Help stop the advance of oil palm plantations in Gabon!

We need your support! We call on organizations, groups, networks and movements to sign this petition in solidarity with Gabonese communities threatened by OLAM / SOTRADER plantations. You can adhere until Thursday, September 19.

OLAM is a large transnational agribusiness company based in Singapore that operates in over 70 countries. In 2010, OLAM partnered with the government of Gabon to develop large industrial oil palm and rubber plantations on a total of 500,000 hectares of land in the Central African country with extensive forest areas. To implement their plans, OLAM and the government of Gabon created several companies, including SOTRADER.

Dozens of communities live on the land that the government gave to OLAM in concession; these communities depend on the forests and savannas for their livelihoods which are based on agriculture, hunting, gathering and fishing. Ever since OLAM began its operations, the company and its plantations have brought great destruction to the communities' territory, and have started to enclose more and more.

The communities of Ferra and Nanga in southern Gabon decided to unite to say NO to the expansion of OLAM's plantations. They drafted a petition, in which they state that they do not accept the company's advance onto yet another part of their traditional territory, on the left bank of the Dola River, which is very close to their villages. They will deliver this petition to the authorities and the company on the eve of the International Day of Struggle Against Tree Plantations, which is celebrated on September 21st.

The communities of Ferra and Nanga are asking for your support. Please sign the petition below in solidarity with these communities' demand to reclaim their traditional territory, which is essential for them to maintain their way of life—today and in the future!

In solidarity,
The WRM Team

PETITION: Against the occupation of the NANGA and FERRA communities' lands – 2019

NO to the development of oil palm plantations by the Olam / SOTRADER companies along the Dola River (on the left side, leaving Mouila). The Communities of Nanga and Ferra Are in Opposition

As part of diversifying its economy, and with the aim of achieving food self-sufficiency and reducing rampant unemployment, Gabon launched an ambitious program in 2015 called GRAINE ("grain"). On the ground, implementation of this program was entrusted to SOTRADER, a public-private partnership between the government of Gabon and multinational company, Olam Palm Gabon.

GRAINE was established in Ndendé in the province of Ngounié, where SOTRADER set up its

headquarters. There, it began development of food crops, and most notably, acquired a concession of 58,400 hectares to develop oil palm plantations. The plantations were to be managed by local communities, through newly established agricultural cooperatives and a process of free, prior, informed consent that was influenced by people with political-administrative affiliation. Located at the heart of this concession area, the communities of Nanga and Ferra are totally isolated. As a result, we regret to see the precarious situation in which we find ourselves:

- The forests and biodiversity—which are central to our traditional values, from where we obtain our essential economic and cultural resources, but to which we now have limited access—are literally destroyed, which may aggravate climate change-related impacts;

- The lands that we use to feed our families and communities are taken away from us. Food becomes scarce, and hunger gradually settles in;

- The nice promises made to the communities are never fulfilled.

We, inhabitants of the villages of Ferra and Nanga, demand that multinational company OLAM and SOTRADER return our lands located on the left bank of the Dola River (coming from Mouila); in order for us to continue enjoying our customary use rights for our production and harvesting activities, and to guarantee the food security and sovereignty of our communities—as recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people who work in rural areas.

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