



WWF

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## CHINESE INVESTMENTS IN CAMEROON

Examining the trends, challenges  
and perspectives on the environment  
and communities



CHINESE INVESTMENTS IN CAMEROON

# Examining the trends, challenges and perspectives on the environment and communities

**A Report for WWF Cameroon Country Programme Office**

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# SUMMARY

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# ACRONYMS

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ADF	African Development Fund
AFD	French Development Agency
AfDB	African Development Bank
BDEAC	Banque des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (Central African States Development Bank)
CAA	Caisse Autonome d'Amortissement (Autonomous Sinking Fund)
CAMTEL	Cameroon Telecommunication Company
CBRC	China Banking Regulatory Commission
CHEC	China Harbor Engineering Company
CNEEC	China National Electric Engineering Corporation
CRBC	China Road and Bridge Corporation
CSAC	Commonwealth Civil Society Advisory Committee
CWE	China International Water and Electricity Corporation
EDC	Cameroon Electricity Development Corporation
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FOCAC	Forum for China-Africa Cooperation
FMU	Forest management units
GESP	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
GESP	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
HEVECAM	Cameroon Rubber Company
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund

## 6 Acronyms

JXTC	Jiangxi Rare Metals Tungsten Holdings Group Company Ltd
KDSPC	Kribi Deep Sea and Industrial Port Complex
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDRI	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MINADER	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.
MINEE	Ministry of Water Resources and Energy
MINEPDED	Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development
MINEPAT	Ministry of Economy Planning and Regional Development
MINTP	Ministry of Public Works
PADY	Projet d'Aménagement de la Ville de Yaoundé (Yaoundé Development Project)
PRECESSE	Projet de Renforcement des Capacités Environnementales et Sociales pour le Secteur de l'Energie (Environmental Capacity Building Project for the Energy Sector)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SME	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
SNH	National Hydrocarbon Company
UNDP	United Nations for Development
WB	World Bank
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
MINEPDED	Ministère de l'Environnement, de la protection de la nature et du développement durable (Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development)
MINTP	Ministère des Travaux Publics (Ministry of Public Works)
MINEE	Ministère de l'Eau et de l'Energie (Ministry of Water Resources and Energy)

MINADER	Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development)
NEF	National Employment Fund
EMC	Environmental Management Conditions
ESIA	Environmental Impact and Social Assessment
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
SESE	Special Environmental and Social Conditions
CRP	Compensation and Resettlement Plan
PDR	Regional Development Plan
CDP	Community Development Plan

# PREFACE

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Cameroon, like most African countries, has a rich resource base with world leading concentrations of strategic minerals like oil, uranium and iron ore. Unfortunately, these countries are all suffering from limited capacity (technical and financial) and infrastructure to exploit these resources. It is no coincidence therefore that these two sectors have attracted Chinese companies. The Chinese are currently financing and in certain cases undertaking the construction of several infrastructure development projects ranging from seaports, double carriage highways, hydropower dams, potable water supply systems, etc. in Cameroon. Apart from its engagement in infrastructure, Chinese companies are actively involved in the extractive industries with focus on oil and mineral exploration as well as agro-industrial plantations. While these projects shall, indubitably, contribute to Cameroon attaining its 2035 development vision of becoming an emerging middle income economy, there is no doubt that they could have irreversible negative impact on the country's rich biodiversity.

To ensure that certain investments do not negatively affect the environment and where such impacts cannot be avoided, the necessary corrective measures are considered, Cameroon has put in place an appropriate environmental legislation which requires that such projects are subjected to an environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA). However, companies generally hardly comply with these requirements and in most cases the ESIA are considered as mere box-ticking with no intention of actually implementing the measures envisaged in the accompanying environmental and social management plan. It is difficult to single out Chinese companies from this general trend. However, the peculiarity of Chinese companies operating in Cameroon goes beyond regulatory requirements to issues of cultural complexity. This is one of the revealing findings of this study. It is therefore important that as Cameroon pursues its ambition of becoming an emerging economy by 2035 and considering that China like other emerging economies shall continue to support this development, efforts need to be made to balance the observed gaps in the implementation of the current legislations and the cultural differences revealed in this report. The cultural complexity observed in some of the project sites visited is a potential source of conflict, either between the companies and staff or between the companies and the local communities.

This study was carried out within the context of WWF China for a Global Shift Initiative aiming to make China's international trade and capital flow a driving force in global conservation and footprint reduction. This is based on engaging key decision-makers in governments and financial institutions relevant to Chinese investments outside China and with an impact on WWF's priority places.

**Hanson NJIFORTI**

*Country Director*



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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After decades of self-reliance, China has progressively opened up and grown to become the world's second largest economy. The emergence of China as a key trading and economic partner for African countries has been inclusive of Cameroon. Chinese investments in Cameroon are concentrated in infrastructure development projects, most of which are located in fragile ecological areas thereby heightening the risk of serious negative environmental and social impacts. The challenge therefore is to ensure that operations by investors including Chinese operators integrate environmental and social best practices in full conformity with the existing national and international regulations on environmental protection.

China has become conscious of the need to promote environmental protection. Therefore it is not surprising that China's 12th five year development plan included environmental protection and the promotion of green development as one of its key pillars. This marks a turning point from the country's previous emphasis on headline growth, according to an overview of the plan provided by KPGM. The emphasis for China now is on strategies and measures to ensure long term prosperity for the entire nation. That new turn in China's economic development strategy translates the common goal of sustainable development enshrined in the 2009 FOCAC (Forum for China-Africa Cooperation) Declaration. The issuance by MOFCOM in 2013 of Environmental guidelines in Foreign Investment and Cooperation provides an impetus to Chinese companies going abroad, to give priority to environmental protection and adhere to the laws and regulations of host countries, as well as proactively fulfil their social responsibilities.

This study on the trends of Chinese investments in Cameroon commissioned by WWF Cameroon Country Programme Office aimed at defining an approach that advises the Cameroon government, the Chinese companies opera-

ting in Cameroon and local communities on how best to integrate environmental and social aspects during projects' inception and implementation phases. The study also provides an opportunity to identify relevant contacts within the different Chinese companies such as to permit mutual collaboration. This however, remain one of the key challenges because generally Chinese actors encountered during the study remained cautious to openly speak about their activities without clear instruction given by a duly authorized official from either the Government of Cameroon or the Chinese Government representative (Embassy of China).

In terms of lessons learnt, a better option to engage with Chinese actors would be through Government designated channels as well as a situational analysis of the structural organization of each of the relevant companies. Such an option provides for the possibility of establishing effective collaboration with the companies, especially with regard to social and environmental issues. It is important in such an approach to consider not all companies but only those that are really relevant thanks to their business span and location. In this regard the following companies could be considered China international Water and Electric Corporation (CWE), SINOHYDRO, China Harbour and Engineering Corporation (CHEC) and SINOSTEEL.

In its engagement with the Cameroonian Government and other Public Authorities, WWF should seek collaboration in all key sectors, by trying to set up a collaboration scheme that consist in supporting the process of Environmental Certificate deliverance and monitoring of the compliance to Environmental Management Plans during projects implementation. Before engaging with Chinese Authorities, it would be essential to be clear on what their prime interest is and to find out what the official pre-defined line is for China on the issues at stake. WWF's approach in connecting with relevant contact persons in Chinese companies, for environmental impact management, should then consider collaboration with key contact persons within the project owner and the supervising entity, as a way to access the relevant contact person in the Chinese company.

# I-INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

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- I.1** The global context and Chinese cooperation model
- I.2** South-South Cooperation and the new trend in Africa
- I.3** Growing Chinese investments in Africa and Cameroon
- I.4** New Development strategy in Cameroon and cooperation with China
- I.5** Highlight on WWF-Cameroon's work with China
- I.6** Justification of the study objectives and expected results
- I.7** Study approach and methodology







### 1.1 The global context and Chinese cooperation model

China is now becoming one of Africa's cherished development and financial partner and it has declared its willingness to champion a win-win cooperation model by developing a pro-active strategy in its development assistance to Africa. In that respect, the very much needed infrastructure in the continent are placed at the forefront. The Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), established in 2000, during its 2006 edition, was used as an opportunity by China to pledge US\$ 20 billion assistance, with infrastructure as main target for a five year period. The Forum is now an important platform for dialogue where key decisions on trade and investment are made by Chinese and African Leaders.

### 1.2 South-South Cooperation and the new trend in Africa

Today, traditional western donors due to their historical relationship with Africa are facing enormous challenges from emerging countries like China, Brazil, Turkey, India and South Africa. The modus operandi of these new actors in Africa is quite different from that employed by the continent's former colonial masters and the USA. They seem to offer more attractive financing and cooperation opportunities for development without conditionalities. The Cameroon national development strategy as outlined in both the 2035 Development Vision and the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) formally integrates cooperation with these new donors as a pivotal in the country's ambition of becoming an emerging economy by 2035. In attaining this objective of fostering south-south cooperation, the Government of Cameroon decided to re-structure the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT) which is responsible for international development cooperation, by creating a special Directorate in charge of relations with Emerging Countries<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> MINEPAT  
Organogramme  
2010

### 1.3 Growing Chinese investments in Africa and Cameroon

After several decades of self-reliance, China since the mid 70s has progressively opened up to the rest of the world. In 1999 it adopted the “go global policy” which was aimed at encouraging Chinese enterprises to begin investing overseas. This policy has contributed to China’s emergence as a global economic power. The emergence of China as a key trading and economic partner for African countries is not specific to particular regions of the continent. Africa is seen as key to support China’s rapid growth strategy by supplementing Chinese insufficient natural resource base. Meanwhile Chinese foreign direct investments and development assistance are providing African states with financial and technical resources for the realization of development and infrastructure projects to help in the continent’s growth.

According to the information Office of China State Council<sup>2</sup>, Chinese direct investments in Africa witnessed a 20.5 % growth between 2009 and 2012, rising from US\$ 1.44 billion to 2.52 billion. Chinese manufacturing enterprises directly invested 1.33 billion U.S. dollars in African countries in the same period. At least 2,000 Chinese companies have invested in more than 50 countries and regions in Africa, in various areas including agriculture, mining, construction, manufacturing, finance, trade logistics and real estate.

The prospects for Chinese investment in Africa show a positive trend which was confirmed by Premier Li Keqiang of China, at the World Economic forum in Abuja, Nigeria in May 2014. He announced a \$30 billion China-Africa Fund which China is ready to “deploy in an effort to give the continent a new lease of life”. He said that “China, in order to build infrastructure network in Africa, is ready to provide financial, technical and human resources support”. China will increase projects financing in Africa, adding US\$10 billion to be committed to the credit lines agreed at FOCAC, to reach a total of US\$30 billion. China

<sup>2</sup> The White Paper on Economic Cooperation and China-Africa trade

also intends to put another US\$2 billion into the China-Africa Development Fund to make it US\$5 billion.

In Cameroon, after the establishment of diplomatic and economic ties in 1971, China has progressively placed itself at the forefront of infrastructure development projects, either by taking over western stakes, co-funding projects<sup>3</sup> or by simply undertaking constructions. Today China is emerging as one of the country's major economic partners, with an estimated annual investments portfolio amounting to around USD400 million since 2007.

### 1.4 New Development strategy in Cameroon and cooperation with China

#### 1.4.1 From relative prosperity to crisis: the impact of poverty

The decade prior to 1986 was a period of prosperity for Cameroon, with a booming economy yielding foreign exchange revenue from petroleum, cocoa and coffee. The annual average growth based on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 7%, from the late 1970s through 1985. After that period, the country witnessed an economic crisis, characterized by a dramatic fall in foreign exchange revenue, due to a decline in the world prices of oil, cocoa and coffee, and because of diminishing supplies of oil. From 1987 - 1993, average annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) variation was negative (-2.8%).

In 1989, the prices of cocoa and coffee paid to farmers were halved whilst subsidies were reduced and eventually cancelled. The economic crisis increased the level of poverty (40.2 % in 1996)<sup>4</sup> and created an important rural exodus. A positive growth for almost a decade (4% from 1994-2003, 2% in 2005, 3.8% in 2006) has not been high enough for a significant impact on poverty reduction. Poverty level was in stagnation and still estimated at about 40% in 2009, from 40.2% in 2001. Poverty level was still estimated at about 40% in 2009, and from successive evaluations by the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Programming (MINEPAT) in collaboration with the UNDP<sup>5</sup>, the country is not likely to achieve the Millennium

<sup>3</sup> See Jean Paul Pougala, Les plus gros mensonges sur la coopération entre la Chine et l'Afrique, July 2013 on <http://pougala.org/tag/jean-paul-pougala/> visited on 29/04/2014.

<sup>4</sup> Cameroon PRSP, 2003.



Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, despite some progress in education and gender.

### 1.4.2 Economic and social adjustments: the new development agenda (Vision 2035)

Cameroon went through a Structural Adjustment Programme in the period 1987-1997, with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). But afterward, external debt remained unsustainable with debt stock totaling US\$ 7802 million in nominal terms by end of June 1999. A Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) was designed for implementation as from 1997, after validation by the Bretton Woods Institutions, within the framework of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative to which Cameroon was admitted in May 2000. HIPC decision point was attained in October 2000 and the completion point in April 2006, three years later than expected. The impact of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) resulted in a marked improvement in Cameroon's debt position. The public debt-to-GDP ratio declined from 52 percent in 2005 to 10 percent in 2008. Since 2008, however, domestic and external borrowing has been rising again<sup>6</sup>.

During the past years, Cameroon has faced a wide range of challenges including growing unemployment, poverty, lingering corruption, public mismanagement, fragile sociopolitical environment and low pace of democracy implementation through, operationalization of relevant institutions<sup>7</sup>. In fact, despite visible efforts, the putting in place of all institutions constitutionally supposed to accompany the democratization process is yet to be completed in 2014. In February 2008, more than fifteen years after the political turmoil that marked the transition from a single party system to political pluralism (1990-1992), the high cost of living resulted in social unrest (hunger riots).

In response to economic and social challenges, considering the lack of success by previous development strate-

<sup>5</sup> The more recent and important evaluation of MDGs achievement was made during the Post 2015 sub-national and national consultations in Cameroon (April – May 2013), which resulted in a Post 2015 National position report submitted to the UN in September 2013.

<sup>6</sup> IMF, country report No 11/116 (June 2012)

<sup>7</sup> The senate for instance, an institution provided by the 1996 Constitution became operational in 2013 and the ongoing decentralization process has already taken the same time.

gies, Cameroon adopted a new one, fully detailed in the “Vision 2035”. The Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) is the first stage of that vision aiming at making Cameroon a “united, emerging, diversified and truly democratic country”. The pillars of that new strategy are: (1) poverty alleviation; (2) becoming a middle income country, (3) becoming a newly industrialized country and (4) consolidating democracy and national unity while respecting the country’s diversity.

The Cameroon development strategy is anchored on the following strategic pillars: (1) Increased investments in infrastructure and rapid modernization of production, by improving the business climate and governance; (2) Maintaining growth at high levels, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and ensure that the population is entirely mobilized in the fight against climate change effects; (3) Improvement of international cooperation by opening Cameroon more to the outside World and relying on its production and export pattern essentially based on industries, and facilitating a better financial system that can mobilize domestic and foreign funding as well as a promotion of the private sector.

Cameroon was among the countries chosen by the United Nations for national consultations on the Post 2015 that took place during the year 2013. Four major development priorities were identified by Cameroonian populations: education, health, employment and environment. These were considered to be achievable only if a number of crosscutting issues are addressed: Human Rights, gender, good governance and infrastructure. In 2014 another phase of consultations were organized by the UN system in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Programming (MINEPAT) on the localization of the post 2015 development agenda, in a view to determining the best mechanisms to ensure transformational changes and better delivery of development services.

### 1.4.3 International cooperation strategy and relationship with China

There is an emerging trend in the economic dynamics

of the relationship between China and Cameroon, which are actually defined within a broader Chinese policy framework, aiming at accelerating the opening of the Chinese economy to the outside world, to introduce foreign technology and know-how as well as to develop foreign trade and secure political alliances. This new Chinese policy orientation is spelt out in the Chinese government's "go global strategy" meant to encourage Chinese enterprises (primarily state-owned enterprises) to invest overseas. Chinese imports are observable on the Cameroon local market, through a great number of Chinese trading companies. However, for this study emphasis is on Chinese investments in the infrastructure, natural resources and agribusiness sectors.

Cameroon's national development strategy as detailed in the "Vision 2035" Document and the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) provides justification of huge investments in the infrastructure sector. China is currently financing at least a dozen projects in that line, ranging from the construction of low-cost houses, hydropower dams, installation of optic fibres, double carriage highways, seaports, hospitals, schools and stadia. In the natural resources sector, Chinese firms are involved in iron ore exploration in Kribi, and interested in the exploitation of nickel and cobalt exploitation in Lomié, following the purchase in July 2013 of 60,5% of the USA GEOVIC Mining shares of the Cameroon Cobalt mining project by a the Chinese provincial state corporation, Jiangxi Rare Metals Tungsten Holdings Group Company Ltd (JXTC)<sup>8</sup>.

## 1.5 The WWF China Shift Initiative

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has introduced the concept of "ecological footprint" to China, in the context of the formulation of the 12th five-year plan. A joint report<sup>9</sup> was published with the People's Bank of China which has endorsed the need to improve environmental criteria in lending policies. The report stresses the growing importance of commercial banks in China's effort

<sup>8</sup> Paul Pougala, « The biggest lies on the cooperation between Africa and China, Lesson 58 of African Geostrategy, July 2013 » [http://pougala.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Lecon\\_58](http://pougala.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Lecon_58), visited on 29 May 2014.

to realize its national sustainable development strategy and provides specific recommendations on environmental policy changes. It draws lessons from international standards in the finance industry such as Equator Principles (EPs), as well as the experience of international banks including City Bank, Deutsch Bank and HSBC. The report concludes that many Chinese commercial banks have established their own environmental policies, but most have failed to take concrete action. It thus calls on governments, non-governmental organizations, and the finance sector to drive commercial banks' commitment into action<sup>10</sup>.

WWF has led international skill-share tours between European, African and Chinese banking communities with a view to deepening the understanding of the opportunities and challenges of sustainable banking. A green finance forum was created to bring together Chinese banks, academics, the government and international financial institutions in a view to sharing information and experience on sustainable finance. WWF has cooperated with environmental NGOs and with the Chinese government to establish guidelines for overseas timber operations. Dialogue was thus facilitated between Tanzania, Mozambique, Cameroon and China's State Forestry Administration to improve sustainability of the timber trade.

The WWF's plans for the future are to: (1) contribute to sustainability of China's demand for natural resources through raising awareness on ecological footprint and informing decisions at central local and sectorial level; (2) support the development of a system to measure "green development" in China, to help local authorities comply with environmental targets included in China's 12th five-year plan; (3) engage Chinese and African delegates to ensure inclusion of environmental sustainability in the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC); (4) work with the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC) and the Ministry for Environmental Protection to develop investment guidelines in environmentally sensitive sectors; (5) partner with Chinese banks to enhance their implementation of "green lending" policies; (6) keep

<sup>9</sup> WWF - China Central Bank's Financial Research Institute, "Towards Sustainable Development: Reform and (the) Future of China's Banking Industry", Report on sustainable development in China's banking sector, September 2008.

<sup>10</sup> WWF – China Newsletter, July – December, 2008

supporting Chinese timber companies to ensure that their forest products from Africa come from responsibly harvested and verified sources; (7) study how countries in Africa can gain access to clean energy and production technologies through solutions from China; (8) broker networks and partnerships, build constructive dialogue with strategic partners with the greatest impact.

## 1.6 Justification and objectives of the study

### 1.6.1 Justification

The majority of the projects involving Chinese investments in Cameroon are located in areas of ecological importance. Great attention should therefore be placed on their potential environmental and social impacts. The challenge however is to ensure that these investments contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development while minimizing environmental degradation. WWF through its China for a Global Shift Initiative aims to make the fundamental drivers of China's development assistance including trade and other investments environment-friendly. The ultimate purpose is to ensure that long-term benefits are felt not only in China but also in partner countries like Cameroon. The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) provides an opportunity to discuss the quality of Chinese investments in Africa, through inclusion of environmental protection in the deliberations.

While there have been several reports<sup>11</sup> on China-Cameroon relations, many of these reports have made little reference to the environmental and social implications of the China-Cameroon cooperation. To engage with China, it becomes pertinent to understand their current impacts on the ground. WWF Cameroon Country Programme Office has initiated a review of the literature on China-Cameroon relationship in a view to provide the status and trends of Chinese investments in Cameroon. The findings and recommendations from this critical literature review are meant to inform WWF's future engagement with China in Cameroon, within the global framework of the "China for a

<sup>11</sup> See consulted documents in the annex

## 22 Introduction and context

Global Shift Initiative”.

### 1.6.2 Objectives

The overall objective of the study is to assess the status and trends of all Chinese investments in Cameroon (past and current) looking at their direct implications on the environment. Specifically the aims were to: (1) provide an up-to-date list of current projects with Chinese investments; (2) list planned projects with confirmed or likely Chinese involvement; (3) compile an overview and brief description of the development and status of past and current conflicts associated with Chinese investments; (4) assess the literature on China-Cameroon relations and the extent to which it integrates concerns on environmental protection, biodiversity conservation and social safeguards of Chinese investments in Cameroon; (5) examine the policy and regulatory framework for infrastructural and natural resource (extractive) investments with regard to Chinese interests; (6) provide a list of recommendations to inform future WWF engagement with both government of Cameroon and the Chinese authorities on Chinese investments in Cameroon

## 1.7 Study approach and methodology

### 1.7.1 General approach

The overall objective of the study was translated into an assessment of the status and trends of all Chinese investments in Cameroon (past and current), taking into account direct implications on the environment. This logically led to the mapping and characterisation of the pattern of these investments, with special consideration of environmental aspects, as regards the challenges, in terms of appraising the consistency and conformity with international and national standards or expectations. Beyond a mere review of the literature on China-Cameroon relations, the integration of concerns on environmental protection was done through field work and verification to complement the theoretical approach and create a strong base for recommendations to inform future WWF engage-

ment with Cameroon government, Chinese Government authorities in Cameroon and Chinese investors and operators.

Practically, in order to assess the extent to which Chinese investments in Cameroon integrate biodiversity conservation and social safeguards, this entailed field visits to selected project sites. Without turning the research into an environmental impact study, a few project sites were visited with the objective of getting a sense of how project authorities handle environmental and social challenges, as well as assessing the perception by communities of the management of these challenges.

The following projects' sites were visited: Yato potable water station, at the outskirt of the economic Capital, Douala, in Wouri Division (Littoral Region); Mekin dam construction in the Dja & Lobo division (South Region); Lom Pangar dam construction in the Lom & Djerem Division (East Region); Nanga Eboko rice plantation in the Upper Sanaga Division (Centre Region); Kribi deep-sea port in the Ocean Division (South Region) and Memve'ele dam construction in the Mvila Division (South Region).

### 1.7.2 Stakeholder and documentation sampling

Collaborators for the study were identified at public and private level, targeting Cameroonian and Chinese Authorities as official information sources in a sampling process that looked at sectorial Ministries, institutions such as the Cameroon Autonomous Sinking Fund (CAA), the Ministry of Economy Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT) and the Chinese Embassy or Consular Services as well as projects authorities. Formal correspondences were sent to these potential collaborators and consultations arranged with key resource persons in these institutions on Chinese investments in Cameroon.

A first stage of consultations resulted in the identification, localising and broad characterisation of potential stakeholders and relevant resource persons for the study. In that respect discussions and information sharing were arranged with the Director in charge of Emerging Countries

## 24 Introduction and context

and a few other Officials at the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT); the Senior Economic Expert of the Kribi Deep-sea Port; the Head of the Department for Studies, Projects and Cooperation at the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED); Officials at the Division for Cooperation at the Ministry of Public Works (MINTP); the Management of the YATO Potable Water Station and Officials at the Town Council in Dibombari; Officials at the Cameroon Autonomous Sinking Fund; Officials at the Ministry of Water Resources and Energy (MINEE), Officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER).

A preliminary desk research resulted in identifying a number of relevant documents that were reviewed in-depth. A list of key relevant stakeholders with their locations was then prepared, drawing from a matrix of Chinese investments stakeholders built from the information collected during the research: name, location, area of operation, project, contact person, investment type, local work force, environmental challenge, remarks for recommendation. Time and other field constraints made it difficult to effectively complete this matrix, but the resulting table when fully completed will serve as a reference database of relevant counterparts for collaboration with WWF on environment, nature protection and sustainable development issues.

### 1.7.3 Field data collection and interpretation

Field data collection was based on interaction with a number of stakeholders identified from the preliminary documentation review, focusing on reports and publications on Chinese interventions in Africa and Cameroon. The main tool for data collection was a discussion and consultation guide which was used either for “Focused Group Discussions (FGD) or interviews, in addition to traditional means of desk research based upon note taking, in relation to specific areas of concern. Considering that the ultimate purpose was to draw a clear profile of Chinese investments in Cameroon, emphasis was put on aspects cor-



responding to the same entries provided in the matrix of Chinese investments stakeholders, one of the outputs expected from the study.

The study consultation guide thus targeted the following: stake with regard to Chinese investment; area of operation; project description; location; Chinese counterpart and type of collaboration; level of investments or shares; labour force structure; environment and development sustainability challenges; challenges mitigation approach; recommended resource persons as counterparts for environmental issues; documents of reference. The consultation guide was made broad in its design so that it could be used for all categories of stakeholders.









## II- CHINESE INVESTMENTS IN CAMEROON

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- I.1 Areas of interest for China
- I.2 Projects with Chinese investment in Cameroon
- I.3 Mapping Chinese projects in Cameroon

## II.1 Areas of interest for China in Cameroon

Prime Minister Li Keqiang while leading a Chinese strong delegation of 200 persons at the World Economic Forum in Abuja in May 2014, where China pledged 30 billion US dollars for the creation of an African Fund, had the following words: "Africa has high demand for infrastructure and industrial development, while China has excess capacity in infrastructure construction and production. The two economies are highly complementary, and conducting mutually beneficial cooperation will definitely inject greater momentum into our economic and social development." That statement clearly expresses the areas towards which China orients its cooperation with African countries. This matches the reality in Cameroon and coincides with the national development priorities as described by the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) - infrastructure, education, energy, transportation, health and telecommunication -.

### II.1.1 Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

The Chinese direct investments relate to cases where China takes direct interest in businesses or projects in Cameroon. In that pattern, financing from Chinese sources is invested and generally accompanied by operation by a Chinese public or private entity, with or without Cameroon national contribution. Most of the time, the setting is such that the Exim Bank provides a loan in an agreement structure, whereby operations are under a Chinese company which runs the business or the project. A number of examples exist in that line, particularly in the extractive sector.

Some glaring cases of such investment types include: the SINOPEC's takeover of ADDAX Petroleum for offshore oil exploitation in Cameroon; SINOSTEEL for exploration of iron ore permit situated at Mont Mamelles near Kribi and, within the periphery of the Campo Ma'an National Park; Yang Chang Logone Development Holding Company, with two onshore oil exploration permits in the Northern part of Cameroon. Other potential Chinese direct investment could have included the failed attempt by Han-

long Mining to takeover Sundance Resources shares in the Mbalam iron ore project in the southeast of Cameroon.

### II.1.2 Partnerships and contracts

Apart from directly engaging in projects in Cameroon, other Chinese funded projects follow a pattern of partnership and contract. For such investment pattern, Chinese companies operate in implementing government identified projects, which need not necessarily be financed by China. For example within the context of an African Development Bank funded project (Yaoundé Sanitation Project – PADY) the China International Water and Electricity Corporation (CWE) won the bid to construct the Mfoundi River Canal.

The same company is responsible for the construction of the Lom Pangar hydropower dam project under the supervision of “Coyn and Bellier”<sup>12</sup>, which is funded through a consortium of international financial institutions (IFIs); the African Development Fund (ADF 17.0%); the Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC 10.5%); the World Bank (WB 20.8%); the French Development Agency (AFD 22.1%); the European Investment Bank (EIB 11.0%); the Government of Cameroon Counterpart Contribution (18.4%) and others (0.2%)<sup>13</sup>.

Another case in that pattern is the building of some 1500 low-income housing units in Yaoundé, thanks to Chinese loans (China Exim-Bank) under a concessional scheme through an agreement signed in 2010 with the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing. That construction project is part of the government’s Special Emergency Programme to build 10,000 homes and develop 50,000 plots of land.

## II.2 Chinese funded official development projects in Cameroon

### II.2.1 Past projects and achievements

Cameroon and China signed a general trade agreement in 1972. Some of the major realizations from this agreement included the construction of the Yaoundé Conference Centre inaugurated in 1982 by President, Amadou Ahidjo and the Unity Palace, which is the official resident and of-

<sup>12</sup> Cameroon Tribune, 15 Février 2011

<sup>13</sup> Lom-Pangar Hydro-electric Project Appraisal Report, 10 November 2011

fice of the President of the Republic. Another grant agreement from China was dedicated to the construction of the Lagdo water reserve dam in Northern Cameroon, from 1978 to 1984. Generally, in the period before 2000, China's involvement in the economy was at small scale, in isolated initiatives. In the commodity production sector for instance, it was limited to the forestry business by some local actors financially supported by Chinese importing companies. After 2000, the engagement extended to other sectors, especially in the infrastructure sector but also in sectors like oil and mining.

### II.2.2 Some salient projects with Chinese Participation

Chinese presence in Cameroon today can be seen in almost all sectors in Cameroon. However some of the salient projects are in the extractive and infrastructure sectors. As mentioned earlier, there are some Chinese companies involved in the extractive sector – SINOSTEELCAM S.A with an iron ore exploration permit in the South, Yan Chang Logone Holding Development Company S.A for oil exploration in the north and SINOPEC ADDAX Petroleum for oil exploitation in the Rio del Rey basin.

In the infrastructure sector, Chinese companies have taken the lead in the construction of some of the major infrastructure projects earmarked in the national development Vision of 2035 and the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP). These include the Kribi Deep Sea and Industrial Port Complex constructed by the China Harbour and Engineering Corporation (CHEC), the Memve'ele, Mekin and Lom Pangar dam projects constructed respectively by SINOHYDRO (for Memve'ele and Mekin) and the China International Water and Electricity Corporation (CWE) for Lom Pangar. Chinese companies have also taken lead in the construction of some of the country's modern sport infrastructures like the Yaoundé multisport complex, inaugurated in 2009 by President Paul Biya, which was built by a Chinese company with a 14 billion FCFA grant from the Chinese government.

Other projects in the pipeline with already indicated Chinese participation interests include the 72 megawatts Menchum Hydropower dam and the construction of Kribi – Lolabe double carriage highway by the China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC). Other awarded projects to Chinese companies include the Yaoundé – Nsimelen free-way to be constructed by a consortium of Chinese companies (the China Communications Construction Company, the China Road and Bridge Corporation and SINOHYDRO), as well as the Yaoundé – Douala double carriage highway to be constructed by China First Highway Engineering Corporation (CFHEC).

Projects at an advanced stage with Chinese participation include the Ngaoundere – Kousséri highway being constructed by SINOHYDRO. The Kumba – Mamfe road which is part of the trans-African highway to link Cameroon with Nigeria, estimated to cost about 54.6 billion CFA Francs and to be constructed by the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) and the Jiangsu Provincial Transportation Engineering Group.

Apart from road and dams, China has also contributed in modernizing Cameroon's modern telecommunication sector. Some notable areas include the building of CT phone networks in collaboration with the Cameroon Telecommunication Company (CAMTEL). In the social and health sectors, China has contributed in the financing and construction of hospitals like the Douala Gynecological, Obstetric and Pediatric Hospital in Douala, the renovation and completion of the abandoned Ministerial Building Number One in Yaoundé; the Soa-Yaoundé solar panel project; and the low cost project in Yaoundé and Douala which is part of a Government larger low cost housing project comprising of 1800 housing units distributed, in Yaoundé, Limbe, Bafoussam, Bamenda and Sangmelima.

There are other areas that have attracted Chinese investments in Cameroon and one of such sectors is the agricultural sector especially in the domains of rice, cassava, oil palm, cotton and rubber. Shaanxi State Farms through



its subsidiary Sino - Cam IKO Ltd has a land bank of 10,000 hectares to develop its agricultural operations in maize, rice and cassava and possibly ostrich breeding in the Upper Sanaga Division (Centre Region). The company signed a US\$ 120 million investment agreement with the government of Cameroon in 2006 to acquire an existing 120 hectare rice farm and develop a further 6,000 hectares: 1,000 ha in Mbanjdock for cassava, 2,000 ha in Nanga-Eboko for rice, and another parcel of 3,000 ha for cassava. In August 2010 the company was complaining, however, that the land bank to expand its operations was not yet transferred<sup>14</sup>.

Another important Chinese investor in the agricultural sector in Cameroon is SINOCEM. The company through its 51% owned subsidiary GMG Global in Singapore, owns two plantations in Cameroon - Sud-Cameroun Hevea SA (80% owned) and HEVECAM SA (90% owned). Hevecam was already set up near Kribi in the 1970s with support from the World Bank and produces 50,000 tons of rubber on acreage of 41,000 ha. Sud-Cameroun Hevea was set up in 2010 and is developing a rubber and oil palm plantation with an acreage of 45,200 ha in Dja & Lobo division. In November 2011, GMG signed a contract with the government of Cameroon to invest US\$ 400 million in developing this acreage<sup>15</sup>.

In the oil sector, the Cameroon National Hydrocarbon Corporation in April 2009 signed a US\$18 million Partnership Sharing Agreement (PSA) with Yan Chang Logone Holding Development Company S.A for oil exploration on two onshore oil blocks (Zina and Makari) in northern Cameroon situated inside the Waza Logone Plain, a RAMSAR designated wetland.

Jan Willem van Gelder et al., "Biodiversity Impacts of China in Africa: Selection of Case Studies" A Research Paper Prepared for WWF, PROFUNDO September 2013

In the forestry sector, the only related Chinese company actively involved is the Hong Kong based Sino-French Company VICWOOD Group. This company

<sup>14</sup> Jan Willem van Gelder et al., "Biodiversity Impacts of China in Africa: Selection of Case Studies" A Research Paper Prepared for WWF, PROFUNDO September 2013

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*



operates seven (7) Forest Management Units (FMUs) in Cameroon through its different subsidiaries – CFC, SAB, CIBC, and SEBC. These subsidiaries globally cover an estimated total area of 429,069 hectares which is equal to 7.6% of the total forest concession areas in Cameroon. However, there is undocumented evidence that several independent Chinese individuals are involved in the sector as timber traders<sup>16</sup>.



<sup>16</sup> See Putzel, L., Assembe-Mvondo, S., Bi Ndong, L.B., Banioguila, R.P., Cerutti, P., Tieguhong, J.C., Djeukam, R., Kabuyaya, N., Lesucuyer, G. and Mala, W. 2011 "Chinese trade and investment and the forests of the Congo Basin: synthesis of scoping studies in Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon". Working Paper 67. CIFOR, Bogor, Indonesia

Table 1: Matrix of Chinese investments in Cameroon

	LOCATION	SECTOR	NATURE OF PROJECT	AMOUNT CFA BILLIONS	DATE OF CONTRACT SIGNING	CHINESE STAKE CFA BILLION	CHINESE STAKE %	LOCAL SHARE %	CHINESE COMPANIES
1	South	Port Infrastructures	Construction of the Deep Seaport Project in Mboro, Kribi	282	Dec-10	225	80%		China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC)
2	East	Electricity infrastructure	Lom Pangar Dam water reserve	150	Dec-10		0%		China international Water and Electric corporation (CWE)
3	South	Electricity infrastructure	MEMVE ELLE hydropower dam of 201 MW / NTEM river	365	Sep-11	270	74%		SINO HYDRO CORP
4	South	Electricity infrastructure	Mekin hydropower Dam/Dja river	25	Nov-11	21	85%	15%	CHINA NATIONAL ELECTRIC ENGINEERING CORPORA- TION (CNEEC)
5	North West	Electricity	Construction of the Memchum Hydro power dam of 72 MW on the Memchum river		Nov-13				China international water and electric corporation (CWE).
6	National	Oil exploitation	Acquisition/ Pecten shares					20%	China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (CPCC)
7	Far North	Oil exploitation	Successful oil Exploration in the Zina-Makary block in the Logone Birni basin	9	Dec-12	8	89%		China's Yan Chang Logone Development Holding Company
8	South West Littoral	Oil exploitation	Petroleum exploration and production at the Rio-del- Rey Block		Oct-09				ADDAX Petroleum

	LOCATION	SECTOR	NATURE OF PROJECT	AMOUNT CFA BILLIONS	DATE OF CONTRACT SIGNING	CHINESE STAKE CFA BILLION	CHINESE STAKE %	LOCAL SHARE %	CHINESE COMPANIES
9	South Region	Iron Ore Mining	Exploration for iron at the Lobe concession near Kribi	330	2010	330			SINOSTEEL's subsidiary, SINOSTEELCAM S.A.
10	Centre Littoral	Road Infrastructure	Yaoundé-Douala Highway (80 Km)	284	Dec-10	241	15%		China first Highway Engineering (CFHE)
11	Centre	Road Infrastructure	Yaoundé- Nsimalen freeway	154	Dec-13				SINO HYSINOHYDRO / China Road and Bridge Corporation/CCCCRO CORP
12	South	Road Infrastructure	Kribi – Lolabé double carriage Road:	215	Apr-14	192.91	15%		China Harbour Engineering Company).
13	South West	Road Infrastructure	Kumba Mamfe road (Lot1 et Lot2)	86	Jun-13	62	28%		China Communication Construction Company (CCCC)
14	Littoral	Road Infrastructure	Roads construction projects		Apr-10				Jiangsu Provincial Transportation Engineering Group Co Ltd (JPTEG)
15	Adamawa	Road Infrastructure	Rehabilitation of Ngaoundere-Kousseri road		Mar-12				China Road and Bridge Construction company
16	West, South West	Sport Infrastructures	LIMBE and BAFOUSSAM Stadium	18		18			China International Water & Electric Corporation (CWE)

## 36 Chinese investments in Cameroon

	LOCATION	SECTOR	NATURE OF PROJECT	AMOUNT CFA BILLIONS	DATE OF CONTRACT SIGNING	CHINESE STAKE CFA BILLION	CHINESE STAKE %	LOCAL SHARE %	CHINESE COMPANIES
17	Littoral	Sport Infrastructures	Construction of a modern stadiums in Douala and Yaoundé		Dec-10				China Machinery Engi- neering Corporation (CMEC)
18	National	Water Infrastructure	Potable water Projects Ba- foussam, Bamenda, Kribi, Sangmelima.	85		85	100%		China Machinery Engi- neering Corporation (CMEC)
19	Littoral	Health Infrastructures	Construction of gynecolo- gical, obstetric and pedia- tric hospital in Douala	14		14	100%		Shanxi Construction,
20	Littoral	Water Infrastructure	Enhancing potable water capacities in Douala Phase2	45		11	24%		CGCOC Cameroun
21	Littoral	Water Infrastructure	Enhancing potable water capacities in Douala Phase2	18			0%		CGCOC
22	Centre	Water Infrastructure	Water project to supply Yaoundé with 400 000 m3 from Sanaga river.	400	May-14	339.15	85%	15%	China Machinery Engi- neering Corporation (CMEC)
23	National	Telecom Infrastructures	Construction of Came- roon's 3,200 km optical fiber backbone network.	38	Sep-10	38	100%	15%	HUAWEI/ China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC)
24	National	Telecom Infrastructures	Projet e-Post	31		31	100%		HUAWEI Technologies

	LOCATION	SECTOR	NATURE OF PROJECT	AMOUNT CFA BILLIONS	DATE OF CONTRACT SIGNING	CHINESE STAKE CFA BILLION	CHINESE STAKE %	LOCAL SHARE %	CHINESE COMPANIES
25	National	Telecommunication	Building of Ct phone networks in partnership with CAMTEL		Apr-05				Huawei broadband partner to MINPOSTEL
26	Centre	Public Building Infrastructures	Ministerial Building N°1	16	Jun-10	0	0%		China Shanxi Construction Engineering Corporation
27	Centre Littoral	Social housing Infrastructure	Social housing project Yaoundé and Douala	45	Oct-12	33.5	75%		Shenyang
28	Center region		Soa-Yaounde Solar panel project	1.5	Jul-10	1.5	100%		HUAWEI Technologies
29	Center region		Construction of a Canal on the Mfoundi river banks	22	Jun-09	0	0%		The China International Water and Electricity Corporation (CWE)
30	South	Agriculture	Rubber Plantations						SINOCHEM (90% HE-VECAM shares)
31	Center region	Agriculture	Revamping Agriculture with Chinese Expertise nourishing 'un-whitened' rice	31	Apr-08	31	100%		Shaanxi Company under the name SINO-CAM INKO Agriculture Development Co, in Cameroon
32	Center region	Sports Infrastructures	Construction of Yaounde Sport Complex	15	Jul-01	13	88%		

### II.2.3 Future projects and prospects

According to the Autonomous Sinking Fund (CAA), responsible for managing Cameroon's public debt, for the first quarter of 2014, several projects were in the pipeline to be funded by China. One of such project is the Yaoundé potable water supply (from the Sanaga river) project. The financing of that project was expected to be signed in 2014. It is anticipated that the project will improve the water production capacity from 300,000 cubic metres to 450,000 cubic metres at an estimated cost of 400 billion CFA Francs. The project is expected to be financed at the tune of USD 679.32 million through a non-concessional loan from the China Exim Bank.

Exim Bank is also expected to finance, through a concessional loan estimated at about 192.91 billion CFA Francs, the construction of a 38.5 km highway between Kribi and Lolabé. In addition, Exim Bank is expected to finance the construction of 1050 housing units for Cameroon's military personnel. The total amount of the loan is estimated at RMB 1.26 billion (USD 200,6 million) and the total cost of this project is estimated at RMB 1.07 million (USD 171.2 million).

Other potential projects in the pipeline to be financed through financial assistance from China include the Kribi–Campo road estimated at 47 billion CFA Francs, the Bamenda ring road in the Northwest Region estimated at 200 billion CFA Francs, the Obala–Batchenga–Nanga–Eboko–Bouam road (Lots three and four) at an estimated 70 billion CFA Francs and the rehabilitation of the Lagdo hydroelectric dam in the North Region at an estimated 38 billion francs CFA.

## II.3 Mapping Chinese projects in Cameroon

### II.3.1 Sectorial and Geographical distribution

While Chinese funded projects and investments are relatively spread over the national territory, they are notably concentrated in the Littoral and South regions. In the South region for instance, one of the major project is the

Kribi deep sea and industrial port complex being constructed by CHEC. In the South as well as in the Central Regions, there are some major funded Chinese projects in the agro-industrial sector.

## Geographical Mainstreaming of Chinese investments

Chinese investments' spread in Cameroon alongside poverty Incidence

Source : ECAM 3 and Author

NB:

The figures in brackets indicate the incidence of poverty in the Region, as calculated by the National Institute of Statistics, following the standard used by the UN for the evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In the Adamawa Region for instance, 52.9 % of the population live under the poverty line.



### II.3.2 Relevant stakeholders in projects with Chinese investments

There are a lot of misconstrued conceptions on Chinese related investments making it difficult sometimes to identify the appropriate stakeholders. These misconceptions are generally due to the lack of openness, in relation to some of such investments. This may even be more so in areas likely to incur some environmental and social impli-

cations. Chinese companies generally criticized (probably wrongly), for not paying much attention to these aspects in their operations. For a more appropriate collaboration with Chinese investments stakeholders or companies, it is important to firstly understand their *modus operandi*, which is often aligned with a pre-defined official guideline from the Chinese Government.

Therefore it is important to ensure that collaboration is aligned with such an identified and pre-defined Chinese official guideline. This, in a confidence building approach, could help facilitate collaboration with Chinese operators in Cameroon. In the context of this study, the following were identified as major interlocutors or stakeholders when dealing with Chinese related investment and development assistance:

The Government of Cameroon with focus on the following key ministries:

- Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT);
- Public Works;
- Mines, Industry and Technological Development;
- Energy and Water;
- Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development;

The Chinese Embassy in Cameroon:

- The Political and Economic Office through the commercial attaché;

The Chinese companies:

- Companies with direct investments;
- Companies implementing pre-defined Government projects.

The Cameroon Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT), especially through the Division in charge of Emerging Countries is a key entry



point to facilitate engagement with the Chinese stakeholders. This Service is one of the official contact points with Chinese stakeholders (both public officials and investors) and is responsible for managing or facilitating economic cooperation ties between Cameroon and China. It works in close collaboration with the Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office (directly under the control of the Ministry of Commerce – MOFCOM of China) at the Chinese Embassy.

With regard to the specific collaboration on environmental issues related to the implementation of Chinese investments and other related projects, a good analysis of the managing structure of each Chinese operator or company would suggest the best way through. But it is essential to target the highest hierarchy, through their national key counterpart or partners i.e. the project owner or the project supervising partner, when trying to connect with relevant resource persons within a Chinese structure. In the case of the Lom Pangar Project, for instance, the construction firm (CWE) has a Chinese Director in charge of environmental issues, assisted by a Cameroonian Deputy-Director. That structuring pattern is common in Chinese companies and applies to other issues than environment protection. A number of Chinese companies could be interesting for WWF to engage with, on environmental protection matters<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> See table in the annex that includes suggestions on how to find a point of contact in these companies.





# III- ANALYSIS OF CHINESE INVESTMENTS IN CAMEROON

**III.1** Relevance to national strategy

**III.2** Environmental considerations



### III.1 Relevance to national strategy

#### III.1.1 Overall relevance

The current era of Chinese assistance to Cameroon started in a context where the country had chosen a clear strategic line for investment allocation, defined in its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), in 1997, as “a necessary infrastructural build-up”. In that same period, China’s new cooperation strategy toward Africa was taking shape<sup>18</sup>, with a format of development assistance to Cameroon that includes low interest rates long term public loans, grants and economic private loans through EXIM-Bank China. The twenty year planning in Cameroon’s national strategy prescribed in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) places emphasis on infrastructure construction, specifically relying partly on the current Chinese option to assist Cameroon in that domain, as well as on partnership with other emerging countries like Brazil, Turkey or India.

In 1997 Cameroon adopted its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) with infrastructural development as one of the defined areas, which survived after the revision of the national strategy in 2009. It is during the same period that China elaborated its new cooperation strategy for Africa, adopted in 2006, and based on the following general principles: Sincerity, friendship and equality; Mutual benefit, reciprocity and common prosperity; Mutual support and close coordination; Learning from each other and seeking common development.

The current pattern of Chinese investments in Cameroon is therefore aligned to both the government development orientation policy outlined in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP), adopted in August 2009 and the general principles outlined in the China Co-operation Strategy for Africa.

#### III.1.2 Volume analysis

While it may be difficult to ascertain the amount of Chinese investments and assistance to Cameroon, espe-



cially in the private sector, there are however clear indicators of the role being played by China in Cameroon's national economic development. These range from road construction through fishing, poultry farming, confectioneries, catering, medical care, forestry and retailing of a wide variety of goods imported from China.

The total volume of Chinese investments in Cameroon can approximately be computed through Chinese grants, concessional and non-concessional loans figures obtained from the Cameroon Autonomous Sinking Fund (CAA), which is responsible for the management of Cameroon's public debts. Most of this assistance has been channeled through China EXIMBANK. Chinese investors are generally involved in specific foreign business promotion schemes set up by the government of China<sup>18</sup>, following a common pattern for Africa. The major part of Chinese financial assistance, if not all or more, could thus correspond to Chinese investments. Based on that assumption, for the period 2007 to 2013, the total volume of Chinese overall investments in Cameroon could be estimated at about USD 2.2 billion with an annual average of USD 360 million (see table).

The figures in this table are tabulated from the detailed figure in the table in the next page that give details of Chinese financial assistance as registered by the Cameroon Autonomous Sinking Fund (CAA) for the period 2007-2013.

<sup>18</sup> Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China's African Policy, 2006

<sup>19</sup> Marie-Hélène Pozzar, "L'aide chinoise à l'Afrique : la difficulté à penser la notion d'aide chinoise au développement", October 2009

**Table 2: Volume analysis of Chinese investments in Cameroon (2007-2013)**

Source: Author, tabulated from CAA figures on the period (2007-2013).

YEAR	TOTAL CHINESE ASSISTANCE USD	CHINESE INVESTMENTS USD	%	OTHERS USD	%
2007	83,360,000	27,360,000	33%	56,000,000	33%
2009	193,980,000	193,980,000	100%	0	100%
2010	67,920,000	53,920,000	79%	14,000,000	79%
2011	1,105,846,018	1,036,566,018	94%	69,280,000	94%
2012	994,608,715	651,100,000	65%	343,508,715	65%
2013	472,990,000	196,640,000	42%	276,350,000	42%
TOTAL	2,918,704,733	2,159,566,018	74%	759,138,715	74%
Annual average	486,450,789	359,927,670		126,523,119	

**Table 3: SYNTHESIS OF CHINESE ASSISTANCE TO CAMEROON SINCE 2007**

N°	FUNDING SOURCE	SUBJECT	CURRENCY	AMOUNT	YEAR	DATE OF SIGNATURE	NUMBER OF YEAR
1	EXIM CHINA	Loan agreement to be transferred to CAMTEL	CNY	350,000,000	2007	31/1/2007	20
2	EXIM CHINA	Douala potable water supply project	CNY	171,000,000	2007	13/11/2007	23
3	EXIM CHINA	Optical fibre transmission backbone project	USD	52,050,000	2009	8/7/2009	31
4	EXIM CHINA	Douala Potable Water Supply Improvement Project	USD	97,130,000	2009	5/11/2009	20
5	EXIM CHINA	Bafoussam and Limbe Stadium Construction Project	CNY	280,000,000	2009	5/11/2009	20
6	EXIM CHINA	Mekin Electric Hydropower Construction Project	CNY	337,000,000	2010	7/1/2010	20
7	EXIM CHINA	Matgenie equipment renewal project	USD	14,000,000	2010	24/3/2010	20
8	EXIM CHINA	1500 Social Housing construction project	CNY	450,000,000	2011	12/1/2011	19
9	EXIM CHINA	Kribi Deepsea port construction project	USD	423,000,000	2011	12/1/2011	20
10	EXIM CHINA	Cameroon e-Post Project	CNY	433,000,000	2011	21/7/2011	33
11	EXIM CHINA	Memvele Hydropower Construction De Project	USD	541,566,018	2011	3/5/2011	15
12	EXIM CHINA	Yaoundé Douala Highway	USD	482,800,000	2012	8/3/2012	20
13	EXIM CHINA	National broadcast network project	USD	168,300,000	2012	19/7/2012	20
14	EXIM CHINA	Military equipment supply project	EUR	252,450,000	2012	24/5/2012	10
15	CHINA	Grants to forestry Institutions	CNY	4,500,000	2013	11/6/2013	-
16	CHINA	Technical cooperation agreement	CNY	100,000,000	2013	11/6/2013	-
17	CHINA	Various projects	CNY	70,000,000	2013	11/6/2013	19
18	CHINA	Various projects	CNY	100,000,000	2013	11/6/2013	19
19	CHINA	Conseils techniques et mise en œuvre de l'HGOPY, Buéa et Mbyo	CNY	5,500,000	2013	11/6/2013	-
20	EXIM CHINA	Potable water supply in the cities of Bafoussam, Bamenda, Kribi et Sangmelima	CNY	1,059,000,000	2013	9/9/2013	20
21	EXIM CHINE	Project for the purchase of (02) aeroplane MA60	CNY	430,000,000	2013	11/11/2013	20
22	CHINA	Project for the purchase of a MA60 aeroplane	CNY	215,000,000	2013	11/11/2013	-
23	EXIM CHINA	Telecommunication emerging system project	USD	155,550,000	2013	29/10/2013	20

Source: Cameroon Autonomous Sinking Fund



### III.1.3 Economic impact analysis

<sup>20</sup> The item “Various Projects” corresponds to amounts pledged by China without targeting specific project at the time when the agreement is signed. The recipient country (Cameroon) will allocate the money according to its priorities afterward.

During the World Economic Forum in Abuja in May 2014, in a key note address, the Chinese Premier Li Ke-qiang reiterated the importance of transport infrastructures and pledged China’s support to improve on Africa’s transport infrastructure to connect countries and cities. Some of the earmarked infrastructures include the building of high-speed railways, expressways and civil air transportation. Considering the current Chinese support in domains such as telecommunication and power generating facilities, it is believed that such development assistance will contribute in improving Africa’s economy. But this depends very much on the management structure of each country<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>21</sup><http://paepard.blogs.pot.be/2014/05/china-announces-30bn-fund-for-africa.html> (consulted on May 9, 2014)

The average US\$360 million annual Chinese investments in Cameroon would necessarily have direct and indirect impact on the national economy. Such level of investment is likely to have considerable impact on the country’s national economy in terms of job creation or household incomes improvement, and thereby contribute to poverty alleviation. The Lom Pangar dam construction project, for instance, was expected to create 800 direct jobs, same as would the other projects of the same kind (Mekin, Memve’ele, Mentchum) even though in different proportions. The other categories of infrastructure construction projects involving Chinese investments also have a potential for job creation. The scope of this study did not allow calculation of the real scale of the direct income effect on the people, but there is a logical possibility that such effect exists.

It is also expected that other Chinese funded projects like the one carried by SINOCHEM, current owner of two rubber plantations in Cameroon, with over 5000 employees, will have similar impacts on the economy; improving households’ incomes and alleviating poverty. In addition, considering that the company is one of the largest state-owned company in China and the 168th largest corporation in the world, it could bring an added value to

Cameroon's international trade.

Apart from direct impacts on the population such as providing employment and improving household incomes, it is expected that the different Chinese funded or implemented projects will consistently contribute in the country's industrialization. Looking at the six pillars of the agenda for structural transformation, in the African Common Position (CAP)<sup>22</sup>, drawn from the "African Union Agenda 2063"<sup>23</sup>, this would be essential for the kind of structural economic transformation, inclusive growth and sustainable development that Africa seeks to achieve. Sound cooperation with China on science, technology and innovation could in fact result in technology transfer and boost industrialization, which the African Union reiterated as a regional imperative and a key area for which Africa needs to reinforce its collaboration with China.

The Lom Pangar dam for instance which is being constructed by the CWE is expected to bring an additional 170 megawatts by improving the generating capacity of the downstream dams on the Sanaga River (Nachtigal for 280 megawatts and Song Mbengue dam for 900 megawatts). Such additional energy on the national grid will help to reduce the energy deficit that has plagued the country for long, and provide the much needed energy to industries.

The Kribi Deep Sea and Industrial Port Complex (KDSPC), another Chinese financed and constructed project is going to be the country's largest port, capable of receiving the world's largest ships. The project has been presented as one of the linchpin of the country's development strategy, which aims at reducing poverty to less than 10 percent by 2035, and increasing the economic growth rate to 10 percent by 2017. But the project itself has attracted criticism not only for its social and environmental risks, but also for what some CSOs see as questionable correlation between the project and the much heralded poverty reduction objectives. Never-the-less, a residential community of more 100,000 inhabitants is expected to develop around that port complex by the year 2040<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> African Common Position (CAP) for the Post 2015 Development Agenda, AU Commission, February 2014. The CAP is the reference for the African Group at the United Nations in the negotiations on the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda.

<sup>23</sup> In 2013, the African Union adopted a development strategy strategic for the next 50 years which is embedded in a document : the "African Union Agenda 2063"

<sup>24</sup> Cameroon "Vision 2035", Working Paper, Republic of Cameroon: Ministry of the Economy, Planning, and Regional Development (MINEPAT), 2009.

Considering the high level of poverty in Cameroon (around 40% in 2012), for many Cameroonians, it may not seem obvious to determine their direct economic gain from the Kribi Deep Sea Port or any of the other projects highlighted in this study. But yet, as indicated in “Vision 2035”, it certainly will somehow improve their lives indirectly. For some critics, it may be considered incongruous to build a multi-million dollar Port complex in a country where many people lack access to clean water and adequate medical resources. But if this kind of project is managed well, it could bring the much heralded benefits, will attract foreign investments, increase domestic resource mobilization, through the tax system, and thus improve the State’s capacity for delivery of development services to the population. Above all, it is likely to generate secondary and tertiary economic activities through the development of Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME).

The extractive industry (mining, oil and gas) relating to Chinese investments in particular will also be of benefit to the Cameroon economy. It will provide additional income, even though it can be argued that by their very nature extractive industries are not sustainable<sup>26</sup>, because natural resources will eventually run out. Sustainability is a complex notion indeed, as it integrates risks relating to issues of pollution, legacies to future generations, water scarcity, climate change, and the situation of local communities. But it is possible in the mining sector and would derive from the government’s ability to efficiently allocate resources and reinvest related national income in sustainable development projects. Economic gains can thus logically be expected from the Mbalam and Kribi iron ore mining.

### III.2 Environmental and social considerations

Every investment project has its social and environmental externalities. China’s investments, as that of any other developed countries operating in countries like Cameroon, could have significant social and environmental impacts. As mentioned earlier, most of the Chinese funded

<sup>26</sup> Fiskén, Charlotte, "Vision 2035 and the Kribi Deep Seaport: An analysis of the Economic Impacts for Cameroon" (2013). Independent Study Project (ISP)

or implemented projects in Cameroon are in areas considered as ecologically fragile. China's 12th five year plan (2011–2015) places emphasis on the challenges of promoting economic development without sacrificing the environment. It therefore seeks methods to promote economic development while protecting the environment.

In Cameroon, as required by the 1996 Environmental Management Framework Law and its 2005 implementing decree amended in February 2013, all projects with potential environmental and social risks are to be subjected to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The designing of almost all these projects, at least those involving Cameroon's Public Authorities, should thus integrate an Environmental Impact and Social Assessment (ESIA), an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), Special Environmental and Social Conditions (SESE), and a Compensation and Resettlement Plan (CRP). ). In addition, these mechanisms are to be implemented along with Regional or Community Development Plans (PDR / CDP).

At least for all the public projects funded or implemented by Chinese companies that were examined during this study, legal environmental exigencies were complied with. The Memve'e Hydropower Dam project, funded by the China Exim bank, and implemented by SINOHYDRO, for instance, complied in full with the legal requirements. Apart from the ESIA, the ESMP, and the Compensation and Resettlement Plan (CRP), the Project has an accompanying social and development plan (PASEM). While the major challenge remains a full compliance by Chinese companies of these different tools to ensure an appropriate mitigation of environmental and social risks, some of such tools like the PASEM are not dependent on the Chinese contractor but on the contracting public authority which in this case is the Ministry of Water and Energy.

### III.2.1 Specific environmental considerations about Chinese projects in Cameroon

Since the 1992 Earth Summit, sustainable development has become a reference for policy makers. Its importance is now acknowledged at all level of the global society, and achieving it depends upon a balance between economic, environmental and social objectives. This applies even to private business as part of the sustainability of their core activities, and their corporate social responsibility (CSR). Nowadays the commitment to environmental sustainability is a performance factor. Specific institutions are developed in many countries as well as new legislations, policies or planning mechanisms, following ratification of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

<sup>26</sup> WWF: (Briefing notes) How China and Africa can achieve environmental and social responsibility in the mining sector

As indicated in the WWF brief on 31 May 2013<sup>26</sup>, Governments should require companies to produce and adhere to Biodiversity Action Plans that identify, monitor and address any risks to wildlife and habitats. Companies should in fact understand the local environment in which they operate. The operation typology of Chinese projects in Cameroon which relates essentially to large scale infrastructure construction, involves clearing large portions of land and creating access roads, with very high risks of opening important migratory corridors, or of connectivity within ecosystems, as well as of new opportunities offered to poachers.

The Lom Pangar dam construction project located in the East Cameroon is close to the Deng Deng forest reserve and considered a sensitive example that meets all categories of risks, with the expected sinking of an important part of that forest, when the dam construction is completed and it is operated. Additionally, the Memve'ele and Mekin dam construction project as well as all the mining prospects in the southern and eastern part of Cameroon are a serious ecological threat. They are in the proximity of the gazetted national parks like the Campo Ma'an, and the Boumba Bek National Parks.

Another recurrent issue with these projects is the handling of social related aspects like workers' rights and relationship with local communities. In the cases of the

Mekin and Meve'ele dam or the Kribi deep-sea port construction projects, in the South Region of Cameroon, the local work force does not find Chinese conditions of employment attractive enough to compel them abandon their traditional fishing or agricultural activities. The consequence of not getting localized labour has led to outsourcing from other areas, especially where the incidence of poverty is quite high, like from the Far North and Northwest regions with poverty incidence rate of 65% and 51% respectively<sup>27</sup>.

This has led to the establishment of new communities in the different project location areas, with the potential of generating social conflicts between the migrated and the local communities. Apart from these social conflicts, the fear expressed by some of the locals in Mekin is that once the dam goes operational, it shall destroy some of the important vegetal species and introduce invasive fish species into formerly undisturbed areas.

The Government of Cameroon, while acknowledging that Chinese investments generate social and economic benefits, considers however that the changes attached to these may also, if left unchecked, have a negative impact on the environment as well as on local communities. In that respect, the Environmental and Social Capacity Building Project for the Energy Sector (PRECESSE) was established in February 2009, with the support of the World Bank. That multi-sectoral project, involving both the Ministries in charge of Environment and Social Affairs, aimed at taking into account environmental and social aspects during the implementation of major development projects.

The Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) normally delivers a certificate of compliance to development projects owners, after examination of the various environment management documents of the considered projects, resulting from the related Environmental Impact and Social Assessment (ESIA). Subsequently during the projects implemen-

<sup>27</sup> Martin Tsounkeu-Pascal Kengne, Cameroon National Position Report on the Post 2015 Consultations, UNDP-MINEPAT, 2013

tation period, the Ministry (MINEPDED) monitors the activities to make sure that there is compliance with the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and with the Special Environmental and Social Conditions (SESE) where applicable.

China on its part has issued environmental protection guidelines for Chinese companies to follow when investing overseas, calling on them to pay more attention to pollution and its impact on local communities. The guidelines call on companies to follow local environmental laws, assess the environmental risks of their projects, minimize the impact on local heritage and draft plans for handling emergencies<sup>28</sup>. Never-the-less operations by Chinese companies in very sensitive ecological areas raise a big challenge for environmental management and nature protection, because compliance is generally not necessarily put at the forefront by these operators whose main priority is the realisation of technical project outcomes.

For instance, for the Lom Pangar dam, the Chinese company constructing the dam began integrating environmental and social concerns in its field operations, only after threats from the project supervisory authority EDC to halt the project. Following a site visit made by the supervisory authority in October 2013, thirteen recommendations were made to the Company with regard to environmental protection concerns. These recommendations identified during an early field visit in June 2013 by the World Bank, were specifically made to improve: the wastes collection, transport and treatment system; wastewater analysis with conveyance of results to the Ministry in charge of Environment; the maintenance of hazardous waste register; and sanitation in the workers' housing.

### III.2.2 Legal framework relating to Chinese investments in Cameroon

At least 37 African countries including Cameroon have made provisions on environment in their constitutions, in keeping with the Rio Convention (1992) and the Kyoto Protocol (2007), and particularly with agenda 21 of Rio. Many have gone further to adopt environmental frame-

<sup>28</sup> Bloomberg, Beijing, Url: <http://bloom.bg/13qjRfs>, 28 February 2013.



work laws. An environmental framework law may be defined as an ordinary law, purpose and scope of which relate to environmental management problems and protection. It deals with all the enforcement prospects and the integration of environmental management approaches in all sectors. It is a legal instrument that encourages centralization and coordination of various interventions pertaining to "environment protection".

An environmental framework law is the formal way to get an integrated environmental management system, by collecting often autonomous regimes for each sector, in a generalized system with interfaces between sectors. In a given national context, it is meant to achieving a legal integration of the environmental management approach. Such a law presents a set of measures relating to the practical application of integrated environmental management policies in a given country<sup>29</sup>.

In the case of Cameroon, Law No 96/12 on 15 August 1996 applies for environmental management. Environmental protection aspects are elaborated also in other legal instruments such as: the 1992 Labour code; the 1994 forestry, fauna and fishery law; the 1999 Petroleum Code; the 2001 Mining code; the law on safety regulations governing modern biotechnology; the law No. 98-005 1998 on the laying of water regime; the law No. 78-23 on the protection of national parks; the law No. 89-27 on toxic and dangerous waste; the 2003 law on plant protection products; the act No. 2001-014 on seed activities; or the 2003 act on activities in the fertilizer sector.

### III.2.3 Conflicts relating to projects with Chinese investment

The areas of potential contention with regard to Chinese investments in Cameroon are: (1) employment conditions offered by Chinese companies; (2) interaction with people living in the areas where the projects are implemented; and (3) environmental issues.

#### III.2.3.1 Employment conditions offered by Chinese companies

Chinese companies operating in Cameroon are gene-

<sup>29</sup> Emmanuel G. Moutondo, « Les lois-cadres environnementales dans les pays francophones d'Afrique », <https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/html/EPLP-069/section7.html> on 18/06/2014

rally blamed for preferably employing labour from China and imposing difficult working conditions on local workers, with low wages. This allegation is refuted by Chinese companies who argue that all workers are subjected to the same standards which correspond to the normal standard back in China. They believe that such allegations could be related more to the cultural differences. This is further accentuated by the language and communication difficulties between the Chinese contractor and the local employees. Majority of the Chinese employers have little mastery of any of the official languages in Cameroon (English and French).

Technical documents are even sometimes only in Chinese and it takes too much time and effort for the Chinese employers to explain the content to the local workers. These communication difficulties sometimes create real tension. This finding was confirmed during conversations with a sample of local workers in some of the project sites like Mekin, Memve'ele, Kribi, Yato and Lom Pangar project sites.

On the recruitment of workers locally to work on the different project sites, the Cameroon Government as well as some of the Chinese companies is making efforts to ensure more locals are employed as workers in Chinese implemented projects. In June 2014, for instance, an employment protocol was signed between the National Employment Fund (NEF) and the China International Water and Electricity Corporation (CWE) which is constructing the Lom Pangar dam. One of the provisions of this protocol is that the NEF during the construction phase of the dam is to supply labour for an equivalent of over 3500 local workers. These shall be mostly low and middle level technicians (carpenters, welders, bricklayers and truck drivers). To facilitate the implementation of this protocol, the NEF has opened a pilot office at the Lom Pangar dam construction site to ensure that the Chinese company is served with workers immediately the need arises.

### III.2.3.2 Interaction with people living in the areas of projects implementation

There is a direct interaction between the different Chinese funded or implemented projects and the local communities. Considering the communication difficulties and cultural differences, the relationships between these projects and the local communities could be misinterpreted. While there is no denial that these projects have had some negative impacts on the local population, like involuntary displacement, such impacts, especially in government led projects and implemented by Chinese contractors are within the purview of the government. The government is therefore responsible for resettlement and compensation of these communities if they are moved from their original sites. Nearly all the projects examined for this study (Lom Pangar, Memve'ele and Kribi seaport) for instance have been subjected to problems of compensation and resettlement. While these problems are not directly associated with the projects contractors, the non-resolution has had serious implications on the projects' progress.

There has been serious controversy especially around compensation measures for local communities affected by the Kribi deep seaport project. In the absence of appropriate measures and in the absence of information, the local communities easily blame the Chinese contractor for all of their mishaps. This in most of the projects examined is one of the causes of tension and conflict between the local communities and the Chinese companies. The survey conducted for this study through focused group discussions in a few of the communities around some of the project sites, there was serious resentment from the population with regard to the manner in which the projects were implemented.

The Chinese companies and their workers therefore become easy target for the populations to vent their anger. In Mekin for instance, there were resentment that some communities remote to the potential impacts of the project were awarded more in terms of monetary compensation,

whilst some others in the vicinity of the dam construction site were not even identified as potential recipients. The same type of complaint was expressed in Meve'ele and Lom Pangar, and this has created tension between the communities. It is important to note that the identification of beneficiaries for compensation is a government led process, as well as effective compensation. There is no denial that during such exercises, corrupt practices easily become abound. The National Anti-Corruption Commission in its 2011 report on the state of corruption in Cameroon remarked this, with regard to the amount of compensation to be awarded to communities and persons to be affected by the Kribi deep Seaport project.

While these projects have been presented as overarching development opportunities with social benefits, for the local communities, there is fear among the communities that this may not be the case. A good illustration is the Yato Potable Water Project. The two phases of the project which begun in 2009 has been largely financed through a loan from Exim Bank of China (first phase 11 billion CFA and the second phase of 44 billion francs CFA. It is a 150,000 cubic metres capacity water scheme that is expected to pump, by the end of 2014, further 100,000 cubic metres of drinking water to Douala. Unfortunately, communities around the water station in Yato do not have access to drinking water. While the provision of such a necessity is not the responsibility of the Chinese company, it could be a potential source of conflict with the local communities.

### III.2.3.3 Environmental issues

Environment issues are a contention factor with regard to Chinese investments related projects. Non-compliance to the environmental rules may lead to litigation between the Chinese implementing company and the project owner or other stakeholders in the project, including funding partners. All stakeholders have the right to refer to the environmental regulation framework to ask for compliance, like in the case the Lom Pangar project when the World

Bank and other funding partners complained and subsequently obtained adjustments from the Chinese constructing company.

### III.2.3.4 Field case presentations resulting from the field visit

## The Lom Pangar Dam Construction Project

The Lom Pangar dam project is located in the East Region of Cameroon, Lom and Djerem Division. Its site is found on river Lom, about 4 km downstream of its confluence with the Pangar, 13 km upstream of its confluence with the Sanaga, and 120 km north of the town of Bertoua, the Capital of Region. It includes: a 45m high dam and a reservoir covering a 540 km<sup>2</sup>; the Touraké bridge; a hydropower plant with a 30 MW capacity; an interface between the reservoir and the Chad-Cameroon pipeline, a section of which will be under water after the filling of the reservoir; a set of access roads and tracks; a transmission line of 90 kV linking the power plant and the interconnected network in Bertoua (105 km); and equipment for the implementation of the ESA recommendations of the project.

The area of influence of the project extends from its immediate vicinity where the impacts are concentrated, to the Atlantic Ocean: The Social and Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) of the project covers the following areas: (1) erosion and sedimentation control; (2) logging management; (3) career management; (4) water quality monitoring; (5) management of and emergency response to chemicals and other toxic and dangerous products; (6) control of dust and other air emissions; (7) noise control; (8) management of cultural heritage and archaeological assets; (9) landscape plan and reforestation; (10) waste management; (11) management of risks related to the filling of the dam's reservoir; (12) environmental and social training (13) management of construction traffic and site access; (14) construction and management of accommodation amenities; (15) staff health management; (16) dam sa-

fety; (17) planning and sustainable management of construction sites; (18) Operational Procedures Manual.

From the field observations, it appears that there is a medical centre and waste management, wastewater treatment were improved after the 2013 site inspection by donors that issued 13 recommendations. Traffic and access to the site is secured; speed limitation on the way to the project site is effective and the road is well maintained. Employees work with appropriate equipment. Security on the site is provided by the Cameroonian Defence Forces and a private security company, the living conditions of the workers have somewhat been improved, but a number of challenges remain, regarding the efforts that should be made in reducing promiscuity, in order to improve their living conditions.

The Company's Environmental and Social Management Plan (CESMP) of the project covers: fight against poaching (Joint Patrols: Security; health and hygiene; fight against erosion; and site re vegetation. The corresponding activities are likely to be subcontracted to local structures, the objective being to ensure that the social and environmental requirements are fulfilled. Collaboration within the Environmental and Social Specifications (ESS) covers: reparation of all monitoring documents (periodic reports); communication on site following the communication plan between the Project Owner and the Contractor (provided by an Environmentalist. The contractor (CWE) has a Chinese Health, Safety Environmental Manager on site, assisted by local deputy.

The major challenges concern: environmental management of water retention, especially with regard to timber logging and fishing; preservation and exploitation of other existing resources (mine); evaluation of residual risks relating to mining operations, by the Ministry of Mines and Industry and Technological Development (MINMID); archaeological rescue for which a MOU was signed between the project owner (EDC), the Group VABIOCE - WBC-AMS and the Ministry of Arts and culture (MINAC). An

Operational Technical Unit (OTU) is responsible for the fight against poaching with the participation of: ATN to monitor the park; the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF); the Cameroon Oil Transportation Company (COTCO), the National Security Forces (Army / Police); and local communities represented by nine Paramount Chiefs.

*Images from the Lom Pangar Project site*



***Waste filtering units***

***Lom Pangar dam***





*All the area to the left  
will be flooded com-  
pletely by the Lom  
Pangar reservoir*

*Showing the newly  
reconstructed village  
of Lom Pangar.*



### **The Mekin Hydropower Dam Construction Project**

The construction site of the Mekin hydroelectric dam is in the Southern Region of Cameroon, in the Dja and Lobo division, District of Meyomessala, Mekin Village (a small location of nearly 600 residents). The project is developed over the Dja River, for the construction of a 15 MW hydroelectric dam, in a view to reinforcing the South interconnected grid and supply power to all the eight council areas in the Dja and Lobo Division.

The main social issues regarding the project that appeared from field observation relate to impact on fauna and flora. They also concern population displacement with for example a particular village called Nyabisu to be relocated, the compensation process and risks of a possible rupture of the dam. Compensation of the project site and vicinity was made, but there are complaints in the Mekin village that some people with no connection with the village received significant compensation. The relationship between the contractor and local staff are sometimes tense, over working conditions including onsite accommodation and communication with Chinese company autho-

rities. In terms of accommodation, for instance, local worker complain that their Chinese Colleague are powered round the clock, whilst Cameroonian workers have light only from 6pm 6am.

There are no significant signs of conflicts between residents and Chinese workers who generally live in isolation in their camp. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of the Mekin village believe that these new neighbours do nothing for the development of their village. Young people in the surroundings villages prefer farming or fishing instead of going to work on the dam construction site, because they believe that wages are too low, and the jobs offered are not decent enough. Most of the local workers for the project come from other regions of Cameroon, particularly the Far North and the North West Regions. Local residents are also concerned that there is no indication that they will benefit from electric supply from the dam. They see the high voltage lines that have already been built, and wonder whether medium and low voltage will come any soon.

### *Images from the Mekin Project site*





# IV – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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## IV.1 Conclusion

## IV.2 Recommendation

- WWF engagement with Cameroon Government
- WWF engagement with Chinese authorities
- WWF engagement with other Chinese investment actors







## IV.1 Conclusion

Chinese investments in Cameroon are mainly concentrated in infrastructure projects such as transport (ports, roads,) telecommunication, sports (stadia), and social (hospitals, and provision of drinking water). Most of these projects are situated in areas considered ecologically pristine and could have serious negative environmental and social impacts in the absence of well-defined mitigation measures. While these projects are aligned to Government's poverty alleviation policy highlighted in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP), a net positive impact for the local communities will require an effective management of value addition.

The challenge is to ensure that operations by Chinese partners are environment-friendly. Even though the Cameroonian legal framework provides for environmental management instruments, under the control of the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED), full compliance by Chinese companies is still an issue of great concern. It is crucial to ensure collaboration with relevant contacts within the different Chinese companies in Cameroon on environmental impact management. However, such collaboration is made difficult for non-state actors and sometimes even for public institutions, due to insufficient trust and absence of a confidence building mechanism with the Chinese companies. It may be easier to attain such collaboration through a well-defined partnership between Government, the companies and civil society.

The traditional approach consisting of placing the blame on the Chinese operators without understanding their mind set or clearly identify their prime interest is thus inefficient. It is important to find better ways to connect with Chinese operators, in full respect of their official framework. Going through Cameroonian Public Authorities is an option to combine with a situational analysis of the structuring within each relevant Chinese company with regards to environment issues, in a view to establi-

shing solid collaboration links.

In that respect, some Chinese companies are more relevant than others, due to their business span in Cameroon in terms of number and importance of the project as well as geographical location. The China international Water and Electric Corporation (CWE), which is involved in electricity and road infrastructure, with many dam and road construction project in ecological sensitive areas, is one of these. It would be of interest for WWF to focus on collaborating with such companies if not with all.

## IV.2 Recommendation

In order to ensure that projects related to Chinese investments in Cameroon are environment friendly in their implementation, there are three levels of collaboration on which WWF can work, by engaging with the three main categories of relevant stakeholders: Cameroon Public Authorities; Chinese Authorities and the Chinese operational investment actors. There are also some General Policy aspects to be considered by the Cameroonian Government.

### IV.2.1 General Policy consideration by Cameroon Government

The Government of Cameroon could better capitalize on the implementation of projects related to Chinese investments, and on the cooperation with China and other emerging partners in general. This is possible by taking full ownership of the related impact management beyond strict environmental considerations. It would mean ensuring that the public is extensively informed and sensitized on the benefits linked to such cooperation, as well as on the corresponding risks and the way these risks are mitigated. In the domain of environment protection, emphasis should be put on enforcing the existing law and regulations, in collaboration with other stakeholders following a clear collective formula involving an official roadmap.

### IV.2.2 WWF engagement with Cameroon Government

Engagement with the Cameroonian Government and other Public Authorities should seek collaboration with all key sectorial Ministries that initiate Chinese investments



related projects and in a particular way with the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) on the one hand, and the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT) on the other. With the Ministry in charge of environment, WWF could try to set up a collaboration scheme that consist in supporting the Ministry in the process of Environmental Certificate deliverance and monitoring of compliance to Environmental Management Plans during projects implementation. WWF in that support process could work to technically and financially support the permanent allocation of human resource, from the Ministry, to the project site for work following specific guidance agreed upon between the MINEPDED, the project owner (the sectorial Ministry or other relevant institutions), the project supervising entity and the Chinese company.

Collaboration in the monitoring process will have to start right from the stage of Certificate deliverance, with WWF involvement in the examination of the ESIA. Through that permanent human resource allocation, WWF will have the opportunity to be closer to the decision making concerning environmental management. Additionally it would be worthwhile to develop close and special collaboration with the MINEPAT Director in charge of emerging countries to ensure connection with Chinese Authorities and subsequently with Chinese operators.

#### IV.2.3 WWF engagement with Chinese authorities

Before engaging with Chinese Authorities, it would be essential to be clear on what their prime interest is and to find out what the official pre-defined line is for China on the issues at stake. In the case of Chinese investment related project and the environmental impact management issue, the Chinese legal instrument providing the related guidelines would be a good reference. However, this should not be brandished as a tool for finger pointing to blame Chinese companies for non-compliance. It should rather be used in combination with local legal instrument as a collaboration area to propose to Chinese operators in

a view to helping them protect their interests while they operate in Cameroon.

#### IV.2.4 WWF engagement with other Chinese investment actors

The WWF approach in connecting with relevant contact persons in Chinese companies, for environmental impact management, should consider collaboration with key contact persons within the project owner and the supervising entity, to access the relevant contact person in the Chinese company. To achieve this, an in-depth analysis of the structuring of the targeted Chinese operators is necessary. The stake to propose to Chinese companies here would be assistance to help facilitate their relationship with the supervising entity, by assisting them in the elaboration and implementation of the project Environmental Management Plan (EMP).



# ANNEX

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## CONSULTATION GUIDE FOR THE STUDY ON THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF CHINESE INVEST- MENTS IN CAMEROON WITH FOCUS ON IT'S SO- CIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS







## CONSULTATION GUIDE FOR THE STUDY ON THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF CHINESE INVESTMENTS IN CAMEROON WITH FOCUS ON IT'S SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

### Introduction

This consultation guide indicates the core questions around which discussions should be conducted with relevant stakeholders. The stake is to be able gather information at all possible level, be from individual or from institution on key aspects of Chinese investments in Cameroon. They conversation with the stakeholder will be freely shaped with much flexibility so as to integrate contextual factors. The consultation guide is made broad enough in its design, so that it can be used for all categories of stakeholders.

Key generic questions and objectives

- What is the stake with regard to Chinese investment?
  - o Position the person or the institution in the Chinese investment arena
- What is the area of operation?
  - o Find out the sector and any other relevant character
- What are the features of the relevant projects?
  - o Describe interests and stakes, give more detail on the sector
- What is the location of project
  - o Geographical and other localisation factors
- Chinese counterpart and type of collaboration?

- o Identify resource persons for future collaboration
- What investments level and shares?
  - o Specify investments amounts and partnerships
- What is the labour force structure?
  - o Specify on local share of the work force
- What are the environment and development sustainability challenges?
  - o Specify the challenge and the corresponding mitigation approach and identify resources persons as counterparts for environmental issues; indicate documents of reference

**Table 2: HSE counterparts in Chinese investments related companies in Cameroon**

	Chinese Companies	Location	Sector	Nature of project	HSE Counterpart or Contact Person	Remarks for contact facilitation
1	China international water and electric corporation (CWE).	East	Electricity infrastructure Electricity infrastructure Road infrastructure	Lom Pangar Water Reserve Dam Menchum Hydro power dam Rehabilitation of Ngaoundere-Kousseri road		
2	SINO HYDRO Corp	South	Electricity infrastructure	Memve'ele hydropower dam of 201 MW / NTEM river. Yaounde- Nsimalen freeway		
3	China national electric engineering Corporation (CNEEC)	South	Electricity infrastructure	Mekinhypower Dam/Dja river		
4	Shichuan Hanlong Group	East	Mining	Mbalam iron ore mining project		
5	China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC),	South	Road Infrastructures	Construction of the Deep Seaport Project in Mboro, Kribi		
6	CGCOC Cameroun	Littoral	Water infrastructure	Enhancing potable water capacities in Douala Phase2 Enhancing potable water capacities in Douala Phase2		
7	SINOCHEM (90% HEVECAM shares)	Sud	Agriculture	Rubber Plantations		
8	China Harbour Engineering Company).	South	Road Infrastructures	Kribi – Lolabé double carriage Road:		
9	China's Yan Chang Logone Development Holding Company	Far North	Petroleum	Successful oil Exploration in the Zina-Makary block in the Logone Birni basin		
10	China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC)	Centre	Water infrastructure	Water project to supply Yaoundé with 400 000 m3 from Sanaga river.		

11	Shaanxi Company under the name SINO-CAM INKO Agriculture Development Co, in Cameroon	Center region	Agriculture	Revamping Agriculture with Chinese Expertise nourishing 'un-whitened' rice packaged		
12	The China International Water and Electricity Corporation (CWE)	Center region		Construction of a Canal on the Mfoundi river banks		
13	SINOSTEEL's subsidiary, SINOSTEELCAM S.A.	South Region	Iron Ore Mining	Exploration for iron at the Lobe concession near Kribi		
14	China Road and Bridge Construction company (CBCC)	Littoral	Roads	Roads construction projects		
15	China first Highway Engineering (CFHE)	Centre Littoral	Road infrastructure	Yde-Dla Highway (80 Km)		
	China Communication Construction Company (CCCC)					
16	China Communication Construction Company (CCCC)	South West	Road Infrastructures	Kumba Mamfe road		
17	Jiangsu Provincial Transportation Engineering Group Co Ltd (JPTEG)	South West	Road Infrastructure	Kumba Mamfe road		
18	China Road and Bridge Construction company (CBCC)	Littoral	Roads	Roads construction projects		

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**Table 2:** Volume analysis of Chinese investments in Cameroon (2007-2013)

**Table 3:** Synthesis of Chinese assistance to Cameroon since 2007

**Table 4:** HSE counterparts in Chinese investments related companies in Cameroon



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