



GOPDC

GOPDC NEWS JUNE 2014



This is our new logo



GOPDC

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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“

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

GOPDC LIMITED

GOPDC, a subsidiary of the Siat Group, is an integrated agro-industrial company specialized in the cultivation of oil palm, extraction of crude palm oil and palm kernel oil. GOPDC produces refined specialty oils and fats for use by the food industry. GOPDC is also diversifier into the cultivation of rubber trees (*Hevea brasiliensis*). GOPDC is wholly owned by Société d'Investissement pour l'Agriculture Tropicale (sa Siat nv) of Belgium.

GOPDC has about 21,000 hectares of oil palm plantations at its Kwae and Okumaning estates in the Eastern Region of Ghana, of which about 13,000 ha have been developed for about 6,000 outgrowers. In total, there are over 1,860,000 oil palm trees spread over a radius of 30 km, creating direct or indirect income for above 50,000 people.

The processing facilities of the company comprise a 60 mt/h fresh fruit bunch palm oil mill, a 60 mt/day palm kernel oil mill, a 100 mt/day refinery and fractionation plant and a palm kernel cake pellet plant. In 2012, a Jerrycan Filling plant was added to GOPDC's industrial where the company's "Kings" brand Olein Vegetable Oil is packaged into 5 litre and 25 litre jerrycans.

The company, employing about 3,000 workers in the peak season, produces over 35,000 tons of palm oil and palm kernel oil per annum and has a storage capacity of about 21,000 tons both at its Kwae and Tema (harbour) facilities.

GOPDC supports the communities it operates in, not only through the results from its business operations, but also through investment in education, health and the environment which are essential factors in social development with the aim of improving the living standards of the people.

FOREWORD

It is well over a year since we brought you the previous volume of your GOPDC News!

While we admit that the long delays in presenting the GOPDC News was not the best, we wish to assure you that the editorial committee is doing all it can to overcome the challenges that result in these delays. We have put in place the needed measures to streamline the activities that go into the preparation of the journal.

Since the last issue, there have been a lot of activities on our estates as well as within our surrounding communities. On the estates, we bring you an update on the investment projects. These include the jerry can filling plant, the palm kernel cake pellet plant, the new 1.5MW turbine and the biogas project. In our surrounding communities, you will notice that GOPDC is not relenting in its efforts in sustaining its corporate social responsibility even amidst prevailing financial and general economic challenges. Ongoing projects at Anweam, Kusi and Okumaning are featured.

A feature in the journal very popular among the workforce is the column on new appointments under the Human Resource section. This was not left out.

We wish you a pleasant reading.

Thank you.

Editorial Committee

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Corporate



NEW GROUP CORPORATE HEAD OFFICE

On October 18, 2013 our Group head office in Brussels moved into its new location. The new ultra modern office complex in Zaventem has brought together both the general secretariat and the logistics department under one roof. The new address is:

sa Siat nv

Romboutsstraat 6-8 • B-1932 Sint-Stevens-Woluwe • Zaventem – Belgium • Tel.: +32 (0)2 718 38 88 • www.siat-group.com

GEORGES ASSIRI BOSSON is the new Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO).

An agronomist by profession, Georges joined GOPDC in August 2013. He graduated from ENSA-Abidjan (Ecole Nationale Supérieure Agronomique) Côte d'Ivoire and INA-Paris (Institut National Agronomique) France. He previously worked with PHCI-Unilever (Plantations & Huilerie de Côte d'Ivoire) for 10 years. Before that, he was in charge of a Tomato Project in (Trituraf-Blohorn) Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire for 2 years. Georges also work with DCGTx-Odienné (Direction & Contrôle des Grands Travaux) for 7 years in the north of Côte d'Ivoire where he was in charge of a soya bean Project. He delights in walking and drawing.



THE LIDAR SURVEY

Proper oil palm plantation management is crucial for GOPDC as the dependency of the mill and the refinery on FFB increases day in and day out. However, to increase yield in the short and long term, precision agriculture is considered as one of the approaches that can be adopted by plantation managers and supervisors, to improve plantation practices.

For GOPDC to remain as one of the biggest agro-based companies in Ghana, the company decided to explore the potential of the use of LiDAR and optical remote sensing data for plantation road and terrain planning for planting purposes. In July 2012, GOPDC signed an agreement with Rabat based Société des Etudes de Projets et Réalisation des Travaux (SEPRET) for the provision of LiDAR surveying of GOPDC's concessions. SEPRET undertook the field work in January 2013 and delivered the results in February 2013.



SO WHAT IS LIDAR?

LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) is an optical remote sensing technology that can measure the distance to other features by illuminating the target with Light. The technology has been used in airplanes to measure features on Earth's surface, including determination of detailed elevation models and to make high resolution maps. It has applications in agriculture, geomatics, geography, geology, forestry, remote sensing, contour mapping etc.

For example in agriculture, LiDAR technology can be used to help farmers to determine which areas of their fields that they need to apply costly fertilizer. LiDAR can create a topographical map of the fields and reveal the slopes and sun exposure of the farmland. Moreover, the ground surface elevation contours created from this technology can be used to prepare both surface and sub-surface field drainage patterns.

One of the most significant advantages of the approach is that, it allows plantation managers to accurately plan the plantation roads. Furthermore, it creates a more and accurate digital database of oil palm estate, and the airborne imagery can also be used for related activities such as oil palm tree inventory and detection of palm diseases.

FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

In view of the enormous benefits of the technology in agriculture, GOPDC for the first time undertook a LiDAR survey of its entire catchment area (200,000 Ha) including its two concessions, Kwaie and Okumaning in January/February 2013, for the following purposes listed below;

1. Identify potential rubber growing areas within GOPDC entire catchment.
2. Create crop classification map.
3. Identify the drainage pattern in the concession.
4. Generate Digital Terrain Model (DTM), Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and Digital Surface Model (DSM).
5. Make slope, Hill shade, Aspect and topographical maps (contour).
6. Oil palm tree inventory.
7. Other uses

CURRENTLY WHAT THE LIDAR DATA IS BEING USED FOR:

1. The contours generated are being used for contour planting in the area of rubber.
2. Slopes maps have been generated to identify potential rubber growing areas within Kwaie concession
3. Oil palm tree inventory was conducted in 2013 for the purpose of consolidation in the two plantations.
4. To accurately identify and map all bio-diversity plots in the two concessions.
5. It was used to update all the roads network and plots in the two estates.

Seth Tawiah Kotey Amon, Surveyor



ADB AT GOPDC

On December 23, 2013 a media team from our cherished banker Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) visited us at Kwae ...



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF AGRIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES STUDENTS ON TOUR

On December 5, 2013, students from the University College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies arrived at Kwae for a study tour. The students were led by Mr. Eric Asante a lecturer.




ALBERT OSEI RETIRES...

On Sunday January 5, 2014 evening, and at the invitation of GOPDC Chairman Pierre Vandebееck, a BBQ was held at the Management Club House in honor of Mr. Albert Osei who retired from the Board of GOPDC on December 31, 2013. Mr. Osei served on the Board for 6 years and was the Vice-Chairman of the Board. During his tenure at GOPDC, Mr. Osei also represented the interests of Siat Group in Ghana. In brief remarks at the function, both Chairman Vandebееck and Mr. Osei recalled the longstanding relationship between them dating as far back as Mr. Osei's days at the World Bank. Also present at the function were other directors of the GOPDC Board as well as GOPDC management staff.



Agriculture

THE NEW OUTGROWER SCHEME.


COMMUNIQUE


At a meeting on Monday, 11th November, 2013 between GOPDC Management and the Executives of the GOPDC Outgrowers' Association held at the Conference Room of GOPDC Ltd, Kwae;

It was decided as follows:

- 1. Pricing of FFB**
 - a. That with immediate effect there will be two prices for FFB viz Farm Gate (FGP) price and Mill Gate (MGP) price.
 - b. That also with immediate effect, current FFB prices will be:
 - i. Farm Gate price: GH¢250.00 per ton for all farmers.
 - ii. Mill Gate price: GH¢280.00 per ton being the sumtotal of the FGP of GH¢250.00 and an average transport component of GH¢30.00.
 - iii. That the Transport price will be fixed by zones and will vary based on the distance between the zone and the Mill.
- 2. Extension Services**
 - a. That a new Outgrower Manager (OGM) has been appointed in the person of Mr. Florent Asquinhazi.
 - b. That the OGM will be supported by District officers and Zonal officers.
- 3. Incentives**
 - a. That in addition to the FFB price, the Company will provide a performance based incentive package of GH¢20.00 credit per ton of FFB supplied payable each year in December. This bonus shall be applied to debt reduction or used to offset against procurement of seedlings, fertilizers, tools or any other inputs available from GOPDC once the loan is totally reimbursed.
- 4. Payment for FFB**
 - a. That payment for FFB supplied will be made within 2 days from date of supply.
 - b. That the payment will be by electronic payment system in order to ensure fast payment.
- 5. Allocation of Inputs**
 - a. That allocation to members of the Farmers Association of seedlings, fertilizers, planting materials and any other inputs will be based on performance only.
- 6. Financial Support to OG Association**
 - a. That an amount of GH¢2.00 will be credited to the account of the OG Association for every ton of FFB supplied by members of the Farmers Association.
 - b. The Outgrower Manager will be a member of the executives of the Farmers' Association.
- 7. GOPDC will resume local road maintenance work where required and where farmers are performing well.**

Kwae 19/11/2013.

Ph. Hoogstoel.


Managing Director.

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At a meeting with the executives of the Outgrower Farmers' Association on November 11, 2013, Chairman Pierre Vandebecq announced the introduction of a new outgrower scheme to be headed by Mr. Florent Asquinazi. A communiqué issued at the end of the meeting summarized the objectives and terms of the new scheme.

FLORENT ASQUINAZI

Outgrower Manager

KWAE

RUBBER UPDATE

2010 to date

The rubber project started in 2010 with the installation of a one hectare (1ha) budwoodgarden which continues to serve as source of clone material for the annual budding. In 2010 eight different clones were planted (IRCA41, IRCA230, IRCA109, GT1, PB217, PB260, RRIC100 and RRIM712). The ground stumps were received from CHC Cavally.

In July 2011 the first nursery of 0.5ha was installed and in March 2012 15 workers of GOPDC rubber team were sent to RPG To-pease (Asamankase) to be trained in grafting. In 2012 20ha were planted as an experimental plot.

The 4ha nursery established in 2012 has provided planting material for a 104ha industrial plantation as well as replacements of a total of about 25ha in 2012 and 2013 plantings. The clones planted in the plantations are IRCA41, IRCA230, PB260 and RRIC100.

In 2013 an extension of about 1.5ha of the budwoodgarden was done to provide sufficient budding material each year. Meanwhile, installed clones are: IRCA41, IRCA230, IRCA109, GT1, PB217, PB260, RRIC100, RRIM712, PR107, PB254, PB255, IRCA331, RRIM600. The nursery has also supported seven hectares of out-grower demonstration farms in five communities.

For 2014 the planting target is 150ha industrial plantation and 50ha of Outgrower farms/ extension.

The rubber team started in 2010 with 6 workers. Currently there are 120 workers working on a daily basis in the nursery, plantations of 2012, 2013 and 2014 new planting operations. For the moment there is a supervisor each for the nursery, plantation and outgrower project.



Nursery for YOP2014, with installed drip irrigation

Rubber planting YOP2012, 20ha



*Rubber planting YOP2013
(contour planting), 104ha*



OKUMANING

GOPDC Okumaning plantation, can boast of 17ton/ha for the 11years old trees planted in 2002 and 14tons/ha for the 2007 planting which is only 6 years old. The high yields currently being achieved in Okumaning could be attributed to the adoption of best management practices; better planting materials, regular maintenance and harvesting frequencies, efficient usage of fertilizer which has had positive effect on the yield.



2007 PLANTING ALREADY YIELDING 14TONS/HA

A clear evidence of exhibiting better management practices is the recent planted trees in 2013; trees are doing very well with very high density planted at the right time.



For the 2011 planting though it is just 2.5 years old, they are full of bunches and already being harvested since Jan 2014. From the bunch counts in Dec 2013, it is possible to achieve 5tons/ha for the first year of harvesting.



2.5 year old young palm at Okumaning ready for harvesting

We are therefore optimistic to achieve a sustainable yield between 18-20tons per ha very soon in Okumaning plantation.

From the environmental point of view, oil palm is eco-friendly by its nature, highly productive compared to other oilseed crops. Its superior productivity is also reflected in high photosynthetic rate resulting in oxygen emission and carbon dioxide absorption rates that are ten times more effective than those observed for soybean and other oil seeds.

This means the oil palm crop remains one of the most important sources of sustainable and renewable raw material for food, oleo chemical and bio-fuel industries for the future. Let's be optimistic and continue growing oil palm.

E. K. Wiafe
Estate Manager, Okumaning

AT LONG LAST A NURSERY AT GOPDC-OKUMANING

GOPDC- Okumaning project started in June 2002. Planting continued in 2003 till 2013. So far Okumaning can boast of having planted over 2,700ha out of which over 2000ha is matured and being harvested. The remaining 700 is immature. Based on computation, it can be concluded that Okumaning had over 400,000 seedlings from the Kwae Nursery, located over 24km from the Okumaning plantation.

Consequently considering the cost, the risk and the stress involved in transporting the seedling, it was appropriate for management to have taken the decision to establish a nursery at Okumaning.

Filling the main-nursery poly bags



Workers placing the poly bags



Leaders checking the number of bags filled



Pre-nursery poly bags already placed

Therefore a nursery project was started in Oct. 2013 at Okumaning. So far over 100,000 pre-nursery poly bags have been filled and placed with over 80,000 planted.

With respect to the main-nursery, preparations are seriously ongoing to receive all the pre-nursery seedlings by April 2014. We know one of the basic factors for a successful plantation is a good nursery management. With healthy seedlings from the nursery the planter can be sure of good production within the 25 years life span of the oil palm.

Okumaning pre-nursery



Therefore the site and the topography were carefully selected. Accessible roads, water supply, electricity, etc have been taken care of and planting at the main –nursery started. Having drastically reduced the undesirable effects of shock and stress associated with the transfer of seedlings over a long distance, we are optimistic to produce healthier seedlings.



Okumaning main nursery ready for planting

KWAE ESTATE

“Enemy declared wanted” – An amount of GH¢ 4.00 per kilogram was placed on the head of this creature the oryctes ... an enemy to oil palm. This activity greatly helped in the control of the oryctes!



Stores Supervisor Isaac H. Owusu ready to receive “enemy” oryctes!

THE GALOTRAX 500 – a new land clearing machine – was introduced at GOPDC in 2013.



The Galotrax at work at the Kwae plantation.

Production

PROJECTS:

The new 1.5MW turbine



Palm kernel pellet cake warehouse

THE NEW JERRYCAN & FILLING PLANT



*The jerrycan filling plant -
the home of "king's" vegetable oil*



THE BIOGAS PLANT BEING INSTALLED BY BIOTEC INTERNATIONAL UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Mauricio Castillo Justiniano, biotec's resident engineer



The control room

Environment, health and safety

Fire fighting training by the Ghana National Fire Service for GOPDC staff




... and the First Aid training for staff by the Ghana Red Cross



HSE Officer Gilbert James Amenuvor shows the way for safety observation for motorbike riders ...






18/09/2013


MEMO

Road Safety Instructions




50
Km/h

Speed Limit within the
ESTATES (Kwae/ Okumaning)




30
Km/h

Speed Limit within **community
area/ housing/ offices/
nursery/
industrial unit/ school**



**Reduce Speed when
approaching**

EVERYBODY SERVES AS A GOOD EXAMPLE
Non-compliance shall be reported and will be sanctioned



September 2013

MEMO

Obligations for motorbike holders

Hereby GOPDC takes the opportunity to reinforce the following regulations for motorbike users on the GOPDC estates

- Motorbike user holds a valid driving license
- Motorbike user wears a crush helmet at all times on the motorbike
- Motorbike user respects and adheres to road safety rules and speed limits indicated
- Motorbike has a valid registration

Thank you,
HSE Manager

Your safety!!! Our topmost priority

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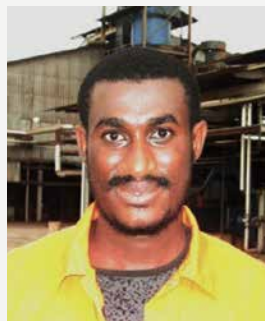
Human Resource

NEW APPOINTMENTS



Felix Poporo

Position: Mechanic
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



Philip Ankapong

Position: Refinery Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Albert Offeh

Position: Turbine Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



William Mintah

Position: Refinery Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Daniel Appiah

Position: Refinery Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Eric Danso

Position: Crane Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Stephen Boateng

Position: Capstan
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Nicholas Narh Padi

Position: Kernel Recovery
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Sampson Adomako
Position: Crane Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



Paul Kwaku Agbenya Kporha
Position: Turbine Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Edmund Doku Donkor
Position: Crane Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Alex Asare Duodu
Position: Power House Attendant
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



George Bawuah
Position: Welder
Department: Technical
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



Richard Annor
Position: Laboratory Attendant
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Doralyn Appiatua
Position: Clerk
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Prince Oware
Position: Welder
Department: Technical
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 2nd JULY, 2012



Yaw Gyekye
Position: Mechanic
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



Christian Kofi Dzieketey
Position: Agric Supervisor
Department: Agriculture
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st February, 2013
Hobby: Dancing, reading and travelling



Richard Austin Danyo
Position: Turbine Operator
Department: Technical
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



Solomon Ofori Boateng
Position: Agric Supervisor
Department: Agriculture
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st August, 2013
Hobby: Watching movies and listening to reggae music



Francis Dotse
Position: Agric Supervisor
Department: Agriculture
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 2nd September, 2013
Hobby: Watching football



Joyce Okyere Ewudzie
Position: Nursery Supervisor
Department: Agriculture
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st February, 2013
Hobby: Listening to music and watching movies



Gilbert James Amenuvor
Position: Health, Safety and Environment Officer
Department: Agriculture
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 10th September, 2013



Legend Owusu-Boadu
Position: Agric Supervisor
Department: Agriculture
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st September, 2012
Hobby: Watching football and reading motivational book



Agyin Martison

Position: Clerk
Department: Agriculture
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2012



Foster Sintim-Broni

Position: Security Officer
Department: Corporate
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 5th August, 2013
Hobby: Watching flying birds and listening to music



Bright Mintah Adomako

Position: Administrative Officer
Department: Corporate
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st November, 2013
Hobby: Swimming and travelling



Isaac Kwame Nyame

Position: Security Supervisor
Department: Corporate
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 7th October, 2013
Hobby: Watching football and listening to music



Ivy Akosua Asabea Obeng

Position: Human Resource Officer
Department: Corporate
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st September, 2012
Hobby: Singing and watching football



Benedict Michael Ohene Amponsah

Position: Security Supervisor
Department: Corporate
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 1st October, 2013



Richard Asare Adjei

Position: Security Manager
Department: Corporate
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 3rd December, 2012
Hobby: Basketball, tennis and aerobic exercise



Yao Edem Foli-Awoubey

Position: Cook
Department: Corporate
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st March, 2013



Charles Asuman
 Position: Stores Clerk
 Department: Finance
 Marital status: Single
 Date joined: 20th September, 2013
 Hobby: Listening to music



Romel Calara
 Position: Mechanic
 Department: General Services
 Marital status: Married
 Date joined: 14th October, 2010



Michael Asenso
 Position: Stores Assistant
 Department: Technical
 Marital status: Single
 Date joined: 2nd July, 2012



Simon Zanu
 Position: Workshop Supervisor
 Department: General Services
 Marital status: Single
 Date joined: 1st December, 2013

PROMOTION



Ebenezer Owiredo
 Grade: Supervisor
 Department: Technical



Adu Mireku
 Grade: Supervisor
 Department: Technical



Sowu Avogbedoh
 Grade: Manager (Nucleus Estate)
 Department: Agriculture



Seth Kotey Tawiah Amon
 Grade: Assistant Manager (Surveyor)
 Department: Agriculture



Isaac Theophilus Appiah
Position: Electrician
Department: General Services
Marital status: Single
Date joined: 1st August, 2012



Alloysius Donkor
Position: Driver
Department: General Services
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 1st October, 2013



Eric Obeng
Position: Driver
Department: General Services
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 11th September, 2013



Alan Guiriba
Position: Mechanic
Department: General Services
Marital status: Married
Date joined: 5th August, 2011

WEDDINGS



Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Mantey after their wedding on 2nd November, 2013 at GOPDC Kwae Estate. Mrs. Mantey (nee Amakye) is a data entry clerk at the GOPDC Finance Department.



Mr. & Mrs. Joseph O. Akoto posed for a picture after their wedding on 5th April, 2014 at GOPDC Kwae Estate. Mrs. Akoto (nee Ammissah) is a secretary at the GOPDC D/A Basic School.

Community and Social Responsibility

NEW PROJECTS IN THE COMMUNITIES

KUSI

A Community library with I.T Centre for Kusi funded by GOPDC was completed in 2013 at the cost of GH¢85,544.30.



ANWEAM

A six unit Classroom block with staff common room and a store under construction at the cost of GH¢ 174,101.18 as part of the company's corporate social responsibility for Anweam.



OKUMANING NURSES QUARTERS

The construction of two semi detached Nurses quarters for Okumaning Clinic is also ongoing at the cost of GH¢121,470.95 as part of the company's corporate social responsibility.



DONATION TO THE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM

Our social responsibility efforts are not confined to the Akyem Abuakwa Traditional Area alone. We promote education beyond the boundaries of the Akyem Abuakwa Traditional Area. The company proudly supports the northern regional school feeding program via the donation of palm oil towards the sustenance of the program. At the third quarter of 2013, Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC), in its unlimited desire to help develop the country's human resource base through education, donated 700kg of crude palm oil towards the school feeding programme in the Save-lugu/Nanton district of the Northern Region of Ghana.



OKYEMAN ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION

To effectively contribute to the sustainability of environment and its protection, in the Okyeman Traditional area, the company has also released an amount Gh¢ 62,893.80 to the Okyeman Environmental Foundation and the same amount also given to the Okyeman Traditional council for local development.



OUR QUEEN MOTHERS FOR OKUMANING PLANTATION PROJECT

The traditional queenmothers within the Okumaning project area were not left out in consultations in the project.



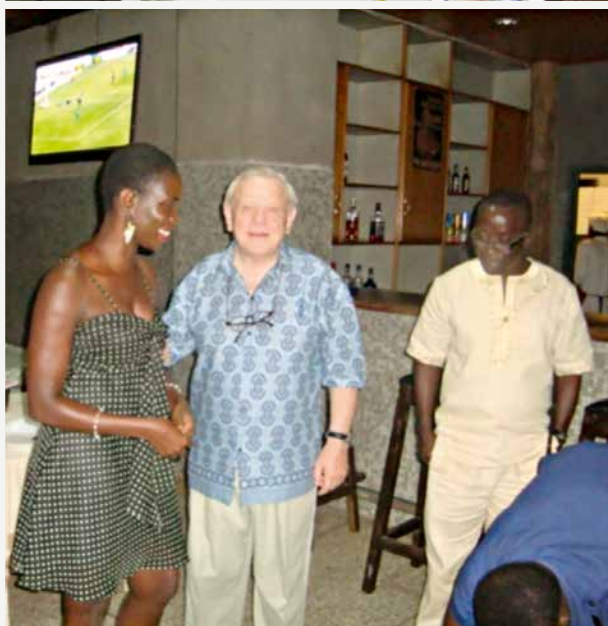
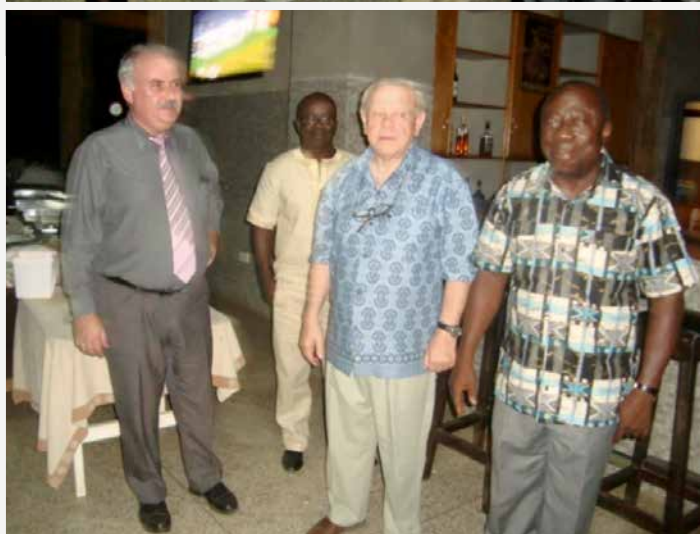
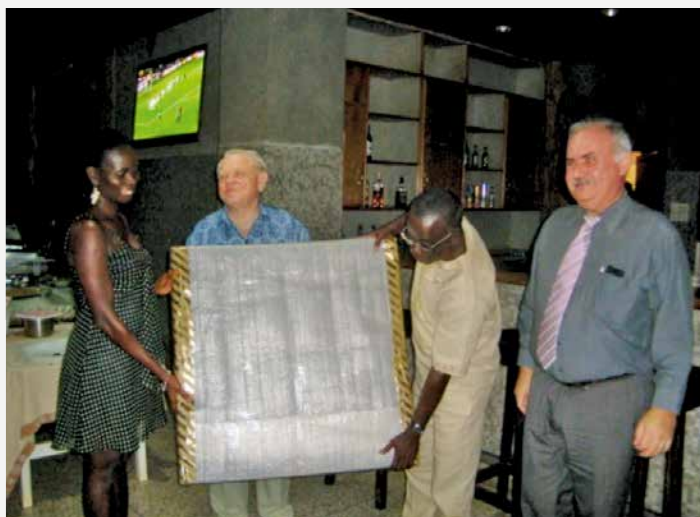
Our Working Environment and social news

AT THE END-OF-YEAR PARTY FOR GOPDC STAFF ON DECEMBER 19, 2013



ATSRIM AND OTU LEAVE GOPDC ...

On March 14, 2013, a sendoff party was organized in honour of Messrs Lawrence Atsrim and Christian Amoh Otu at the Management Club House. The occasion was graced with the presence of the Chairman and CEO of the Siat Group, Mr. Pierre Vandebecck. The event was also attended by the Managing Director and a cross section of workers of GOPDC.



AT GOPDC CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT UNION ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 22, 2013

At the meeting, the chairman noted that the GOPDC Credit Union was formed in 1985 with a few members but can now boast of membership of 383. The association's total assets grew from GH¢ 265,565.47 to GH¢ 373,246.71 in the 2012/2013 financial year. Due to this positive growth, the association is now graded "B" from its previous grade of "C". The GOPDC Credit Union hopes to move to the grade of "A" by the end of the year 2014.



INTER SCHOOL FOOTBAL COMPETITION HOSTED BY GOPDC D/A BASIC SCHOOL



END OF YEAR MEETING WITH CHIEFS OF COMMUNITIES AROUND GOPDC



FEATURE

THE MEROPS ALBICOLLIS

by Philippe Hoogstoel



You have certainly seen them since end of November : they are back after having spent the main of the rainy season in the South of Sahara. They usually wait for their prey on a branch or more commonly on electric cables.

The White-throated Bee-eater (*Merops albicollis*) is a near passerine bird in the bee-eater family Meropidae. It breeds in semi-desert along the southern edge of the Sahara, Africa. The White-throated Bee-eater is migratory, wintering in a completely different habitat in the equatorial rainforests of Africa from southern Senegal to Uganda.

This species, like other bee-eaters, is a richly-coloured, slender bird. It is predominantly green, but its face and throat are white with a black crown, eye stripe, and neckband. The underparts are pale green shading to blue on the breast. The eye is red and the beak is black.

The White-throated Bee-eater can reach a length of 19-21 cm, excluding the two very elongated central tail feathers, which can exceed an additional length of 12 cm. They weigh between 20 and 28 grams.

White-throated Bee-eaters also feed and roost communally. As the name suggests, bee-eaters predominantly eat insects, especially bees, wasps and hornets, which are caught in the air by sorties from an open perch. However, this species probably takes mainly flying ants and beetles.

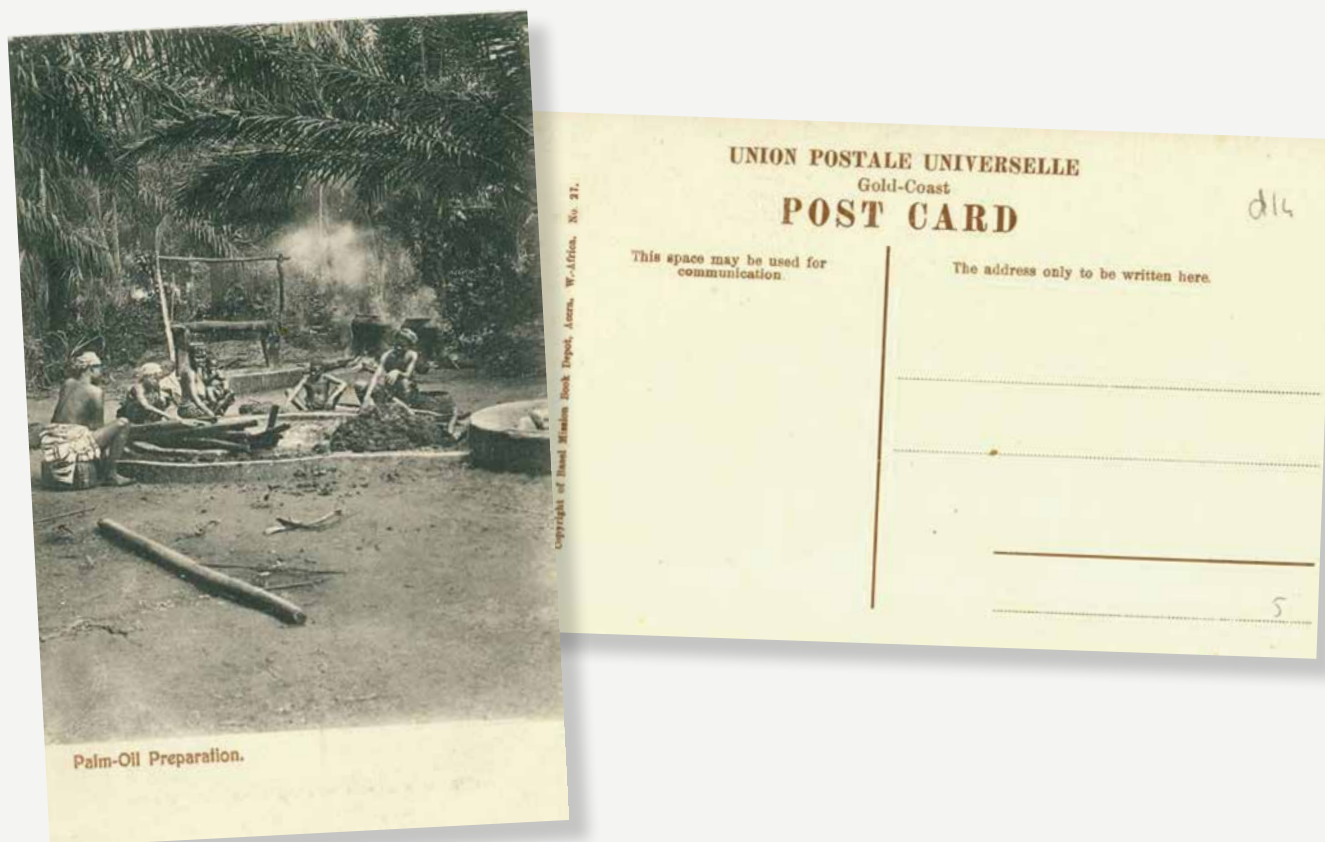
A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE!



EDITOR'S PICK

This photo featured on a post card in the Gold Coast era shows indigenous palm oil preparation method. Gold Coast was the name of the country Ghana before its independence in 1957.

Do you see any similarities between the scene in this photo and those of present day cottage palm oil mills within our communities?



... and compare with this modern-day palm oil preparation as depicted in this flow diagram ...

