



# CAMEROON COUNTRY STRATEGY

## *Executive Summary*

Cameroon hosts a rich array of wildlife species and biomes, so eclectic it is often called “Africa in miniature.” Its ecosystems play essential roles in human life and well-being, contributing significantly to the national income, and, at the community level, providing essentials such as construction materials, food, and medicine. Protected areas—national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and faunal reserves—cover more than 20% of the country (475,000 km<sup>2</sup>) and help conserve this natural wealth. Because Cameroon has relatively low levels of tourism, many of these areas are still pristine. But even with protected status, Cameroon’s ecosystems and wildlife are increasingly under threat in the face of expanding development and other human factors.

The country’s 2020-2030 National Development Strategy sets a path for structural transformation and inclusive development, with commitments to secure protected areas and intensify protection of species and ecosystems. The conservation of wildlife and their habitats is pivotal to the country’s ambition to develop sustainably.

**AWF ENVISIONS HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS AND THRIVING BIODIVERSITY THAT SUPPORT HUMAN WELL-BEING AND CONTRIBUTE TO CAMEROON’S 2020-2030 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.**

We prioritize all of our work against 10-year targets and three overarching goals:

- Developing African conservation leadership at the national, regional, and local levels
- Implementing landscape-wide strategies that integrate protected areas, adjacent lands, and local communities, and
- Investing in monitoring and protection of wildlife populations in their habitats

In Cameroon, AWF delivers on these goals through a combination of country-level engagement with government leaders, businesses, civil society organizations, and youth and women’s groups, as well as through the implementation of field-level programs in three landscapes.

### **MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS**

AWF’s comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system tracks key performance indicators linked to our three organizational goals. The process, which includes annual and 10-year targets, helps us to demonstrate whether we are on track to meet the goals, identify areas of improvement, and replicate successful strategies at scale. Importantly, it allows us to be responsible partners and ensure we are delivering on our commitments.

### **OUR WORK**

AWF began operations in Cameroon in 2015 to support the government in managing wildlife and wildlife habitats. Currently, three protected areas and their peripheries benefit from our support: Faro National Park, Dja Faunal Reserve, and Campo Ma’an National Park.

## AWF Projects in Faro, Campo Ma'an, and Dja Landscapes

### FARO

- Addressing conflict over natural resources:** Around Faro, AWF helped create a local “diplomacy network” of transboundary transhumant herders from Cameroon, Nigeria, Mali, and Chad. These AWF-supported teams have been trained to mediate conflict and foster two-way communication while engaging in non-threatening, culturally fine-tuned information-sharing. As a result, groups traditionally in conflict over land use are collaborating to establish corridors for seasonal cattle passage.
- Developing park infrastructure:** To ease park access and facilitate rapid deployment of rangers, the Faro project is developing a new headquarters in Voko and a park base on the river at Faro Beach. We also are supporting road improvements and maintenance and contributing to planning for river crossings and airstrips in the park.
- Monitoring wildlife:** AWF helped build rangers’ anti-poaching capacity, providing tracking technology and training in best practices. We helped build a community-scout contingent based at the park’s borders to protect against incursions and monitor the parks’ hippos. We also conducted a wildlife inventory, establishing that the park contains 30 species of mammals (including more than 900 hippos). Baseline species-population data is critical to assessing conservation success and monitoring endangered populations.

### CAMPO MA'AN

- Creating alternative livelihoods:** To promote sustainability in community enterprise, AWF partners with communities in the valorization of non-timber forest products, creating

a sustainable income source (via sales of moisturizing creams and other beauty products) that helps promote conservation while providing alternatives to illegal bushmeat hunting.

- Strengthening wildlife protection:** AWF supported Cameroon’s wildlife ministry in developing a five-year anti-poaching strategy for the park and has partnered with authorities to carry out pedestrian and river-based anti-poaching patrols.
- Providing technical support:** We have ensured that the park staff is equipped with the latest anti-poaching and ecological monitoring systems and knowledge. Armed with cutting-edge tracking equipment, AWF-trained rangers have helped check poaching by seizing large caches of bushmeat, snares, and firearms. With AWF support, the ranger units have increased patrol days from just over 5,000 to more than 10,000 per year.

### DJA

- Enhancing cocoa-based agriculture:** AWF and partners have worked with local governments and communities to develop sustainable, cocoa-based agroforestry, producing tropical forest food and cosmetic products as an alternative to the bushmeat trade. In 2021, 74 farmers, all part of AWF’s sustainable livelihoods program, produced more than 17,000 tons of cocoa, which they sold through market value chains developed by AWF. The farmers benefited from training in sorting, fermenting, and weighing cocoa, as well as the role that sustainable cocoa farming plays in conservation.
- Supporting strategic anti-poaching:** AWF has strengthened anti-poaching capacity by providing rangers ecological monitoring equipment and training. Our Conservation Geography unit helped authorities map poaching

## LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES



**GOAL 1**  
*Cameroonian leaders are championing, influencing, and prioritizing conservation to support sustainable development.*

#### BY 2030 RESULTS IN

Businesses and investments flowing into Cameroon, as well as those already in place, are contributing to sustainable conservation gains and development.

AWF in Cameroon contributes to empowering Indigenous peoples and local communities and civil society organizations to inform decision-making in conservation for sustainable development.

The government values and prioritizes conservation as fundamental to delivering Cameroon’s 2030 National Development Strategy and 2035 vision.

A pipeline of motivated and capacitated conservation leaders is shaping the conservation narrative of Cameroon and beyond.

Influential Cameroonians across society are championing conservation.

Empowered youth and women become key voices and derive benefits from conservation.

**GOAL 2**  
*Cameroon’s ecosystems and the services they provide are conserved, protected, and restored, unlocking greater value from natural resources for economic growth.*

#### BY 2030 CATALYZES

Protected areas are managed well and form anchors for conservation success, both at the landscape and country levels.

AWF priority landscapes support the development of a biodiversity economy, contributing to local prosperity.

Land use plans incorporate ecosystem and conservation needs that support sustainable development, approved by the government and implemented in AWF priority landscapes.

A network of successful *zones d'intérêt cynégétiques* (government-managed hunting zones) is achieved through ecological integrity, economic viability, and social-political acceptance.

**GOAL 3**  
*Wildlife is conserved in situ for Cameroon’s prosperity.*

#### BY 2030 RESULTS IN

Four national species action and recovery plans are revised and implemented (by 2025).

Wildlife populations are protected and growing in situ.

Trafficking is decreased as a major cause of wildlife population decline.

A strong database informs wildlife economy development in Cameroon.

hotspots, which allowed the reserve managers to apply limited resources more efficiently. We also established ranger bases at four priority sites in the reserve and strategically placed camera traps and acoustic sensors to improve wildlife monitoring and inform anti-poaching efforts.



*The African Wildlife Foundation’s mission is to ensure wildlife and wild lands thrive in modern Africa.*

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