

THE MONTHLY ECONOMIC NOTE

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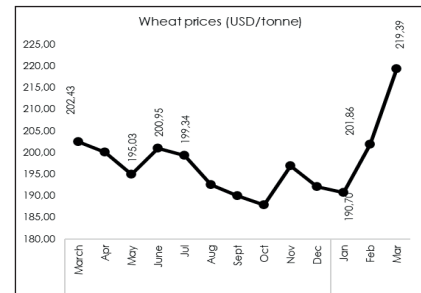
By  GECAM

1. PRICES OF KEY COMMODITIES

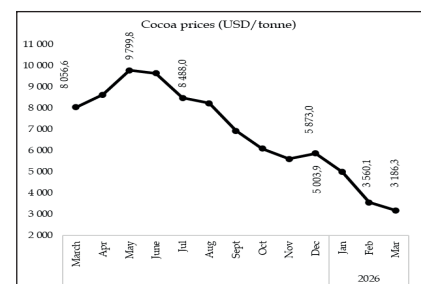
This section analyses trends in commodities that are strategic for the national economy. From energy volatility to agricultural fluctuations, these global developments directly influence industrial production costs and the profitability of exports in the cocoa, coffee and cotton sectors, which are the mainstays of Cameroon's trade balance.

Agricultural commodities

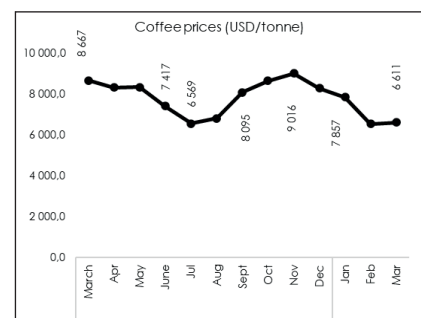
Wheat. The price of wheat rose significantly in March to reach USD 195.81 (+15.80% month-on-month). This upward trend, observed since January 2026, is due to unfavourable weather conditions in the main production areas and logistical uncertainties regarding Black Sea export routes, which are weighing on global supply.



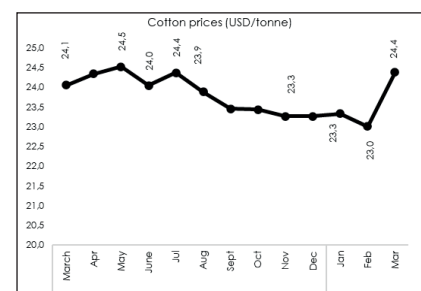
Cocoa. Following the historic price surge of 2025, cocoa prices continued to fall, settling at USD 1,640.45 in March 2026. Improved weather conditions in West Africa suggest a gradual return to market equilibrium, leading to a correction in global prices. This fall in prices is putting direct pressure on local exporters and producers' incomes.



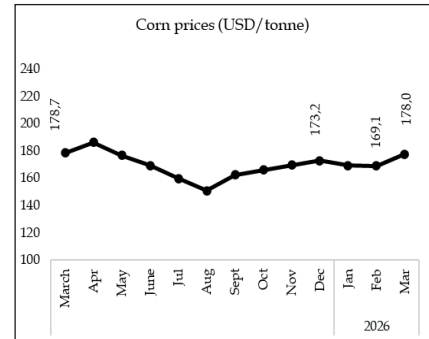
Coffee. Coffee prices rose slightly in March 2026, rising from USD 296.29 per tonne in February to USD 299.74 per tonne. This temporary strengthening is due to logistical delays in the shipment of stocks from South-East Asia and a downward revision of the harvests of certain speciality coffees. Although the index remains down year-on-year, this monthly rebound illustrates the market's sensitivity to shipping conditions and the management of certified inventories on international exchanges.



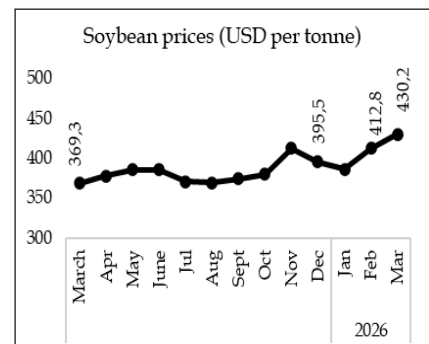
Cotton. Unlike other commodities, cotton is showing positive momentum at USD 2,845.32 in March 2026, representing a monthly increase of 10.27%. This rise is driven by a vigorous recovery in textile demand in Asia and a downward revision of production forecasts for the current season, bringing the annual increase to over 21%.



Maize : Maize is in a recovery phase, standing at USD 178.0 in March 2026. After hitting a cyclical low in August 2025, prices are gradually rising, supported by strong demand for animal feed and adjustments to planted areas among major global exporters.

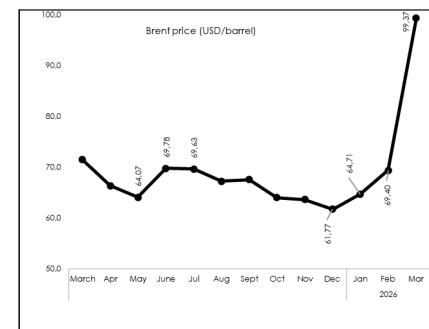


Soya: The soya market is surging to reach \$430.2, its highest level in over a year. This acceleration, particularly sharp between February and March 2026, is driven by increased demand for soya meal and a downward revision of global ending stocks.



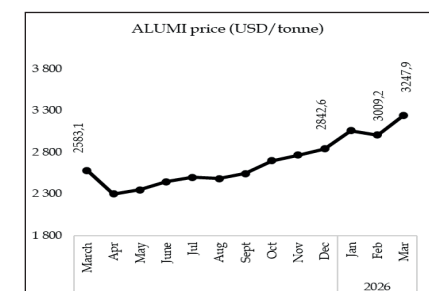
Energy

Oil : The price of Brent crude reached a record high of USD 99.37 in March 2026, following an escalation of tensions in the Middle East. Security instability in strategic straits poses a direct threat to the smooth flow of global oil supplies, prompting markets to factor in a significant risk premium. This trend is exacerbated by the decision of OPEC+ countries to maintain their production cuts until the end of the half-year. Caught between fears of a supply disruption and resilient global demand, the price per barrel is consolidating above the \$80 mark, marking a monthly rise of over 20%. For the global economy, this energy shock is reigniting inflationary pressures.



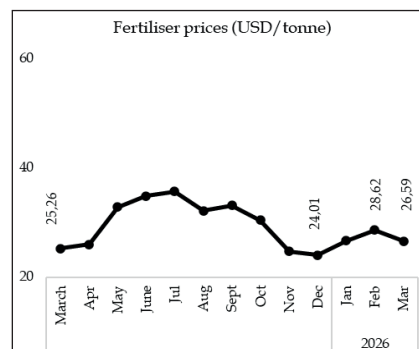
Metals

Aluminium : Aluminium reached its annual high of \$3,247.9, confirming an uninterrupted upward trend since September 2025. This surge is driven by a recovery in industrial demand in Asia and energy supply constraints affecting smelters worldwide, pushing the index up by nearly 26% compared with the previous year.



Inputs

Fertilisers : The fertiliser price index eased in March 2026 to 26.6 points. Although up 5% year-on-year, the index fell by nearly 7% month-on-month. This movement reflects a decline in the costs of the energy raw materials (natural gas) required for their production, thereby stabilising the market.



2. SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC NEWS

Within the CEMAC area, the economic climate is dominated by the BEAC's monetary status quo and a diplomatic push to accelerate structural reforms. The momentum towards integration is evident in new financial regulation agreements and a shared commitment to streamlining cross-border trade.

BEAC maintains status quo amid moderate growth

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Bank of Central African States (BEAC) has decided to maintain its main policy rate (TIAO) at 4.75%. This decision comes against a backdrop where growth forecasts for the CEMAC zone have been revised down to 2.9% for the 2026 financial year, due to mixed performance in the extractive sectors and domestic demand that remains fragile.

The decision to keep interest rates at a high level confirms the restrictive stance of monetary policy, which aims to anchor inflation expectations and protect foreign exchange reserves. Whilst this stability in the key interest rate is necessary for the currency's credibility, it continues to weigh on the cost of bank credit for businesses. The Employers' Association

stresses the importance of accompanying this monetary tightening with targeted fiscal stimulus measures and increased support for SME financing, to prevent the rising cost of credit from stifling the productive investment needed to achieve growth targets.

Price competitiveness: a gain in ground for CEMAC exporters

At the end of the first quarter of 2026, the CEMAC zone showed a significant improvement in its price competitiveness. This improvement is driven by two factors: the relative depreciation of the CFA franc against the main invoicing currencies and stricter control of domestic inflation compared to trading partners outside the eurozone.

This context presents a strategic window of opportunity to strengthen export market shares, particularly in the agro-industrial and manufacturing sectors. The relative weakness of the currency, coupled with a favourable inflation differential, automatically reduces the cost of local products on international markets. However, this price competitiveness remains fragile. It must be consolidated through structural productivity gains and a reduction in non-factor costs (energy, logistics),

in order to transform this cyclical advantage into a lever for sustainable growth for 'Made in Cameroon'.

Boosting the BVMAC: the BEAC reiterates its support for IPOs

Following an initial unsuccessful attempt, the BEAC is relaunching its support process for the stock market listings of four sub-regional companies. This initiative aims to increase the depth of the BVMAC's market and offer new investment opportunities to investors, whilst diversifying the sources of financing for the region's economic leaders.

This renewed commitment from the central bank is a positive sign for the depth of the regional financial market. The success of these listings is crucial to breaking the sub-regional stock market's lethargy and reducing large companies' excessive reliance on bank credit. However, the success of this operation depends on the transparency of the assets presented and on rigorous financial reporting, capable of reassuring institutional and private investors.

CEMAC Zone: towards a shift in the forest valuation model

Gabon's initiative, aiming for 22% GDP growth through the monetisation of ecosystem services and extensive local processing, marks a turning point for the CEMAC zone. This strategy aligns with the 2023 EU directives banning the export of logs, thereby imposing a paradigm shift towards a high value-added industry. Gabon's example illustrates the emergence of a regional green economy where carbon credits and environmental certification are becoming key financing levers, offering alternatives to oil revenues, and redefining competitiveness standards for the entire Congo Basin

Combating financial crime: a united front among regulators in CEMAC

Under the auspices of COBAC, COSUMAF and ANIF, a strengthened cooperation agreement has been signed to step up the fight against illicit financial flows (IFFs) in the CEMAC zone. This strategic alliance aims to harmonise the supervision of banking and stock market channels in order to detect money laundering and terrorist financing more effectively.

This interoperability among regulators is a guarantee of transparency and credibility for the regional financial centre. Whilst it imposes stricter compliance obligations on businesses, it provides long-term security for investments and protects the formal economy against unfair competition from illicit capital.

Monetary cooperation: Paris calls for a strengthening of IMF programmes in CEMAC

At the recent Franc Zone summit, France urged CEMAC member states to accelerate their structural reforms. The aim is to facilitate the conclusion of new programmes with the IMF, deemed essential for ensuring macroeconomic stability and attracting foreign investment.

This approach highlights the urgent need to consolidate public finances and improve governance. Although these programmes impose strict budgetary discipline, they serve as a guarantee of credibility for the private sector, fostering a more predictable business environment and secure access to international financing.

3. MAJOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Economic activity in March 2026 is driven by sustained industrial momentum and marked dynamism in the government bond market.

Between the strengthening of bilateral partnerships and the profound transformation of strategic sectors, the macroeconomic landscape reveals a positive growth trajectory, albeit one conditioned by the rigorous management of domestic financial commitments

OVERALL MACROECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Towards a post-oil Cameroonian economy

According to the IMF's Article IV Consultation Report (March 2026), Cameroon is embarking on a structural transformation aimed at reducing its dependence on oil revenues. This process is underpinned by the commencement of production from large-scale mining projects and governance reforms designed to broaden the non-oil tax base. The IMF recommends strengthening the regulatory framework, improving the efficiency of public investment and promoting local processing to avoid a purely extractive model. Macroeconomic stability will depend on the speed of these structural reforms and the resilience of the business climate in the face of external shocks.

Acceleration in real growth: the infrastructure boost

The IMF projects an acceleration in Cameroon's real GDP growth to 4.3% in 2026, up from 3.9% the previous year. This momentum is mainly driven by the commissioning of major energy infrastructure projects, notably the Nachtigal dam, which is expected to alleviate significant constraints on industrial supply. The dynamism of non-oil sectors and the more efficient implementation of public-investment projects are the main drivers of this performance. However, the institution stresses that the sustainability of this growth remains dependent on the continued improvement of the business climate and security stability in the production regions.

Monetary convergence: a gradual slowdown in inflation

Inflation in Cameroon is expected to continue its downward trajectory, settling at 2.9% in 2026, after reaching 3.4% in 2025. This level would bring the country back below the CEMAC convergence threshold of 3%. This lull reflects the moderation in global prices, particularly for food, and the appreciation of the exchange rate against the US dollar. The IMF warns, however, that a weakening of the zone's foreign exchange reserves could necessitate further monetary policy adjustments.

MONETARY POLICY AND PUBLIC FINANCE

Public debt

Consolidating solvency and clearing arrears

The Cameroonian government is continuing its strategy to clear domestic debt, particularly to companies in the construction sector and French creditors, in order to restore confidence among economic operators. According to the IMF's Article IV report (March 2026), debt management remains "sustainable" but requires increased vigilance regarding the contingent liabilities of public enterprises. The focus is on reducing energy subsidies and improving budget transparency to free up the necessary fiscal space to finance SND30 development projects.

Financial sector

Financial stability: the IMF warns of vulnerabilities in the banking system

In its latest surveillance report, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) highlighted the structural weaknesses of Cameroon's banking sector. The institution notes, in particular, an excessive concentration of banks' exposure to government securities and a deterioration

in asset quality, marked by persistent non-performing loans. These vulnerabilities could limit the banks' ability to support the country's growth ambitions.

This warning is a critical signal. A weakening of the banking system directly translates into tighter lending conditions and higher collateral requirements for businesses. Strengthened banking supervision and accelerated reforms aimed at cleaning up the loan portfolio are recommended. It is imperative to preserve the financial soundness of banks to ensure sustainable financing of the real economy, which is essential for achieving non-oil growth targets.

Banking sector: Afriland First Bank strengthens its capital base for regional expansion

As the leader of the national banking market, Afriland First Bank has announced a further increase in its share capital. This strategic move aims to consolidate its financial base and support its expansion plan within the CEMAC zone, whilst complying with the COBAC's increased regulatory requirements regarding risk coverage.

The strengthening of the capital base of a major player in the market is a sign of resilience and increased capacity to support the economy. Furthermore, increasing the financial capacity of local banks is an essential prerequisite for financing major infrastructure projects and meeting the long-term credit needs of businesses. The strength of the national banking champions must remain a lever for economic sovereignty and support for the structural transformation of our productive sector.

Financial market

Government securities market: a 580 billion financing programme for the second quarter

of 2026

The Cameroonian Treasury has unveiled its schedule for public debt issuance on the BEAC market for the second quarter of 2026, with a target of raising 580 billion CFA francs. This provisional programme comprises Assimilable Treasury Bills (BTA) for short-term cash management and Assimilable Treasury Bonds (OTA) for the financing of medium- and long-term investment projects.

For the private sector, this massive call on the regional financial market by the government is an indicator of the continuing need for budgetary financing. Such a volume of issues could lead to a shortage of bank liquidity available for lending to the real economy. Close coordination between fiscal policy and the market's absorption capacity is essential to avoid any crowding-out effect that could harm the growth momentum of local businesses.

Capital raising: successful OTA issue raises 144 billion CFA francs

The Cameroonian Treasury has achieved a notable performance on the BEAC securities market by raising over 144 billion CFA francs through an issue of Treasury-Assimilated Bonds (OTA). This operation, characterised by a high subscription rate, demonstrates the resilience of Cameroon's creditworthiness among institutional investors, despite a restrictive regional monetary environment.

For the private sector, this massive fundraising confirms the attractiveness of government securities as secure investment assets for banks in the sub-region. However, it should be noted that investors' preference for long-term maturities (OTA) over short-term financing may reflect a strategy to secure portfolios in the face of inflationary uncertainties. It remains important to prioritise the allocation of these

resources towards settling domestic debt and financing key infrastructure, in order to generate positive externalities and ensure for the entire national entrepreneurial ecosystem.

PRODUCTIVE SECTOR

Infrastructure and Energy

Energy and Refining: Progress on key infrastructure

Cameroon's energy landscape is taking a decisive step forward with the confirmation that the private CSTar refinery, located in the Kribi industrial zone, will be technically operational by the end of 2026. This major project, whose total investment is now re-estimated at 372 billion CFA francs, is designed to complement SONARA's supply. Its operationalisation aims to secure the national supply of finished petroleum products in the long term and reduce dependence on fuel imports.

At the same time, the ramp-up of the Nachtigal hydroelectric dam is strengthening grid stability and the availability of energy for heavy industry. This synergy between increased refining capacity and a more competitive electricity supply is a key driver of growth in non-oil GDP. It fosters the emergence of a resilient industrial ecosystem capable of supporting the growth and skilled job creation targets set out in the National Development Strategy 2030 (SND30).

Industry and sector development

Cotton sector: a regional strategy for capturing added value

Meeting in Yaoundé, African cotton-producing states have launched a diplomatic and economic initiative aimed at increasing local processing of 'white gold'. The objective is to break away from the traditional model

of exporting raw fibre in order to develop a truly integrated textile value chain at the continental level, capable of meeting the requirements of the AfCFTA.

Local cotton processing represents a source of industrial jobs and a means of reducing the cost of textile imports. However, the employers' association stresses that the success of this ambition depends on the modernisation of ginning equipment, access to competitive energy, and tax incentives for investment in the spinning and weaving sector. The coordination of sub-regional industrial policies will be the key factor in transforming this agricultural potential into manufacturing success.

Cassava sector: Creation of a public-private partnership to structure the value chain

The Cameroonian government, in partnership with the private sector, has approved the creation of a public-private partnership dedicated to structuring the cassava sector. The main mission of this entity is to organise production, facilitate growers' access to high-performance inputs and, above all, drive large-scale industrial processing to meet the needs of national and sub-regional markets.

This initiative is a concrete response to the objectives of the SND30, which aims to reduce reliance on imports. Cassava, due to its versatility (baking flour, industrial starch, animal feed), represents a major lever for food sovereignty and the reduction of the trade deficit. The success of this new structure will depend on its ability to effectively integrate small-scale producers into an industrial performance framework and to guarantee a remunerative purchase price, whilst ensuring a constant supply of raw materials for local processing units.

Banana sector: a mixed performance despite the CDC's rebound

The 2025 financial year ended on a mixed note for Cameroon's banana sector, whose relative underperformance has held back the overall growth of African exports. Whilst the volumes exported by the CDC recorded a remarkable 34% surge to reach 42,286 tonnes, this recovery was not enough to offset the sector's general sluggishness. At the start of 2026, the trend remains fragile: following a seasonal peak in January, national exports fell by nearly 5,000 tonnes, illustrating the persistence of structural and climatic challenges.

This volatility in export volumes highlights the urgent need to strengthen the resilience of plantations in the face of security and environmental risks. Furthermore, despite the welcome recovery of the state-owned operator CDC in crisis-hit regions, the sector is still struggling to regain its full production potential. Increased investment in irrigation and the renewal of planting stock is recommended. Ensuring the long-term security of production areas and improving the supply chain to the Port of Kribi remain critical levers for guaranteeing the competitiveness of Cameroonian bananas on the European market, in the face of growing competition from Latin American sources.

Cocoa sector: The takeover of CHOCOCAM under scrutiny by competition authorities

Cameroon's agro-industrial landscape is set to undergo a major restructuring with the proposed takeover of CHOCOCAM, a local subsidiary of the South African giant Tiger Brands. This merger, which is of strategic importance for the domestic and sub-regional market, is currently under rigorous scrutiny by the competition authorities to assess its impact on the structure of the confectionery and chocolate market.

This withdrawal of a continental investor in favour of a new buyer raises issues of industrial

continuity and economic sovereignty. The takeover of this industrial flagship must be accompanied by firm guarantees regarding job retention, the strengthening of local integration (notably the sourcing of Cameroonian cocoa beans) and the continuation of technological investment. It is, however, recommended that this transaction should not result in a dominant market position which could, in the long term, stifle innovation or drive up prices for end consumers, whilst hoping that it will inject new growth momentum into this historic processing facility.

EXTERNAL BALANCE

Bilateral cooperation

Strengthening the Cameroon-France economic partnership

On the sidelines of the WTO Ministerial Conference held in Yaoundé, Cameroon and France reaffirmed the strength of their economic ties by signing new partnership agreements. This high-level meeting laid the foundations for increased collaboration in the strategic sectors of agribusiness, digital technology and infrastructure, whilst consolidating the financing mechanisms for the Cameroonian economy through the AFD.

This revitalisation of the Paris-Yaoundé axis is seen as a means of securing investment. This partnership should promote increased technology transfer and encourage joint ventures between French and Cameroonian operators. It is recommended that these commitments result in easier access to European markets for products made in Cameroon and in enhanced technical support for local SMEs, in order to maximise the benefits of this cooperation for the national industrial fabric and the creation of skilled jobs.

Echanges transfrontaliers

Towards the removal of tax barriers at Kyé-Ossi

With a view to revitalising trade with Cameroon, the Equatorial Guinean authorities have expressed their willingness to remove the persistent fiscal and administrative barriers at the Kyé-Ossi border post. This initiative aims to streamline the transit of goods and people, whilst economic operators regularly complain about parafiscal charges that drive up transaction costs.

Indeed, Kyé-Ossi is a strategic hub for the export of agri-food and manufactured goods to Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. The employers' association welcomes this move, which is in line with the free movement of goods advocated by CEMAC.

Price competitiveness: Cameroon's position within the CEMAC zone

Against a backdrop of prudent regional monetary policy, Cameroon maintains its leading position within CEMAC. However, the external balance faces headwinds: the current account deficit is expected to widen to 4.9% of GDP in 2026, compared with around 2.6% in 2024, mainly due to the fall in global cocoa prices. Although domestic inflation is projected to fall to 2.9%, the price competitiveness of non-oil exports remains under pressure due to commodity price volatility. Maintaining this balance will depend on the ability to boost industrial productivity to reduce this deficit to 3.4% of GDP in the medium term, whilst monitoring the erosion of the region's foreign exchange reserves, which necessitates rigorous liquidity management.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFD:	French Development Agency.
BEAC:	Bank of Central African States.
BTA:	Assimilable Treasury Bills (short-term debt securities)
BVMAC:	Central African Stock Exchange.
CDC:	Cameroon Development Corporation.
CEMAC:	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa.
COBAC:	Central African Banking Commission.
COSUMAF:	Central African Financial Market Supervisory Commission.
FCFA:	African Financial Cooperation Franc.
FFI:	Illicit Financial Flows.
IMF:	International Monetary Fund.
IPO:	Initial Public Offering.
MINFI:	Ministry of Finance
NIF:	National Financial Investigation Agency.
WTO:	World Trade Organisation.
OTA:	Assimilable Treasury Bonds (medium- and long-term debt securities)
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
SME:	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SND30:	National Development Strategy 2020–2030
SONARA:	National Refining Company.
TIAO:	Tender Interest Rate
ZLECAF:	African Continental Free Trade Area.