

PRESS RELEASE

Socfin Group appoints Céline Schmitz as Head of Sustainability

Fribourg, January 5th, 2026

Socfin, an international agro-industrial group active in tropical agriculture, announces the appointment of Céline Schmitz as Head of Sustainability, effective January 1st, 2026. She has held the position of Group Sustainability Coordinator since January 2025, with responsibilities notably covering grievance mechanisms, health, safety and environment (HSE), as well as the monitoring of action plans resulting from independent verification missions.

With more than **14 years of experience within the Socfin Group**, across West Africa, Central Africa and at Group level, Céline Schmitz has played a key role in structuring and implementing the Group's sustainability frameworks. She has notably contributed to the achievement and maintenance of demanding international certifications such as **RSPO** and **ISO 14001**, to the deployment of environmental and social management systems, and to the strengthening of dialogue with local communities and stakeholders.

She holds **master's degrees in Environmental Management, Anthropology and History** (Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium) and also has specialised certifications in **RSPO auditing**, **ISO 19011**, **ISO 14001** and **ISO 9001**, as well as recent training on **Gender and Development** and the prevention of gender-based violence and harassment, delivered by **Earthworm Foundation**.

In her new role, she will be responsible for **steering the Group's sustainability strategy**, ensuring consistency of policies and practices across all countries of operation, and supporting compliance with international regulatory and normative frameworks, particularly in relation to responsible supply chains, human rights and environmental protection.

"Sustainability is not an abstract concept; it is built on the ground, over time, together with the women and men who make our plantations possible and with neighbouring communities. My priority will be to **consolidate this collective effort**, strengthen our listening and continuous-improvement mechanisms, through **transparent**, open and long-term **dialogue** with stakeholders, in order to **turn our commitments into measurable and verifiable realities**," said Céline Schmitz, Head of Sustainability, Socfin Group.

"Céline Schmitz's appointment is fully aligned with our **commitment to responsibility and transparency**. Her **technical expertise**, **in-depth knowledge of our operations** and **extensive field experience** are key assets in supporting ongoing transformations and meeting the growing

expectations of our stakeholders,” said Régis Helsmoortel, General Manager of the Socfin Group.

This appointment reflects Socfin Group’s **determination to strengthen its sustainability governance**, embed its commitments into robust operational practices, and continue developing responsible tropical agriculture that respects the environment, people and local territories.

About Socfin

Socfin is an **international agro-industrial group active in tropical agriculture**, whose activities focus primarily on the production of natural rubber and palm oil. Operating in several countries across Africa and Asia, the Group draws on long-term experience in agricultural development. Its approach is based on the gradual strengthening of environmental and social practices, constructive stakeholder engagement and a continuous-improvement process, in line with internationally recognised standards.

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