

## **Introductory Statement – MTR Presentation**

The Republic of Cameroon forms part of the Congo basin forest which is the second largest tropical forest basin. The forests of Cameroon are host to endemic tree and animal species, that play a key role in the stabilisation of greenhouse gases and offer food and shelter to millions of inhabitants. These forests are presently under threat from unsustainable exploitation, high demand for agricultural land, mining exploitation, and infrastructure expansion.

As a result, the government of Cameroon supported the inclusion of the REDD+ as a post Kyoto mechanism in the climate change discourse; and actively participated in shaping the present scope of REDD+ as in the Warsaw Framework on REDD+ as well as the inclusion of REDD+ and non-carbon benefits in the Paris Accord.

Outcomes of the international negotiations have been translated nationally in the preparation of the Readiness Project Idea Note (R-PIN), Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) and presently the elaboration of the national REDD+ strategy. Equally, Cameroon was admitted into FIP and CAFI processes, and with this additional support, is currently elaborating an Investment Plan. Parallel to the sensitization and consultation campaigns related to the elaboration of the national REDD+ strategy and the Investment Plan, the government is encouraging the implementation of REDD+ pilot projects. It is in the scope of these developments that the government submitted an Emission Reduction Project Idea Note, which was included in the Carbon Fund pipeline. The Letter of Intent has been signed by the Government of Cameroon and the World Bank, and elaboration of the ER-PD has commenced.

Also, Cameroon has committed to restoring over 12 million hectares of deforested and degraded land by 2030 as part of the Bonn Challenge initiative. The pledge is the biggest made so far in the species-rich Congo Basin, home to the world's second-largest tropical rainforest. The Bonn Challenge, is a global effort to restore 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030. With Cameroon's commitment, the Challenge has reached over 148 million hectares pledged in total.

As a first step in creating an enabling environment for the preparation and subsequent implementation of REDD+, the government has set up a multistakeholder national REDD+ steering committee which is the main decision making organ of the REDD+ process. The REDD+ Technical Secretariat (the operational organ of the steering committee) and the National Climate Change Observatory (responsible for monitoring the impact of climate change and the efficacy of measures and policies to address climate change) are now fully operational.

### **Significant progress has been made in key REDD+ readiness deliverables, notably:**

In an effort to strengthen intersectoral cooperation, the REDD+ Technical Secretariat has initiated the creation of an interministerial working group comprising technical staff of ministries managing and utilising natural resources. This working group is actively involved in the elaboration of the investment plan in the scope of CAFI and FIP, and plays an essential role in the ER-Program development.

The government of Cameroon considers the participation and involvement of all REDD+ stakeholders as paramount to a successful implementation of REDD+. The CSO REDD+ and CC platform has been in place since 2011 and has decentralised its structures right down to local council level. Also, a communication strategy, an FPIC document and a consultation plan have been elaborated to ensure that REDD+ process reaches out to all stakeholders.

All strategic studies required to inform the national strategy are currently under way. These include an in-depth analysis of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, strategic options to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation; the establishment of a forest reference level, conception of a benefit sharing mechanism, Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism, and the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment. Preliminary results are under examination at the Technical Secretariat and final results are due in June 2017.

The legal and policy framework is gradually being revised to accommodate the demands of the REDD+ process. For example, land use planning schemes, forestry laws and land tenure policies are being revised taking REDD+ into consideration. An economic development matrix which includes REDD+ is presently being elaborated by the Ministry of Economy and Planning.

A credible time plan has been elaborated to ensure that the R-Package is delivered in 2018. This will not be possible without further support from the international donor community.

Whilst the priority remains adaptation to climate change, there exists enormous potential in the area of mitigation, especially considering ambitions related to national development goals. The government considers REDD+ as a tool for sustainable development, and the forestry and land use sector is expected to contribute more than 30% of GHG reduction commitments stated in the NDC. The elaboration and implementation of the Investment Plan and the ER-Program are concrete steps towards realising the NDC. Given all these efforts that Cameroon has engaged in and continues to pursue, we would like to solicit the support from donors, to enable Cameroon achieve its commitments set out in the NDC.

It's important to recall here that the budget that was previewed for the implementation of the R-PP stood at 29.2 million US dollars. Cameroon succeeded to mobilize about 1/3 of this amount (8 million US dollars) and the gap that remains is still substantial and merits consideration by the participants committee for more financial support. We therefore appeal to the Participants Committee to support us in realising the objectives of the REDD+ process in particular and hence our overall climate change commitments.

Thank you for your attention