



10 December 2021

Protecting forests and areas of high conservation value and eliminating unacceptable land use practices is a priority for Olam across our agricultural supply chains worldwide. Around the world we maintain open and regular dialogue with local communities where we operate and support activities that are making tangible differences on the ground to improve livelihoods and deliver better living standards for farmers and rural communities.

We respect customary and legal tenure, and access rights of indigenous people, as well as local and cultural traditions. We are committed to the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as set out in our [Living Landscapes Policy](#).

To address the specific points raised by Public Eye:

#### **Palm operations in Gabon**

- We disagree and strongly [refute](#) the allegation of irresponsible deforestation or land conversion and that Olam breached FSC rules on forest clearance. Since first raised, we have engaged proactively with Mighty Earth, [hosting](#) it and other NGOs and stakeholders to see first-hand our environmentally and socially responsible approach in Gabon, and enabling them to engage with national stakeholders as well as villages and communities. We are permanently protecting 99,000 hectares of HCV lands – over 50% of our total palm concession – and since January 2017, we have upheld a moratorium on new plantation expansion in Gabon and we are committed to no further development or expansion.
- In April 2020, we voluntarily commenced a process with the FSC to independently review how the decisions on our palm development in Gabon were taken and implemented and to resolve Mighty Earth's procedural grievance. We are committed to an open and transparent process with the FSC and believe it will demonstrate the rigour that we brought to the planning and implementation, and reaffirm our plantations as a positive example of environmentally and socially responsible palm production.

#### **Coffee plantations in Laos**

- In 2010, Olam subsidiary Outspan Bolovens was granted a concession to set up a 150-hectare coffee plantation on the Bolaven Plateau in Laos. A survey of the land was conducted by the Government according to national laws and regulations and we commenced our development in the belief that there were no land tenure disputes. In December 2011, an international NGO brought some issues concerning this plantation to our attention which we acted promptly to investigate. We appointed a dedicated independent team to define a comprehensive approach and methodology to carry out a thorough audit of the situation. Subsequently through a process overseen by the National Assembly Committee, Provincial departments and other stakeholders, all farmers' claims were settled by returning land and providing financial compensation. Over the past 12 years, we have been working with small-scale farmers in the region and we have, several community initiatives supporting more than 1,500 coffee farming families to improve production yields. Our estates are Rainforest Alliance/UTZ certified.

#### **Coffee plantations in Tanzania**

- We do not accept the allegations levelled at the Aviv estates regarding poor labour conditions, particularly around wages, working hours, potable water, health & safety, and grievances.

Workers in our plantation in Tanzania typically have an 8-hour day including a one-hour lunch break, with any additional hours paid over-time. We have always paid above minimum wage. Aviv has constructed an on-site canteen, purpose-built flushing toilets for men and women, and an on-site water treatment facility fresh, clean water; and hygienic toilet facilities. In the surrounding community we have constructed a dispensary, medical laboratory and doctor's house. We have also built and renovated multiple school classrooms, established school latrines; and constructed housing for teachers. The granting of land for plantation/agriculture purposes pre-dated Olam's involvement with the site. We have carefully prepared the land to protect native trees and planted more than 50,000 shade trees alongside the coffee to reduce irrigation, and this activity of restoration of degraded areas within and around Aviv plantation continues to date. Our social and environmental teams engage regularly with the villages which is also a key part of our Rainforest Alliance and other certifications.

We trust these address the points raised and underline our continued commitment to a sustainable and responsible approach to enable prosperous farmers, thriving rural communities and healthy ecosystems to coexist.