



Increasing finance  
for sustainable land management

# CAMEROON

## CONTEXT

Located in the Gulf of Guinea, Cameroon lies at the intersection of Central and West Africa and is often referred to as “Africa in miniature” due to its geographical and cultural variety. The sudano-sahelian zone, the high plateau and the high savannahs are the main areas affected by land degradation. The major causes of land degradation are unsustainable agricultural practices; overgrazing and bush fires; deforestation; unsustainable land-use planning; mounting population pressure; and desertification and soil erosion.

Development priorities, including sustainable land management (SLM), are defined in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Environmental priorities are further defined by the National Action Plan for Environmental Management (PNGE) and the Forest and Environment Sector Programme (PSFE).

Following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, development partners have aligned according to these priorities in the environmental sector. Coordinated international support to the implementation of the PSFE is provided through projects, targeted budgetary support and common funds.

The PSFE is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Forestry (MINFOF) and the Ministry of Environment and Protection of Nature (MINEP), which is also in charge of the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of national environmental policies. In this context, MINEP is functioning as national focal point institution of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

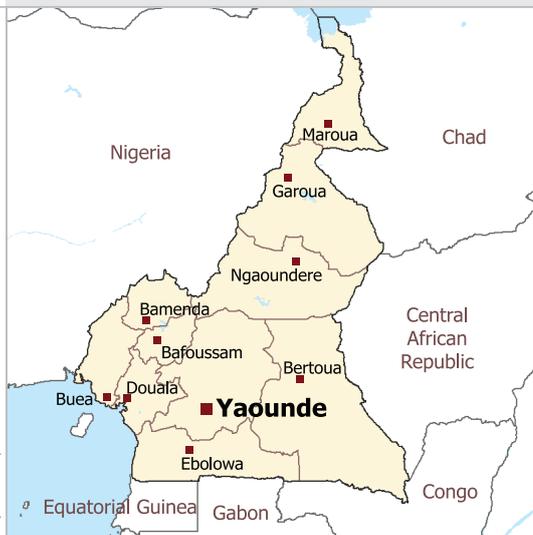
## CHALLENGES

Faced with the increasing degradation of natural resources, which is contributing to growing poverty in many parts of the country, MINEP, with support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), coordinated the elaboration of the National Action Plan to Combat Desertification (NAP). The NAP provides a strategic framework to promote SLM based on five priority areas: participatory land use management; sustainable management of natural resources; restoration of degraded lands and improvement of soil fertility; capacity building; and concerted management of shared resources at the sub-regional level.

Following the adoption of the NAP by the Cameroonian government in October 2006, efforts are being undertaken by MINEP to mobilize substantial financial resources for SLM and NAP implementation, including through national budgets, investments from the private sector, decentralized communities and civil society organizations as well as development assistance from bilateral and multilateral donors. Although some success in resource mobilization has been achieved, major challenges remain that prevent the up-scaling of SLM, such as the i) effective participation and coordination of various ministries and research institutions in NAP implementation; ii) mainstreaming of SLM into major development processes, sector programmes and national budgets; and iii) the monitoring and evaluation of NAP implementation.

Confronted with these challenges, the Cameroonian Government has requested technical and financial support from the Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD to identify additional and to facilitate the more effective use of existing financial resources for SLM activities and NAP implementation.

Map courtesy of IFAD



Total population (million), 2006: 18.2  
Surface area (thousands km<sup>2</sup>), 2006: 475.4  
Population density (people per km<sup>2</sup>), 2006: 38,3  
Forest area (% of surface area), 2005: 44.7  
Agricultural land (% of surface area), 2005: 19.7  
GDP (current USD, billion): 18.32  
GDP growth (annual %): 3.8  
External debt (current USD, millions), 2006: 3.2  
Foreign Direct Investment (current USD, millions), 2006: 309  
UNCCD ratification: 1997

Source: World Development Indicators Database, 2008

The Global Mechanism (GM) was established under Article 21 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and began its operations in October 1997. The GM is defined as an organizational entity mandated “to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms... [and]... to promote actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources to affected developing country Parties.”

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### COMMON OBJECTIVES

Through a three-year programme, the GM aims to strengthen the integration of SLM issues in policy, macroeconomic, budgetary and sectoral processes, by developing and implementing an Integrated Financing Strategy (IFS) for SLM.

The programme supports MINEP and other stakeholders in mainstreaming SLM in the overall policy framework, to assess the public expenditures designated to SLM and to evaluate the economic costs of land degradation for the country. Furthermore, the programme evaluates the opportunities of innovative financing mechanisms such as climate change and trade as potential financing sources for SLM and UNCCD implementation. This evaluation is done in the context of IFS elaboration and implementation, which aims to identify a blend of internal, external and innovative sources of finance designated for SLM.

Capacity building is an essential element in the support programme in order to strengthen the stakeholders' capacities to identify existing and new resources for SLM and UNCCD implementation. This includes the strengthening of national coordination mechanisms for the implementation of SLM/UNCCD-related activities in order to create synergies and strengthen cooperation among stakeholders, including governmental agencies, the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners.

### WHERE DO WE STAND ON IMPLEMENTATION?

Programme implementation began in August 2008, following the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between MINEP and the GM. The programme has been designed and is being implemented in close partnership with ministries, development partners and other stakeholders active in SLM and UNCCD implementation.

The programme builds on regional and sub-regional processes, including the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Environmental Action Plan of NEPAD for Central Africa (PAE/NEPAD), the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), the implementation of the Convergence Plan of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) and is implemented in consultation with platforms such as the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) and TerrAfrica. On the sub-regional level, the programme is complemented by GM's support to Central African countries for the implementation of the Sub-Regional Action Programme (SRAP) to combat land degradation in Central Africa.

### NEXT STEPS

During the first year of implementation, the programme will focus on the following activities:

1. analyze the economic costs related to land degradation and desertification in Cameroon;
2. enhance the mainstreaming of SLM in policy and sectorial processes such as the PSFE, the Sector Programme for Agriculture and Livestock (PAE) and the PSRP;
3. strengthen the collaboration of Ministries dealing with SLM, including the national coordination committee for UNCCD implementation in Cameroon;
4. analyze the opportunities of innovative financing mechanisms for UNCCD implementation;
5. organize a workshop on the opportunities of innovative financing mechanisms; and
6. organize a training workshop on 'Designing Integrated Financing Strategies'.

Map courtesy of IFAD



FOR MORE INFORMATION



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