

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FOR THE PROPOSED  
COMMERCIAL CASSAVA FARMING AT APATA COMMUNITY IN OWORO  
DISTRICT, LOKOJA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA (L.G.A.) OF KOGI STATE;  
PROPOSED BY  
CREST AGRO PRODUCTS (CAP) FARMS LIMITED**

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**Background Information Document (BID)**

This Background Information Document (BID) provides information to assist stakeholders to participate in the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) and environmental authorization process for the proposed **Commercial Cassava Farming at Apata Community in Oworo District, Lokoja Local Government Area (L.G.A.) of Kogi State, Nigeria**

**What is the EIA About?**

Basically, the EIA is the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the bio physical, social and other relevant effects of Crest Agro Products (CAP) Farms Limited proposed project prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made.

In compliance with Nigeria regulatory bodies statutory provisions and in accordance with the EIA Act 86 of 1992, *the project-proponent* has commissioned Richflood International Limited, being a Nigerian based environmental consultant, to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposed Project at Apata Community in Oworo District, Lokoja Local Government Area (L.G.A.) of Kogi State

**Background**

Crest Agro-Products Farm Ltd (CAP), a subsidiary of CardinalStone, is planning to establish a 13,000 ha cassava farm to produce cassava roots (raw materials) to feed a starch processing factory with an installed processing capacity of 21,000 t/annum of industrial cassava starch, which the company is planning to build in Kogi State, Nigeria. It is also planning to augment output from its captive farm with an out-growers' scheme involving local farmers in communities that are contiguous to its proposed starch processing factory.

## **Project Location**

The Agricultural Land of Crest Agro Products Farms Limited as acquired from the Kogi State Government for the Cultivation of Cassava (farming activities) is located at Apata Community in Oworo District of Lokoja Local Government Area, State Capital of Kogi, North-Central Nigeria.

The nearest host-community to the Project site is Apata-Oworo Community, a rural settlement distanced with about 4.5km situated along KM 51, Lokoja-Kabba road, Apata, Kogi State, with site point-coordinates as: N 870807.000m and E 225349.000m.

The land use pattern of the area is farming, as indigenes' major occupation is agriculture and predominate crops grown as cassava, maize, rice and other cover crops.

The surrounding villages are Uro, Aku, Irepeni, and Irewagere Villages.

## **Objectives of the EIA**

The objectives of the EIA for the project site are to:

- Provide information and evidence required for developing an Environmental Impact Statement for the project site;
- Establish baseline information for the project site.
- Identify associated/potential impacts of the project in the area;
- Recommend preventive, mitigative and control measures for the identified potential/associated adverse impacts of the project; and
- Develop a cost effective Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the lifetime of the project.

## **Project Overview**

This will involve soil cultivation, planting and harvesting of cassava produce.

- i. **Land/vegetation clearing:** Removal of trees and shrubs and stumps.
- ii. **Manual removal of stumps and logs:** In preparation for tillage operation by the bulldozers.
- iii. **First plough:** To pulverize the soil.

- iv. **Second plough:** breaking up soil and cutting furrows in preparation for sowing.
- v. **Harrowing:** is to break up the lumps of soil and to provide a more suitable soil structure for seed bed.
- vi. **Ridging:** this is hipping of the top soil to form a good seed bed for cassava seed.
- vii. **Roads:** Establishment of unpaved internal roads.
- viii. **Irrigation:** Installation of water reticulation and irrigation infrastructure
- ix. **Planting:** Using cassava planters. The planting population is an average of 13,000 strands per hectare.
- x. **Application of herbicide:** For weed seed prevention.
- xi. **Weeding:** Weeding is also used in combination with the herbicides for weed controls.
- xii. **Fertilizer application:** To boost the produce yield.
- xiii. **Harvesting:** With the use of Cassava harvesters.

In order to determine the suitability of the proposed project area, CAP engaged International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) to carry out a land suitability analysis for cassava production in the project area.

## **POTENTIAL AND ASSOCIATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### *Environmental Impact Indicators*

The environmental impact indicators for the study are easily observable parameters that will indicate change/deviation, which can be used to monitor the various environmental components.

The primary *Biophysical Indicators* for the on-going impact assessment are the following:

- Climate and meteorology;
- Air quality;
- Noise levels;
- Groundwater;
- Geology and geomorphology;
- Soils and soil erosion;
- Drainage patterns and flooding;

- Unique physical features; and
- Vegetation including economic trees and crops.

The primary *Socio-Economic Indicators* for the on-going impact assessment are the following:

- Land use;
- Employment and income;
- Community population and ethnicity;
- Community relations; and
- Services (e.g water and electricity supply).

### **Potential Benefits**

- Creation of jobs and job opportunities.
- Improvement on the economic status of the stakeholder community due to increased demand for local goods and services.
- Source of livelihood for out-growers scheme beneficiaries

### **Potential Issues**

A cassava farm can affect the environment by its activities. These effects or impacts can either be temporary or permanent. Below are the potential issues or impacts, which could result from Project.

1. Destruction of habitat for plant species of special concern (SSC) within the farm development footprints.
2. Destruction of habitat for faunal species of special concern (SSC).
3. Loss of plant SSC due to vegetation clearing and disturbance
4. Disruption of ecological corridors, patterns and processes
5. Increased erosion risk and topsoil loss due to vegetation clearing and disturbance
6. Loss of fauna species of special concern as a result of poaching, hunting and trapping.
7. Loss of plant species of special concern (collection for ethno botanical use, firewood, etc.).
8. Increased exotic plant invasion due to disturbance of soils and vegetation.

9. Air Quality & Dust impacts

10. Noise: Operating the farm machineries could increase noise levels in the area and may be a concern particularly to nearby communities.

11. Pollution of surface and groundwater by herbicides, pesticides and fertilizer.



### **Call for Participation**

The stakeholder engagement process is designed to conform to the Nigerian EIA Decree and international standards, including the IFC Performance Standards. Key objectives for stakeholder engagement for this project are:

1. Share information about the Project;
2. Gather local knowledge to improve understanding of the environmental and social context and understand locally-important issues;
3. Enable stakeholders to raise concerns / questions about the Project;
4. Gather responses on the EIA findings and incorporate stakeholder views into the design and management measures;

5. Respond to concerns and questions and report back on the findings of the EIA and proposed management measures;
6. Lay foundation for future stakeholder engagement.

Anyone who is interested or affected by the proposed project has a right to participate in the EIA process, and is invited to further participate in the EIA Process. Please make use of the following opportunities to be involved in the stakeholder engagement process:

- Study the information made available in this Background Information Document;
- Contact the Stakeholder Engagement Team to obtain further project information, and/or raise issues and concerns (contact details provided below);
- Attend the Stakeholder meetings to obtain further project information, interact with the Project Team, and/or raise issues and concerns. More information about the meetings will be circulated through letters, community leaders, radio announcements and through the project website.

#### Contact Information

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