

# EU/Cameroon Voluntary Partnership Agreement on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and derived products to the EU (FLEGT): termination

2024/0245M(NLE) - 20/05/2025 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on International Trade adopted a report by Karin KARLSBRO (Renew, SE) containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the proposal for a Council decision on the termination of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Cameroon on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and derived products to the Union.

The Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union and the Republic of Cameroon on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and derived products to the European Union (FLEGT) entered into force on 1 December 2011 and is one of the first agreements of this kind that was concluded. Cameroon has **not been able to honour its VPA obligations** over the last 10 years and the governance of the forest sector has worsened despite the existence of the agreement. The report deplored the lack of progress in the implementation of the VPA with Cameroon, especially with regard to the enforcement, transparency and traceability of commitments. Members are also concerned about the ongoing deforestation and forest degradation not only by illegal logging, but also by other key drivers of deforestation, such as forest conversion for agricultural use and mining.

## *Termination of the agreement*

Members regretted the need to end the legally binding VPA with Cameroon and agreed with the Commission that, in the light of the VPA's shortcomings, this is the best policy option for the time being. They stressed concern about the impact of the termination of the VPA on diplomatic and economic relations between Cameroon and the EU and on the EU's capacity to build meaningful future partnerships with the country.

The report underlined that the EU remains a committed partner of Cameroon in fostering economic growth and comprehensive human development. It called on the Commission and the European External Action Service to engage in dialogue with the authorities of Cameroon to explore possibilities for constructive cooperation based on areas of mutual interest, combat illegal logging, support forest conservation and boost economic cooperation and trade. In this regard, Cameroon is urged to work towards stopping widespread corruption and to address other factors fuelling illegal logging and forest degradation, with particular regard to customs, in cooperation with other authorities.

The Commission is called on to explore alternatives in close dialogue with Cameroon to ensure the legality of timber and timber products originating from Cameroon and to properly address the problem of illegal timber logging. The committee considered that a **forest partnership**, as outlined in the EU Deforestation Regulation, could be a possible option for cooperation between the EU and Cameroon.

The EU is called on to continue supporting and engaging in dialogue with Cameroon in order to tackle the challenges arising from deforestation in a spirit of equal partnership, and to promote sustainable and inclusive development throughout its territory including by establishing the robust and transformative timber traceability systems that are necessary to comply with the expanding requirements of consumer market regulations worldwide.

### ***Parliamentary oversight***

Members stressed the importance of the parliamentary oversight and monitoring of the VPA by Parliament's Committee on International Trade and underlined the need for the meaningful and timely involvement of Parliament with regard to the assessment of the implementation of existing VPAs, as well as the negotiation, signing and implementation of any future forest partnerships.

Members called on the Commission to:

- regularly report to Parliament on the implementation of the VPAs and forest partnerships, including on the work of the joint implementation committees and on the strategies to be pursued in the coming years;
- ensure coherence between the EU's trade and sustainability frameworks when engaging with Cameroon and the broader central African region;
- ensure technical assistance and regulatory guidance is provided to partner countries to help align trade practices with environmental standards, particularly in sectors such as timber, cocoa and tropical agriculture.

In parallel, it is worth noting the adoption of a [report](#) on the draft Council decision on the termination of the VPA.