

SOCFIN in Cambodia commits to a sustainable management of its rubber plantations in Mondulkiri

Phnom Penh, January 9th, 2017

In its *Zero Deforestation Commitment* published today, SOCFIN in Cambodia describes its determination to be a leading tropical agro-industry company. A few weeks after the Socfin Group published its policy for responsible management, SOCFIN in Cambodia reaffirms the Group’s philosophy and guidelines. It commits to manage and develop its rubber plantations in Mondulkiri while protecting the environment, respecting local communities and providing full transparency. SOCFIN in Cambodia is the first rubber plantation to take such an engagement in the Kingdom.

Sustainable measures from the start of SOCFIN activities in Cambodia

Since the beginning of its activities in 2008, SOCFIN in Cambodia has always considered fundamental to minimize and mitigate its impact on the environment it works in. From the establishment of the plantations to the current cultivation, the company always strived to implement environmental best practices by – among other actions - developing its plantations following biodiversity assessments conducted by third parties, preserving biodiversity corridors, or protecting indigenous forests and cemeteries.

As stated in the *Zero Deforestation Commitment*, SOCFIN in Cambodia is also committed to reduce its ecological footprint, by minimizing the emission of greenhouse gases and improving the yield of its plantations.

This commitment follows the guidelines and definitions from respected institutions such as the FAO, the HCS Approach Steering Group and the HCV Resource Network.

Making the communication with the local community a priority

SOCFIN in Cambodia’s commitment also includes local community development and support. “We have always believed that surrounding local communities should and must benefit from our presence and share the value created by our activities” specifies Mr Jef Boedt, General Manager of SOCFIN in Cambodia.

Since the beginning of its operations in Mondulkiri, the company has always engaged with the local population and has been committed to respect land tenure rights and the rights of indigenous and local communities throughout all its operations. SOCFIN in Cambodia also

contributes to local development by supporting schools, health facilities or maintaining local infrastructures.

“To meet the objectives of this commitment, we need to work hand in hand with all local partners and stakeholders. As the first rubber company to publicly make such a commitment in Cambodia, we strive to be an example to set up good practices in the Kingdom.” adds Mr Boedt. The company wants the process to be as transparent as possible and will monitor closely the operational application of the commitment.



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Note to editors

- 1) The full commitments for SOCFIN Cambodia and the Socfin Group are available online:
Socfin.com
- 2) For more information on the FAO, the HCS Approach Steering Group and the HCV Resource Network, please visit <http://www.fao.org/home/en/>, <http://highcarbonstock.org> and <https://www.hcvnetwork.org>
- 3) Additional pictures are available upon request
- 4) About SOCFIN Cambodia

The Socfin Group is an international European-owned company specialized in the rubber and palm oil industry worldwide. In Cambodia, it operates through its subsidiaries Socfin Kcd Co., Ltd and Coviphama Co., Ltd.

The Group created industrial rubber tree plantations in Mondulkiri province, 40 km from Sen Monorom.

SOCFIN Cambodia Zero Deforestation Commitment

As part of the Socfin Group, SOCFIN in Cambodia strives to be a leading responsible tropical agro-industry company. Our approach to business is guided by the principles of Sustainability, Continuity, Inclusivity and Transparency.

The Socfin Group Policy for responsible management is the foundation for our strategy and it encompasses all of our operations.

We strive to fully implement best practices in all areas of our operations and in all dimensions of sustainability, such as protection of the environment, community development, working conditions and in our supply chain. We engage our stakeholders proactively and our activities must create and share value while maximizing the positive environmental and social outcomes.

To that end, in Cambodia, SOCFIN is committed:

1. To protect natural ecosystems and their biodiversity and carbon stocks through a “No Conversion, No Degradation, and Restoration” policy, including – but not limited to:

- a. No clearing or development of High Carbon Stock (HCS) Forests as defined and audited by the HCS Approach Steering Group (<http://highcarbonstock.org/>)
- b. No clearing or development of High Conservation Value (HCV) Areas as defined and audited by the HCV Resource Network (<https://www.hcvnetwork.org/>)
- c. No draining or development of peat areas of any depth
- d. No providing of incentives to convert natural ecosystems
- e. Protection of all natural ecosystems inside all concessions from any party
- f. Prevention of the use of all infrastructure for illegal activities
- g. Restoration of protected areas in all concessions as required by law
- h. Progressive improvement of management of existing plantations to – among others - reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and impact of chemicals
- i. Improvement of yields to reduce the footprint of rubber production

2. To respect people and local communities affected by its operations, through – but not limited to:

- a. Respect for land tenure rights
- b. Respect for the rights of indigenous and local communities to give or withhold their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) to operations on lands to which they hold legal, communal or customary rights
- c. Respect for and recognition of the rights of all workers including contractors, temporary and migrant workers
- d. Resolution to all complaints and conflicts through a process involving a wide range of stakeholders including civil society

- e. Integration of smallholders into corporate supply chains
- f. Establishment of community development programs

3. To provide full transparency of its operations, through – but not limited to:

- a. Availability of all concession permits and boundaries for consultation upon request
- b. Availability of all supply chains information for consultation upon request
- c. Establishment of a consultative grievance process
- d. Appointment of an independent third-party to verify that the policy commitments are being implemented and availability of its reports for consultation upon request

SOCFIN in Cambodia will work with local partners and stakeholders to meet the objectives of this commitment.

A time-bound plan will be developed to implement this commitment and provide regular updates and full transparency on the progress of the implementation.