Date: 12/06/2017

To the Business and Human Rights Resource Center

Portucel Moçambique Response

Introductory Notes

Portucel Moçambique considers essential the constant dialogue, the agreement and the harmony between the company and the communities living inside the land which Rights of Use (DUAT) where granted to the project.

To assure that meaningful relationships exist and are permanent, a Grievance Mechanism was developed which, through various instruments creates, manages, reinforce and monitors the relationship between the communities, families and the project. The mechanism is extensive to all the project interested parties.

To manage the relationship with the communities residing in the DUAT areas where the company implements its forestry project, and guarantee regular contacts with the project staff, Portucel Moçambique has teams dedicated to communication with communities aligning the local knowledge to the best international practices.

In parallel, Portucel Moçambique conceived a Social Communication Plan as a strategy to consolidate the dialogue and constant and updated information sharing with the communities, partners and all those interested.

In the course of the forestry project implementation, the company is committed to implement social investments initiatives, benefiting communities leaving inside the DUAT areas where the company implements the project in Manica and Zambezia provinces.

For the development of process, procedures and training of teams, Portucel Moçambique counted with the technical support of the Advisory Services from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), member of the World Bank for the private sector. The support allowed the company to improve its process and procedures according to the international performance standards in social and environmental aspects.

For more information about Portucel Moçambique kindly visit the link provided below.

<http://www.portucelmocambique.com/Comunidade/Gestao-da-Relacao-com-as-Comunidades>

1. “[ADECRU Lança Documentário – ″ Um Hectare, Uma Chapa de Zinco](https://adecru.wordpress.com/2017/04/11/adecru-lanca-documentario-%e2%80%b3-um-hectare-uma-chapa-de-zinco-%e2%80%b6/)”, Acção Académica para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais (ADECRU), 11 de abril de 2017

* Portucel Moçambique became aware of the documentary in 2016 through social media networks.
* In February 2017 ADECRU contacted Portucel Moçambique requesting an interview, to which the company indicated that was available to respond in writing through a questionnaire.
* ADECRU agreed in sending the questionnaire, and consulted the company on the timing that would be required to receive a feedback.
* Portucel Moçambique didn´t receive the questionnaire.
* The documentary was again released in April 2017.
* Through the Grievance Mechanism, the company initiated a process to:

1. collect information in the communities and with the documentary testimonies;
2. register the grievances; and
3. provide the proper treatment to such cases (verification, validation and resolution).

* The results of this process will be shared with the Portucel Moçambique Consultative Committee[[1]](#endnote-1), ADECRU, Government, communities, families and other relevant entities.
* Based on the information collected by Portucel Moçambique so far, the preliminary results indicate that:

1. One of the testimonies did not cede land, neither worked for the company and no one from his family actually did. When requested to share evidence, indicated that he doesn’t know anyone that was left homeless, with no farms for agriculture and livestock due to Portucel Moçambique forestry project;
2. Many other people were filmed by ADECRU but has they didn´t present opinions or facts against the project, where not included in the documentary;
3. Community leaders indicated that they were supportive to the project but where not included in the documentary;
4. All the testimonies indicated that they were instructed by ADECRU on what to say in the documentary;
5. 4 (four) of the testimonies of the video are beneficiaries of the Portucel Moçambique agriculture programme, information omitted in the documentary;
6. ADECRU interviewed people from various communities where the company implements its forestry project which indicated that they voluntarily ceded land to the company and hadn’t any grievances against the project, but none of them appear in the documentary;
7. ADECRU documentary evidences several imprecisions, which is indicative of lack of rigor and careful analysis of the project. As an example, it said that the company counts with a funding from the World Bank through IFC of around two million and three hundred thousand American dollars (USD) and received an authorization from the Mozambican government to plant eucalyptus and pine.

The correct information is that Portucel Moçambique has an authorization from the Mozambican government to implement an integrated project, with an investment of around two million and three hundred thousand American dollars (USD), having as a shareholder, the IFC, a World Bank entity for the private sector. Portucel Moçambique plantations are eucalyptus and not pine.

1. “[Um Hectare, Uma Chapa de Zinco](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25hQ-9hdFas)”, Acção Académica para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais (ADECRU), 11 de abril de 2017

Portucel Moçambique answers in section above.

1. [Portucel: O Processo de acesso à Terra e os direitos das comunidades locais](http://wrm.org.uy/pt/artigos-do-boletim-do-wrm/recomendado/portucel-o-processo-de-acesso-a-terra-e-os-direitos-das-comunidades-locais-2/)”, no Boletim 230, 10 de maio de 2017

            (Disponível em inglês [aqui](http://wrm.org.uy/articles-from-the-wrm-bulletin/recommended/portucel-the-process-of-acquiring-access-to-land-and-the-rights-of-local-communities-in-mozambique/))

Portucel Moçambique answers in section 5.

1. “[Parem as plantações em Moçambique!](http://wrm.org.uy/pt/acoes-e-campanhas/parem-as-plantacoes-em-mocambique/)”, World Rainforest Movement, 15 de setembro de 2016

        (Disponível em inglês [aqui](http://wrm.org.uy/actions-and-campaigns/stop-plantations-expansion-in-mozambique/))

Portucel Moçambique answers in section 5.

1. “[Portucel - O Processo de acesso à Terra e os direitos das comunidades locais](http://wrm.org.uy/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Portucel_O_Processo_de_acesso_%C3%A0_Terra_e_os_direitos_das_comunidades_locais.pdf)”, Justiça Ambiental (JA!), Setembro de 2016

            (Disponível em inglês [aqui](http://wrm.org.uy/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Portucel_The_process_of_access_to_Land_and_the_Rights_of_Local_Communities.pdf))

* Portucel Moçambique was invited for the launch of the Justiça Ambiental (JA)study in September 2016, and in that opportunity showed appreciation for the work that was done, and assumed the commitment to analyse the information and testimonials to be able to share its position in due time.
* Based on the presented allegations, the company though the Grievance Mechanism assessed their legitimacy by directly contacting the communities, families and community leaders.
* From that process, the company shared the findings with JA, local government, communities and families:

1. Portucel Moçambique did not destroy agriculture products and did not work in the land without the families’ prior consent. In such cases where at the time, the land had products, a timeline was agreed with the families to assure that they harvest;
2. From the 67 families that the company was able to identify that claimed loss of products in their farms, only 48 ceded land;
3. In this 48 families that ceded land, 23 families were already benefiting from the company agriculture programme since 2015. The remaining 25 were immediately integrated as beneficiaries, although 15 families did not have their land access agreement process regularized – some of the families indicated that they received the agreements from the company but those were destroyed (e.g. by rats);
4. From the universe of families presented by JA, 19 never ceded land to the company, admitting that there are many other families that might have presented grievances to JA that are still to be located;
5. When it comes to the 7 testimonies registered in video, it was possible to locate 5 and satisfactorily resolve 4 grievances, while one is still being analyzed.

As a strategy to improve its processes, it was shared with JA that the company has decided to undertake the following measures:

* Revise all the communication materials and land access, with emphasis on messages about employment and social benefits;
* Based on the revised materials, provide training to all field teams;
* Promote flexibility in the grievance management process to assure reduced timeline for feedback;
* Conduct community meetings in parallel with community consultative committee´s meetings to guarantee wider participation.

Portucel Moçambique showed gratitude to Justiça Ambiental for the contributions provided through the study, which are very important in improving processes and procedures of a Forestry Project in constant learning and evolution.

1. “[Plantações Florestais da Portucel ameaçam a segurança alimentar nas comunidades do distrito de Namaroi, na Zambézia](http://www.adecru.org.mz/index.php/pt/slider1/50-plantacoes-florestais-da-portucel-ameacam-a-seguranca-alimentar-nas-comunidades-do-distrito-de-namaroi-na-zambezia)”, Acção Académica Para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais – ADECRU, 20 de fevereiro de 2017

Portucel Moçambique is working with the communities and families from Namarroi district to collect grievances and provide the proper treatment. The results with be shared with Consultative Committee, ADECRU, local government, communities, families and other relevant entities.

1. Platform established by civil society organizations with the objective of advising Portucel Moçambique in the fields of environment, social, social development, human rights and gender equity. The Committee is composed by representatives from the civil society, Government and Portucel Moçambique. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)