

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) - 17/06/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted, by 557 votes to 75, with 37 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft 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 European Union (FLEGT).

The Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union and the Republic of Cameroon on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT) entered into force on 1 December 2011 and is one of the first such agreements to be concluded. Cameroon **has been unable to meet its obligations** under the VPA over the past ten years, and governance of the forest sector has deteriorated despite the agreement's existence.

Parliament deplored the lack of progress in implementing the VPA with Cameroon, particularly regarding the implementation, transparency, and traceability of commitments. Members are also concerned about ongoing deforestation and forest degradation, not only due to illegal logging, but also other key drivers of deforestation, such as forest conversion for agriculture and mining.

Termination of the Agreement

Parliament regretted the need to terminate the legally binding VPA with Cameroon and agreed with the Commission that, given the VPA's shortcomings, this was the **best policy option** at this time. It expressed concern about the impact of VPA termination on diplomatic and economic relations between Cameroon and the EU and on the EU's ability to build meaningful future partnerships with the country. The Commission is invited to assess the impact of this decision on European companies operating in Cameroon and to explore support mechanisms to preserve responsible trade channels and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources.

Parliament stressed that **the EU remains a committed partner** of Cameroon in promoting economic growth and overall human development. It called on the Commission and the European External Action Service to engage in dialogue with the Cameroonian authorities to explore opportunities for **constructive cooperation** based on areas of mutual interest, to combat illegal logging, support forest conservation, and boost economic cooperation and trade.

In this context, Cameroon is called upon to work towards **ending widespread corruption** and addressing other factors that fuel illegal logging and forest degradation, particularly in the customs sector, in cooperation with other authorities. **Human, workers' and indigenous peoples' rights** must also be protected, in particular by respecting in all circumstances the principle of free, prior and informed consent, in the supply of products and commodities intended for the Union market.

To be effective, any potential future partnership should be developed through an **open, transparent, inclusive, deliberative and non-discriminatory process** with the meaning participation of civil society, trade unions and local and international NGOs, the private sector, including microenterprises and other small and medium-sized enterprises, local authorities, local and indigenous communities and farmers.

The Commission is invited to explore alternatives in close collaboration with Cameroon to ensure the legality of timber and timber products originating from Cameroon and to properly address the problem of illegal logging. A **forestry partnership**, as described in the EU Deforestation Regulation, could be a possible option for cooperation between the EU and Cameroon.

The EU is invited 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 control

Members highlighted the importance of parliamentary oversight and monitoring of the VPA by the Parliament's Committee on International Trade and stressed the need for meaningful parliamentary involvement in assessing the implementation of existing VPAs, as well as in the negotiation, signing, and implementation of any future forest partnerships. They also stressed the need to include consultations with civil society organizations, the private sector, and in particular indigenous communities, environmental and human rights defenders, and trade unions.

Members called on the Commission to:

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

In parallel, Parliament adopted a [legislative resolution](#) approving the termination of the VPA.