GOPDC News

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Ghana to become first African RSPO state

THE Ghana Oil Palm Development Company Limited (GOPDC), with the support of Sinar, a multi-national company, is championing in the country, the cause of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSOP) which is promoting the growth and use of sustainable palm oil worldwide.

RSPO was established in 2003, to address bad practices in the palm oil industry.

The GOPDC has assisted Ghana to complete a vital document, called the national interpretation document, on steps taken to meet the requirements of the RSPO and forwarded the document to it.

The document, prepared by the National Interpretation Working Group for Ghana (GNIWG) of which Ms Anke Massart, Director for Agriculture of GOPDC, is the national co-ordinator, paves the way for Ghana to become an RSPO country and the first in Africa.

The GNIWG was established in September last year, to develop a national interpretation of the sustainability principle and criteria of the RSPO.

It is to see to the adoption of good practices in the cultivation and processing of the palm oil to international standards.

The Community Relations Officer of GOPDC, Alhaji Bashir Mutu, said Ghana was the first African country to have completed the national interpretation document, adding that GOPDC, with the assistance of Sinar and other NGOs, was making frantic efforts for the technology transfer to the palm oil sector in order for Ghana to become the first African RSPO country.

To achieve that purpose, GOPDC had held training programmes for oil palm cultivation and processing groups to ensure that all palm oil is produced sustainably.

Ms. Massart, in an interview, emphasised that the RSPO was promoting the production, procurement and use of sustainable palm oil and had developed a certification system for growers, millers, processors and other stakeholders along the supply chain.

She spelled out the eight principles and criteria for sustainable palm oil production which included commitment to transparency, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, commitment to long-term economic and financial viability, and use of appropriate best practices by growers and millers.

GOPDC Limited

GOPDC is an integrated agro-industrial company specialized in the cultivation of oil palm, extraction of crude palm oil and palm kernel oil. GOPDC also produces refined specialty oils for use by the food industry.

GOPDC is currently owned by three Shareholders: - sa Siat nv of Belgium (51%), SSNIT of Ghana (30%) and ATMF (19%).

Siat Ghana Limited has been liquidated. GOPDC now aims at being listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange.

GOPDC has 21,000 hectares of oil palm plantations at Kwae and Okumaning in the eastern region of Ghana, 14,000 of which have been developed for about 7,000 outgrowers. GOPDC's processing facilities comprise a 60 mt/hour fresh fruit bunch palm oil mill, a 60 mt/day palm kernel mill and a 100 mt/day refinery and fractionation plant.

GOPDC is strongly focused on creating value for its produce. This is the driving force behind all the investments taking place. An agro-industrial company such as GOPDC is part of the community and cannot survive without social engagements. We support the communities we operate in not only through the results from our business operations but also in several other ways. GOPDC invests in education, health and the environment because they are essential factors in social development with the aim of improving living standards for the majority of the people.

Our Vision

Our vision is to ensure that our business will be conducted in a more prosperous, safe and environmentally sustainable manner that will promote the wellbeing of our shareholders, employees, customers, community and the environment.

Editorial Committee

Werner Pirijns
Alhaj Bashir Manu
Alisetu Wamdaogo
Emmanuel K. Wiafe
Kofi Mensah Amartey
Augustine K. Owusu-Sarpong

Contact Information

GOPDC Ltd
Kwae Estate, Kwae near Kade
Kwaebibirem District, Eastern Region, Ghana

Tel.: +233 (0)24 4330090 - Fax: +233 (0)30 3202670
E-mail: info@gopdc-ltd.com

www.gopdc-ltd.com

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Foreword

Introduction:

Greetings from Kwae. We are pleased to present Volume 22 of the GOPDC News (Gnews).

Starting with this issue, we have introduced two new columns - "The Editor's Pick" and "Memory Lane". The Editors Pick column will feature one section of the Company and the objective is to give our readers an insight into the section's activities. A short write-up on the activities of the section will be provided. We will also introduce the staff of the section by way of individual photos and a brief description of their functions.

"Memory Lane" is intended to arouse nostalgia! We will present you with some photographs and you will have the opportunity to identify the persons in the photographs and the occasions. We trust this mind-boggling exercise will provide something for you and your family to reflect on. Unfortunately, the people who are behind this column may not have all the answers!

Also beginning the next issue, we will feature two new columns – "The Gnews Family" and "The Gnews Community." The Gnews Family will focus on the general Estate life of one family on the Estate picked at random using a map of the Kwae Estate. The Gnews Community will focus on one community within our operational area. Our readers will have the opportunity of learning about the people and the activities of the community.

The Editorial Committee

A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Dear colleagues,

At the beginning of the New Year it's always good to look over our shoulders and review the past year and learn, adapt and get new inspiration for the New Year.

It's clear that 2010 was not an easy year and it will be booked as a turning point for GOPDC, its' like an athlete preparing for the Olympic Games. I hope that we will have our gold medal in 2011 and the years that are coming. We have closed the collection centers and already started with some meters ahead of our competition by paying a higher price for the FFB to our outgrowers. Everyday of the year we worked on the mill with only one goal "no more the situation of 2010". I'm convinced that GOPDC is at its best, ready to win any competition. We have to put, of course our shoulders under it and the final score is not yet known, but we are ready.

We started with a rubber project, which will bring more strength to GOPDC, it's still small but even a blind person can see that a great future can be seen on that path. We are ready for the extension of Okumaning and today we can see that Okumaning is going for the first place.

Of course we also had bad moments; we have all seen the publications in the newspapers. GOPDC, our company that we carry in our heart was presented to the general public as a criminal organization; it was like reading about our own child accused of being a criminal. Before, we were proud to work for GOPDC but suddenly we lost that feeling and we were even ashamed to tell our friends that we are working at GOPDC.

Therefore, we have to look to the future, GOPDC will make 2011 its Olympic year with gold medals so that we would be proud again to tell friends and relatives: Yes Sir, I work for GOPDC the biggest agro-industry company in Ghana.

We are not going to accept anything less than gold.

It is also clear that we still have to work on our organization but together we will achieve this goal. A healthy and sound GOPDC will create for us all better conditions of living.

In our newsletter we see the activities from the last couple of months, though it doesn't show how strong GOPDC is, we survived the heavy storm and became stronger and better.

This was only possible due to the support of the staff, contractors and all involved in the daily operations of GOPDC. Now that we are back in good shape, let's win our Olympic medal.

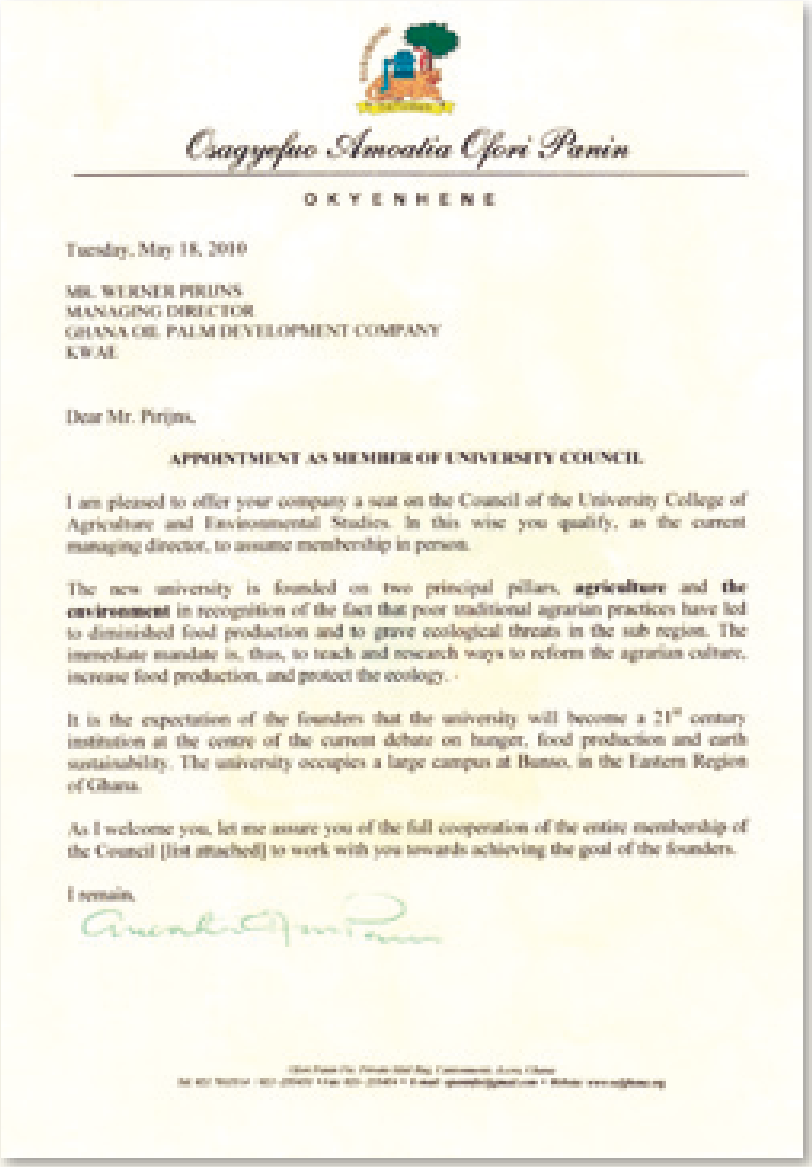
Departmental reports

CORPORATE

Appointment of GOPDC to the Council of the University College of Agricultural and Environmental Studies (UCAES)

In a letter dated May 18, 2010 the Okyenhene Osagyefuo Amoatia Ofori Panin offered GOPDC a seat on the Council of the University College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies.

GOPDC Hosts Group Management Committee Meeting



Osagyefuo Amoatia Ofori Panin

OKYENHENE

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

MR. WERNER PIRLINS
MANAGING DIRECTOR
GHANA OIL PALM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY
KWAE

Dear Mr. Pirlins,

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER OF UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

I am pleased to offer your company a seat on the Council of the University College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies. In this wise you qualify, as the current managing director, to assume membership in person.

The new university is founded on two principal pillars, **agriculture** and **the environment** in recognition of the fact that poor traditional agrarian practices have led to diminished food production and to grave ecological threats in the sub region. The immediate mandate is, thus, to teach and research ways to reform the agrarian culture, increase food production, and protect the ecology.

It is the expectation of the founders that the university will become a 21st century institution at the centre of the current debate on hunger, food production and earth sustainability. The university occupies a large campus at Bunso, in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

As I welcome you, let me assure you of the full cooperation of the entire membership of the Council [list attached] to work with you towards achieving the goal of the founders.

I remain,

GOPDC hosted the Siat Group Management Committee Meeting at Kwae on July 23, 2010. The meeting was attended by the Managing Directors of all the four subsidiary companies of the Group viz CHC, GOPDC, Presco and Siat Gabon. The meeting was chaired by the Group's Deputy Managing Director Helena Vandebeeck. Also in attendance was Mr. Jean-Serge Nkorouna of Siat Gabon.

GOPDC's New Corporate Social Responsibility Policy

At its meeting on July 22, 2010 at Kwae, the Board of Directors of GOPDC approved a new Corporate Social Responsibility Policy for GOPDC. The new Policy expected to strengthen and enhance the relations between GOPDC and the communities within its operational area, will supersede all previous agreements related to GOPDC's social responsibility programme. Below are excerpts of the new Policy.

- Under the Policy, GOPDC is willing to reserve 2% of its net profit to enhance its Corporate Social Responsibility in its operational areas.
- Distribution of the allocated funds to the different stakeholders within the operational area shall be at the discretion of GOPDC.
- The amount derived will be based on quarterly results of the current year and shall be paid quarterly in arrears as follows: 31st July, 31st October, 31st December and 30th April of the following year.
- The amounts disbursed to the beneficiary communities shall be used for landmark projects such as water, education and health within the respective communities.
- In order to get the beneficiaries well involved and to be a part of the development projects, GOPDC encourages the beneficiaries to as much as possible co-finance such development projects and that such projects shall be jointly managed by the communities and GOPDC where possible.
- The communities shall ensure authority and control over their subjects within the areas granted to safeguard the investment and development undertaken by GOPDC.
- GOPDC reserves the right to unilaterally amend the Corporate Social Responsibility Policy subject to the approval of its Board of Directors.

Hon. Minister of Food & Agriculture visits GOPDC

The Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Kwesi Ahwoi, has paid a working visit to the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC) at Kwae in the Kwaebibirem District to acquaint himself with its operations.

GOPDC is an integrated agro-industrial company which specializes in the cultivation of oil palm, extraction of crude palm oil and palm kernel oil, and also produces specialty oils used by the food industry.

The Minister held discussions with the Company's Management, some of the members of the Board of Directors and Representatives of the Outgrower farmers.

Outgrowers are farmers who are assisted by the Company with high yielding seedlings, fertilizers and training to follow good agricultural practices. In return, the farmers are expected to sell their produce to the Company.

Welcoming Mr. Ahwoi and his team of officials of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Managing Director of GOPDC, Mr. Werner Pirijns said the Company was very pleased to have the Minister in their midst to have an insight

into their operations, achievements and challenges.

He said the Company had 21,000 hectares of oil palm plantations of which about 14,000 hectares for 7,000 Outgrowers at Kwae and Okumaning.

The Company's facilities comprised 60 metric tons of fresh fruit bunches per hour at the palm oil mill, with 60 metric tons per day at the palm kernel mill and a 100 metric tons a day at the refinery and fractionation plant.

Mr. Pirijns said the Company was strongly focused on creating value for its produce which was the driving force behind all the investments taking place.

An agro-industrial company such as GOPDC is part of the community and cannot survive without social engagements and as such supports communities through their business operations and in several other ways.

The Managing Director said, the company was investing in education, health and issues concerning the environment because they were essential factors in social development, aimed at improving the living standards for the majority of the people.

The Minister toured the Company's nursery, plantation and mill and learnt that farmers obtained oil palm seedlings at Two Ghana Cedis instead of the market price of Six Ghana Cedis.

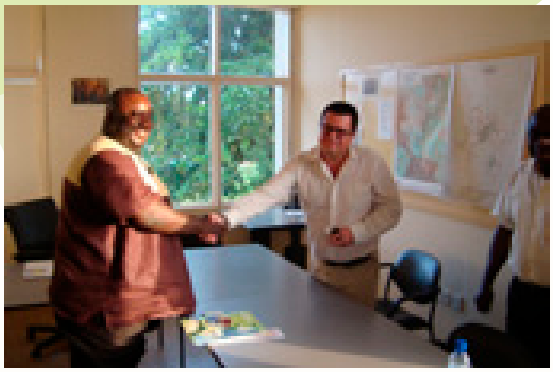
Mr. Ahwoi commended the Company for its achievements and when he learnt that many Outgrowers who were assisted by the Company to set up their farms were diverting their produce to small-scale millers, he advised them to refrain from that practice.

The Minister sited the example of tomato and other farmers who were assisted to produce but sold their produce elsewhere and refused to pay back loans granted them.

When representatives of the Outgrower farmers pleaded for the supply of inputs such as fertilizer on credit, the Managing Director said repayment by farmers had been "horrible", some of them in arrears between four and six years.

He said because of that reason and the level of diversion, the major palm oil companies including Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP) and Benso Oil Palm Plantation (BOPP) had stopped assisting farmers.

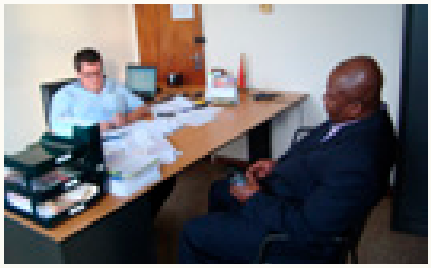
In a related development, the Executive Chairman of Wienco (Ghana) Limited Mr. Henri Wientjes also visited GOPDC in August 2010. Wienco (Ghana) Limited is the principal supplier of fertilizers to GOPDC. As part of his working visit, Mr. Wientjes interacted with some of GOPDC's outgrower farmers during the visit. The Wienco visit coincided with that of the Minister of Food and Agriculture.



Member of Parliament for Kade Constituency visits GOPDC

The MP for Kade Constituency paid a courtesy call on the management of GOPDC. The new Managing Director Mr. Werner Pirijns and his Deputy Mr. L.S.K Atsrim assured the MP that the old spirit of friendship and cooperation would continue to exist between the company and MP for the good of the constituency and the District in general. Hon. Ofosu Asamoah, the MP for Kade Constituency used the occasion to announce the death of his beloved father and invited the management to mourn with him by giving details of the funeral arrangement. Management also responded appropriately by visiting him formally at his residence at Kade a day before the funeral. A delegation from the management also represented the company on the day of the funeral and donated on behalf of the management: one cow, a carton of schnapps and an amount of one thousand Ghana Cedis (Ghc1,000.00).

Kwaebibirem District Chief Executive visits GOPDC



The Kwaebibirim District Chief Executive, Hon. George Agyemang Duah paid a visit to the company on the 10th of June, 2010. He was received by the Managing Director, Mr. Werner Pirijns and the Community Relations Officer, Alhaji Bashir Manu. The D.C.E discussed a proposal about the construction of the new Kade Market Project during his visit. There is an appeal to the company to assist in the construction of the market. He proposed that the cost for the tiling of the entire market place should be taken up by the company.

Land Valuation Division visits GOPDC

One of the main challenges faced by the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC) in its expansion and development has been Land and Crop compensation.

The company is anxious to resolve all outstanding Land acquisition compensation issues through timely evaluation of Crop and Land compensation by government agencies prior to planting. However, the processes of resolving the issue have been hampered by delays.

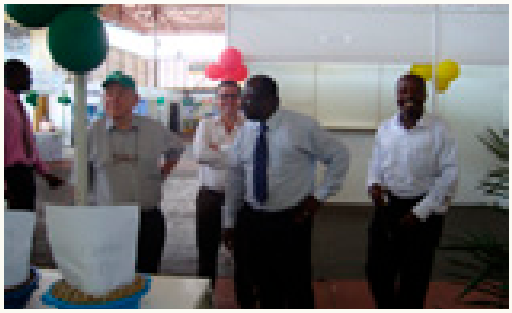
In order to have good working relations with the government and its agencies, and also facilitate the process of resolving outstanding Land compensation issues, a seven-member commission paid a three-day working visit to the GOPDC head office at Kwae to have discussions with the management of the company. Regarding the Okumaning Nucleus Estate, they wanted to know its planting season for the years 2010 and 2011.

Aside the dialogue that yielded mutually fruitful results, the team toured the Okumaning Nucleus Estate. The team saw the recently cultivated seedlings and Land clearance to make way for the planting for this year's planting season and that of next year. They saw at first hand areas where extension of planting has been delayed due to delay in valuation of compensation

for land and crops. The Managing Director, Mr. Werner Pirijns, led the management team of GOPDC while Mr. Baffour Dankwa, Acting Director of the Land Valuation Division, led his team in the discussions.

Within the past 15 years, GOPDC has been transformed into a nucleus estate of 7,270 hectares and small holder / out grower plantings of 13,874 hectares, up from a nucleus estate of 3,850 hectares and 4,250 hectares of small holders / out grower planting some 30 years ago. The original palm oil mill of 20 metric tons per hour capacity modeled on the technology of the seventies has undergone a complete refit and expanded to 60 metric tons per hour. A 60 metric tons per day palm kernel oil mill and a completely new state of the art 100 metric ton per day refinery and fractionation plant have been the latest investment.

The 14th Ghana Agribiz Fair held at the Trade Fair Center, La Accra - May, 2010.



The Agribusiness fair which is organised for companies in the Agricultural sector has the primary purpose of serving as a platform for the interaction between agribusiness stakeholders, and the dissemination of information and knowledge of viable agricultural solutions. Relevant services from the Academic, Business, and Financial communities to the agricultural sector and the general Ghanaian public is also highlighted. The theme for this year's fair was "From the backyard to industrial agriculture". Major stakeholders which include the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA), Food Research Institute of Ghana, Council for Scientific & Industrial Research, College of Agriculture & Consumer Sciences of University of Ghana, Apex Farmers Organization of Ghana, Crop Life Ghana, and the Ghana Agric-inputs Dealers Association participated in this year's fair. GOPDC used the exhibition as a platform to showcase its best practice from the nursery stage to the refined products as the largest oil palm producer in the country. As part of the company's social responsibility to corporate Ghana, participants to the fair were given the company's newsletters and some materials on the best practices in the oil palm business.

Among the officials who visited the stands of GOPDC Ltd were Hon. Dr. Yakubu Ahmed Alhassan, Chairman of Parliamentary Select Committee on Food, Agric and Cocoa Affairs, Dr. Roseema Mamaa Entsua-Mensah Deputy Director General of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Prof. S.K Offei, Dean College of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, the Board Chairman of GOPDC Mr. Vandebeek and Mr. Werner Pirijns Managing Director of GOPDC. In all, over eight hundred (800) personalities visited the stand of GOPDC.

GOPDC Stands at Agribiz Fair in Pictures

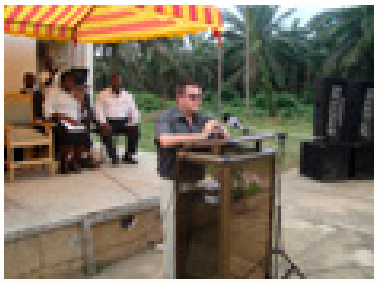
So far about twenty of them on record have traveled down here to purchase our seedlings. Some challenges faced by the extension team at the exhibition ground which needs serious attention and improvement included:

- Unpopularity of GOPDC. This resulted in people confusing the company with TOPP and BOPP thereby giving credit to other companies. There is the need therefore to intensify the promotion and propagation of our name and image.
- In future more brochures/ handbills need to be developed for our company to enhance its image.
- The company should also be encouraged to be part of the sponsors to programmes of this nature to enhance its image.
- A documentary to create awareness of what is being produced in GOPDC LIMITED on any of our local television stations should be encouraged.

The team which consists of Mr. L. S. K. Atsrim, Deputy Managing Director, Alhaj Bashir Manu, Community Relations Officer and Mr. George Korsah, Laboratory Technologist (Refinery) is grateful to the management, staff and all who made GOPDC's participation at the fair a success.

Kwae Estate

Forum for Palm Oil Producers in Eastern and Ashanti Regions on Sustainable Production



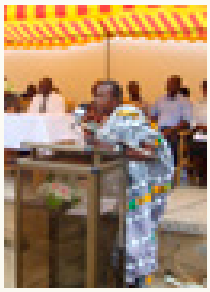
Small - scale oil palm growers and palm oil producers and other stakeholders in the Eastern and Ashanti Regions have met at the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC) at Kwae to address serious concern that not all palm oil is being produced sustainably at present.

The meeting, convened at the instance of GOPDC was to enhance broad consultation on how Ghana can produce sustainable palm oil in accordance with the requirements of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and was sponsored by Solidaridad of Netherlands, Chemico Ltd and GOPDC.

The RSPO was established in 2003 to address bad practices in the oil palm cultivation and palm oil production.

It was to promote the production, procurement and use of sustainable palm oil and in that regard RSPO has developed a certification system for growers, millers, processors and other stake holders along the supply chain.

Among the attendants were district and regional directors of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Officials of Land Valuation Division and the Environmental Protection Agency, District Chief Executives and Assembly Members of some selected districts.



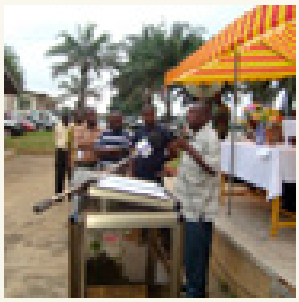
Others were research centers such as the Oil Palm Research Institute, Kusi and the Agricultural Research Centre of the University of Ghana, Legon at Okumaning.

Also present were chiefs and queen mother's as well as family heads of the GOPDC catchment area and representatives of Okyenhene, Osagyefo Amoatia Ofori Panin and the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II.

Participants were welcomed by the Managing Director of GOPDC, Mr. W. Pirijns. He explained that the Ghana National Interpretation Working Group (GNIWG) was established in September 2009 to develop a National Interpretation of the Sustainable Principles and Criteria of the RSPO.

There was the need to adopt good practices in the cultivation and processing of palm oil of international standards.

It was noted that driven by ever increasing global demand for edible oils, the past few decades had seen rapid expansion in the palm oil in the tropics. From the 1990's to the present time, the areas under oil palm cultivation had increased enormously, mostly, in the Malaysia and Indonesia, the World's largest producers of Palm Oil.



It was also noted that whiles better managed plantations and oil palm smallholdings served as models of sustainable agriculture, in terms of economics performances as well as social concern and environmental responsibility, there was serious concern that not all palm oil was being produced sustainably at present.

Producers were therefore warned that if by 2015, they did not adopt sustainable practices their product would not be patronized by international consumers.

A member of the GNIWG, Mr. E.K. Wiafe took participants through the eight principles and criteria for sustainable palm oil production.

These included commitment to transparency, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, commitment to long – term economic and financial viability, and use of appropriate best practices by growers and millers.

The others were environmental responsibility and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, responsible consideration of employees and of individuals and communities affected by growers and mills, responsible development of new plantings and commitment to continuous improvement in key areas of activity.

The deputy managing director of GOPDC, Mr. Lawrence Atsrim who chaired the meeting asked participants to spread the knowledge acquired to others to adopt sustainable practices in small scale palm oil production.

New Motor Bikes for GOPDC Staff

As part of management commitment to the progress of plantation supervision, new Yamaha motor bikes were presented to some staff in the Agric department of GOPDC. Presenting the keys to the selected staff, the Nucleus Estate Manager, Mr. Emmanuel Duku Boamah advised the field staff to be very vigilant as they ride in the plantation to avoid accidents. He also reminded them to stick to regular maintenance to be able to use the bikes for a reasonable period.

Finally, the beneficiaries were urged to improve upon the 2010 output; this he said would justify the quest for more new motor bikes.

By E.K. Wiafe

The Rubber Project

As part of GOPDC's diversification plan, a rubber project has been started with 15.885 rubber stumps. Siat rubber consultant Mr. Michel Gompou has undertaken several site monitoring missions to GOPDC since the establishment of the rubber nursery in September 2010.

Training in Rubber Cultivation by Michel Gompou (02-08 Sep)

In early September 2010, Mr. Gompou conducted training in rubber cultivation at Kwae for GOPDC agronomists.

The Photo Story of the first 15,885 rubber stumps at Kwae...

Tapping the Actual FFB Potentials from Okumaning plantation in 2011

This is a just to confirm biblical saying which states "There is time to sow and a time to reap" Yes, even though the 5000ha which is supposed to be the total Concession area for Okumaning plantation has not been achieved, we hope to continue and finish in some few years to come.

Despite our inability to plant the total 5000ha concession, I can boldly say that, we have started reaping the potentials that we sowed about nine years ago.

Current status oil palm tree in 2002 planting in GOPDC Okumaning plantation

In brief, the Okumaning plantation started in 2002 and the first batch of young oil palm seedlings were planted in June 2002. Since then, planting continued year after year to date.

Currently, we can boast of 2000 ha with the following (YOP) years of plantings 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2008. Development is still on-going for 2011.

Eight year old palm trees with a lot of FFB

In terms of FFB harvesting, the Okumaning plantation can boast of exceeding their targets since 2005 that harvesting started. Current results from the Agric report (Jan-Dec. 2010) indicates that out of the targeted 16,500tons given to the plantation we were able to supply over 18,700 tons of FFB.

FFB in 2002 planting in Okumaning ready for the Mill

We are therefore optimistic that, with good maintenance we would supply more than the 20,000 tons target for 2011.

Again, records from the Agric report as at 31st Dec 2010 indicate that GOPDC-Okumaning produced
12tons/ha from the 8year old trees planted in 2002. However, results from the Experimental plot HES 02 proved that it is possible to achieve 19tons/ha.

Therefore our goal for 2011 is to improve upon the general maintenance on the plantation and the labour situation in particular, so that we can exceed our 20,000tons FFB target and also improve the FFBtons/ha from 12 to 15tons/ha

FFB Harvested from the Experimental Plot D4, Yop 2002

By Emmanuel K Wiafe
Ag. Estate manager – Okumaning

The RSPO Forum in Pictures

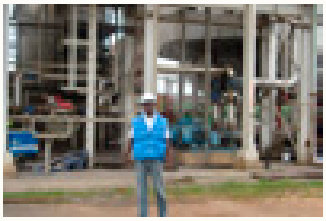
FROM THE UTILITIES ENGINEER'S TABLE

The quest for optimal utilization of organization's natural resources has begun to assume its frame in corporate anatomy. Industrial waste handling is another area of much concern to organization management, realizing the cost associated. It is for this and other like reasons that Ghana Oil Palm Development Company Limited, GOPDC, has had another definition for waste.

Waste emanating from the mill operations, is now seen as a major input, which is as much importance as the Fresh Fruits Bunch (FFB). Recycling of this waste into useful product is the issue.

Energy is the life-blood of industrial settings, as costly as its importance, such that industries cannot do without it. Energy assumes several forms, ranging from Radiant, Chemical, Thermal or Heat, Mechanical, Electrical and others. Energy can neither be created nor destroyed, but in events of no relevant use, can be a waste. GOPDC Ltd. has dug a little deeper into defining a use for the form of energy available on site. The conversion of energy from one form to the other, as stipulated by the Principle of Conservation of Energy, has been the backbone for the stepping up of GOPDC Ltd. among others. The Chemical energy trapped within the waste of its industrial processes is further utilized through stages of several conversions from one form to the other, and finally, Electrical. However magical as it may seem, the philosophy is a physical process supported by the Principle of Conservation of Energy, which states that "Energy can neither be created nor destroyed but can be changed from one form to the other".

The "waste" from the mill operations, notably Fibre, Empty Fruit Bunches, Shells and Palm Kernel Cake, are readily available on site, with certain proportions of Chemical energy, and hence at different calorific levels. The question remaining then is "Which form of energy would be most relevant and important to GOPDC's undertaking?" Like for any industrial setup, Electrical energy is the most pronounced. How to get there is another issue worth considering. Management of GOPDC Ltd, with all keen interest, had therefore undertaken great investment into the realization of this very useful energy form from the Chemical energy available in the waste.



By this, the "waste" are fed in various proportions into a steam boiler, to enhance combustion, leading to transformation of it Chemical energy into Thermal or Heat energy. This Heat energy is then impacted into water, well treated to conform to safety requirements, to produce high pressure steam at about 25 bar gauge. This is achieved in a 30 metric tons per hour boiler, supplied by Vyncke. The Heat energy is then transported through the steam to a 2.5 MegaWatts Dresser-rand Steam turbine, of the extraction configuration, on consideration of the need for low pressure steam for mill processes. A Steam turbine is simply a heat engine, which converts the total energy of steam into Mechanical energy, specifically, rotation. With this turbine, the steam expands through sets of blade fixed in rows on a rotating shaft, thereby setting the shaft into rotation at 6,060 revolutions per minute. Another phase of energy transformation from Heat into Mechanical is achieved. This turbine offers the flexibility to extract steam at low pressure, 3 bar gauge, after a number of sets of blades, for the mill processes. The rotation of the shaft is transmitted to an Alternator, through a gearing arrangement, with a reduction ratio of 4 to 1, thus reducing the speed to 1,500 revolutions per minute, to suit the operational requirement of the alternator. The alternator produces Electricity.

The relentless efforts of GOPDC technical team, led by Ing. Lawrence S. K. Atsrim, the Technical Director and current Deputy Managing Director, and Mr. Daniel Meulemans, the Group Technical Director of factories, there is a continual closure of the gap between actual and expected realization of green power availability on kilowatt-hour consumption.

BLANKSON, Abraham (UTILITIES ENGINEER)

UPDATE OF THE MILL

The Technical Services has seen some changes in recent times; changing inefficient machinery and worn-out parts being replaced. Not only does this reduce downtime but also makes our operations ecological friendly.

The smooth operation of the boiler, turbine and water treatment enhances smooth production (mill and refinery) since power, steam and water which are in constant demand, are well supplied for production and other uses.

There has been an issue of ceasing all avenues in implementing waste management by recycling waste products from the milling processes for the production of green power. It is in this light that the new empty bunch conveyor was constructed to ensure there is constant shredding of empty bunches to be used by the boiler house.

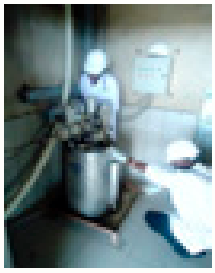
The shell elevator that conveys the shell from the shell bin has been changed to ensure that there is constant feeding of shells to the boilers (old boilers as well as the Vyncke boiler).

Removal of kernel moisture is a necessity to effective crushing. The installation of the new heaters for the kernel silos has ensured that the kernel for PKO production is prepared for crushing with a higher extraction rate of the oil and reduction of the oil in the press cake.

The nut silo 3 has also been constructed.

WHY YOU NEED VITAMINS

The human body needs a minimum amount of vitamins and minerals each day to remain healthy and function properly. A balanced diet normally supplies these nutrients. However, serious disorders can still develop if the diet does not meet your body's needs. Symptoms of a deficiency usually appear when the lack is already in a relatively advanced level.



Vitamin A dosing unit

One very important food group is the vitamins. Proper food consumption should be accompanied by the right vitamins. Vitamins serve as buffers in the event that your diet does not meet your daily requirements fully. Surely you can't calculate how much vitamins your body takes in every meal you consume. And while most people take vitamins to avoid common deficiency-related diseases, not all products available cater for what your body requires. There are those that still lack what you need.

The common causes of vitamin deficiencies include poor eating habits, alcoholism, emotional stress, the improper absorption of vitamins (usually due to liver or intestinal disorders), the intake of medicines that interfere with the ingestion of vitamins and lack of exposure to sunlight. If you constantly feel sluggish and suffer from chronic health-related inconveniences, you might be short of the vitamins your body needs to function properly. Doctors will usually prescribe supplements. However, keep in mind not to overdo it, as an excess of vitamins can also be harmful.
Vitamins cannot be assimilated without ingesting food. This is why it is suggested that vitamins must be taken with a meal. They help to regulate the body's metabolism, assist in forming the bone and tissue, and help convert fat and carbohydrates. However, one must remember that vitamins cannot replace food.

The vitamins group can further be broken down into specifics depending on how they function in the body. Examples are vitamins A, B, C, D, E, etc

Functions of Vitamin A

- Repair & growth of body tissues
- Protects mucous membrane of mouth, throat, lungs and nose
- Helps maintain smooth, disease-free skin
- Counteracts night blindness.
- Reduces risk of lung and certain types of oral cancers

Palm oil contains vitamin A. During the refining process, the oil is exposed to very high temperatures and hence an amount of this Vitamin A is lost.

For this reason GOPDC now fortifies its refined oils with Vitamin A.

So rest assured that any time you consume any refined product from GOPDC, you have actually consumed oil with the right proportion of Vitamin A. This is certified by FDB.

SOCIAL ISSUES

The Technical Services Department took part in the May Day worker's festivities. In a soccer gala tournament organized by GOPDC for the various departments, the Technical Services came runner up to Agric Services. It is believed that next year the officiating would be made better.

HIV/AIDS DEPARTMENTAL TRAINING WORKSHOP REPORT

HIV over time has been one of the serious health problems in every part of the world, and most especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the industrial sector, it poses a lot of threat to productivity which leads to great profit loss. This is due to the fact that, companies with workers infected with this virus tend to spend their profit on health insurance policies, Hospital bills, Funeral cost among others. GOPDC being aware of this important fact organized a workshop regarding HIV / AIDS for its workers and their wards at GOPDC Junior High School (JHS). The purpose of this workshop was to educate the workers on the implications of this virus, how it is acquired or its causes and transmission, its symptoms and prevention, Counseling and testing (CT), Treatment through ART, information on the correct use of condoms and also deal with some of the misconceptions they had about the virus.

The workshop training was scheduled to commence on the 14th of July, 2010 and end on the 3rd of August, 2010. The workers were categorized into their various sections and notices were prepared and placed on notice boards for the workers to be sure of their date for the workshop. The sections that participated in the first week of the workshop include JHS Students and Teachers from the GOPDC School, the Management and Senior Staff and the Office staff i.e. Agric, Finance, Corporate, Agric Out Growers/ SMH/ FCA staff.

In the second week, the participants were workers from Workshop and Stores sections, the Transport section, and then the Agric – Okumaning Group Leaders. Workers from the Mill and Refinery had theirs from the 27th of July, 2010 to the 29th of July, 2010. Participants to the workshop were advised by facilitators to quit certain behaviors such as using drugs like Viagra and China drugs (currently about 25 types of such drugs are available in the market) before they had sex and also avoid having sex with people they hardly know. They were also advised to visit a health center to check their HIV status to enable them live a healthy life. Again facilitators advised workers at the workshop to be nice to people infected with the virus since they need their love and support.

The final group which is the Agric- Kwae Estate GP Leaders (Maintenance team) and the Agric- Kwae Estate GP Leaders (Harvesters team) had their workshop training Scheduled for the 2nd and 3rd of August 2010, respectively. In all five hundred and ten boxes of male condoms and over three hundred and four female condoms were distributed to participant.

ALHAJ BASHIR MANU, COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER

A TWO-DAY TRAINING ON FIRST AID

As part of Management commitment to training and the general health and safety of workers, two days were set aside to train some selected staff from all the departments and sections in GOPDC.

A participant demonstrating how to give artificial respiration through external heart compression

The invent which took place at GOPDC Junior Club house between 12-13th July 2010 was facilitated by the Eastern Regional Director for Ghana Red Cross Society.

Topic treated Included: The seven main principles of first aid. In addition, the staff learnt about signs and symptoms of Asphyxia, the ABCD of Artificial respiration-Cardio-Pulmonary-Resuscitation, Signs and symptoms of internal breeding, Shocks, how to control them.

Regional Director of 1st Aid-Ghana giving instructions during training

Also treated was how to handle wounds, burns/scalds, fractures / dislocations and how to handle snake, bees, dog bites and many other relevant incidents that require first aid. In the end, the deserving staff were awarded with certificates.

Some Participants demonstrating how to carry a victim on the stretcher

GOPDC Medical Assistant presenting certificate to a participant

Phytosanitary Team Received Training on Safe Handling of Pesticides

As part of Management commitments to training and the general health and safety of workers, one day training on safe used and handling of pesticides was organized for the GOPDC Phytosanitary team and all group leaders and supervisors in the Agric Department of GOPDC.

The Nucleus Estate Manager who was also the resource person took the participants through different types of pesticides, their toxicities and the various ways to use these chemicals without much problems to the handlers.

They were also taken through the importantance and uses of Personal Protective Clothing when handling any pesticides. The NEM warned that every pesticide is harmful therefore they should always use the supplied personal protective clothing provided.

Finally, there was a demonstration on uses of personal protective clothing.

By E.K. Wiafe

GOPDC Renews its Environmental Management Plan

As part of its commitment to its staff, surrounding communities and the working environment, GOPDC has been able to renew the Environmental Management Plan (EMP). According to the resource person, the permit has been granted for the next three years that is between Dec.2009 to Oct. 2012 with some conditions.

These conditions actually necessitated the need to organize an internal EMP workshop for the entire staff in the company. The main goal for this exercise was to create the awareness of the permit conditions so that together with management the ultimate goal of meeting all the environmental aspects would be achieved.

The educational workshop which took almost eight days was organized for the entire management and the staff of the various sections comprising; workshop, Corporate, Agric, Stores, Finance, and the Technical Staff.

According to the permit conditions and recommendations, GOPDC is supposed to continue its efforts in improving all its environmental aspects; especially the effluent quality in order to conform to the EPA -Ghana standards.

-Noise level to be minimized
-Accident cases to be reduced
-Adopt the cleaner production system to improve general waste management in the company.

Another pertinent issue raised by the ESO, was the alarming rate at which water and energy consumption was escalating on the Estate. He cautioned staff to do everything to reduce the consumption rate.

Both Technical and the Agric Directors were present during the presentation in their respective departments.

ESO Doing EMP Awareness presentation to staff

NEW APPOINTMENTS

I am **Serwaa Dwirah Bediako-Poku**. My baptismal name is Doris but hey I'm a Ghanaian. I'm a product of Mansyte (Mfantsiman Girls Sec Sch). I hold a Bsc in Chemistry from the University of Cape Coast. I joined GOPDC as the Quality Control Officer in July, 2009. I am very accommodating and patient. Hmmm, my hobby, I love to talk. I love tennis and a true fan of Federer and an anti-Nadal. I also love football but unfortunately, I'm a Pompey (Portsmouth) fan.

I'm **Charles Adu-Frimpong**. I hold a Bsc. (Hons) degree from Cape Coast University. During my final year at the University, I was sponsored by GOPDC to undertake a detailed Soil Nutrient Research work for their Kwae Plantation as a partial fulfillment for the award of my university degree. I had my national service with GOPDC and was later offered full employment. Charles is married to Bernice and blessed with one daughter, Wendy.

Kwasi Agyemang Jnr. I hold a Bsc. degree in Agriculture from Cape Coast University and secondary education at Kumasi Anglican Secondary School. Before joining GOPDC I worked with PRAISEL CONSULT as a negotiator. Agyemang is single and still searching. I like listening to music and watching movies at my leisure time.

Wilson Amoah is my name. I hold a bachelor's degree in agriculture which I obtained from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. Having completed KNUST in 2004, I worked with some companies in the United Kingdom before doing my national service with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, New Juaben Municipal Directorate, Koforidua. I am a great fun of the English Premiership because of Manchester United. I am married to Edna and we have been blessed with Yaa Serwaa.

My name is **Alfred Kwabena Gyasi**. I come from Akim Kusi in the Eastern Region of Ghana, A product of High Academy School for Technicians at Kukurantumi. I joined the workshop department of GOPDC Ltd as a heavy duty mechanic on 2nd February, 2006 as a temporary staff. I have now been transferred to Presco Plc and am working as a field engineer, in charge of heavy duty, machineries at Ologbo Estate Nigeria. My hobbies are watching movies and listening to music.

My name is **Isabel Schlegel** and I am 26 years old. I joined GOPDC at the beginning of May 2010 as Junior Agronomist. I hold a Master in Agricultural Sciences, which I acquired at the University of Hohenheim, Germany. For my Master Thesis I was 6 months in St. Louis, Senegal. Before GOPDC I worked 9 months as a scientific assistant at my former university. My hobbies are gardening, enjoying nature, bicycling and spending time with friends.

HUMAN RESOURCE

My name is **Kamlesh GURBANI**, and I joined the SIAT Group since May-2010 as "Group IT Manager", with Accra as my base. I started my career in India as a Software Programmer, and midway I made a transition to IT Infrastructure and Network management. Also, the first 6 years of my career were with IT Solution Providers, and subsequently I have worked in end-user IT Management. My career has taken me to Oman, Bahrain, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Tanzania. Before my IT career, I spent a year in Benin during my early days, so coming back to West Africa after nearly 20 years is certainly very exciting.

My name is **Mathieu Constant** and I am 29. I started as financial controller within GOPDC beginning of September 2010. I have 6 years experience at Deloitte, 3 years in the consulting practice and 3 years in audit. About my personal interests, I enjoy the outdoors and I feel lucky to be in Kwae that offers me the biking, jogging, swimming, ping pong and tennis opportunities. I also enjoy golf and ULM.

My name is **Melodie Pinchart** and I am 27. I joined GOPDC at the beginning of September 2010 as Internal Auditor. I hold a Master degree in Business Sciences with a specialization in Finance. I studied at the Solvay Business School, University of Brussels, Belgium. Before GOPDC I worked 4 years for Deloitte Belgium as External Auditor. My hobbies are reading, cooking, swimming and going out with friends.

PROMOTIONS

Mr. Lawrence S.K. Atsrim, Deputy Managing Director
Mr. Augustine Kwadwo Owusu-Sarpong, Administrative Manager
Mr. Emmanuel O. Blankson, Accounts Manager
Mr. Ismail Yahaya, IT Manager
Mr. Alexander Gyimah Poakwah, Accounts Supervisor
Miss Alisetu Wamdaogo, Human Resource Manager

RETIREMENT

The under listed colleagues retired in 2010 and we wish them a happy and successful retirement life.

Mr. James Amoako
Mr. Raymond Ompong
Mr. Samuel Amoako Yeboah
Mr. Stephen Nti
Mr. S.O. Yeboah,

RESIGNATIONS

The under listed persons left the services of GOPDC in 2010:

Mr. Seth Addo (Driver)
Mr. Frank Nkrumah (Financial Controller)
Mr. Patrick Yankey (Human Resource Manager)
Miss Esther Bruce-Appiah (Secretary)
Mr. Charles Darko (Mechanic)
Mr. Kofi Amosah (Project & Plant Engineer)
Mr. Kenneth Dogbey (Asst. Surveyor)
Mr. Frempong Amponsah (Okumaning Estate Manager)

OBITUARY

Mr. Emmanuel Asiedu, Supervisor of the Department of Agricultural Services died on September 27, 2010 in Libreville, Gabon. The late Asiedu joined GOPDC on August 6, 1980 and in November 2007, he was transferred to Siat Gabon under the Siat Group staff exchange programme.

GOPDC DONATES TO KWAEBIBIREM DISTRICT ASSEMBLY

The Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GODPC) at Kwae in the Eastern Region has presented some items to the Kwaebibirem District Assembly to assist it in organizing a party for children as part of Christmas and New Year celebrations. The beneficiary children included those from orphanages and the physically challenged. The donated items include 20 cartons of frozen chicken, 20 bags of rice, a quantity of cooking vegetable oil which cost about GHc2, 500.

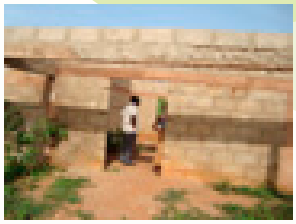
The items were presented by the new managing director of GOPDC, Mr. Werner Pirijns, to the District Chief Executive (DCE), Mr. George Agyemang Duah, who thanked the company for the package. Speaking to newsmen, Alhaj Bashir Manu the Community Relations Officer of the company said GOPDC considered such donations as part of its social responsibilities. Alhaj Manu said concerned about the welfare of orphans and deprived children, the company had made a similar donation to the SOS Foundation for the benefit of orphans in their institution.

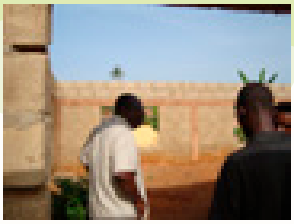
He added that the company had also made a donation to the Okyenhemaa Women Empowerment Foundation for the welfare of women and children living with HIV/AIDS and presented a cheque for GHc2, 000 to the Ghana Association for the Disabled.

ABOABO

Community engagement meetings with the stakeholders on the land demarcation issues to pave way for land preparations at Okumaning project site 2010 planting area.

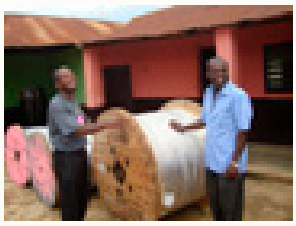
ANWEAM





Roofing of the Roman Catholic School JHS is being constructed with the assistance of the GOPDC.

KUSI



There is an ongoing electrification project being undertaken by Any Electrical Company in this community. As part of GOPDC's social responsibility, the company financed the renovation of the community center and assisted in the construction of a mechanized borehole pipe system at the inception of the Okumaning project.

OKUMANING

The Company is financing the construction of a rural clinic as part of its developmental projects for this community.

A GIFT FROM ELISE AND XANDER OF BELGIUM

Elise and her younger brother Xander of Belgium took advantage of their aunt Sophie's duty travel to Africa in April 2010 to show some love to their age-mates in Africa. As a measure of child solidarity and friendship, Elise and Xander gave a pack of sweets to their aunt for distribution to their fellow school children in Africa. Here we see the Assistant Headmistress of GOPDC School kindly fulfilling the wish of Elise and Xander. A touching story indeed!

DELOITTE BELGIUM DONATES TO GOPDC

Also in April 2010, Deloitte & Touche of Belgium made a corporate gift to GOPDC for distribution to the less endowed in the surrounding communities of GOPDC. The gift, delivered to GOPDC by Miss Sophie Robberechts, was made up of Deloitte-branded T-shirts, pens and pencils and were given as awards to participants of the 2010 Health Walk organized by GOPDC for it's communities.

ATS TAKES OVER MANAGEMENT OF GOPDC KWAE GUESTHOUSE & CLUBHOUSE

With effect from April 1, 2010 All Terrain Services Limited (ATS) is the new manager of the GOPDC Kwae Guest House and Management Club House. This followed an agreement concluded between GOPDC and ATS in March 2010. Welcome ATS!

INDEPENDENCE DAY SPORTS FESTIVAL

Anweam Roman JHS wins GOPDC GALA

The Ghana Oil Palm Development Company [GOPDC] has organized a soccer gala for the junior high schools in and around Kwae in the Eastern Region, with Anweam Roman Catholic Junior High School emerging the champions in the boys division. The Okumaning Methodist Junior High School was crowned winner in the girl's competition. The winners took home a Dell desktop computer with accessories and GHc 200 each, while the runners-up took home GHc 100 each.

Mr. Werner Pirijns, the Managing Director, presented the prizes to the boys whiles Mr. Tom Leyman, an executive of Siat Gabon, a sister Company of GOPDC, gave out prizes to the girls.

GOPDC WORKERS IN MAY DAY SOCCER GALA

Sports, especially soccer loving Ghana Oil Palm Development Company have once again organized a soccer competition among its workers as part of the May Day international workers solidarity day, which is a holiday in Ghana.

The interdepartmental soccer GALA which was participated by 12 teams at the company's school park at Kwae saw some brilliant display by players of the various teams. Spectators which included members of management and workers who were also drawn from neighbouring communities had much to cheer about.
Some of the players excelled and much potential were discovered. Players who could be groomed to form a formidable team for GOPDC which could stand and be counted in competitive football among companies and indeed other football teams were selected.

At stake was a magnificent gold cup and cash prizes donated by the management. The competition was won by the Agricultural services of the Kwae nucleus estate which beat the technical services one team three goals to two on penalties.

The managing director of GOPDC, Mr. Werner Pirijns, presented the cup to the winning team which also won the contest last year. Both finalist teams received Ghc200 in cash. In the first semi-finals match Okumaning Nucleus Estate Agricultural Services drew two-two with the technical Services One. Kwae Agricultural Services defeated by three-two the G4 Security Services in the second semis.

In the preliminary matches Technical services two played goalless with G4 Security Services. The Technical Services One beat Corporate/Finance by a loan goal. Kwae Agricultural Services also defeated Corporate/Finance by a lone goal. Technical Services Two lost to Okumaning Agricultural Services by a lone goal and Kwae Agricultural Services beat the Technical Services by one-nil.

At the end of the competition both players and spectators went home satisfied that it was a holiday well spent.
Talking to the press after the competition, the company's community relations officer, Alhaj Bashir Manu said GOPDC was determined to develop sports particularly soccer among schools in its catchment areas. That was why the company organised a two-day soccer gala participated by eight schools in the boys and girls divisions.

Alhaji Manu said the company would also continue to encourage its workers to participate in games and sports to facilitate physical fitness as a sound mind is always found in a sound body.

May Day, Koforidua 2010 in pictures ...

GOPDC Staff attend Workers day In Koforidua.

Generally, every 1st May marks international workers day. As it is usually practice world-wide, a number of invents including rallies, Marches, symposia and durbars are held to commemorate the event.

Workers in their Bus towards Koforidua

In Ghana, similar activities normally happen in the national capital-Accra and all the regional capitals as well.

This years invent took place in the Eastern regional capital Koforidua and it witnessed a massive participation of all unionized workers in the region, amongst them were GOPDC Staff

GOPDC Staff Marching in Koforidua

In his speech on this years theme, ***"Consolidating Workers Solidarity and the legacy of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah"***, the Eastern Regional Minister Mr. Samuel Ofosu Ampofo congratulated all workers for their hard work and urged them to continue to rededicate themselves to their respective jobs for the supreme national interest as well as enhancing productivity in their various workplaces. Finally he assured workers that with hard work, there is better living awaiting therefore all should put in their maximum effort for a better Ghana.

Eastern Regional Minister addressing the parade

GOPDC staff in Group picture

Section of GOPDC Staff Enjoying Lunch after the event

By Emmanuel K. Wiafe

GOPDC HEALTH WALK 2010

The health of the workforce is a very important aspect that determines the productivity and development of any company. The ill-health of the workers will always yield a low level of productivity, which is usually even not of high quality, leading finally to the stunted growth of the company. Due to this important fact, GOPDC as a company with high productivity and the production of high quality goods as their vision organizes programmes that will help in the enhancement of the health of its workers. One of such programmes is the health walk organized by the Community Relations Unit of the company on the 1st of July, 2010, Ghana's Republic Holiday.

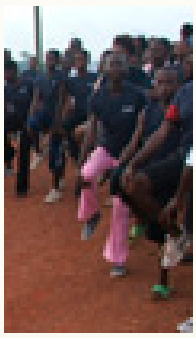
This year's health walk was organized for both workers and JHS students from the company's school. The route for the walk was from the Clinic to the Anweam gate, to Kwae then back to the Nucleus Estate through the Kwae Gate. Before the Walk began, workers from different departments and students assembled in front of the clinic. The company's T-shirts were given to the workers and the students among the 'Health Walkers who were also given T-shirts donated by Deloitte Belgium.

It is very interesting to note that some of the participants were very anxious to start the walk, so they started to warm up by jogging in front of the clinic.

In all, one hundred and twenty (120) people made the walk a success with fifty- two (52) of these people being students. The participants walked from the Nucleus Estate to the Anweam gate, where they took a short rest, then proceeded to Kwae. They then walked back to the Nucleus Estate with the Management club house being their last stop.

After being refreshed, Pens and pencils also donated by Deloitte Belgium were again given to all students present before the group dispersed to their various homes.

It is our vehement hope that all who were not able to make it to this year's health walk, will make it a point to be vibrant participants of next year's health walk, because ***"All work and no play..."***



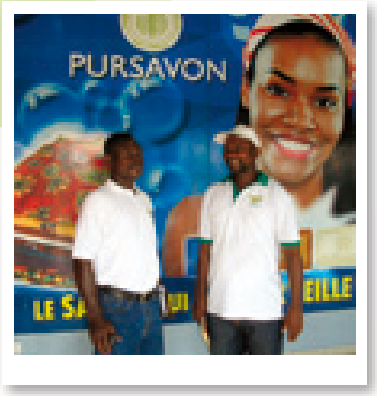
WE WERE THERE ..... SOUTH AFRICA 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP!

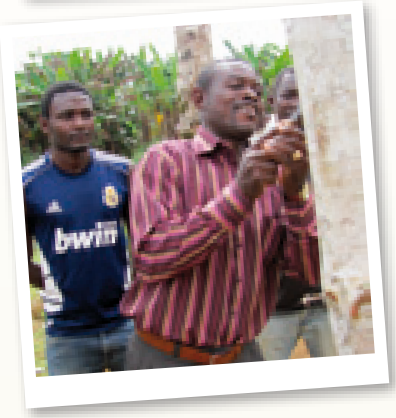
And the Wedding Bells Rang!!!

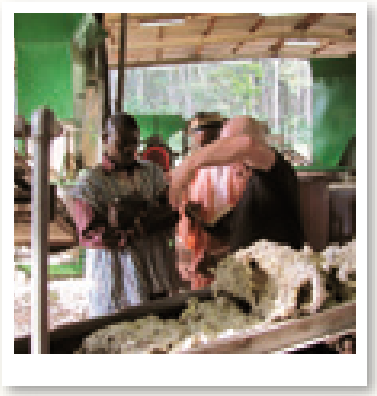
A VISIT TO SIAT GABON ...

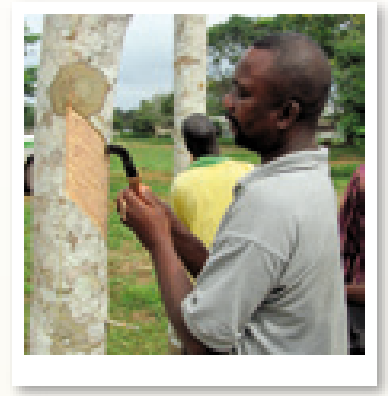
In late December 2010, Messrs Jackson Sawyer Asante and Yaw Amoako Duodu, executives of the GOPDC Junior Staff Union, paid a familiarization visit to Siat Gabon. We invite you to join our colleagues for a photo visit …

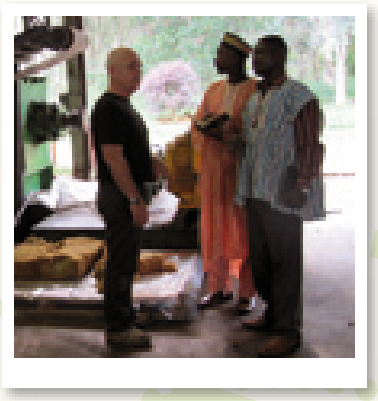
OUR WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL NEWS











The 2010/2011 Academic Year First-day-at-school group!

GOING DOWN MEMORY LANE!

Can you identify the people in these photographs and the occasions?

Friday, July 16, 2010 The Ghanaian Times BUSINESS

BUSINESS

Oil palm company tells success story

WITHIN the past 15 years, the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company Limited (GOPDC) has been transformed into a mashaw estate of 7,279 hectares and small holder/outgrower plantation spanning 15,874 hectares.

The original palm oil mill of 30 metric tonnes per hour capacity, modelled on the technology of the 1970s had undergone a complete refit and expanded to 60 metric tonnes per hour.

A 60-metric tonne per day palm kernel oil mill and a complete new state of the art 100 metric tonnes per day refinery and fractionation plant is the latest investment of GOPDC.

This was made known to a seven-member technical team of the Land Valuation Division of the Lands Commission during a visit to the company site.

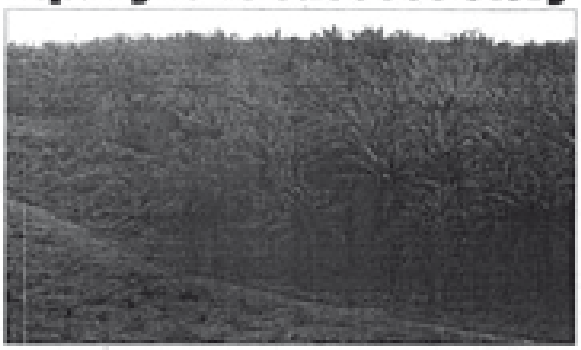
The interactive encounter was facilitated by the Managing Director of GOPDC, Mr Werner Pirijna and Mr Steffour Dankwa, acting director of the Land Valuation Division.

Ms Anke Massart, Director of Agriculture of GOPDC, who briefed the team about activities at the Okumaning 2010 planting site and related matters, said 460 hectares were expected to be cultivated this year.

She said this would be possible after compensation was paid to farmers and property owners who would be affected by the project.

GOPDC is expected to pay compensation for 145 buildings and 16 crop farms.

Ms Massart said 472 hectares would be cultivated at the Kongo project site and 342 at Kwae. — GNA



The Ghana Oil Palm Development Limited plantation

Daily Graphic, Saturday, August 28, 2010

Agric Minister visits GOPDC

THE Minister of Agriculture, Mr Kwesi Atwoi has paid a working visit to the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC) at Kwae in the Eastern Region to acquaint himself with its operations.

GOPDC is an integrated agro-industrial company which specialises in the organic cultivation of oil palm, extraction of crude palm oil and palm kernel oil, and also produces speciality oils used by the food industry.

The minister held discussions with the company's management, some of the members of the board of directors and representatives of the outgrower farmers.

Outgrowers are farmers who were assisted by the company with high yielding seedlings, fertilisers and training to follow good agricultural practices. In return, the farmers were expected to sell their produce to the company.

Welcoming Mr Atwoi and his team of officials of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Managing Director of GOPDC, Mr Werner Pirijna said the company was very pleased the minister was in their midst to have an insight into their operations, achievements and challenges.

He said the company had 21,000 hectares of oil palm plantations and helped develop about 14,000 hectares for 7,000 outgrowers at Kwae and Okumaning.

The company's facilities comprised 60 metric tonnes of fresh fruit bunch per hour at the palm oil mill, with 60 metric tonnes per day at the palm kernel mill and a 100 metric tonnes a day at the refinery and fractionation plant.

Mr Pirijna said the company was strongly focused on creating value for its produce which was the driving force behind all the investments taking place.

An agro-industrial company such as GOPDC is part of the community and cannot survive without social engagements and as such support communities they operate in not only through the result from their business operations, but also in several other ways.

The MD said the company was investing in education, health and issues concerning the environment because they were essential factors in social development aimed at improving the living standards of the majority of the people.

The company's Director of agriculture, Miss Anke [illegible] plant indigenous trees along rivers to protect them.

Miss Massart said the company had adopted good agricultural practices in the oil palm cultivation and palm oil production in keeping with the requirements of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).

The minister toured the company's nursery, plantation and mills and learnt that farmers obtained oil palm seedlings at GH¢2 instead of the market price of GH¢6.

Mr Atwoi commended the company for its achievements and when he learnt that many outgrowers who were assisted by the company to set up their farms were diverting their produce for small-scale millers, he advised them to refrain from that practice.

The minister cited tomato as an example and other farmers who were assisted to produce but sold their produce elsewhere and refused to pay back loans granted them.

When representatives of the outgrower farmers pleaded for the supply of inputs such as fertiliser on credit, the managing director said repayment by farmers had been "horrible" as some of them were in arrears between four and six years.

He said because of that reason and the level of diversion, the major palm oil companies, including Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP) and Benso Oil Palm Plantation (BOPP) had stopped assisting farmers.

Palm oil producers attend forum at Kwae

[illegible]

The Ghanaian Times
Page 28 Dec 30, 2010

Ghana to become first African RSPO state

THE Ghana Oil Palm Development Company Limited (GOPDC), with the support of Nat, a multi-national company, is championing in the country, the cause of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSOP) which is promoting the growth and use of sustainable palm oil worldwide.

RSPO was established in 2003, to address bad practices in the palm oil industry.

The GOPDC has assisted Ghana to complete a vital document, called the national interpretation document, on steps taken to meet the requirements of the RSPO and forwarded the document to it.

The document, prepared by the National Interpretation Working Group for Ghana (GNIWG) of which Ms Anke Massart, Director for Agriculture of GOPDC, is the national co-ordinator, paves the way for Ghana to become an RSPO country and the first in Africa.

The GNIWG was established in September last year, to develop a national interpretation of the sustainability principle and criteria of the RSPO.

It is to see to the adoption of good practices in the cultivation and processing of the palm oil to international standards.

The Community Relations Officer of GOPDC, Alhaji Bashir Mana, said Ghana was the first African country to have completed the national interpretation document, adding that GOPDC, with the assistance of Nat and other NGOs, was making frantic efforts for the technology transfer to the palm oil sector in order for Ghana to become the first African RSPO country.

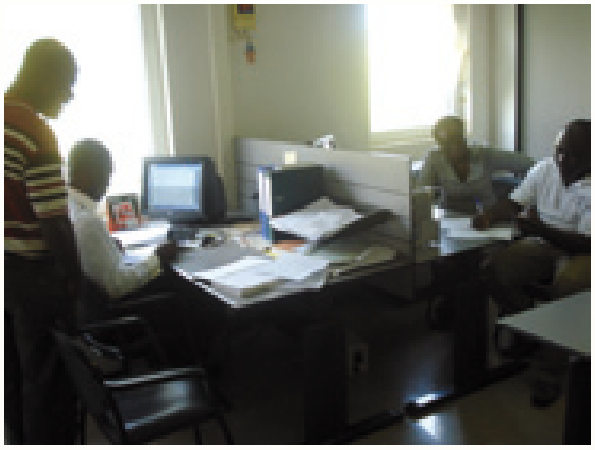
To achieve that purpose, GOPDC had held training programmes for oil palm cultivators and processing groups to ensure that all palm oil is produced sustainably.

Ms Massart, in an interview, emphasised that the RSPO was promoting the production, procurement and use of sustainable palm oil and had developed a certification system for growers, millers, processors and other stakeholders along the supply chain.

She spelled out the eight principles and criteria for sustainable palm oil production which included commitment to transparency, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, commitment to long term economic and financial viability, and use of appropriate best practices by growers and millers.

EDITOR'S PICK

In this maiden edition of the Editor's Pick, we are pleased to feature the Agric. Supervisors' Office.



Office Location: Agric. Block, Ground Floor.

Staff here are divisional heads and nursery supervisors. The various divisions include Division I, Division II and Division III. The under-listed are some of the activities handled by the supervisors:

- Field visits in the morning to organize and supervise the various activities done on the field for each day which include maintenance (slashing, ring weeding etc.), fertilizer application, harvesting, pruning and loose fruit collection.
- Updating records on the activities done in the day.
- Checking and signing daily worksheet for the various field operations from each gang which is later forwarded to the Nucleus Estate Manager.
- Making requisition for tools and equipment needed by field workers to carry out their activities.
- Preparation of weekly forecast on Fridays for the following week's activities needed to be done which include where to harvest, slash, apply fertilize etc.
- Assisting the Nucleus Estate Manager in sanctioning daily worksheet.
- Any other work assigned to them by the Nucleus Estate Manager.

FEATURE

Stores management and control: Responsibility of all

Stores management: **finance** or **operation** function?

Finance:

Materials stock to finance managers is money invested by the organization and so have a very significant impact on the financial base of the organization. The management of stores is therefore one very important function that attracts the attention of finance managers.

- The value movement of stock must be known and the closing value declared in the financial year closing report.
- Materials and associated cost must be factored into production cost/sale price determination
- Information on stock turnover must be available to expose obsolete and redundant stock for value adjustment in the financial year closing report
- Advise top management on stock acquisition policies in terms of how much is available to spend etc. among others

Management at Stores:

Due to the huge investment normally involved in stock, finance managers are very interested in controls (administrative in nature) at the stores where stock are kept. The huge amount in working capital that is sitting there in stock must be properly accounted for. Since there are many users of stores there is the need to have a control system which hands over the accountability for stores from one departmental area of responsibility to another, so that, this huge money or stock would translate into a positive expenditure. To realize the objectives above, controls must also be such that information is forth coming and accurately for users.

Operation:

Materials stock to operation managers is materials kept in pool as assurance for uninterrupted usage for the achievement of their core and ancillary operation targets. The consequences of inadequate stock and or lack of it could impact negatively on the overall profitability of the organization in the form of production shortfall. To the operation managers therefore, the inadequate stock or lack of it is a serious concern. Because of the above consideration they are equally interested in controls at the stores, basically of physical and information inflow and outflow. Controls that would ensure that:

- Physical structures meet standards for safe and organized storage
- Items are physically present and in the quantities as indicated by information available
- Arrival of new purchased items were duly announced and inspected
- Low stock and stock-out were promptly informed
- Realistic stock levels are set and continually reviewed
- Reduce stock varieties and eliminate items duplication
- Proper description and identification of items, example: nomenclature
- Conditions that create Obsolete and redundant stock were eliminated
- Items were properly stocked and in the right condition

Management at usage points (production, maintenance, field & offices etc.):

User managers

Management of materials at usage points, mainly production, engineering & maintenance, plantation fields are of equal if not more important as at the stores. It is a fact that, a little upward adjustment in product price could affect sales negatively. Since materials cost is an important element in product/sales price builds up user managers have a bigger role in ensuring that waste and abuses at usage points were reduced to the barest minimum by putting in place the necessary administrative mechanism

General staff:

Stores management is a collective responsibility. The general staff is not directly involved in stores management and control administration, but no meaningful gain can be made in this activity without their contribution. The savings in materials consumption reduction would be much bigger if the entire staff is part of the process. Some of the contributions they could make are for example:

- Avoid spillages of liquids whilst applying or serving
- Drivers observing approved driving methods and routes to conserve fuel
- Field staff applying the approved quantity, example: fertilizers and chemicals
- recycle papers for reuse
- and prudent use of consumables devoid of abuses
- take good care of items drawn from stores, use them as approved among others

User managers would best know where to save on materials usage but creating the awareness among general staff would make their job easier.

Should stores operate under finance or operation department or operate as a department?

This decision will vary from one establishment to another. **There is no hard and fast rule**, but the following considerations among others would inform first, the decision to operate stores as a department or not:

- The size of the establishment
- The scope of responsibilities , roles and functions assigned
- The type of industry and main category of materials stored
- Is it a specialized store serving mainly one specialized department and rendering relatively minor services to other users or equally serving multiple departments of different specialties?

GOPDC stores stock wide variety of items and serve multiple departments of equal specialties: mill, workshop, plantation/general, medical, agro chemicals, fuel and lubricants, office and IT. It is a section under finance department. It has several storehouses located at the premises of the various departments that it serves. Materials stocked in each storehouse are those which the department is a major user.
Which department then should have oversight responsibility over the various stores?

Allowing each department in this circumstance to take charge of its own stores could result in:

Lack of cohesion and coordination, weak organization, just to mention a few, but above all, uniformity in control and operational procedures may also suffer. Even if allowed, which department takes charge of general items that do not directly fall under any particular area like stationery, fuel and lubricants etc?

Centralization of management and administration has the advantage of taking care of most of these lapses, if not all. It has some disadvantages but needless to mention in this article; as its (article) focus is on GOPDC stores which has been centralized.

Fundamentally, materials stock is money, complex financial information preparation; gathering and reporting are required for materials acquisition and movements, right from the decision to acquire to the point of release for use. All management and controls of stores are therefore principally structured towards the safeguard and movement of money for the production of money. Therefore, a centralized administration for stores that has not met a full department status would normally fit into finance which has the expertise in money administration and management.

Against the fact that, operation departments already have a heavy schedule of meeting production, machinery maintenance and field targets, and so, much of their attention focus is heavily on meeting those targets and associated challenges which come alongside with huge volume of record production, record keeping and information dissemination roles. Adding stores administration, also a specialized function may result in overloading of responsibility. There is also the possibility of compromise in effective recordkeeping if major users are the custodians at the same time. All things being equal, it will serve better to allow the operation departments concentrate on their core jobs where they have the expertise.

Of course, unintentionally though, sometimes finance managers are drawn very deep into core finance challenges and demands, thus pushing their oversight responsibility role over the stores to oblivion, but this shortfall could be made up if a strong audit culture is enforced; backed by the support of operation managers.

Operation departments are major stakeholders in stock administration. Stock administration would not achieve objectives and goals required without their active involvement. Their involvement in major decisions in the administration of store is crucial to make it operate efficiently and render optimum reliable service.

All said the bottom line is collaboration. We will all gain if savings in materials usage translate into cheaper product and result in higher sales.

Stephen Avemegah

NOTES