Activities

OPAL Inception workshop
Bogor, Indonesia (3-6 March 2015)
The successful 4-day workshop gathered all the OPAL partners. In a relaxed though very productive atmosphere, we constructed theories of change for the three target countries. We bridged across disciplines and sectors. We identified the partners that can help us achieve impact. And we laid out a first model of the drivers of Oil Palm production across Colombia, Cameroon and Indonesia.

The OPAL team in Bogor
More pictures here.

OPAL at the r4d Forum
Filzbach, Switzerland (19-20 March 2015)
OPAL was represented at the r4d Forum 2015 by Jaboury, Arya, Ludovic, Emmanuel and Anne. The forum included more than 80 participants from projects under the Ecosystems and Food Security themes, as well as members of the review panels. The purpose of the Forum was to stimulate exchange, discussion and debate among researchers, review panel members, and representatives from development policy and practice and funders.
A highlight were the 180 second project pitches. You can see a video of our effort here. (password: r4d)

Training on Companion Modelling (ComMod)
Wislikofen, Switzerland (17-22 May 2015)
Heru (Indonesia), Durrel (Cameroon) and Beth (Colombia) joined this year’s Spring School on Companion Modelling and Facilitation organized by the ETH ForDev Group.
⇒ Find some pictures on the ForDev Facebook page (scroll down to 20 and 22 May 2015).
⇒ Watch the video of the 2014 edition on Youtube.

To do list

✔ Send your OPAL logo proposals before 6 July 2015 to Tobias?
✔ Send your proposals for members of the OPAL advisory board, called “Science and Policy Interface Group” to Jaboury. More info here.
✔ Keep track of all your expenses. Excel form and instructions here.

OPAL outputs

Blogs
- “Declining palm oil prices: Good news and bad news for smallholders” Mongabay.com (08-Mar-15)
- “Of pastures and oil palm” ETH’s Zukunftsblog (26-Mar-15)

Find the full list of outputs here, and don’t forget to add yours.

Social Media

We’re on Facebook!

Click here to like our page and post messages.
New on the OPAL project

Malika Virah-Sawmy is taking over from Joshua Tewksbury as the main contact of the Luc Hoffman Institute. Malika has worked on FSC and RSPO certification issues before, and has an extensive background in extractives, small-holder farmer livelihoods, and threats to biodiversity. More [here](#).

Romain Pirard is taking over Krystof Obidzinski’s role related to the overseeing of the OPAL project implementation in Indonesia. Romain is an environmental economist who works extensively on deforestation. Romain Pirard joined CIFOR in November 2013.

Nur Hasanah (Nui) has secured a Swiss Excellence Scholarship for Foreign Students and will start her PhD at ETH Zurich in Sept. 2015. She will be collaborating with the Indonesia team.

Églantine Fauvelle is our consultant currently developing a game in Cameroon (more below). She is a tropical agronomist and was trained in Companion Modelling in March 2014 during the ForDev Spring School.

Daniel Castillo from Javeriana University joined the Columbian team. He is familiar with Companion Modelling and has used it in Columbia before.

Tobias Schmid is a Master student at ETH currently working with us on the OPAL logo and on a consumer awareness project.

Aimée Kwembi (Pan African Institute in Douala) and Kenneth Mbache (University of Dschang) are two Master students doing a 6-month internship with WWF, studying the cooperative system and small oil mills in Cameroon.

Story from the field

By Eglantine Fauvelle

In May, we started the design of a conceptual model based on existing knowledge and scientific expertise in Cameroon. National and international partners met in Yaoundé to talk about the first version of a model focused on the relationship between smallholders and agroindustry, and its implementation into a role-playing game. This tool aims to (i) help the different stakeholders of the Cameroonian palm oil value chain (producers, agroindustry, refinery, soap industry and government institutions) to share and better understand their respective strategies and (ii) explore scenarios of collaboration and partnership. In August, sessions of role-playing game will involve some of these stakeholders in 3 study sites and will hopefully highlight the interest of communication to bring out win-win situations.

Oil Palm in the news

A selection of worldwide articles published on the internet in the last few weeks (not from OPAL):

- “Palm oil: scourge of the earth, or wonder crop?” [TheConversation.com](#) (1-Jul-15)
- “300 to take part in Oil Palm Best Practices workshop” [TheBorneoPost.com](#) (24-Jun-15)
- “7 Companies With a Palm Oil Problem” [Care2.com](#) (23-Jun-15)
- “Corporations Demand Higher Palm Oil Standards” [EnvironmentNewsServices.com](#) (23-Jun-15)
- “Palm oil a matter of national security” [NewStraitsTime.my](#) (22-Jun-15)
- “FDA bans artificial trans fats, paving way for more U.S. palm oil consumption” [Mongabay.com](#) (16-Jun-15)

More news articles [here](#).