

## CAMEROON

### CELEBRATES THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

May 2015

THEME: BIODIVERSITY for SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The parties to the United Nations soon after the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) proclaimed May 22 the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB). The overall objective of the celebration is to increase understanding and awareness on biodiversity and the importance of its conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of its benefits for human well-being. Cameroon as a party to the UN and a signatory to the CBD has constantly joined the global community to celebrate the importance of this day to the nation and its people.

The theme for this year's celebration is "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development". This reflects the importance of the global efforts that have been made to establish a set of Sustainable Development Goals as part of the United Nations Post 2015 Development Agenda for the period 2015-2030 and the relevance of biodiversity for the achievement of sustainable development

**Biodiversity as the variety of life on earth is crucial for humanity. Biodiversity is essential for sustainable development and human well-being as highlighted below.**

- Global and local economies are driven by biodiversity as a vital asset
- Food production, access to clean and secure water etc... depend on biodiversity and the services provided by ecosystems
- Research, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries depend on biodiversity and associated traditional knowledge;

- Biodiversity plays a major role in mitigating climate change by contributing to long-term sequestration of carbon in a number of biomes
- Women depend on biodiversity as the cornerstone of their basic survival ;
- The built environment of cities are linked to and affected by biodiversity.

This explains why the Gangwon Declaration adopted by the Ministers in attendance at the just ended High Level Segment of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity calls on parties to ensure the effective integration and mainstreaming of biodiversity in national and local sustainable development goals.

In a continued engagement to protect the nation's rich biological diversity and to harness the benefits this offers for a sustained economic growth and an improved well-being of the people, Cameroon in 2012 adopted a second version of its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP II). The visionary direction and its four strategic goals orient all national interventions in matters of biodiversity. Within Strategic Goal D of NBSAP II, Cameroon opts for mainstreaming biodiversity into national, sector and local level development plans as a key priority.

Building understanding on the value of Cameroons rich biological diversity, its contribution to a development that is sustainable, approaches to ensure effectiveness in mainstreaming biodiversity as the nation defines its sustainable development goals and identifying key actors responsible will all constitute a major focus of the 2015 celebrations of Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in Cameroon.

Key actors are all called upon to develop specific programs to celebrate this day and to join the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development in a one-week national celebration that is scheduled to take place from the 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2015.

Highlights of the national celebration will include the following:

- Media awareness and sensitization programs
- Debates and dialogue sessions
- Youth programs and competitions, and
- A Workshop for the National Biodiversity Target Leads.