



Cameroun Vert (CamVert)

Location: Océan, Campo (Cameroon)

Biome: Tropical Rainforest

Area property (ha): 60,674 ha (40,032 ha without 'reserved' southern part of concession)

Coordinates: 9.9335, 2.4333

Cleared Area

6,890

hectares

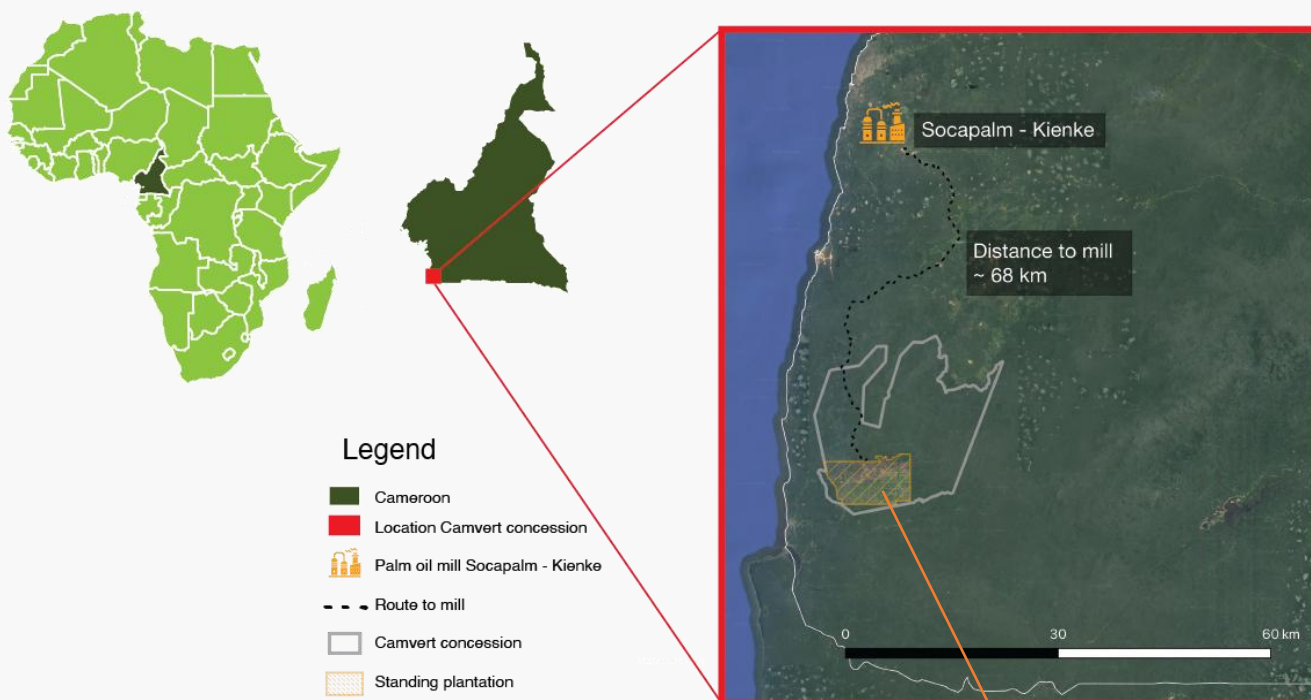
Period clearance:

April 2020 and April 2025

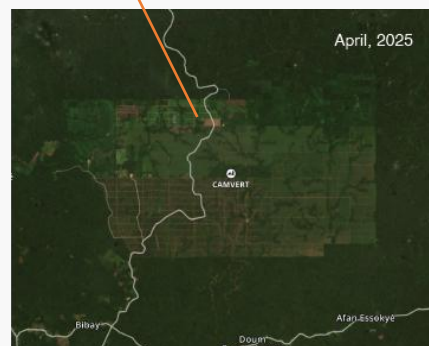
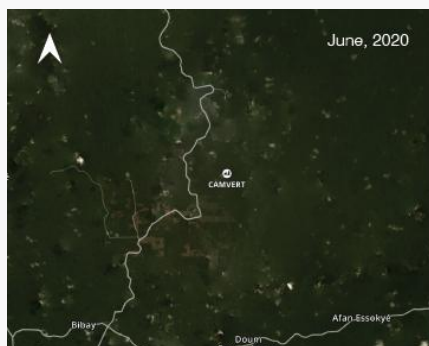
Type of vegetation:

Dense Moist Forest

Imagery: The grey outlined polygon shows the concession area of CamVert. The orange polygon within demonstrates the oil palm plantation. The top images illustrate the location of the concession and the route from the plantation to the closest industrial palm oil mill, Kienke, from Socfin's subsidiary Socapalm. The bottom three pictures demonstrate the phased clearing of the plantation between June 2020 and April 2025. There is a gap between December 2019 and June 2020 in the available cloud-free Planet satellite data, therefore, the clearing could have started earlier than June 2020. There seem to be clearing signs starting in April 2020 (Sentinel-2 L2A satellite), and there are reports (e.g. source 5 on page 4) on clearing of forest areas that had already started in September 2019 for the nursery.



Source: AidEnvironment, based on Google satellite imagery, and data from the Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune (MINFOP), polygon based on visual deforestation in Planet Labs. PBC. (2025, March 2025), background aerial image from Google et al. (2025), route created using Google Maps (2025).

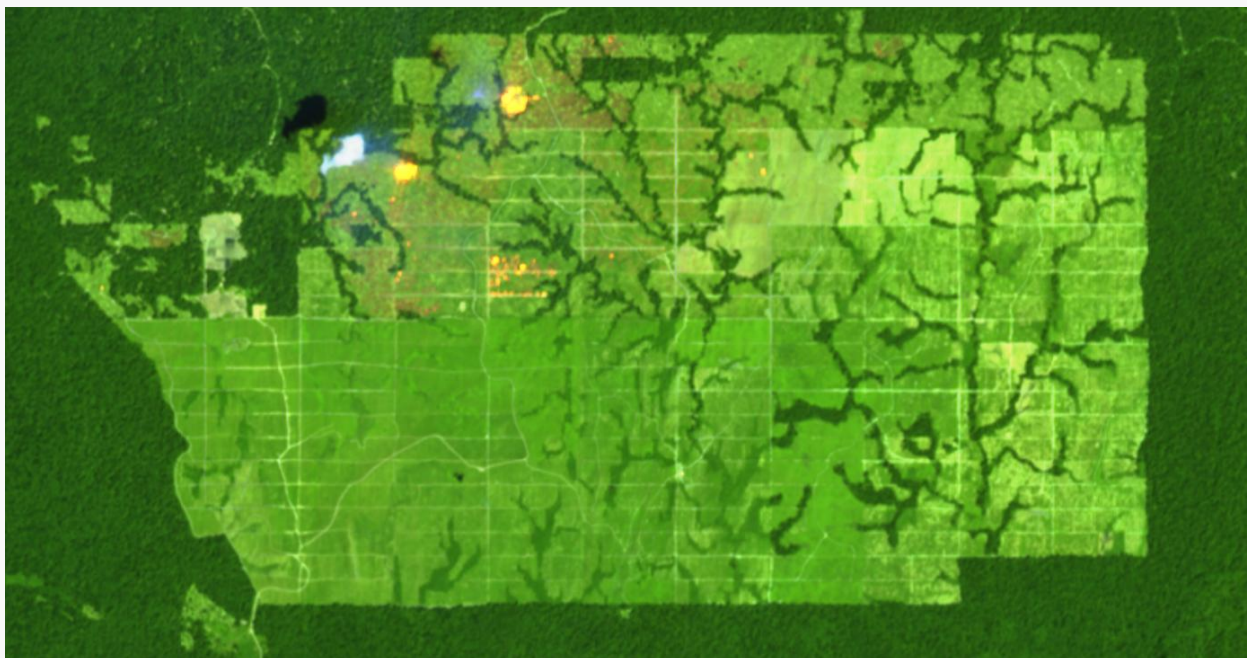


Picture: Screenshots of the deforestation in the Camvert concession between 2020 and 2025.
Source: Planet Labs, website assessed in June 2025.



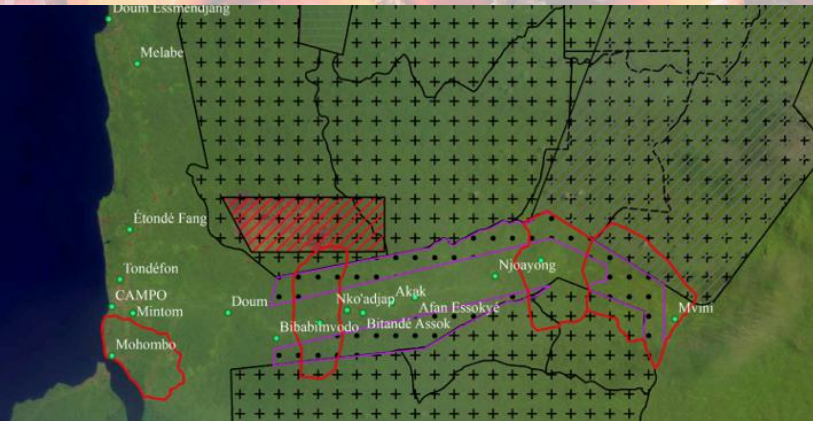
Cameroun Vert (CamVert)

Imagery: The two (processed) images below visualise the occurrence of active, man-made fires in the CamVert concession on 31 January 2023, as part of the clearing and land preparation process.



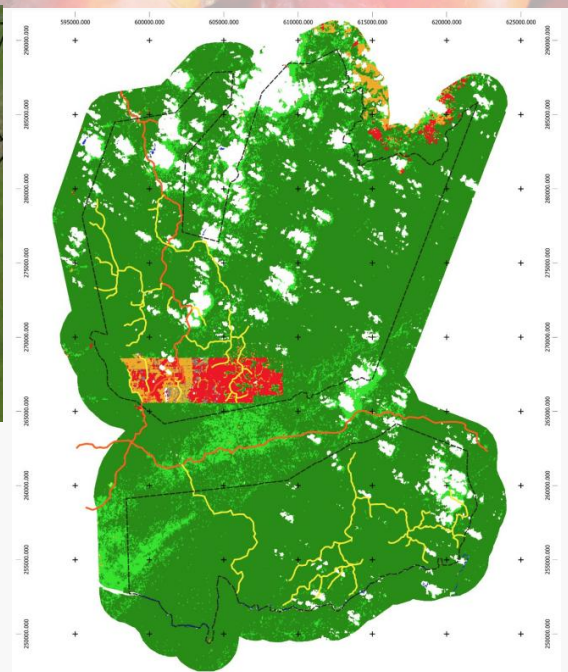
Source: AidEnvironment, based on Copernicus Browser 2025.

Cameroun Vert (CamVert)



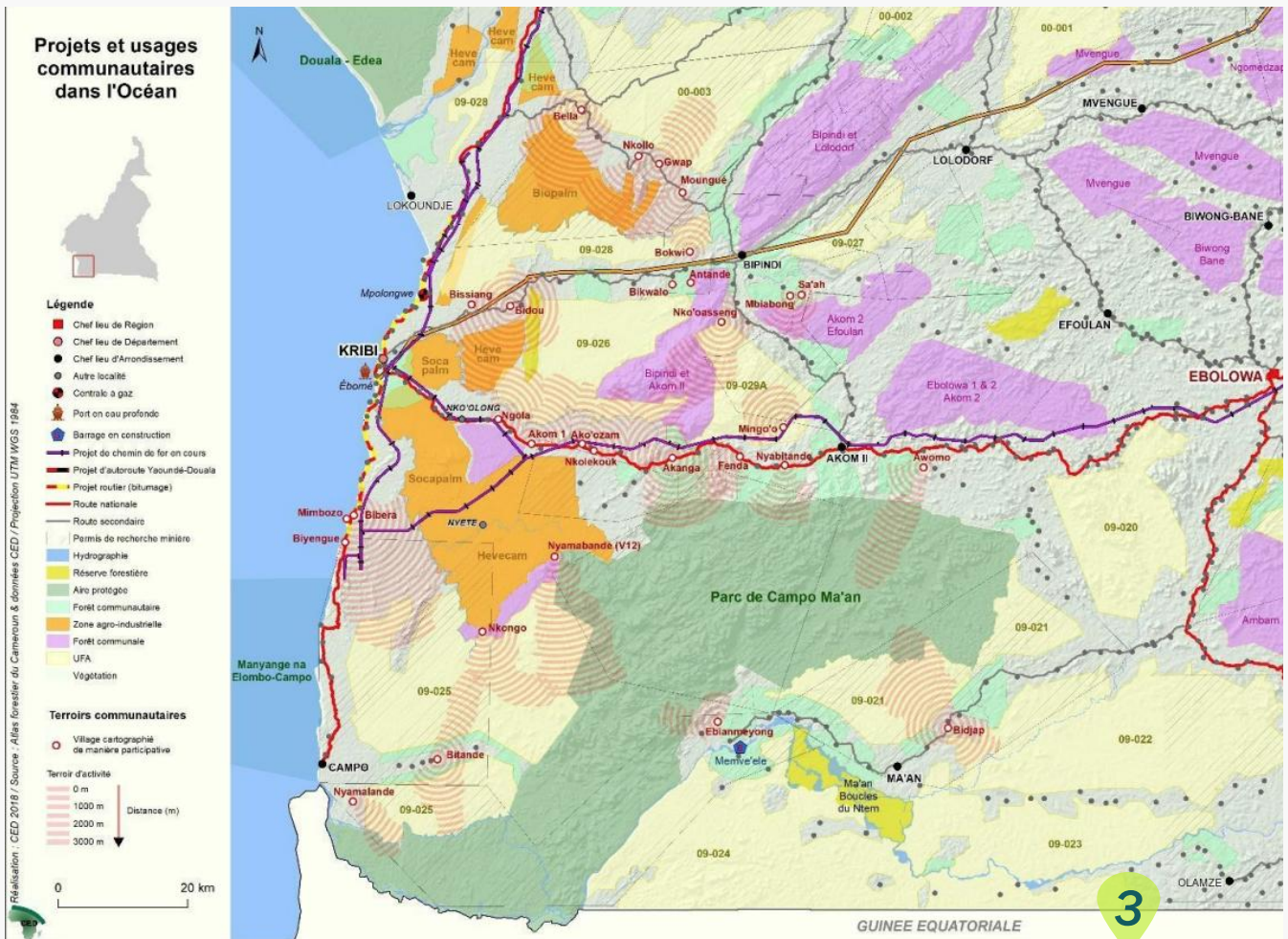
Maps above and at bottom visualise the presence of indigenous areas and local communities adjacent to the CamVert cleared zone for oil palm, clearly demonstrating the need for consultation and FPIC.

Top map left: CamVert cleared zone (shaded in red) and location of local communities (green dots), community forest (purple polygons) and community land tenure (red polygons). [Source:](#) Greenpeace and EIA, 2021.



Bottom map: Bagyeli community land use zones (red-lined areas) next to Campo Ma'an National Park. [Source:](#) CED Cameroon, 2018 in FPP UN CERD submission.

Map: Land cover in CamVert concession (in red/orange), indicating significant dense forest (dark green) and open/disturbed forest (light green). [Source:](#) CED Cameroon, Milieudéfense & Landscape Matters (2023).



Cameroun Vert (CamVert)



Ownership

CamVert ownership	Main shareholder of CamVert is co-founder Aboubakar Al-Fathi (75% of shares). Mahmoud Mourtada , co-founder and managing director, holds 25% of the shares and supervises CamVert's activities. Finally, Mamoudou Bobbo , chief manager officer, coordinates and carries out agricultural activities in Campo (1).
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Case description

Between April/June 2020 and April 2025, Cameroun Vert (CamVert) cleared 6,890 ha of native vegetation on the border of Campo-Ma'an National Park in southern Cameroon for planting oil palm plantations in the total concession area of 60,674 ha (40,032 ha without 'reserved' southern part of the concession) (2). In November 2019, Cameroon's Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute has declassified Forest Management Unit- *FMU 09 025*, to allow for large-scale agricultural production. In 2020, 2,500 hectares of the declassified part of FMU 09 025 were authorised for exploitation to the benefit of the CamVert project (3). Ongoing clearing is expected. The process of allocating logging rights for the forest conversion was reportedly flawed (4). A detailed 2023 analysis of the cleared vegetation type in the CamVert concession (5), reveals that given the high percent of continuous Dense Forest in the concession, at least 53% of the CamVert concession is designated as High Priority Patches (HPP) under the HCV patch type system. A total of 2,245 ha (33%) of the cleared area is classified as 'forest' under the European Regulation on Deforestation-free products (EUDR) (6), but a visual correction on the (delayed) EU Forest Observatory Map demonstrates that in reality 4,842 ha (70%) of the cleared area can be classified as forest by June 2025 (7).

Impacts of the CamVert project on local communities and indigenous peoples in the concession have been widely documented (8) and cumulated in a formal complaint by the Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) at the UN CERD Committee in March 2023 (9). FPP raises concerns that "the customary lands of multiple Bagyeli communities in the Océan department of Cameroon are being rapidly deforested to establish a large oil palm plantation, after the government granted Cameroonian company CamVert a provisional concession for such a development." Moreover, "Mvae and Iyasa communities living in the area are also affected and many have expressed their concerns" (9). On 13 December 2024, the CERD Committee stated that "the response from Cameroon government about violations of Bagyeli rights by the CamVert oil palm concession is insufficient" (10). Communities protested multiple times stating the company is violating the agreements on benefits for the community (11).

Any palm oil produce and related palm products from the CamVert concession marketed in Europe from January 2026 runs the risk of being noncompliant with the EUDR, considering the conversion of classified forests in the CamVert concession since the EUDR cut-off date (30 December 2020), as well as the likely impacts on and violations of (FPIC) rights of indigenous peoples and local communities described above. While there are indications of CamVert having performed an FPIC processes, these are likely not executed in a proper way. For example, the chosen representative of the Bagyeli indigenous community can neither read or write in French or English and reportedly did not know what he had signed for (1).

- (1) Infocongo (22 February 2022), *An Opaque Agro-industry Razes Cameroon's Forests with Impunity*, online: <https://infocongo.org/en/an-opaque-agro-industry-razes-camerouns-forests-with-impunity/>, viewed in June 2025.
- (2) The clearing is confirmed in numerous investigations, including Infocongo (see source 1); [Greenpeace](#) (Camvert, a recurring nightmare) and CED Cameroon and Milieudéfensie (see source 5).
- (3) Infocongo (22 February 2022), *An Opaque Agro-industry Razes Cameroon's Forests with Impunity*, online: <https://infocongo.org/en/an-opaque-agro-industry-razes-camerouns-forests-with-impunity/>, viewed in June 2025.
- (4) *Pers. comm.* CED Cameroon in June 2025.
- (5) Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement (CED), Milieudéfensie & Dr Geoffrey Griffiths (2023). *Mapping the extent and type of deforestation, Campo Ma'an Cameroon*. Online: https://en.milieudéfensie.nl/news/cameroun_report_forest-clearing-CamVert_january-2023_final-report_for_publication.pdf/@download/file/Cameroun%20report%20forest%20clearing%20CamVert.pdf, viewed in June 2025.
- (6) EU Forest Observatory Map, online: <https://forest-observatory.ec.europa.eu/forest/rmap>, viewed in June 2025.
- (7) Richter, J., Goldman, E., Harris, N., Gibbs, D., Rose, M., Peyer, S., Richardson, S., & Velappan, H. (2024). *Spatial Database of Planted Trees (SDPT Version 2.0)* [Data set]. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378725480_Spatial_Database_of_Planted_Trees_SDPT_Version_2_0
- (8) See references summarized here, e.g. of Greenpeace, Infocongo, Milieudéfensie.
- (9) Forest Peoples Programme (2023). *Submission to CERD*, online: <https://www.forestpeoples.org/publications-resources/reports/article/submission-to-cerd-concerning-the-grant-of-a-palm-oil-concession-to-camvert-and-associated-rapid-deforestation-on-the-customary-forest-lands-of-bagyeli-communities-in-cameroon/>, viewed in June 2025.
- (10) <https://www.forestpeoples.org/publications-resources/news/article/response-from-cameroon-government-about-violations-of-bagyeli-rights-by-the-camvert-oil-palm-concession-is-insufficient-according-to-un-cerd-committee/>, viewed in June 2025.
- (11) Greenpeace (24 January 2025). *Cameroon: In Campo, local residents express their annoyance with Camvert*, online: <https://www.greenpeace.org/africa/en/press/56940/cameroon-in-campo-local-residents-express-their-annoyance-with-camvert/>, viewed in June 2025.

Cameroun Vert (CamVert)



Business relationships

Potential buyers:

Direct: Socfin
Socapalm - Kienke

Indirect: LDC, VVF,
Nestlé, L'Oréal

Company responses: In response to a draft version of this case study shared with Socfin's subsidiary **Socapalm** in June 2025, the company stated that (14 July 2025) "there is no legal, structural, or commercial link between CamVert and Socapalm" and that "Socapalm has no supply agreement with CamVert and doesn't intend to establish one in the future". Socapalm's full response can be read [here](#). **CamVert** did not respond to repeated requests for feedback.

Case description

After land clearance in 2019 and 2020, CamVert started planting its first oil palm trees (1). Considering the average time for producing palm oil from a new plantation (3-4 years), at the time of reporting (2025), it is expected that CamVert has or will sell its first palm oil produce from the concession soon. Based on proximity (see maps first page), nearby palm oil mills of Socfin's Société Camerounaise de Palmeraies (Socapalm), notably the RSPO-certified Kienké palm oil mill (2) will be a potential recipient of this palm oil produce. Considering the road infrastructure, there is only 68 km between the concession and the Kienke mill, and the mill is the only industrial palm oil mill in the area that also sources outside of its own Socapalm plantations. It is estimated by palm oil companies that mills will mainly source from plantations within an approximate 50-70 km radius around the mills due to the oil palm fruits' perishability (though this may vary depending on available infrastructure, such as road density and quality). Palm oil buyers of the Socapalm Kienke mill are therefore unlikely to achieve negligible risk in their due diligence efforts under the EUDR when buying palm oil products from Kienke mill. Socapalm has denied the existence of any commercial relationship with CamVert (see response above).

While there is already significant controversy around the CamVert concession, also Socapalm and its European parent company Socfin are reportedly linked to land grabbing, illegitimate RSPO certification, threats and intimidation, forced labour, deforestation, and pollution (3), and therefore also risking noncompliance with the EUDR. Socfin Group, a Luxembourg-based holding company involved in oil palm and rubber production in Asia and Africa, which consists of major financial holdings Socfin, Socfinaf, and Socfinasia, is 39 percent held by the French group Bolloré and 54 percent held by the Belgian businessman Hubert Fabri. Socfin was a European agribusiness company during the colonial period and has largely expanded its plantation territory through privatization of African state plantation companies (4).

Buyers of Socfin's Socapalm mills in Cameroon, also with specific reference to Socapalm's Kienke mill, include Louis Dreyfus Commodities (LDC) in 2024 (5) and VVF India (producer of fatty acids) in 2024 (6). Nestlé sourced from Socapalm's mill in 2021 (7). Buyers indicating that Cameroonian palm oil mills are part of their suppliers, therefore likely also including Socapalm, but without specifying the mills, include L'Oréal (8) and Nestlé in 2023 (9).

Shipment data samples do not reveal (yet) any direct palm oil exports from CamVert to date. However, indirect supply via Socfin mills might follow existing trading routes. For instance, Socfin's Safacam (rubber and palm oil) company has, apart from significant exports of rubber to several major tyre manufacturers (Michelin, Goodyear, Continental, Nokian, Polsaros, MRF) in Europe, also directly exported palm kernel oil (HS 151329) from Cameroon to Golden Agri Resources in the Netherlands (dated 2024-10-01, at a total value of USD 3 million); to LDC in Spain (dated 2024-03-06; at a total value of USD 1.0 million); and to Sogescol in the Netherlands (dated 2022-03-25; at a total value of USD 4 million) (10). Sogescol is Socfin's legally registered company in Switzerland marketing rubber and palm oil.

- (1) Infocongo (22 February 2022), *An Opaque Agro-industry Razes Cameroon's Forests with Impunity*, online: <https://infocongo.org/en/an-opaque-agro-industry-razes-camerouns-forests-with-impunity/>, viewed in June 2025.
- (2) Socapalm Kienke RSPO certification, online: https://www.socfin.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2028-01-17_Socapalm_Kienke_RSPO_2023-01-18.pdf and GeoRSPO, online: <https://my.gfw-mapbuilder.org/v1/latest>, viewed in June 2025 (PDF report available upon request).
- (3) Small selection of sources on Socfin's reported misconduct: [Chain Reaction Research](#); [Business and Human Rights Resource Centre](#); [Mongabay 1](#); [Mongabay 2](#); [Milieudefensie](#); [Greenpeace](#); [Fern](#); [Volkskrant](#); [Earthworm](#); [Sherpa](#).
- (4) Chain Reaction Research (2022). *African Oil Palm Expansion Slows, Reputation Risks Remain for FMCGs*, online: <https://aidenvironment.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/African-Oil-Palm-Expansion-Slows-Reputation-Risks-Remain-for-FMCGs.pdf>.
- (5) LDC Palm Oil Mill List 2024-H1, online: <https://www ldc.com/wp-content/uploads/Palm-Traceability-to-Mill-List-H1-2024.pdf>, viewed in June 2025.
- (6) VVF India Palm Oil Mill List 2024, online: <https://vfftd.com/PDF/sustainability/Palm-Mill-List-2024.pdf>, viewed in June 2025
- (7) Nestlé palm oil mill list 2021 (PDF file available upon request).
- (8) L'Oréal mill list 2022, online: <https://www.loreal.com/-/media/project/loreal/brand-sites/corp/master/lcorp/3-commitments/sharing-beauty-with-all/list-of-mills-potentially-connected-to-loreal-palm-supply-chain-2022-v1.pdf>, viewed in June 2025.
- (9) Nestlé CDP Forests 2023, online: <https://www.nestle.com/sites/default/files/2024-11/cdp-nestle-answers-forests-2023.pdf>, viewed in June 2025.
- (10) Cameroon export data for palm oil and palm oil products (HS codes: 1511, 120710, 151321, 151329, 230660, 382319) to Europe between January 2022 and March 2025, filtered for companies affiliated with Socfin in Cameroon (e.g. Socapalm, Safacam).