

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Project site is located at Ologbo near Benin City, capital of the Benin Kingdom.

Extract from Wikipedia:

The Oba of Benin, or Omo N'Oba, is the [oba](#) or king of the [Edo people](#), and formerly the [Benin Kingdom](#) from 1180 until 1897. 'Oba' means king or ruler. The Edo or Benin homeland (not to be confused with the modern day country of the [Republic of Benin](#), which was formerly known as [Dahomey](#)) has and continues to be most significantly populated by the Edo (also known as the Bini or Benin ethnic group).

The title of 'oba' was created by Oba Eweka the Great, the kingdom's first 'Oba'. The current capital is [Benin City](#) in modern day [Nigeria](#).

During the 14th and 15th centuries, the Oba of Benin's power was at its peak and different monarchs of the dynasty controlled significant stretches of land in Africa. During this era, exquisite naturalistic bronze art was created to enhance and embody the power of the Oba. The art often depicted the ancestors in order to establish legitimacy.

In 1897, the British '[Punitive Expedition](#)' (see [Benin Expedition of 1897](#)) sacked Benin City and exiled Oba [Ovonramwen](#), taking control of the area in order to establish the [British colony of Nigeria](#). The expedition was mounted to avenge the killing of an official British delegation in 1896. The expedition consisted of indigenous soldiers and British officers. To cover the cost of the expedition, the [Benin royal art](#) was auctioned off by the British. The Oba was captured and eventually exiled until his death in 1914.

The present Oba, [Erediauwa I](#), is the 39th Oba of the dynasty.

Oba, [Erediauwa I](#), graduated in Law and Administration from [King's College, Cambridge](#) in 1956.

Wikipedia lists the Obas of Benin in an unbroken line from 1180 to the present day i.e. over 800 years.

In essence:

- The Project site is within the “Benin Kingdom” which remains highly organized around the Oba of Benin
- The principals of Ossiomo Investments Limited (“Project Sponsor”) are indigenes of Benin with a family history that dates over hundreds of years
- The key traditional institution within the Benin kingdom are the Benin Traditional Council headed by the Oba of Benin
- In addition each major area in the Benin Kingdom is headed by a Duke – the Ologbo community is headed by Dr. Akenzua and they hold regular community meetings every month
- Dr. Akenzua is a physician with decades of practice.

So in addition to the political and administrative stakeholders namely the Federal Ministry of Environment, Edo State Ministry of Environment and Ikpoba-Okha Local Government, the key stakeholder in the host community is the Benin Traditional Council headed by the Oba of Benin.

Over the last 18 months, the Project Sponsor has fully engaged the key Project stakeholders from the inception of the concept of developing an ammonia and urea production plant at the Ossiomo industrial site.

In particular:

- The Sponsors have made several presentations to all the stakeholders about the parameters and potential impacts of the Project
- Starting from November 2009, the Sponsors have held meetings with the Executive Governor of Edo State and the Governor’s office outlining the parameters and potential environmental and social impacts of the Project
- The Sponsors have attended a number of community meetings at Ologbo (headed by Dr. Akenzua, the Enogie of Ologbo) outlining the parameters and potential environmental and social impacts of the Project
- The Sponsors have held several meetings with members of the Benin Traditional Council outlining the parameters and potential environmental and social impacts of the Project

In addition:

- The Sponsors held a series of events culminating in a public hearing was held at the Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria on the 2nd of December 2008 to present the development of an ammonia urea Project within the Ossiomo industrial site
- The public hearing was attended by representatives from
 - Benin Traditional Council led by the Enogie of Ologbo
 - Ikpoba-Okha Local Government

- Edo State Ministry of Environment
- Edo State Ministry of Land and Survey
- Federal Ministry of Environment

At each forum, the Sponsors have outlined in detailed;

- The potential impacts resulting from the construction and operation of an ammonia urea plant at the Ossiomo site including the potential hazardous and non-hazardous chemical, fire and explosion risk
- The potential social impacts of having an influx of workers and personnel moving into the area to construct and operate the plant
- The potential economic impact of the Project in generating employment for the local community during construction and plant operation
- The potential agro-economic impact of the widespread availability and application of fertilizers to the local farmers in Nigeria as the Project commences production in 2013
- The potential impacts of significantly reducing gas flaring in the area with the capture and utilization of natural gas which is currently being flared in the area (constituting a severe environmental hazard).

At each forum, the Stakeholders have:

- Shown a good understanding of the rationale for the Project
- Shown a good understanding of the potential environmental and social impacts of the Project
- Have appreciated the steps taken by the Sponsors to mitigate the potential environmental and social impacts of the Project
- In particular, appreciated the Sponsors use of site selection and layout to mitigate the potential environmental and social impacts
- Underlined their strong expectation of the significant economic benefits the Project will bring to the community.

The support of the community and People of Benin for the Project is formally noted in a letter from the Oba Benin (King of Benin and Head of the Benin Traditional Council) dated 12 January 2010.

The letter of support from Oba, [Erediauwa I](#) is attached on the following pages.

Following the public forum the Sponsors have engaged all the stakeholders and communicate progress with the development of the Project in formal and informal discussions.

**LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT FROM HRM OBA EREDIAUWA, OBA OF
BENIN AND THE PEOPLE OF BENIN KINGDOM**



OBA OF BENIN

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Our Ref:

January 12, 2010

DATE-----18-----

Dr. Uwa Igiehon,
The Managing Director,
Ossiomo Investment Limited,
9, Igun Street,
Benin City,
Edo State.

**SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRATED
PETROCHEMICAL PROJECT INCLUDING A FERTILIZER
PLANT AT OLOGBO, EDO STATE**

I am directed by Omo N'Oba N' Edo, Uku Akpolokpolo, Oba of Benin to refer to the Integrated Petrochemical Project currently under development by Ossiomo Investments Limited ("Ossiomo") at its site located at Ologbo, Edo State, Nigeria. The Omo N'Oba understand that this plant will produce urea fertilizer as its primary product to be marketed in Nigeria and the international markets.

Omo N'Oba recognized that there is a shortage of fertilizer in Edo State and throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Addressing the shortage of fertilizer is crucial to redressing food shortage and enhancing agricultural productivity, food security and agrarian based jobs.

The Omo N'Oba is delighted to understand that Ossiomo's proposed Petrochemical Project will result in significant new foreign direct investment into Edo State. Omo N'Oba is also delighted to understand that the Project will result in significant employment opportunities for the Benin people and citizens of Edo State both during the construction as well as during the operation of the

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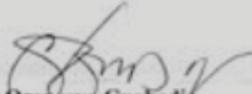
Petrochemical Plant. Omo N'Oba also understand and anticipate that the development of the Plant will result in the attraction and creation of related Industrial Plants and Service Industries which will feed off the Petrochemical Plant thereby creating on the longer term, a significant New Petrochemical Industrial Complex for Benin and Edo State, in general.

Consequently, His Royal Majesty and the people of Benin are very interested in supporting the development of the Petrochemical Project, in full recognition of the unique opportunity that it represents to Benin people as well as to Edo State.

Whilst the Omo N'Oba recognizes that the Petrochemical Project is an Independent, Private Sector-led Commercial Enterprise, steps will be taken to facilitate the quiet enjoyment of the project site and security atmosphere necessary for the development of the Project.

The Omo N'Oba request you to consider this letter as a Letter of Support to assist with the development of the Fertilizer Plant and the Petrochemical Project.

Thank you.


O. Orosaye-Gurobadja
Secretary to the Oba of Benin