

Strategies for Achieving Climate Governance in Cameroon: A Legal Appraisal

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Abstract

Climate governance over the last decades has occupied the minds of many scholars who are much concerned with ensuring appropriate protection of the environment. Because of the hazards and negative impact of climate change, many scholars think that climate governance is an unavoidable issue that society must seek to achieve. The article addresses the crucial need for effective climate governance amidst growing environmental and socio-economic challenges caused by climate change in Cameroon. Despite its commitment to international climate agreements, Cameroon faces significant legal and institutional gaps that hinder the integration of climate change considerations into national policies and sectoral plans. The research problem focuses on the absence of a comprehensive and enforceable legal framework that mandates public institutions to incorporate climate adaptation and mitigation measures into their operations, resulting in weak policy implementation and limited climate action effectiveness. The main objective is to appraise existing legal frameworks and propose strategic legal reforms that can enhance climate governance in Cameroon for sustainable development. Employing a qualitative methodology, the study reviews climate-related laws, policy documents, and stakeholder consultations to analyze gaps and opportunities in Cameroon's climate governance architecture. Major findings reveal that while Cameroon has ratified key international conventions and developed some sectoral strategies, its legal framework remains fragmented and non-binding, with poor enforcement mechanisms. Institutional weaknesses, insufficient public participation, corruption, and lack of climate mainstreaming into budgets are prominent challenges. The study concludes that Cameroon's climate governance can only be strengthened through comprehensive legal reforms that institutionalize climate obligations, improve coordination among ministries, and promote transparency and inclusiveness. It recommends enacting binding climate legislation, enhancing institutional capacities, ensuring public participation, and integrating climate considerations into all development policies and budgets to achieve effective climate governance aligned with sustainable development goals.

Keywords: strategies, climate, governance, climate governance

1. Introduction

The recognition of climate change as a global issue began in the late 20th century. Early conferences and accords, such as the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, laid the foundation for international cooperation on

climate change¹. The Convention was formulated with the primary objective of instituting an international environmental accord to address the multifaceted challenges presented by climate change, emphasizing its ramifications on both natural and anthropogenically influenced ecosystems and the consequential implications for human health and societal well-being². An empirical observation central to the Convention was the notable disparity in per capita emissions between developed and developing nations. However, it also projected a surge in emissions from developing nations, a trajectory that aligns with their inherent socio-economic and developmental trajectories³. In light of these disparities and forecasts, the Convention underscored the imperative for a collaborative international approach. This approach predicates on the principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities,’ taking into account individual national capacities and the socio-economic paradigms within which they operate.⁴ The evolution of climate governance initially stems from diplomatic efforts between countries and later expanded through the involvement of transnational networks and non-governmental actors. The timeline above marks significant milestones in this progression. Pinpointing the exact origin is challenging, but a pivotal moment is the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Rio, often regarded as the first major landmark in climate diplomacy.⁵ This conference brought together nations worldwide and aimed to replicate the success of the Montreal Protocol in eliminating ozone-depleting substances.⁶

As international climate governance has advanced, numerous transnational public and public-private networks have emerged to pursue its objectives within their respective domains. Examples include the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, the Global Cities Covenant on Climate (also known as the Mexico City Pact), and the Cities for Climate Protection Programme (CCPP). The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) served as a catalyst for this development. Regional and local networks embraced the emissions reduction targets set by the convention and explored ways to implement them locally. For instance, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability committed to the UNFCCC framework to align local initiatives with global climate goals.⁷

Climate governance, meaning the effective management of the Earth’s climate system, is critically important. However, establishing strong collective frameworks to oversee and address climate impacts on a global scale faces unique challenges.⁸ These include the complexity of climate science, the ongoing evolution and refinement of scientific understanding about our planet’s systems, and the difficulty of effectively communicating this information to both the public and policymakers. Additionally, there is an urgent need to act quickly; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emphasizes that the world has a limited timeframe to prevent dangerous increases in global temperatures.⁹ Contemporary international climate governance is structured around three main pillars: mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation. Each of these pillars encompasses numerous issues and policies, reflecting the diverse ways climate change influences society.¹⁰

As one of the country’s most vulnerable to climate-related risks in sub-Saharan Africa, Cameroon faces significant threats to its economy, environment, and social fabric, including agricultural disruption, infrastructure damage, increased poverty, and population displacement. Despite existing climate policies and commitments such as the updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Cameroon’s progress has been hampered by

¹ Jiang, Y., & Li, X., (2002). Sustainable Development: 30 Years Since the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. *ACS Environmental Journal*, 2(6), pp. 480-481:480. Also available at <https://doi.org/10.1021/acsenvironau.2c00065> (Accessed on 18/1/2025)

² Lebeda, A.-M., & Chasek, P., (2021). Do Mega-Conferences Advance Sustainable Development? Still Only One Earth: Lessons from 50 years of UN sustainable development policy. International Institute for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://www.iisd.org/articles/deep-dive/do-mega-conferences-advance-sustainable-development> (Accessed on 18/1/2025)

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Stavi, I., (2022). Rio (1992) to Glasgow (2021): Three decades of inadequate mitigation of climate change and its slow onset effects. *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, 1(2), pp. 90-130:121. Also available at <https://doi.org/10.3389/fenvs.2022.999788> (Accessed on 18/1/2025)

⁵ Yergin, D., (2020). *The New Map*. New York: Penguin Press, p. 12.

⁶ Bulkeley, H.; Newell, P., (2009). *Governing climate change*. New York: Routledge, p. 22.

⁷ ICLEI ‘Local Governments for Sustainability’. ‘AboutICLEI’. Archived from the original on 2009-08-13. Retrieved 15 May 2025.

⁸ Jagers, S.C.; Strippel, J., (2003). Climate Governance beyond the State. *Global Governance*, 9(3), pp. 385–400:389.

⁹ Bulkeley, H., (2010). Climate Policy and Governance: an editorial essay. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 1(3), pp. 311–313:310.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

institutional weaknesses, limited financial resources, and coordination challenges among government agencies. This chapter explores strategic approaches to strengthen Cameroon's climate governance by enhancing institutional capacity, improving policy integration, mobilizing climate finance particularly from the private sector—and fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration. It emphasizes the importance of aligning climate action with sustainable development goals to build resilience and ensure inclusive growth.

2. Main Strategies Taken by Cameroon in Ensuring Fair Climate Governance

Cameroon has been actively involved in international climate negotiations since 1994 when the country became a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The country's engagement in these negotiations is crucial for preparing Cameroon for the impacts of climate change.

Cameroon has implemented a range of strategies for climate governance aimed at both adaptation and mitigation of climate change impacts, embedded within its national development framework and international commitments. The strategies stems from the legal, institutional and policy frameworks put in place to achieve climate governance.

2.1 The Ratification and Enactment of Various Legal Instruments on Climate Related Issues

Creating framework laws, regulations or public policies on climate change: these processes can generate dialogue and consultations that may inform the development and regulation of standards. They regulate climate governance at the national level and set out duties and rights that people can claim on climate action. For example, to create Peru's framework law on climate change and its regulations, dialogues (promoted by the Ministry of the Environment and different organizations) were held with multiple actors and sectors, including young people. The content of the bill was discussed in these spaces and put out for public consultation. The public's input was then included in the draft texts that were discussed. However, at the international level, Cameroon have signed and ratified different international treaties and conventions on climate related issues¹ as well as laws touching on climate. At the national level climate governance frameworks take the form of climate change policies that define how climate change will be addressed at national level and the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, including government, private sector, civil society and affected citizens. These goes a long way as part of the strategies adopted to achieve climate governance in Cameroon.

2.1.1 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 culminated in the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC is a landmark international agreement that has played a crucial role in global climate change governance². It has provided a framework for international cooperation and action on climate change, bringing together countries from around the world to address this pressing issue. The convention has facilitated the negotiation and adoption of subsequent agreements, which have further advanced global efforts to combat climate change.³ The UNFCCC has also established a platform for ongoing dialogue and collaboration among parties, enabling the sharing of knowledge, experiences, and best practices in climate change mitigation and adaptation⁴. The primary objective of the UNFCCC is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Under the UNFCCC, every Party is obligated to submit their national Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventories⁵. Its annual Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings lead to various

¹ By virtue of article 45 of Law No.96/06 of 18 January 1996 to amend the Constitution of 2 June, 1972. States that duly approved or ratified treaties and international agreements, upon publication, have authority superior to national laws, provided the other party implements the agreement. This means that if Cameroon enters into an international agreement that conflicts with existing national law, the treaty or agreement will take precedence as long as the other party also adheres to it.

² Finlayson, C., (2018). Climate change: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC). In *The wetland book I: Structure and function, management and methods* (pp. 1-5). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-9659-3_127 (Accessed on 18/4/2025)

³ Iwueke, N. T., & Alagoa, H. E., (2018). United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) National Level Reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions for Nigeria 1990 to 2014. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, available at <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3239155> (Accessed on 18/4/2025)

⁴ González, S. C., & Numer, E., (2020). What is climate governance? UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/19651/file/what-is-climate-governance.pdf> (Accessed on 20/4/2024)

⁵ Above, M. A., & Bankole, S. I., (2018). Petroleum industry activities and climate change: global to national perspective. In *The political ecology of oil and gas activities in the Nigerian aquatic ecosystem*, (pp. 277-292). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-809399-3.00018-5> (Accessed on 18/5/2025)

agreements, with the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement being the most notable.¹

2.1.2 The Kyoto Protocol 1997

The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement that was adopted in 1997 as an extension of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)². It aimed to address the issue of greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. It placed mandatory targets on industrialized countries, recognizing their role in the current levels of greenhouse gases³. The Kyoto Protocol delineates explicit and quantifiable measures for the Parties. One of its most ambitious mandates is the reduction of global GHG emissions by a minimum of 5% during the commitment span of 2008 to 2012. This pivotal accord underscores the imperative of constraining global warming to a range of 1.5–2.0°C relative to pre-industrial benchmarks.⁴

The 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which sets industrialised countries binding targets for emissions reductions, is one of the monumental achievements of the UNFCCC. Currently, no African country is required to take up emission targets although some, for example South Africa, have voluntarily set targets for themselves.

2.1.3 The Paris Agreement of 1998

The Paris Agreement represents a crucial step in international efforts to combat climate change and promote sustainable development. It is a significant international treaty that aims to address climate change and limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels⁵. It includes key provisions such as nationally determined contributions, a global stocktake, a transparency framework, and support for adaptation and finance. The agreement highlights the need for financial resources to support developing countries in their climate actions, including mitigation and adaptation efforts⁶. It sets a goal of mobilizing \$100 billion per year by 2020 from a variety of sources⁷. The agreement has been ratified by 197 countries including Cameroon, demonstrating global commitment to addressing climate change. Unlike the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement requires all countries to outline their plans for climate change.⁸

Cameroon, in its proactive approach to addressing climate change, has earnestly sought international partnerships to amplify its climate governance efforts. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of the challenges posed by climate change, the nation understands the need to draw upon the collective intelligence, resources, and experiences of the global community.⁹ These collaborations with international bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other nations have not only served as platforms for dialogue and knowledge exchange but have also facilitated the transfer of vital technology, mobilization of funds, and the sharing of specialized expertise. Such synergies are invaluable, especially when crafting policies and strategies that are both locally relevant and globally informed. Through these partnerships, Cameroon is positioning itself to be both a beneficiary and a contributor in the global quest to combat and adapt to the ever-evolving threats of climate change.

2.1.4 Law No. 2011/022 Governing the Electricity Sector in Cameroon, 14th December 2011

The legislation addresses the electricity sector, aiming to promote its modernization and growth. Part IV outlines broad objectives to encourage renewable energy use and improve energy efficiency, particularly within the scope

¹ Maslin, M. A., Lang, J., & Harvey, F., (2023). A short history of the successes and failures of the International climate change Negotiations, UCL Open Environment, 5. <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444/ucloe.000059> (Accessed on 19/5/2025)

² *Ibid.*

³ Maizland, L. Global Climate Agreements: Successes and Failures. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/paris-global-climate-change-agreements> (Accessed on 20/4/25)

⁴ Fawzy, S., Osman, A. I., Doran, J., & Rooney, D. W., (2020). Strategies for mitigation of climate Change., a review of Environmental Chmistres, 2020, pp. 2069-2094:2075. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10311-020-01059-w> (Accessed on 18/11/2025)

⁵ Teo, D. Y. Y., (2023). Was COP26 Critical for the Implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement?. In *Climate and Energy Governance for a Sustainable Future* (pp. 29-41). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-8346-7_3 (Accessed on 6/5/2025)

⁶ Denchak, M., (2021). Paris Climate Agreement: Everything You Need to Know Natural Resources Defense Council. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/paris-climate-agreement-everything-you-need-know> (Accessed on 30/4/2025)

⁷ Kozul-Wright, R., (2023, June 14). A climate finance goal that works for developing countries.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Climate change / Cameroon | Interactive Country Fiches. <https://dicf.unepgrid.ch/cameroon/climate-change> (Accessed on 18/12/2024)

of expanding rural electrification.¹ It mandates the government to support nationwide rural electrification, either through connection to a centralized grid or via distributed generation. Priority is given to distributed generation from renewable sources, except when these are limited, insufficient, or costly. The law permits the transmission system operator or local distributors to purchase excess electricity produced from renewable energy.²

Furthermore, the law commits the State to fostering renewable energy development by establishing regulations for research, development, equipment manufacturing, and project financing. It also allows for the creation of an agency dedicated to renewable energy promotion when needed. Electricity utilities are required to connect renewable energy sources to the grid, with connection fees paid by the applicant, while the terms for energy purchase by utilities are determined by decree. Additionally, the law advocates for energy efficiency initiatives across industrial, transportation, commercial, and residential sectors and authorizes the government to set regulations defining the responsibilities, conditions, and resources necessary to implement these measures.

2.1.5 Forestry Code 2024

The Cameroon Forestry Code of 2024³ is a strategic legal framework aimed at achieving climate governance by promoting sustainable forest management, enhancing community rights, and regulating forest use to mitigate deforestation and forest degradation, which are critical drivers of climate change in Cameroon. The 1994 law mandates detailed forest management plans for logging companies to ensure ecological, economic, and social sustainability of production forests. This aims to balance timber production with conservation; thereby reducing unsustainable harvesting that contributes to carbon emissions⁴. The law classifies forests into Permanent Forest Estate (PFE), which includes protected forests where logging is prohibited, and Non-Permanent Forest Estate, which can be used for production or conversion under strict guidelines⁵. This zoning supports conservation efforts and sustainable use, critical for maintaining forest carbon stocks⁶. The Code recognizes community forests, granting local communities rights to manage and benefit from forest resources under approved management plans. This decentralization promotes local stewardship, which is essential for effective forest conservation and climate mitigation.⁷

The law incorporates principles like the “Polluter Pays Principle” and “Responsibility Principle,” holding polluters accountable for environmental harm. This supports climate governance by enforcing environmental responsibility in forest exploitation⁸. The Code aims to improve transparency and efficiency in allocating harvesting rights, which is crucial to combat illegal logging a major cause of deforestation and carbon emissions.

However, despite these strategic provisions, challenges remain. Studies indicate that enforcement has been weak, with many logging operations not fully adhering to sustainable management plans, limiting the law’s effectiveness in reducing deforestation and enhancing climate governance. Additionally, benefit-sharing mechanisms and forest rights for some stakeholders are inadequate, hindering incentives for sustainable practices and climate mitigation.

Cameroon, enriched by a mosaic of cultural diversity and set against the backdrop of varied landscapes, holds a distinct position in the African continent due to its socioeconomic and environmental intricacies. These dynamics, ranging from its expansive economy to its extensive natural resources, give it a unique edge in taking a leadership role in climate governance within the region. Recognizing the delicate interplay between global obligations and localized necessities, Cameroon has continuously sought to harmonize its international

¹ Cameroon Ramps Up Climate Action with Multi-Agency Agreement <https://www.stopblablacam.com/society/0805-12314-cameroon-ramps-up-climate-action-with-multi-agency-agreement/> (Accessed on the 15/5/2025)

² Progress, Challenges and Prospects for Climate Policy in Cameroon. <https://camepi.org/agriculture-and-trade/progress-challenges-and-prospects-for-climate-policy-in-cameroon/> (Accessed on 15/5/2025)

³ Law No. 2024/008 of 24th July 2024 to lay down Forestry and Wildlife Regulations.

⁴ Sustainable forest management in Cameroon needs more than... https://www.cifor-icraf.org/publications/pdf_files/articles/ACerutti0801.pdf (Accessed on 18/4/2025)

⁵ Cameroon Case Study – AquaDocs. <https://aquadocs.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/485b7d24-2378-4f1d-8d43-2a015b319464/content> (Accessed on 17/4/2025)

⁶ Overview and Analyses of Key National Policies, Strategies and... https://www.proforest.net/fileadmin/uploads/proforest/Documents/Publications/Overview_and_Analyses_-_Cameroon_June_2021.pdf (Accessed on 18/9/2025)

⁷ Community forestry in Cameroon. <https://www.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/G04191.pdf> (Accessed on 18/5/2025)

⁸ *Ibid.*

commitments with its domestic priorities. This approach not only ensures alignment with the broader goals of international climate conventions but also addresses the pressing needs of its populous and diverse citizenry. By judiciously balancing these global responsibilities with inherent national needs, Cameroon is strategically positioning itself to delineate a future marked by sustainability, resilience, and inclusive growth. As the nation embarks on this journey, its strategies and successes can serve as a template for other African countries aiming to bolster their climate governance frameworks.

2.2 The Creation of Various Implementing Institutions

The Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) leads climate governance, supported by the National Observatory on Climate Change (ONACC).¹ Cameroon has developed key policy documents such as the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (PNACC) 2015-2019 and updated its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in 2021, committing to a 35% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, conditional on financing.²

2.2.1 The Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED)

MINEPDED is the key government authority responsible for coordinating Cameroon's climate agenda, including policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation of climate strategies such as the National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)³. MINEPDED led the development and adoption of the NAPCC, a strategic plan with 20 adaptation programmes targeting sectors like agriculture and water⁴. It is responsible for coordinating implementation and annual evaluation, strengthening institutional capacity for climate resilience⁵. The Ministry works with other ministries (Economy, Finance, Planning) and local governments to implement climate policies, although formal definitions of roles and coordination mechanisms need strengthening.⁶ MINEPDED is tasked with coordinating climate change policies and activities. While MINEPDED leads climate governance, it faces resource and capacity constraints that limit its effectiveness. There is also insufficient inter-ministerial coordination, which hampers integrated climate action across sectors.⁷

The First National Communication to the UNFCCC, submitted in 2005, identifies health, agriculture and coastal zones as the three main areas of vulnerabilities. The National Communication established the *Cellule Nationale des Changements Climatiques* (CNCC) within the Ministry of the Forests and Environment. In 2004, this Ministry was divided into the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife and the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection (MINEP), and in 2012 MINEP became the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED), reflecting an increased focus on sustainable development issues. The CNCC's goals include creating a GHG inventory, establishing adaptation measures, implementing an information system and database, designing sectoral projects addressing priority climate actions and evaluating climate change impacts and policies.⁸

2.2.2 National Observatory on Climate Change (ONACC)

In 2009, a Presidential Decree created the National Climate Change Observatory (ONACC) under the supervision of MINEP (now part of MINEPDED). This Decree established the National Climate Change Observatory (ONACC) as a national legal implementing body of climate change policies (though not yet in operation as of 2014). The Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) is responsible for the supervision of the ONACC, and overall co-ordination of climate change

¹ ONACC | Observatoire National sur les Changements Climatiques. <https://onacc.cm> (Accessed on 17/4/2025)

² Climate change / Cameroon | Interactive Country Fiches. <https://dicf.unepgrid.ch/cameroon/climate-change> (Accessed on 14/4/2025)

³ Cameroon: Request for an Arrangement under the Resilience and ... <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2024/053/article-A001-en.xml> (Accessed on 15/4/2025)

⁴ 2 plan national climate du Cameroun – Minepded. <https://minepded.gov.cm/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/PNC-APRIL-2025-EN-1.pdf> (Accessed on 18/4/2025)

⁵ Cameroon – on the Road to Climate Resilience through its First National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change <https://www.gwp.org/en/we-act/change-and-impact/Impact-Stories/cameroon--on-the-road-to-climate-resilience-through-its-first-national-adaptation-plan-for-climate-change/> (Accessed on 17/4/2025)

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ National Observatory on Climate Change (Cameroon) - Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Observatory_on_Climate_Change_\(Cameroon\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Observatory_on_Climate_Change_(Cameroon)) (Accessed on 17/4/2025)

⁸ *Ibid.*

activities and policies within the country. It is supervised by the Ministry of Finance for the financial matters.¹

The responsibilities of the ONACC are to: establish relevant climate indicators for monitoring environmental policy; carry out prospective analyses to provide a vision on climate change, to provide weather and climate data to all sectors concerned and to develop annual climate balance of Cameroon;² educate and promote studies on the identification of indicators, impacts and risks of climate change; collect, analyse and provide policy makers, national and international organisations information on climate change in Cameroon; initiate activities to promote awareness on and provide information to prevent climate change; serve as operational instrument in the context of other activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; propose to the government preventive measures for GHG reduction as well as mitigation and/or adaptation to the adverse effects and risks of climate change; serve as an instrument for cooperation with other regional and international observatories operating in the climate sector; to facilitate the achievement of consideration to payment for ecosystem services provided by forests through the management, conservation and restoration of ecosystems; and to strengthen the capacity of institutions and bodies responsible for collecting data on climate change to create a nation-wide, reliable network for collecting and transmitting the data.³

The Board of Advisers formulates general policies of the ONACC. The Board consists of following members: the President of the Republic; the Prime Minister; a representative from the relevant ministries (MINEPDED, Ministries of Forests, Finance, Technical Cooperation, Scientific Research Agriculture, Water and Energy, and Meteorology); and elected members. The Board members are appointed by Presidential Decrees. Members and the chair of the Board are appointed for the term of three year, which is renewable once.⁴

ONACC's wide-ranging responsibilities include establishing climate indicators, monitoring and forecasting climate change, and providing climate data to the government and all sectors impacted by climate change. It also advises the government on mitigation and adaptation strategies, acts as a liaison for regional and international cooperation, and supports other organizations in developing their capacity to gather climate-related information.⁵

ONACC is a governmental body established in 2009 to monitor and evaluate the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of climate change in Cameroon. It collects, analyzes, and disseminates climate data and indicators critical for informed decision-making⁶. ONACC produces annual climate reports, greenhouse gas inventories, and carbon sequestration assessments, which are essential for Cameroon's compliance with international agreements like the Paris Agreement and for accessing climate finance.⁷

The Observatory proposes preventive and adaptive measures to the government to mitigate adverse climate effects. It also promotes awareness and education on climate change risks and adaptation strategies. ONACC supports capacity building for climate data collection and collaborates with national and international partners. It also fosters synergy among government agencies and local authorities to enhance climate resilience.⁸

2.2.3 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Beyond the UNFCCC, a myriad of other organizations actively shaped the global response to climate change, offering diverse perspectives, resources, and expertise. The World Bank, for instance, dedicates substantial financial resources and technical knowledge to aid countries in their adaptation and mitigation efforts. Through funding for infrastructure projects, capacity-building initiatives, and research, the World Bank ensures that nations, especially those most vulnerable, are equipped to address climate-induced challenges.⁹

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is another cornerstone in the global climate effort. It

¹ African Development Bank Group (AFDB), *Études de développement des énergies renouvelables et d'efficacité énergétique*, 2014. [URL: <http://www.afdb.org/en/projects-and-operations/project-portfolio/project/p-cm-fa0-007/>]. (Accessed 31 March 2025)

² Africa Adaptation Programme (APP), Cameroon, 2014. [URL: <http://www.undp-aap.org/countries/cameroon/>]. (Accessed 26/4/2025)

³ Prime Minister's Office, Official Website, 2019. [URL: <http://www.spm.gov.cm/en.html>]. (Accessed 31 March 2025)

⁴ Republic of Cameroon, Presidency of the Republic, 2014. [URL: <https://www.prc.cm/en/>] Accessed 31 March 2025)

⁵ Presidential Decree No. 2009/410 establishing the creation ...
https://climate-laws.org/document/presidential-decree-no-2009-410-establishing-the-creation-organization-and-functions-of-the-national-observatory-on-climate-change_5e00 (Accessed on 17/4/2025)

⁶ Observatoire National sur les Changements Climatiques – ONACC. https://onacc.cm/pages/news_detail.php?news_id=43 (Accessed on 17/4/2024)

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Equipe – ONACC. https://onacc.cm/pages/dg_onacc.php (Accessed on 18/4/2025)

⁹ *Ibid.*

consolidates scientific research from around the world to provide objective insights into the state of the climate and potential future scenarios. By offering evidence-based recommendations and drawing attention to critical areas of concern, the IPCC shapes policy decisions at both national and international levels, ensuring they are grounded in the latest scientific understanding.

Meanwhile, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) bring a grassroots dimension to the global climate movement. Through advocacy, research, and on-the-ground projects, NGOs bridge the gap between local concerns and global discussions. They highlight the voices of those most affected by climate change, ensuring that global strategies are both inclusive and effective. Furthermore, NGOs often pioneer innovative solutions, collaborate across borders, and act as watchdogs, holding governments and corporations accountable for their environmental commitments. Collectively, these organizations contribute layers of expertise, advocacy, and action, making the global response to climate change multifaceted and robust.

2.2.4 The Steering Committee for Activities Relating to Climate Governance

In 2012, a Prime Ministerial Decree No.103/CAB/PM regarding the creation, organization and operation of the Steering Committee for activities to reduce emissions from deforestation, degradation, sustainable management and conservation of forests, REDD+, 13th June 2012 was passed.

This Decree established the Steering Committee for REDD+. The Committee is headed by the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED). The Committee is responsible for formulating proposals for REDD+ strategy options, providing feedbacks regarding the implementation of the strategies, developing selection criteria for REDD+ projects, evaluating REDD+ pilot project proposals, promoting REDD+ activities and validating the work of the Technical Secretary.¹ The Technical Secretary is chaired by MINEPDED and assisted by the Minister of Forests and Fauna (MINFOF). Other members include the Focal Point of the UNFCCC and the National coordinator of REDD+.²

2.2.5 Courts for Sanctions

Researchers have highlighted the growing role of courts in climate governance. Their influence can be seen across five interconnected areas: holding parties accountable, reshaping power dynamics, addressing vulnerabilities and injustices, expanding the scope and effectiveness of international climate law, and using climate science to resolve legal disputes. Through their innovative actions in these fields, courts are emerging as key players in global climate governance.³

For instance, courts support climate governance by empowering stakeholders and affected groups, ensuring climate change is prioritized on political agendas, raising public awareness about the need for climate action, interpreting and enforcing a wide range of climate-related laws at domestic, regional, and international levels, and settling disputes involving climate-related injustices. In doing so, courts provide diverse stakeholders with a legal platform to address and resolve conflicts connected to climate change.⁴

2.3 Adoption and Enforcement of Policy Frameworks

The Cameroon government, recognizing the imminent threats of climate change, launched several policies and initiatives like the Cameroon Vision 2035, June 2009, National Development Strategy (SND30), the National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) and host of others.

2.3.1 Cameroon Vision 2035

This document outlines Cameroon's broad policy framework aimed at national development. Its main goals include drastically reducing poverty, achieving middle-income status, becoming a newly industrialized country, and strengthening democracy and national unity. The Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development prepared the document.

Vision 2035 recognizes climate change as one of the two primary economic challenges facing Cameroon. It highlights the risks posed by overexploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation, which contribute to climate change impacts. Given Cameroon's partial location in the Sahel region, the country already experiences adverse effects such as desertification, rising temperatures, unpredictable seasons, sea-level rise, floods, volcanic activity, landslides, rockfalls, and toxic emissions. The document emphasizes reducing

¹ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), AAP Knowledge Management Needs Survey Report 2012: April 2012, 2012. URL: http://undp.adaptationlearning.net/sites/default/files/KMNS%20Report%20-%20English_0.pdf. (Accessed 31 July 2024)

² *Ibid.*

³ Kotzé, J.; Mayer, B; Harro V; Setzer, J; et al., (2024). Courts, climate litigation and the evolution of earth system law. *Global Policy*, 15(1), pp. 5–22:15.

⁴ *Ibid.*

greenhouse gas emissions as a crucial regional strategy to combat climate change. The government commits to pursuing high economic growth while meeting the Millennium Development Goals. According to the proposed timeline for Vision 2035, the first phase (2010–2019) includes drafting and implementing major environmental policies to address climate change impacts.¹ Climate change mitigation is also one of three key objectives for the second phase (2020–2027). Planned actions involve protecting and sustainably managing forest ecosystems, combating desertification, and supporting regional initiatives such as the Niger Basin and Lake Chad Basin projects. The document also mentions diversifying energy sources and replacing fossil fuels with clean energy, though it does not specify quantitative targets.²

2.3.2 National Development Strategy (SND30)

Climate change is recognized as a critical challenge, with adaptation and mitigation integrated as core objectives to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth.³ The government commits to incorporating climate concerns into sectoral policies, strengthening natural resource management, and developing waste management strategies promoting corporate social responsibility.⁴

2.3.3 National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC)

Adopted in 2015, the NAPCC outlines 20 adaptation programs across sectors like agriculture, water, and sanitation, emphasizing improved climate monitoring, early warning systems, and capacity building.⁵ It promotes coordination among sectoral administrations, decentralized authorities, civil society, and international partners. Implementation is structured in two five-year action plans, with MINEPDED responsible for coordination and evaluation.⁶

2.3.4 Cameroon's Engagement to REDD+ and LULUCF

Since 2005, Cameroon has been actively involved in REDD+, with its REDD+ Readiness Plan (RPP) approved in 2013. That same year, the country secured a readiness grant of USD 3.6 million⁷. The Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) is responsible for overseeing REDD+ initiatives. Cameroon participates in various international and national programs focused on improving forest management and addressing land use challenges⁸. Notably, it was among the first countries to sign the European Union's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA). The country is also engaged in global REDD+ discussions.⁹

In 2012, Cameroon established the REDD+ Steering Committee, led by MINEPDED, which approves and guides activities aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility funded Cameroon's Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) in 2013.

Collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) plays a key role in shaping forestry and land use policies. For example, in 2011, MINEPDED organized a workshop bringing together domestic and international stakeholders including civil society organizations (CSOs), government officials, and private sector representatives to explore ways for civil society to contribute more effectively to the national REDD+ process. This event led to the creation of a National CSO Platform on REDD and Climate Change, designed to serve as a

¹ Republic of Cameroon, Growth and Employment Strategy Paper: Reference Framework for Government Action over the Period 2010-2020, 2009. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2010/cr10257.pdf>. (Accessed 4 January 2025)

² *Ibid*

³ Climate Change in Cameroon: Key Challenges and Reform ... <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2024/052/article-A003-en.xml> (Accessed on 14/4/2025)

⁴ Cameroon: Selected Issues; IMF Country Report No. 24/52; December 7, 2023 <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/downloadpdf/view/journals/002/2024/052/article-A003-en.pdf> (Accessed on 14/4/2025)

⁵ Cameroon – on the Road to Climate Resilience through its First National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change <https://www.gwp.org/en/we-act/change-and-impact/Impact-Stories/cameroon--on-the-road-to-climate-resilience-through-its-first-national-adaptation-plan-for-climate-change/> (Accessed on 14/4/2025)

⁶ Cameroon: Preparing National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change... <https://iwrmaactionhub.org/node/649/printable/pdf> (Accessed on 14/4/2025)

⁷ Jänicke M., (2017). The multi-level system of global climate governance—the model and its current state. *Environmental Policy and Governance*, 27(2), pp.108-121:114.

⁸ Phuong M, Kathryn D, Gleeson B., (2018). Metropolitan strategies and climate governance: Towards new evaluative approaches. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 42(5), pp. 934-951:950.

⁹ *Ibid*.

bridge between the government and other stakeholders.

2.3.5 African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032)

This 10-year strategic framework sets out the continent's collective approach to climate governance, aiming to build climate resilience, promote low-emission development pathways, and enhance cooperation among African countries.¹ It aligns with Africa's Agenda 2063 and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to support sustainable, climate-resilient development across the continent.²

This Strategy provides harmonized priorities and actions for adaptation, mitigation, resource mobilization, technology development, and inclusive climate governance. It also complements existing regional initiatives such as the Africa Adaptation Initiative and the Great Green Wall.³ The African Union Commission coordinates its implementation alongside regional economic communities and member states to ensure effective regional collaboration on climate change.

The Action Plan (2022-2032) seeks to achieve climate governance through Strengthening governance and policy frameworks by enhancing climate policy coherence, multi-scalar governance, and institutional coordination across national, regional, and continental levels.⁴ This includes improving the roles and coordination among the African Union, regional economic communities (RECs), member states, and other stakeholders to ensure harmonized climate action; Coordinated regional climate action to unify efforts across countries, facilitating joint planning, implementation, and monitoring of climate initiatives.⁵ This helps in addressing transboundary climate risks and leveraging regional synergies for mitigation and adaptation; anticipatory governance and long-term planning by promoting proactive, forward-looking strategies that integrate climate risks into development planning and policy-making, ensuring resilience and sustainability over the next decade and beyond; and establishing robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems to track progress,⁶ enhance transparency, and improve climate governance effectiveness through feedback mechanisms and stakeholder engagement, building climate-resilient capacities by supporting adaptation and mitigation efforts that reduce vulnerability to climate impacts while promoting low-emission development pathways aligned with Africa's socio-economic goals and Agenda 2063.⁷

3. Other Strategies

Beyond the efforts of nation-states to collaborate internationally on climate governance, a growing number of nation-states, non-state actors, and private entities are engaging in various simultaneous global climate governance partnerships. These participants include cities, regions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and corporations.⁸ Their rising involvement has prompted scholars to rethink the dynamics of power within climate governance and the interplay between public and private authority.

To better understand the different types of climate governance networks, it is helpful to categorize their components.⁹ Research on climate governance identifies different modes of governance such as self-governing, enabling governance, provision-based governance, and authority-based governance along with distinctions based on the types of actors involved and the political scale (supranational, national, regional, local). For this discussion, partnerships are classified based on the actors involved into three groups: public climate governance partnerships, public-private climate governance partnerships, and private climate governance partnerships. Although modes of governance and scale are also valid ways to categorize these networks, grouping them by

¹ Ayodeji O, Oluwatayo B., (2023). Climate Governance, Resilience and Entrepreneurship in Nigeria: An Empirical Review. *Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Climate Change and Disaster Risk Adaptation*, 5, pp. 445-454:452.

² Amobi D., Onyishi T., (2015). Governance and climate change in Nigeria: A public policy perspective. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*, 9(2), pp. 199-209:203.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Onwusameka S, Gladson L, Ugbebor J., Orikpete F., (2023). Developing climate governance strategies in Nigeria: An emphasis on methane emissions mitigation. *The Journal of Engineering and Exact Sciences*, 9(9), 173-183.

⁵ Sippel M, Jenssen T., (2009, November 27). What about local climate governance? A review of promise and problems. *A Review of Promise and Problems*, 2009, pp. 89-106:101.

⁶ Wolfram M, Jeroen V, et al, (2019). Learning in urban climate governance: concepts, key issues and challenges. *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 21(1), pp. 1-15:9.

⁷ Kern K, Gotelind A, Sustainable E, Climate P., (2008). Governing climate change in cities: modes of urban climate governance in multi-level systems. *Competitive Cities and Climate Change*, 171, pp. 171-195:190.

⁸ Bulkeley, H., Newell, P., (2009). *Op.cit.*

⁹ Bailey I., (2007). *Op.cit.*

participating actors is considered to provide the clearest differentiation, despite some overlap among approaches.¹

3.1 Establishment of Partnerships

This takes the form of either public or private partnership.

3.1.1 Public Partnerships

Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA's): MEA's can take the form of non-legally binding declarations, or legally binding treaties. Treaties between nations include framework conventions like the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, signed at the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). There are four main criticisms of MEAs. First, their policies have been weakened by successive compromises between bargaining nations.² Second, where one nation refuses to participate (as occurred with the United States withdrawal from Kyoto), they can still benefit from measures taken by participating nations (for example measures to reduce their GHG emissions), even though they have not had to take action themselves.³ Third, developing country governments lack the capacity to shape and influence negotiating processes, giving developed countries disproportionate power to influence proceedings.⁴ Fourth, the number of countries involved in international meetings inevitably leads to conflicts of interest between nations that can make it difficult to reach legally binding agreements.⁵

Global city and regional partnerships: Beyond the local scale, the success of urban climate governance depends on horizontal and vertical collaboration between regions and cities.⁶ Global city and regional partnerships have been identified as showing particular promise.⁷ These can be built into public non-state networks, for example the C40 network, the Global Cities Covenant on Climate, the Cities for Climate Protection Programme (CCPP) and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. The Under 2 Coalition aims to foster action among subnational governments. Through these networks, mitigation measures and adaptation strategies can be adopted by participating cities worldwide. A criticism of global city and regional partnerships is that their exclusive nature limits influence to participating cities and regions which risks drawing resources away from less powerful city and regional actors.⁸

3.1.2 Private Partnerships

Self-Regulating Private Networks: Recently, multinational corporations have formed partnerships within private networks designed to promote industry self-regulation. These networks are frequently coordinated by NGOs and receive government funding.⁹ Examples include the Global Gas Flaring Reduction Partnership and the Carbon Disclosure Project, highlighting the critical role NGOs play in integrating market participants into environmental and climate governance¹⁰. While these networks have the potential to drive behavioral changes conducive to effective global climate governance, they currently operate with minimal regulation and face criticism regarding their legitimacy, accountability, and transparency.¹¹

3.1.3 Public-Private Partnerships

- **Type II Partnerships**

¹ Betsill, M. M.; H. Bulkeley, (2006). Cities and the multilevel governance of global climate change. *Global Governance*, 12(2), pp. 144-159:150.

² James Evans, (2011). *Environmental Governance*. London: Routledge, 67.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Bulkeley, H.; Newell, P., (2009). *Op.cit.*

⁵ James E, (2011). *Op.cit.*

⁶ Alber, G.; K. Kern, Governing climate change in cities: modes of urban climate governance in multi-level systems (Accessed on 18/4/2025)

⁷ Pattberg, P., J. Strippel, (2008). Beyond the public and private divide: remapping transnational climate governance in the 21st century. *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 8(4), pp. 367–388:380.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Pattberg, P., O. Enechi, (2009). The business of transnational climate governance: legitimate, accountable, and transparent. *St Antony's International Review*, 5(1), pp. 76–98:90.

¹⁰ James Evans, (2011). *Environmental Governance*. London: Routledge., *Op.cit.*

¹¹ Pattberg, P., J. Strippel, (2008). Beyond the public and private divide: remapping transnational climate governance in the 21st century. *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 8(4), pp. 367–388:270.

These are collaborative efforts involving public, private, and civic organizations that arise from international treaties. The term “Type II” distinguishes these partnerships from “Type I” partnerships, which are traditional multilateral agreements directly stemming from such treaties. A notable example of Type II partnerships includes the roughly 300 collaborations established during the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.

- **Vertical “Supply Chain” Public-Private Partnerships**

These partnerships focus on implementing internationally agreed goals, like the Millennium Development Goals, by fostering cooperation along supply chains. This is done by facilitating interactions among private sector stakeholders and encouraging constructive dialogue between public and private entities to develop and execute government policies, regulations, programs, and initiatives. The UK’s Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes exemplifies this model.¹

- **Targeted Phaseout Initiatives**

The Powering Past Coal Alliance is a global coalition of both governmental and non-governmental actors working to expedite the worldwide phase-out of coal. Similar networks, such as the ZEV Alliance and the Global Drive to Zero, aim to eliminate combustion engine vehicles in light-duty and heavy-duty categories, respectively.²

3.2 Creating Public Awareness

Creating public policies and making decisions that directly relate to the international climate governance processes of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): for example, the national communications that each country must present to the UNFCCC may be a starting point for climate activists to request spaces for accountability regarding climate ambition in their countries.³ These communications include a national inventory of GHG emissions and other details on climate action implementation.

4. Conclusion

Cameroon’s climate governance strategy is multi-faceted, combining national policy integration, institutional capacity building, sectoral adaptation programs, and stakeholder engagement, but it faces challenges in financing, regulatory enforcement, and local implementation that require ongoing attention to ensure effective climate action.

Effective climate governance requires clear goal-setting, innovative policy frameworks, and the integration of climate strategies across all sectors and levels of government. This includes adopting market-based mechanisms like carbon pricing, regulatory measures such as green building codes, and investing in climate-resilient infrastructure to both mitigate emissions and adapt to climate impacts. Crucially, governance must be inclusive and collaborative, engaging state and non-state actors—governments, businesses, civil society, and local communities—to foster shared responsibility and coordinated action. Multilevel governance that enhances coordination vertically (across government tiers) and horizontally (across sectors and stakeholders) is essential to maximize synergies and address trade-offs effectively. Institutional capacity building and long-term commitment are vital for sustaining climate action through changing political cycles. Establishing legal frameworks, independent advisory bodies, and transparent accountability mechanisms ensures credible and sustained climate governance.

As part of its Recommendations to the Government of Cameroon, there is the need to establish a comprehensive climate change legal framework that mandates integration of climate considerations into all public policies, planning, and budgeting processes to ensure sustained and coordinated climate action across sectors, strengthen institutional capacity and coordination by operationalizing climate governance bodies like the Ministry of Environment and the National Observatory on Climate Change, and create a national technical committee to oversee synergies between mitigation and adaptation efforts.

To the Local Communities, increase local awareness and education on climate change impacts and adaptation strategies to empower communities to participate effectively in climate governance and resilience building and engage actively in local climate action plans by collaborating with local governments to develop and implement adaptation and mitigation measures tailored to community needs.

¹ Pattberg, P., J. Striiple, (2008). Beyond the public and private divide: remapping transnational climate governance in the 21st century. *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 8(4), pp. 367–388:380.

² International Zero-Emission Vehicle Alliance (ZEV Alliance) - Climate Initiatives Platform. climateinitiativesplatform.org (Accessed on 18/4/2025)

³ *Ibid.*

To the International Community, support Cameroon in developing and implementing a robust climate legal and institutional framework through technical assistance, capacity building, and knowledge transfer, and increase climate finance flows with flexible, long-term funding mechanisms that prioritize adaptation and resilience projects, particularly at local and community levels.

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