



EPA

**Economic Partnership Agreement
Central Africa – European Union**

**Practical Guide
for Cameroonian Companies**



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**Central Africa – European Union
Economic Partnership Agreement**

The EPA at a Glance

The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) concluded by the European Union with a number of countries and regions in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) aim to stimulate their long-term economic development and contribute to poverty reduction.

Those agreements are development tools using trade and economic integration as a way to support participation of the ACP countries in the global economy. Compatible with the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the EPAs aim to promote the economic development by progressively removing barriers to trade between the ACP countries and the EU and reinforcing cooperation in all trade-related areas.

The negotiations with the eight countries of the Central-African region¹ started in October 2003. The EPA between Cameroon and the EU entered into force in 2014 as a stepping-stone towards a regional agreement, open to any country of the region wishing to join it².

Including a significant cooperation and development component, the EPA is a trade agreement that is both reciprocal, i.e. implying obligations for both Cameroon and the EU, and asymmetrical, i.e. with more obligations on the EU side.

This means that the EU opened its market directly to all goods originating in Cameroon, while Cameroon benefits from a transition period to eliminate its tariffs in a progressive way on 80% of EU products.

Therefore, the EPA allows Cameroon to benefit from a free access to the EU for all its export products – banana, cocoa, other fresh and processed agricultural products, aluminium, plywood, and products of other emerging industries – while allowing it to eliminate its customs tariffs on imports from Europe gradually over a period of 13 years.

This process, organised in three steps, started in Cameroon on 4 August 2016 with a reduction of import tariffs on products contributing to poverty reduction and improving the well-being of populations (such as medicines and medical equipment, paper, seeds, fertilizers). It continues with products that encourage local production (such as clinker, inputs for food processing, trucks and tractors). This process will be completed by 2029, when tariffs on imports of other EU products, which constitute an important source of fiscal revenue for Cameroon but are also useful for the Cameroonian population and businesses (including audiovisual devices, cars, motorbikes...) will be removed.

This approach allows Cameroonians to benefit from lower prices for essential products and stimulates local business activity by enabling companies to acquire imported equipment and materials at a better price.

For other products, especially those that could compete with Cameroonian food production or prevent growth of local industries, Cameroon is and will remain free to impose customs duties.

1 Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome y Principe, Chad

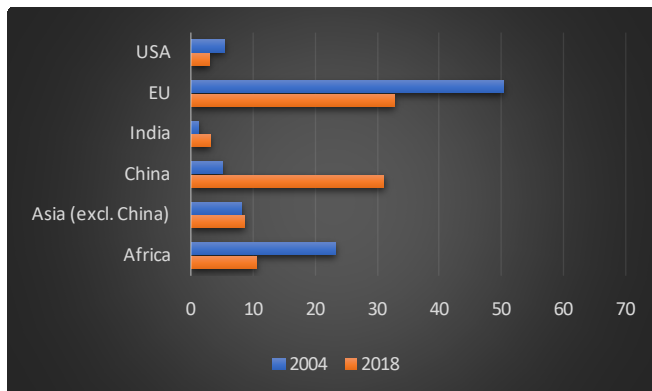
2 From the legal point of view, this is an agreement between the EU and the region of Central Africa, which, on the African side, has so far only been signed and ratified by Cameroon.

1. Cameroon-EU trade

The EU is Cameroon's most important trading partner: around 30% of Cameroon's imports come from the EU and nearly 50% of its exports go to the EU³.

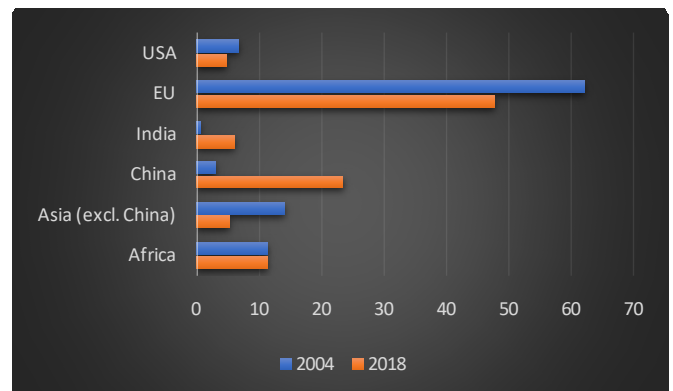
Cameroon Imports

% share by origin



Cameroon Exports

% share by destination



Source : Comtrade-UN

Thanks to the EPA, all exports from Cameroon enter the EU duty-free without any quantitative limitation. In 2019, the total imports to the EU from Cameroon amounted to €2,108 million. The main products exported from Cameroon to the EU are oil, which stand for 51% of the total export value, cocoa (20%), wood (13%), bananas (9%) and aluminium (4%)⁴. Exports of processed cocoa products (paste, butter, etc.) have increased by 83% since 2010 and reached €109 million in 2019.

Cameroon's total imports from the EU were worth €1,387 million in 2019⁵. The main EU products imported to Cameroon are machinery and industrial components (21%), cars, trucks and tractors (11%), pharmaceutical products (6%), as well as articles of iron or steel (6%).

3 Average 2017-2018

4 Eurostat 2019

5 For more information about Cameroon-EU trade:
<https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/central-africa/>

2. Main features of the EPA

The Economic Partnership Agreement aims to promote the economic development of Cameroon by increasing trade. To this end, the EPA⁶:

- Defines the rules for trade in goods and sets free access to the EU market for Cameroonian products;
- Specifies modalities of the progressive elimination by Cameroon of its customs duties on products originating in the EU;
- Sets a dispute resolution mechanism;
- Associates trade rules with the development cooperation perspective.

The EPA is an international treaty: it is binding for both parties to the Agreement during an unlimited period. This characteristic of the EPA, unlike previous non-reciprocal trade arrangements (Lomé Convention) or the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP)⁷ granted unilaterally by the EU, gives a reassurance to local and international investors that look for a stable and predictable investment climate over the long term.

2.1. Trade in goods under the EPA: *Benefits for Cameroonian Companies*

The main objective of the EPA is to contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction in Central Africa. This should be achieved through a number of measures related to exports and imports, to and from the EU, and through measures that protect the Cameroon's agricultural sector and its emerging and infant industries.

2.1.1. Exports: preferential access to the EU market for Cameroonian products

A **preferential unlimited access to the EU market for any product originating in Cameroon** features among the main benefits offered by the EPA. It means that the Cameroonian firms can access EU market without paying any customs duties or being limited by any quotas. In this way, the EU single market, with its 450 millions consumers, an important purchasing power and a market where goods can circulate freely based on unified regulatory requirements, is wide-open to Cameroonian products without any time limit.

6 The text of the EPA is available here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:057:SOM:EN:HTML>

7 The GSP is a scheme of trade preferences for products from developing countries (lower middle-income or least developed countries with the EU initiative "Everything but Arms"). It has been put in place by a number of developed countries in the framework of the World Trade Organization rules. Unlike the EPA, the GSP is not an agreement negotiated by the parties.

To be able to benefit from this privileged access, Cameroonian firms that want to export to one or more EU Member States must ensure that their products fulfill the criteria allowing them to be qualified as “originating” from Cameroon. These conditions are called “rules of origin” and are explained in more detail below (see chapter 2.2).

To be admitted, products must nevertheless also meet the EU’s health and safety requirements. To this end, projects financed by the EU⁸ offer assistance to Cameroonian exporters, explaining all the criteria relating to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures⁹.

Free Access to the EU Market

27 Countries

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden

A market of **450 millions consumers** with an **important purchasing power**

A single market with **the same regulatory requirements** and free movement of goods



2.1.2. Imports without customs duties: savings for Cameroonian producers and consumers

The EPA provides for a **progressive phasing out of Cameroon’s import tariffs** on 75% of products (or tariff lines) originating in the EU, or put differently, on 80% of its imports from EU¹⁰, over a transitional period of 13 years (2016 and 2029).

The elimination of tariffs on intermediate goods and machinery from the EU benefits Cameroonian companies. By giving them access to quality inputs and equipment at a lower cost, it allows them to move upmarket and generate more added value.

8 See chapter 4 below, as well as the directory of support programs: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eu_support_to_private_sector.pdf

9 <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/fr/content/products-requirements>

10 The EPA’s commitments to phase out Cameroon’s customs duties concern 75% of the 5,388 lines of the tariff nomenclature. This does not mean, however, that Cameroon imports all 5,388 products from the EU. By considering the volume of imports by tariff line, we obtain a weighted measure of 80% market opening.

The gradual elimination by Cameroon of customs duties on imports of certain products originating in the EU (also called “liberalisation” or “tariff dismantling”) takes place in several stages, according to a specific timetable for each of the three product categories¹¹.

- **The first category** includes **basic consumer goods, as well as inputs used by Cameroon’s industries**, for which there is no domestic supply. Those correspond to almost a third (32%) of all tariff lines¹² and cover, among others, medicines, medical instruments and appliances, fertilisers and seeds, as well as printing paper. The elimination of tariffs for these products contributes to poverty reduction and improves the well-being of populations. Following a transition period that started on 4 August 2016, with a gradual reduction of 25% per year, all products originating in the EU that fall into this category **can, from 4 August 2019, be imported into Cameroon duty-free**.
- **The second category** of products contributes to the **promotion of local production** by Cameroonian companies. It corresponds to 17% of all tariff lines and covers among others clinker (used in the production of cement), inputs for the food industry, energy generators, various industrial equipments, trucks, vans and tractors. The gradual elimination of tariffs for this category of products reduces the cost of inputs for local businesses. It has been in progress since 4 August 2017 with a reduction of 15% of the initial rate per year. European products covered by this category should therefore become **duty-free upon imports into Cameroon as from August 2023**.
- **The third category** concerns imports of consumer goods important as a source of fiscal income, such as cars and motorbikes, cameras and video projectors, watches and clocks, eyeglasses, sport equipment and musical instruments. They represent 26% of all tariff lines. The tariff reduction for this group of products began on 1 January 2021. The rates will decrease at a pace of 10% of the initial tariff per year to eventually disappear in **August 2029**.

From **August 2029, all products under those three categories will be imported into Cameroon without customs payments**, provided they are genuinely of EU origin (see chapter 2 below).

11 The detailed list of products belonging to each of these categories can be consulted on the website of the Directorate General of Customs:

Group 1: http://www.douanes.cm/douane/images/PDF/APE_SIXIEME_PHASE_GROUPE_1.pdf

Group 2: http://www.douanes.cm/douane/images/PDF/APE_SIXIEME_PHASE_GROUPE_2.pdf

Group 3: http://www.douanes.cm/douane/images/PDF/APE_SIXIEME_PHASE_GROUPE_3.pdf

or in annex III to the EPA:

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:L:2009:057:FULL&from=FR#L_2009057FR.01000201

12 These are defined according to the 6-digit nomenclature of the Harmonised System of 2017 (HS2017) determined at the global level by the World Customs Organization (WCO). This classification is updated by the WCO every 5 years (change of base).

The EPA-based gradual elimination of tariffs results in improved welfare by lowering the price of consumer products. This passes through **price cuts for imported goods** in the domestic market, given the fact that they are no longer taxed with an import duty. Competition between companies to increase their market share allows the spread of this price reduction to all goods, including produced locally.

Thus, for example, printing and stationery products recorded an -11% decline of sales prices in 2019 due to the fact that the raw materials involved are in more than 50% included in the EPA. The significant competition existing in this sector imposes price competitiveness and the gains obtained by the elimination of customs duties have thus been transmitted to the consumer. This situation is also observed for other products, such as the cement, with a -6% drop in cement sales prices recorded in 2019¹³.

Access to the Cameroon's market for EU products

	Products originating in the EU, for which Cameroon eliminates its import duties				Products excluded from tariff elimination
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	% of products (TL) under all 3 groups	% of products (tariff lines - TL)
Year	% of tariff reduction				
2016	-25%			32%	25%
2017	-50%	-15%		49%	25%
2018	-75%	-30%		49%	25%
2019	-100%	-45%		49%	25%
2020		-45%			25%
2021		-60% (january)	-10% (january)	75%	25%
		-75% (august)	-20% (august)		
2022		-90%	-30%	75%	25%
2023		-100%	-40%	75%	25%
2024			-50%	75%	25%
2025			-60%	75%	25%
2026			-70%	75%	25%
2027			-80%	75%	25%
2028			-90%	75%	25%
2029			-100%	75%	25%
% TL	32%	17%	26%	75%	25%

Note : The tariff reductions are applied to the basic rate practiced for goods imported from all countries that are members to the World Trade Organization

13 MINEPAT, Analysis of the First Socio-Economic Effects of the Bilateral Cameroon-EU EPA for the Private Sector, 2019



2.1.3. *Protecting Cameroonian Manufacturing and Agricultural Sectors*

The EPA allows Cameroon to protect its agricultural sector as well as its infant and emerging industries. This protection operates mainly through two measures:

- **The exclusion of products from tariff dismantling:** Under the EPA, Cameroon excluded from tariff dismantling a large number of agricultural and not agricultural products, to ensure the protection of its agricultural and industrial sectors considered as sensitive and also to preserve its tax revenue. Products excluded from dismantling represent 25% of tariff lines and include mostly meat, wines and spirits, malt, dairy products, flour, certain vegetables, wood and its derivatives, second-hand clothing and textiles, paints and used tires. Importing these products from the EU will therefore always be subject to the payment of customs according to the CEMAC common external tariff rate.
- **Safeguard measures:** The EPA contains a chapter on trade defense, with guarantees allowing each party to reinstate import duties and quotas in case imports disrupt or threaten to disrupt its economy. Thanks to these measures, Cameroon can react, if necessary, to a sudden increase in imports from the EU or take additional measures to ensure its food security.

2.2. Rules of Origin: Products Eligible for Benefits of the EPA

Rules of origin are an essential element of any trade agreement because, by defining the country of origin of a product, they determine whether a given product is entitled to preferential access (for example duty-free or with a reduced duty rate) to the markets of other countries covered by the agreement.

Cameroon and the EU are currently negotiating a common reciprocal regime governing rules of origin, which will be annexed as a protocol to the EPA. In the absence of such a protocol, Cameroon benefits from the general rules of origin included in the EU Market Access Regulation, and in particular Appendix 2 of this Regulation specifying the product-specific rules¹⁴. On its part, Cameroon has published a Decree on the rules of origin applicable to products imported from the EU¹⁵ which contains rules practically identical to those in the EU Regulation.

A product is considered to originate in Cameroon or the EU if it is:

- Either produced 100% in the exporting country (also referred to as **wholly-obtained**);
- Or if it has been **sufficiently processed** in the country of export, according to the applicable rules of origin.



Appendix 2 of the EU Regulation and the Cameroonian Decree contain the lists of workings or transformations that each product must undergo to be eligible for the benefits of the EPA.

2.2.1. “Wholly obtained” Products

Wholly obtained products are finished products that do not contain any material from another country. Article 2 of the EU Regulation and Article 4 of Cameroon’s Decree contain a list of goods considered as wholly obtained in the territory of the Cameroon or that of the EU. These are, for example, mineral products extracted from their soils, sea or ocean bottoms; vegetal products harvested there; live animals born and raised in their territories or products from live animals farmed there.

14 EU Market Access Regulation 2016/1076:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2016:185:FULL&from=EN>
Voir aussi : <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/home>

15 Décret N°2016/367 du 3 août 2016 :
<https://www.prc.cm/fr/multimedia/documents/4756-decret-n-2016-367-du-03-08-2016-ape>

2.2.2. Sufficiently Worked or Processed Products

With the growth of global value chains, most products include today inputs that come sometimes from several countries. Products containing imported materials may be considered as originating from Cameroon if the final product has been sufficiently worked or processed in Cameroon according to the defined conditions. Three types of criteria determine sufficient working or transformation:



- **Added value:** The value of materials not originating in Cameroon must not exceed a certain percentage of the ex-factory price of the finished product (see Appendix 2 of the EU Regulation). The general tolerance within the framework of the EPA is 15%. This means that the value of all non-originating materials used must not exceed 15% of the ex-works price of the product. This gives Cameroonians more flexibility than other EU partners for whom the general tolerance is 10%.
- **Change in tariff classification:** Imported materials used in the production process must be classified under a different tariff heading of the Harmonized System (HS) than the finished product. The change of the tariff heading may be required at the chapter level (2 digits, so the highest level of aggregation), in which case the required transformation is drastic; or on the contrary, at the subheading level (6 digits, the finest level), in which case it is relatively minor.
- **Specific rules:** Beyond general tolerance concerning the value of non-originating materials, products may be subject to specific criteria. For instance, a particular process must be made on non-originating materials according to prescriptions different from those meeting the general tolerance, or the product must be manufactured from a specific raw material¹⁵. To give an example, a cocoa-based product will be considered as Cameroonian and therefore eligible to be exported to the EU duty-free if all ingredients not originating in Cameroon included in this product have been classified in a Harmonized System heading different from that of the finished product and if the value of the imported sugar does not exceed 30% of the ex-works price of product.

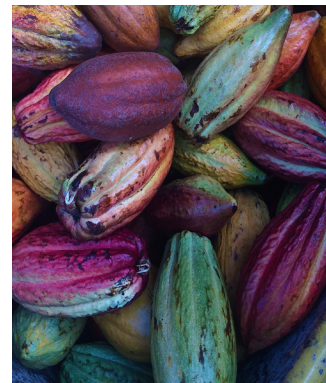
2.2.3. Insufficient Working or Processing

The other way round, some operations are considered as insufficient to make the final product Cameroonian. For example, the following working and processing is not sufficient to consider an imported product as eligible for duty-free export to the EU:

¹⁵ List of workings and transformations to which non-originating materials must be subject, so that the final product can be considered Cameroonian:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2016:185:FULL&from=FR>

- Handling intended to ensure that products are maintained as they are during transport and storage (ventilation, spreading out, drying, refrigeration, placing in salt, sulphur dioxide or other aqueous solutions, extraction of damaged parts and similar operations);
- Simple operations of dusting, screening, sorting, classification, matching (including the composition of sets of goods), washing, painting, cutting up;
- Changes of packaging and breaking up and assembly of packages;
- Simple placing in bottles, flasks, bags, cases, boxes, fixing on boards, etc., as well as all other simple packaging operations.



2.2.1. *The Rule of Cumulation of Origin*

The cumulation of origin is a rule that makes it possible for parties to the EPA to use raw materials and inputs originating in some other countries, disregarding their value, without losing preferential access to the EU market.

- In this way, a Cameroonian cosmetics producer can use odoriferous substances coming from an overseas territory of one of the EU Members, and the final product will be considered originating from Cameroon and eligible to enter the EU market duty-free.
- If we stay in the same sector, a product based on diatomite, microscopic algae in flour, imported from France to elaborate a cosmetic product in Cameroon, will be treated as Cameroonian upon its export to the EU.

2.3. *Administration and monitoring of the Agreement*

The EPA Committee is responsible for the administration of all areas covered by the agreement. It ensures the follow-up of the agreement and concretises the dialogue between the partners (EU and the Cameroonian government, private sector, civil society) in the area of trade, aid for trade and development assistance. The EPA Committee makes it possible to find solutions to any problems that could prevent consumers and businesses from benefitting fully from the agreement. It is also through the EPA Committee that the parties inform each other about their multilateral commitments and agreements with other countries. Since its creation, the EPA Committee has taken several decisions concerning its organisation and operating rules, the Croatia's accession to the EPA as a new EU member state, updating of the Cameroon's market access offer and its timetable, as well as the rules and mechanisms for conflict resolution.

3. Practical Aspects: How to Export and Import under the EPA?

3.1. How to export to the EU

3.1.1. Make Sure Your Product Respects EU Regulations

To benefit from the EPA, first of all, it is necessary to make sure that your product is in conformity with the EU legal requirements, for example as it comes to packaging and labelling, pesticides, food additives or other substances used in the production process¹⁷. If the product in question does not respect these requirements, your consignment may be seized by EU customs, which would entail significant losses.

3.1.2. Make Sure Your Product Can Be Considered Cameroonian Under the Applicable Rules of Origin

To find out whether your products satisfy rules of origin for duty-free exports to the EU, you may want to check the Access2Markets¹⁸ platform and choose in the results of your product-specific search the “rules of origin” tab that will give you details of the applicable criteria.

3.1.3. Obtain a Certificate of Origin EUR.1

The benefit of the preferential regime established by the EPA is subject to the presentation of proof of origin (movement certificate EUR.1). It must be presented at the time of customs clearance. The proof of origin certifies that the goods coming from Cameroon comply with the EPA rules of origin described above (chapter 2.2.).

The EUR.1 certificate is issued by the Cameroonian customs upon written request made by the exporter or, under the latter’s responsibility, by his authorised representative. To this end, the exporter, or his representative, completes the EUR.1 certificate and the application form.

To obtain the forms, contact the customs office competent for export according to your location (Yaoundé, Douala, Kribi) and mode of export (air or sea) or consult the websites of customs or the Cameroon Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Mines (CCIMA)¹⁹.

The customs office, if it considers that the forms have been duly completed and that the proof of origin is satisfactory, issues the EUR.1 certificate with a stamp and signature. The file processing is free of charge and, in principle, does not exceed 24 hours.

17, 18 This information is available free of charge on the online platform Access2Markets:

<https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/home>

19 <http://www.douanes.cm/douane/index.php/en/accueil> ou <https://www.ccima.cm/>

The exporter requesting a movement certificate EUR.1 must be ready to present at any time, at the request of Cameroonian customs, all the appropriate documents proving the origin of the products concerned. Cameroonian customs take all the necessary measures to check the origin of the products and to verify that all the other conditions are fulfilled. To this end, they are empowered to demand proofs, to carry out checks of the exporter's accounts or any other checks that they deem useful. Customs must also ensure that the application forms are duly completed. They check in particular whether the box reserved for the designation of the product has been completed in such a way as to exclude any possibility of fraudulent additions.

Documents justifying the origin:

- direct proof of the operations carried out by the exporter or supplier in order to obtain the goods concerned, contained, for example, in its accounts or its internal accounting
- documents establishing the origin of the materials used, issued in Cameroon or in the EU
- documents establishing that the workings or transformation of the materials took place in the countries party to the agreement
- proof of origin establishing the origin of the materials involved

3.1.4. Declare the Origin on the Invoice (Without EUR.1 Certificate)

In certain specific cases, the procedure for obtaining the EUR.1 certificate will not be necessary. Products originating in Cameroon can benefit from exemption from customs duties when exported to the EU on simple presentation of a **declaration, drawn up by the exporter on an invoice**, a delivery note or any other commercial document describing the products in detail ("invoice declaration"), in two circumstances:

1. When the exporter is "approved". Approved exporters are exporters frequently exporting and offering all the guarantees to check the originating status of the products. Approved exporters are authorised by Cameroonian customs to issue invoice declarations, regardless of the value of the products concerned;
2. When the shipment consists of one or more packages containing products originating in Cameroon, the total value of which does not exceed EUR 6,000.

The text of the declaration that must appear on the invoice is as follows: "The exporter of the products covered by this document [customs authorisation no. ...²⁰] declares that, except where otherwise clearly indicated, these products are of Cameroon's preferential origin".

²⁰ Customs authorities attribute to an approved exporter a number of customs authorisation that has to be mentioned on the origin declaration. If the value of the consignment does not exceed EUR 6 000, this number does not need to be mentioned.

3.2. How to Import to Cameroon from the EU

3.2.1. Check whether the Product You Intend to Import Benefits from the EPA and Look up the Remaining Tariff Rate, if Applicable

You can do it in two ways:

1. You can consult the lists of products covered by the EPA advantages on the customs website²¹. You will find 3 lists: products for which duties have already been completely eliminated and two lists covering products subject to a progressive customs duties' reduction. If the product in question is not listed, this means that the customs duty remains fully applicable.
2. You can ask your supplier in Europe to do a search for you on the Access2Markets platform²².

3.2.2. Check whether the Product Offered by Your Supplier Originates in the EU and that the Supplier is Able to Provide a Proof of that Origin

Products originating in the EU that are covered by the advantages of the EPA can benefit from these advantages on presentation, when imported into Cameroon, of a movement certificate EUR.1-CMR or a declaration on invoice²³.

The EUR.1-CMR certificate can be obtained from the customs of the EU member state in which your supplier is based. The invoice declaration can be made by "approved exporters"²⁴ or when the export operation concerns one or more packages containing products originating in the EU, the total value of which does not exceed EUR 6,000.

To avoid difficulties and inconveniences to obtain certificates, it is important to favour business relations with European producers/exporters who master export procedures and have experience in obtaining certificates of origin. It should be noted that a simple declaration of origin is not valid for Cameroon (unless it is done on invoice by an approved exporter). It is therefore essential to specify to your potential supplier that you need a certificate and not just a simple declaration.

It is recommended to introduce into the contract with your potential supplier a clause indicated his responsibility to provide you with a certificate of origin (and not a simple declaration). You will need it before your goods arrive in Cameroon.

21 See the footnote 11 above

22 <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/home>

23 Decree 2016/367 Laying Down the Rules of Origin of the EPA on the Cameroon's side: <https://www.prc.cm/fr/multimedia/documents/4756-decret-n-2016-367-du-03-08-2016-ape>

24 Approved exporters are exporters who make frequent operations of export and offer guarantees of control of the origin of exported products. Approved exporters are authorised by the customs of EU member states to declare the origin on an invoice whatever the value of exported products.

4. EU support for the implementation of the EPA

The objective of the EPA is to contribute to long-term economic development and the poverty reduction in Cameroon. The EPA expands the choice and improves affordability of goods and inputs of EU origin for consumers and local producers, while offering exporters free access to the EU market and reassuring local and international investors who seek a predictable investment climate. An easy access to the EU market provides an incentive to potential investors to set their production in Cameroon and export to the EU. This incentive to invest in Cameroon is further reinforced by the implementation prospects of the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** that has been signed and ratified by Cameroon and is politically and financially supported by the EU.

Conditions necessary for the EPA objectives to be reached would not be fulfilled without development aid policy and specific action of the EU and its member states that come in support of the commercial dimension:

- The EU development assistance to Cameroon in recent years has focused, for example, on enhancing productivity and agricultural competitiveness. The PACOM program of EUR 10 million (Program of Support for Improvement of the Competitiveness of the Cameroonian Economy, 2013-2018) facilitated the development of quality infrastructure, public-private dialogue and improvement of the productivity of Cameroonian businesses. PACOM was replaced in 2018 by another EUR 10 million program under from the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), the DACC (Competitiveness Support Facility for Cameroon).
- For more than 10 years, the EU, together with other international partners, has supported the “Cameroon Business Forum”, a platform for dialogue between the Cameroonian government and business.
- The European Investment Bank (EIB) helps Cameroonian companies in their access to finance. Its credit line made it possible to offer Cameroonian SMEs EUR 34 million over the period 2019-2020.
- COLEACP’s Fit for Market program supports agricultural producers in the horticultural sector to achieve compliance with the European phytosanitary rules. The funding for the 2016-2020 period for Cameroon amounted to EUR 1.9 million.
- Adapted EU support also benefits Cameroonian value chains, such as coffee, cotton or cocoa.
- The EU provided also technical assistance and support for modernisation of Cameroonian customs.

The EU will continue to support Cameroon and its companies in the implementation of the EPA in its new financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027.

5. Success stories related to the EPA



Trade in Organic Products

BIOTROPICAL produces, processes and exports a large variety of fresh, dry and frozen fruit products. It sells nearly fifty products - certified organic fruit and spices, mango and passion fruit pulp, and dried fruit to France; pineapple, mango, Penja pepper, turmeric and, since more recently, ginger to Italy; dried fruit to Germany.

BIOTROPICAL is benefiting from the duty-free, quota-free access to the EU market under EPA for all exports from Cameroon. Its turnover for a period before 2017 stood at around XAF 350 million a year, export representing 80%. Pineapples, mangoes and papayas from Biotropical are distributed in the main “organic” markets of France. Fresh or processed fruit is also sold through the large networks of organic stores.

Under the EPA, Cheaper Inputs Support Local Production and Jobs

The SABC Group is an agro-industrial leader established in Cameroon since 1948. It is owned in 15% by Société Nationale d'Investissement (SNI) and Cameroonian shareholders, and in 85% by Groupe Castel. It has become over time a legacy at the service of development of Cameroon, with its 6 manufacturing sites, 10 factories, 53 distribution centers, and 1100 vehicles that produce and distribute 150 products. The group worth €2 billion works around its “industrial engine”, *Société Anonyme des Brasseries du Cameroun (SABC)*, and two “turbos”: one agricultural, *Compagnie Fermière Camerounaise (CFC)*, and the other one in manufacturing and packaging, *Société Anonyme Camerounaise de Verrerie (SOCAVER)*, 2 subsidiaries of the SABC. It thus generates an added value of 70%. The SABC is one of the largest private employers in Cameroon, with 6,000 direct employees and more 100,000 indirect jobs through its ecosystem of local SMEs and VSEs. The SABC Group generates a turnover of €1.2 billion by producing 1.1 billion liters of beverages per year.

The SABC Group vision is to be an agro-industrial leader and reference in production and marketing of drinks, with a highly-performant, profitable, modern and citizen-orientated organisation. The Group has a double ISO 9001 V2015 and FSSC 22.000 certification and aims to become certified ISO 14001 (Environment), 45001 (Safety), 27001 (Information system) and 26000 (Governance) through an IMS (Integrated Management System) in 2022.

Taking quality of its products and respect of standards and regulations very seriously, the SABC Group imports

BIOTROPICAL's mango pulp was selected since 1995 by Patrick Font, producer of artisanal upmarket juices for the brands Patrick Font and Emile Vergeois, sold in France and beyond.

BIOTROPICAL has set its distribution subsidiary in France to streamline supplies of its products to customers met in the various organic fairs. In the most important organic fairs in France, such as Marjolaine and Primevère, the company is the only African exhibitor of this sector.

According to Mr. Jean Pierre Imele (director and founder), BIOTROPICAL is a model in social entrepreneurship. It seeks less the profit than the well-being of all actors in the value chain. The company pursues its agricultural and processing activities orientating them towards sustainable economy, protection of environment and strengthening of social links between producers, encouraging development of regional clusters. To give an example, producers from the North-West and from the department of Noun, characterised by a Sudano-Sahelian climate, benefited from an extensive free distribution of mango tree plants and fly traps to allow the sector to achieve production of several dozen tons of dried mangoes, fresh mangoes and mango pulps.

Biotropical has also received support from the EU for its ISO 9002-2008 certification.



from the Union European two groups of products. First of all, raw materials such as malt, hops, yeast, aromas, extracts and colourings, and, in the second group, bottling machinery, industrial equipment and spare parts, which are not available locally.

Since 2016, the SABC Group has been benefiting from the EPA, saving on tariff reductions some €1.9 million between 2016 and 2019. All of these savings have been reinvested to promote supply of local raw materials with short supply chains and circular economy in mind; a choice based on the two main lessons learnt from the COVID-19 health crisis. The SABC Group has concretised its agro-industrial vision through creation of its subsidiary CFC, with an overall investment of €38.1 million. CFC aims to boost the maize sector in Cameroon with an integrated agro-industrial site combining agriculture and animal farming. It will provide SABC with all of its annual maize production estimated for 40,000 tonnes. Despite sometimes higher costs, SABC also tries to source inputs locally and continues to buy 30,000 tonnes of sugar from SOSUCAM and 100% of MAISCAM's annual maize grits production estimated at 10,000 tons. With its local subsidiary SOCAVER, the only producer in the CEMAC zone specialised in bottles and preformed packaging, the SABC Group has generated an extra added value in form of raw materials or expertise, increasing it from 45% to 70% between 2017 and 2021.

6. More information

General info on the EPAs:

<https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/development/economic-partnerships/>

Cameroun-Central Africa Relations:

<https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/central-africa/>

Complete text of the Cameroun-EU EPA

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2009.057.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2009%3A057%3ATOC#L_2009057EN.01000201

European support to Cameroun's businesses

https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_support_to_private_sector.pdf

Statistical data on Cameroun-EU trade

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/isdb_results/factsheets/country/details_cameroun_en.pdf

Rules of Origin

EU Regulation

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2016:185:FULL&from=EN>

Cameroun's Decree

<https://www.prc.cm/fr/multimedia/documents/4756-decret-n-2016-367-du-03-08-2016-ape>

Regulatory Requirements for Trade with the EU For any additional information

<https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/content>

For any additional information, contact the EU Delegation in Cameroun:

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