



OVERVIEW AND ANALYSES OF KEY NATIONAL POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS RELEVANT TO DEFORESTATION, CHILD AND FORCED LABOUR, AND SMALLHOLDER INCLUSION IN CAMEROON

Samuel NNAH NDOBE

(Study conducted for PROFOREST with funding from FGMC)

July 2019

TABLE OF CONTENT

ACRONYME.....	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION	1
1.2 OBJECTIVE OF STUDY	3
1.3 THE RELEVANCE OF POLICY REVIEW.....	4
1.4 SELECTED LANDSCAPE AND COMMODITIES	5
1.5 COMPANIES	5
2 OVERVIEW OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO DEFORESTATION, CHILD AND FORCED LABOUR, GENDER AND SMALLHOLDER INCLUSION	6
2.1 REGULATIONS AND POLICIES RELATED TO DEFORESTATION	6
2.1.1 <i>The 1994 Forestry Law</i>	6
2.1.2 <i>The 2011 Law on orientation for Development and Sustainable Development of the Territory in Cameroon</i>	9
2.1.3 <i>The 1996 National Environmental Management Plan and the Environmental Management Framework Law</i>	10
2.1.4 <i>The Land tenure related laws</i>	10
2.1.5 <i>The Rural Sector Development Strategy</i>	12
2.1.6 <i>The National REDD+ Strategy and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)</i>	12
2.1.7 <i>FLEGT and the Voluntary Partnership Agreement</i>	13
2.2 REGULATIONS AND POLICIES RELATED TO RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMEROON:.....	14
2.2.1 <i>Labour rights:</i>	15
2.2.2 <i>Child protection and child labour in Cameroon</i>	16
2.3 REGULATION AND POLICIES RELATED TO GENDER AND SMALLHOLDER INCLUSION	18
2.3.1 <i>The National Gender Policy</i>	18
2.3.2 <i>Smallholder inclusion</i>	21
3 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OR IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES AND PROCESSES RELATED TO CURBING DEFORESTATION.....	24
4 CONCLUSION	26
Annex 1 International Legal Instruments relevant to biodiversity, gender, labour and child’s right in Cameroon.....	25
Annex 2 Questions and comments raised during the validation of the study.....	29



ACRONYME

AFi	Accountability Framework Initiative
APOI	African Palm Oil Initiative
AVC-DP	Agriculture Value Chain Development Programme
CAFI	Central African Forest Initiative
CAR	Central African Republic
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CGF	Consumer Goods Forum
COMIFAC	Commission of the Gulf of Guinea on maritime security, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Commission of Central African Forests
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ER-PIN	Emission Reduction Project Idea Note
FCPF's	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP	Forest Investment Program
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
FMUs	Forest management units
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GESP	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
LAS	Legality Assurance System
MINEF	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NEMP	National Plan on Environmental Management
NFP	National forestry Policy
nPFE	non-Permanent Forest Estate
PACA	Agriculture Competitiveness Project
PADMIR	Rural Micro-finance Development Support Project
PFE	Permanent Forest Estate
R-PP	Readiness Preparation Proposal

VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WBCSD	World Business Council on Sustainable Development
ZND	Zero net deforestation



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context and Justification

Cameroon is defined by its geography. With its 47.54 million ha stretched around six countries – Nigeria, Chad, Central African Republic (CAR), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Republic of Congo – the country links the “vibrant and densely populated” West Africa and the forested and “less lively” Central Africa (Vircoulon, 2015). This geostrategic position determines its involvement in various regional bodies from West and Central Africa such as the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea on maritime security, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC).

Cameroon’s surface area is shared among coast, desert, mountains, rainforest, and savanna. Based on their ecological, climatic and edaphic characteristics, these landscapes have been grouped around five agro-ecological zones which cover approximately the following surface area: i) moist monomodal rainfall forest zone (4.57 million ha), ii) moist bimodal rainfall forest zone (16.58 million ha), iii) High plateaus zone (3.12 million ha), iv) High savanna zone (12.31 million ha) and v) Sudo-sahelian zone (10.04 million ha) (Republic of Cameroon, 2013a).

Cameroon is also home to one of the most diverse biodiversity of the continent, with high degree of endemism. It ranks fourth in floral richness and fifth in faunal diversity and represents 92% of Africa’s ecosystems (Republic of Cameroon, 2012a).

Cameroon’s ambition to become an emerging country by 2035 seems fraught with difficulties. Its long-term development “Vision 2035”, developed in 2009, states the following objectives:

- Reducing poverty to a socially acceptable level;
- Becoming a medium-income country;
- Acquiring the status of a Newly Industrialized Country
- Reinforcing national unity and consolidating the democratic process

Cameroon suffers from weak governance, which affects the country’s development and ability to attract investments. It ranks 130th out of 168 countries in the 2015 Transparency International corruption perceptions index and 172th out of 189 economies in the [2016 Doing Business report](#)

The country is richly endowed with natural resources ranging from fertile land for agriculture to extractive resources (minerals, oil) and forest. These resources constitute a crucial economic life wire for the country.

In 2017, the agricultural sector alone provided an estimated 76.38 per cent of Cameroon's GDP. This contribution came from both cash and food crops like cocoa, coffee, rubber, rice, banana, manioc, etc. For some of these commodities like cocoa, coffee and palm oil, Cameroon ranks amongst the world's top producers. For cocoa, the country ranks fifth globally with 275,000 tons per year; coffee it ranks 31st globally and () in Africa while for palm oil and rubber it ranks 13th globally and fourth in Africa and 16th globally respectively. Cameroon presently has a land cover of 44 000 hectares for rubber plantation with an annual production of about 61 000 tones¹.

It is important to emphasize that the cocoa sector is estimated to contribute about 0.89% to 1.45% of Cameroon's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and accounts for between 5 to 9.652% of annual total export revenues². About 50% of Cameroon's cocoa beans come from the South West, 35% from the Centre and 15% from the South East Regions³. Apart from agriculture, another crucial natural resource commodity is timber. With the fall in international oil prices in Cameroon in the late 1980's, timber resources emerged as one of the major sources of foreign earnings, eventually leading to an increase in logging. Cameroon produces about three million m³ of round wood logs per year, which makes it a major producer of tropical logs in Africa⁴. The contribution of timber to Cameroon's GDP has increased steadily from about 3.5% in 1989 to 6.7% in 1995 and finally reached 12% of GDP in 2000⁵.

While these sectors are essential to Cameroon's economic development, there is no doubt that their development could create certain negative impacts from deforestation to the violation of human rights. Cameroon like most of the countries of the Congo Basin has an impressive forest cover estimated at about 29 million hectares and representing 10 per cent of the total forest cover of the Congo Basin sub-region making it one of the country in the region with the largest forest after the DRC.

¹ Umar H Y et al, "An Overview of World Natural Rubber Production and Consumption: An Implication for Economic Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria", *Journal of human ecology* 33(1), 2011, p.55.

² Ibid ,

³ Mubeteneh T C, "The Cameroon Cocoa Story" *sudwind, supply change and Global 200*, P.14.

⁴ Eba'a Atyi R, "Modelling Sustainable Timber Production In South Cameroon", *Tropenbos-Cameroon Programme*, 2016, p.210.

⁵ Njimanted G F and Nkwetta A A, "The Impact of Timber Exports on Economic Growth In Cameroon: An Econometric Investigation", *Asian Journal of Economic Modelling*, 2015, p.48.



Between 1990 and 2000, Cameroon lost an average of 220,000 hectares of forest per year. This amounts to an average annual deforestation rate of 0.90%, among the highest in the Congo Basin sub-region. Between 2000 and 2005, the rate of forest change increased by 9.9% to 0.98% per annum. In total, between 1990 and 2005, Cameroon lost 13.4% of its forest cover, or around 3,300,000 hectares. Measuring the total rate of habitat conversion (defined as change in forest area plus change in woodland area minus net plantation expansion) for the 1990-2005 interval, Cameroon lost 8.4% of its forest and woodland habitat. These figures are further confirmed in the REDD+ National Strategy estimating that the average annual rate of loss of forest cover between 2000 and 2014 is 0.12%. According to the report on drivers of deforestation in Cameroon commissioned as part of the development of the REDD+ National Strategy, agriculture is considered the main cause of forest cover change. The report goes further to analyse deforestation as per the five agro-ecological zones in Cameroon.

Deforestation is not the only visible impact related to the exploitation of natural resources, there have also been cases of the non-respect of human rights ranging from cases of child labour, community rights, etc. However, the Government through different regulatory and policy instruments has undertaken measures to regulate questions of deforestation, child and forced labour and favouring smallholder inclusion in the country's macro-economic equation.

1.2 Objective of study

The overarching objective of this study is to identify laws and policies on deforestation, child labour, force labour and smallholder inclusion in Cameroon, and analyze how these policies support the private sector to align with the sustainable production of timber, palm oil, cocoa and rubber. This shall entail:

- Identifying and reviewing the various national and sub-national sector policies and how these policies are align or not align to some of the private sector commitments related to deforestation, child labour, and gender and smallholder inclusion.
- Identify practical entry and leverage points, and implementation opportunities and constraints for private sector involvement in the sustainable production of timber, palm oil, cocoa and rubber.
- Recommend workable measures to address the situation, which will enable the private sector to align with the existing policies to promote the sustainable production of timber, palm oil, cocoa and rubber.

1.3 The relevance of Policy Review

The government of Cameroon has been putting in efforts to regulate different aspects such as Deforestation, Child Labour, Forced Labour and Smallholder Inclusion in the production of the selected commodities.

Some of the key legal and policy frameworks in place include:

- The Constitution of Cameroon adopted as Law No.
- The Labour Code adopted as Law No 92-007 of 14 August 1992
- The Orientation Law on Land-use planning and sustainable development adopted as Law No 2011/008 of 6 May 2011,
- The Environmental Management Framework Law adopted as Law No 96/12 of 5 August 1996
- The Land Tenure Ordinances No 74-1 and No. 74 -2 of July 6, 1974
- The Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries Law adopted as Law No 94/01 of January 20, 1994

In addition to these laws, are also included international conventions and treaties duly signed and ratified by Cameroon. Also to consider are policies and strategies aimed at economic and development planning like the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper, the Rural Sector Development Strategy, the National Gender Policy Document as well as sector-based strategies like the National forestry Policy (NFP), National REDD+ strategy, the FLEGT VPA, and the Nationally Determined Contributions, prescribed by the UNFCCC within the framework of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. These national policies and strategies are complemented by international or regional initiatives like the COMIFAC Convergence Plan, the African Palm Oil Initiative (APOI), the Accountability Framework Initiative (AFi) and private sector led initiatives like the FSC, RSPO, UTZ, etc.

There has been growing commitment from the private sectors to improve and transform their business practices, so they reflect a more thorough compliance to sustainability principles. At the global level, a newly established industry platform, the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF), responded in 2010 to the increased pressure from civil society groups by having its members collectively pledged to work towards achieving zero net deforestation (ZND) for high forest-risk commodities by 2020. The palm oil companies at the RT16 in Indonesia adopted a new RSPO standard incorporating concepts of HCS. In October 2017 initiated by the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD), stakeholders in the rubber value chain launched the Global Platform for Sustainable



Natural Rubber and at the sideline of COP23 in Bonn, the world's largest cocoa and chocolate companies agreed to end deforestation and forest degradation in the global cocoa supply chain.

As indicated in the introductory section of this report, the different laws, policies and strategies shall be analyzed to identify opportunities for and constraints on private sector involvement in national processes.

1.4 Selected Landscape and commodities

The Campo – Ma'an Landscape legally referred to as the "Campo Ma'an Technical Operations Unit is one of Cameroon's productive landscape.

Commodities:

- Rubber
- Palm oil
- Timber
- Cocoa

1.5 Companies

- SOCAPALM (SOCFIN subsidiary)
- HEVECAM (HALCYON subsidiary)
- CUF (Cameroon United Forest)
- SCIEB/WIJMA
- Cargill Cocoa (Cargill is sourcing from the pilot landscape through its partner Telcar Cocoa Ltd?)
- Barry Callebaut (Barry Callebaut is sourcing from the pilot landscape through its subsidiary Sic Cacaos?)
- OLAM Cameroon (Olam Cameroon is sourcing cocoa from the pilot area?)

2 OVERVIEW OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO DEFORESTATION, CHILD AND FORCED LABOUR, GENDER AND SMALLHOLDER INCLUSION

2.1 Regulations and Policies related to deforestation

2.1.1 *The 1994 Forestry Law*

Cameroon since its participation in the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992 has undertaken an array of reforms to protect its environment and especially its rich biodiversity including the forest and its resources. The first major reform was at the institutional front with the creation of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MINEF). Cameroon's forest policy reforms were largely influenced through the World Bank and IMF sponsored structural adjustment program but galvanized by the ideals of the Rio Conference on the importance of the rainforest. Another element that influenced the policy reforms in the 1990s in the forestry sector was the dwindling of revenues from oil and agriculture and the country was seeking alternative income sources or broadening its narrow export base. Timber emerged as a main export commodity in Cameroon in the late 1980s and its contribution to GDP increased steadily from about 3.5% in 1989 to 6.7% in 1995 and finally reached 12% of GDP in 2000⁶.

It was against this backdrop that the Government got the bill on a new forestry law adopted by the Cameroon National Assembly in 1994. The forestry law of 1994 is considered a major turning point in the history of Cameroon's forest policy. Adopting this law the government aimed to achieve five key objectives related to the forest sector⁷:

- Rationalizing the use of forest land
- Enabling communities to benefit more significantly from their right to use forest resources.
- Allocating harvesting rights with greater transparency and efficiency
- Supporting Sustainable Forest Management
- Reforming the Taxation System

⁶ Njimanted G. Forgha & Nkwetta Ajong Aquilas, "The Impact of timber exports on economic growth in Cameroon: An Econometric Investigation" *Asian Journal of Economic Modelling*, 2015, 3(3): 46-60

⁷ Benjamin Singer "Cameroonian Forest-related policies: A Multisectoral overview of public policies in Cameroon's forests since 1960" Institut d'Études Politiques and CIRAD, France September 2008



It also noteworthy to mention that the law was adopted amidst a steadily increase in deforestation and forest degradation. According to certain sources, it was during this decade (1990 – 2000) that Cameroon lost an average of 220,000 hectares per year amounting to an average annual deforestation rate of 0.90%⁸.

Essential elements of the 1994 forestry law related to deforestation

The 1994 forestry reform process was a culmination of several external and internal influences with the goal of balancing Politics, Economics and Conservation equated to meet development objectives, direct material interests and political concerns⁹. As indicated earlier the objectives of the law included rationalizing the use of forest land, providing local communities certain rights to use forest resources, improving transparency and efficiency in attribution of logging rights, ensuring sustainable forest management practices and reforming the forest taxation system.

The one key development of this law with some bearing on the concept of deforestation was the categorization of the forest into two categories i.e. the Permanent Forest Estate and the Non-Permanent Forest Estate. The purposes of these two categories are well spelt out in the Law (Section 20). According to this provision of the Law, Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) “shall comprise lands that are used solely for forestry and or as a wildlife habitat” and non-Permanent Forest Estate (nPFE) “shall comprise forest lands that may be used for other purposes than forestry”. According to the Law, the permanent forests shall cover at least 30 per cent of the country’s national territory and need to take into account the country’s ecological diversity. The permanent forests are subjected to a management plan to ensure the activities within the forest are carried out based on clearly stated objectives including maintaining “primitive value” or not compromising the future productivity of the forest. (Section. 23).

The dispositions of the 1994 Forestry Law are rendered operational through the Decree No. 95/531/PM of 23 August 1995 laying down the procedures for implementing the Forests System. Permanent forest estates also referred to as “forets domaniale” or “National Forests” include the following:

8

⁹ François Ekoko, 2000. "[Balancing Politics, Economics and Conservation: The Case of the Cameroon Forestry Law Reform](#)," [Development and Change](#), International Institute of Social Studies, vol. 31(1), pages 131-154, January.

- Strict ecological reserves
- Flora reserves
- Protection forests
- Recreational forests
- Research and teaching forests
- Production forests
- Reforestation areas
- Botanic areas.

Prima facie, the 1994 Forest Law prohibits certain activities that will lead to deforestation or forest degradation in the permanent forest estate. Article 9 of the 1995 decree stipulates that clearing of a national forest (forêt domaniale) may be authorized only after the proposed forest is degazetted or declassified. The degazettement or declassification must be done only for “public interest” and only after an environmental impact assessment has been duly carried out.

This provision raises a number of issues including what constitute “public interest”. In Cameroon, the concept of “public interest” is increasingly becoming a buzzword to legitimize violations often attributed to land attributions. This concept is grounded in the Land Tenure Law especially the texts related to expropriation and compensation. For example, does a private sector led investment like attribution of land for large-scale palm oil plantation qualify as an investment of public interests? Public interest according to practices therefore could be qualified within the space of economic development aimed at promoting the national economy.

The Decree with regard to the issue of degazettement of a permanent forest estate provides further that any such degazettement either in “whole or in part” can only be valid where a forest of “the same class and equivalent area in the same ecological zone” is classified or gazetted (Art. 22).

The Forestry Law reform process in Cameroon is criticized on many fronts including the “flawed formulation process, conflicting interests and weak government administrative capacity” but also because the law has not been fully implemented¹⁰.

To ease implementation and in alignment with one of the objectives of the 1994 Forestry Law to rationalize the use of forest lands, the Government adopted Decree No. 95-678-PM of December 18, 1995 establishing an indicative land use framework for the Southern Forest Zone. The indicative framework for the past two decades has served as a tool for planning, orientation and exploitation of natural resources. This plan established forest management units (FMUs) as well as secured the

¹⁰ Ibid



different protected areas but unfortunately, this process has been limited to only the Southern forest zone running from the Southwest, Centre, South, Littoral and East Regions. The intention of the indicative framework is also to encourage integrated management of resources considering potential sectoral conflicts. The question today is whether it has really helped to rationalize the use of the forestlands to ensure long-term sustainability.

Unfortunately, Cameroon in the last decade and a half has witnessed a huge overlap in the implementation of its different policies that have affected the forest cover. It was during this period that Cameroon witnessed a drastic increase in the rate of forest change estimate at 9.9% against 0.98% per annum. This could be justified if one considers that it was during this period that Cameroon started the implementation of its new economic policy defined in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP). This new policy focused on transforming its agricultural production with attribution of lands for large-scale plantations and introduction of its concept of “agriculture of the second generation” and attribution of mining permits. A report by WWF produced in collaboration with two national NGOs depicted the extent of these conflicts with about thirty mining exploration permits overlapping 12 protected areas, and dozens more in the immediate vicinity of protected areas, with a high potential for conflicting with the government’s conservation objectives¹¹.

2.1.2 The 2011 Law on orientation for Development and Sustainable Development of the Territory in Cameroon

In 1995, Cameroon elaborated and validated a forest-zoning plan but only limited to the forestry sector and did not take into consideration other land uses such as agriculture or mining and the development of infrastructures. Another drawback of the 1995 forest-zoning plan was that it covered less than half of the country and focused only in the meridional tropical forest. With increasing demand for other land uses in contradiction with the forest-zoning plan, there was a need to have a new plan that covers the entire national territory and it is multi-sectoral. It was within this context that the Government adopted a new framework law on land use planning and sustainable development. The objectives of this law are three-fold:

- Integrate the management of national space within development policies in order to give more visibility and method to land allocation;

¹¹ Schwartz B, Hoyle D, Nguiffo S. “Emerging Trends in Land-use conflicts in Cameroon: Overlapping natural resource permits threaten protected areas and foreign direct investment” An ad hoc working paper WWF 2012.

- Balance the distribution of activities, infrastructures, equipment, services, and populations across the national territory;
- Support the implementation of major projects.

This law if implemented including its different tools (national land-use master and zoning plans, regional land-use plans, sector-based land-use plans and local land-use and sustainable development plan) aim at organizing land allocation in a sustainable development perspectives could contribute to Cameroon minimizing the increasing loss of its forest cover. Since the adoption of the law, the Government has engaged a number of initiatives including the elaboration of the national land-use master plan (Schema National) with a diagnosis of the land-use in Cameroon. Equally also engaged the development of regional land-use plans with the first tier of regions earmarked were the most forested like the Southwest, the East and South Regions. However, due to the ongoing socio-political crisis in the Southwest Region, this process is currently stalled. Meanwhile, the process is ongoing for the East and South Regions.

2.1.3 The 1996 National Environmental Management Plan and the Environmental Management Framework Law

In 1996 following, the reform process that began after the Rio Conference of 1992 elaborated a National Plan on Environmental Management (NEMP). The overall objective of Plan was to develop policies, strategies and actions for environmental protection and the rational management of resources to contribute to sustainable development. The policy identified five priority areas; participatory land use management, sustainable management of natural resource, restoration of degraded land and improvement of soil fertility, capacity building and concerted management of shared resources at the sub-regional level. Borne out of this policy was Law No. 96/12 of 5 August 1996 on environmental management.

This is a framework law and provides the basis for different environmental protection mechanisms such as the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regime. The introduction of EIA was aimed at determining the direct and indirect impact of any project on the ecological balance, the physical environment and the local population of the area where the project is located. Owing to the fact that the establishment of most industrial plantations is subject to an EIA, it means this law should help to curb instances of deforestation or degradation because of the establishment of plantations that are destructive to the environment and can affect the wellbeing of the local population.

2.1.4 The Land tenure related laws

Land is a fundamental asset for livelihood of many indigenous people and forest dependent population in Cameroon. It has also become a key issue underpinning the debate around key



commodities especially palm oil and rubber production as investors require large expanse of land to establish their plantations. The government of Cameroon in 1974 elaborated a regulatory framework to govern land tenure in the Country. Cameroon's primary land law is ordinances No 74-1 and 74-2 Of 6 July 1974. This law classifies land into private property, national lands and public lands. These laws create a system of land tenure based on land registration and all privately- owned land must be registered and titled in order to retain its character as private land.

In addition to these two foundational laws on land tenure, is also an array of other regulatory texts dealing with specific aspects of land tenure. Some milestone texts include Decree N° 76 -166 of 27 April 1976 to establish the terms and conditions of management of national lands or Law No. 85-09 of 4 July 1985 related to expropriation for public interest and modalities for compensation. Some key elements on the interaction of the different land tenure regulatory instruments to the question of deforestation is the extent to which the Forest Law treat customary land rights. The most evoked element in Cameroon's land tenure regime is how it treats customary rights. It has been considered in some sources that the current land tenure regime severely diminishes customary land rights though it does not directly extinguish these interests, preferring to achieve this effect by the back door¹². Section17 of Ordinance No.1 of 1974 (the founding land law) refers to 'customary communities and members thereof' but guarantees them only peaceful occupation and use of lands. Even the guarantee of peaceful occupancy and use is limited to those parts of their lands where 'human presence and development is evident'. Section7 of Ordinance No.2 of 1974 declares that 'bona fide owners and occupants of public property may not be dispossessed thereof unless the public interest so requires, and subject to compensation'. However, this too is heavily proscribed requiring 'landowners, customary land holders, farmers and other holders of property interests' to be present at adjudication, 'to declare every property that they hold' (Section9)¹³.

Also to curb huge investment on compensation for the acquisition of land by the state for the so called public interest investments, the government resorted to creating land parks commonly called "les reserves foncier". This process has taken place in a most regions of the country and has seen community lands taken over by the state without any consultations.

12

13

2.1.5 The Rural Sector Development Strategy

In 2016, Cameroon elaborated a new rural sector development strategy in replacement of the one that has been in existence since 2005. The new strategy was to ensure alignment with the Government's new economic and development orientations provided in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper. The strategy aims to ensure a successful transition of the rural sector towards green and inclusive growth based on the principles of sustainable development and providing the necessary platform for Cameroon to attain emergence by 2035. The document proposes four strategic axes:

- Modernizing agriculture, development of production value chains and improving market access for products
- The development and modernization of rural infrastructures, facilitation of access to factors of production, financing and insurance
- Land-use planning, equitable allocation and sustainable management of rural lands and natural resources.
- Encouraging private initiatives, improving governance and the institutional framework, capacity building of actors.

2.1.6 The National REDD+ Strategy and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

Due to its great forest potential, Cameroon has been a key player in international climate change discourse and strategy development. Its rainforests alone cover approximately 46.3 % of the national territory and account for 11 % of Congo Basin forests. Cameroon therefore has the third largest forest range in the Congo Basin, after DRC and Gabon. As it is the case with other countries of the Congo Basin, Cameroon is grappling with the adverse effects of climate change and with the increasing pressure on forests. To tackle these major challenges, the Government is committed through its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to reduce emissions by 32% by 2035 from its projected baseline of 2010 emissions¹⁴.

The forest sector is expected to contribute significantly to the realization of this objective. The contribution of the forest sector will be achieved through the country's engagement in the REDD+ process. Government's efforts are simultaneously addressing the three phases of REDD+. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF's) Participants Committee approved Cameroon's Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) in 2013. The R-PP states that the sum of US\$28.911 million is needed to

¹⁴ FCPF Mid term Countries Uptate : Cameroon.

<https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/system/files/documents/Cameroon%20MTR%20-%20final%20for%20posting.pdf>



formulate the national REDD+ strategy and roughly US\$60 million to implement pilot projects in all agro-ecological zones of the country. .

With regards to the Investment and Demonstration Phase, the country has been admitted into the Forest Investment Program (FIP) and the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), making it possible to prepare an investment plan for these initiatives. This plan will serve as the basis to mobilize investments to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation within and outside the forest sector.

To ensure coherence and synergies between developments in FIP, CAFI and the national strategy, the development of the FIP and CAFI investment plan is placed under the supervision of the National REDD+ Coordinator. This allows for the efficient use of human and financial resources and provides a direct link between the FCPF funded readiness phase and the investment funds, which will lay the groundwork for carbon payments through the Carbon Fund. In terms of Performance-based payments (Phase 3), the Government submitted an Emission Reduction Project Idea Note (ER-PIN) to the Carbon Fund. The ER-PIN was approved in June 2016 and the development of the ER Programme Document is under way¹⁵. The national REDD+ strategy was validated on June in 2018.

2.1.7 FLEGT and the Voluntary Partnership Agreement

A Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) of the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEGT) is a legally binding trade agreement between the EU and a timber-exporting country outside the EU. A VPA aims to ensure that all timber and timber products destined for the EU market from a partner country comply with the laws of that country. It can also be noted that in addition to promoting trade in legal timber, VPAs address the causes of illegality there by improving forest governance and law enforcement. A major strength of VPAs is that they look beyond trade to consider development and environmental issues, as well as effects on local populations.

Between 2007 and 2010, Cameroon and the EU negotiated a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) to promote trade in legal timber products and improve forest governance. Cameroon and the EU ratified the VPA in 2011 and are now implementing the commitments they made in the Agreement¹⁶. According to the VPA, once Cameroon has implemented a timber legality assurance system and other

¹⁵ FCPF Mid term Countries Update : Cameroon.

<https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/system/files/documents/Cameroon%20MTR%20-%20final%20for%20posting.pdf>

¹⁶ <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/background-cameroon>

commitments outlined in the VPA, it will export to the EU only verified legal timber products accompanied by EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) licenses. According to art 2(c), of the VPA, the agreement intends to create and encourage economic opportunities for resident local communities and local enterprises, and art 2(e) states that the VPA intends to strengthen the capacities of actors in Cameroon by encouraging the creation of a favourable climate for investment in the sustainable management of forests.

It can therefore be seen that, Cameroon in developing and implementing its forest management and logging policies, will obviously have to ensure such policies are in line with the provisions of the VPA with the EU on timber regulation.

APV-FLEGT is the Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the EU on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade in Timber and Wood Products (APV-FLEGT). Illegal logging is one of the drivers of deforestation in tropical countries. Conscious of this situation, the EU is committed to eliminating illegal timber from its consumer market. Cameroon being one of the largest African exporters of hardwoods destined for Europe. On May 6, 2010, Cameroon and the EU signed a Voluntary Partnership Agreement on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade in Timber and Wood Products (APV-FLEGT).

Through this trade agreement, Cameroon is committed to ensuring that timber marketed within the country and shipped to the EU does not contain any illegal timber. By signing this agreement, Cameroon is committed to implementing a comprehensive program to advance the forest-sector reform process, including strengthening forest sector control. In return, the EU committed to excluding unauthorized timber from its entire market, while providing technical assistance to Cameroon for the implementation of a Legality Assurance System (LAS) and a Wood Traceability System in Cameroon (STBC).

2.2 Regulations and Policies related to respect of Human rights in Cameroon:

The exploitation of natural resources has often been tainted with cases of human rights violations. Cameroon has in its Constitution affirmed in the preamble its commitment to protect human rights as inscribed in the different international human rights declarations, conventions and treaties duly signed and ratified. It has also affirmed this commitment in the various laws and other regulatory instruments at the national level. For instance, aspects of labour rights as well as the protection of children are treated within the labour code and related regulatory instruments and in the different conventions and treaties ratified by Cameroon.



2.2.1 *Labour rights:*

The respect of labour rights in Cameroon is a right duly inscribed in the constitution of the country. The preamble stipulates the right and obligation to work for all citizens. The provisions of the preamble are made enforceable by the provision of Article 65 of the Constitution making the preamble an integral part of the constitution.

The Cameroon Labour Code adopted as Law No. 92/007 of 14 August 1992 governs labour relations in Cameroon especially between employers and employees. It is important to note here that the greatest labour force employed in Cameroon is in the informal sector and especially in agriculture and non-agriculture with more than 90 per cent of the overall labour force. According to the FAO, the agriculture sector, including the sub-sectors of crop and animal production, forestry and fishing and aquaculture, is a source of livelihoods for over 85 percent of rural people¹⁷. There is no doubt that it is in these sectors that the worst forms of human rights violations occur like working without contracts.

The Cameroon Labour Code provides for contracts of employment and that a contract maybe concluded for a specified or unspecified duration (Section 25.1). Another serious issue with related to labour contracts in Cameroon is on wages paid to workers. According to the ILO, agricultural workers are considered the poorest of the rural poor as they receive wages that place them on the bottom rung of the rural poverty ladder and even below the minimum subsistence level¹⁸. The Labour Code provide the non-discrimination in wage payment as it stipulates that “for the same type of work and level of proficiency, workers shall be entitled to the same remuneration, irrespective of their origin, sex, age, status and religion, subject to the provisions of this section” (See Section 62.2).

¹⁷ Sisay Yeshanew “Regulating labour and safety standards in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors” FAO 2018

¹⁸ ILO, “Agricultural Wage Workers: the Poorest of the Rural Poor” Press release | 23 September 1996 available at https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_008067/lang--en/index.htm last accessed 15 June 2019.

2.2.2 *Child protection and child labour in Cameroon*

Child protection is a prime concern in Cameroon. It is one of the government's priority actions to address the issue of protection and promotion of the rights of the child. Cameroon has ratified legal instruments protecting children's rights such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1993). Rights of Children Protected by National Laws in Cameroon. These rights are affirmed in both the Constitution as well as other national laws like Decree no. 2001/041 of 19 February 2001 on compulsory and free education. Other laws related to securing the child's right to education and well-being include:

- Decree No. 82/412 of 9 September 1982 on the procedure for granting State relief to indigent and needy person.
- Circular letter No. 80/I/658/MINEDUC/CTD of 18 January 1980 on admission of disabled children and children of disabled parents to public and semi-public institutions;
- Circular letter No. 90/02800/LC/MINASCOF/SG/DRS of 10 December 1990 on provision of aids to needy and disabled persons;
- Act No. 67/LF/7 of 12 June 1967 instituting a family benefits code

Cameroon has also through legislative process undertaken to prohibit child labour. In 1992, Cameroon adopted a new labour code as Law No. 92/007 of 14 August 1992. The Law has a dedicated chapter on employment of women, young persons and children. Section 61 (1) for instance states that "No child shall be employed in an enterprise even as an apprentice before the age of 14 (fourteen) years, except as otherwise authorized by order of the minister in charge of labour, taking account of local conditions and the jobs which the children may be asked to do". This disposition is completed by other regulatory texts:

- Decree No. 69/DF/287 of 30 July 1969 on apprenticeship contracts.
- Order No. 16/MTLS/DEGRE of 27 May 1969 on female labour, with an annex listing work prohibited for women and children;
- Order No. 17/MTLS/DEGRE of 27 May 1969 on child labour.

The Law prohibits certain categories of work for children:

- Work that is beyond a child's strength, such as the transport and handling of goods over a certain weight calculated in relation to the sex and age of the child and the transportation of goods by truck or similar vehicle;



- Dangerous or unhealthy work, such as work underground in mines or in quarries or foundries and the manufacture, handling or manipulation of explosives;
- Work harmful to the morals of children, such as the fabrication and sale of written or printed products (posters, drawings, sculptures) which may have an adverse influence on the moral and psychological development of children, even if such work is not prohibited by Criminal law.

The Law equally prescribe certain affirmative action measures:

- The ban on night work for women and children as per article 81 of the Labor Code. The maximum duration of daytime work cannot exceed eight hours, with a compulsory break of at least one hour for children¹⁵⁰
- Compulsory rest time of at least 12 consecutive hours¹⁵¹ ;
- Compulsory granting of leave on the basis of two and a half days per month instead of one and a half days for adults.

Criminal penalties are provided for in articles 167, 168 and 190 of the Labour Code against anyone who contravenes the provisions of articles 82, 86 and 90 of that Code concerning, inter alia, children's working conditions.

While it may seem that the current legal dispensation is adequate to cater for the right of children and prevent any such violation either in terms of education or in terms of work, there are reported cases of child labour and forced labour. The one common justification of associated with child labour in Cameroon is that it is considered as a cultural norm and often not considered as an abuse. Common forms of child labour according to the US Department of Labour are concentrated in the agriculture and service sectors including commercial sexual exploitation. In addition to these violations is the fact that Cameroon is a source of transit for traffickers.

The Bollore Group, main shareholder of SOCAPALM were accused of using child labour in their Oil Palm plantations in Cameroon. Meanwhile during a discussion at the AFi consultations in Cameroon small holders argued that working with their children in the farm holdings is not child labour but a means of preparing the children to take over the farms as their parents grow old. Participants at the consultation suggested the need to clarify and differentiate between child work and child labour.

Box: Child Rights and Child Labour in Cameroon (culled from the US Department of Labour 2017 Child Labor and Forced Labor Reports)

Cameroon is a source, transit, and destination country for child trafficking from neighboring countries in Central and West Africa. Some traffickers have resorted to kidnapping children, as increased public awareness has resulted in fewer parents entrusting their children to intermediaries. (3) Children engaged in cocoa production are exposed to dangerous working conditions, including exposure to pesticides and the use of sharp tools such as machetes. The NGO Child Soldiers International alleged that some officially sanctioned community neighborhood watch groups, known as vigilance committees, may have used and recruited children as young as age 12 in military operations against Boko Haram. Human trafficking provisions remain discordant with international standards, as they require threats, the use of force, or coercion to be established for the crime of child trafficking, and individuals ages 16 to 18 are not considered children. In addition, the types of hazardous work prohibited for children under age 18 are not comprehensive, as work underwater or at dangerous heights are not prohibited. However, the government earmarked approximately \$18,000 for the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MINTSS) to revise the list in 2018. The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor. However, gaps exist within the operations of MINTSS that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

2.3 Regulation and Policies related to gender and smallholder inclusion

2.3.1 The National Gender Policy

From its institutional architecture with a dedicated Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family, there is no doubt that Cameroon is keen to make the issue of gender a core element in its national development policy. To affirm its commitment to this issue, the country has taken part in most international conferences on gender issues and especially the landmark Beijing conference in 1995 with the adoption of the Beijing Action Plan. The Government in 1997 embarked on the elaboration of a series of normative instruments including the policy declaration on the Integration of Women in Development, the Multi-sectoral Plan of Action on Women and Development, and the National Plan of Action on the Integration of Women in Development.

The government in 1999 approved all these documents. Cameroon equally signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). These efforts culminated in the elaboration and adoption of the National Gender Policy for the period 2011 – 2020. The development of this policy aligns to Cameroon’s economic development vision posited in the Vision 2035 Document and the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper. The purpose of the NGP is to contribute to the systematic elimination of inequalities between women and men at all levels. This



goal is underpinned by a national gender vision “...where women and men enjoy the same rights and participate in development in an equitable and equal manner”. The NGP has six strategic areas of intervention, which are:

- Promote equal access of girls and boys, women and men to education, training and information.
- Improve women's access to health services, particularly with regard to reproductive health.
- Promote equal opportunities for women and men in the economic and employment sectors.
- Promote a favorable socio-cultural environment for the respect of women’s rights
- Enhance women’s participation and representation in public life and decision-making.
- Strengthen the institutional framework for gender promotion.

The NGP has been criticized, as the dynamics that embedded its development does not guarantee its social appropriation and its implementation¹⁹. If one consider the Policy’s strategic areas of intervention, it is difficult to ascertain which intervention could adequately address the challenges faced by rural women. For instance, the strategy on improving women’s access to health services will have to take into consideration the link between gender and transport especially rural transport infrastructure. This analysis of linking gender and transport is equally true for the strategy on promoting economic opportunities considering the aspect of economic and market access for women.

Another critical element to consider in the analyses of the gender policy environment in Cameroon is its mainstreaming in national processes. Gender equality and women’s rights have not been issues addressed in the conversation around climate change and REDD+ in Cameroon. The first attempt was through an IUCN pro-poor REDD+ project with a development of the Gender and REDD+ Road Map for Cameroon with the expectation that both women and men are fully recognized as forest stakeholders. Another aspect that undermines the notion of gender equality relates to land tenure. A construct of a belief system built around customary practices limits women’s security of tenure over

¹⁹ Mefire, L. M., Vissandjée, B., & Bibeau, G. (2017). “Cameroon and the Gender Issue”. *Advances in Anthropology*, 7, 34-45. <https://doi.org/10.4236/aa.2017.71004>

land²⁰. According to Fonjong (2012), land discrimination based on sex is not only an issue of rights but also of economic injustice, that does not promote the fight against poverty at the local and national level. This is so even with the fact that rural women in Cameroon play a major role in guaranteeing local food security through the production of an estimated 90% of food consumed nationwide.

Cameroon's ranking on the 2018 global gender index 57 demonstrates the country's strong determination to ensure gender equality. However, if it need to move up this index ranking, the country will need to put efforts to do fast track its policy reforms especially on land tenure but also take a renewed commitment on the NGP. Such renewed commitment on the NGP will permit appropriation by all stakeholders.

Box 2: The Governance and Human Rights Situation in Cameroon

The Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance is comprehensive statistical tool assessing African countries' performance in provision of public goods and services across four pillars: Safety and Rule of Law, Participation and Human Rights, Sustainable Economic Opportunity and Human Development. Cameroon in the 2018 report was ranked 36th on overall governance performance with a score of 46.2 on 100. On Safety & Rule of Law that include the following elements: rule of law, transparency & accountability, personal safety and national security the country scored 40.3 on a 100. On Participation and Human Rights with elements such as participation, rights and gender, the country had 39 on 100. On Sustainable Economic Opportunity encompassing the following elements: public management, business environment, infrastructure and rural sector, Cameroon had a score of 47. Its best performance was on human development with elements on welfare, education, and health with a score of 58.2. On the World Bank Doing Business Ranking, Cameroon is ranked 166 among 190 economies in the ease of doing business. In the 2017 Resource Governance Index, that assesses how resource rich countries govern their oil, gas and mineral resources published by the NRG, Cameroon was ranked 30th among 89 countries assessed and 7th out of 31 in sub-Saharan Africa. According to the 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) by Transparency International reveals that Cameroon is among the most corrupt countries in West and Central Africa surpassing Ghana and Nigeria, all put together. Cameroon is the 152 least corrupt nation out of 175 countries. The crisis in the Southwest and Northwest Regions have worsened Cameroon's human rights records with widespread human rights violations.

²⁰ Fonjong et al. (2012) "The paradox of gender discrimination in land ownership and women's contribution to poverty reduction in Anglophone Cameroon" *GeoJournal* DOI 10.1007/s10708-012-9452-z



2.3.2 *Smallholder inclusion*

Cameroon's economic development policy focuses on two key pillars to pivot its economic growth i.e. infrastructure and modernizing production which include the harnessing the potential of the rural sector. Agriculture in Cameroon employs more than 70 per cent of the active population but the sector is characterized by a high informal rate and thus actions on inclusion are difficult to ascertain. However, the Government in its strategy in the GESP on modernizing production earmarks the promotion of medium and large-scale farms by facilitating access to farmland and encouraging the creation of farmers' as cooperatives or common initiative groups. The underpinning elements of these objectives include:

- Provision of “privileged State support to such rural organizations regarding access to agricultural inputs (fertilizer and seeds in particular), at affordable prices,
- Access to new production techniques through mechanization, awareness campaigns and agricultural consultancies,
- Access to agricultural credit with the opening of micro-finance establishments and banks interested in this specialized credit line, not excluding the plan to create an agricultural bank;
- Access to markets through better organization of domestic marketing channels, neighboring markets and support for the promotion of Cameroon's agricultural produce on the international market.

Both the 2005 Rural Sector Development Strategy and that of 2016 without alluding to the notion of inclusion, outline actions to enhance inclusion. The 2016 RSDS outlines the challenges of the sector and recommend like in the GESP the need for restructuring and organization of smallholders into groups to render them professional.

Cameroon in the past years have undertaken projects aimed at building competitive value chains and also harness the potential of inclusion of vulnerable groups especially women and youth involved in agriculture. One of such projects is the Rural Micro-finance Development Support Project (PADMIR). This project funded by IFAD aimed at reducing poverty by increasing income and food security for target groups. The specific objectives include improving the enabling environment of the micro-finance sector as to incorporate the problematic of rural sector financing and facilitation of access to financial services to target groups and adapted to their needs. To facilitate inclusion of women and youth groups involved in economic activities especially in the rural areas, the project

developed a gender and youth strategy with the purpose of ensuring equitable access of women, men and youth in rural areas to both financial and non-financial products adapted to their needs with a view of improving their revenue and living conditions.

The Government also implemented a US\$ 60 million funded world Bank project targeting smallholders and their organizations as direct beneficiaries with the aim of increasing competitiveness on target value chains. The Agriculture Competitiveness Project (PACA) in terms of inclusion had the following components:

- Rehabilitation of rural roads covering about 500 km of rural roads with the main purpose of connecting high-potential production areas to markets (sub-component 1.1)
- Support the development of linkages and coordination between different stakeholders and help them analyze and propose solutions to specific bottlenecks to the development of competitive value chains (Sub-component 2.1)

The African Development Bank is currently financing a EUR 115.081 million project to improve the competitiveness of the oil palm, plantain and pineapple value chains; create employment for the youths; and increase the incomes of crop sector stakeholders. The Agriculture Value Chain Development Programme (AVC-DP) will help to eliminate constraints on the competitiveness of the three targeted crop sectors (oil palm, plantain and pineapple). The project plans to engage in infrastructure development comprising:

- The rehabilitation of 1,000 km of rural roads linking farming areas to consumption centres;
- The construction of community infrastructure: 30 storage spaces and warehouses, 15 rural markets, 30 DWS systems; extension of LV electricity over 30 km;
- Construction and equipment of a quality control laboratory.

On the component of crop sector development, the Project aims at the following:

- Strengthening of farmer organizations: institutional and organizational development, technical guidance, facilitation of interface with suppliers of agricultural services and training;
- Strengthening of crop sector development support institutions: support for research in the production of quality seeds and seedlings, and establishment of crop sector development committees with public and private stakeholders
- Financing of value chains: establishment of crop-sector development funds to finance various VC stakeholders.



The project also has a component on development of youth agricultural entrepreneurship seeking to integrate young graduates into the VCs by helping them to create their own businesses. This entails the following:

- Training in incubation centres and support for business development in the areas of agribusiness, production, marketing, processing and management and business plans
- The youths will be assisted in the preparation of requests to secure financing through the credit mechanisms established by the project.

There are also specific projects at the level of the ministries of youth, agriculture, livestock and vocational training to facilitate inclusion especially of young farmers. The Government has also set up specific facilities including a Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Bank and an Agricultural Bank. However, the effectiveness of these institutions to facilitate inclusion is still embryonic.

Box 3: Land grab and community rights in Cameroon.

Cameroon has been considered as one of the African countries that is most exposed to the phenomenon of land grabbing. The most noted land grab case was that of SGSOC, a subsidiary of US based Herakles Farms, which in 2009 acquired a concession of 73,000 hectares in the Southwest Region for the development of a palm oil plantation. This attribution sparked off nation and worldwide condemnation as the project envisages the destruction of the rainforests, endangering the natural habitat of many animal species – including elephants, chimpanzees, baboons, and other rare monkeys – but most significantly sparking off tensions in local communities. The Government in November 2013 reduced the concession to about 20,000 hectares but this has not reduced the pressure of both National and International NGOs as the project is considered as a “wrong project in a wrong place”. In 2016, 244 farmers filed two court complaints and an international petition calling upon the Cameroon government to halt the project. Other instances that local CSOs have denounced and considered as land grabs include the Biopalm project in Kribi and Sudcam rubber plantation in the South Region.

3 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OR IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES AND PROCESSES RELATED TO CURBING DEFORESTATION

There is no doubt that the different laws, policies, initiatives and processes analyzed in this review could be complex and challenging both for the government and private sector aiming at curbing deforestation or protecting human rights. This review provide an opportunity for the private sector to re-affirm its global commitment in engaging in removing deforestation from its supply chains and protecting human rights. There are different opportunities that could help the private sector to meet these obligations without necessarily requesting for policy reforms. Cameroon is currently developing its National FSC Standards for the logging sector, plans to initiate the National Interpretation of the RSPO Principles and Criteria and development of a roadmap for deforestation free cocoa. Initiatives like the TFA2020 African Palm Oil Initiative (APOI), the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), and the REDD+ National Strategy provide platforms to drive private sector involvement in eliminating deforestation for the selected commodities in this review. There is no doubt that forest holds enormous benefits not only for man's wellbeing but when protected could contribute in enhancing profitability for commodities like cocoa²¹. Private sector companies are becoming aware of both the risks and opportunities related to deforestation and have taken to adopting aspirational goals of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation evidenced with commitments of zero-deforestation. As of March 2017, there are more than 760 public commitments from about 447 producers, processors, traders, manufacturers, and retailers to reduce deforestation from supply chains²².

Such commitments demonstrate the increasing interest of the private sector and this policy review identifies within the current regulatory and policy framework opportunities for developing robust corporate sustainability strategies that are not in contradiction with laws and policies in place. Take the instances of the National Gender Policy aiming at promoting a favourable socio-cultural environment for the respect of women's rights or the Labour Law provisions on the prohibition of child labour. This equally relates to the forest and environmental legislations providing opportunities

²¹ Katrina Mullan. 2014. "The Value of Forest Ecosystem Services to Developing Economies." CGD Working Paper. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development. <http://www.cgdev.org/publication/value-forest-ecosystem-services-developingeconomies-working-paper-379>

²² Eric F. Lambin et al. 2018 "The role of supply-chain initiatives in reducing deforestation" Perspective <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-017-0061-1>



for public consultations be it through the gazetting of a forest or in the development of environmental and social impact assessment.

There is no doubt that the current policy environment has challenges that may affect an effective private sector engagement in both the process of curbing deforestation or enhancing the respect of human rights, these however are situated at the level of implementation.

4 CONCLUSION

This review clearly demonstrates that both government and private sector can achieve targets of curbing deforestation and ensuring effective respect of human rights along the supply chains of the selected commodities.

Some of the notable gaps within the current policy review remain the non-definition of smallholders as this may make it difficult for companies making it subjective as to who to bring into a program of inclusion. Another critical element especially related to the landscape approach though not highlighted in the review relates to the governance structure in Cameroon, which though decentralized with subnational governments (regional and local authorities) have limited competence in terms of policy-making. The Central Government maintains supervisory powers and delegates competences as it deem fits and in accordance with the law on decentralization adopted in 2004. Thus companies operating at landscape level will have to see how to internalize these governance dynamics in their operations.

The review also notes that the civil society organizations at the local, national and international levels have a significant role to play in the governance system towards reducing deforestation and curbing human rights abuse in the value chains of commodities. As local civil society strengthen its organization, with the creation of active CSO land observatories, first with the North West regional Land Observatory that inspired and triggered the creation of the South and the South West Regional Observatories respectively. These observatories, at provincial and local levels are strong potentials for linking local with national and global. Understanding, recognizing and reviving community traditional knowledge and ecological governance systems is equally primordial.

Also the coherence of operations, policies sector and regulations (for example in agriculture, forestry, mining and planning sectors) is something to be addressed.

Annex 1: International legal instruments relevant to biodiversity, gender, labour and child's rights in Cameroon

key international law instruments to which Cameroon is a party	Date of signature/ratification/Accession by
--	---



	Cameroon
1. Biodiversity and other key environmental related conventions and treaties	
Convention on Biodiversity Diversity, (CBD) 5 June 1992	Ratified on 02 October 1994
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 9 May 1992	Ratified on 19 October 1994
Convention to Combat Desertification, (UNCCD) 1992	Ratified on 17 June 1994
Paris Climate Change Agreement, 15 December 2015	Ratified on 29 July 2016
The Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES),	Accession: 05/06/1981 Entry into force: 03/09/1981
Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 11 December 1997	Ratified on 28 August 2002
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa	Ratified on 29 May 1997
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 16 September 1987, amended on 29 June 1990	Signed on 08 June 1992
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially Waterfowl Habitat, 1971 as amended in 1982 and 1987	Ratified on March 20, 2006
Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 16 November 1972	Ratified 07 December 1982
the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS),	Entry into force November 1983
The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA),	signature date: 03/09/2002 ratification date: 19/12/2005
the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)	
Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals & Pesticides in international Trade, 10 September 1998 amended in 24 September 2004, 31 October 2008, 24 June 2011, 10 May 2013 and 15 May 2015	Ratified on 20 May 2002
International Tropical Timber Agreement, 18 November 1983, 26 January 1994 and 27 January 2006;	signed on 3 Feb 2007 and ratified on 21 Aug 2009

Treaty on Conservation and Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa & to Establish the Central African Forests Commission, February 2005	Signed 2005
The Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening Cooperation & Mutual Support in Conservation of Wild Fauna & Flora between COMIFAC & the Task Force for Cooperative Enforcement Operations on Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna & Flora (The Lusaka Agreement Task Force), 8 Sep 1994	Ratification not required
Governance and Human Rights related International Treaties and Conventions	
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 20 October 2005	Signed on 22 November 2006
United Nations Convention against Corruption (2000), entered into force on 14 December 2005	Ratified on 6 February 2006
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 17 October 2003	Ratified on 09 October 2012
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979	Signed on 06 June 1983 and ratified on 23 August 1994
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966	Ratified on 27 June 1984
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966	Ratified on 27 June 1984
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), 21 December 1965	Signed on 24 June 1971
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989	Signed on 25 September 1990 and ratified on 11 Jan 1993
African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 01 June 1981	20/06/1989
Specific International Conventions related to Labour	
ILO Convention (No. 143) on Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions), 1975	04 July 1978
ILO Convention (No. 97) on Migration for Employment, 1949	03 September 1962
ILO Convention (No. 29) concerning Forced Labour or Compulsory Labour, 1930	07 June 1960
ILO Convention (No. 105) on the Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957	03 September 1962
ILO Convention (No. 138) concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (specified at 14 years)	13 August 2001
ILO Convention (No. 10) on Minimum Age (Agriculture), 1921	25 May 1970
ILO Convention (No. 111) concerning Discrimination in Respect of	13 May 1988



Employment and Occupation, 1958	
ILO Convention (No. 100) on Equal Remuneration, 1951	25 May 1970
ILO Convention (No. 98) on Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949, ratified on 03 September 1962	03 September 1962
ILO Convention (No. 87) on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948	07 June 1960
ILO Convention (No. 182) on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999	05 June 2002
ILO Convention (No. 103) on Maternity Protection (Revised), 1952	25 May 1970
ILO Convention (No. 11) on Rights of Association (Agriculture), 1921	07 June 1960
ILO Convention (No. 101) on Holidays with Pay, 1952	25 may 1970 but denounced
International Conventions Related to the Protection of the Child	
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW (1979)	Signed 6 Jun 1983 Ratified 23 Aug 1994
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW (1999)	Accession 7 Jan 2005 a
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2003)	Signed 13 Dec 2000 Ratified 6 Feb 2006
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (1958)	Signed 13 May 1988
“Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.” (The Maputo Protocol	Ratified 28 December 2012
Minimum Age Convention 1973	Ratified 13 Aug 2001
U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989	
Optional Protocols to the CRC on Sex Trafficking, Armed Conflict	Signed 5 Oct 2001
African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 1990	Signed 16/09/1992 Ratified 05/09/1997
Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999	Signed 05 Jun 2002

Annex 2: Questions and comments raised during the validation of the study

Generally the participants were very impressed by the work as presented. We observed very few people read the draft sent, prior to the workshop, by the workshop organizers. As such most questions and comments were beyond the scope of the study. Nevertheless, we list some of the comments and questions below:

- **The need for a Public sector - Private sector - Platform to facilitate coherence in decision making and implementation of policies, especially in the cocoa sector**
- **A list of all the international instruments, treaties and convention related to the study and that have been ratified by Cameroon. This list is found in Annex 1 of this report;**
- **Proposal to make sure that the laws are popularized to local communities and workers so they are aware of their rights;**
- **Even local government authorities at the local levels do not know the laws;**
- **The laws even when they exist are not usually applied, due to corruption and negligence;**
- **Build capacity of relevant government authorities on the laws and processes on safeguarding workers rights and the environment;**
- **Take into considerations labour law and collective agreements or “conventions collectives”, most companies do not sign contracts with clients or workers;**
- **REDD+ is very capital, but the private sector has not been involved in the process;**
- **Private sector carrying out initiatives to reduce deforestation, driven by international market commitments than by national program to reduce deforestation;**
- **National REDD+ Strategy, not well known to stakeholders as they were not or inadequately involved in the strategy elaboration process;**
- **Need for the government, precisely the National REDD+ Coordination to have a clear and robust Stakeholder Engagement Plan;**
- **Private sector and government should work together so as to harmonize actions carried out by the Private sector, driven by international market commitments like the Zero Deforestation along major commodity value chains, and governments REDD+ programs driven by commitments within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

