



# Protecting Gabon's biodiversity

Managing palm plantations in a biodiversity-rich country like Gabon requires extensive efforts to support and safeguard the country's natural heritage. Olam Palm Gabon (OPG) employs a 100-strong team dedicated to enforcing rigorous standards designed to protect the areas of High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) that make up 50% of our palm concessions.

This approach to ensuring environmentally and socially responsible palm production is aligned with Olam's commitment to create and sustain living landscapes where we operate.



The red-capped Mangabey recorded within Olam concession, newly classified as endangered" by the IUCN red-list authority.

Working with Gabon's National Park Agency and the Ministry of Forests, OPG implements a biodiversity management plan, with anti-poaching policies, to protect iconic species including elephants, gorillas and chimpanzees. In 2019, the team partnered with WWF Gabon to roll out SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) software to monitor wildlife that live in the protected areas within our concessions.

The GPS-enabled tool allows the team to record observations within the 72,000 ha of High Conservation Value (HCV) areas. The data captured in the forest is collated and geo-referenced in auto-generated reports that provide a complete picture of wildlife populations, their movements and signs of poaching activity. Conservation efforts can then be adapted and deployed as necessary.

Many direct sightings of endangered species have been recorded in Olam's concessions such as the Southern Reedbuck and more recently, the red-capped Mangabey. Newly classified as "endangered" by the IUCN red-list authority, large numbers of this rare primate have been spotted moving freely through the biological corridors. This year, hippopotamus footprints were also reported by our HCV team, running along a protected river buffer. A national inventory carried out in 2013 declared the hippo non-existent in this region with no sightings reported since 1949, making this a very exciting discovery.