm oil unless you were in Central or Western Africa where the crop originates from. Today it's hard to avoid it. Palm oil is everywhere, especially in processed foods. Studies suggest it is contained in about half of the packaged foods on supermarket shelves, whether you are

shopping in Shanghai, Durban or Santiago.¹ You'll also find it in most soaps, cosmetics and lotions.

The demand for palm oil is insatiable. Consumption has increased by about 1.5 million tonnes per year since the mid 1980s, going from just a few million tonnes to over 50 million tonnes today. Palm oil now accounts for over half of the world's total consumption of oils and fats.²

The underlying reason for the dramatic boom is simple: palm oil is cheap. Amongst the big crops for oils and fats (oil palm, soybeans, oilseed rape and sunflower), palm oil is the cheapest.³ So wherever there's a demand for a cheap, generic source of vegetable oil, palm oil tends to win out.⁴

This wasn't always the case. Not long ago, national markets for vegetable oil were dominated by local sources of oils and fats and national policies and regulations protected domestic vegetable oil producers from cheap imports. But, over the past 15 years, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and a series of bilateral free trade agreements have removed most of these protections, opening the flood gates to vegetable oil imports.

Malaysian palm oil companies jumped on this opportunity. They expanded production, first in Malaysia and then in Indonesia. Other companies followed suit. Today, Malaysia's forests and agricultural lands are carpeted with oil palm plantations, as are several islands of the Indonesian archipelago. These two palm oil powerhouses now account for around 90% of global palm oil production and exports, a huge figure considering that palm oil accounts for nearly two thirds of total global vegetable oil exports.

The surge in palm oil exports has hit farmers hard in importing countries, such as India. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the Indian government used import restrictions and government programmes to maintain national self sufficiency in vegetable oil production. Decent prices encouraged farmers to expand into oilseeds and boost production of traditional vegetable oil crops, like coconut, whose production doubled in the first half of the 1990s. The local processing of the oils also generated thousands of jobs.

But in 1994, under pressure from the World Bank and as part of its WTO obligations, India started eliminating restrictions on vegetable oil imports. The country was immediately inundated with imported palm oil, while production of traditional oil crops languished. Today, with

1. RSPO, "Why palm oil matters in your everyday life," 2013

2. IEA Bioenergy, "A global overview of vegetable oils, with reference to biodiesel," 2009; Sime Darby, "Palm oil facts & figures," 2013

3. Sime Darby, "Palm oil facts & figures," 2013

4. GRAIN thanks Pastor Adjahossou Firmin, resource person on palm oil from Benin, for his contributions.

tariffs on palm oil fluctuating around zero, India is the world's largest importer and consumer of palm oil.⁵

The high cost of cheap palm oil for India's coconut farmers

Shanmugam is a coconut farmer in Talavady, Tamil Nadu. The flood of imported palm oil into India has driven down the price for coconut paid to Shanmugam and other farmers, deeply affecting their livelihoods. "Farmers are drowning in debt, and we're trying to survive in anyway we can," says Shanmugam. "The coconut price is only 4-5 Rs per nut, which is what it was 20 years ago, and we can't even afford to harvest or remove the coconut trees now to change to other crops because it's too costly."

This year Shanmugam is selling his 7 hectare coconut farm to pay off a portion of his debt.

China's followed a similar path. Imports of oil palm hovered around 1 million tonnes per year until China made significant cuts to import restrictions in 2000 as part of its WTO entry obligations. Imports ballooned, reaching 5 million tonnes per year by 2005. That year, China began implementation of a free trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which the Malaysian oil palm industry credits with a further 34% increase in oil palm imports between 2005-2010.⁶

The world's fourth largest import market for palm oil, Pakistan, is also a product of free trade. The Malaysian palm oil industry says the 2008 Malaysia-Pakistan free trade agreement is responsible for doubling Pakistan's palm oil imports between 2007-2010.⁷

China, India and Pakistan were marginal consumers of palm oil two decades ago. Today they account for over 40% of total global imports, and a third of global consumption.⁸

Trade policies are not the only factor however. The surge in palm oil imports in India and China, and in many other countries in the South, such as Venezuela and Bangladesh, also correlates with major transformations to their food systems. Global food corporations, restaurant chains and supermarkets are expanding rapidly in the South and this is increasing the consumption of processed foods. Annual sales growth of processed foods is around 29% in low and middle income countries, as opposed to only 7% in high income countries.⁹

5. Afsar Jafri, "Trade Liberalisation's Impact on Edible Oil Sector in India," Focus on the Global South, 6 July 2011

6. N Balu and Nazlin Ismail, "Free Trade Agreement –The Way Forward for the Malaysian Palm Oil Industry," Oil Palm Industry Economic Journal (11.2)

7. N Balu and Nazlin Ismail, "Free Trade Agreement –The Way Forward for the Malaysian Palm Oil Industry," Oil Palm Industry Economic Journal (11.2)

8. Lipid Library

9. Corinna Hawkes, "Globalization and the Nutrition Transition: A Case Study", in: Per Pinstrup-Andersen and Fuzhi Cheng (editors), "Food Policy for Developing Countries: Case Studies," 2007

More consumption of processed foods means more consumption of fats, and more consumption of palm oil, the world's discount source of fats. It is estimated that palm oil is found in half of all packaged foods on supermarket shelves.¹⁰ In China, where supermarkets are expanding faster than anywhere else on earth, the annual per capita consumption of vegetable oils has gone from 3 kg in 1980 to 23 kg in 2009, or roughly 64 grammes per day— almost twice the fat intake required to meet a person's nutritional requirements. Palm oil now accounts for a third of the vegetable oil consumed in China, nearly three times the share it held in 1996.¹¹

In Mexico, sales of processed foods have increased by 5-10% per year since the country began implementing the North American Free Trade Agreement with the US and Canada, opening the door to increased foreign investment by multinational food companies.¹² Obesity rates are soaring; Mexico now has a higher percentage of obese people than the US. And palm oil consumption is soaring too. Per capita consumption of palm oil doubled from 1996, when it accounted for 11% of the vegetable oil in the average Mexican's diet, to 2009, when it accounted for 28%.¹³

Even in the US, there has been a recent shift by food companies towards the use of palm oil, partly in response to concerns over transfats. Since 2000, consumption of palm oil in the US has grown nearly sixfold.¹⁴

This is still well behind Europe, where consumption totalled 5.8 million tonnes in 2012, double what it was in 2000. Growth of palm oil consumption in Europe is, however, driven less by changes to the food system, as it is by the continent's biofuel policies. The implementation of biofuels mandates in European countries over the past decade or so has created much greater demand for palm oil, both as a feedstock for biodiesel and as a vegetable oil to replace European oilseeds that are diverted to biofuel production. Palm oil imports could surge much further if a European Commission proposal goes forward which would see all 27 members of the European Union requiring biofuels based on food crops to account for at least five percent of national transport fuel consumption. The legislation would require an additional 21 Mtoe (million tonnes oil equivalent) of biofuels by 2020. Measured in palm oil, this equates to roughly 5.5 million ha of new oil palm plantations.¹⁵

10. Rainforest Action Network, "Conflict palm oil," September 2013

11. Dinesh C. Sharma, "Rise in oil consumption by Indians sets off alarm," *India Today*, 2 April 2012; FAOSTAT

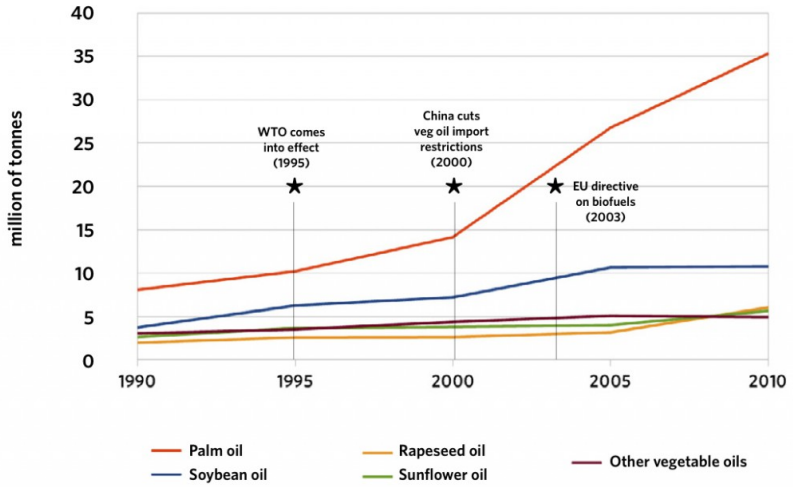
12. Corinna Hawkes, "Globalization and the Nutrition Transition: A Case Study", in: Per Pinstrup-Andersen and Fuzhi Cheng (editors), "Food Policy for Developing Countries: Case Studies," 2007

13. FAOSTAT

14. Rainforest Action Network, "Conflict palm oil" September 2013

15. GRAIN, "Land grabbing for biofuels must stop," February 2013

Vegetable oil exports



CHAPTER 2

CASH CROP



The Malaysian state-owned company Felda raised \$2 billion from a stock offering which it has been using to buy up lands for oil palm and rubber plantations. (Photo: FELDA)

The surging global demand for oil palm has produced windfall profits for palm oil companies and turned them into hot targets for investment by banks, pension funds and other financiers looking to cash in on the palm oil boom. All the major palm oil companies are ploughing this new found money into more plantations. So much so that it is difficult to say if money is a bigger driver of plantation expansion than the global demand for palm oil.

In Indonesia alone, US\$12.5 billion is estimated to have been invested in oil palm expansion between 2000 and 2008, and those numbers are rising.¹ Much of this money comes from Singapore, where Indonesian tycoons parked their ill-got fortunes to escape from the clampdown that occurred after the collapse of the Suharto dictatorship. These tycoons are using this money and their old political influence to build up plantation empires throughout Indonesia, and even to other countries such as the Philippines and Liberia. Oil palm plantations are also a favourite destination of Malaysian companies with close connections to the ruling elites. The forestry companies linked to the Chief Minister of the Malaysian state of Sarawak are particularly active in building up land banks for oil palm plantations in Borneo, Papua and Africa. Meanwhile in Colombia and Honduras, paramilitary groups and drug barons are deeply intertwined with oil palm expansion.²

More conventional conduits for funnelling money into oil palm plantations are also to be found. Some of the largest palm oil companies have recently turned to public offerings on stock markets to raise money from the financial houses and institutional investors eager to get a piece of the palm oil boom. In 2012, Felda, the Malaysian state palm oil company, restructured and went partially public, raising \$3.3 billion in what was the third largest share offering in the world that year. The share sale left Felda with a \$2 billion cash pile that the company has since been using to acquire lands for oil palm and rubber plantations outside of Malaysia.

That same year, one of the largest oil palm plantation companies in Indonesia also made an initial public offering. Bumitama Agri, controlled by Indonesian billionaire Lim Hariyanto Wijaya Sarwono, raised around US\$177 million on the Singapore Stock Exchange, as palm oil giant Wilmar and several Asian, European and US financial management companies each bought multimillion dollar stakes in the company. Bumitama said it would allocate US\$114 million from the IPO for the expansion and development of its existing uncultivated land bank.³

The forestry flip

In September 2012, Global Witness and the Liberian NGOs Sustainable Development Institute and Save My Future Foundation issued a shocking report. Wading through the vast number of land use permits issued to logging companies since the lifting of UN Sanctions on

1. Pablo Pacheco, "Oil palm in Indonesia linked to trade and investment," CIFOR, May 2012

2. See the sections on regional expansion of oil palm plantations.

3. A 2013 Friends of the Earth report shows how Bumitama's land bank is composed of thousands of hectares of lands that the company is operating on illegally, without the necessary permits

Liberian timber in 2006, they made the startling discovery that the Malaysian logging company Samling had taken control of around 10% of Liberia's total land area. Samling linked companies had acquired permits covering 10,200 km².⁴



Harvesting palm fruits on a plantation in Liberia. (Photo : Rob McNeil/CI)

The report also unearthed another key bit of information. In the areas where it was acquiring logging permits, Samling was also amassing a land bank for oil palm plantations. Samling's companies were getting communities to sign 75 year "agricultural conversion agreements" giving the company rights to convert the areas to oil palm plantations once they have been logged out. According to the NGOs: "The unsigned agreements we have seen suggest that Atlantic Resources may plan to set up its own palm oil subsidiary or department to operate these plantations."

Samling does have an oil palm subsidiary, Glenealy Plantations, that it established in the 1990s to construct oil palm plantations on deforested areas of Sarawak, the company's home base. The plantation subsidiary followed in the foot steps of the company's logging division as it expanded into Indonesia and then Papua New Guinea, where Samling now holds lease rights for oil palm plantations on at least 128,000 ha.

Samling is not the only forestry company pursuing this model. Data

4. Global Witness, "Liberian forests to be flattened by secret logging contracts," 4 September 2012

collected by the environmental group WALHI shows how the practice has been rampant in Indonesia, where oil palm expansion is happening faster than anywhere on earth.

Between 1980-2001, companies, most of them controlled by friends and relatives of President Suharto, acquired an incredible 72 million ha of lands under forestry permits in Indonesia, while 4.1 million ha were handed out for oil palm plantations. But between 2004-2014, the forestry numbers dropped to 25 million ha, while the oil palm numbers increased to 19 million ha. WALHI predicts that oil palm concessions will be the main source of land concessions over the next 10 years, accounting for 26.3 million ha, in comparison with 26.2 million ha for forestry.

“What is gradually happening,” explains Zenzi Suhadi of WALHI, “is that Indonesia’s rainforests are all being converted into oil palm monocultures.”

Alas Kusuma is one of the largest holders of forestry concessions in Indonesia. Through its close connections with the Suharto government, the company had at least 19 forestry concessions, with a total area of 2,661,376 ha, by the end of the dictatorship in 1999.⁵ Now the owners of the company are converting these lands to oil palm concessions, often under different company names, and selling them to major palm oil companies for millions of dollars.

In a 2013 deal, shareholders of Alas Kusuma sold permits for 8,000 ha in West Kalimantan to Malaysia’s Felda Global Ventures, the world’s largest oil palm planter. Felda paid around US\$8 million for these permits, even though the company had only planted oil palms on 725 ha and was facing government action to revoke them for failure to develop the lands. Alas Kusuma made a similar sale of logged out lands in 2010 in Ketapang, Kalimantan to GoodHope Asia Holdings Ltd, the palm oil company of Sri Lankan plantation giant Carson Cumberbatch.⁶

But it is in Papua New Guinea (PNG) where the confluence of the logging industry and palm oil is most extreme. The main means for logging companies to acquire forests in PNG is through an agricultural lease that typically lays out a plan to develop oil palm plantations once the forest has been logged. While few companies end up sticking around once the logs have been taken, the growing global interest in palm oil is generating opportunities for them to flip the lands for big sums of money.

5. David Walter Brown, "Why Governments Fail to Capture Economic Rent: The Unofficial Appropriation of Rain Forest Rent by Rulers in Insular Southeast Asia Between 1970 and 1999", 2001
6. Felda's announcement of the deal on 9 July 2013 indicated that the owners of PT Temila Agro Abadi, the company with the lands in West Kalimantan, were Paul Sugandi, Janti Susanto, Evelyn Suwandi and Yenny Suwandi – all of whom are connected to Po Suwandi, owner of Alas Kusuma. The GoodHope deal involved the sale of Alas Kusuma's company PT. Agro Harapan Lestari.

Communities in Collingwood Bay, PNG have been fighting off forestry companies since the 1980s, especially the notorious Malaysian logging company Rimbunan Hijau. In 2002 they won a 14-year legal case blocking a Rimbunan Hijau linked company from taking 350,000 ha of their lands. But in 2009 another Malaysian forestry company, Ang Agroforestry Management Ltd, came to the area with the same local partner to propose an “Integrated Agriculture Project” that would involve the clearing of over 40,000 ha of forest and the establishment of oil palm plantations. Ang Agroforestry claimed to already have acquired the land leases for the project.⁷

Little is known of Ang Agroforestry except that its shareholder and representative in PNG is Hii Eii Sing, whom the Collingwood Bay communities recognise as the Business Manager of the Rimbunan Hijau group of companies. Hii Eii Sing is also the owner of Sebekai Plantation Sdn Bhd, which has a 5,000 ha oil palm concession in Bintulu, Sarawak, where communities have established blockades and held protests to try and get their lands back from the company.⁸ In 2003, he was arrested by the police in Indonesia for his role in illegal logging in the Merdey sub-district of Manokwari on behalf of PT Rimba Kayu Arthamas, a Jakarta-based company with a concession in Papua.⁹

In 2010, the Traditional paramount chiefs of the nine tribes of Collingwood Bay representing 326 clans publicly stated their disapproval “in the strongest possible terms” of any plans to introduce oil palm plantations in the Collingwood Bay area. And the communities also got a court order preventing any government or company official from entering their lands without their prior permission.¹⁰

The local opposition, however, did not seem to matter to the Malaysian palm oil company KL Kepong (KLK), which has been a member of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) since 2004. In 2011, it began a process to acquire Ang Forestry, eventually paying Hii Eii Sing nearly US\$12 million for a 69% stake in the company. In outlining the reasons for the acquisition, KLK cited increasing difficulty and expense to source suitable land in Malaysia and Indonesia. It said that although infrastructure and accessibility were currently difficult and development costs high, “these disadvantages are counterbalanced by the fertile soil and friendly terrain of the PNG land.”¹¹

7. Complaint against KLK

8. “Negotiations fail, Penan Muslims hold demo,” Sura Sarawak, June 2012

9. EIA, “The last frontier: illegal logging in Papua and China’s massive timber theft,” 2005

10. Complaint against KLK

11. “Oil palm cultivation plan in PNG will benefit KLK,” The Star, 5 October 2012

CHAPTER 3

A SCRAMBLE FOR LANDS



Oil palm seedlings in Malaysia. (Photo: Sophie Gnych)

With all this money pouring into palm oil companies, lands for oil palm plantations are at an all time premium, wherever they can be found.

Oil palm plantations can, however, only be established on a narrow band of lands in tropical areas that are roughly 7 degrees North or South of the equator and that have abundant and evenly spread rainfall. This

makes the potential area for new oil palm plantations rather limited. Plus, most of these lands are composed of forests and farmlands that are occupied by indigenous peoples and peasants, some of whom are already growing oil palms for local markets.

The expansion of oil palm plantations, therefore, depends upon companies getting these people to give up their lands. This is not an easy sell, given the meagre jobs and other benefits that an oil palm plantation generates in comparison with the destruction that it causes and the value that the lands already hold for the people. A typical oil palm plantation requires only one poorly paid worker for every 2.3 hectares, while the surrounding communities pay a high price for the deforestation, water use, soil erosion and chemical fertiliser and pesticide contamination that it causes.¹ Companies trying to acquire lands from communities also run into customary forms of land governance that do not allow for a company to buy up land one parcel at a time.

The easy way for companies to get around these hurdles is to ensure that the communities do not even know that their lands have been signed away. It is very common in Africa, for instance, for companies to sign land deals directly with the national government without the knowledge of the affected communities. In many cases, the companies signing the deals are obscure companies registered in tax havens with their beneficial owners hidden from view. The managers of these companies tend to come from the mining sector or other extractive industries with long histories of shady deals in Africa. In Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, land deals are typically brokered between local elites and foreign investors, also often with obscure ownership structures registered in tax havens.

Such small shell companies are not in the business of developing plantations. Once the land contracts are signed, they immediately look to sell out to larger companies with the technical capacity and financial resources to build the plantations. And it is usually at this point that the communities come to understand that their lands have been sold.

Most of these cases eventually lead to a situation where a large multinational plantation company, backed by a national government and a multimillion dollar contract, faces off against a poor community trying desperately to hold onto to the lands and forests it needs to survive. It is incredibly difficult for communities to defend themselves against such powerful forces, and those that do risk the treat of violence, whether by paramilitaries in Colombia, police in Sierra Leone, or the army in Indonesia.

1. UNEP, "Oil palm plantations: threats and opportunities for tropical ecosystems," December 2011

Tax havens and land grabs for palm oil in Africa

The case of Atama Resources Inc

In 2010, the Government of the Republic of the Congo signed away more than 400,000 ha to a Congolese registered company called Atama Plantation whose owners remain unknown.² In return, this mysterious company promised to develop the Congo Basin's largest ever oil palm plantation, converting 180,000 ha of mostly forested land in the provinces of Cuvette and Sangha while paying the government a token annual fee of \$5 per hectare of planted land. The company was under no obligation to conduct environmental or social impact assessments or to consult with affected populations.



Congo's largest landowner, Malaysian businessman Robert Tan (Photo: The Star, Malaysia)

When the contract was signed, Atama Plantation was wholly owned by Silvermark Resources Inc, a company registered in the offshore fiscal paradise of the British Virgin Islands.³ The only publicly available

2. See the excellent report, "Seeds of Destruction", Rainforest Foundation UK, 2013

3. Silvermark is owned by Tinaldi Ltd and the Director is Greenland Ltd. Greenland Ltd is reported to be controlled by Benny Lum (who may just be a proxy). It controls Lamington Capital Inc (maybe Singapore) which is also a shareholder in African Petroleum Corporation Limited. It was also used to direct a transfer of funds to a Thai company that is linked to Thaksin. Both Tinaldi Ltd and Greenland Ltd (Brunei) are registered in Brunei to the address of HMR Trust Ltd (which is involved in offshore financial services). Other documents indicate that Tinaldi Limited is owned by Tan Sri Barry Goh Ming Choon of Malaysia and the company acts as a trust for other Malaysian businessmen. Barry Goh controls B&G Capital Resources Berhad ("BCGR") which he started in 1994. BCGR has served as the

information on Silvermark is that it is owned and directed by two shell companies registered in Brunei. Because of the rules of secrecy governing companies registered in Brunei and the British Virgin Islands, it is impossible to know who the actual owners of these companies are.

In 2011, ownership of Atama Plantation was transferred to a holding company in Mauritius, another fiscal paradise, before finally being sold, in 2012, to Malaysia's Wah Seong Corporation, a "pipe-coating specialist" company with no history in the palm oil sector that is controlled by Malaysian businessman Robert Tan.⁴

Whoever the owners of Silvermark are, they pocketed an estimated \$25 million, without doing anything more than orchestrate the contract with the Congolese government. And, under the deal with Wah Seong, they still hold 39% of the shares with yet another British Virgin Islands registered company with unknown owners holding the remaining 10%.

The case of Liberian Forest Products Inc. (LFPI)

On August 21, 2006 a little known London minerals exploration company announced to the world that it had taken control of 700,000 ha of land in Liberia— equal to about 7% of the country's entire land area. The owners of Nardina Resources PLC claimed they had acquired rights over this massive chunk of land through a take over of a Liberian company called Liberian Forest Products Inc. (LFPI). Nardina then changed its name to Equatorial Biofuels PLC and then again to Equatorial Palm Oil Ltd (EPO) to reflect its new mandate as a palm oil company. Meanwhile, the original owners of LFPI walked away with £1,555,000 in shares and cash.

But how did the owners of LFPI get hold of such an obscene amount of territory in a country just emerging from over a decade of civil war? And who were these owners anyways?

EPO's disclosure documents from its listing on the London AIM stock exchange in 2010 show that the money it paid for LFPI went to two

principal contractor to Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), one of the largest government link companies in Malaysia

4. Atama Resources Inc was registered in Mauritius in July 2011, as 100% owned by Silvermark. In 2012, Wah Seong purchases 51% of Atama Resources Inc. through its 100% owned subsidiary WS Agro Ind Pte Ltd (Singapore). 39% remains with Silvermark. 10% is taken by Giant Dragon Group (BVI), which is 100% owned by Marston International Ltd. (BVI), who's director is Eastern Sky Ltd. (Hong Kong). Eastern Sky is a nominee director for several other companies. The Wah Seong Corporation is largely controlled by Malaysian businessman Robert Tan. Marston International Ltd. is the owner of Pergenia International Limited (PIL) incorporated in British Virgin Island on 10 January 2007 and Netstar Holdings Limited registered in BVI in 2003. Marston International Ltd is also the controlling shareholder of PT Jaya Pari Steel Tbk. (Indonesia). Reports from PT Jaya Pari Steel Tbk say that Marston International Ltd is owned by John Matthew Ashwood (50%) and Brian Whiteman and Robinson McKinstry (50%), who seem only to be proxies and John Ashwood likely works for Vistra, an offshore financial company based in Hong Kong. PT Jaya Pari Steel is a company of the Gunawan family of Indonesia, which is involved in finance and steel. The family controls 46 percent of Indonesia's PT Bank Panin. Marston International Limited is also a major shareholder in another Gunawan steel company, Betonjaya Manunggal Tbk PT, through its ownership of Profit Add Limited (Samoa). Marston International is listed as a shareholder of Best Dragon Enterprises Limited, alongside Tito Sulistio, who is connected to the Suharto family.

offshore companies, Kamina Global Ltd of the British Virgin Islands and Subsea BV of Liberia, which each had 50% shares of LFPI.

Searches conducted in December 2013 through the company registry in Liberia found no record of registration for a company called Subsea BV. However, the articles for registration for LFPI of November 2006 indicate that LFPI is a Liberian company owned by Tony Smith (50%) and A. Kanie Wesso (50%), who are both trustees for a new company to be formed, called Subsea BV. The sole LFPI director named in the document is Mark Slown, a British businessman operating from Liberia whose name also turns up as the CEO of SubSea Resources DMCC (Dubai Multi Commodities Centre), a company that acquired mineral rights in Liberia at around the same time.

A second business registry document for LFPI from August 2007 refers to LFPI as a British owned company— with ownership split between Mark Slown (50%) and Kanie Wesso (50%). Both documents describe LFPI as a company whose sole business is logging.

Subsea BV also turns up in the UK business directory as a director of the G4 Group, which has several business interests in Liberia and is controlled by the notorious financial fraudster Lincoln Fraser.⁵ The G4 Group's Liberian subsidiary, G4 WAO Inc., exports rubber tree logs and holds a phosphate exploration concession covering 36,000 ha in Bopolu. According to the company website, G4 WAO "manages in excess of one million acres of the best crop growing conditions in the world" and has partnered with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics (ICRISAT) "to establish trial sites on various G4 farming enterprises in Liberia, Ghana and Kenya."⁶

Kamina Global Ltd, the other company that was paid by EPO for the acquisition of LFPI, is even more opaque. Legislation in the British Virgin Islands does not require companies to disclose their directors or shareholders, so it was not possible to identify the people behind Kamina Global through company records.⁷

When EPO acquired LFPI, the contract was under examination by Liberia's Public Procurement and Concession Commission. It would conclude that the agreement contained "gross irregularities and non-compliance with the law" and EPO was forced to renegotiate. LFPI, now under the ownership of EPO, signed a new contract with the government in 2008, this time covering a much reduced but still

5. Fraser is described by Offshore Alert as a "British conman who masterminded the 0 million Imperial Consolidated fraud" which robbed thousands of pensioners and others of their savings when it went bankrupt in 2002.

6. G4 Group website

7. Kamina's company registration information indicates that it was registered on 17 March 2006 and struck off on 2 November 2009. It's registered agent is TMF (BVI) Ltd, a company which manages numerous shell companies on behalf of clients around the world. As written on the same document: "Under the BVI Business Companies Act, 2004 companies are not required to file information on Directors and Shareholders of a company."

valuable 55,000 ha area of land in Butaw. With this concession and another of a similar size in Liberia, EPO went public on the London AIM stock exchange, eventually attracting significant investment from the Siva Group, a Singapore-based holding company of Indian billionaire Chinnakannan Sivasankaran, who has quietly amassed one of the world's largest land banks for oil palm in just a few years. The Siva Group started buying shares of EPO in 2010 and by 2013 it controlled 36.7% of the company and had formed a 50:50 joint venture with EPO based in Mauritius, called Liberian Palm Developments Ltd, that took control of all of EPO's Liberian land concessions.⁸

In 2013, the Siva Group would sell its shares in EPO and its Mauritian joint venture to KL Kepong of Malaysia, one of the world's largest palm oil companies.

Are Chinese companies grabbing land for palm oil?

China runs neck and neck with India for the world's number 1 palm oil importer. So it would only make sense that Chinese companies would be involved in the current rush for lands for oil palm plantations. But while there have been several reports of massive land grabs for palm oil by Chinese companies, few of these have materialised.

China's telecom giant ZTE, which has a biofuels division, was said to have signed an agreement with the Democratic Republic of the Congo to develop 2 million hectares of oil palm plantations. The numbers were later scaled down to 100,000 ha and it now seems like the project has been scrapped entirely.

In 2005, Indonesia's President Yudhoyono announced a plan to develop 1.8 million hectares of land along the Kalimantan border into oil palm plantations. Several Chinese companies including state-owned investment company CITIC Group were offered one third of the area in return for building roads and railways and details were released of a \$600 million project between CITIC and Indonesian palm oil giant Sinar Mas to develop a 100,000 ha plantation in the area, with a \$380 million dollar loan from the China Development Bank.⁹ Sinar Mas' subsidiary Golden Agri Resources is one of the main suppliers of palm oil to China. The plans, however, were never put into operation.

8. Siva Group's 36.7% share of EPO is held by way of several subsidiaries: Biopalm Energy Limited (16.62%), The Siva Group (16.62%) and Broadcourt Investments Ltd (3.46%). (The joint venture is between EPO's wholly-owned subsidiary Equatorial Biofuels (Guernsey) Limited and Biopalm Energy Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Geoff Palm Ltd based in the offshore city of Labuan, Malaysia, and which is owned by Broadcourt Investments Ltd, a British Virgin Islands registered holding company with Chinnakannan Sivasankaran, the Siva Group's founder and owner, listed as its only director and shareholder since January 2007.

9. "The Kalimantan border oil palm project," Milieudefensie – Friends of the Earth Netherlands and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, 2006; "China's investment foray into Indonesia," Asia Sentinel, 6 June 2013

In 2012, Sinar Mas, which is controlled by Indonesia's Widjaja family, announced a new partnership for oil palm development with China, this time with state-owned China National Offshore Oil Corp. and another Widjaja controlled company, HKC Holdings of Hong Kong. Wang Jun, the former chairman of CITIC Group, is the honorary chairman and a director of HKC. The companies said the project would be rolled out over eight years in Papua and Kalimantan, "where regional governments had reserved about one million hectares of land for it."

Less than a year later, the Widjajas cemented another major palm oil deal with China. This time in Africa. In March 2013, Golden Agri Resources' wholly-owned subsidiary Golden Veroleum Limited procured a \$500 million term loan facility from the China Development Bank to support the construction of its 220,000 ha oil palm plantation project in Liberia. Typically the CDB only loans to overseas companies or projects when Chinese companies are directly involved.¹⁰

For now, China appears to be channeling most of its investments in palm oil through Asian palm oil companies, such as Sinar Mas, that dominate the global palm oil trade. The only Chinese company making significant direct investments in oil palm plantations has so far been China's state-owned oil company Sinochem. In April 2012,, Sinochem paid 193 million euros to acquire 35% of the Belgian plantations company SIAT, which has oil palm plantations in Gabon, Ghana and Nigeria. It also announced that its rubber company in Cameroon would be expanding its plantations and starting to move into palm oil production.

10. Golden Agri press release

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNITIES LOSE OUT TO OIL PALM PLANTATIONS



Villagers at the site of a new industrial oil palm plantation in Cameroon. (Photo: Greenpeace)

Local communities can only lose from this new wave of land grabs for palm oil. They lose access to vital lands and water resources, now and for future generations. And they have to face all of the impacts that come with vast monoculture plantations within their territories– pollution from pesticides, soil erosion, deforestation, and labour migration. Experience also shows that the employment generated by the plantations often goes to outsiders, and that most of the jobs are seasonal, poorly paid, and dangerous. Certification schemes, such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), can only alleviate or postpone some of the worst excesses (See below: *Why the RSPO facilitates land grabs for palm oil*).

Experience also shows that the outgrower schemes, known as plasma programmes in Indonesia or nucleus estates in Africa, are not solutions. It has become standard practice for companies to offer to develop outgrower schemes on a portion of the lands within their concessions as part of their agreements with host governments. The farmers involved in these schemes have little control over production or the terms of payment, which are dictated by the company, leaving them vulnerable to all sorts of abuses. More than anything, the outgrower schemes are a means for the companies to capture supply and placate the local people who are ultimately being forced to give up control over their territories.

This is not to say that small scale palm oil production cannot support people's livelihoods. There are excellent examples from Honduras and West and Central Africa where small oil palm farmers have developed markets or organised cooperatives that provide them with a decent price for their production.¹ But in these cases, the farmers have control over their lands and their farms, and they are not at the mercy of a single foreign or national company for the sale of their products. The current wave of plantations is a direct threat to these farmers— taking away their lands and their local markets.

There is no demand justification for the expansion of oil palm plantations either. The growing global market for palm oil is not about resolving world hunger. It is mainly a product of new biofuel mandates and the substitution of cheap imported palm oil for locally produced oils and fats (whether animal or vegetable) in the production of processed foods by global corporations. People do not need more oil palm plantations; corporations do.

Why the RSPO facilitates land grabs for palm oil

Winnie Overbeek is the international coordinator of the World Rainforest Movement— an international network with a small secretariat in Uruguay that supports the struggles of communities and indigenous people who depend on tropical forests. He talked to GRAIN about his views on the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil.

GRAIN: What is the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)?

Winnie: The RSPO is an initiative that was founded in 2001. It is a partnership between the palm oil industry and a few NGOs – the WWF is a very important one. In my view, you can see it as a response of the palm oil industry to the conflicts and the environmental problems,

1. For examples from Honduras, see Tanya M. Kerssen, "Grabbing Power: The New Struggles for Land, Food and Democracy in Northern Honduras," FoodFirst, 1 February 2013; for examples from Africa, see World Rainforest Movement, "Oil palm in Africa: past, present and future scenarios," 2010

especially deforestation, caused by the very fast expansion of the industry, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia, over the past 20 years.

The RSPO now has over 750 members and only 13 of them are NGOs, so the remaining 740 members are companies somehow related to the oil palm sector. You have palm growers, you have the palm oil processors and traders, you have the consumers' goods manufacturers, and some banks and investors. And in a process that is very similar to the Forest Stewardship Council certification system, the RSPO delivers certificates to palm oil producers, based on a set of principles and criteria approved by RSPO members. The RSPO states on its website that it has already certified about 1.6 million hectares of oil palm plantations as 'sustainable'. They call it "sustainable oil palm production", which is supposed to rest on legal, economically viable, environmentally appropriate and socially beneficial management practices.

GRAIN: In your experience working with communities, has the RSPO been a solution for them? Has it helped to make palm oil sustainable?

Winnie: It is true that the RSPO, according to some of the organisations we work with, has resulted in some benefits, and it is important also – I imagine it is for any certification scheme – that they can show some positive results. So, for example, they have been able to slow down deforestation a bit, or at least to make companies slow down their expansion rate. But it is also true that for those communities that have filed complaints to the RSPO, in Indonesia for example (the country with the most problems between communities and oil palm companies), none of these complaints have come to a satisfactory conclusion for the communities. And this is very worrisome, because the complaint mechanism is the last option to correct problems not solved in the certification procedure. If the complaints mechanism of the RSPO doesn't even function, what can we think of the whole certification process?

It's not easy for communities to access this complaint mechanism in the first place, and this has to do with the second point I want to make, which is the fact that the RSPO has been set up without any community participation. The RSPO has produced a number of procedures, of principles and criteria, and these are often very difficult for communities to understand. The language that they write these procedures in, even the complaint mechanism, is different from the language of the communities. I mean that they are written in a very technical way, not in a way that facilitates access to communities. It is written in the language of companies, consultants, scientists, and it is also the language of the NGOs that are participants, which are most often constituted of specialised workers with university degrees. They

can easily understand the documentation. It is much more difficult for communities. This is a big advantage for the companies that are seeking a certification, and often a source of frustration for communities.

One example is how, within the certification process, they define forests that should not be planted with oil palm. They call them high conservation value forests (HCV), and they are determined by the identification of areas by consultants that are hired by the company – not by the communities. Most often, communities do not understand this concept because for them, their whole territory, often made up of different forested areas that they use for many different things, like agroforestry, is important. All these different forested areas are very important for communities, and not just one single part of this area, like the RSPO proposes.

Another problematic aspect with the RSPO is that it's not an effective instrument to solve the increasing land grabbing problems in the global South, the planting of more monocultures for exports. It does not question the palm oil industry's logic of expanding plantations and markets. If this is not taken into account, how can there be talk of "sustainable" palm oil at the global level?

At the local level, there are two characteristics of plantations that are also not being questioned by the RSPO : their large scale and their monoculture production. These are two aspects that always have a lot of social, environmental, economic and cultural impacts. They require lots of pesticides and water, and they occupy a lot of territory that multiple people are living on – because they are most often settled on fertile land – so it is very problematic to call plantations that are large scale and monoculture "sustainable", and for us it's impossible. So when the RSPO puts a label on such projects, declaring them "sustainable", they give a false promise to consumers that the palm oil they consume is coming from a sustainable plantation, that it's benefiting people and benefiting the world. It's simply not true.

A final important problem with the RSPO is that it is a mechanism, like other new trends like REDD , that is dividing us as a civil society formed by communities, social movements, and NGOs. Certification is being used as a tool to assist certain communities at certain times, while in other countries – or often in the same country – the same tool is being used to silence or overpower people and control their territory.

These mechanisms, like certifications or REDD projects, need therefore to be seen, to be understood in a broader context. We should reflect on our commitment to solidarity with those who are being abused by certification schemes and REDD projects. This is still, I think, not happening enough, and is very worrying. So now, for example, it's also a trend that mechanisms like RSPO and REDD are coming

more together. The high conservation value forest areas I talked about earlier, that RSPO wants to protect, are now also being called “high carbon forests”. This means that, eventually, a company certified by the RSPO could also sell carbon credits from its area, even as studies show that agrofuels produced from large scale, monoculture production can result in even more CO₂ emissions than using fossil fuels for energy generation.

Overall I think the limitations and the problems of the RSPO are much bigger and more significant than its benefits for communities, and I would say that the contrary is true for companies: I think they get much more benefit from the RSPO than what it costs them to put in. At the end of the day, companies get stronger with mechanisms like the RSPO and the struggle of communities to resist against landgrabbing, to defend their territories, gets more difficult.

Cameroonian activist risks prison for campaigning against a Wall Street land grabber

Nasako Besingi is a land grabber’s worst nightmare. Nasako, a community organiser who runs an NGO called Struggle to Economise Future Environment (SEFE), interfered with an American corporation’s plan to get its hands on a large tract of land in southwestern Cameroon to produce palm oil.

Herakles Capital is a venture capital corporation headquartered in New York that has been using various tactics to acquire and develop oil palm plantations on over 80,000 hectares in West Africa and Central Africa. From the moment he heard about its plans for Cameroon, Nasako got down to researching the issue and raising awareness among the local populations as to the dangers associated with the project. As a result, resistance to Herakles has grown - but at a very high cost to Nasako.

“I first heard about the plantation project planned for our region from a government official in 2009,” he explains. “It was quite a shock. I responded, ‘But there isn’t any land available here!’”

Later that year, during a meeting of the reigning political party, the region’s chiefs were asked to sign a blank piece of paper in exchange for 10,000 CFA francs. “None of them knew what they were signing,” said Nasako. “It was only later that we discovered that the document was used as proof of local consent for the plantation project.”

In 2010, the agreement between the government and the corporation became public, but it wasn't very clear who was behind the project. "When discussing it locally they alluded to an American corporation, Sithe Global, but in official communication they referred to SCSOC, a company registered in Cameroon. It was as if they were trying to hide the true identity of the corporation," explained Nasako. It was only after some time that it became clear that the corporation belongs to the American hedge fund Herakles Capital, which also owns Sithe Global.

An inside source gave Nasako a copy of the agreement.

"The agreement does not specify the area of the land concerned, nor the locations of any of the sites that were supposedly granted," he points out. "But when the corporation showed up, it insisted that the land had been legally granted."

SEFE held a meeting in August 2011 to get clarity on the proposed project. It invited all the affected villages, the government, and the corporation, but the corporation refused to participate.

"That's when we realised they didn't want to negotiate, they didn't want anything to do with us," recalls Nasako. "So we decided to pursue legal avenues."

SEFE lodged a complaint against the corporation with the High Court of Justice for violations of domestic and international environmental and human rights law. The court ruled in favour of SEFE, concluding that Herakles did not have permission to operate in the region - but that was not enough to discourage Herakles.

"The corporation ignored the court's decision because it did not have the Prime Minister's blessing," said Nasako. "We considered the matter and we said: "If this corporation feels free to ignore a court decision, how can we expect them to listen to a bunch of poor villagers?"

So SEFE took its awareness-raising work to the next level. It held another large meeting in July 2012 in the village of Meangwe. In the days leading up to the meeting, agents of the corporation came to the villages to warn people not to attend.

"They told the villagers that the meeting was illegal and that people would be arrested if they attended," says Nasako. "But that didn't stop people from coming. It was the rainy season, yet more than 300 people

came from all the villages concerned to take part in the meeting. For many of them, it was the first time they had heard of the project and the corporation.”

Nasako’s efforts nearly cost him his life. A month after the meeting, he was motorcycling to a village that had asked him to speak about Herakles’ plans when he was attacked by a group of men.

“They dragged me off the bike and started punching me,” Nasako remembers. “They were yelling at me, saying I was the one who had caused trouble for the corporation. I recognised them: they were lower-level managers of Herakles Farms.”

As luck would have it, a team of French journalists was not far behind Nasako that day. When their truck arrived, the men let go of Nasako and scattered.

Tensions between the corporation and the villagers continued to rise. But the corporation and the government continued to claim that the local populations approved of the proposed concession and to spread disinformation in the domestic and international media.

“A large majority of local people are opposed to what Herakles is doing, and we wanted the world to see that reality,” stresses Nasako.

At the request of the community, SEFE drew up an action plan. In November 2012, it produced hundreds of tee-shirts bearing the slogan: “No plantations on our land. SGSOC go home.” The plan was for the villagers to wear these T-shirts at the inaugural ceremony for the new regional prefect, and in that way to express their opposition to the Herakles plantations. But before the ceremony took place, a squadron of police and soldiers burst into SEFE’s offices, arresting Nasako and five villagers.

“They were trying to silence us and goad the villagers into violence,” states Nasako. “But we insisted that it was to be a peaceful demonstration and we urged people not to resist arrest, since that would just give them an excuse to make more arrests and file more complaints.”

Despite these bullying tactics, 400 people came to pick up the tee-shirts. While they were on their way to the ceremony, they were violently attacked and brutalised by police and soldiers, who prevented them from entering wearing the tee-shirts.

Nasako is still awaiting his court date and does not know the charges against him. The five others were arrested and charged with taking part in the organisation of an illicit public meeting.

Meanwhile, Herakles filed a separate complaint against Nasako, accusing him of defamation and suing him for damages and interest. This proceeding is also pending.

“I won’t be able to afford the damages if I lose,” says Nasako. “So in that case, I would have to go to prison.”

The risk of prison and the threats on his life have not managed to discourage Nasako. He is convinced that the communities are winning. Herakles Farms seems to be having financial problems now, and the government’s has forced the corporation to reduce the size of its project to 20,000 hectares.

But that’s not enough for SEFE and the villagers: they want to see the project canceled.

“We have to keep up our resistance,” cautions Nasako. “The corporation has been silent for a while, for reasons that aren’t entirely clear. We can’t let down our guard until it is officially announced that the contract has been terminated. Other corporations are coming to the region. We know, for example, that Cargill is working with the international NGO Proforest to acquire land in a neighbouring district, just south of the project proposed by Herakles.”

CHAPTER 5

NEW FRONTIERS FOR OIL PALM EXPANSION



The Americas

Palm oil is not something you would associate with a Mexican kitchen. But go to any supermarket in the country, and you will find countless products containing it. The country's food system has changed immensely since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect in 1994 and multinational companies moved in to take control of the country's food supply. The alarming rate of obesity, now higher than that of the US, is one manifestation of Mexico's changing food landscape, and tied to this is the escalating consumption of palm oil.

Palm oil consumption has increased by over four times since NAFTA was signed, and it now accounts for one quarter of the vegetable oil consumed by the average Mexican, up from 10% in 1996. Other

countries in Latin America undergoing similar changes to their food systems have also increased their consumption of palm oil. Venezuelans have doubled their intake, and Brazilians are consuming 5 times what they did in 1996.

This growing consumption is matched by growing production, not in Mexico, but in those countries where oil palm can be most cheaply produced. A third of Latin America's palm oil exports now go to Mexico.

Colombia, with about 450,000 ha under production, is the biggest palm oil producer in the Americas. Since the late 1990s, Colombia's palm oil production has taken off for several overlapping reasons, including government incentives and a national biodiesel mandate. Oil palm has also been promoted as a substitute crop for coca as part of the US-backed "Plan Colombia" – a programme aimed at ending the country's long-standing armed conflict and curbing cocaine production. Paradoxically, palm oil is also proving a useful way for drug cartels, paramilitaries and landlords to launder money and maintain control of the countryside.

The most notorious land grabs for palm oil in Colombia have occurred in the north west Chocó province, where businessmen and paramilitaries have colluded to force Afro-Colombian communities to cede their territories for palm oil plantations and contract farming. After dozens of Afro-Colombian leaders were killed resisting such land grabs, Colombia's Prosecutor General's Office brought forward charges against 19 palm oil businessmen for crimes of conspiracy, forced displacement, and the invasion of ecologically important land. Three of these businessmen have so far been convicted.

Disease outbreaks have limited palm oil's expansion in Chocó Province and most of the expansion has instead happened on the pasture lands of the central and eastern parts of the country, where the oil palm industry claims there is little deforestation and displacement of peasants. But studies show that these pasture lands are in fact typically common areas vital to peasants for the production of their food crops and the grazing of their livestock. The "pasture lands" are often the only lands that peasants have access to, and palm oil companies routinely use force and coercion, including paramilitaries, to take control of these lands from them or to force them into oppressive contract production arrangements. Across Colombia, the expansion of palm oil and the presence of paramilitaries are tightly correlated.

Ecuador, Latin America's second largest palm oil producer, has also seen a recent expansion in oil palm production. While much of its palm oil is produced on farms of less than 50 ha, new expansion is driven by private companies who have been moving into the territories of Afro-Ecuadorians and other indigenous peoples in the Northern part of the

country, leading to severe deforestation and displacement and meeting with stiff local resistance.

Land conflicts over palm oil are also erupting in Central America. In Honduras, peasants in the Aguan Valley have been killed, jailed and terrorized for trying to defend their lands and small palm oil farms from powerful national businessmen who have been grabbing their lands to expand their palm oil plantations with the backing of foreign capital. Ironically, these peasant families first moved into the forests of the Aguan in the 1970s as part of a government land reform programme, and were encouraged to grow palm oil and establish their own cooperatives. The neoliberal policies of the 1990s and a coup d'état in 2009, opened the door for powerful local businessmen like Miguel Facussé, to destroy the peasant cooperatives, violently grab lands for plantations, and reorient the supply chain towards exports for biofuels and multinational food companies. Likewise in Guatemala, where production of palm oil has quadrupled over the past decade, the palm oil sector is now entirely controlled by just eight wealthy families who have been aggressively seizing lands from indigenous communities, such as the Q'eqchi,

Some industry insiders predict that an expansion of oil palm production in Brazil will soon dwarf all other production in the region. Brazil is a net importer, and production has so far been confined to a small area of Pará, in the North. But, unlike in other regional palm oil producing countries where production is dominated by national companies and wealthy landowning families, transnational corporations have recently made significant investments in Brazilian palm oil production, such as the mining company Vale, energy companies Petrobras and Galp, and ADM, one of the world's largest grain traders and a major shareholder in the world's largest palm oil processor Wilmar.

Going further

- Tanya M. Kerksen, "Grabbing Power: The New Struggles for Land, Food and Democracy in Northern Honduras," FoodFirst, 1 February 2013
- Human Rights Everywhere, "The flow of palm oil Colombia-Belgium/Europe: A study from a human rights perspective," 2006

Papua (Papua Province – Indonesia, West Papua Province – Indonesia, Papua New Guinea)

Papua has a long, sordid history of resource extraction by mining and

forestry companies. But only recently has there been much corporate interest in the area's agriculture, and it's difficult to judge how genuine this interest is. Many of the large land deals for palm oil have been acquired by forestry companies that are mainly interested in logging out the trees. Once the trees are gone, the companies are likely to close up shop and move elsewhere.

In Papua New Guinea, 5 million ha have been given to companies as leases for agricultural projects. Eight years ago, 97% of the country's land mass was owned by traditional land holders and communities, now foreign companies control 12% of it. Under the terms of these leases, companies are supposed to establish agricultural projects, which are typically oil palm plantations. But a 2013 study of 36 leases for oil palm projects covering over 2 million ha found that only in five instances did the companies have any real capacity and intention to develop oil palm plantations. Most were only there for the trees.

The situation in Papua is not so different from what has transpired in other parts of the world where oil palm plantations have been established. Oil palm expansion tends to follow the path of logging. The forestry companies that logged out the rain forests of Borneo, like Sinar Mas and Rimbunan Hijau, became major players in the palm oil sector and they are now turning to Papua's forests with the same model, as are a new batch of companies that are more focused on oil palm, such as Wilmar, the Siva Group and Far East Holdings Berhad. Added up, palm oil companies have acquired over 2 million ha for plantations across the Papua area.

Papua's governments are active players in helping these companies to secure lands and override local opposition. Politicians in Papua New Guinea are often financially involved in the deals with oil palm companies, and rarely is consent sought or given from the affected communities where the land leases are taken. In 2011, public protest forced the government to establish a commission of inquiry to investigate the awarding of land leases. In its report to parliament in September 2013, the commission said the land lease system was "marred by shocking corruption and mismanagement". Of the 42 leases it examined, only four had secured consent from local landowners and had viable agricultural projects.

The Indonesian government has been steamrolling ahead with a massive, 2.5 million ha plantations project called the Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE) in the territories of indigenous Malind communities within Western Papua Province. In July 2013, a coalition of 27 organisations made a submission to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Commission urging it to take urgent action to protect the Malind from the MIFEE. The submission

relates how the Indonesian government and foreign and national companies are working together to lure Malind communities into ceding vast extents of their lands for agricultural plantations, particularly for oil palm and sugarcane.

“Consent, where sought, is obtained through coercion, deceit, misinformation and the purposeful manipulation and fragmentation of the Malind’s customary community collective decision-making processes and representative institutions,” says the submission. “Terms of compensation are unilaterally imposed rather than negotiated, at rates of less than 0.86 USD per hectare per year per clan. Without exception, interactions between the company and the communities are held in the constant presence of the military and armed forces, such that freedom of expression is restricted and objections to the proposed developments stifled.”

An estimated 2 to 4 million workers are expected to migrate to the area because of the project, “overwhelming and further threatening the rights and well-being of the Malind who number approximately 52,000 persons.”

Already, 33 land permits have been given to companies for oil palm plantations under MIFEE. Just four companies have 25 of these permits, covering an area of 948,500 ha.

Going further

- Awas MIFEE! website
- Oakland Institute, “On our land: Modern land grabs reversing independence in Papua New Guinea,” November 2013
- AGRA and PANAP, “Land Grabbing for Food and Biofuel (MIFEE Case Study),” 2012
- Longgena Ginting and Oliver Pye, “Resisting Agribusiness Development: The Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate in West Papua, Indonesia,” April 2011

Borneo (Kalimantan – Indonesia, Sabah – Malaysia, Sarawak – Malaysia)

More land has been grabbed for oil palm on the tropical island of Borneo over the past decade than anywhere else on earth. Between 2000 and 2009, the area under oil palm plantations in Borneo more than doubled, from 2.4 million ha to 5.4 million hectares.

Sabah and parts of Kalimantan had already experienced major waves of oil palm expansion. In the 1980s and 1990s, palm oil companies from peninsular Malaysia were allocated huge areas of degraded forest lands

by the Sabah government, while in Kalimantan, starting in the 1970s, the Suharto regime sent millions of families from other densely populated parts of Indonesia to clear forest lands and cultivate oil palm in the territories of indigenous peoples under a national land distribution programme.

The current second wave of oil palm expansion in Borneo continues to target the customary lands of indigenous peoples, who account for about 40% of the island's population. In 2012, there were 108 documented land conflicts between local communities and palm oil companies in Kalimantan alone, with more than 90% of them involving indigenous communities.

Sarawak's Chief Minister Datuk Taib, who has been in power for over 30 years, is particularly aggressive in delivering the lands of indigenous peoples to plantation companies. He orchestrated several changes to land legislation in the 1990s that enabled companies to acquire the lands of indigenous peoples and he opened the door for companies to bring in workers from Indonesia and pay them less than the minimum wage. Indonesian migrant workers now account for about 80% of the labourers in the oil plantations of Sarawak (and 90% in Sabah). Under these conditions, oil palm cultivation has mushroomed, from a mere 55,000 ha in 1990 to 1,164,386 ha in 2009. And, in the process, Taib's family and a small circle of businessmen and politicians around him have used secretive kickback schemes and shell companies to make hundreds of millions of dollars.

Multinational palm oil companies have been deeply involved in the expansion of oil palm in Sarawak and other parts of Borneo. Sime Darby has over 100,000 ha planted with oil palm in Sabah and Sarawak and 45 of the 71 plantations it operates in Indonesia are in Kalimantan. Wilmar, the world's largest palm oil processor, has over 160,000 ha of plantations scattered across the island. Even the Tabung Haji, which manages the savings of Malaysians for the pilgrimage to Makkah, owns 24 plantations in Sarawak and Sabah through its subsidiary TH Plantations, as well as 42,000 ha in East and Central Kalimantan through a joint venture with Felda Global, the world's third largest owner of oil palm planter. TH Plantations has been embroiled in several land conflicts with indigenous peoples in Sarawak, including a conflict in Simunjan with an Iban community that, after getting nowhere with peaceful efforts to stop the company from encroaching on their lands, torched 16 of the companies' tractors.

Some of the largest oil palm plantation operators in Borneo are logging companies that diversified into palm oil in the late 1990s after clearing out much of the island's more lucrative forest areas. These companies are able to convert the extensive forest permits they have

acquired into oil palm plantations or flip the lands to other palm oil companies. Friends of the Earth estimates that logging companies in Sarawak, for example, have acquired around 280,000 ha of lands for oil palm plantations by way of Planted Forest licenses. A number of Sarawak's largest logging companies, such as Samling and Rimbunan Hijau, are now setting up plantations globally in the Indonesian Borneo, Papua and even Africa.

Several major state-backed projects are also in the works that would bring corporate investment in plantations to parts of the Borneo that have not yet been touched by oil palm expansion. The biggest state project is the Kalimantan Border Oil Palm Mega Project, which would involve eighteen, 100,000 ha plantations near the Malaysian border.

Going further

- WALHI Indonesia website
- The Sarawak Report website
- Down to Earth Indonesia website
- Global Witness, "Inside Malaysia's shadow state (Film)", 2013
- Friends of the Earth Europe, "Commodity Crimes: Illicit land grabs, illegal palm oil, and endangered orangutans," November 2013
- Forest Peoples Programme, Sawit Watch and TUK Indonesia, "Conflict or Consent? The oil palm sector at a crossroads," 2013

PART 2

**ANOTHER SIDE OF PALM OIL, IN
AFRICA**

CHAPTER 6

A LONG HISTORY AND VAST BIODIVERSITY



Elaeis guineensis, commonly called oil palm or African oil palm in English; Mchikichi (Swahili) or Odé or dé (Fongbé, Goungbé, Tolligbé). (Photo: ADAPE-Guinée)

There is a part of the world where palm oil is not synonymous with deforestation and plantations, where it is not an export commodity but an essential ingredient in local dishes, and where its production profits peasants not bankers. In Africa, the centre of origin for oil palm, tens of millions of people, most of them women, rely on this tree for food and livelihoods.

The global land grab for plantations puts these people, the oil palms they look after and their traditional systems of production at tremendous risk. Resistance, for them, is not just a matter of holding

onto their lands and forests. It is also a fight for their livelihoods, their cultures, their biodiversity and their food sovereignty.

A long history and vast biodiversity

From the plantations of Malaysia to the small farms of Honduras, all oil palms trace their origins to Africa. It was here, long ago, somewhere in the western and central parts of the continent that people first began to use the plant for their needs. They discovered dozens of uses for the plant, and it soon became an integral part of their food systems and local economies and cultures. In the traditional songs of many countries of West and Central Africa, oil palm is called the “tree of life”.¹

Béninois song: translated into English

Mi kpon détin nin dji aga

Look at the top of this palm tree

Ogbè é do détin nin dji aga don

Look at the life at the top there

Mikpon détin dji aga, mi kpon mi kpon détin nin dji aga don

Look at the top of this palm tree, please look at it

O ho é do han tché nin min

What you can take from my song

Wè gnin do détin nin é do téé

Is this: that the palm tree standing there;

Min dé djro gbè toin nan dou donan lébé nan bo nan non sin

Anyone who wishes to benefit from it should care for it and worship it

Mikpon déman é ton édo non bolo akiza

Look at its leaves which are used for making brooms

Mikpon dékpa nin sin do wè é do non bolo do toh kan

Look at the parts which are used for making ropes to draw water from the well

Détin é ka do té a nan mon dékpa bo mon délian

From the palm tree, you get branches and cakes

Détin do kpo nin dji wè dé sounhlouin gan gan soun gan dé

On the same palm tree there are big stems which hold nuts

Mi kpon ami é ton, a nan mon ami dja kpo atan kpo

Look at the liquids it produces: palm oil and wine

Mindé djro gbè ton nan dou,

Anyone who wants to benefit,

1. The following is based in part on field studies that were carried out by GRAIN in 2013 in collaboration with Réseau des Acteurs du Développement Durable (RADDD) in Cameroun, INADES – Formation (Institut Africain pour le Développement Economique et Social) in Côte d’Ivoire, ONG ADAPE (Association pour le Développement Durable et la Protection de l’Environnement) in Guinée and CEPECO (Centre pour la Promotion et l’Education des Communautés de base) in the Congo.

dékin min wè tchotcho akou non ton son

should know that we get the best quality oil from these nuts;

Mi kpon détin nin dji aga

Contemplez le sommet de ce palmier à huile

In Africa, oil palms on plantations make up only a small percentage of the total. Most oil palms are still grown in the groves in mixed forests. These groves are often cared for and harvested by particular families, passed down from generation to generation. Such semi-wild groves are found in large parts of Africa, from Senegal in the west, to the southern end of Angola, from along the banks of Lake Kivu and Tanganyika on the East African coastline, and even on the west coast of Madagascar. Nigeria contains the continent's largest area of wild or semi-wild palm groves, with over 2.5 million hectares. (See Table 1)

Oil palms are also grown on small farms on the continent. African farmers in West and Central Africa mix oil palms with other crops like bananas, cacao, coffee, groundnuts and cucumbers.

According to the World Rainforest Movement, it is extremely difficult to find reliable figures on the area covered by oil palms in Africa, because of: 1) the difficulty of separating forest areas -containing oil palm trees as one of their components from natural palm groves where oil palms constitute the sole or main tree species; 2) the difficulty of distinguishing between "wild stands" and palm groves that have been part of local communities' agricultural practices for centuries (some natural, some planted); 3) the difficulty of classifying palm stands as family plantations (that may or may not sell the fruit to an industrial processing unit) or as outgrower plantations. contractually linked to an industrial plantation unit; 4) the existence of abandoned industrial plantations that are being used by local communities as if they were natural palm stands; and, 5) the lack of updated inventories of natural palm stands, small scale plantations and industrial plantations.

The type of oil palms grown in Africa are also significantly different from those grown elsewhere. Most palm oil in Africa is produced from the traditional *dura* variety, which grows in the wild, and not the high yielding crossbreeds used on plantations in Africa and elsewhere. Even though the *dura* variety produces less yield compared with modern varieties, many African peasants prefer it because it creates less shade and therefore does not hinder the growth of other crops on their farms. They also favour it for the quality of palm oil it produces, which sells for a premium in local markets.

Area covered by oil palm in selected African countries

Country	Natural palm groves and traditional plantations (ha)	Industrial plantations (ha)	Proportion of total represented by industrial plantations
Angola	--	--	--
Benin	300,000	20,000	6.00%
Burundi	--	10,000	--
Cameroon	25,000	76,500	75.00%
Central African Republic	18,000	1,000	5.00%
Congo, Republic	--	10,000	--
Congo, Democratic Republic of	10,000,004	1,470,005	12.81%
Côte d'Ivoire	140,000	88,000	38.00%
Gabon	--	10,000	--
Gambia	--	--	--
Ghana	--	300,000	--
Guinea	2,000,000	9,000	0.45%
Equatorial Guinea	--	7,000	--
Guinea Bissau	--	--	--
Liberia	--	70,000	--
Madagascar	--	--	--
São Tomé and Príncipe	--	--	--
Senegal	50,000	--	--
Sierra Leone	32,000	18,000	36.00%
Tanzania	--	--	--
Togo	600,000	2,000	0.30%
Uganda	--	10,000	--

Source : World Rainforest Movement 2010

Table 1

Natural reproduction

In Côte d'Ivoire, the survival and reproduction of this plant depend on a small animal, a squirrel known in the Yacouba language as "gbe". The squirrel lives in the trees and eats the ripe palm fruits and spreads its seeds with its droppings; indeed, its behaviour is a reliable indicator of when the fruits are ripe.. Birds are also part of the oil palm's reproductive cycle, carrying the fruits and hence the seeds far away from the parent plant. Some farmers in the central region of Cameroon transplant palm seedlings out of the forests onto small plantations ranging up to just over two hectares.

Palm nuts dropped on the ground by people, mammals, and birds sprout everywhere. In addition, the process of harvesting the clusters and removing the nuts in the forest causes many seeds to fall on the ground, helping to renew the palm groves and encourage the trees to grow around villages.

In the local markets of West and Central Africa, the quality of a palm oil is typically judged by its colour. African women say that the palm oil extracted from traditional oil palms is better because it is more red than that extracted from the modern varieties. In Benin, traditional palm oil sells for 20-40% more in the markets than that from modern varieties.² African women also say that their traditional sauces made with boiled palm kernels have a lighter and thus better texture when made with kernels from traditional palms than with those from modern ones.

A love affair with traditional palm oil in Côte d'Ivoire

Palm oil has long been the vegetable oil of choice in Côte d'Ivoire. The average Ivorian consumes about 10 kilos of it per year. It is used not only for frying but also as a main ingredient for many local dishes, from gombos and other sauces to various dishes made with plantains or fofou. Palm oil gives these foods a particular taste and colour that is highly valued in Ivorian cuisine.

Imports and highly refined palm oil from industrial plantations and modern mills have taken a share of this market from traditional producers. But despite higher prices, consumers remain loyal to traditional palm oil, even in the cities.

A study found that even though traditional palm oil costs at least a third more than industrially grown and processed palm oil, Abidjan's households go through eight times more traditionally produced oil than its industrial equivalent.³

2. Stéphane Fournier, André Okouniola-Biaou, Isaac Adje, "Importance of 'local' commodities: palm oil production in Benin", *Oléagineux, Corps Gras, Lipides*, Volume 8, Number 6, 646-53, November - December 2001



Oil palm kernels on sale in Côte d'Ivoire. (Photo: INADES Formation)

The study found that Abidjan's discerning consumers prefer palm oil derived from wild or semi-wild oil palms (so-called "African" oil) over palm oil derived from modern high-yielding varieties (referred to as "sodepalm" for the former agroindustrial oil palm corporation). They also differentiate among the territories where palm oil is produced, such as Bouaké, Gagnoa, Bouaflé, Adjukru, or Attiés, with preference given to those regions where modern varieties are not cultivated.

According to the study, the highly prized "African" oil, which cooks consider to be the "genuine article," fetches twice the price of inferior-tasting "sodepalm" oil (490 CFA francs for sodepalm oil versus 915 for African oil).

Abidjan shoppers will also consistently buy from certain women at the markets, based not only on which region the palm oil they sell comes from, but also on how close these women are to the producers. Preference is given to vendors who source their palm oil directly from the villages that produce it.

But traditional oil palms offer much more than a high quality palm oil and kernel. Unlike on industrial oil palm plantations, African

3. Emmanuelle Cheyns, "La consommation urbaine de l'huile de palme rouge en Côte d'Ivoire : quels marchés ?" *Oléagineux, Corps Gras, Lipides*, Volume 8, Numéro 6, 641-5, November-December 2001

communities use every part of a traditional oil palm, from its roots to its branches to produce everything from wines and soups, to soaps and ointments, traditional medicines and animal feeds, and even a whole range of textiles and housing materials (see Table 2).

Palm wine in the Congo



Villagers relaxing with a few bottles of palm wine at the end of the day in the fields. (Photo: CEPECO-Congo)

In the Congo, wine made from oil palms has various uses.

- Palm wine is mixed with certain leaves and used to treat fractures and palsies.
- Palm wine is mixed with other products is used to treat endemic diseases.
- Palm wine spiced with a very hot local pepper variety is an effective cold and flu remedy.
- Palm wine is used to treat snakebite and to alleviate breastfeeding-related difficulties in lactating women.

Various uses of oil palm in West and Central Africa

Part	Foods	Cosmetic	Medicine	Textiles	Construction	Other
Roots			Treatment of fractures, in combination with other plants			
Trunk	Larvae from insects living in the trunk, palm wine (known as Choukoutou en Côte d'Ivoire, Sodabi au Bénin)		Black soap for treatment of dermatitis		Beams, roofing, fences	Firewood
Leaves			Excision (Guinea)	Mats, mattresses, screens, brooms, baskets, bins, fans		Hedges of traditional convents (Benin), used to build fetiches for sacred forests (Guinea)
Branches				Twine, rope, masks	Fencing for fields and sacred forests	Catholic palm celebration
Flowers	Palm wine (and alcohol distilled from it)	Soap	Soap			
Whole fruit (Palm oil extraction)	Red oil for cooking: stews, deep-frying, etc.	Soap, ointment, milk	Earache, body care, remedy for food poisoning, smallpox, eye irritation	Spiny clusters used as fuel after fruit is removed		Customary and religious practices
Kernels (extraction of palm kernel oil)	Snacks, palm kernel oil, animal feed (hogs, poultry)	Body care	Earache, soap			Warding off evil spirits
Hulls					Filling of lots, paths, roads	Fuel, forge, cooking
Oilcakes				Fire	Walls	Animal feed

Table 2

Traditional medicines from oil palms in Cameroon

(by Marie-Crescence Ngobo, RADD)

All parts of the oil palm, including its byproducts, are raw materials for making indigenous remedies. The Yambassa people in Mbam use the leaves of traditional oil palms to treat tooth decay. Palm wine mixed with various other ingredients is used as a remedy for male impotence, chlamydia, gonococcal infections, stomach ache, jaundice, and measles.

The Mvele, a Beti sub-tribe, prepare a meal of hearts of oil palm for new mothers, as it stimulates milk flow.

Black palm kernel oil, which the Bantu call manyanga, has a range of cosmetic and medicinal applications. It is used in skin and hair care and is an indispensable and ubiquitous ingredient in formulas for newborns. All modern maternity wards strongly recommend it in place of other baby formulas. It has been shown that children rubbed with manyanga are less susceptible to disease. In former times, the Beti used a mixture with other ingredients as a pigmentation agent for children born lighter-skinned, who were more likely to become sickly.

Palm kernel oil also lowers fever in children. Mixed with other ingredients, it is a good remedy for stomach ache and is also administered for malaria, cough, and earache.

The roots can be chewed on to relieve a toothache. They are also a good nasal decongestant.

The burned husk is an antiseptic and an antibacterial. For a persistent stomach ache, consumption of powdered coal from the traditional palm nut is advised. Coal made from the kernel also serves as a teeth whitener and communities in southern Cameroon use it as a toothpaste. Ash from the burned tree bark relieves boils.

Ash from the leaves of teis boiled for many hours until the water is gone. A valuable type of salt is produced by burning the tree's branches, then dissolving the ash in water and boiling the solution for hours. The resulting powder was used for cooking before being supplanted by salt from other sources. Women with babies and young children should always keep a supply of this salt on hand, as it is an ingredient in traditional remedies for conditions affecting children.

Oil palm fronds are also used to treat sprains.

CHAPTER 7

OIL PALM PRODUCTION IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA



Artisanal palm oil production in Guinea. (Photo: ADAPE Guinée)

Oil palm in Basse-Guinée and Guinée Forestière

(by Alphonse Yombouno, ADAPE-Guinée)

The oil palm is has long been valued because of its multiple uses.

All parts of the plant, from the roots to the flowers to the by-products, are used for food, traditional medicine, and for their important sociocultural value.

Palm groves and oil processing, along with the other services related to palm production, have historically contributed to the development of our local economies and still do today, since these products are used in our communities for food (palm oil, wine and alcohol) and traditional medicine (soaps made from palm and palm kernel oils, ointments derived from palm kernel oil).

Peasants who earn part of their livelihood from oil palms are careful to protect them at all times, trimming the surrounding vegetation to prevent brush fires or other phenomena from harming the trees.

Throughout the Guinée Forestière and Basse-Guinée regions, small-scale palm oil extraction is a very important economic activity for nearly all families and peasant farms. The industry employs not only growers but also processors and merchants.

The red oil is used as a remedy for food poisoning and smallpox, while palm kernel oil is used to treat earache.

Some communities in the two regions prefer to harvest natural stands of oil palms in the forest instead of planting palm groves. However, large corporate plantations, individual growers, and research centres use trees imported from Côte d'Ivoire.

There are mills in each region for processing the kernels into palm kernel oil, offering an income-generating opportunity for producers in rural communities and a source of soap for consumers.

In addition to oil, the main products extracted from the palms are fibre from the leaves and a beverage, known as bandji in the Maninka language or touguiyé in Susu, from the sap.

Naturally brewed palm wine is sold in small containers or bottles along roads and in hotels and bars throughout Guinea. This traditional beverage is often used in celebrations (weddings, customary or religious rites), most notably in sacred groves in forested regions.

Fibres and kernels left over from oil extraction are dried in the sun to be used as fuel for the future batches of palm oil. The ash from the process is spread on fields as fertiliser.

The oilcakes (fibre and nut chaff) produced as a byproduct of the process are used as feed for cattle, pigs, and poultry.

Processing techniques for oil palm products (palm oil, palm kernel oil, palm wine, and distilled palm alcohol) are a common feature of the history and traditions of these regions.

History of oil palm use in the Bas-Fleuve District, DRC

(by Pastor Jacques Bakulu, CEPECO Congo)

Even before colonisation, our ancestors knew and valued oil palms as a food, as well as in economic and social terms. The plant was a boon to them as they drank its wine, cooked with its oil, used its branches as building materials, and so on.

Our ancestors would pile the ripe palm fruits in holes dug for the purpose¹ and allow them to ferment. The fruits were left for a considerable time before being mashed in a mortar, producing a thick paste.² While in West Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea), small-scale palm oil extraction is done by the grower or buyer of the “raw” fruits or clusters, in the Congo this is not the case. Here, the paste was cut into blocks, packed, and then sold or traded to the colonists or to neighbouring countries, where the palm oil itself was extracted. This activity was an important source of subsistence income for many families, and the wealth of a clan or family could be gauged by their ability to process palms in this way.

Even today, the holes dug to ferment ripe palm fruits constitute historical evidence of the existence of each village, or even each clan, in the Bas-Fleuve region.

The existence or ethnic affiliation of a village lacking a “mabulu ma zieta” is subject to challenge on the grounds that the ancestor was incompetent or never existed in the first place. Thus, oil palm is bound up with the history of populations existing today in our area of activity.

The economic importance of oil palms to Africa is huge, particularly when it comes to women. They handle most of the production, from the harvest and processing of palm oil, to the sale of the oil and other oil palm products in the local markets. The income they earn makes a critical contribution to their households. In the south of Benin, for example, around a quarter of all women earn some part of their income from the processing and sale of palm oil.³

“In Guinea, the oil palm sector is still today a source of stable employment, and as such helps to stem the rural exodus and to develop the local economic fabric. It plays an important subsistence role for peasant families thanks to the many business opportunities it provides and the multiple uses it has in the traditional economy,” says Alphonse Yombouno of ADAPE-Guinée. “Every able-bodied individual is put to

1. These holes are known in the Kiyombe dialect as mabulu ma zieta – literally, “mixing hole.” Kiyombe is a spoken by the Yombe tribe, a subgroup of the Kongo, in the Bas-Fleuve District, Province of Bas-Congo (see administrative map of Bas-Congo, above).

2. This paste was called zieta in Kiyombe.

3. Stéphane Fournier, André Okouniola-Biaou, Isaac Adje, “Importance of ‘local’ commodities: palm oil production in Benin”, *Oléagineux, Corps Gras, Lipides*, Volume 8, Number 6, 646-53, November - December 2001

work during the production, processing, and marketing of these products.”

This informal sector, managed mainly by rural women, continues to supply Africa with most of its palm oil, the vegetable oil of choice for much of Africa, despite the competition from industrial plantations. Table 3 shows how small scale producers account for most of the market in some of the African countries that consume the most palm oil.

The reality, however, is that a growing amount of palm oil is being imported into African countries, oil which could easily be supplied by small scale producers if the proper policies were in place. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), for instance, where small-scale producers produce nearly 90% of the country’s domestic palm oil production, imports have grown to account for 81% of the domestic market. If those imports were curtailed and the domestic sector was protected from foreign oil palm companies, it would open up a tremendous economic opportunity for rural women in the DRC.

Percentage of domestic palm oil market supplied by small scale processors

Country	%
Benin	83
Côte d'Ivoire	58
Ghana	60-80
Nigeria	80
Liberia	50

Source: World Rainforest Movement 2010, CTA¹, SmallStarter²

Table 3

Oil palms in Benin: The inconvenient truth

(by Hubert-Didier Madafimè, journalist, Radio National Bénin)

Oil palm was Benin’s first export industry, before undergoing a decline in the early 1970s despite significant advances in scientific research. Oil exports have declined sharply since then and only 40% of domestic vegetable oil requirements are now covered by domestic production (280.000 tonnes in 2005). This was the situation when President Thomas Yayi Boni took power in 2006. Boni had stated that the oil palm sector would be revitalised along the same lines as the cotton sector. He announced this at the beginning of his first term, in conjunction with an investment of 14 billion CFA francs in cotton. But

Boni either did not know or was not told that the oil palm sector in Benin faces problems linked to growing conditions that will make it hard to boost production.

In order for oil palms to thrive and produce a good yield, two basic conditions have to be met: annual rainfall must be at least 1800 mm and it must be spread fairly evenly throughout the year. Benin no longer meets these requirements. Rainfall is only 1000–1200 mm and it is highly seasonal. Even the south, the region best suited to growing oil palms, is rainy only half the year. While Benin produced 100,000 tonnes of palm nuts per year in the 1960s and exported processed palm oil from factories inherited from the colonial regime at Avrankou, Gbada and other sites, today the country finds itself at a disadvantage if it wants to capture a share of the world market for palm oil. Its competitors include Malaysia, where it rains almost every evening, and neighbouring African countries with higher rainfall than Benin, such as Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and Cameroon. These countries all boast better yields of nuts and oil. For example, one variety developed at Benin's National Agricultural Perennials Research Institute at Pobe (66 km north of Porto-Novo or 100 km from Cotonou) yields 34 tonnes of nuts or 9.8 tonnes of oil per hectare per year in Malaysia. The same variety yields 24 tonnes per hectare per year in Côte-d'Ivoire. At the station in Benin, where the plants are carefully tended, it yields only 14 tonnes of nuts per hectare per year, while in peasant plantations it rarely achieves 6–8 tonnes.

It was this fact that led Boni to retain the services of a Malaysian oil palm expert in an attempt to put his announced intention to revitalize the sector into effect. It was only after the expert had arrived in the country that the government realised it did not have enough land available for the projects being proposed. Then began a race against the clock to persuade people to sell or lease their land for oil palm production – a race that ended in failure. In Lokossa they were chased out by machete-wielding locals who remembered an earlier episode, in 1966, when the government had expropriated local landowners for an oil palm project at Houin-Agamey, one whose negative effects are still being felt today. The government quickly realised that there was no vacant or even fallow land available: it was all owned by families or communities, and there was no way to wrest it away from them. A few months later the expert left Benin with nothing having been accomplished. He was rumoured to have stated before leaving that “Conditions in Benin are not suited to the growing of oil palms.”

Yet Benin was, in the 1960s, the subregion's leading producer of palm oil. With the departure of the Malaysian expert, the announced reforms could not be put into effect. Since the withdrawal of government support, a number of cooperatives (Houin-Agamey, Hinvi, Grand

Agony) have been plagued by problems related to abuse of trust and suspected mismanagement, and the whole sector has suffered as a result. Today, one is tempted to state that the Beninois oil palm sector has practically ceased to exist.

The oil palm sector in Côte d'Ivoire

(by Kadidja Kone, INADES-Formation, Côte d'Ivoire)

A participatory survey of practices for the processing of traditional oil palm byproducts, involving interviews and field observation, was conducted in Dakouépleu and Douèléu, two Yacouba villages in the Logoualé sub-prefecture (Department of Man, western Côte d'Ivoire). In this region, oil palms are grown and harvested in the wild.

The respondents stated that the oil palm is a gift from nature; that their ancestors were born from God and found that the oil palm had been given to them. For the Gouro people of west and central Côte d'Ivoire, "The oil palm is what Bali, God the creator, gave human beings before putting them on the earth. He gave it to them for food. Human beings and palm trees are one and the same: we are both here on the earth. It watches over us, as God intended. That is why this tree never dies; even under the hottest sun, even in the dry season, it stays green." In terms of symbolism, the palm is the emblem of beauty and goodness; with the feeling of fresh humidity it gives off, it is seen as calm, gentle, and peaceful.

Plans to expand oil palm production in Africa are having negative impacts on the means of subsistence of local populations, both for those affected by existing plantations or people living in regions targeted for new ones. Most of the African countries to which the oil palm is native are being pushed by their governments and by foreign financial institutions into a production model that causes problems for local populations. Millions of hectares have already been set aside for palm oil-based agrofuel production, with the result that whole communities are being pushed off their land. They are losing their livelihoods and watching their biodiverse natural ecosystems give way to palm monocultures. Women in particular are losing a valuable source of income offered by palm oil.

In Côte d'Ivoire, industrial corporations (Palm Côte d'Ivoire, Palmafrique, Société Internationale de Plantations et de Finance en Côte d'Ivoire (Sipefci)) have occupied some 250,000 hectares with palm plantations.⁴ Alongside the modern plantations, natural or wild palm groves still exist, especially in the south and central portions of the

4. Claudie Haxaire, *L'huile de palme chez les Gouro de Côte d'Ivoire* in *Journal des africanistes*. 1992, tome 62 fascicule 1, pp. 55-77.

country, the gallery forests of the northern savannas, and the montane area of Man. Unrefined red oil, prized throughout the country, is produced in artisanal fashion from these trees.

The red oil is an ingredient in stews such as wild spinach stew (sauce feuille) and dried or fresh gumbo stew (sauce djumblé, sauce kopé). It is also found in common dishes based on plantains, manioc, or yams: fufu (boiled plantain or yam pounded into a dough), attiéké (fermented manioc) stew, “red” attiéké made from boiled yams, and alloko (fried plantains). Red oil is incorporated into gumbo stews as a condiment, rather than being used to fry meat or fish as refined palm oil would be, presumably because it gives them a distinctive colour and taste. But in wild spinach stews, red oil may be used to fry the fish or meat.⁵ Thus, each of these oils has a number of specific uses.

Traditional oil palms produce an abundant crop from January to May, with production tailing off in June and July.

Oil pressed from wild palms keeps for 5 to 7 months; the women who use it state that its shelf life can be extended by adding a ripe plantain or some sugar to the oil. The barrel containing the oil is then placed on a pallet. Traditional palms are exploited on a small-scale basis, and the skills for doing so must be learned from elders. The equipment used remains the same as in former times. The women note that a few young men have gotten into palm processing in recent years.

The oil obtained from the nuts is used in cosmetics and to produce a soap considered a remedy for fever and skin conditions (acne, ringworm).

Oil palm roots mixed with other medicinal plants are administered as a remedy for swelling.

The tree’s wood can be used to build beds and stools, while strips cut from the palm frond’s leaflets are woven into baskets, dryers and hoop nets. They can also be bound together to make brooms.

Whole palm fronds are used for fencing and roofing (houses, showers).

The central spine of the leaves, the rachis, is boiled down into a traditional salt that is rich in potassium and low in sodium. It is recommended for people who are on low-sodium diets.

In conclusion, local knowledge related to the oil palm constitutes a rich heritage that can and should be capitalised on to safeguard Ivorian and African biodiversity. While the plantations and factories of the industrial system employ relatively few workers – several thousand at best – the traditional system provides products and income for millions

5. La consommation urbaine de l’huile de palme rouge en Côte d’Ivoire : quels marchés ?, *Oléagineux, Corps Gras, Lipides*. Volume 8, Numéro 6, 641-5, Novembre - Décembre 2001, Dossier : L’avenir des cultures pérennes

of people, women in particular, who are involved in the harvesting, processing, and marketing of palm oil, kernels, and wine.

CHAPTER 8

THE GLOBAL LAND GRAB FOR OIL PALM PLANTATIONS HITS AFRICA

The rush to develop oil palm plantations in Africa is a double whammy for the continent. Not only does it involve a huge land grab of peoples' lands and food producing resources, it also directly undercuts the livelihoods of millions of people involved in Africa's traditional oil palm sector.

This is not the first time foreigners have pushed an expansion of oil palm in Africa. During the the colonial occupation of the continent, the European powers became interested in palm oil as an industrial lubricant and for making candles. African families were forced to pay a special tax, known as the "takouè" to the colonial authorities, in the form of palm oil and palm nut. King Léopold II of Belgium forced every farmer in the province of Equateur in the Congo to plant 10 palms a year.¹

The European powers also established their own oil palm plantations around this time. Plantations were created in West and Central Africa as well as in Southeast Asia. Research stations and collection missions were launched to develop high yielding varieties of oil palms through the cross breeding of traditional or wild varieties.

With independence, most of these plantations and research stations were nationalised, and the new African governments reenergised the expansion of national production. In Bénin, for example, the state-owned Société Nationale du Développement Rural (SONADER) led an expansion of oil palm plantations in the south immediately after independence, while another state-owned company, the Société Nationale pour l'Industrie des Corps Gras (SONICOG) built new palm oil refineries and palm nut processing factories.

1. World Rainforest Movement, "Oil palm in Africa: past, present and future scenarios," 2010

But, at the end of the 1990s, World Bank and donor imposed structural adjustment programmes forced African governments to privatise their national palm oil companies and to sell off their mills and plantations. While many national companies simply crumbled away, European companies with old colonial connections captured the most lucrative operations. SOCFIN, controlled by billionaires Vincent Bolloré of France and Hubert Fabri of Belgium, took over national companies in Cameroon, the DRC, Guinea and Nigeria. SIAT, controlled by the family of South African diamond magnate Ernest Oppenheimer and the Belgian Vandebecck family, took plantations in Gabon, Ghana and Nigeria, while another old money Belgian company, SIPEF took over a chunk of the state-owned oil palm plantations of Côte d'Ivoire. Unilever, one of the world's largest and oldest food companies, scored plantations too – in the DRC, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

Today there is a second wave of foreign interest in oil palm plantations in Africa. With land for oil palm plantations becoming more difficult and expensive to acquire in Malaysia and Indonesia, companies and speculative investors are keen to open up new frontiers for export production. Some investment is going to Papua and to Latin America, but the biggest target is Africa. A long list of companies, from Asian palm oil giants to Wall Street financial houses, are scrambling to get control over lands on the continent that are favourable to oil palm, especially in the West and Central regions.

Over the past five years, vast areas of land in Africa have been allocated to foreign companies for oil palm plantations by African governments, with minimal if any consultation with the affected populations and many allegations of corruption. Annex 1 lists 60 deals covering nearly 4 million hectares over the past decade and a half.

A number of different actors are involved. There are established Asian plantation companies, like Wilmar and Sime Darby, and multinational palm oil traders, like Cargill and Olam, both looking to establish a new basis of palm oil supply for global markets in Africa. But many of the first movers are in fact small obscure companies, typically domiciled in tax havens, whose owners intend only to sign land deals and then sell their companies as soon as possible to larger players with the capacity to develop the plantations. In many cases it is difficult to work out who the owners of these companies are.

CHAPTER 9

WELL OILED RESISTANCE



Resistance to a landgrab for a new oil palm plantation in Cameroon. (Photo : SEFE)

The communities facing land grabs from palm oil companies are under tremendous pressure to accommodate them, with pressure coming from the companies, the government, the local chiefs and even the army and paramilitaries. Those who resist face arrest, harassment and violence. And yet communities in Africa and around the world, from Papua New

Guinea to Sarawak, from Cameroon to Guatemala, continue to struggle to stop palm oil companies from entering their lands.

Communities in southwest Cameroon have been involved in a three year struggle to stop the US company Herakles Capital from setting up an oil palm plantation in their area. Despite support from the president of Cameroon, Herakles has been unable to move forward with its plans because the communities are united in their total opposition to the plantation and because of the creative actions that they have undertaken, with support from national and international partners, to put pressure on the company to leave. The company and the government keep coming back and presenting new terms, the latest being a presidential decree that reduces the land allocated to Herakles from 73,000 ha to 20,000 ha and boosts the rent that the company must pay. Community leaders have been arrested and harassed with lawsuits. Yet the communities are sticking to their bottom line demand – no oil palm plantations on their lands.

Cameroon is also a target for the Luxembourg based company SOCFIN, owned by billionaires Vincent Bolloré of France and Hubert Fabri of Belgium. Over the past decade and a half, SOCFIN has taken over lands for oil palm and other crops in several African countries, including Cameroon, DRC, Guinea, Nigeria, Sao Tome & Principe, and Sierra Leone. The company is notorious for human rights abuses and land conflicts at its operations, and for its aggressive tactics against those who oppose it. In the past few years, the company has slapped defamation suits on several organisations and journalists in Africa and Europe that have spoken out against it.

On June 5, 2013, communities affected by SOCFIN plantations in four African countries held simultaneous protest actions against the company, as a delegation of diaspora from these countries and supported by the French group Réseaux d'Action Transnationale (ReAct) presented a joint letter from the various communities to the Annual General Meeting of the Bolloré Group, which is a major shareholder in SOCFIN.

“This initial international protest is just the beginning. We are committed to upholding our rights and Mr. Bolloré will have to understand that,” said Emmanuel Elong, spokesperson of Synaparcam, the Socapalm resident farmers’ union in Cameroon.¹

1. Synaparcam, SoGB residents committee, Concern Union Citizen, and MALOA, “West African farmers stand up against Bolloré,” 5 June 2013



The Jodbahn Clan convinced Liberia's government to stop the expansion of plantations onto their lands. (Photo: Cargo Collective)

Strong community resistance combined with national and international, well targeted pressure, can roll back land grabs. The Jodbahn Clan in Liberia provides an inspiring example. When the British company Equatorial Palm Oil began surveying their lands as part of a deal it signed with the Liberian government, the communities took action to stop the work crews. They then marched to the local government offices to make it clear that they had never been consulted about the deal and that they would never give up their lands for the project. Along the way they were beaten, arrested and thrown in jail. But the communities refused to back down. Local and international NGOs joined their struggle, and exposed what was happening to the world. Finally, in March 2014, community leaders met with the Liberian President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and secured a commitment from her to stop the company from expanding on their lands. Now Liberian groups are hoping to replicate these efforts with other affected communities in the country.²

The many different efforts to resist land grabs and maintain local control over palm oil production in Africa, Asia and Latin America demonstrate how committed local communities are to maintaining

2. For more information about the case see: <http://sdiliberia.org/node/263>

control over their ancestral lands and their biodiversity, for themselves and for future generations.

ANNEX 1 : LAND GRABS FOR OIL PALM PLANTATIONS

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Angola	Atlântica Group Portugal	Contract signed, no implementation 5000	AfriAgro is a subsidiary of the Portugal-based Atlântica Group. The Angolan company is a joint venture with 3 Angolan companies (Nzogi, Yetu, Coroa Gest, Lion), in which Atlântica Group owns 45%. The companies acquired a 50-year lease on 5,000 ha of land near the city of Ambriz in Bengo Province, Angola, with an initial investment of 35 million euros (US\$ 46.6 million). The companies intend to expand to 20,000 ha and supply palm oil to Sonangol, the Angolan national fuels company, for biofuels. There is no post-2010 information available on the project.	LM T101 Macau Hub (March 15 2007) : http://tinyurl.com/Ino856j WRM map http://tinyurl.com/lpc6wise Oil palm in Africa (Carrere, 2010, p16).
Cameroon	Cargill US	Negotiations, in process 50000	In May 2012, an official at Cameroon's Investment Promotion Agency met with Cargill representatives and told Reuters that they had discussed plans for Cargill to invest \$390 million in a 50,000 ha oil palm plantation. Cargill declined to confirm the report, but local sources say that Cargill, in collaboration with NGO Proforest, has already organised a meeting with local communities in the country's Southwest to discuss its plans for establishing palm oil production in the area.	http://tinyurl.com/n8by4ha Communication with Nasako Besingi.
Cameroon	Herakles Capital US	Contract signed, implementation 20000	Herakles Farms is an affiliate of Herakles Capital, a venture capital firm based in New York City, that is pursuing the acquisition and development of oil palm plantations on over 80,000 ha in West and Central Africa. In 2009 in Cameroon, its subsidiary SG Sustainable Oils Cameroon acquired a 99-year lease, covering 73,000 ha for the development of oil palm plantations. In April 2013, Cameroon's forestry ministry suspended the project pending a review of its public usefulness and then, in June 2013, reduced the size of the concession area to 20,000 ha. Herakles is faced with a complaint process in the US over at its Cameroon operations, an ongoing dispute with former staff members and a subcontractor over the non-payment of salaries and fees and the resignation of several senior staff, including Bruce Wrobel, the CEO of both Sthe Global and Herakles, who announced his retirement in July 2013.	LM T159 http://tinyurl.com/q9vg3to http://tinyurl.com/pcy359 http://tinyurl.com/adtxnprn http://tinyurl.com/mklavvy http://tinyurl.com/lobu6gu
Cameroon	Sinochem China	Contract signed, implementation 20000	Through its Singapore subsidiary GMG Global, the Chinese state oil company Sinochem, acquired a 90% stake in Sud Hévea, a rubber company that was privatised by the Government of Cameroon in 1996. The company controls an area of 45,000 ha for rubber plantations. In May 2013, Sinochem announced that it would be expanding its plantations by 20,000 ha and that it would begin planting oil palm.	Seeds of destruction http://tinyurl.com/K5bg29b + http://tinyurl.com/l3bnbbg + WRM map http://tinyurl.com/mnhjiaz http://tinyurl.com/ka2wjwn

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Cameroon	Siva Group Singapore	Contract signed, in process 200000	Indian billionaire Chimmakaran Sivasankaran, owner of the Siva Group of Singapore, has been investing heavily in palm oil over the past few years. Through his shell company Broadcourt Investments Ltd in the British Virgin Islands, he owns Geof Palm Limited, a company based in the offshore Malaysian centre of Labuan, which owns Biopalm Energy Limited (Singapore), the Siva Group's main vehicle for palm oil investments in Asia and Africa. Through its Cameroon subsidiary Biopalm Energy Ltd, the Siva Group signed an MOU with the Government of Cameroon in 2011 in which the government agreed to provide the company with 200,000 ha for oil palm plantations in the Ocean Department. So far, Biopalm has been issued a provisional 3-year lease by Presidential decree on 28 March 2012 for 3,348 ha within the territories of the indigenous Bagyeli people, who say they did not provide their consent and who have issued a collective petition against the project.	LandMatrix 3200 Palm oil in Africa report (Carrere, 2010, p.32) http://tinyurl.com/m999qp4 http://tinyurl.com/7tutkeh
Cameroon	SOCFIN Luxembourg	Contract signed, implementation 58063	Socapalm is Cameroon's largest producer of palm oil. It was a national, parastatal company formed with assistance from the World Bank in 1963, but it was privatised in 2000 and sold to intercultures, a subsidiary of SOCFIN, a Luxembourg-based company controlled by European billionaires Vincent Bolloré and Hubert Fabri. In 2012, SOCAPALM had 58,063 ha under concessions for oil palm plantations in Cameroon.	LM 1151 WRM map http://tinyurl.com/add354a http://tinyurl.com/khefbuv Oil palm in Africa report (Carrere, 2010, p.31) http://tinyurl.com/m999qp4 http://tinyurl.com/pnuuz75
Congo-Brazzaville	ENI Italy	Contract signed, no implementation 70000	ENI is an Italian energy company majority owned by the Italian Government. In 2009, ENI signed an MoU with the Government of the Republic of the Congo for an oil palm plantation project, known as Food Plus Biodiesel, in the Niari region, in the northwest of the Congo, in which the company intends to produce 340,000 tonnes per year of crude palm oil on 70,000 ha. The project is part of a larger project between ENI and the Republic of the Congo involving tar sands and natural gas development.	http://www.za.boell.org/web/cop17-507.html
Congo-Brazzaville	Fri El Green Power Italy	Contract signed, no implementation 4000	In July 2008, Reuters reported that a joint venture of Italy's Fri El Green Power and Germany's RWE had signed an agreement with the Congolese government to take over the 4,000 ha oil palm plantations of the government owned Sangha Palm Company and Congo National Palm Plantations Authority and to develop oil palm plantations on an additional 40,000 ha over 30 years.	LM T165 http://tinyurl.com/79f9sev http://tinyurl.com/i83sur http://tinyurl.com/l3pknc2

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Congo-Brazzaville	IBECO Corporación Spain	Contract signed, in process 60000	Through its subsidiary Biocongo Global Trading, the Madrid-based company IBECO Corporación claims it will invest \$201 million to develop 60,000 ha of oil palm in the Cuvette and Cuvette-Ouest regions of the Congo. In 2012, the company's president, Eugene Hubert Obba Pèya, signed a protocol for the project with the Government of the Republic of the Congo. The company, which has no previous experience in agriculture and had previously signed an agreement for a wind power project with the Congolese government, says the oil palm project will be managed by a technical team from Colombia. The Directors of IBECO are linked to several other Madrid companies, including Axiala Pointgreen, Global Trading Forum and MIOM Associates. It is not clear how the company intends to raise financing for the project.	http://tinyurl.com/lpvtvX3 http://tinyurl.com/nbg4v2k http://tinyurl.com/k749ywy http://tinyurl.com/mzdst05l http://tinyurl.com/ms5vv4gl
Congo-Brazzaville	Lexus Agric Malaysia	Contract signed, no implementation 50000	In July 2013, Congolese media reported that the Malaysian company Lexus Agric had signed a contract for a palm oil and rubber project with the Congolese government, covering 50,000 ha. The director of Lexus Agric, Jérémie Issamou, is also involved in the Atama Plantation palm oil project in the country.	http://tinyurl.com/kuknafx http://tinyurl.com/l66qqh4 http://tinyurl.com/qc4uzyf
Congo-Brazzaville	Wah Seong Malaysia	Contract signed, implementation 470000	In 2010, the Government of the Republic of the Congo signed a contract with a Congolese registered company called Atama Plantation providing it with a concession of over 400,000 ha within which the company would convert 180,000 ha of mostly forested land in the provinces of Cuvette and Sangha to oil palm plantations while paying the government an annual fee of \$5 per hectare of planted land. When the contract was signed, Atama Plantation was wholly owned by Silvermark Resources Inc, a company registered in the British Virgin Islands. The only publicly available information on Silvermark is that it is owned and directed by two shell companies registered in Brunei. In 2011, ownership of Atama Plantation was transferred to a holding company in Mauritius before finally being sold, in 2012, to Malaysia's Wah Seong Corporation, a "pipe-coating specialist" company with no history in the palm oil sector that is controlled by Malaysian businessman Robert Tan. The unknown owners of Silvermark made an estimated \$25 million from the deal with Wah Seong, while retaining 39% of the shares in the new company.	LM 1166 http://tinyurl.com/hkd62fr http://tinyurl.com/m9pooxag http://tinyurl.com/oej25tv http://tinyurl.com/oej25tv http://tinyurl.com/boomhlg

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Côte d'Ivoire	Grroupe l'Aiglon Switzerland	Contract signed, full operations 7500	In 2009, French businessman Rémy Bayset acquired the Geneva-based financial holding company Grroupe l'Aiglon, which was in the process of liquidation. Grroupe l'Aiglon holds 59% of Société Africaine de Financement et de Participation (SAFIPAR) which holds 70% of PalmAfrique. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire holds the remaining 30%. PalmAfrique owns 7500 ha of oil palm plantations and three processing plants in Côte d'Ivoire.	WRM map Oil palm in Africa report (Carre, 2010, p.36) http://tinyurl.com/n9sqhvb http://tinyurl.com/nsnntko
Côte d'Ivoire	SIPEF-CI Belgium	Contract signed, implementation 12700	Société Internationale de Plantations et de Finance (SIPEF) is a privately held Belgian oil palm and rubber company with plantations in Africa, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. SIPEF was one of three companies to acquire oil palm plantations (on a 99 year lease) when the national palm oil companies were privatised in Côte d'Ivoire in 1997. Today, its subsidiary in Côte d'Ivoire has land concessions for oil palm covering 12,700 ha.	WRM map Oil palm in Africa report (Carre, 2010, p.36) http://tinyurl.com/n9sqhvb http://tinyurl.com/6ac523z http://tinyurl.com/6745glft
Côte d'Ivoire	Siva Group Singapore	Contract signed, implementation 52886	Indian billionaire Chinnakkann Sivasankaran, owner of the Siva Group of Singapore, has been investing heavily in palm oil over the past few years. Through his shell company Broadcourt Investments Ltd in the British Virgin Islands, he owns Geoff Palm Limited, a company based in the offshore Malaysian centre of Labuan, which owns Biopalm Energy Limited, the Siva Group's main vehicle for palm oil investments in Asia and Africa. In Côte d'Ivoire, Siva formed a joint venture with DekerOil, a Cyprus based company founded by Israeli businessman Youval Rasin. The joint venture, CS DekerOil Siva Ltd, registered in Cyprus, is 49% owned by Siva and controls DekerOil's land holdings. By 2013, DekerOil Siva held a 1,886 ha oil palm plantation as well as three separate agreements with cooperatives, small farmers and local landowners giving Siva lease rights to 27,000 ha around Ayenouan and 24,000 ha in Guiry.	LM 3272 http://tinyurl.com/ns9borg http://tinyurl.com/p8kz9d http://tinyurl.com/pgeoe58
Côte d'Ivoire	Wilmar International Singapore	Contract signed, implementation 39361	In 1997, the state owned national palm oil company of Côte d'Ivoire was privatised and sold off to three private companies, including PALM-CI, a joint venture between Unilever, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the national company SIFCA. Palm-CI controls almost 40,000 hectares of oil palm plantations and processes 70% of Ivory Coast's palm oil production. In 2007, Wilmar and Olam formed a 50:50 joint venture called Nauvu Investments and acquired a 27% stake in Sifca. Subsequently, Unilever and the Government sold their stakes in PALM-CI to Nauvu and SIFCA, giving Nauvu 26.5% direct ownership of Palm-CI. SIFCA was founded in 1964 by Ivorian	http://tinyurl.com/p7ngbcc http://tinyurl.com/qhwgql

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Côte d'Ivoire	Grroupe l'Aiglon Switzerland	Contract signed, full operations 7500	In 2009, French businessman Rémy Bayset acquired the Geneva-based financial holding company Grroupe l'Aiglon, which was in the process of liquidation. Grroupe l'Aiglon holds 59% of Société Africaine de Financement et de Participation (SAFIPAR) which holds 70% of PalmAfrique. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire holds the remaining 30%. PalmAfrique owns 7500 ha of oil palm plantations and three processing plants in Côte d'Ivoire.	WRM map Oil palm in Africa report (Carre, 2010, p.36) http://tinyurl.com/n9sqhvb http://tinyurl.com/nsnntko
Côte d'Ivoire	SIPEF-CI Belgium	Contract signed, implementation 12700	Société Internationale de Plantations et de Finance (SIPEF) is a privately held Belgian oil palm and rubber company with plantations in Africa, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. SIPEF was one of three companies to acquire oil palm plantations (on a 99 year lease) when the national palm oil companies were privatised in Côte d'Ivoire in 1997. Today, its subsidiary in Côte d'Ivoire has land concessions for oil palm covering 12,700 ha.	WRM map Oil palm in Africa report (Carre, 2010, p.36) http://tinyurl.com/n9sqhvb http://tinyurl.com/6ac523z http://tinyurl.com/6745glft
Côte d'Ivoire	Siva Group Singapore	Contract signed, implementation 52886	Indian billionaire Chinnakkann Sivasankaran, owner of the Siva Group of Singapore, has been investing heavily in palm oil over the past few years. Through his shell company Broadcourt Investments Ltd in the British Virgin Islands, he owns Geoff Palm Limited, a company based in the offshore Malaysian centre of Labuan, which owns Biopalm Energy Limited, the Siva Group's main vehicle for palm oil investments in Asia and Africa. In Côte d'Ivoire, Siva formed a joint venture with DekerOil, a Cyprus based company founded by Israeli businessman Youval Rasin. The joint venture, CS DekerOil Siva Ltd, registered in Cyprus, is 49% owned by Siva and controls DekerOil's land holdings. By 2013, DekerOil Siva held a 1,886 ha oil palm plantation as well as three separate agreements with cooperatives, small farmers and local landowners giving Siva lease rights to 27,000 ha around Ayenouan and 24,000 ha in Guiry.	LM 3272 http://tinyurl.com/ns9borg http://tinyurl.com/p8kz9d http://tinyurl.com/pgeoe58
Côte d'Ivoire	Wilmar International Singapore	Contract signed, implementation 39361	In 1997, the state owned national palm oil company of Côte d'Ivoire was privatised and sold off to three private companies, including PALM-CI, a joint venture between Unilever, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the national company SIFCA. Palm-CI controls almost 40,000 hectares of oil palm plantations and processes 70% of Ivory Coast's palm oil production. In 2007, Wilmar and Olam formed a 50:50 joint venture called Nauvu Investments and acquired a 27% stake in Sifca. Subsequently, Unilever and the Government sold their stakes in PALM-CI to Nauvu and SIFCA, giving Nauvu 26.5% direct ownership of Palm-CI. SIFCA was founded in 1964 by Ivorian	http://tinyurl.com/p7ngbcc http://tinyurl.com/qhwgql

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
DRC	Feronia Canada	Contract signed, implementation 107892	businessman Pierre Billon, a close friend of Côte d'Ivoire's founding father, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, and soon became the country's leading exporter of cacao. French national Yves Lambelin joined the company in 1978 as its Director General. The company remains majority controlled by the Billon and Lambelin family holding companies-- Parme Investissement and Immoriv SA. The current CEO is Jean-Louis Billon, son of Pierre Billon, and, since late 2012, Minister of Commerce for Côte d'Ivoire.	WRM map http://tinyurl.com/oh3hcbm http://www.feronia.com/ Palm oil in Africa report (p.41)
DRC	Frieha Holdings Lebanon	Contract signed, in process 10000	Feronia is a listed company on the Toronto Stock Exchange that was established by Canadian financial house Lawrence Asset Management. It acquired the oil palm plantations and 107,892 ha land concession of Unilever's Plantations et huileries du Congo and a grains farm in Bas Congo Province. Major shareholders in Feronia include the Siva Group (8%) and the African Agriculture Fund, managed by Phatisa, which invested US\$ 10.5 million in the company in 2012. In 2009 the World Bank's Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency provided Frieha Holdings and its subsidiaries with a US\$4.32 million guarantee to protect its investments in the Congolese company, Congo Oil and Derivatives SARL (COD). That same year, COD acquired a 10,000 ha oil palm concession in Bas-Congo province, Muianda Territory, within two forest reserves.	http://tinyurl.com/nt8kow3 http://tinyurl.com/nxe4cl
DRC	Gruppe Blattner Elwyn USA	Contract signed, implementation 23700	The Blattner Family of the US has been in the DRC for decades and is reported to control around 3 million ha in land concessions in the DRC, including 2.1 million ha acquired through the purchase of Siforco, a subsidiary of Swiss-German forestry company Danzer. The Blattner Family, which operates mainly as Groupe Blattner Elwyn, took over Société Générale de Belgique in the 1980s, giving it ownership of 4 oil palm plantations in the Province of Equateur and one plantation in Oriental Province covering 10,000 ha in total.	WRM map http://tinyurl.com/n2ex5zc http://tinyurl.com/pacydorm http://tinyurl.com/pdfujjh http://tinyurl.com/or3e4hm http://tinyurl.com/7uey9sh
DRC	Hawkwood Capital LLP UK	Contract signed 22000	Hawkwood Capital LLP, through its investment fund, Hawkwood African Crops Limited, owns farms for grains on 25,000 ha in Zambia and a 22,000 ha concession for oil palm in DRC. Hawkwood is directed by brothers Hilary Duckworth and Russell Duckworth.	http://tinyurl.com/n7moomdr http://tinyurl.com/nvverd7 http://tinyurl.com/o2ygljp

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
DRC	Nocafex Belgium	Contract signed, implementation 37800	Nouvelle Compagnie Africaine d'Exportation (Nocafex) is a maritime transport company owned by Belgian businessman Jean-Claude Hoollans. The company has a 37,800 ha concession in Gwaka, Equator Province, DRC where it is developing the production of palm oil, rubber, coffee and cacao. The company is planning to develop an initial 3,000 ha for oil palm.	Oil palm in Africa report (p.14) WRM map http://tinyurl.com/oa3dm4 http://tinyurl.com/nuwpyde
DRC	SOCFIN Luxembourg	Contract signed, implementation 26261	In 2007, Huilerie de Mapangu was acquired by Intercultures, which is a subsidiary of SOCFIN, a Luxembourg-based company controlled by European billionaires Vincent Bollore and Hubert Fabri. SOCFIN changed the name of the DRC company to Brabanta and in 2011 it signed a renegotiated contract, giving it a 25 year lease for 26,261 ha.	LM 3747 http://tinyurl.com/o8lme5g http://tinyurl.com/pnuuz75 http://tinyurl.com/om3wb77
DRC	ZTE China	Contract signed, no implementation 100000	ZTE Corporation is China's largest telecommunications company, with operations in more than 140 countries. In 2007, it established ZTE Energy to invest in biofuels and food production in China and overseas. That same year, it signed a convention with the DRC government to develop oil palm plantations on 100,000 ha but, after constructing a nursery on 200 ha, the company decided to put the project on hold. ZTE's DRC representative says, "The possibility to restart the project is very negative."	WRM map http://tinyurl.com/Zw3dcke http://tinyurl.com/omqwz3x http://tinyurl.com/mjru96 personal communication with ZTE (21 Oct 2013)
Ethiopia	Al Amoudi Saudi Arabia	Contract signed, in process 250000	Saudi-based billionaire Sheik Al Amoudi controls numerous companies within Ethiopia involved in various sectors including hotels, mining and agriculture. His company Horizon Plantion is a joint venture with Ethiopian businessman Jamal Ahmed, Ethiopia's leading importer of palm oil, that intends to develop oil palm plantations within Ethiopia. The company has hired the Malaysian company AgriNexus to develop plantations for oil palm, rubber and other crops on 250,000 ha in Ethiopia.	LM 1241 http://tinyurl.com/k9hxoem http://tinyurl.com/k9kzveq http://tinyurl.com/nqf5k2o
Ethiopia	Fri El Green Power Italy	Contract signed, no implementation 30000	The Italian energy company Fri El Green Power acquired a 30,000 ha lease from the Privatisation and Public Enterprises Supervising Agency of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State of Ethiopia to cultivate oil palm and jatroph. The company takes over the site of the failed Ethio-Korea Palm Oil Project, established in the 1980s. Fri El Green says it plans to invest at least US\$36m in the project	LM 1230 http://tinyurl.com/akrkh8m http://tinyurl.com/k9hxoem
Ethiopia	Karuturi Global Ltd India	Contract signed, implementation 20000	Bangalore-based Karuturi Global Ltd, founded by Sai Ramakrishna Karuturi, is the world's largest producer of cut flowers. Through it's Dubai holding company, Karuturi Overseas, it acquired a 50-year renewable lease on 100,000 ha in the Gambela Region of Ethiopia in 2008 where it intends to	LM 1205 http://tinyurl.com/ady28wg http://tinyurl.com/bcf9f46 http://tinyurl.com/ocw5mt

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Gabon	Olam International Ltd Singapore	Contract signed, implementation 100000	<p>Olam is an Indian non-resident company, based in Singapore. It is one of the world's largest commodity traders and is investing heavily in farming operations and contract farming schemes, particularly in Africa and Latin America. In January 2012, Olam announced a US\$250 million investment to develop oil palm plantations on initial 50,000 ha in Gabon through a joint venture in which 70% will be held by Olam and 30% by the Government of Gabon. As part of the agreement, the government has committed to the joint venture a total land bank of 300,000 ha, most of it forested lands, of which 100,000 ha will eventually be used by Olam for oil palm plantations.</p> <p>The Société d'investissement pour l'agriculture tropicale (SIAT) was established in Belgium in 1991 as a partnership between Pierre Vanderbeek (who until then was responsible for SOCFIN's Nigerian operations), the family of South African diamond magnate Ernest Oppenheimer, and the holding company for a group of Dutch businessmen active in African agriculture called Wienco Holdings. SIAT Gabon was established in 2004 to acquire the state companies HeveGab, Agro Gabon and Ranch Nyanga through a privatisation process. Through these deals, SIAT Gabon acquired a 7,300 ha oil palm plantation in Makouké, Moyen Ogooué Province, on which it currently cultivates 6,500 ha. It recently acquired a new 5,000 ha concession for expansion in the area, where by 2013 it had planted oil palms on over 900 ha. The company told the Gabonese media that it plans to extend its Bindo and Ebel Abanga palm plantations to have 25,000 ha under oil palms in Gabon by 2014. The Oppenheimer family left SIAT around 2010, and in April 2012, SIAT announced that the Chinese state owned oil company Sinochem, through its Singapore subsidiary GMG Global Ltd, would acquire 35% of SIAT for 193 million euros, leaving the Vanderbeek family with 51% and Wienco with 12%.</p>	<p>http://tinyurl.com/p5utcg1 http://tinyurl.com/p6i3lk http://tinyurl.com/k9kzevq</p> <p>LM 2236 from http://tinyurl.com/qzwx8yl http://tinyurl.com/kqebwkl</p>
Gabon	SIAT Group Belgium	Contract signed, implementation 7300		<p>LM 3352 Seeds of destruction (p.33) http://tinyurl.com/kqebwkl http://tinyurl.com/k3h8scz http://tinyurl.com/pk12toh http://tinyurl.com/jduxrs http://tinyurl.com/qe8w5l</p>

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Ghana	DOS Palm Production limited UK	Contract signed, implementation 8094	UK-based DOS Palm Oil was established in 2006 to develop oil palm plantations in Africa. By 2012, the company had 8094 ha under its own plantations in Ghana, and was in negotiations to expand to 20,000 ha. DOS has a London subsidiary Palm Oil Investment Ltd through which UK investors can participate in the plantation. The company sells investors lands that are part of the plantation and managed by DOS, for which the investor acquires a lease in his or her name "with total freedom to sell, reassign and exploit the land themselves" or to sell back to DOS.	LM 3767 Palm oil in Africa report (p.50) http://tinyurl.com/l79qpl (pp.12-13) http://tinyurl.com/n5gaaqz8 http://tinyurl.com/mx9f63y
Ghana	Herakles Capital USA	Contract signed, implementation 4364	Herakles Farms is an affiliate of Herakles Capital, a venture capital firm based in New York City, that is pursuing the acquisition and development of oil-palm plantations on over 80,000 ha in West and Central Africa. In Ghana, the company has acquired over 4,000 ha in the Volta and Dodo Pepesu regions for oil palm plantations by way of its wholly owned subsidiary SG Sustainable Oils Ghana Ltd. Herakles is reportedly looking to sell its Ghanaian operations.	LM 3770 Oil palm in Africa report (p.50) http://tinyurl.com/lk3f294 http://tinyurl.com/lvzx4u2
Ghana	Norpalm AS Norway	Contract signed, full operations 5018	Norpalm SA is a Norwegian company established in 1996 to invest in global palm oil production. It began by investing in oil palm plantations in Ecuador and in 2000 it acquired Ghana's state owned palm oil company, National Oil Palm Ltd, along with the company's plantations and lands totalling 5016 ha, by way of its subsidiary, Norpalm Ghana Ltd, which is 31.4% owned by UK-based PZ Cussons Ltd. All of the crude palm oil produced by Norpalm Ghana is supplied to PZ Cussons. Norpalm has received significant funding from NORAD for its Ghana operations.	LM 3773 http://tinyurl.com/kxpl36v Oil palm in Africa report (p.50) http://tinyurl.com/lheue64
Ghana	SIAT Group Belgium	Contract signed, fully operational	The Société d'investissement pour l'agriculture tropicale (SIAT) was established in Belgium in 1991 as a partnership between Pierre Vanderbeek (who until then was responsible for SOCFIN's Nigerian operations), the family of South African diamond magnate Ernest Oppenheimer, and the holding company for a group of Dutch businessmen active in African agriculture called Wienco Holdings. In 1995, SIAT acquired the state owned Ghana Oil Palm Development Company Limited through a privatisation process. Its wholly-owned subsidiary now has about 21,000 hectares of oil palm plantations at two estates in Kwae and Okumaning in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Oppenheimer family left SIAT around 2010, and in April 2012, SIAT announced that the Chinese state owned oil company Sinochem, through its Singapore subsidiary GMG Global Ltd, would acquire 35% of SIAT for 193 million euros, leaving the Vanderbeek family with 51% and Wienco with 12%.	http://tinyurl.com/md9l2zc

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Ghana	Symbiol AG Germany	Contract signed, implementation 13500	Symbiol AG was established by its main shareholder Schnell Motoren, a manufacturer of CHP engines that run on biogas and/or vegetable oil, to produce vegetable oil for export to Germany for use as biofuel. In Ghana, Symbiol has acquired a 49 year lease for 7000 ha next to Wilmar's Ghana plantations, with an option to expand to 13,500 ha, and has established a nursery. It is also investing in oil seed farming in Russia.	LM 3766 http://tinyurl.com/l5ul4t http://tinyurl.com/kghsqzd
Ghana	Wilmar International Singapore	Contract signed, implementation 6157	Wilmar, one of the world's largest commodity traders and palm oil producers, acquired control of Benso Oil Palm Plantation of Ghana in 2011 from UK-based Unilever and the Government of Ghana, through its Ghana subsidiary, Wilmar Africa. In June 2013, SIFCA acquired a 49.5% share in Wilmar Africa. SIFCA is 27% owned by a joint venture between Wilmar and Olam.	LM 1346 http://tinyurl.com/mwadjdt 18/01/2012 http://tinyurl.com/obg5bz http://tinyurl.com/l575v7u http://tinyurl.com/l5q6952 Palm oil in Africa report (p.73) http://tinyurl.com/mwua372
Guinea	Peak Palm Oil PLC UK	Contract signed, implementation 100000	Peak Oil PLC was incorporated in the UK in 2011. It claims to have a "lease promise" covering 100,000 ha in Guinea, of which 5,000 ha are already under lease, for the development of oil palm plantations and to have established a trial area on 2,000 ha. The company is owned by Mans Ltd, a Seychelles registered company involved in gold mining exploration in Guinea and Ghana that was set up by American and UK businessmen.	http://tinyurl.com/mt79ggt http://tinyurl.com/nxk692s
Guinea	SOCFIN Luxembourg	Contract signed, implementation 22000	SOGUIPAH was a national oil palm and rubber company owned by the Government of Guinea. As part of a privatisation process agreed to by the government and its donors, management of SOGUIPAH was transferred in 1994 to a company 85% owned by Terres Rouges Consultants, with 15% held by the state. Terres Rouges Consultants is part of the SOCFIN conglomerate, controlled by Vincent Bolloré and Hubert Fabri. Eventually SOCFIN took control of SOGUIPAH, along with a 22,000 ha concession provided by the government. The website of the Swiss-based, private company Tropicore International, lists the SOGUIPAH plantations as part of its company, yet there is no public information that links Tropicore to SOCFIN or SOCFIN's owners. In July 2011, violent clashes broke out in the village of Saoro when SOGUIPAH moved to clear land for its plantations.	http://tinyurl.com/qelmezn http://tinyurl.com/pgy6gcv http://tinyurl.com/g9zmdjv http://tinyurl.com/ksfpmfid

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Liberia	Golden Agri-Resources Ltd Singapore	Contract signed, in process 220000	Golden Agri-Resources Ltd is incorporated in Mauritius but operates out of Singapore. It is owned through several offshore companies controlled by the family of tycoon Eka Tjipta Widjaja, Indonesia's richest man, and owner of the Sinar Mas Group. With a total planted area of 457,000 hectares, it is the second-largest oil palm planter behind Malaysia's Sime Darby Bhd. Company documents indicate that, as of March 2013, Golden Agri-Resources was the initial and only investor in the Verdant Fund LP, a British Virgin Islands company that owns GV Holdings Ltd of the Cayman Islands, which owns Golden Veroleum Ltd-Hong Kong, which owns Golden Veroleum (Switzerland) AG, which owns Golden Veroleum (Liberia) Inc., which, in September 2010, signed a contract with the Government of Liberia for a controversial 220,000 ha oil palm concession. In March 2013, Golden Veroleum Ltd received a US\$500 million loan facility from the China Development Bank to finance the expansion of its oil palm plantations in Liberia and Indonesia. Golden Veroleum has indicated on several occasions, including in its concession contract with the Government of Liberia and in its RSPO application, that other investors are involved in the company but information on these investors is not publicly available.	LM 1396 http://tinyurl.com/m657q99 from http://tinyurl.com/n8syswuh http://tinyurl.com/mpwvrftg , 18/01/2012
Liberia	Kuala Lumpur Kepong Malaysia	Contract signed, implementation 168942	Equatorial Palm Oil (EPO) is a UK company listed on the AIM stock exchange that was established by executives from the mining and energy sectors who acquired rights over large areas of land for oil palm development in 2007 and 2008. EPO acquired concession rights over 34,393 ha at Palm Bay and 54,549 ha at Butaw, as well as 80,000 ha under an MOU with the River Cess County government. By early 2013, the Siva Group had acquired a 36.7% stake in the company and had formed a 50:50 joint venture with EPO based in Mauritius, called Liberian Palm Developments Ltd to hold all of EPO's Liberian land concessions. The Siva Group subsequently sold off its interests in EPO to KLK in the second half of 2013, and KLK, one of the largest palm oil companies in the world, then boosted its shares in the company to over 60% by early 2014.	LM 1393 and 1395 http://tinyurl.com/m65cslc http://tinyurl.com/Af7g88w Oil palm in Africa report (p.57) http://tinyurl.com/m65cslc http://tinyurl.com/m73329
Liberia	SIFCA Côte d'Ivoire	Contract signed, in process 16000	In March 2011, the Government of Liberia and SIFCA signed an agreement providing SIFCA with a 25-year renewable, 15,200 ha concession for oil palm plantations and an out-grower scheme in Maryland and River Gee counties. At the same time, SIFCA, through its subsidiary SIPH, signed an agreement with the government to expand its rubber plantations from	LM 3463 http://tinyurl.com/lbat68 http://tinyurl.com/3fu9rc8 http://tinyurl.com/lcc2fir http://tinyurl.com/mfp9cez

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Liberia	Sime Darby Malaysia	Contract signed, implementation 220000	8,000 ha to 35,000 ha in the same counties. SIFCA is 27% owned by the transnational trading corporations Wilmar and Olam, which have been backing the company's expansion in Africa. Malaysia's Sime Darby is the world's largest agribusiness company and palm oil producer. In 2009, the company was granted a 63 year lease for a 220,000 ha concession for oil palm production spanning the counties of Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, Bong and Gbarpoli. A public audit found that the government did not follow a competitive bidding process in awarding the concession to Sime Darby. There was also an absence of consultation with affected communities, and land conflicts have caused significant delays to the project implementation.	http://tinyurl.com/la4cagy 1388 + http://tinyurl.com/muzh-cpu http://tinyurl.com/mpjiz6 http://tinyurl.com/insw2tq http://tinyurl.com/kndyos http://tinyurl.com/llo7td5
Mozambique	MedEnergy Italy	Contract signed, no implementation 10000	MedEnergy Global is a UK-based holding company owned by Italy's Belleli family, which made its fortune in the energy sector. MedEnergy is pursuing a 10,000 ha oil palm plantation project in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado Province. Approval of the project was granted by Mozambique's investment authority in 2011.	http://tinyurl.com/kwz3vx2 , 15/12/2011 Palm oil in Africa report (p.59) http://tinyurl.com/ljzfhjd
Nigeria	Fri El Green Power Italy	Contract signed, implementation 100000	In 2009, Fri El Green Power, an Italian energy company, purchased an 80% stake in the government owned Abia Palm company, with the Abia State Government retaining 20%. Abia Palm has a concession of 11,292 ha, including the former Abia Palm plantation, and a right to extend the concession up to 100,000 ha. Fri El Green Power plans to eventually use the palm oil processed in Nigeria to fuel liquid biomass power plants in Europe.	LM 1679 http://tinyurl.com/mrp8pdz , 20/12/2011 Oil palm in Africa report, p.61
Nigeria	Salim Group Indonesia	Contract signed, no implementation 60000	In March 2014, the Commissioner for Agriculture of Edo State disclosed that De United Food Industries Limited, a subsidiary of PT Indofood, had acquired 60,000 in the state for oil palm plantations. PT Indofood, the largest instant noodle maker in the world, is part of the Salim Group, which is owned by the family of Indonesian tycoon Liem Sioe Liong. The group also owns the Indonesian plantation company PT Lonsum and has been pursuing plantation development in the Philippines through its Honk Kpng holding company, First Pacific.	http://tinyurl.com/mqykpkak
Nigeria	SIAT Group Belgium	Contract signed, fully operational 27500	The Société d'investissement pour l'agriculture tropicale (SIAT) was established in Belgium in 1991 as a partnership between Pierre Vanderbeek (who until then was responsible for SOCFIN's Nigerian operations), the family of South African diamond magnate Ernest Oppenheimer, and the holding	LM 1680 Oil palm in Africa report (p.60) http://tinyurl.com/mzulfw3z http://tinyurl.com/jgsvueu

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Nigeria	SOCFIN Luxembourg	Contract signed, implementation 35900	<p>company for a group of Dutch businessmen active in African agriculture called Wienco Holdings. In 1991, SIAT established a Nigerian subsidiary Presco Industries Limited, with a Nigerian company Presco International Limited (PINL). The joint venture acquired a 3,000 ha oil palm plantation south of Benin City belonging to state owned Oil Palm Company Ltd that had been developed with support from the World Bank. As part of the joint venture, SIAT was to provide a portion of its profits to Megatrade International SA -- a Luxembourg holding company for the owners of PINL. After failing to reach agreement on the amount that SIAT should pay, SIAT bought out PINL in 1997 and paid Megatrade US\$2 million to settle all accounts. SIAT placed Presco Plc on the Lagos Stock Exchange in 2002, and continues to hold 60% of the company. Presco now owns four oil palm plantations covering 12,600 ha, and is pursuing the acquisition of an additional 17,000 ha in Edo State. In 2011, SIAT's subsidiary Siat Nigeria Ltd acquired the assets of another palm oil company, Risonpalm, including 16,000 ha of oil palm plantations, from the Rivers State Government. The Oppenheimer family left SIAT around 2010, and in April 2012, SIAT announced that the Chinese state owned oil company Sinochem, through its Singapore subsidiary GMG Global Ltd, would acquire 35% of SIAT for 193 million euros, leaving the Vanderbeek family with 51% and Wienco with 12%.</p> <p>Okomu Oil Palm Company was established in 1976 as a Federal Government pilot project aimed at rehabilitating oil palm production in Nigeria. The company was privatised in 1997 and listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. SOCFIN is the company's largest shareholder, with a 53% stake. The German development finance institute DEG Deutsche Investitions has a 6.94% share. The lands on which the company operates and intends to expand are contested by the communities living there. In March 2014, the Governor of Edo State announced that the company had acquired a further 20,000 ha for expansion in the state.</p>	<p>http://tinyurl.com/jdxurs http://tinyurl.com/qe8ws5l</p>
Nigeria	Wilmar International Singapore	Contract signed, implementation 19732	<p>PZ Wilmar is a joint venture between the UK-based soap and foods company PZ Cussons and Wilmar International, the world's largest processor of palm oil. Since it was established in 2011, PZ Wilmar has acquired three palm oil plantations in Cross River State with a total land area of around 24,000 ha, and the Cross River State government is reported to be in the process of identifying lands for the company to expand to a total of 100,000 ha. The concessions have already generated conflict with local communities.</p>	<p>LM 3074 http://tinyurl.com/k9gyv9o http://tinyurl.com/i7vxy59 http://tinyurl.com/ldamnj http://tinyurl.com/m7lm6a</p>

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Sao Tome e Principe	SOCFIN Luxembourg	Contract signed, in process 5000	In 2010, the Government of São Tomé e Príncipe signed an agreement with SOCFIN, a Luxembourg-based company controlled by European billionaires Vincent Bolloré and Hubert Fabri, that gives SOCFIN's local subsidiary Agripalma a 25-year concession to develop 5,000 ha of oil palm plantations on the Ribeira Peixe and Porto Alegre estates in São Tomé and on the Sundry estate in Príncipe.	http://tinyurl.com/mramatz http://tinyurl.com/6hh4tno
Sierra Leone	Agri International- al Consultants Corporation UK (Anguila)	Contract signed, in process 52535	Company registry documents show that Agri International Consultants Corporation, a shell company whose owners are not known and registered in the tax haven of Anguila, owns 95% of West Africa Agriculture Ltd (WAA) of Sierra Leone. The remaining 5% is held by Ady Macauley, a lawyer with B&J Partners of Freetown. WAA acquired a 32,441 ha lease in Maforiki Chiefdom in November 2011 and a second for 20,094 in Sorogberna Chiefdom on December 2011. Kevin Goddington, the CEO of WAA, and B&J Partners are involved with several other companies acquiring land leases for oil palm plantations in Sierra Leone.	http://tinyurl.com/p5j3v5z
Sierra Leone	Agrierra Ltd UK	Contracted 2011, project not started 45000	Through its acquisition of Red Bunch Ventures in 2011, Guernsey-based Agrierra acquired a 50-year lease (with an option to renew for a further 21 years) over approximately 45,000 ha of agricultural land in the Pujehun District in the Southern Province of Sierra Leone, where it intends to develop oil palm plantations. Agrierra, which was established by mining venture capitalist and former England cricket star Phil Edmonds, also owns cattle ranches and maize farms in Mozambique, covering nearly 17,000 ha, with plans to expand to over 20,000 ha in the near future. In August 2011, after legal proceedings, Red Bunch surrendered a lease with the Kpanga Kabon-deh Chiefdom of Pujehun District, which overlapped with a lease acquired by African Oil Palm Ltd, now owned by the Siva Group. Agrierra's website still indicates that Red Bunch controls 45,000 ha of land for oil palm in Pujehun.	http://tinyurl.com/66zvkb5 http://tinyurl.com/p5j3v5z
Sierra Leone	Aristeus Agriculture Limited UK	Contract signed, in process 33489	Aristeus Agriculture Ltd was registered in Sierra Leone in September 2009. It is controlled by Kevin Goddington of the UK, with 4% held by his local associates, including Frederic Claye and Ady Macauley of B&J Partners. In December 2010, Aristeus Agriculture acquired a lease for 33,489 ha from the Yoni Chiefdom. Goddington, Claye and Macauley are involved in several other companies acquiring land for oil palm plantations in Sierra Leone.	

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Sierra Leone	Aristeus Palm Oil Ltd Mauritius	Contract signed, in process 47567	Aristeus Palm Oil Limited was incorporated in Mauritius in June 2011. A month later, Aristeus Palm Oil Ltd, a company registered in Sierra Leone to the address of B&J Partners, signed a lease for 47,567 ha with the Sorogberna Chiefdom for the development of oil palm plantations. The lease was signed by Kevin Goddington, as Director of Aristeus Palm Oil Limited. The ownership of the company is not clear, however several other companies linked to Goddington are registered to the same address.	http://tinyurl.com/a9sfcr7 http://tinyurl.com/pyzuqlh http://tinyurl.com/nqhbv3 http://tinyurl.com/3eca8kn
Sierra Leone	Felda Global Ventures Holdings Malaysia	Contract signed, no implementation 2500	The Government of Malaysia's Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) is the world's largest owner and manager of plantation land. In 2012 it was reorganised as Felda Global Ventures Holdings and listed on the main market of Bursa Malaysia Securities Berhad. With the financial support of the Malaysian government and the Islamic Development Bank, Felda launched a project with the Government of Sierra Leone to develop a Felda-style oil palm settler scheme on 1,600 hectares in Southern Bonthe province (Mattru). The Oakland Institute reports that the total area allocated for the project is 2,500 ha. Rather than buy land, Felda says that it wants to replicate its smallholder cooperative model in Africa and sell planting materials and technical expertise in exchange for long-term supplies.	http://tinyurl.com/abjuv6 http://tinyurl.com/Azpx4f8
Sierra Leone	Goldtree Holdings Mauritius	Contract signed, implementation 5200	In August 2010, Goldtree Holdings, a company registered in Mauritius, signed an MoU with the Government of Sierra Leone to set up a large scale oil palm plantation in the Kaliahuh District. The project is backed by Fin-Fund and the Agence Française de Développement, which has committed US\$10 million to the project through the African Agriculture Fund.	LM 3003 http://tinyurl.com/k6s2ex4 http://tinyurl.com/ph9o3az
Sierra Leone	Quifel Holdings Portugal	Contract signed, no implementation 126000	Quifel International Holdings is the Lisbon-based personal holding of Miguel Pais do Amaral, a Portuguese aristocrat, race car driver and businessman. In 2008, Quifel established a Sierra Leone subsidiary Quifel Agribusiness Ltd and signed three, 49-year leases with possibility of extension to 70 years, covering nearly 130,000 ha with communities in the Porto Loko District to prospect for the potential for plantations of oil palm and other crops. Quifel's local offices have since disappeared and the status of the leases is not clear.	http://tinyurl.com/pyzuqlh http://tinyurl.com/qaak6om http://tinyurl.com/0apz9os
Sierra Leone	Sepahan Afrique Iran	Contract signed, in process 10000	Sepahan Afrique is an Iranian conglomerate that has acquired 10,117 ha in the Marampa and Buja Romende chiefdoms of the Port Loko region of Sierra Leone. The company plans to develop rice and oil palm plantations, with the support of Hte Government of Iran. According to Business Insider,	

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Sierra Leone	Siva Group Singapore	Contract signed, in process 203000	landowners in the project area were summoned to the Iranian embassy for an urgent meeting in 2007, where they say they were forced to sign the agreement "under duress" after being informed that the Iranian investors were leaving the next morning and that they had to sign before reading the agreement. They say they signed because they "could not violate the authorities". Indian billionaire Chimakannan Sivasankaran, owner of the Siva Group of Singapore, has been investing heavily in palm oil over the past few years. Through his shell company Broadcourt Investments Ltd in the British Virgin Islands, he owns Geoff Palm Limited, a company based in the offshore Malaysian centre of Labuan, which owns Biopalm Energy Limited (Singapore), the Siva Group's main vehicle for palm oil investments in Asia and Africa. In Sierra Leone, Siva has acquired 41,582 ha through the acquisition of Luxembourg-based Sierra Leone Agriculture Limited in 2011, 39,321 ha through the acquisition of African Palm Oil Limited in 2011, and at least 123,000 ha that has been leased directly through Biopalm Energy Limited in Pujehun, Bo and possibly Kenema districts, for a total of 203,000 ha.	Lease
Sierra Leone	SOCFIN Luxembourg	Contract signed, implementation 12000	Socfin Agricultural Company (SL) Ltd is a subsidiary of SOCFIN, a Luxembourg-based company controlled by European billionaires Vincent Boloré and Hubert Fabri. In March 2011, the Ministry of Agriculture of Sierra Leone signed a land lease with the Paramount Chiefs of Malen chiefdom, Pujehun District, and then, on the same day, signed a 50 year sub-lease agreement for these lands with Socfin Agriculture, giving the company 6,575 ha for oil palm plantations. Despite local opposition to the project, Socfin Agriculture had cleared and planted 3,200 ha by 2013 and is negotiating for an additional 5,500 ha.	http://inyurl.com/om9wmdm
Sierra Leone	West Africa Agriculture Number 2 Limited UK	Contract signed, in process 30700	Company registry documents show that West Africa Agriculture Number 2 Limited (WAA2) is owned by Kevin Goddington of the UK and Frederic Claye of Sierra Leone. Kevin Goddington is also involved in other companies that have acquired large land leases for oil palm in Sierra Leone, such as Sierra Leone Agriculture Ltd, Aristeus Palm Oil Ltd and African Palm Oil Ltd. Frederic Claye has been involved in several Goddington led companies, as well as the Sierra Leone operations for Dubai-based Miro Forestry. In December 2012, WAA2 acquired a 30,700 ha lease for oil palm in Makpele Chiefdom.	

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Tanzania	African Green Oil Ltd UK	Contract signed, ceased operations 20000	African Green Oil Ltd is reported to have acquired land leases covering 20,000 ha in Rungungu and Nyamatanga, Rufiji District, Tanzania. The company cleared land for planting and established a nursery, but is reported to have ceased operations.	WRM map http://tinyurl.com/nvt5nw http://tinyurl.com/nu754kh http://tinyurl.com/vtu889 http://tinyurl.com/qz28668
Tanzania	FELISA Belgium	Contract signed, in process 4253	FELISA is owned by 24 shareholders, mainly from Belgium. It established a 100 ha oil palm plantation 75km from Kigoma, Tanzania, and has acquired another 4,258 ha for oil palm 150km from Kigoma. It is also pursuing another 5,000 ha of production through the development of an outgrower scheme.	http://tinyurl.com/qj5ov5w
Tanzania	Nava Bharat Ventures Ltd India	Contract signed, in process	Nava Bharat Ventures Ltd is an Indian company listed on the national and Bombay stock exchanges. It is involved in the energy, mining and agriculture sectors, including sugar production in India and coal mining in Zambia. The company recently began exploring overseas agribusiness investments and decided to focus on Tanzania. In August 2013, its subsidiary, Nava Bharat Africa Resources Pvt. Limited (NBAR), signed a joint venture agreement with the Government of Tanzania's National Development Corporation (NDC) for an integrated oil palm project. Under the project, which is 80% owned by Nava Bharat and 20% owned by NDC, 10,000 ha have been identified for oil palm plantations and contract farming in Kimala Misale Village, Kisarawe District.	http://tinyurl.com/nj5e4oh http://tinyurl.com/g2bfp2r http://tinyurl.com/nhe2cm4
Tanzania	TM Plantations Malaysia	Contract signed, no implementation 50000	TM Plantations is a subsidiary of TM Global Holdings, an investment fund set up by Tony Tan that is registered in Delaware, US and that focuses on investments in emerging markets. Tm, or Thiam Makmur, also operates an organic farming company, with operations in Pahang, Malaysia. In July 2007, TM Plantations paid preliminary survey fees to the Kasulu District government of Tanzania to investigate the feasibility of establishing an oil palm plantation on 50,000 ha, and the company is also pursuing land acquisitions for forestry. In 2007 Colonel Kabenga Nsa-Kaisi, former chief counsellor to Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa, was appointed to the board of TM Plantations. The company's website was taken down at the end of 2012, and it is not clear if the company is still in operation.	http://tinyurl.com/kwz3vv2 , 15/12/2011 http://tinyurl.com/njv2a86 , 15/12/2011 http://tinyurl.com/o4v9dz7 , 26/01/2012

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

Country	Company and country of investor	Deal Status and area (Ha)	Summary	LandMatrix number and / or sources
Uganda	Wilmar International Singapore	Contracted signed implementation 40000	<p>In 1997 the Government of Uganda, the World Bank and the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) agreed to a joint project to develop palm oil production in Uganda. Two years later, the Government entered into negotiations with Bidco Uganda Limited, a joint venture company formed by Bidco Oil Refineries Limited of Kenya, Wilmar, ADM and Josovina Commodities. US commodities giant ADM owns 16% of Wilmar, the world's largest processor of palm oil, while Bidco is a major importer of palm oil into Africa from Josovina Commodities, a Singapore-based joint venture trading company owned by Wilmar and Malaysian businessman Victor Ngo Swee Chiang. The government eventually agreed to make available 40,000 ha for oil palm production on the islands of Lake Victoria to Bidco Uganda's subsidiary Oil Palm Uganda Limited (OPUL). During the first phase of the project, OPUL was provided with a 99-year lease for 10,000 ha on Bugala Island in Kalangala District where the company has since put into operation an oil palm plantation and an out grower scheme. A second phase is now in process to identify and develop a further 10,000 ha. While the World Bank pulled out of the project in 2004, IFAD has committed over US\$ 70 million in loans to the Ugandan government towards the project. In 2006, the Kalangala Oil Palm Growers Trust, which is governed by a mix of government representatives, project leaders and contract growers, acquired a 10% stake in OPUL using IFAD funds and as compensation for the land leased to OPUL by the government. The second phase of the project also benefits from a grant by The Netherlands Development Organisation.</p>	http://tinyurl.com/phek99m http://tinyurl.com/pjmtu67
	TOTAL	3,528,914		

Annex 1: land grabs for oil palm plantations in Africa

ANNEX 2: LAND GRABS FOR OIL PALM PLANTATIONS IN THE PAPUAS OF INDONESIA AND NEW GUINEA

Region	Company	Origin of company	Area grabbed	Notes and source
West Papua Province (Indonesia)	Daewoo International Corp.	Korea	109,700 Ha	Daewoo is a Korean industrial and shipping corporation that recently moved into agriculture. It acquired three concessions in West Papua for palm oil through the purchase of PT. Bio Inti Agrindo http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/ http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/
West Papua Province (Indonesia)	Korindo Group	Korea	118,800Ha	Korindo is a private Korean company that is mainly invested in forestry, with over 113 million ha in concessions in Indonesia. It has three palm oil concessions in Papua under the MIFEE project. http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/ http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/
West Papua Province (Indonesia)	Sinar Mas	Indonesia	340,000Ha	In its 2007 annual report, Sinar Mas's palm oil subsidiary Golden Agri reported that it had acquired a land bank of 1 million ha in Papua. For reasons that are not clear, the company is no longer reporting these lands as part of its land bank. It has, however, acquired 10 land permits in West Papua covering 340,000 ha of land. http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/ http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/
West Papua Province (Indonesia)	Genting Group	Malaysia	380,000Ha	Genting is a Malaysian conglomerate involved in gaming, hotels and real estate. Its palm oil division is mostly active in Sabah. It has acquired 10 land permits in West Papua for oil palm development under MIFEE covering 380,000 ha. http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/ http://pusaka.or.id/dokumen-submission-cerd-untuk-mifee-25-juli-2013/
Total West Papua Province	4		948,500 ha	

Annex 2: land grabs for oil palm plantations in the Papuas of Indonesia and New Guinea

Region	Company	Origin of company	Area grabbed	Notes and source
Papua Province (Indonesia)	Wilmar	Singapore	23,000Ha	Wilmar, the world's largest processor of palm oil, purchased a 53.7% stake in a subsidiary of Singapore-based Noble Group's Indonesian subsidiary Noble Plantations Pte Ltd., which owns a 23,000 ha oil palm land concession in Papua through its subsidiary PT Harrison Inti Persada. http://www.thisisnoble.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1429%3AWilmar-and-noble-form-palm-focused-strategic-joint-venture&catid=21%3Aannouncements&Itemid=664&lang=en&device=desktop
Papua Province (Indonesia)	Sinar Mas	Indonesia	20,143Ha	In July 2012, Sinar Mas' subsidiary Golden Agri Resources acquired 20,143 ha of forest land for oil palm development in the Jayapura Regency of Papua, where it is also building a refinery and port facilities. http://www.greenomics.org/docs/GAR_Expansion_Papua_June2013.pdf
Papua Province (Indonesia)	Bosowa Group	Indonesia	30,000Ha	Through its subsidiary, PT Tujuh Wali-Wali the Bosowa Group is pursuing the development of oil palm plantations in Papua. The Group is controlled by the politically-connected Aksa family from Sulawesi, where it has business interests in infrastructure, finance and automotive sectors as well as in hybrid rice seeds and maize and oil palm plantations. http://www.downtoearth-indonesia.org/story/more-oil-palm-west-papua
Papua Province (Indonesia)	Alas Kusuma	Indonesia	6,000Ha	Alas Kusuma is controlled by Murdaya Poo alias Po Suwandri, one of the richest men in Indonesia. Through a number of subsidiaries, some controlled by his wife Siti Hartati Murdaya, his group has over 2 million ha of forestry concessions and numerous oil palm plantations across Indonesia. http://www.downtoearth-indonesia.org/story/more-oil-palm-west-papua
Total Papua Province	4		79,143 ha	

Annex 2: land grabs for oil palm plantations in the Papuas of Indonesia and New Guinea

Region	Company	Origin of company	Area grabbed	Notes and source
Papua New Guinea	Far East Holdings Berhad	Malaysia	140,000Ha	Malaysian conglomerate Far East Holdings Berhad acquired an SABL for the 140,000 ha Bewani Oil Palm Development project in West Sepik, under which 26,000 ha are supposed to be for an oil palm plantation.
Papua New Guinea	Kulim Berhad	Malaysia	121,553Ha	Kulim, one of Malaysia's largest palm oil producers, is the controlling shareholder of New Britain Palm Oil Limited, which has operated oil palm plantations in PNG since the 1970s and is part owned by the Government of Papua New Guinea. In September 2013 it had a land bank on PNG of 121,553 ha, with 75,000 ha under oil palm cultivation.
Papua New Guinea	Siva Group	India	110,000Ha	The Siva Group, through its Lebuon registered subsidiary Geoff Palm Ltd, acquired the Malaysian owned company, SPZ Enterprises (PNG) Pty Ltd giving it ownership of the SABL for the 110,000 ha Nungwaia Bongos Integrated Large Scale Agriculture Project in East Sepik Province, where it intends to develop oil palm plantations on 80,000 ha.
Papua New Guinea	Société Internationale de Plantations et de Finance (SIPEF)	Belgium	19,500Ha	The Belgian company SIPEF has operated oil palm plantations in Indonesia and West Africa since 1919. In 2004 it took over Hargy Oil Palms Ltd in Papua New Guinea giving it 9,500 ha of oil palm plantations. The company is now expanding to 19,500 ha on lands it has already acquired.
Papua New Guinea	Rimbunan Hijau	Malaysia	155,893Ha	http://www.hargy.com.pg/about_us.html The Malaysian logging company Rimbunan Hijau is the biggest logging operator in PNG. Several of its forestry concessions in PNG include plans for palm oil plantations, including a joint venture with a company controlled by PNG's Minister for Internal Security in the Gulf Province, as well as the Pulle-Anu Oil Palm Project, the Sigite Mukus Integrated Rural Development Project and the Wawoi Guavi Oil Palm Project.
Papua New Guinea	Joinland Group	Singapore	56,592 Ha	http://www.rhpng.com.pg/pdfs/Oil_Palm_Plantation.pdf The Joinland Group of Singapore, owned by Sarawak businessman Thomas Hah Ting Siu, is the developer of the Central New Hanover Integrated Agroforestry Project in New Ireland Province, which is supposed to involve a 16,000 ha oil palm plantation within the 57,000 ha concession.

Annex 2: land grabs for oil palm plantations in the Papuas of Indonesia and New Guinea

Region	Company	Origin of company	Area grabbed	Notes and source
Papua New Guinea	Samling Strategic	Malaysia	128,100Ha	In 2012, the Malaysian timber and plantations giant Samling paid over US\$ 17 million in cash through its subsidiary Glenealy Plantations to acquire Al-bright Ltd, another Malaysian company with land permits for the 116,400 ha Mekeo Hinterland Integrated Agroforestry Project and the 11,700 ha Abeda Integrated Agro Forestry Project.
Papua New Guinea	Continental Venture Ltd.	Malaysia	112,400Ha	Malaysian owned Continental Venture Limited is the developer partnering with Ursair Agroforestry Oil Palm Development in Madang for a 112,400 ha SABL, that includes 75,520 ha for oil palm plantations.
Papua New Guinea	Kuala Lumpur Kepong Bhd	Malaysia	82,692Ha	Kuala Lumpur Kepong Bhd owns around 250,000 ha of oil palm plantations in Indonesia and Malaysia. Through its acquisition of Collingwood Plantations in 2012 and its subsidiary Ang Agro Forest Management Ltd, it has leases for oil palm plantation development covering 82,692 ha, including the Wanigeia Integrated Agriculture Project in Western Province.
Papua New Guinea	Wewak Agriculture Development Limited	Malaysia	116,840Ha	Wewak Agriculture Development Limited, owned by Malaysian nationals, has an SABL for the 116,840 ha Wewak Turubi Integrated Agriculture Project in East Sepik Province, of which 90,000 ha are slated for oil palm plantations
Total Papua New Guinea	10		1,435,390 ha	
Total			2,071,233 ha	

Annex 2: land grabs for oil palm plantations in the Papuas of Indonesia and New Guinea



GRAIN is a small international non-profit organisation that works to support small farmers and social movements in their struggles for community-controlled and biodiversity-based food systems.

GRAIN

Girona 25 pral.,
08010 Barcelona, Spain
Tél: +34 93 301 1381,
Fax: +34 93 301 16 27
Email: grain@grain.org

www.grain.org