

# **Do you have the information you need?**

## **Toolkit for Golden Veroleum Environmental & Social Impact Assessments**

May 2017

This Toolkit is about the Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) that Golden Veroleum (GVL) is supposed to give to the community where it wants to put the plantation.

This toolkit also explains:

1. What an ESIA is.
2. Why an ESIA is important.
3. What kind of information an ESIA should contain.
4. An example of a ESIA that GVL has already done for the Tarjuwon people, including the information it does and does contain and the questions that the community should ask GVL to make sure its ESIA is better.



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## **1. What is an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)?**

An ESIA is the key study paid for by the company to assess what the impacts of its palm oil plantation might be, and how those impacts can be reduced or mitigated.

An ESIA should be carried out with proper scientific analysis, and with full community consultation. An ESIA must be carried out before operations begin - if it is done after operations have started there will already be impacts which can't be reduced or stopped.

Customary land rights, community resources, community livelihood activities and the other resources and good things the land or forest provides the community should also be mapped as part of the ESIA, to know how the people are living on the land. Time must be taken to do this properly and to get a clear picture of how the land is being used.

The ESIA must be given to the community, but it is a big bulky document and can be hard to fully understand. The company is supposed to give the community a summary of the ESIA. People need to understand the ESIA in order to make the right decision about how the land should be used.

## 2. Why is an ESIA important?

Before the company can take the communities' land it must first obtain the communities' Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. This means the community must understand what the impacts of the plantation will be before they agree to the plantation or reject it.

The purpose of an ESIA is so that people (government, company, community) can get an idea of what the impacts of the plantation will be. It is the single best source of this information, and so the ESIA must be a good document so people can make an informed decision whether or not they want the plantation on their land. The ESIA must be done before these decisions are made.

A good way to show why an ESIA is important is to show what happens when people are not aware of the impacts of a plantation on their lives. In Grand Cape Mount, the palm oil plantation run by Sime Darby has had big impacts on peoples' lives. Similar problems could happen in the GVL plantation, and thus should be addressed in the ESIA you get from GVL:

- The company uses chemicals to make sure the palm grows well, but these chemicals can pollute drinking water making it unsafe to drink and causing health problems for the community.
- People have lost farmland, forests and the pollution of water, impacting their livelihoods, hunting, ability to farm, traditional religious sites, graveyards, ancestors homes, and way of life. With farmland gone people are concerned they will have to use all their wages to buy food.
- There have been jobs for some people, but people are concerned that without education the jobs would be limited and the employment would be insecure.
- People are worried they may be forced from their homes and forced to move to other area where they might cause tensions in the community.

### **3. What information should an ESIA contain?**

An ESIA should contain information on:

- How many people are in the community? What is their livelihood and how do they get money and the other things they need like water, food, fuel and shelter?
- What will be the impacts of the development on the community?
- What will the impact on the land and the forest be? Will the plantation impact people's farms? Will the plantation impact on hunting?
- Will there be any impacts on streams and water sources? What chemicals will be used in the plantation?
- What will the impacts be on the community's sacred sites?
- What opportunities will there be to get jobs? Will other people move to the area to take job?
- What will be built? Will there be a mill or new roads?
- Will people still be able to pass through the plantation area?
- What rights will the community have?

#### **4. Learning lessons from a bad ESIA Golden Veroleum has already done**

GVL has already done some ESIA for other parts of its plantation. One of these is for Tarjuwon, in Sinoe County. The ESIA for Tarjuwon is not very good because it does not contain much information the community needs. However, it can be used as an example of what other communities should look for in their ESIA's, and what kind of additional information they can demand for their ESIA's.

The Tarjuwon ESIA covers the below topics. On the following pages is described the detail provided in the Tarjuwon ESIA on each topic, the information that is missing in the ESIA on each topic, and questions your community can ask to make sure your ESIA contains the right information on each topic:

- |                |                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Food        | g. Cultural Areas                |
| b. Livelihoods | h. Outside Workers               |
| c. Pollution   | i. Outgrowers Program            |
| d. Water       | j. Resettlement and Compensation |
| e. Soils       | k. Jobs                          |
| f. Health      | l. Climate                       |
|                | m. Buffer Zones                  |

## **a. Food**

### **What is the risk?**

- The plantation will take land that is used by the community for farming, reducing food.
- The plantation will take forests that are used by the community for hunting bushmeat, reducing food.
- Even if the plantation leaves enough farmland and forests for the community now, what happens if the community gets bigger in the future?

### **The ESIA says:**

- There is a risk that people will have less food as farmland will be lost to the plantation.
- There is likely to be a major loss of forest. If this happens there will be less bushmeat to hunt.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

What happens as the community population getting bigger in the future? If there are more people in the future, more land will be needed so everyone can eat. But if the plantation is on farm and forest land how will people get the food they need?

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- Where will people get land to farm once the plantation is there?
- Where can people hunt for bushmeat once the plantation is there?
- What land will be available for our children and grandchildren to make farm and hunt?

## **b. Livelihoods**

### **What is the risk?**

- Traditional livelihoods will change. Fewer people will be able to farm and hunt for food. With less forests, building materials, medicines, and other supplies from the forests will become harder to get.
- Farming may have the change because the company doesn't want fires nearby.
- Fewer people will be able to make money from crops they sell, like rubber.
- Inequality could get worse. If people who currently work in the community, like elders or women, cannot work on the plantation they could have less power in the community.
- People may move. If the plantation employs different numbers of people over time, people may have to leave their villages and move to the city to find jobs.
- Towns may move. The plantation may cause entire towns to be resettled. This could cause great tension in the communities.

### **The ESIA does not talk about the plantation's impacts on peoples' livelihoods:**

The ESIA does not talk about how people's livelihoods may change. It does not talk about peoples' current livelihoods or how it will affect them. It does not say whether people will be better off or worse off as a result of the plantation.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- How will community people live if they cannot make farm or go to the forest to hunt or got to the river to get fish?
- Will our lives be able to continue the same as before? Will our lives be better or worse if the plantation is there?
- How much of our ancestral lands will we lose if the plantation is there?
- Where will we make farms when the plantation is there?
- How will the community people get money if they lose their life trees?
- How much compensation will be paid for the loss of crops? How long will you be able to feed your family with the money?
- Will we have to move?

## **c. Pollution**

### **What is the risk?**

The plantation will cover the ground in chemicals never before used in the area. These chemicals will be used over a long time to kill pests and plant diseases and improve the soil for oil palm trees. These chemicals are applied by GVL and, if they are washed into rivers, will pollute drinking water and will not be good for peoples' farms and animals.

### **The ESIA says:**

- These chemical may be used:
  - Fertilizers: Agrobolen, Kieserite, Borate, Sulphate of Ammonia, Muriate of Potash
  - Pesticides: Cybermethrin
  - Herbicides: Roundup, Glufosinateammonium, matsulfon-methyl, triclopyr and fluroxypyr.
- There is a major risk that these chemicals will pollute water in the area.
- The people use rivers, streams, and creeks to meet all their water needs so will be affected by these chemicals in the water.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

- The ESIA does not state that the chemicals it lists are all the chemicals that the company will use. There may be more.
- The ESIA does not explain exactly what health impact these chemicals will have on workers, but we know from other sources that many of these chemicals have negative impacts on peoples health.
- The ESIA does not explain what health impact these chemicals will have on communities. For example if people drink polluted water they could get sick but the ESIA does not talk on that.
- The ESIA does not explain what impact these chemicals will have will have on the communities' crops, animals, or fish.
- The ESIA does not discuss how risks of using chemicals can be reduced.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- What chemicals will be used? Why?
- What are the impacts of each of these chemicals on human health?
- How much chemical will be used and when?
- What is the safe level of use for each chemical? How will the company make sure that the level is not exceeded?
- How will the company make sure that our water is safe to drink? How big will the buffer zones be?
- How will these chemicals impact the land? Will the productivity of the land be affected?
- Will we will be able to grow crops on the land once the plantation is gone? Will the crops be safe to eat?

## **d. Water**

### **What is the risk?**

- Oil palm trees in the plantation will use water in a different way than communities' farms and the forests. This could mean there is less water in rivers, swamps and in underground sources. Oil palms can also need irrigation which could reduce water in streams, swamps and underground sources. It could also mean that during heavy rainfall there could be flooding, as a plantation is not able to absorb water as much as a forest or farmland so there could be floods downstream as more water will drain into rivers and creeks.
- Chemicals used by the plantation could not only pollute rivers and streams, but also water underground and swamps.

### **The ESIA says:**

- Creeks that are inside the concession area drain into larger rivers and creeks.
- Water samples were taken during the rainy season.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

- The ESIA does not talk about how the plantation will affect water under the ground
- The ESIA does not talk about how the plantation will affect swamps.
- The ESIA only talks about water during the rainy season. It did not study water during the dry season, when rivers, streams, underground water, and swamps are very different.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- Will the plantation mean that there is more dirt in the rivers and creeks? Will this affect the number of fish we can catch? Will we still be able to drink the water if there is too much dirt inside?
- If chemicals are used in the plantation, will they get into our rivers and streams? Will this water still be safe to drink if there are chemicals inside?
- Will there be more or less water in rivers, streams and swamps once the plantation is there?
- Will there be an increased risk of flooding once the plantation is there?
- Will water be tested during the dry season?
- What will happen to the water under the ground and swamps?

## **e. Soils**

### **What is the risk?**

It is important to protect the soil because it preserves nutrients crops need to grow and cleans water that ends up in rivers and in underground water. Too many oil palm trees and chemicals may change the soil or cause it to wash away as there are less roots and trees to hold the soil in place

### **The ESIA says:**

- There is only one type of soil in the whole area: Ferrasols.
- These soils require fertilizers (ESIA, p101)
- The plantation may cause more soil erosion, especially where there is heavy rain.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

- The ESIA does not talk on what the impacts of the plantation and chemicals will be on the soil.
- THE ESIA does not talk on whether the plantation will affect soil erosion.
- The ESIA does not talk on what are the best areas for farming
- The ESIA does not talk on the texture, organic content, or acid-alkaline balance of the soil. These things are important for planning where to farm.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- Are you going to do a correct soil analysis so that you can plan how the land should be used?
- Are you going to use the soil analysis to understand how pollution and chemicals could move through the soil?
- How will the plantation effect soil erosion – will there be more or less soil erosion once the plantation is there?

## **f. Health**

### **The ESIA says:**

Health impacts could include: accidents, exposure to noise, dust, fumes, chemicals, fires, malaria, animal bites and communicable diseases as a result of more people coming to work and live in the plantation area.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

- The ESIA does not go into many details on what the health impacts might be.
- There could be serious health impacts if it is not easy to get the same food you used to grow and hunt.
- It does not talk about the fact that there may be an increased risk of Sexually Transmitted Diseases such as HIV, because more people will be coming in to work on the plantation.
- Roads that community people use to get to the clinic might be inside the concession, so people might not be able to use them anymore and have to find another route to the clinic.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- Where will the health facilities be built and who will be able to use them?
- Do you have to work for the company to be able to use the clinic?
- Will we still be able to use the roads we currently use to get to our clinic?

## **g. Cultural Areas**

### **The ESIA says:**

- Area's available for cultural practices and graveyards might be reduced or lost.
- Community access to the concession area may be limited and sacred areas may be destroyed.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

- The ESIA does not look at the importance of sacred sites and cultural areas to the community.
- It does not look at the way the land and cultural sites create a sense of identity and belonging, as well as a way of life.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- Will our cultural sites be protected and respected?
- Will we still be able to access our cultural sites?
- Will we participate in mapping our cultural sites, as it says in the concession agreement?

## **h. Outside Workers**

### **The ESIA says:**

- 1000-2000 workers are needed in the first phase of the project
- 7000 workers will be needed during the construction phase.
- The additional people coming into the area for work could cause some problems for the community: crime rates could increase, alcohol abuse, conflicts could increase, the way the community is looking could change.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

- How big or small these problems could be.
- That there might be problem with sexually transmitted diseases and increased prostitution due to the additional workers coming to the area.
- Additional workers could mean that local people get more business from trading.
- The fact that these numbers are just estimates – there may be more or less workers needed for the plantation, depending on how much land the company gets permission to use.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- How many people will come to the area for job?
- How will you make sure that we don't get additional problems from them?

## **i. Out growers Program**

### **The ESIA says:**

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- 40,000 hectares of the GVL concession has been allocated to an outgrowers program.
- The outgrowers program could be beneficial for surrounding villages.
- The program could reinforce local farming practices.
- The program could help people get links to markets because GVL has committed to buy all the palm that people can produce.
- If the scheme is not properly managed it could lead to conflicts.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

- It is not known what the outgrowers program is.
- It is not certain that the outgrowers program will go through – the company says it must find funding from an international donor to pay for the scheme.
- GVL may provide support to other palm oil farmers, but they are not obliged to do this under their contract, it is their choice to make.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- What is the outgrowers program?
- Where will the outgrowers program happen – which area?
- Who will GVL go to for funding the program?
- When is the program going to start?
- How will GVL be buying the palm oil from the community?

### **Questions to think about:**

- Is growing palm oil to sell to GVL a good use of your land?
- Are there any other trees that are also a good option? Which would provide you with a greater income?
- Will you be able to make farm on the same land after you stop producing the palm oil?

## **j. Resettlement and Compensation**

### **The ESIA says:**

The ESIA does not talk about people being resettled from their lands. The company's contract does talk about resettlement and compensation.

### **The contract says:**

#### Resettlement:

- Local communities may lose access to forest resources.
- Communities may be resettled if they live within the GVL concession area, this will be ongoing throughout the term of the contract (65 to 98 years).
- The company's contract does not require that communities participate in this decision. However, voluntary promises the company has made, including to the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), state that communities should participate fully in developing the resettlement plans.
- There is a principle in the contract that the number of settlements inside the concession where people are allowed to remain should be kept to a minimum. This means that if the communities' village falls inside the concession area, you may have to be resettled.

#### Compensation:

- Compensation will be paid to families affected by resettlement, but the government will decide the level of compensation.
- Communities do not need to be consulted about the level of compensation they should receive.
- Other funds may be available, but money may not be put into these funds until after the palm trees have started producing, which could take 3-5 years.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- What is the current plan for resettlement?
- What is the way we can participate in developing the resettlement plan?
- How much compensation will the community get?
- How much compensation will be paid for lost crops and farmland?

### **Questions to think about:**

- If you're resettled will the people of the new village allow you come and live among them? Will the relationship be ok between you?
- Will there be conflicts over land?

## **k. Jobs**

### **The ESIA says:**

:

- 1000-2000 people will be needed to take job in the first phase of the palm oil plantation.
- 7000 workers will be needed during the construction phase of the palm oil plantation.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

It does not say what the impacts will be on the community if people move into the area to take job.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- What job opportunities will there be?
- What types of jobs can community people do?
- How long will the job last?
- What qualifications will you need to get job?
- How much money will the job provide?
- Will they bring in other workers when it comes to harvesting the palm?
- Will the jobs be for old people or young people?
- Will the jobs be secure and long term? Will there be a job contract?
- Who should you go to if you lose your job?

### **Questions to think about:**

- Will you have enough money to buy food and things you need if you can't grow food anymore?
- Will you enjoy work on the plantation?
- By doing that job will you miss out on education opportunities? Will getting an education be a better long term solution to a secure income?
- What is the best way to sustain your family in the future? What option gives you the best opportunities?

## **I. Climate**

### **The ESIA says:**

- The clearing of large amounts of vegetation might affect the local climate.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

The clearing of large areas of vegetation could make the area hotter, and there may be less rainfall in the long term due to the loss of the forest.

### **The ESIA does not talk about:**

Will the plantation make our area hotter or colder or change the rainfall?

## **m. Buffer Zones**

### **What is the risk?**

- Buffer zones between the plantation and the communities' farms are important – they protect the community from some of the impacts of the concession such as pollution.
- If there is not enough room in the buffer zone to make farm, people will have to walk distance to reach their farms and to access roads to take produce to market.
- If there is not enough buffer zone it might be hard for people to get to the school or clinic
- Buffer zones must allow enough space for the community to live off the land – if there are more people in the community the buffer zone needs to be bigger.

### **The ESIA says:**

The ESIA does not talk on the buffer zones that will be needed to be left between the plantation and farms or villages.

### **Questions to ask the company and the government:**

- How big is the buffer zone between villages/ farmland and the concession? Is that enough to sustain you and your family?
- How will the size of the buffer zone be decided?