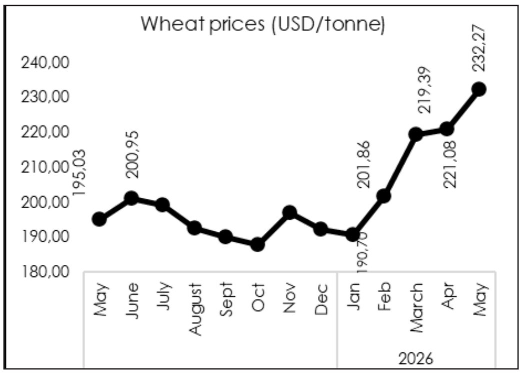
THE MONTHLY ECONOMIC NOTE

N° 10 MAY 2026

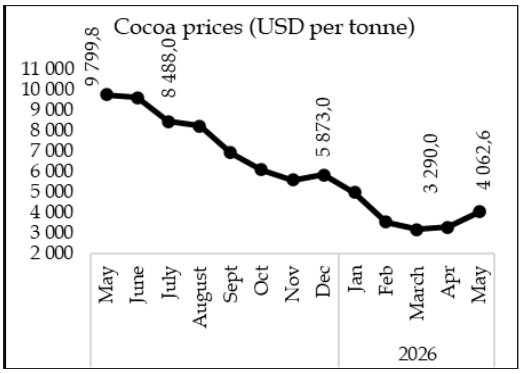
By GECAM

1. PRICES OF MAJOR COMMODITIES

Wheat. Between April and May 2026, the upward trend in wheat prices accelerated. Prices rose by 5.06 per cent to stand at $232.27 per tonne, following increases of 5.9 per cent in March and 0.77 per cent in April 2026. This sharp rise, recorded since January, is partly linked to adverse weather conditions in major exporting countries, as well as to prolonged geopolitical disruptions in strategic shipping lanes. On an annual basis, the price is significantly higher, showing a growth rate of 19.10 per cent.

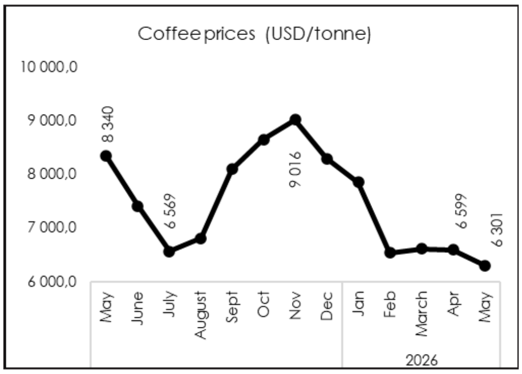


Cocoa. The price of cocoa is continuing the upward trend observed since April 2026. It has thus risen from 3,290 to 4,026 dollars per tonne, representing an increase of 23.48 per cent. This increase is the result of a combination of factors, namely concerns regarding the off-season and projections for the forthcoming harvest, particularly in West Africa due to the El Niño phenomenon. Added to this are pressures on fertiliser and freight costs.
Year-on-year, the price has fallen by 58.54 per cent, from $9,799.8 to $4,026.

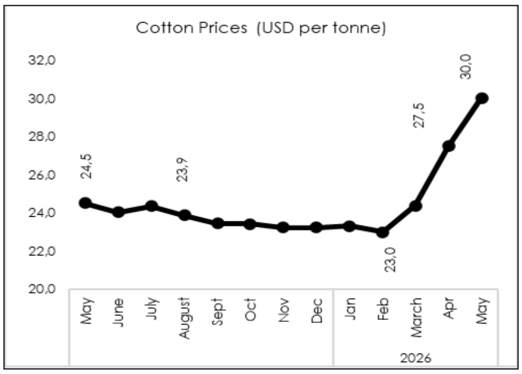


Coffee. After stabilising somewhat at around $6,500/t between February and April 2026, the price of coffee fell slightly by 4.5 per cent between April and May 2026, from $6,599 to $6,301.

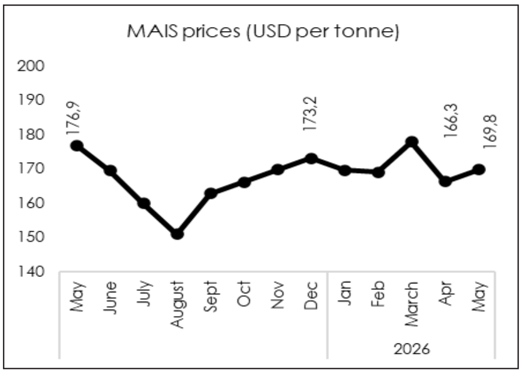
This fall is attributable to improved harvest prospects in the major producing regions, which has eased the risk premium. Year-on-year, the decline is more pronounced (-24.4 per cent), with the price falling from $8,340 to $6,301.



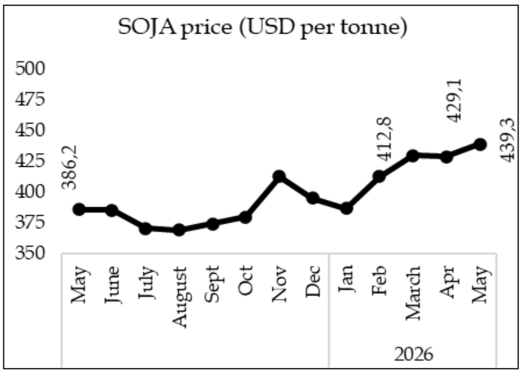
Cotton. The price of cotton is continuing the strong upward trend observed since the start of 2026. It stands at $30 per tonne, up 9.09 per cent on April and 22.45 per cent year-on-year. This momentum over the last three months has been driven by a vigorous recovery in textile demand in Asia and a downward revision to production forecasts for the current crop year.



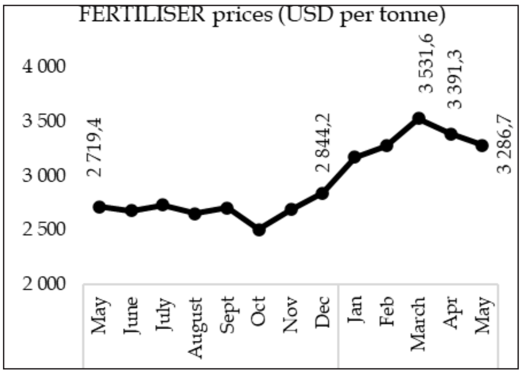
Maize. The price of maize has risen by 2.10 per cent compared with April to stand at $169.8/t. This slight monthly increase is attributable to weather warnings in the main production areas and major geopolitical tensions, which created a risk premium in the market in May. Year-on-year, however, the price remains down by 4.01 per cent.



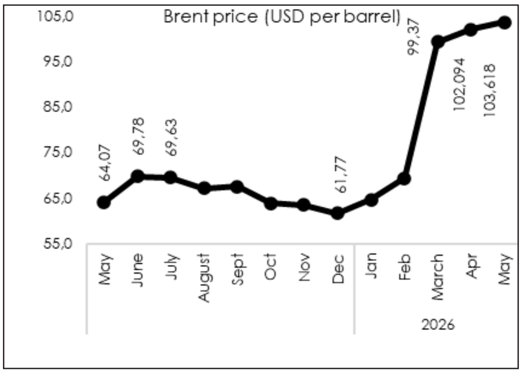
Soya. Daily price figures show that the price of soya rose slightly by 2.38 per cent between April and May 2026. Year-on-year, the trend shows a moderate upward movement of 13.75 per cent. Although the year saw some fluctuations, the market has been on a structural upward trend since January 2026, settling firmly above the $400 mark.



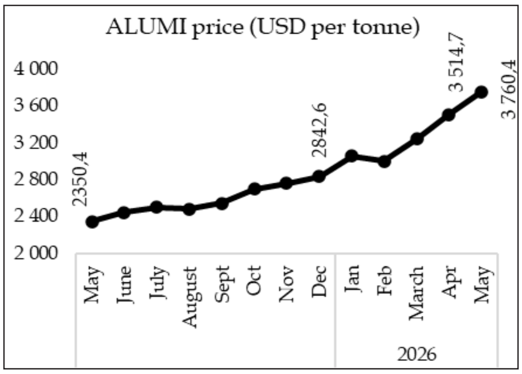
Fertilisers. Fertiliser prices showed a downward trend in May 2026. Between April and May, the price per tonne fell from $3,391.3 to $3,286.7, a decrease of 3.08 per cent, which began following a peak in March triggered by tensions in the Middle East. This decline is attributable to the relative lull in the conflict following the ceasefire, which helped to reduce risk premiums. Year-on-year, however, the trend remains upward, showing an increase of 20.86 per cent.



Oil. The trend remains bullish but at a slower pace. The average price for May stood at $103.62 per barrel, up 1.49 per cent compared with April 2026 and by nearly 61.73 per cent year-on-year. Prices continue to be affected by tensions in the Middle East and highlight a radical structural shift in the market.



Aluminium: Aluminium prices are showing a continuous and sustained rise. In May, the increase was 6.99 per cent, with the price rising from \$3,514.7 in April to \$3,760.4 in May 2026. The year-on-year increase, meanwhile, stands at 60 per cent. This trend reflects structural pressure fuelled by growing industrial demand, high energy costs linked to the conflict in the Middle East and supply chain pressures.



2. SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC NEWS

CEMAC Macroeconomic Outlook

CEMAC price competitiveness. According to the BEAC's Economic and Business Cycle Bulletin, specifically the sections on the Composite Commodity Price Index (ICCPB) and reports on price competitiveness, in the first quarter of 2026, the CEMAC's overall real effective exchange rate (REER) depreciated. This indicates an improvement in competitiveness on international markets compared with the previous quarter. Indeed, on a quarterly average, the overall REER fell by 1.1 per cent, following a 1.2 per cent decline in the previous quarter (Q4 2025).

For the second quarter of 2026, the outlook for the CEMAC REER is uncertain, as the conflict between Iran and the United States has created a dual 'scissor effect' for the sub-region. On the one hand, soaring crude oil prices are temporarily strengthening the trade balances of oil-producing countries; on the other hand, rising freight costs and imported inflation on manufactured goods threaten to weigh on domestic price indices. Such a scenario would reduce the CEMAC's protective inflation differential vis-à-vis its partners, which would slow down, or even halt, the gains in price competitiveness accumulated over previous quarters.

Strengthening human capital: Regional launch of the strategy for West and Central Africa: 'Healthy to Prosper: Investing in Health for Employment and Development in West and Central Africa'

On 4 May 2026, the World Bank Group launched its health strategy for West and Central Africa, aiming to provide coverage for a further 200 million people by 2030. This unifying framework redefines health as an economic investment that generates jobs, productivity and growth.

To overcome budgetary constraints, the programme is structured around three pillars: (i) strengthening frontline primary healthcare, (ii) reforming financing through the mobilisation of domestic resources, and (iii) building resilience to climate and epidemic crises. Inter-ministerial agreements will harmonise budgets, whilst support for the AIM2030 initiative will promote the local production of medical supplies, thereby reducing the sub-region's dependence on external sources.

Stablecoins and monetary stability: the BEAC aims to create a digital CFA franc to limit the influence of the dollar

In response to the expansion of US dollar-backed stablecoins, the BEAC favours the creation of a central bank digital currency, pegged at a strict parity to the fiat CFA franc. This sovereignty initiative, carried out in collaboration with the IMF, aims to maintain control over the CEMAC zone's financial ecosystem.

The adoption of parallel crypto-assets would threaten regional stability by circumventing traditional regulatory channels. Furthermore, capital flight to foreign portfolios would increase pressure on the sub-region's foreign exchange reserves, which stood at $11.3 billion (4.2 months' worth of imports) at the end of 2024. This initiative therefore aims to preserve the effectiveness of monetary policy and regional banking liquidity.

Promoting financial education in the CEMAC zone: a partnership agreement between the Banque de France and COSUMAF

On 18 May 2026, the Central African Financial Market Supervisory Commission (, COSUMAF) and the Banque de France signed a partnership agreement to strengthen financial inclusion and promote financial education amongst the population in the CEMAC zone. This collaboration aims to transfer French educational expertise and adapt it to local circumstances, characterised by low penetration of financial products and the hoarding of savings outside the formal financial system.

The agreement provides for the training of trainers and the development of targeted content. For COSUMAF, the key challenge is to inform savers in order to broaden the investor base of the regional stock exchange (BVMAC) and stimulate domestic financing in local currency, which is essential for the sub-region's infrastructure. From the French perspective, this initiative builds on a long-standing cooperation and enables the maintenance of a consensual technical influence within the Franc zone, far removed from political debates on monetary sovereignty.

Nevertheless, the success of this programme will depend on its tangible impact on the ground. COSUMAF will need to successfully align it with national financial inclusion policies, led by the BEAC, the Ministries of Finance and mobile banking operators.

Finance: towards an economic and financial forum to harmonise the proliferation of financial meetings within CEMAC

Faced with a proliferation of sector-specific events, the BEAC is proposing a single forum to strengthen regional integration and the CEMAC's international visibility. In preparation for this, the Governor has invited all financial stakeholders, via Circular Letter No. 08/GR/2026 of 15 May 2026, to a consultation on the creation of the Central African Economic and Financial Forum (FEFAC). Indeed, the proliferation of financial initiatives within the CEMAC zone is giving rise to significant structural constraints: excessive demands on experts, fragmentation of strategies, a dilution of policy effectiveness and low international visibility. To break down this silo mentality, the Governor of the BEAC launched, on 15 May 2026, a consultation on the creation of the Central African Economic and Financial Forum (FEFAC). This inter-institutional platform aims to streamline regional meetings into a single annual event, thereby reducing organisational costs by 40 per cent. Intended to be held on a rotating basis across the six member states, the FEFAC plans to bring together more than 1,000 participants (regulators, banks, fintech firms, academics) for thematic panels, B2B meetings and technical workshops. The findings will form the basis of a report due in July 2026. Beyond the event itself, this forum aims to become a strategic driver for modernising financial infrastructure, coordinating reforms in response to technological challenges and collectively shaping the economic future of the CEMAC.

3. MAJOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

OVERALL MACROECONOMIC OUTLOOK

External balance: Export earnings as the real constraint

Admittedly, the debt-to-GDP ratio is reassuring, but the real bottleneck lies in external debt (64.5 per cent of the central government's outstanding debt) against a backdrop of unfavourable foreign trade. Indeed, the trade deficit surged in 2025 by 22.8 per cent compared with 2024 to reach 2,145 billion CFA francs, with exports now covering only 59 per cent of imports, and the ratio of external debt service to export earnings exceeding the critical threshold of 15 per cent (IMF, 2026). Furthermore, the quality of the debt portfolio is deteriorating, with commercial debt having surpassed the 2,000 billion CFA franc mark by the end of March 2026, driven by a private placement of 850 million dollars signed in February and the proportion of floating-rate debt, which stands at 21.4 per cent of the portfolio.

Furthermore, this 44.3 per cent ratio does not include the government's explicit contingent liabilities, consisting mainly of public-private partnerships with a cumulative value estimated at 4,895 billion CFA francs, or 14.1 per cent of GDP. Although these commitments are not debt in the strict sense, they may become so if the underlying projects fail to generate the expected revenue or if the government has to step in to replace private operators. Added to this is the Cameroon–Congo railway project, estimated at 5,400 billion CFA francs, which has not yet been accounted for. Including these would push virtual debt to nearly 58 per cent of GDP, exceeding the 50 per cent ceiling set by the Medium-Term Debt Strategy (SDMT). Not to mention the Committed but Undisbursed Balances (SEND) of 5,044 billion CFA francs. This figure represents funding that has already been approved but is held up by bureaucratic delays.

MONETARY POLICY AND PUBLIC FINANCES

Public finances:

Société Générale Cameroun (SGC) becomes General Bank of Cameroon (GBC) following its acquisition by the State

On 12 May 2026, the Cameroonian government formalised the acquisition of 58.08 per cent of Société Générale's shares in its local subsidiary for 129 billion CFA francs. This transaction brings the state's stake to 83.68 per cent and marks the creation of the *General Bank of Cameroon* (GBC).

The Ministry of Finance guarantees the full continuity of services and the stability of IT systems, with the operational transition having been approved by COBAC. This nationalisation is, however, intended to be temporary. The government's intervention aims to safeguard deposits and prevent systemic risk following the French group's withdrawal.

In line with the guidelines of the lenders, notably the IMF, the authorities plan eventually to open up GBC's share capital to strategic national and international partners, with a view to establishing a sustainable, privately-owned shareholder structure.

Public debt

Public debt situation in the first quarter of 2026

According to the CAA's economic report, Cameroon's total outstanding public debt stood at 15,416 billion CFA francs, or 44.3 per cent of GDP, as at 31 March 2026. This level reflects a trend showing increases of 0.2 per cent month-on-month, 4.1 per cent quarter-on-quarter and 6.0 per cent year-on-year. This ratio remains well below the CEMAC threshold of 70 per cent and is in line with the target set out in the 2026–2028 Medium-Term Debt Strategy, which caps debt at 50 per cent of GDP. This debt is heavily concentrated in:

- The central government: 93.6 per cent of total outstanding debt (14,430 billion CFA francs, or 41.5 per cent of GDP).

- Public enterprises and institutions : 6.2 per cent (960 billions CFA francs).
- Decentralised Local Authorities (CTDs): 0.2 per cent (26 billion CFA francs).

Trends in External Debt

The central government's outstanding external debt stands at 9,301.2 billion CFA francs (26.7 per cent of GDP), representing an increase of 0.8 per cent month-on-month and 7.4 per cent year-on-year. It accounts for 64.5 per cent of the government's direct debt. It breaks down as follows:

- Multilateral debt (52.0 per cent, or 4,808.5 billion CFA francs): Mainly held by the World Bank Group (42.9 per cent of the multilateral component), the African Development Bank Group (25.5 per cent) and the IMF (19.7 per cent). This includes 1,530 billion CFA francs in budget support.
- Bilateral debt (26.1% – 2,409.0 billion CFA francs): Overwhelmingly dominated by China (China Exim Bank), which holds 64.9% of this component (16.8% of total external debt), followed by France (25.8%).
- Commercial debt (21.9% – 2,083.7 billion CFA francs): This has exceeded the 2,000 billion CFA franc mark due to increased reliance on international markets. It consists mainly of loans from the Africam Export Import Bank (26.3 per cent of commercial debt), private placements via LSEG made in February 2026 (23.2 per cent) and the 2021 Eurobond (21.6 per cent).

Trends in Domestic Debt

Total domestic debt stands at 5,129 billion CFA francs (representing 35.5 per cent of the government's direct portfolio). It has seen sustained growth, with a 2.4 per cent increase month-on-month. It comprises :

- Direct domestic debt excluding outstanding payments (RAP) and floating debt (79.3 per cent, or 4,066.2 billion CFA francs):
  - Government securities (53.6 per cent, or 2,178.7 billion CFA francs): Comprising Assimilable Treasury Bills (BTA) worth 445.8 billion and Assimilable Treasury Bonds (OTA) worth 1,321.8 billion CFA francs.
  - Structured debt (26.6 per cent, or 1,079.9 billion CFA francs): Liabilities arising from banking and non-banking agreements with defined maturities.
  - BEAC consolidated receivables (14.2 per cent, or 576.9 billions CFA francs) and SDR allocations (4.4 per cent – 180 billions CFA francs).
- Outstanding Payments (RAP) (12.7 per cent – 1,026.3 billion CFA francs): Pending final consolidation, the total outstanding amount is estimated at the end-2025 level. However, after adjustment for time, outstanding payments of more than 3 months' standing are projected to rise to around 650.9 billion CFA francs by the end of March 2026. Outstanding payments of less than 3 months' standing amount to 375.4 billion CFA francs.
- Short-term debt (8.0 per cent, or 411.5 billion CFA francs): Stable, dominated mainly by wage arrears (73.7 per cent, or 303.3 billion), followed by trade debt (16.9 per cent).

Debt of State Agencies

- Direct debt of enterprises and public institutions stands at 960 billion CFA francs (2.8 per cent of GDP), down 7.9 per cent year-on-year. It comprises:
  - *Direct external debt*: 443.2 billion CFA francs (95.4 per cent of which consists of trade and operating debts owed by SONARA, amounting to 361.4 billion, and by CAMAIR-CO, amounting to 61.6 billion).

- *Direct domestic debt*: 322.1 billion CFA francs (SONARA accounts for 60 per cent of this, with 193.3 billion in bank and trade debts).
- *Corporate floating debt*: 194.4 billion CFA francs (comprising 71 per cent tax and customs debts).

Bond issue: Repayment of 58.7 billion CFA francs on its 2022–2029 bond issue

The Government of Cameroon has repaid 58.7 billion CFA francs on the BVMAC's unified financial market. This transaction forms part of the repayment schedule for the multi-tranche bond known as 'CEFCAM 6.25%–5.95%–5.60% 2022–2029'. The payment, which comprises both the principal and accrued interest, demonstrates the Cameroonian Treasury's consistent fulfilment of its financial commitments to investors in the sub-region.

By honouring this statutory payment despite a generally tight liquidity environment, the authorities are strengthening the country's sovereign credit rating in the CEMAC market. Maintaining this creditworthiness remains essential to ensuring the success of future fundraising efforts needed to finance infrastructure.

Public investment: Infrastructure

A loan agreement worth 130.4 billion CFA francs to commence work on the Ebolowa–Akom II–Kribi road, which has been awaited for 15 years

On 15 May 2026, Cameroon and Standard Chartered Bank signed a loan agreement worth 130.4 billion CFA francs for the construction of the Ebolowa–Akom II–Kribi road. This commitment brings the total amount raised from the bank for this project – spanning approximately 160 km and long-awaited since it was first promised in 2011 by President Paul Biya – to 138.2 billion CFA francs. Although the contract was awarded in 2022 to the Italian company ICM Construction, work had been held up due to a lack of funding.

The significance of this road goes beyond simply opening up the agricultural regions of southern Cameroon; it has regional strategic importance, as it will improve traffic flow along the corridors connecting Cameroon to the Congo, Gabon, Chad and the Central African Republic, whilst also facilitating access to the deep-water port of Kribi for sub-regional trade.

Public revenue: Taxation – moving towards a recentralisation of local tax administration.

A joint decree signed on 15 May 2026 by the Ministers of Finance and Decentralisation reorganises the management of tax resources for the Decentralised Territorial Authorities (CTD). Pursuant to the Act of 23 December 2024, the State is transferring responsibility for the levying and collection of local taxes from municipal authorising officers to the central tax authorities.

The powers of the CTDs are now limited to monitoring, through the creation of Local Tax Monitoring Units, which are responsible for identifying taxpayers and conducting property surveys.

PRODUCTIVE SECTORS

Agriculture

Maize: suspension of maize imports in response to sluggish sales of local produce

On 8 May 2026, the Minister for Trade, Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana, officially proposed to the Ministry of Agriculture that maize imports be suspended with immediate effect. This safeguard measure aims to protect domestic farmers facing an alarming slump in sales of their produce, despite government efforts to revitalise the sector, such as the Castel Group's maize processing plant launched in 2021.

The contrast is striking: imports soared by 229 per cent in 2023 to reach over 81,000 tonnes in 2024, representing a foreign exchange outflow of more than 11 billion CFA francs. This preference among manufacturers for imported maize is due to a significant price difference. Whilst imported maize trades at between 131,000 and 155,000 CFA francs per tonne, local maize can reach 255,000 CFA francs depending on the season.

This lack of competitiveness stems from poor yields (1.8 tonnes per hectare compared with a global average of 5.9 tonnes) and high production costs (428,000 CFA francs per hectare), exacerbated by limited access to high-quality seeds. By calling for a freeze on import licences, even those already issued, the government is attempting to force the sale of local stocks to save a sector weakened by competition from international products that are often subsidised.

Cocoa: the price per kilogramme of beans is approaching 2,000 FCFA with two months to go until the end of the 2025–2026 season

According to the ONCC's Sector Information System (SIF), the price of cocoa in Cameroon is beginning to rise as the 2025–2026 season draws to a close. As at 11 May 2026, a kilogram of beans was trading between 1,750 and 1,800 FCFA, marking a rise of 150 FCFA in a week and approaching the 2,000 FCFA mark as the campaign draws to a close on 15 July.

However, this upturn remains modest compared with the historic highs of previous seasons. As a reminder, the price had reached a record 6,000 CFA francs in 2023–2024, before peaking at 5,400 CFA francs in 2024–2025. This sharp decline has thrown the government's forecasts off balance; it had hoped to maintain prices between 3,200 and 5,400 CFA francs for the current season.

This discrepancy between official ambitions and the reality on the ground can be explained by global market fundamentals. Analysts point to the prospect of an increase in global production. This expected surplus is exerting downward pressure on international prices, directly impacting the incomes of Cameroonian producers despite the recent weekly increases observed in the production basins.

Forestry sector: extension of the ban on log exports

The Ministry of Forestry has extended the trade restriction by banning the export of 15 new timber species in log form. This regulatory decision brings the total number of species now banned from export in their raw state to 91. The initiative forms part of the gradual implementation of CEMAC's community guidelines aimed at banning the export of unprocessed timber to stimulate local industrialisation.

For the national economy, this restrictive policy seeks to compel forestry operators to carry out extensive local processing, thereby increasing industrial added value and promoting job creation within the secondary and tertiary processing sectors.

Circular economy: Cameroon launches a national roadmap for the circular economy

On 22 May 2026, the Ministry of the Economy and the African Development Bank (AfDB) launched Cameroon's ten-year roadmap for the circular economy. Faced with a major environmental crisis involving nearly of 6 million tonnes of waste annually (less than 10 per cent of which is recycled), 1,300 tonnes of plastic per day and 4.5 million tonnes of post-harvest losses, the country is taking action. This strategy sets out 32 objectives and 102 concrete actions targeting four sectors: agribusiness, waste, plastics and the forestry and timber sector. Its main objectives are to stimulate green growth, improve the management of natural resources, create new sustainable jobs by 2035 and transform waste into economic and social opportunities. This initiative is aligned with the National Development Strategy 2030, aiming to turn the environmental challenge into a driver of growth. The government is therefore counting on the creation of thousands of green jobs and the economic empowerment of women and young people through new sustainable industrial value chains.

Extractive industries

Energy infrastructure: 120 billion CFA francs raised for the CSTAR refinery project in Kribi

The project to build the Kribi refinery and oil depot reached a major financial milestone on 5 May 2026. An agreement worth 120 billion CFA francs was signed in Yaoundé to cover the contribution from the National Hydrocarbons Company (, SNH). This financing, arranged by BGFIBank Cameroon alongside a local banking consortium (Afriland, CCA Bank, SCB, BICEC), represents the 32 per cent public share in this 372 billion CFA franc project led by CSTAR.

Initially aimed at refining 10,000 barrels per day, with an expansion to 30,000 barrels planned for 2027, this infrastructure aims to reduce imports of petroleum products by 435 billion CFA francs per year. According to the BEAC, the projected foreign exchange savings amount to 580 billion CFA francs.

Hydrocarbons: decline in oil production

In the first quarter of 2026, crude oil production attributable to the Glencore group in Cameroon fell by 14 per cent year-on-year, standing at 3,100 barrels per day compared with 3,600 barrels in the same period in 2025. This contraction is mainly due to the natural decline of the mature fields operated by the Anglo-Swiss trading company in the Rio del Rey basin. This local decline contrasts with the group's overall performance, with total hydrocarbon production rising by 5 per cent globally, driven by the ramp-up of its West African assets.

12.7 billion CFA francs raised by Cameroonian investors

The initial public offering (IPO) of BGFI Holding Corporation on the BVMAC generated considerable enthusiasm in Cameroon. Domestic investors raised 12.7 billion CFA francs, representing 28.1 per cent of the 45.3 billion raised during the first tranche of the offering. The country has thus confirmed its position as a key driver of growth for the Gabonese group, ranking just behind Gabon (22 billion CFA francs).

In total, the offering attracted 7,601 subscribers across 24 countries, 71.3 per cent of whom were retail investors. Thanks to this listing, the group's shareholder base has grown from 431 to over 7,600. For the time being, the funds raised represent 36 per cent of the final target of 125.8 billion CFA francs, intended to finance the 'BGFI 2030' strategic plan. This plan provides for the strengthening of subsidiaries, particularly in Cameroon and the DRC, as well as accelerated technological transformation.

The operation will continue into the third quarter of 2026 with a view to reaching the initial target of opening up 10 per cent of the share capital. This milestone success highlights the group's appeal and the growing dynamism of the sub-regional financial market.

Minim Martap bauxite: the first seven locomotives from China's CRRC expected in Cameroon

The Minim Martap bauxite mining project is stepping up its logistical deployment. Seven of the twenty-two diesel locomotives ordered from the Chinese manufacturer CRRC Corporation Ltd are expected to arrive at the port of Douala. This delivery, handled by Cosco Shipping, marks a pivotal stage for Camalco, a subsidiary of the Australian company Canyon Resources, in its strategy to transport ore out of the Adamaoua region.

The investment is colossal: of the 252.6 billion CFA francs earmarked for the rail component, 176.8 billion have already been raised in partnership with Camrail. This rolling stock will be supplemented by a massive fleet of wagons (560 initially, with an option for a further 1,040) ordered from the Indian firm Texmaco, in order to support the ambitious target of 10 million tonnes of bauxite per year.

Beyond the equipment, the developer must finance the connection of the mine to the national network and the rehabilitation of critical sections of the existing railway line. The arrival of these first locomotives sends a strong signal to the markets and partners: the Minim Martap project is moving beyond the stage of theoretical announcements and entering a concrete operational phase, thereby securing the future export chain to the international market.

Gold: illegal gold mining costs the state USD 22.5 million

In a sectoral economic report published this month, SONAMINES reveals that between 2021 and 2025, Cameroon lost approximately 2,000 billion CFA francs in revenue due to the illegal export of 44 tonnes of gold, mainly to the United Arab Emirates. The Director-General of the National Mining Company (SONAMINES) has highlighted a massive discrepancy with official customs statistics, which record only 148 kg. This cross-border trafficking, which intensified in 2024 and 2025, involves 216 clandestine mining companies operating in the East and Adamaoua regions. More than 95 per cent of these companies are controlled by foreign operators, notably Chinese, who are exploiting the porous nature of the borders.

Energy

Solar energy: strengthening local expertise

The Ministry of Water and Energy has taken a further step in its energy transition strategy with the launch, on 11 May 2026 in Yaoundé, of an intensive training course on solar photovoltaic systems. The result of cooperation with the International Solar Alliance (ISA), this programme is training 30 experts at the specialist Star-C centre.

The aim is to address the lack of access to electricity in rural areas by strengthening national expertise in the installation and maintenance of off-grid systems. By targeting engineers and researchers, whilst encouraging gender diversity, the government is focusing on the sustainability of solar infrastructure, which is already essential for off-grid schools and health centres.

This strengthening of local skills is crucial: it guarantees not only the technical roll-out but also the long-term viability of renewable energy solutions in the face of the limitations of the conventional grid, thereby consolidating Cameroon's energy sovereignty.

Renationalisation of the electricity sector in Cameroon: towards a renegotiation of KPDC and DPDC contracts following the announced acquisition of GLOBELEQ's assets

The proposed acquisition of GLOBELEQ's 56 per cent stake in the Kribi (216 MW) and Dibamba (88 MW) power stations marks a strategic re-acquisition of generation assets by the State. The primary aim of this transaction is to renegotiate the power purchase agreements between KPDC and DPDC and the distributor SOCADEL.

In budgetary terms, the reduction in costs for the electricity system is projected at 3 billion CFA francs per month, representing an annual saving of 36 billion CFA francs. By consolidating its control over the entire value chain (generation, transmission, distribution), the government is strengthening its energy sovereignty. The success of this vertical integration will depend on the financing model chosen for the acquisition, a key factor in achieving long-term financial stability for the sector.

Drinking water: the shutdown of the Akomnyada plant is causing major disruptions to the drinking water supply

Since 10 May 2026, the city of Yaoundé has been experiencing significant disruptions to its drinking water supply. This situation follows the technical shutdown of the Akomnyada production plant, caused by maintenance work carried out by Sonatrel at the Mbalmayo substation.

The shutdown of the pumping units is affecting almost the entire capital, from the eastern districts (Nkoabang, Ekounou) to the western and central areas (Mendong, Biyem-Assi, Boulevard du 20-Mai). Whilst Camwater promises a gradual restoration of services, the lack of a precise timetable is fuelling frustration amongst users, some of whom report water shortages having occurred even before the official statement was issued.

This incident highlights the structural fragility of Yaoundé's water network. As Akomnyada is the backbone of the urban water supply, its reliance on the electricity grid makes the supply precarious. Faced with excess demand, households and businesses are forced to resort to costly stopgap measures, illustrating the persistent challenge of access to water in Cameroon's major cities.

Property sector

Property Financing in Cameroon: **Institutionalising property savings from the diaspora**

Cameroon aims to channel the substantial savings of Cameroonians living abroad into the national property sector. On 19 May 2026, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Director-General of the Cameroon Property Company (, SIC) , signed a memorandum of understanding officially launching the Diaspora-SIC initiative. Diplomacy in the service of property development. Under this agreement, MINREX will mobilise embassies and consulates to promote SIC's projects through dedicated focal points and the organisation of 'SIC Property Weeks'. Meanwhile, SIC will roll out a secure digital platform backed by an international product catalogue, whilst ensuring rigorous monitoring of construction site progress. To circumvent the traditional pitfalls of the local market (land disputes, unfinished projects, unscrupulous intermediaries), this agreement introduces strict security mechanisms such as:

- The use of escrow accounts in foreign currencies;
- Staged payments based on the progress of the works;
- Compliance with anti-money laundering standards;
- Future issuance of property bonds.

The key aim of this initiative is to channel a significant proportion of remittances from the diaspora – estimated at 650 billion CFA francs by 2025 – into productive property investments. The government's aim is not to replace these funds with traditional flows of day-to-day consumption, which are essential for households, but to encourage citizens to diversify their allocations towards structural investments.

Automotive industry: The army is exploring the possibility of local production of military vehicles and equipment with SOTRABUS

The Ministry of Defence and the local vehicle manufacturer SOTRABUS have initiated technical consultations to assess the feasibility of domestic production of military vehicles and equipment. This industrial cooperation project aims to capitalise on the technological expertise of Cameroon's leading bus manufacturer to develop transport platforms tailored to the specific needs of the armed forces.

For the national economy, this initiative forms part of the government's import substitution policy. It seeks to establish a local metalworking and mechanical engineering industry, whilst strengthening the state's technological autonomy and logistical sovereignty.

Services

Logistics and transport

Trade facilitation: Cameroon and Chad sign an agreement to streamline the transit of Chadian freight along the Douala–N'Djamena Corridor

On 14 May 2026, Cameroon and Chad signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at optimising the transit of goods along the corridor linking the ports of Douala and Kribi to the Chadian capital. Initialled by the directors-general of the shippers' councils of both countries on the sidelines of a tripartite forum, this agreement aims to make this logistics route more competitive. It seeks to reduce administrative delays, redundant checks and costs that hinder trade. It focuses on modernisation through the interconnection of information systems, electronic tracking of shipments and the creation of a joint digital platform to handle operators' claims.

For Chad, a landlocked country, this corridor provides vital access to the sea. For Cameroon, it represents a major commercial and fiscal interest, generating over 350 billion CFA francs in annual revenue (MINFI, 2026). Given Chad's desire to diversify its routes to the sea, it is imperative that Yaoundé secures and streamlines this strategic corridor.

Yango Group launches Yango Tech in Africa with AI and digital infrastructure solutions

Yango Group has officially announced the launch of its technology subsidiary, Yango Tech, on the African continent. This entity offers proprietary solutions incorporating artificial intelligence and advanced digital infrastructure for businesses in the logistics and retail sectors. The software offering aims to optimise the management of last-mile operations, automate the supply chain and enhance the customer experience. This roll-out illustrates the digital transformation of African markets, offering new avenues for productivity and modernisation for local businesses seeking operational efficiency.

Mobile telephony: telecoms operators ordered to block 700,000 undeclared mobile phones

The Directorate-General of Customs has ordered mobile phone operators MTN, Orange and CAMTEL to block 700,000 phones identified as not having cleared customs. This enforcement measure forms part of the roll-out of the digital system for collecting customs duties on imported devices, aimed at curbing smuggling and safeguarding public revenue. The tax authorities estimate the loss of revenue at several tens of billions of CFA francs. This decision requires telecoms operators to achieve immediate technical compliance, whilst obliging importers to regularise the customs status of their stock.

Union Bank of Cameroon increases its profit to 5 billion CFA francs and begins the process of increasing its capital to 25 billion

Union Bank of Cameroon (UBC) posted a net profit of 5 billion CFA francs at the end of the financial year. Buoyed by this financial performance, the bank has embarked on a process to increase its share capital to reach the regulatory threshold of 25 billion CFA francs. This restructuring forms part of the mandatory capitalisation requirement imposed by the sector regulator, COBAC, aimed at strengthening the solvency and resilience of banks in the region. This increased capitalisation will enable UBC to consolidate its financial base and expand its financing capacity to support the national economy.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASI	: International Solar Alliance
BDEAC	: Development Bank of Central African States
AfDB	: African Development Bank
BTA	: Assimilable Treasury Bills
BVMAC	: Central African Stock Exchange
CAA	: Autonomous Amortisation Fund
CEMAC	: Central African Economic and Monetary Community
COBAC	: Central African Banking Commission
COSUMAF	: Central African Financial Market Supervisory Commission
CTD	: Decentralised Local Authorities
FEFAC	: Central African Economic and Financial Forum
IMF	: International Monetary Fund
GBC	: General Bank of Cameroon
OTA	: Assimilable Treasury Bonds
ONCC	: National Cocoa and Coffee Board
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
SGC	: Société Générale Cameroon
SIC	: Société immobilière du Cameroun
SND30	: National Development Strategy 2020–2030
SNH	: National Hydrocarbons Company
TCER	: real effective exchange rate