



Forest  
Governance Index

REPORT

# Cameroon

forest governance situation  
2007–2022

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REPORT

# Cameroon forest governance situation in 2007–2022

## 1. Introduction

Cameroon has a rich forest heritage, boasting a diverse range of species and ecosystems. However, in recent years, it has faced significant challenges in managing its forests sustainably and effectively. To address these challenges, Cameroon is actively engaged in forest governance initiatives, including the European Union's (EU) Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process, and the United Nations' Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries (REDD+) process. This report aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of forest governance in Cameroon in the context of the country's participation in these two processes.

Cameroon and the EU began negotiating a FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) in 2007. The VPA is a legally binding trade agreement. It aims to ensure that Cameroon produces and exports only legal timber and timber products to the EU by improving forest governance and law enforcement. The Agreement entered into force in 2010. Since then, Cameroon has taken steps to implement legal and governance reforms identified by stakeholders through the VPA negotiation process.

The REDD+ process was launched in 2005 and aims to provide financial incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Cameroon has been involved in international REDD+ negotiations since its inception. The first REDD+ pilot project in Cameroon took place in 2008 and the national multistakeholder REDD+ Steering Committee was set up in 2012.



In addition to timber legality or emission reduction commitments in the context of the FLEGT and REDD+ processes, both initiatives have fostered multistakeholder participation, legislative clarity through legal reforms, accountability mechanisms, transparency and other aspects of good governance. This assessment of the forest governance situation in Cameroon addresses these aspects using the Forest Governance Index (FGI).

This report also compares data drawn from FGI with other governance assessments at the national level. In the context of the FLEGT process, this report also contrasts the FGI findings with those of a perception-based assessment of VPA impacts in Cameroon conducted by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in 2022<sup>1</sup>.

This analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the state of forest governance. It also brings insights into the strengths and weaknesses of Cameroon's forest governance regime and in so doing helps to identify where opportunities for further improvement could lie.

## 2. Methodology

The FGI assessment is made by experts using a standard questionnaire to guide scoring and collection of evidence. Evidence can be in the form of published documents and information on events, activities or developments that took place in the year or period assessed. The evidence provides for the substantiation of the score rather than relying on opinions or experts' perceptions. A scoring guide is provided for each indicator, which is scored out of a maximum of five once the scoring is rescaled. The score of each governance area is calculated as an average of its three constituent key features, and no weighing is applied.

Following the assessment, the data is checked and validated by 10 to 15 actors in country with relevant historic and contemporary knowledge, with a balance across different stakeholder groups.

Once validation is concluded, the scores are interpreted. To do so, predefined thresholds categorise the magnitude of change. Changes below 0.15 points are considered as 'no change', changes between 0.15 and 1 point as 'moderate', and those exceeding 1 point as 'substantial'.

Assessments of governance at the national level are calculated using indicators and historic scoring available from 11 indices.

A full explanation of the methodology is available in the report "Forest Governance Index – [What it is, how it works](#)".

## 3. Overview of forest governance in Cameroon (2007–2022)

**Stakeholder participation** was assessed as improving slightly in the context of the FLEGT process (3.40 to 4.01) from 2007 to 2022. Discussions to secure stakeholder involvement took place in the years leading to formal negotiations (2004–2006). However, the baseline year for the FGI assessment is 2007, which is when VPA negotiations started. The Government's Decision 957/MINFOF/D/SG/DF of 15 November 2007 establishing a multistakeholder committee to lead the VPA process is reflected in the baseline score. Therefore, the FGI assessment does not capture the situation prior to this development. Over the same period, significant improvements were made in the context of the REDD+ process (2.09 to 3.33). This is because, in contrast to FLEGT, in 2007 the REDD+ process had not yet fully started. The assessment therefore better reflects the full evolution of stakeholder participation in that process.

In contrast, an analysis of indicators related to stakeholder participation drawn from eight national governance indexes<sup>2</sup> shows a slight decline over the assessment period (2007–2022) (see Annex 2 for an in-depth comparison).

**Legislative and institutional clarity** was assessed as improving for both FLEGT (2.56 to 3.54) and REDD+ (2.47 to 3.33) from 2007 to 2022. This is mostly due to improvements in the legislative framework. The FLEGT process has prompted the clarification of rules related to forest use and management through the adoption of various implementing decrees and orders after the conclusion of VPA negotiations. Moreover, FLEGT and REDD+ have strongly contributed to the launch of reform processes that are still ongoing in the areas of land-use planning, land allocation, and activities impacting forests and forest lands. The clarity of roles and powers among the levels of the administration responsible for land-use planning was at a medium level at the start of the assessment period, but declined to a lower level after 2020. This is because the 2019 Law on decentralised territorial communities structured the state according to the national, regional and municipal levels. However, the 2005 decrees organising the different ministries responsible for land-use planning, land allocation and activities impacting on forests and forest lands have not yet been amended to take into account this new structure of the state.

Analysis of indicators related to legislative and institutional clarity drawn from three national governance indices<sup>3</sup> show a slight improvement over the assessment period, which contrasts with the significant improvement in this area captured by the FGI (see Annex 2 for an in-depth comparison).

**Accountability and oversight** were assessed as improving during the period from 2007 to 2022 both for FLEGT (3.11 to 3.67) and for REDD+ (2.33 to 2.44). No changes took place in the oversight function, which was at an advanced level (4.5) in 2007 and remained this way until 2022. While independent monitoring was at high-mid level (3.83) in 2007 in the context of monitoring forest production. Better access to information needed for monitors to operate led to further improvements in 2020 (4.17), which were maintained in 2022. In contrast, independent monitoring of deforestation and forest degradation was not yet developed in Cameroon in 2007 (1.5) and, although some work has taken place to start preparing the systems to allow for monitors to operate, REDD+ projects have not yet started. So, it cannot be said that monitoring has taken off – therefore scores remain the same. Although no complaints mechanisms exist in Cameroon, both the FLEGT and REDD+ processes foresee their creation – hence some improvement was captured in the assessment. In the case of the FLEGT process, this commitment is a legal obligation, but no work has been done to implement it. In the REDD+ process, although there is no legal commitment for its establishment, some initial work to set up this mechanism has been carried out.

Analysis of indicators related to accountability and oversight drawn from six national governance indices<sup>4</sup> show a decline over the assessment period, which contrasts with the slight improvement captured by the FGI for the forest sector.

**Transparency** was assessed as improving during the period from 2007 to 2022 both for FLEGT (2.31 to 2.87) and for REDD+ (2.31 to 3.09). Although the right to access certain forest sector information was already embedded in Cameroonian law before 2007, the VPA and FLEGT processes introduced clarity on which forest information should be made public. The VPA included for the first-time legal obligations to make available information on forest management at all levels (national, subnational and local) and on taxes and law enforcement. The availability and accessibility of information also improved slightly between 2007 and 2022. Under the REDD+ process, a practical guide on access to information was developed. Stakeholders used public information for their engagement in both the FLEGT and REDD+ processes, which contributed to improving forest stakeholders' understanding of laws and regulations.

Analysis of indicators related to transparency drawn from eight national governance indices<sup>5</sup> show a slight improvement over the assessment period. In contrast, the FGI indicates a slightly higher improvement.

**Compliance promotion and enforcement** were assessed as improving (2.61 to 3.27) during the period from 2007 to 2022, attributed to the efforts to support the formal and informal private sector in understanding and complying with their legal obligations. Since the signature of the VPA, the country has made significant progress in promoting compliance by providing numerous information materials relevant to formal and informal enterprises and has implemented educational initiatives to promote compliance with legal requirements. No changes occurred either in the presence of enforcement officers, the existing systems to collect information and support the detection of non-compliance, or the enforcement measures.

Analysis of indicators related to compliance promotion and enforcement drawn from four national governance indices<sup>6</sup> show a decline over the assessment period. In contrast, the FGI indicates a clear improvement.

**Figure 1.** Evolution of forest governance in Cameroon in the context of the FLEGT process

## Evolution of forest governance in Cameroon between 2007-2022



### SCORES AND RECENT TRENDS

AREA OF GOVERNANCE	SCORE 2022	TREND 2020-22
Stakeholder participation	4.01	↑
Legislative and institutional clarity	3.54	→
Accountability and oversight	3.67	→
Transparency	2.87	↓
Compliance promotion and enforcement	3.27	→

**Figure 2.** Evolution of forest governance in Cameroon in the context of the REDD+ process

## Evolution of forest governance in Cameroon between 2007-2022



### SCORES AND RECENT TRENDS

AREA OF GOVERNANCE	SCORE 2022	TREND 2020-22
Stakeholder participation	3.33	→
Legislative and institutional clarity	3.33	→
Accountability and oversight	2.44	→
Transparency	3.09	→
Compliance promotion and enforcement	3.27	→

**KEY**

- ↑ Significantly improving
- ↗ Moderately improving
- No change
- ↘ Moderately decreasing
- ↓ Significantly decreasing

## 4. Detailed findings

### 4.1 Stakeholder participation

Participation refers to when stakeholders are involved in decision making, and able to influence a given forest policy and decision-making process. The FGI indicators for ‘participation’ seek to assess: the existence of a conducive legal basis for stakeholder participation; the freedom of forest sector stakeholders to associate in multistakeholder structures; the inclusiveness of such structures; if the structures are regularly used; and the extent to which the inputs and views of stakeholders are translated into appropriate actions.

As the existence of multistakeholder structures and/or the openness of the administration to the participation of other actors may vary across policy processes, two processes were assessed: FLEGT and REDD+.

#### Findings of the FGI assessment

##### In the context of the FLEGT process

The **foundations for participation** were already at an advanced level (4.08) in 2007 and were assessed as improving slightly (4.33) in 2010 but declined again to 2007 level (4.08) in 2022. This is because the law already affirmed the principle of participation before 2007, and the FLEGT process further formalised the principle in decisions regarding the forest sector by making multistakeholder involvement mandatory as part of decision making in VPA negotiations and implementation. This governmental decision was taken in 2007 and therefore already captured in the baseline year. The drop in the score in 2022 is because new multistakeholder structures related to the VPA were set up in 2021. However, in contrast to those established earlier in the process, these new structures did not have a recognised role to contribute to all VPA-related issues. Moreover, the existing VPA multistakeholder structures were by this time not functional nor involved in key discussions related to the process, such as the revision of the forest law or the development of the computerised timber information management system.

**Active representation** was assessed as being at a mid-level (3.00) in 2007, a situation that was maintained between 2010 and 2020, but improved to the maximum level (5.00) in 2022. This is because although multistakeholder involvement was mandatory from the early stages of the FLEGT process, it was not until 2022 that local communities and informal enterprises were formally included in the VPA multistakeholder structure.

**Effective dialogue** was assessed as being at a mid/advanced level (3.13) in 2007. Although it improved slightly between 2010 (3.25) and 2020 (3.35), it declined (2.96) in 2022. This is because although the Government was open to dialogue with non-state actors from the start of the VPA negotiations, the frequency of the dialogue and the involvement of different stakeholders varied throughout the process. For example, although in 2022 all stakeholders were included in the multistakeholder structure, the score for that year is lower than in 2020 because after 2021, the dialogue with stakeholders on issues such as the revision of the forestry law had broken down and the multistakeholder structures were functioning sporadically.

CIFOR’s findings align with the FGI findings on stakeholder participation. The assessment of VPA impacts in Cameroon found<sup>7</sup> that the FLEGT process moderately contributed to considering the views of civil society in decision making related to the forestry sector, and slightly increased consultation and consideration of the views of local communities and indigenous peoples. Additionally, improved after VPA ratification, the number of civil society organisations focusing on forest governance increased. These organisations also improved their coordination and advocacy. The artisanal private sector reported no positive change attributable to the VPA in this regard.

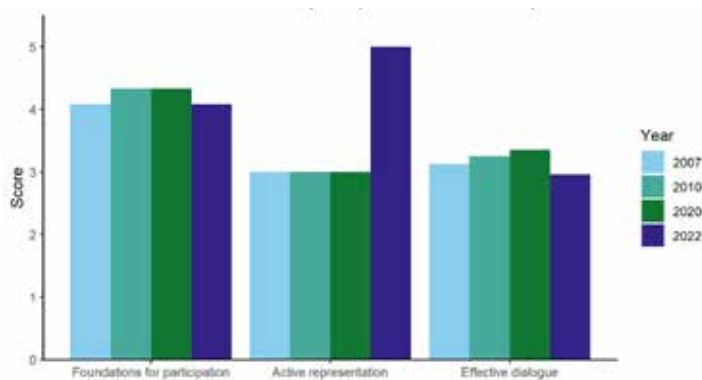
**In the context of the REDD+ process**

The **foundations for participation** were assessed as being at a mid-level (3.58) in 2007 and improved slightly during the assessment period (3.83). This is because the legal framework already affirmed the principle of participation in 2007, but before 2012 there was no multistakeholder structure ensuring participation in the REDD+ process.

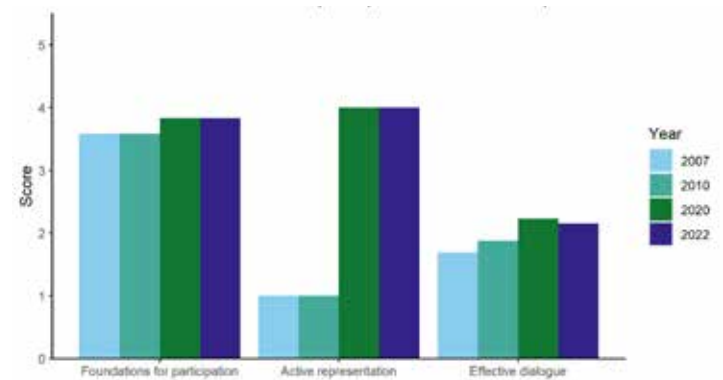
**Active representation** was assessed as being non-existent (1.00) in 2007. This is because no multistakeholder structure existed before 2012. By 2022, this was improved substantially, and representation was high (4.00). Participation was not at a maximum level because only three of the four stakeholder groups were invited to the process. The informal private sector remains excluded.

**Effective dialogue** was assessed as being at a low level (1.69) in 2007 but improved during the assessment period to achieve low mid-level (2.15) in 2022. This is because government entities were not open to dialogue with non-state actors during the development of Cameroon’s Readiness Plan Idea Note. This changed after 2011, when civil society organisations, local and indigenous communities, and formal enterprises effectively participated and contributed to the process. Since 2012, these actors have been represented on the REDD+ Steering Committee.

**Figure 3.** FGI assessment of stakeholder participation in the FLEGT process



**Figure 4.** FGI assessment of stakeholder participation in the REDD+ process





## 4.2 Legislative and institutional clarity

Legislative and institutional clarity enables forest stakeholders to understand rights, responsibilities and obligations. The FGI's indicators for 'legislative and institutional clarity' seek to assess the extent to which the legal framework allows the raising of concerns regarding the content of laws, regulations and policies; and clearly establishes the roles and power of government entities involved in the forest sector or in activities impacting forests. The indicators also seek to assess whether stakeholders regularly review laws and regulations to identify areas for legal reforms, with the ensuing process to address inconsistencies, overlaps or gaps.

Improvements in legislation are often pushed by political processes. To assess the extent to which a process is behind improvements in forest-related legislative and institutional clarity, two policy processes were assessed in the context of this assessment: FLEGT and REDD+.

### Findings of the FGI assessment

#### In the context of the FLEGT process

The **process for reforms** was assessed as being at a mid-level (3.17) in 2007 and improved during the assessment period to reach an advanced level (4.00) in 2020. This level was maintained in 2022. The legal basis for raising concerns about the content of laws and regulations was at a high level at the start of the assessment period and remained at that level because the Forest Law and the Parliament's procedures provide for non-state stakeholder groups to raise concerns about the content of forestry laws, regulations and policies at the legislature and executive levels. The legal basis for establishing a mechanism for raising concerns about the content of laws and regulations also existed at the start of the assessment period and remained in place throughout. Although some stakeholders were excluded from the identification of areas for legal reform at the beginning of the VPA process, they were later included during VPA implementation.

The process for addressing the **clarity and completeness of laws and regulations** was assessed as being at a very low level (1.25) in 2007 and improved by 2010 (2.13) and 2020 (3.50), maintaining this mid-level at the end of the assessment in 2022. This is because although some legal developments were foreseen during the initial stages of the VPA process, law reform mostly only took place after the VPA negotiations concluded. Nonetheless, advances to achieve completeness of laws and regulations took off after 2010. But in the case of land-use planning,

land allocation and activities impacting forest and forest lands, much remains to be done. This is because Law No. 2011/008 on the orientation of planning and sustainable development provides for the establishment of a National Council for Planning and Development. The body will be responsible for managing the overlaps and coexistence of the different land-use permits, but it has not been established yet. On land allocation, overlaps in the use and allocation of land in the forestry sector were detected, but not resolved. On activities impacting forest and forest lands, legal reforms to define the legal regime for forest carbon have been identified but have not yet taken place. On the other hand, several rules covering forest use and management have been adopted since 2012.

Similar to the FGI assessment, CIFOR's assessment<sup>8</sup> found that the VPA slightly contributed to better coherence of the legal and regulatory framework of the forestry sector. The study also found that although the VPA increased the consideration of the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples, it did not help these groups gain more recognition for their property rights.

#### In the context of the REDD+ process

The **process for reforms** was assessed as being at a mid-level level (3.17) in 2007 and improved during the assessment period towards an advanced level (4.00) in 2020 and 2022. This is because of the increased involvement of non-state actors in the identification of areas for legal reforms.

The process for addressing the **clarity and completeness of laws and regulations** was assessed as being at a very low level (1.00) in 2007 but increased to a mid-level (2.75) in 2020 and 2022 (2.88). This is because the initial stages of the REDD+ process did not focus on legal reform, but legal improvements took place in 2011 and beyond on all legal areas related to forests (i.e. land-use planning, land allocation, forest use and management, and activities impacting the forest sector). Work is ongoing in most of these areas.

#### In the context of the FLEGT and REDD+ processes

The FLEGT and REDD+ processes are related to similar, if not identical, roles and powers within the same branches of the government and administration. The **division of roles and power** can therefore be assessed for the forest sector as a whole and therefore apply jointly to the two processes. This governance feature was assessed as being at a mid-level level (3.25) in 2007, but slightly declined during the assessment

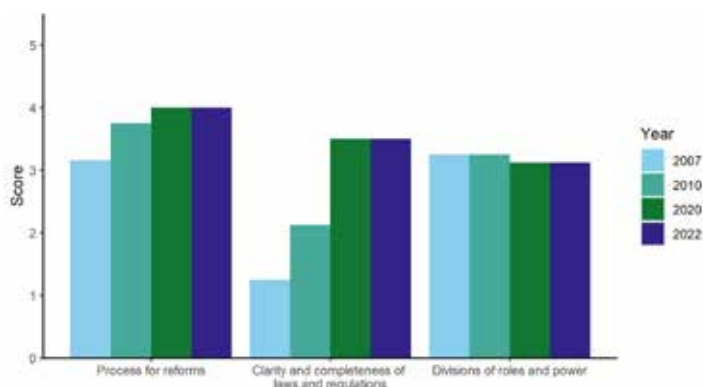
period to (3.13) in 2020 and 2022. This is because there are legal mandates for all the ministries that have jurisdiction over the forest and land-use sectors, but they sometimes overlap and conflict. A 2012 decree on the organisation of the Ministry of Domains, Cadastre and Land Affairs (Decree No. 2012/390 of 18 September 2012) clarified and addressed some overlaps. However, there are still conflicts over the management of the forest area, although this Ministry intends to resolve such issues. Similarly, the legal framework defines and delimits the distribution of roles and powers among the ministries responsible for land allocation in the forestry sector, but there are overlaps and no legal text specifies the management of relations among these ministries.

The distribution of roles and powers among the levels of the administration responsible for land-use planning was at a medium level at the start of the assessment period but declined to a low level after 2020 due to the inconsistencies in the distribution of roles between administrations introduced by the law on decentralised territorial communities (Law No. 2019/024 of December 2019). The law structured the state in three levels (national, regional and municipal), while the decrees organising the different ministries responsible for land-use planning, land allocation and activities impacting on forests and forest lands did not take into account this new state organisation. This creates overlapping roles between the decentralised structures of the state (regions and communes) and the deconcentrated administrations of the state (ministries, regional delegations, and departmental delegations).

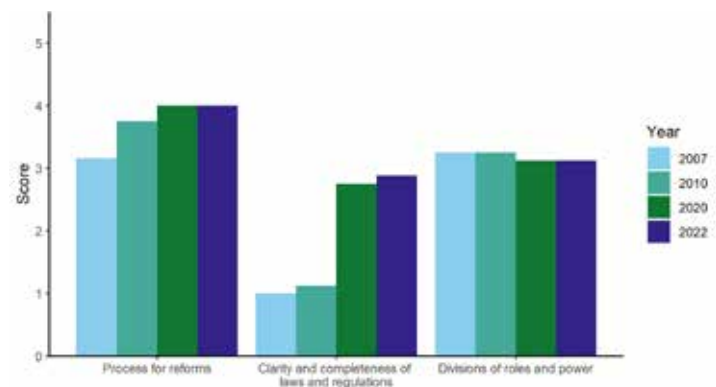
The distribution of roles and powers among the levels of the administration responsible for use and management of forest resources was at a high level throughout the assessment period. A regulation adopted within the framework of the VPA implementation and a 2012 operations manual of the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife, which includes procedures regarding the roles and responsibilities of the different levels of administration, brought greater clarity on the division of roles.

The distribution of roles and powers among the levels of the administration responsible for activities having an impact on forests, such as agriculture, mining or infrastructure, was assessed as being at a medium level throughout the assessment period.

**Figure 5.** FGI assessment of legislative and institutional clarity in the FLEGT process



**Figure 6.** FGI assessment of legislative and institutional clarity in the REDD+ process



### 4.3 Accountability and oversight

Accountability exists when government entities and operators do what they have committed to do and take responsibility for their actions. The FGI’s indicators for ‘accountability and oversight’ address the legal foundations for, existence and functioning of internal and external oversight and complaints mechanisms that provide checks and balances on the government entities and operators in the forest sector.

#### Findings of the FGI assessment

The **oversight function** was assessed as being already at an advanced level (4.5) in 2007 and maintained the same level during the assessment period. This is because an oversight body was already established: the General Inspectorate. This body carries out regular internal controls on the functioning of government entities responsible for the management and control of forests. The reports of this body are not public – if they were, the score would be maximum.

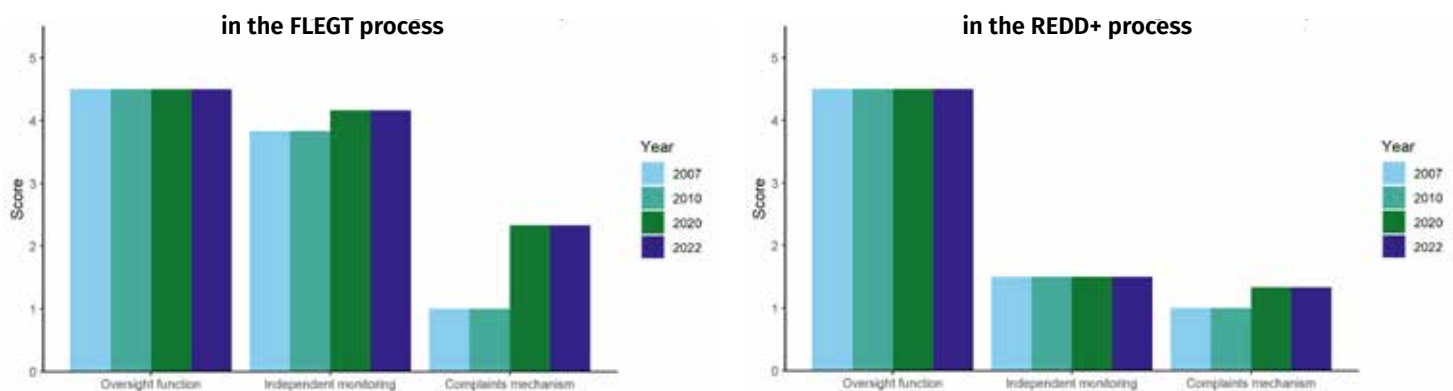
**Independent monitoring** of forest use and management (FLEGT-related) was assessed as being already at a high mid-level (3.83) in 2007 and improved to an advanced level during the assessment period (4.17 in 2020 and 2022). This is because monitors gained access to wider coverage of the territory and there is more information available allowing them to undertake monitoring work. The Independent Monitor reports are public.

Although it is possible to operate as independent monitor of deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+ related) in Cameroon, such monitoring does not exist. As a result, it scores at a very low level (1.5) throughout the assessment period. However, since REDD+ projects have not yet started and monitoring has not taken off in practice, civil society has developed a monitoring system to track deforestation and forest carbon. They have also assessed one project. This shows that monitors could start operating in the country, although it is not reflected in the scoring.

**Complaints mechanisms** did not exist in 2007 (1.00), a level that was maintained in 2010. This improved in 2020 for both the FLEGT (2.33) and REDD+ (1.33) processes, and that level was maintained in 2022. This is because no complaints mechanism exists, however, under the FLEGT process, Cameroon has legally committed to establish such a mechanism. Although the commitment under the REDD+ process is not enshrined in law, some work to set up such mechanisms has already taken place.

In relation to accountability and oversight, CIFOR’s findings align with the FGI findings. The assessment of VPA impacts found<sup>9</sup> that the VPA process slightly contributed to making the government more accountable for its actions in the forestry sector and to more effective independent observation of the timber sector by civil society. This function improved from weak to moderately effective after VPA ratification, even though monitoring was sometimes inadequate due to unavailable documentation.

Figure 7. FGI assessment of accountability and oversight



## 4.4 Transparency

Transparency refers to the availability and accessibility of information to the public, and clarity on rules and procedures for decision-making processes in the forest sector. The FGI's indicators for 'transparency' seek to assess: the legal basis for transparency; the extent to which transparency commitments are being met; the existence and functioning of procedures and a system for information disclosure; the use of disclosed information by non-state actors; the responsiveness of government entities to the use of information by non-state actors; and transparency in public decision making.

### Findings of the FGI assessment

The **foundations for public disclosure of information** were assessed as being at a quite low level (2.33) in 2007 and 2010 but increased to mid-level (2.83) in 2020 and 2022. This is because although a legal basis for the right to access certain forest sector information already existed before the start of the VPA negotiations (i.e. 1996 Constitution, 1990 Law on social communication, 1993 Forest Policy, etc.), the VPA clearly defined which forest information should be made public. For example, it requires for the first-time the publication of information on forest management at all levels (national, subnational and local), on taxes and on law enforcement. In the REDD+ process, the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development and the NGO Forests and Rural Development (FODER) developed a practical guide for access to information. Nonetheless, there are no legal provisions specifying the grounds for refusal.

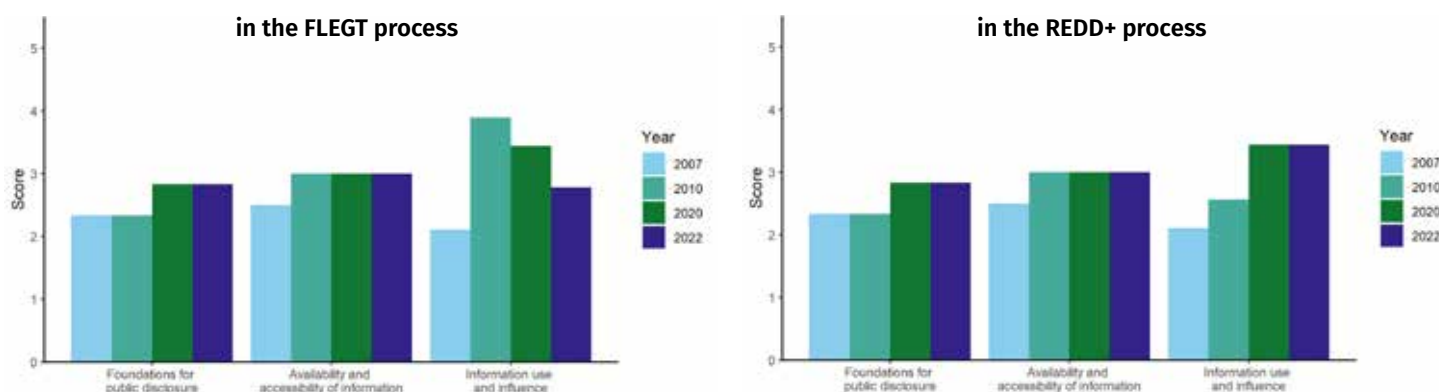
The **availability and accessibility of information** were assessed as being at mid-level (2.50) in 2007, and slightly improved (3.00) in 2010, a level maintained during the rest of the assessment period.

This is because government entities do not promptly publish forest-related information, and because there has been limited (if at all) consultation with non-state actors on the types of information that should be made public.

The **use and influence of information** were assessed as being at a low mid-level (2.29) in 2007. In the context of the FLEGT process, it improved to a high mid-level (3.19) in 2010, but subsequently decreased (3.14) in 2020 and further in 2022 (2.86). This is because during VPA negotiations, information on the legal development process in the forest sector was widely available to all stakeholders, but the availability of information decreased at later stages of VPA implementation. In the context of the REDD+ process, it continued to improve throughout the process. In 2022, both processes were at the same level (2.78). In some areas, such as the forest allocation process, access to information remains closed to many stakeholders. Both the FLEGT and REDD+ processes have contributed to improving forest stakeholders' understanding of laws and regulations.

Similar to the FGI assessment, CIFOR found<sup>10</sup> that the FLEGT process slightly improved transparency in the forestry sector, with transparency being weak before VPA ratification and moderate today. Respondents found that public information was more relevant and sufficient for use by civil society and the artisanal private sector. The CIFOR study shows that information made public about the requirements and verification of legality met the needs of SMEs and has contributed slightly to enable SMEs to conduct their activities legally. While efforts were made to improve access to forest-related information, it was sometimes incomplete, and many actors still relied on informal channels for access to information.

Figure 8. FGI assessment of transparency



## 4.5 Compliance promotion and enforcement

Compliance promotion and enforcement refer to activities that increase awareness, inform, motivate, or change behaviour, and encourage compliance with a regulatory requirement. Compliance promotion is delivered through a variety of actors and mechanisms – not just government entities, but also through initiatives of industry associations, non-government organisations, and academic and training institutions. The FGI’s indicators for ‘compliance promotion and enforcement’ seek to assess: the clarity of the legal basis for compliance and enforcement in terms of mandates, types of responses, penalties and inducements; the availability of information for promoting compliance; the existence of educational initiatives that promote compliance; and the extent of enforcement to promote compliance and address non-compliant behaviour.

### Findings of the FGI assessment

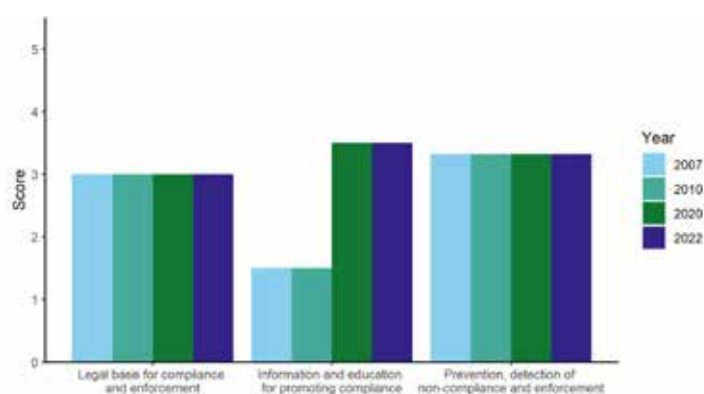
The **legal basis for compliance and enforcement** was assessed as being at a mid-level level (3.00) throughout the assessment period. This is because the texts contain provisions on the application of the law, but they have not changed much since 2007. Mandates for addressing non-compliance with legal requirements in respect of land-use planning and land allocation are not clarified, whilst they are fully clarified regarding the respect of forest use and management, the payment of fees, environmental legislation or third parties’ tenure and use rights to forests. The legal framework is not always clear on the type of response and penalties for addressing non-compliance (see Annex 1 for more information).

The **information and education for promoting compliance** were assessed as being at a low level (1.75) in 2007 and 2010 and improved to an advanced level (4.5) in 2020 and 2022. This is because the entry into force of the VPA led to an increase in projects aimed at supporting the private sector (formal and informal) in complying with the law. After 2010, both the availability of information to support operators in understanding their obligations and educational initiatives to promote private sector compliance with legal requirements increased.

The **prevention, detection of non-compliance and enforcement** were assessed as being at a mid-level (3.32) throughout the assessment period, with no changes to the score of the sub-area. This is because there was no change in the period in the type of presence of enforcement officers, the existence of information systems to collect and analyse information to promote compliance, and the enforcement measures taken.

CIFOR’s study found<sup>11</sup> that the VPA slightly contributed to more enforcement of sanctions as outlined in the law and to making sanctions more credible. The study also found that the private forest sector and workers in the forest sector were better organised and had better expertise than before VPA ratification – for example, the curricula of training institutions now better-integrated subjects related to legality and sustainable management of forests.

Figure 9. FGI assessment of compliance promotion and enforcement



## 5. Data tables

Table 1.

Forest governance related to **FLEGT** – scores for areas and key features

<b>FLEGT</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Area A. Stakeholder participation under FLEGT</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>4.01</b>
Foundations for participation	4.08	4.33	4.33	4.08
Active representation	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
Effective dialogue	3.13	3.25	3.35	2.96
<b>Area B. Legislative and institutional clarity under FLEGT</b>	<b>2.56</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>3.54</b>
Process for reforms	3.17	3.75	4.00	4.00
Division of roles and power	1.25	2.13	3.50	3.50
Clarity and completeness of laws and regulations	3.25	3.25	3.13	3.13
<b>Area C. Accountability and Oversight under FLEGT</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>3.78</b>
Oversight function	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
Independent monitoring	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
Complaints mechanism	1.00	1.00	2.33	2.33
<b>Area D. Transparency</b>	<b>2.31</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>2.87</b>
Foundations for public disclosure	2.33	2.33	2.83	2.83
Availability and accessibility of information	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00
Information use and influence under FLEGT	2.11	3.89	3.44	2.78
<b>Area E. Compliance promotion and enforcement in the forest sector</b>	<b>2.61</b>	<b>2.61</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>3.27</b>
Legal basis for compliance and enforcement	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Information and education for promoting compliance	1.50	1.50	3.50	3.50
Prevention, detection of non-compliance and enforcement	3.32	3.32	3.32	3.32

Table 2.

### Forest governance related to REDD+ – scores for areas and key features

REDD+	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>Area A. Stakeholder participation under REDD+</b>	<b>2.09</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>3.33</b>
Foundations for participation	3.58	3.58	3.83	3.83
Active representation	1.00	1.00	4.00	4.00
Effective dialogue	1.69	1.88	2.23	2.15
<b>Area B. Legislative and institutional clarity under REDD+</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>3.33</b>
Process for reforms	3.17	3.75	4.00	4.00
Division of roles and power	1.00	1.13	2.75	2.88
Clarity and completeness of laws and regulations	3.25	3.25	3.13	3.13
<b>Area C. Accountability and oversight under REDD+</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>3.44</b>
Oversight function	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
Independent monitoring	1.50	1.50	1.33	1.33
Complaints mechanism	1.00	1.00	1.33	1.33
<b>Area D. Transparency</b>	<b>2.31</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>3.09</b>
Foundations for public disclosure	2.33	2.33	2.83	2.83
Availability and accessibility of information	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00
Information use and influence under REDD+	2.11	2.56	3.44	3.44
<b>Area E. Compliance promotion and enforcement in the forest sector</b>	<b>2.61</b>	<b>2.61</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>3.27</b>
Legal basis for compliance and enforcement	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Information and education for promoting compliance	1.50	1.50	3.50	3.50
Prevention, detection of non-compliance and enforcement	3.32	3.32	3.32	3.32

## Annex 1. Evidence from the FGI assessment per key feature

	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>A. Stakeholder participation under FLEGT</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>4.01</b>
Foundations for participation	4.08	4.33	4.33	4.08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several laws affirm the principle of participation prior to 2007, but are less specific on participation in the specific formulation of laws and regulations. Among those are the Decree 95/531/PM of 23 August 1995 setting the terms of application of the Forest Regime, or the Framework law 96/12 on environmental management.</li> <li>• As part of the FLEGT process, several decisions of the MINFOF enshrine the principle of participation, including Decision 957/MINFOF/D/SG/DF of 15 November 2007 making the participation of stakeholders in the technical committee for VPA negotiations mandatory, Ministerial decree 126/CAB/PM of 09/10/2012 establishing the composition and functioning of the national VPA monitoring committee which makes the multi-stakeholder composition of the committee mandatory, and Decision n° 0941/D/MINFOF/SG/DF/SDAFF of 02 /09/2008 mandating the creation of a multi-party working group to revise the content of the 1994 forest code.</li> <li>• In 2022, multi-stakeholder structures were not formally recognised to participate in all FLEGT related discussions – which leads to the lowering of the score for this year: Although the CNS and FLEGT-related multi-stakeholder structures are ongoing, these structures were not fully functional by 2021-22 and were not involved in important ongoing VPA processes, including the revision of the forest law and the development of SIGIF II (and did not include all stakeholders).</li> </ul>				
Active representation	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MINFOF decision 957 of 2007 recognized the representation within the VPA multi-stakeholder structure of the formal private sector and civil society – although initially only international NGOs were invited to participate. The informal sector and communities are not included in the multi-stakeholder structure.</li> <li>• Ministerial Order 126/CAB/PM of 10/09/2012 defines the composition of the VPA multi-stakeholder structure to include civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and community forest groups.</li> <li>• Civil society pressure to open the VPA multi-stakeholder structure to all actors led to communities being directly invited – which was formalized in 2012. From 2016, indigenous representatives were authorized to participate in the CNS, and the informal sector started to slowly engage in the processes since 2015. Notwithstanding, the score of 3 was maintained in 2020 to reflect the relatively precarious position of representatives of the informal sector and communities to that date.</li> <li>• In 2022, the four groups of stakeholders were included in the VPA multi-stakeholder structure.</li> </ul>				
Effective dialogue	3.13	3.25	3.35	2.96
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the beginning of the VPA process was not entirely clear in terms of participation, the government was open to dialogue with NGOs and the formal private sector from the very beginning of VPA negotiations.</li> <li>• Government openness was not stable between 2012 and 2020, and sometimes even openness to dialogue with CSOs and the large private sector was limited. Openness to dialogue was also not uniform, with some stakeholders not being invited to discuss some VPA related issues.</li> <li>• The forest law and policy review process in 2021 and 2022 took place without the involvement of national stakeholders. A consultant supported the government during the develop of a new forest policy and several meetings were held during the same period without the participation of national stakeholders.</li> <li>• Stakeholders were consulted as part of the relaunch of the independent observation process, the revision of the VPA multi-stakeholder structure and the revitalization of the deliberative system at the national level, and some actors were involved in the discussions relating to the cessation of log exports.</li> <li>• Frequency of the dialogue varied throughout the process, being systematic in early years of the process (2007), and then either periodic (2010, 2022) or irregular (2020)</li> <li>• Local communities and indigenous peoples had their interests channelled by CSOs. Despite the opening of the VPA multi-stakeholder structure to community representation in 2012 (Ministerial Order 126/CAB/PM of 10/09/2012), there is little evidence of direct engagement with communities in 2020. There was little engagement of indigenous peoples in the law review process in 2022.</li> </ul>				



	2007	2010	2020	2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The informal private sector was almost ignored in the pre-negotiation process (2007). In 2010, advocacy around the formalization of the informal sector and the facilitation of their access to legal timber started involving these group of actors into the FLEGT process. The informal private sector was excluded from dialogue during the first years of the VPA process. In 2015, the State became more open to dialogue with the informal private sector. In 2020, representatives of the informal sector were formally consulted in VPA related issues (for example, during the revision of the VPA legality grids or in discussions of transfer of forest concessions and logging quotas). Although the informal private sector is involved in the discussions on the revision of the text organizing the National FLEGT VPA Monitoring Committee, this stakeholder group did not formally take part in the discussions on stopping the export of logs., affecting the score during 2022.</li> <li>CSOs and the formal private sector were actively involved in the VPA pre-negotiations of the VPA. Although initially only international NGOs were invited to participate in VPA discussions, the points of view of national CSOs were channelled through these actors). During 2010 and 2020, these two actors participated and influenced effectively the decisions taken as part of the VPA process. The participation of the CSO declined after 2020, as it did not participate in the revision of the forest law, the development of SIGIF II and the reflections on stopping the export of logs. Whist the private sector has been heavily involved in discussions on stopping the export of logs.</li> <li>The informal private sector, communities, and civil society were not included in the inter-ministerial committee responsible for identifying and proposing the transitional measures to be taken by the Government before the planned ban on the export of timber in the form of logs, nor in the Task Force responsible to address the operational difficulties encountered by</li> </ul>				
	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>A. Stakeholder participation under REDD+</b>	<b>2.09</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>3.33</b>
Foundations for participation	3.58	3.58	3.83	3.83
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several laws affirm the principle of participation prior to 2007 but are less specific on participation in the specific formulation of laws and regulations. Among those are the Decree 95/531/PM of 23 August 1995 setting the terms of application of the Forest Regime, or the Framework law 96/12 on environmental management.</li> <li>There was no multi-stakeholder structure ensuring participation during the preparation of the REDD+ readiness idea note in 2008-2009 nor for the development of the REDD+ Program Preparation Document (R-PP) in 2010.</li> <li>A multi-stakeholder REDD+ steering committee was created in 2012 (Order No. 103/CAB/PM of 13 June 2012). Members of this steering committee included indigenous peoples' organizations, and representatives of CSOs and the private sector.</li> </ul>				
Active representation	1.00	1.00	4.00	4.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prior to 2012, no multi-stakeholder structure ensured active representation in the context of the REDD+ process. Although CSOs and indigenous peoples' representatives took part in the various workshops and meeting related to the elaboration of the R-PP in 2010.</li> <li>Three out of four stakeholder groups are represented on the REDD+ Steering Committee set up by Order No. 103/CAB/PM of 13 June 2012: community organizations, CSOs and formal businesses. Informal enterprises are not represented.</li> </ul>				
Effective dialogue	1.69	1.88	2.23	2.15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2008-2009, government entities were not open to dialogue with non-state actors during the development of Cameroon's R-PIN, and document drafted exclusively by government and international partners.</li> <li>CSOs and the formal private sector did not participate in the initial stages of the REDD+ process. During 2010-2011, these actors were increasingly invited to workshops for the development of the Preparation and Capacity Building Document on REDD+. Since 2011, they have effectively participated in and contributed to the REDD+ process, such as the development of the Readiness Plan Proposal (R-PP) and the REDD+ Readiness Package</li> </ul>				

	2007	2010	2020	2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After 2012, CSOs, local and indigenous communities and formal enterprises were represented on the REDD+ Steering Committee and were involved in the development of the R-PP, the Emission Reduction Program (ERP) and Cameroon's National REDD+ Strategy.</li> <li>Frequency of the dialogue was sporadic in 2007 and improved throughout the process, remaining periodic since 2012. E.g. The dialogue on the revision of the forest law stopped in 2012 while dialogue continued on the implementation of the VPA through the regular meetings of the CNS and CCS.</li> <li>Indigenous peoples did not participate in the REDD+ process in 2007 but have been involved in consultations and in the development of REDD+ document since 2010. The use of community radios in the local language has allowed this group of actors to express themselves openly and effectively during consultations.</li> <li>The informal private sector has not taken part of the REDD+ process.</li> </ul>				
	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>B. Legislative and institutional clarity under FLEGT</b>	<b>2.56</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>3.54</b>
Process for reforms	3.17	3.75	4.00	4.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the forest law, the principle of participation is included. Stakeholders can take their concerns regarding the content of forest-related laws, regulations and policies to the legislature and executive level.</li> <li>There is a legal basis for the establishment of a mechanism for submitting and addressing such concerns. Citizens can challenge the content of laws on the grounds that they are illegal via the administrative court, or via the constitutional court in the case of unconstitutional laws.</li> <li>Although civil society and the formal private sector always contributed to the identification of domains for legal reform, this was not always the case for local communities and indigenous peoples, and for the informal private sector. Local communities and indigenous peoples did not contribute prior to 2010, and support to the informal private sector in their identification of areas for legal reform started only after the conclusion of VPA negotiations.</li> <li>There is no complaint mechanism in the forestry sector. Notwithstanding, the Ministry of Justice and the police authorities allow non-state actors to lodge complaints for illegal activities (Environment Law 1996 and Code of Criminal Procedure 2005). The VPA contains provisions which amount to a commitment/plan to develop a system, but discussions to establish this system are not underway.</li> </ul>				
Quality of regulations	1.25	2.13	3.50	3.50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although some law developments were foreseen in early stages of VPA negotiations (for example, on land-use planning).</li> <li>Law improvements took place after the conclusion of VPA negotiations: <b>(i) land-use planning:</b> Cameroon adopted in 2011 Law No. 2011/008 of 6 May 2011, which sets the guidelines for the planning and sustainable development of the territory. Several processes related to land use planning in the forestry sector took place after 2012. <b>(ii) land allocation:</b> from 2012 onwards, several processes relating to the allocation of land in the forestry sector were initiated, including the land reform (ongoing), the revision of the mining law which resulted in a new land law in 2016, and the revision of the forest law initiated in 2008 (ongoing). <b>(iii) forest use and management:</b> numerous legal texts aimed at improving clarity, both in terms of inconsistencies and gaps, were adopted between 2010 and 2020 <b>(iv) activities impacting forest and forest lands:</b> several processes relating to the clarification of laws and regulations relating to activities that have an impact on forests were initiated: land reform is launched and continues to date (ongoing), revision of the mining law which resulted in a new mining law/code in 2016, the revision of the forest law initiated in 2008 (ongoing)</li> <li>Regarding processes to achieve completeness of laws and regulations, advances took off after 2010 and most are still ongoing: <b>(i) land-use planning, (ii) land allocation, and (iv) activities impacting forest and forest lands:</b> the law on sustainable land use planning was adopted in 2011 (implementing texts ongoing); adoption of the mining code in 2016 (implementing texts still awaited), land reform process (ongoing). <b>(iii) forest use and management:</b> the process of reviewing the laws under the VPA process started before the signing of the agreement, but specific legal changes only started to be enacted from 2012 onwards. Several implementing Decrees and regulations covering forest use and management were adopted since 2012.</li> </ul>				

	2007	2010	2020	2022
Division of roles and power	3.25	3.25	3.13	3.13
<p>Roles and power between ministries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the legal framework seems to define and delineates the division of roles and powers among the ministries involved in forest management,<sup>12</sup> a cross-reading of the legal texts reveals the overlapping of jurisdictions between the various ministries over <b>(i) land-use planning</b>, <b>(ii) land-allocation</b> and <b>(iv) activities</b> impacting the forest sector. This creates conflicts over the management of the forest area, in the absence of an arbitration body.</li> <li>• The legal framework clearly defines and delineates the division of roles and powers among the ministries involved in <b>(iii) forest use and management</b> (the organization and roles of the different ministries are established in individual decrees). It only partially does so for the areas of: <b>(i) Land-use planning</b>: is the responsibility of MINEPAT while the sectoral ministries have jurisdiction over their sectors. <b>(ii) Land allocation</b>: responsibilities are clearly defined and delimited for each sectoral ministry responsible for the allocation of land in the forest domain. But there is no text that specifies the management of relations between the various ministries in the allocation of land in the forestry sector. <b>(iv) activities</b> impacting the forest sector: the roles and powers are defined and delimited by ministry but the management in the event of overlapping competences is not defined. In practice, there is an overlap of forest titles, mining permits and agro-industrial concessions.</li> <li>• In practice, the power relations between the ministries responsible for forests are not very well implemented/ understood in the cases of: <b>(i) land-use planning</b>: Several planning and development documents are drawn up by each ministry, but the links or links between each of the documents are not sufficiently clearly established (PLADDT, POS, PCD, etc.); <b>(ii) Land allocation</b>: an example is the overlapping of forest titles, mining concessions and agro-industrial concessions are illustrations of this; or <b>(iii) forest use and management</b>. They are not followed in the case of <b>(iv) activities</b> impacting the forest sector: In practice, ministries are not required to seek the opinion of other ministries having an impact on forest land before granting rights to the land. This explains the overlaps observed in the field between the mining and forestry cadastre and the agro-industrial concessions.</li> </ul>				
<p>Roles and power across different levels of the administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The legal framework does not clearly define the roles of the different levels of the administration in relation to: <b>(i) Land-use planning</b>: although the legal framework clearly defined the roles of the different levels of the administration before 2011 (i.e. Decree No. 2005/195 of 10 June 2005 on the organization of the Ministry of Planning, Development Programming and Land Use Planning creates provincial and departmental delegations and clearly sets out their roles and responsibilities) the 2011 law on the code of decentralized territorial communities structured the state in three levels: the national, regional and municipal level. The decree organizing the ministry in charge of land planning does not consider this new state organization; Decree No. 2012/390 of 18 September 2012 on the organization of the Ministry of Domains, Cadastre and Land Affairs clarified certain overlaps identified in previous texts. <b>(ii) Land allocation</b> and <b>(iv) activities</b> impacting the forest sector: although roles and powers of each ministry are clearly defined and delineated, the powers are not well defined in case of overlapping competences between different levels of the administration: there is an overlap of several forest, mining, agro-industrial and infrastructure titles.</li> <li>• <b>(iii) forest use and management</b>: roles are clearly defined. Examples include, among others: Order No. 0219/ MINEF of 28 February 2000 creating forestry and hunting posts in different administrative districts; Decree No. 2005/099 of April 6, 2005 establishing the organization of MINFOF; 2012 MINFOF operations manual which includes procedures regarding the roles and responsibilities of the different levels of administration, bringing more clarity, and Order 0135/MINFOF/CAB on the creation, organization and operation of Forestry posts/check points “traceability -MINFOF” for the monitoring and control of timber and derived products in circulation on national territory within the framework of the VPA/ FLEGT</li> <li>• There is no formal assessment providing evidence to this, but those interviewed agreed that, in practice, the power relations between the different levels of the administration responsible for forests are not very well implemented/understood.</li> </ul>				

	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>B. Legislative and institutional clarity under REDD+</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>3.33</b>
Process for reforms	3.17	3.75	4.00	4.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the forest law, the principle of participation is included. Stakeholders can take their concerns regarding the content of forest-related laws, regulations and policies to the legislature and executive level.</li> <li>• There is a legal basis for the establishment of a mechanism for submitting and addressing such concerns. Citizens can challenge the content of laws on the grounds that they are illegal via the administrative court, or via the constitutional court in the case of unconstitutional laws.</li> <li>• Although civil society and the formal private sector always contributed to the identification of domains for legal reform, this was not always the case for local communities and indigenous peoples, and for the informal private sector. Local communities and indigenous peoples did not contribute prior to 2010. The informal private sector never participated in the REDD+ process.</li> <li>• There is no complaint mechanism in the forestry sector. Notwithstanding, the Ministry of Justice and the police authorities allow non-state actors to lodge complaints for illegal activities (Environment Law 1996 and Code of Criminal Procedure 2005). In the absence of an internal complaints mechanism concerning REDD+ and forest governance in general, non-state actors use international mechanisms.</li> </ul>				
Quality of regulations	1.00	1.13	2.75	2.88
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The REDD+ process was in its early stages of the REDD+ process did not focus on legal reforms. Despite a text passing in 2011 on land-use planning, and although reflection took place as part of this process on legal developments, the REDD+ process did not trigger much improvement of regulations.</li> <li>• Work on legal developments after 2010: <b>(i) land-use planning:</b> Cameroon adopted Law No. 2011/008 of 6 May 2011 on the orientation of planning and sustainable development in Cameroon - which provides for a National Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development Plan as an instrument for managing overlaps and inconsistencies related to the various allocations of land, including forest land. It also provides for the establishment of a National Council for Planning and Development which could be the body for managing the overlaps and the coexistence of the different modes of land use. <b>(ii) land-allocation:</b> studies conducted to support the national REDD+ strategy made it possible to detect overlaps in the use and allocation of land in the forestry sector, but did not address legal developments to resolve them. <b>(iii) forest use and management:</b> the R-PP and the national REDD+ strategy provide for land and forest tenure reforms in order to define the legal regime for forest carbon, for example, but these reforms have not yet taken place. <b>(iv) activities impacting forest and forest lands:</b> The R-PP and the national REDD+ strategy provide for land and forest tenure reforms in order to define the legal regime for forest carbon, for example, but these reforms have not yet taken place. Independently of REDD+, these reforms were initiated in 2008 for the forest law and in 2012 for the land law.</li> <li>• Regarding processes to achieve completeness of laws and regulations, advances took off after 2010: <b>(i) land-use planning, (ii) land allocation, and (iv) activities impacting forest and forest lands:</b> the law on sustainable land use planning was adopted in 2011 (implementing texts ongoing); adoption of the mining code in 2016 (implementing texts still awaited), land reform process (ongoing). <b>(iii) forest use and management:</b> after 2010, an analysis of the consistency of laws and policies related to the management of natural resources was carried out and supplemented with that related to land rights and carbon ownership. These analyses led to the proposal of a plea to put in place a legal and regulatory framework conducive to the implementation of REDD+.</li> </ul>				
Division of roles and power	3.25	3.25	3.13	3.13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See section under FLEGT above.</li> </ul>				

	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>C. Accountability and Oversight</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>3.78</b>
<b>C. Accountability and oversight under REDD+</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>3.44</b>
Oversight function	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An oversight body, the General Inspectorate, exists and is in charge of internal controls. Its legal basis is the Decree n° 2005/099 of 6 April 2005 on the organization of the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife.</li> <li>• The General Inspectorate carries out checks on the functioning of government entities responsible for the management and control of forest production and operations. It carries out central and regional inspections, although their reports are not made public (see periodic MINFOF publications, including green letters, facts and figures).</li> <li>• Although it carries out inspections, its reports are not public.</li> </ul>				
Independent monitoring	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50
Independent monitoring REDD+	1.50	1.50	1.33	1.33
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent monitoring is not officially recognised by the Cameroonian law, but monitors are authorized to operate in the country and monitor the activities of government entities and forest operators.</li> <li>• Independent monitors of forest use and management have been regularly present in the country since 1999. Independent monitors mandated by government in Cameroon have included Global Witness (2000-2005), REM (2005-2009) and Agreco-CEW (2010-2013). Non-mandated independent monitors have included the NGOs CED, FODER, SAILD, PAPEL, FLAG, and the NGO network SNOIE.</li> <li>• Reports of independent monitors are public.</li> <li>• Independent monitoring of deforestation and forest degradation was not yet developed in Cameroon in 2007. By 2020, the Cameroonian NGO SAILD had developed a deforestation and forest degradation monitoring system to track deforestation and forest carbon (<a href="https://www.2s2d.org/">https://www.2s2d.org/</a>). Monitoring reports are public.</li> </ul>				
Complaints mechanism	1.00	1.00	2.33	2.33
Complaints mechanism REDD+	1.00	1.00	1.33	1.33
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No legal basis for a complaints mechanism in the forest sector exists prior to the signing of the VPA in 2010. Under the VPA process, Cameroon has legally committed to set up a complaints mechanism as part of the VPA, and also an independent audit system (the later in the context of the VPA itself). Since 2018, the REDD+ process foresees the creation of complaint and conflict management mechanism (A complaint and conflict management mechanism specific to REDD+ has been planned since the validation of the REDD+ strategy in 2018 and is currently being developed).</li> <li>• No activities related to VPA complaint mechanisms have taken place, but work is under development for the REDD+ mechanism.</li> <li>• Although there is no complaints mechanism, the Ministry of Justice and the judicial police authorities allow non-state actors to lodge complaints for illegal activities (Environment Law 1996 and Code of Criminal Procedure 2005). There has been occasional recourse to the judicial system in matters related to forestry operations, but this is not a mechanism specific to the forestry sector. Non-state actors have used such means in the period covered by this assessment.</li> </ul>				

	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>D. Transparency under FLEGT</b>	2.31	3.07	3.09	2.87
<b>D. Transparency under REDD+</b>	2.31	2.63	3.09	3.09
Foundations for public disclosure of information	2.33	2.33	2.83	2.83
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many laws highlight the right to access of forest sector information (i.e. 1996 Constitution, 1990 Law on social communication, 1993 Forest Policy, etc.). The VPA further defined forest information that should be made public, and it includes for the first-time information on forest management at all levels (national, subnational and local), on taxes, and all information on law enforcement.</li> <li>• The VPA also made it an obligation for the government to be active in making information public.</li> <li>• In the concept of REDD+, a practical guide for access to information was developed in 2016.</li> <li>• Despite the right for information, legal provisions do not specify grounds for refusal.</li> </ul>				
Availability and accessibility of information	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government entities make public forest-related information with delays. Information is made available mainly in French, sometimes in French and in English. No information is available in local languages.</li> <li>• Although prior to 2010, there was no consultation on the type of information that would be made public, after 2010 some non-state actors (mostly CSOs and big private sector) have been consulted on their needs for information.</li> <li>• Some non-state actors, namely NGOs, use public information as the basis of their analysis and/or advocacy work.</li> </ul>				
Use and influence of information under FLEGT	2.11	3.89	3.44	2.78
Use and influence of information under REDD+	2.11	2.56	3.44	3.44
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to information varied throughout the reporting period. During VPA negotiations, information on the legal development process in the forest sector was widely available to stakeholders – which is reflected by the high score in 2010. Availability of information decreased in later stages of VPA implementation.</li> <li>• Some stakeholders have access to some information on decision making in the allocation of forests and land-use rights. Although tender notices on the allocation of forest titles are published by billboards and newspapers, the allocation process remains closed and inaccessible to most actors.</li> <li>• Legal developments relating to a forest-related policy process had not yet started in 2007. In 2010 and 2020, the discussions on the legality grids during VPA negotiations and work on legal developments during VPA implementation improved forest stakeholders' understanding of laws and regulations. The consultations organized within the framework of the REDD+ process have also improved the understanding of the stakeholders of the legal framework of the forest sector.</li> </ul>				
	2007	2010	2020	2022
<b>E. Compliance promotion and enforcement</b>	2.61	2.61	3.27	3.27
Legal basis for compliance and enforcement	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandates for addressing non-compliance with legal requirements in respect of land-use planning and land allocation as it relates to the forest sector are not clarified. Legal texts are silent on both accounts<sup>19</sup>. Mandates are fully clarified regarding the respect of forest use and management, to the payment of fees in respect to use of forest resources, to environmental legislation; and to third parties' legal rights concerning use and tenure of forests and forest land. No changes in the scoring for any of those areas took place throughout the assessment period.</li> <li>• The legal framework does not clarify whether a non-compliance with requirements in respect of land-use planning and third parties' legal rights concerning use and tenure of forests and forest land should be addressed by administrative action, or administrative or judicial penalties. The type of response for addressing non-compliance is partially clarified in cases of respect of forest use and management and environmental legislation. It is clear for all requirements in the case of non-compliance with requirements of land allocation and payment of fees in respect to use of forest resources. No changes in the scoring for any of those areas took place throughout the assessment period.</li> </ul>				

	2007	2010	2020	2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the case of clarity of penalties for addressing non-compliance with applicable legislation, there are no clear criteria for determining penalties for non-compliance with applicable legislation in respect of land-use planning, land allocation and third parties' legal rights concerning use and tenure of forests and forest land. Criteria are clarified for some but not all requirements in the cases of respect of forest use and management and environmental legislation. They are fully clarified regarding the payment of fees in respect to use of forest resources.</li> </ul>				
Information and education for promoting compliance	1.50	1.50	3.50	3.50
<p>Information for promoting compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before 2010, only a few types of information materials relevant to promoting compliance of formal enterprises exists for some legal requirements related to the management of forests for production. These included posters to raise awareness and inform communities and staff about poaching, worker protection, waste management etc.; or the Interactive Forestry Atlas of Cameroon. Since 2013, many types of information materials relevant to promoting compliance of formal enterprises were produced: numerous guides and procedures manuals by the MINFOF, materials by Federations of timber producers, etc.</li> <li>No information to promote compliance of informal enterprises was available prior to 2013. Since 2013, many types of information materials relevant to promoting compliance of informal enterprises were produced, including manuals of procedures for the handling of timber product in the Cameroonian Internal Wood Market (MIB) and awareness-raising materials for the formalisation of community forests.</li> </ul>				
<p>Education for promoting compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prior to 2012, few educational initiatives implemented by some NGOs (notably WWF) promoted compliance with legal requirements. An example is WWF's support to the certification of private operators via the "Support project for sustainable forest management and certification" implemented between 2003 and 2009. With the signing of the FLEGT VPA, many educational initiatives promoted the compliance of formal enterprises with most legal requirements.</li> <li>Before 2015, no educational initiative supported the informal private sector in their compliance with legal requirements. With the signing of the FLEGT VPA and the creation of the Internal Timber Market (MIB) in 2010 by a joint order of the Ministry of Forestry and the Ministry of Trade (Order No. 0878/MINFOF/MINCOMMERCE of 26 April 2010 on the organisation and functioning of the Internal Timber Market "MIB" in Cameroon), several projects have provided training sessions to formalize SMEs and strengthening the capacity of the private sector and the informal sector to comply with the requirements of the rule of law through various projects funded by the FAO EU FLEGT programme.</li> </ul>				
Prevention, detection of non-compliance and enforcement	3.32	3.32	3.32	3.32
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presence enforcement officers to prevent non-compliance in forest management is permanent for forest law enforcement officers (i.e. Forestry and hunting control posts are created by Order 1224/A/MINEF/CAB in certain districts of Cameroon, located near logging areas and/or the timber transport routes), and sporadic - and most often dependent of projects support, for other types of law enforcement officers (i.e. environmental officers).</li> <li>National procedures and information systems to promote compliance and address non-compliance exist for both forest production and protection. The forest control strategy provides for the development of a network of informants from local to national level and procedures for processing the information collected. The networks exist and they apply to both forest production and conservation. The network of informants works for collecting information on non-compliance for both timber production and poaching. Although not formally recognised, these networks exist and collect information regularly. (Each agent of the MINFOF sets up his/her network of informants. There is no text that creates this network of informants.)</li> <li>In case of non-compliance with applicable legislation, enforcement measures are most of the time not taken in cases of non-compliance with requirements for spatial planning, the allocation of forests and forest land, or third parties relating to the use and ownership of forests. Administrative actions/penalties or judicial sanctions are taken sporadically in cases of non-compliance with legal requirements for the use and management of forests, the payment of fees, environmental legislation</li> </ul>				

## Annex 2. Findings of other governance assessments – a comparative perspective to the FGI assessment

Global organisations that have developed governance indices have assessed the situation in Cameroon, albeit on a national level – so not specific to any sector. A comparison of the trends identified in the FGI assessment with those shown through relevant indicators used by such indices during the period 2007–2022 provides a picture of how governance evolved in the Cameroonian forest sector in comparison to the national governance situation in country.<sup>14</sup> This comparison offers context to better understand the possible effects of forest policy process on governance issues.

National level assessments of governance in Cameroon, when compared to the FGI assessment, show mixed results over the assessment period, whilst the Forest Governance Index reveal some significant improvements. For example, national indices indicate a decline in the area of participation, but the FGI indicates a significant improvement on this area.

Similarly, the FGI shows important improvements in the area of legislative and institutional clarity, a slight improvement in accountability and oversight, a slightly lower improvement in transparency, and a significant improvement in compliance promotion and enforcement.

This section highlights the different aspects of each governance area and compares the national assessments with the FGI results.

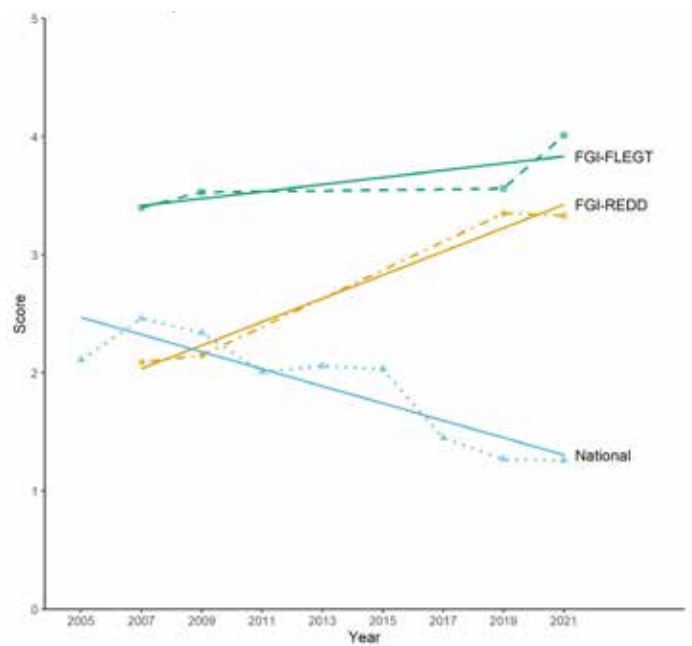


## Stakeholder participation

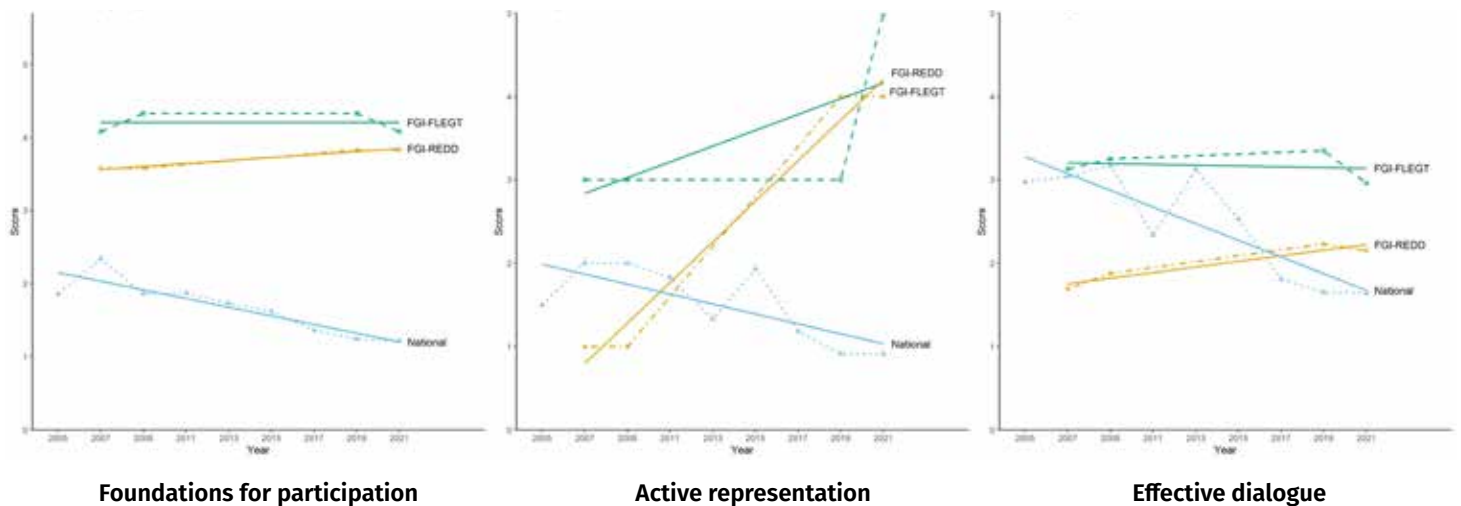
Analysis of indicators related to stakeholder participation drawn from seven global organisations<sup>15</sup> show a slight decline over the assessment period (2007-2022) for the national assessments of Cameroon. This contrasts with the FGI assessment, which indicates a significant improvement during VPA negotiations and after ratification, followed by a decline after 2020. The improvement is more acute in the context of the REDD+ process. See trendlines in figure 10.

When considering the different aspects of stakeholder participation (see figure 11), on average the national assessments show a decline in all areas over the period, which contrasts with the improvement identified by the FGI for the different aspects. On the active representation of stakeholders, the FGI shows an improvement during the last year of the assessment, albeit the national trend continues to show a decline in this area of governance.

**Figure 10.** FGI and national indicators scores for stakeholder participation



**Figure 11.** Key features of stakeholder participation

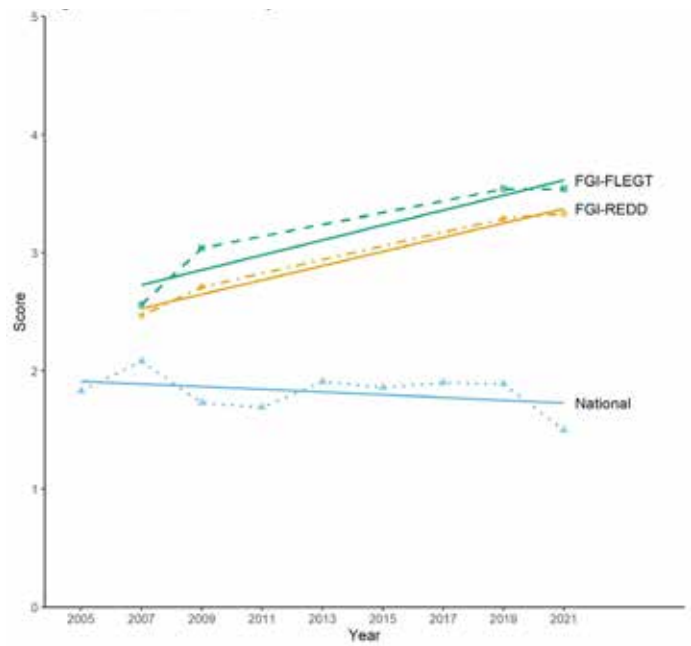


### Legislative and institutional clarity

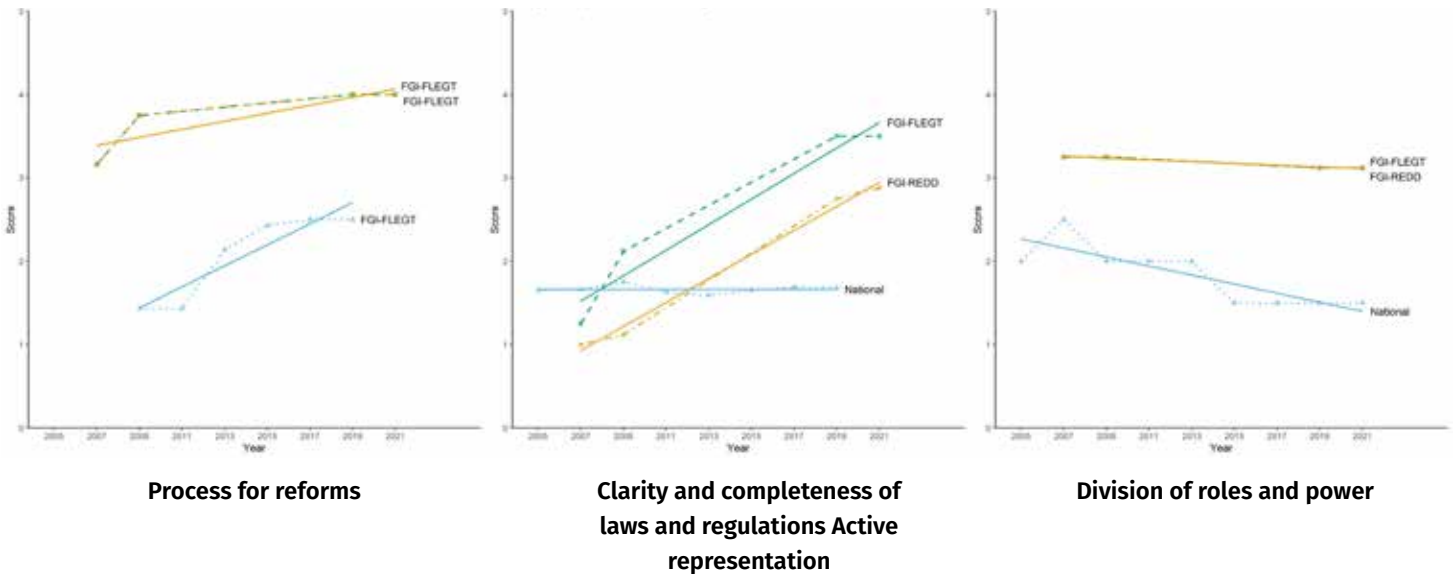
Analysis of indicators related to legislative and institutional clarity drawn from three global organisations<sup>16</sup> show a decline over the assessment period. In contrast, the FGI indicates a significant improvement in the context of the FLEGT and REDD+ processes. See trendlines in figure 12.

When considering the different aspects of legislative and institutional clarity (see figure 13), in the area of ‘process for legal reform’, both the national assessments and the FGI show an improvement – and improvement that is steeper at national level. On the ‘clarity and completeness of laws and regulations’ the national assessments show no change, when the FGI indicates a sharp improvement in the context of both the FLEGT and REDD+ processes. And on division of roles and power, they show a significant decline, whilst the FGI shows only a very slight decline for this aspect.

**Figure 12.** FGI and national indicators scores for legislative and institutional clarity



**Figure 13.** Key features of legislative and institutional clarity



### Accountability and oversight

Analysis of indicators related to accountability and oversight drawn from five global organisations<sup>17</sup> show a decline over the assessment period. In contrast, the FGI indicates a slight improvement in the context of the REDD+ process, and a clear improvement in the context of FLEGT. See trendlines in figure 14.

When considering the individual aspects of accountability and oversight (see figure 15), the national assessments and the FGI both show no change in the oversight function over the period. On independent monitoring, the national assessments show a decline during the period. This contrasts with the FGI, which indicates either no change for this aspect (REDD+ process) or a slight improvement (FLEGT process). And on complaints mechanism, they show a decline, when the FGI indicates improvement for this aspect both in the context of the REDD+ and FLEGT processes.

Figure 14. FGI and national indicators scores for accountability and oversight

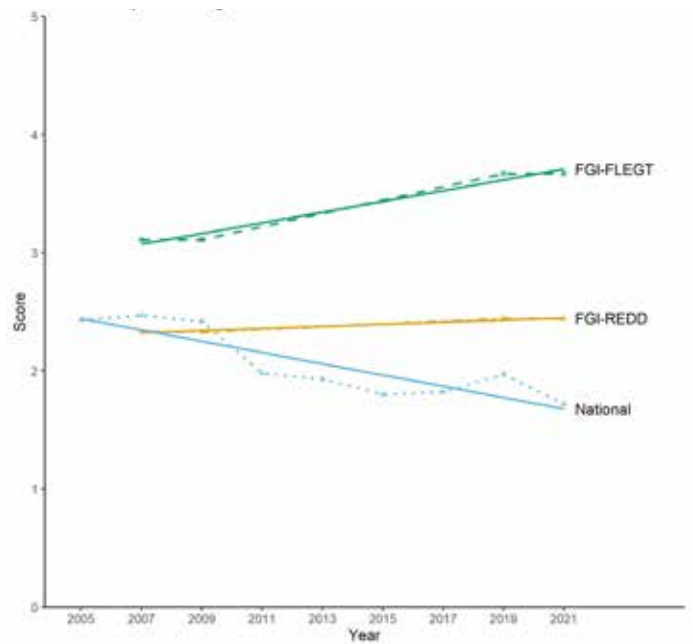
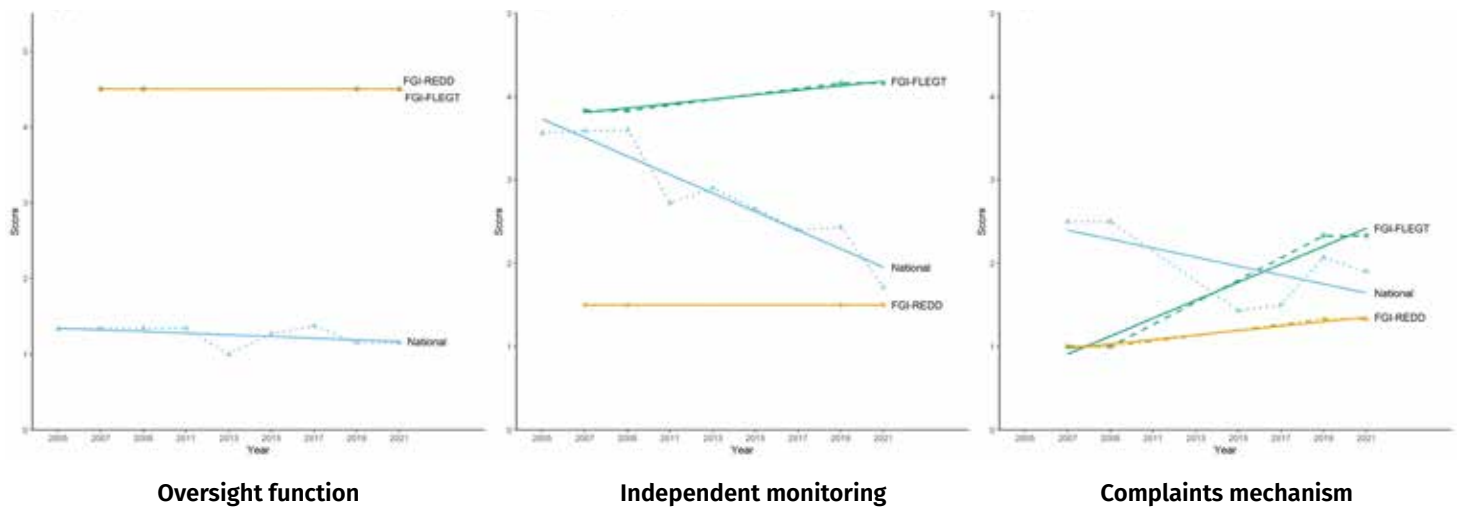


Figure 15. Key features of accountability and oversight



## Transparency

Analysis of indicators related to transparency drawn from five global organisations<sup>18</sup> show a small improvement over the assessment period. In contrast, the FGI indicates a slightly bigger improvement throughout the assessment period. See trendlines in figure 16.

When considering the individual aspects of transparency (see figure 17), on average the national assessments show a clear improvement in the foundations for public disclosure, which contrasts with a lower improvement identified by the FGI for this aspect. On the availability and accessibility of information, they show an improvement which is slightly greater than that identified by the FGI for this aspect. And on information use and influence, they show a slight decline, when the FGI indicates a slight improvement for this aspect in the context of FLEGT and a sharp improvement in the context of REDD+.

Figure 16. FGI and national indicators scores for transparency

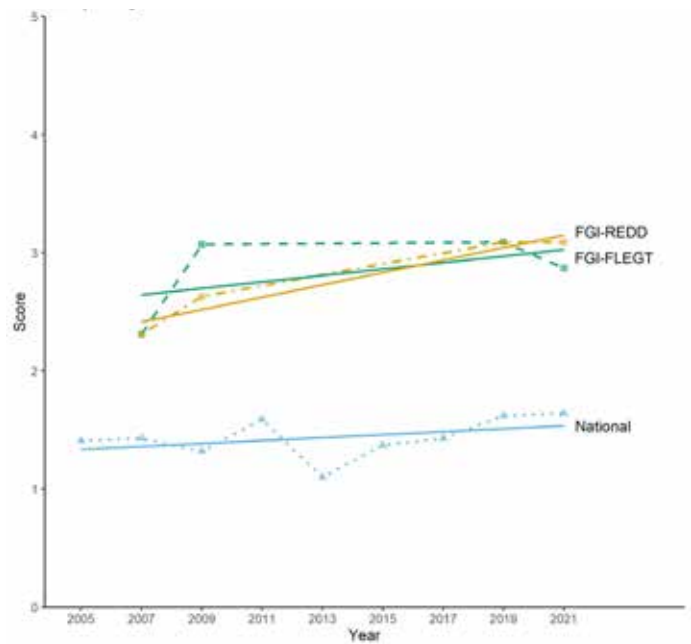
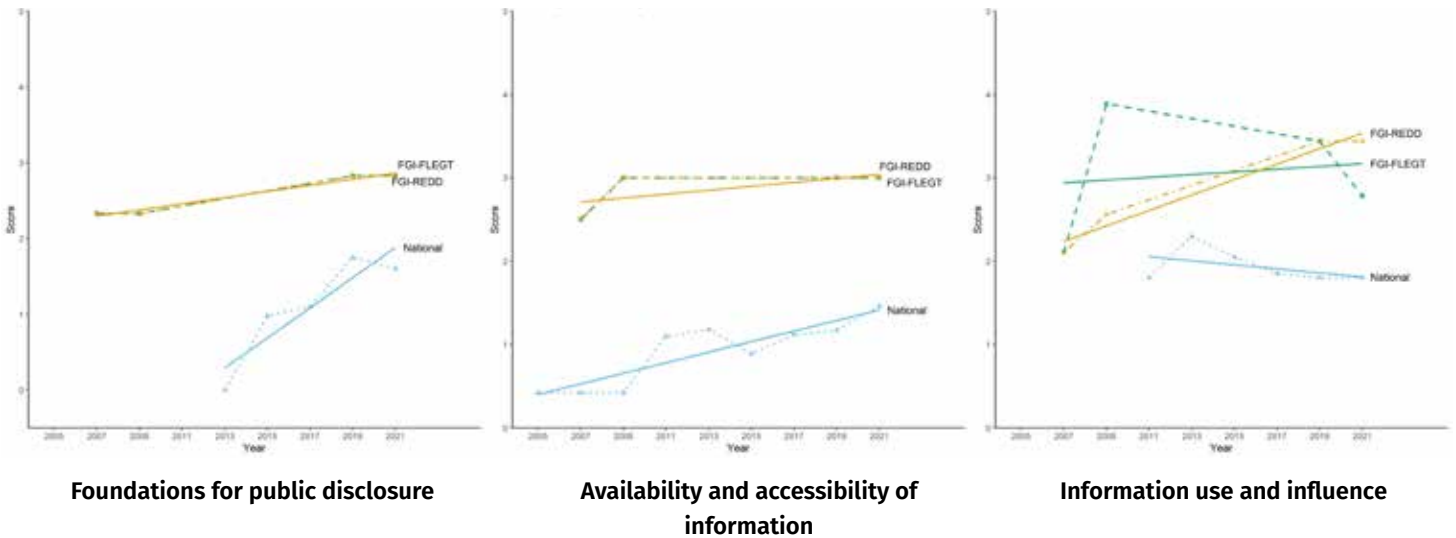


Figure 17. Key features of transparency

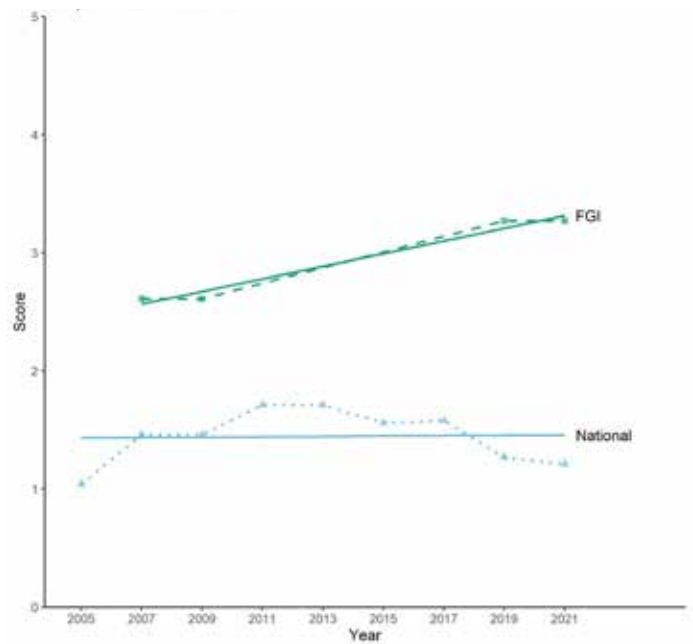


## Compliance promotion and enforcement

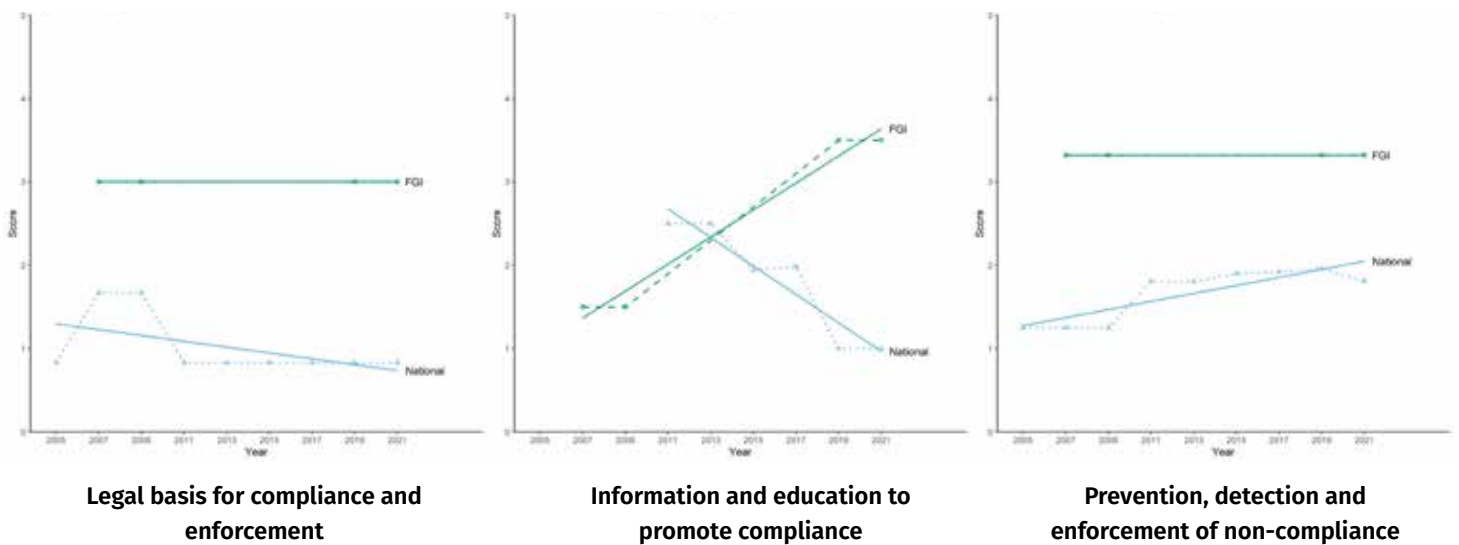
Analysis of indicators related to compliance promotion and enforcement drawn from four national governance indices<sup>19</sup> show a decline over the assessment period. In contrast, the FGI indicates a clear improvement in compliance promotion and enforcement in forest areas. See trendlines in figure 18.

When considering the individual aspects of compliance promotion and enforcement (see figure 19), on average the national assessments show a slight decline in the 'legal basis for compliance and enforcement', which contrasts with a no change identified by the FGI for this aspect. On 'information and education for promoting compliance', they show a decline, whilst the FGI identifies a clear improvement for this aspect. And on 'prevention, detection and enforcement of non-compliance', they show an improvement, when the FGI indicates no change for this aspect. This difference can be due to incomplete evidence collected through the FGI assessment and the fact that the FGI focuses on information systems and the presence of enforcement officers, which have not changed over the evaluation period. In contrast, the national evaluations focus on whistleblowing and the follow-up given to it.

**Figure 18.** FGI and national indicators scores for compliance promotion and enforcement



**Figure 19.** Key features of compliance promotion and enforcement



## Endnotes

- 1 Cerutti PO, Tsanga R, Goetghebuer T, Leszczynska N, Newbery J, Almeida B, Breyne J, Tabi P, and van der Ploeg L. 2022. Collecting evidence of FLEGT-VPA impacts: Cameroon country report. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.
- 2 National governance indices used for the area of stakeholder participation: Bertelsmann Stiftung's Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Freedom House's Freedom in the World indicators, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index and Africa Integrity Indicators, International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Index, IFAD's Rural Sector Performance Assessments, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.
- 3 National governance indices used for the area of legislative clarity: Bertelsmann Stiftung's Bertelsmann Transformation Index, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy and World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Survey.
- 4 National governance indices used for the area of accountability and oversight: IFAD's Rural Sector Performance Assessments, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index and Africa Integrity Indicators, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy, World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.
- 5 National governance indices used for the area of transparency: Freedom House's Freedom in the World, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index and Africa Integrity Indicators, International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Index, IFAD's Rural Sector Performance Assessments, Access Info Europe and the Centre for Law and Democracy's Right to Information Rating, World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.
- 6 National governance indices used for the area of compliance promotion and enforcement: Freedom House's Freedom in the World, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.
- 7 Questions posed by CIFOR in relation to stakeholder participation addressed:
  - VPA contribution to more consultation of local communities in decision making in the timber sector
  - VPA contribution to more consideration of local communities' opinions in decision making within the timber sector
  - VPA contribution to more consideration of the status of women, youth and marginalized groups in questions related to forest management and logging
  - VPA contribution to better recognition of SME associations in the forestry sector in Ghana
  - VPA contribution to better consideration of SMEs' opinions when decisions are taken concerning the forestry sector
  - VPA contribution to greater consideration of civil society's views in decision making related to the forestry sector.
- 8 Questions posed by CIFOR in relation to legislative clarity addressed:
  - VPA contribution to better coherence of the legal and regulatory framework of the forestry sector.
- 9 Questions posed by CIFOR in relation to accountability and oversight addressed:
  - VPA contribution to making the government more accountable for its actions
  - VPA contribution to a greater degree of autonomy for civil society in its role as an independent observer in the forestry sector
  - VPA contribution to more effective independent observation (carried out by CS) of the forestry sector
  - VPA contribution to providing CS with a greater role in controlling illegality and in identifying irregularities.
- 10 Questions posed by CIFOR in relation to transparency addressed:
  - VPA contribution to improving transparency in the forestry sector
  - VPA contribution to making information more readily available for SMEs to conduct their activities legally.
- 11 Questions posed by CIFOR in relation to compliance promotion and enforcement addressed:
  - VPA contribution to collection and redistribution of taxes
  - VPA contribution to enforcement sanctions
  - VPA contribution to making sanctions more credible
- 12 MINEPAT, MINFOF, MINDCAF, MINADER, MINEPIA, MINDHU, MINMIDT and MINEE
- 13 The law setting the orientation of land use planning provides for the establishment of a national land use planning council which has not yet been set up. But these attributes do not make it possible to deal with non-compliance with land use planning
- 14 Data was provided by relevant indicators in the following indices:
  - Bertelsmann Stiftung: 'Bertelsmann Transformation Index'
  - Freedom House: 'Freedom in the World indicators'
  - Global Integrity: 'Global Integrity Index' and 'Africa Integrity Indicators'
  - International Budget Partnership: 'Open Budget Index'
  - IFAD: 'Rural Sector Performance Assessments'
  - Access Info Europe and the Centre for Law and Democracy: 'Right to Information Rating'
  - V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenburg: 'Varieties of Democracy'
  - World Bank: 'Country Policy and Institutional Assessment'
  - World Economic Forum: 'Global Competitiveness Survey'
  - World Justice: 'Project Rule of Law Index'
- 15 National governance indices used for the area of stakeholder participation: Bertelsmann Stiftung's Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Freedom House's Freedom in the World indicators, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index and Africa Integrity Indicators, International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Index, IFAD's Rural Sector Performance Assessments, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.
- 16 National governance indices used for the area of legislative clarity: Bertelsmann Stiftung's Bertelsmann Transformation Index, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy and World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Survey.
- 17 National governance indices used for the area of accountability and oversight: IFAD's Rural Sector Performance Assessments, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index and Africa Integrity Indicators, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy, World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.
- 18 National governance indices used for the area of transparency: Freedom House's Freedom in the World, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index and Africa Integrity Indicators, International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Index, IFAD's Rural Sector Performance Assessments, Access Info Europe and the Centre for Law and Democracy's Right to Information Rating, World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.
- 19 National governance indices used for the area of compliance promotion and enforcement: Freedom House's Freedom in the World, Global Integrity's Global Integrity Index, V-Dem Institute's Varieties of Democracy and World Justice's Project Rule of Law Index.

