



REPORT OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE 2015 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIODIVERSITY



22 MAY 2015
INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
BIODIVERSITY FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

6th May 2015, MINEPDED

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1. 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 12th 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 were 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 4th – 8th of May 2015. National NGOs also organised events in celebration of this day. The celebration was organised by the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development and was supported by the GEF/UNEP NBSAP Project.

2. PARTICIPATION

The activities commemorating the 2015 celebration of the IDB which unfolded from 8:00am to 12:00pm were carried out/ witnessed by about 150 participants, 60 of which were secondary school students. Participants were from various domains including heads of the various MINEPDED departments and services, other ministerial



departments (MINFOF, MINRESI, MINEPIA, MINADER) Development partners (IUCN, UNDP, WWF, etc.), the media (CRTV, Radio Environnement), environmental clubs of secondary schools, Entertainers (dancing band), and the interested public.

3. PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

The IDB celebration ran on the following program; appendix I

- Media awareness and sensitization programs
- Children's competitions
- Singing of the national anthem and the biodiversity song
- Presentation by the National Focal point for the Convention on Biological Diversity
- Presentation of prizes of competitions
- Keynote address of the minister
- Visitation of exhibition stands

3.1 Media awareness and sensitization programs

Sensitisation through mass media was done through different programs such as Monday show on the National Television, with radio spots on Radio Environnement and the National Radio. On the National Radio Mme GALEGA Prudence, CBD Focal Point and Dr KENFACK Jean, Goal Lead A of the NBSAP 2 effectively participated of the nation-wide broadcast program called CRTV Information Day.

3.2 Children's competitions

Children's painting and quiz competitions began at 8:00 am prompt. Three schools were represented by their environment competed in the painting and quiz competitions. These schools are;

- Government Bilingual High School Etoug Ebe
- AYUNGUAH Bilingual Secondary School
- Refuge Bilingual high school



Quiz Competition

Each group chose questions by ballot and answered within a five minute delay after concerting between themselves. Sample questions asked were as follows; who is the minister of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development? Name three organizations which deal with environmental issues? Etc. More than 80% of the questions asked were answered by the children. This is very encouraging because it shows that the younger generation which is an important target group for the sustainable management of our planet is increasingly aware of their environment and the prevailing issues surrounding its destruction.

For the painting competition, each group presented a painting whose concept is based on the theme 'Biodiversity for Sustainable Development', and each group's Spokesperson explained the concept of the picture and its relation to the theme. The paintings presented by the various groups can be found in appendix II. A set of four children from each group took the quiz on behalf of their group.

3.3 Singing of the national anthem



Students singing the National Anthem

The official delegation of the ceremony arrived at 11:00. Briefing of the morning's activities was done by Ms. SANJOH Delphine. Following the briefing was the singing of the National Anthem.

3.4 Presentation by the national focal point of biodiversity



Mrs GALEGA Prudence, National Focal Point for the CBD

Following the national anthem, the National Focal Point for Biodiversity Mrs. Galega Prudence gave background information with regard to the celebration and the theme of the Celebration. She stressed on that fact Sustainable Development being development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of

future generations to meet their own needs. This development approach obligates the integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions in addressing these needs. By so doing biodiversity is thus a central and fundamental building block for any development that is sustainable.

The national Focal point for the CBD proceeded to explain that within the framework of the CBD, global commitment has been made to take urgent action to reverse trends in biodiversity loss; a strategic plan has been adopted, and 20 targets have been set to be met by the year 2020. She pointed out that within Strategic Goal D of NBSAP II, Cameroon opts for mainstreaming biodiversity into national, sector and local level development plans as a key priority.

3.5 Award of prizes to winners of competitions

The prizes awarded included prizes for participants and winners of the children's painting and quiz competitions, and prizes won by callers who took part in the radio quiz.

Prizes for children's competition

- After the children's painting and quiz competitions, prizes were presented to the winners of the competitions as follows;
- The first prize won by ANYUNGUAH College was presented to them by the Minister Delegate to the Minister of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development.

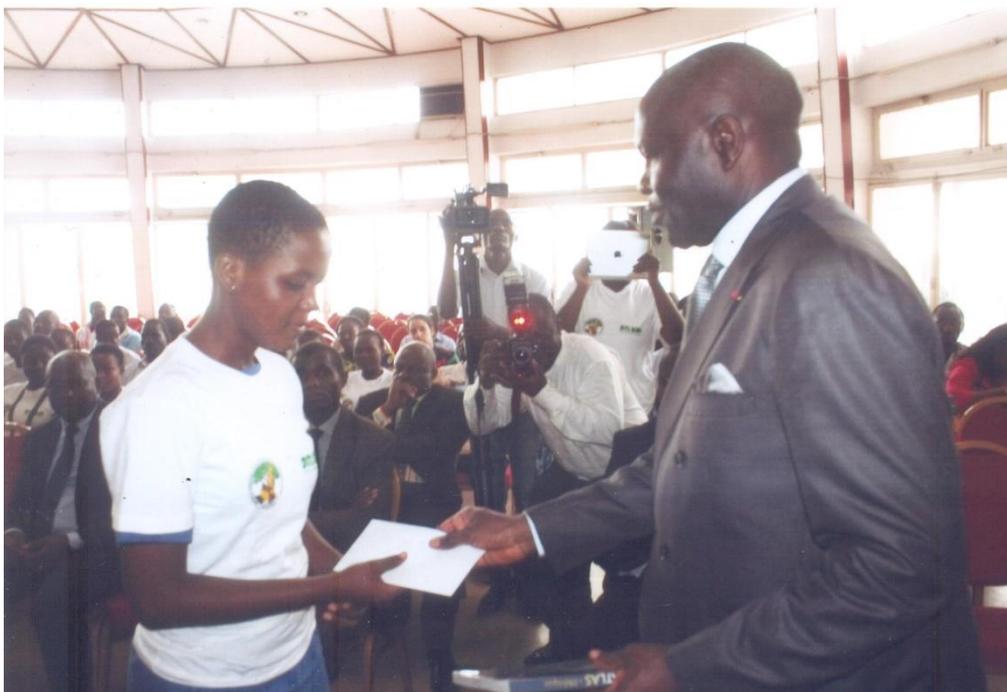


The First prize handed over by the Minister Delegate



The first school ANYUNGUAH College

- The second prize won by GBHS Etoug Ebe was presented to them by the Secretary General of MINEPDED.



The second prize to GBHS Etoug Ebe handed over by the SG of MINEPDED

- The third prize won by Refuge bilingual college was presented to them by the Representative of the Resident Representative of the UNDP.

3.6 Keynote address of the Minister Delegate to the Minister of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development

The Minister Delegate to the Minister of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development on behalf of His Excellency the Minister of Environment and Protection of Nature unavoidably absent presided over the activities organized by Cameroon to join the rest of the world in the celebration of the 2015 IDB. He explained that the 22nd of May is the date set aside for the celebration of the IDB but given the celebration of the National Day on the 20th of May, Cameroon has adopted the tradition of celebrating the IDB on a day of convenience. On this note, he heartily welcomed all the participants to this year's celebration of the 2015 IDB which he said was special because it falls within the United Nations decade for biodiversity. It is on this basis he explained, that the theme of this year's celebration is focused on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development.



The Minister Delegate proceeded to emphasize the far-reaching importance of the value of biodiversity to all Cameroonians; in addition to the importance of sustainably managing it for future generations for a better livelihood.

Further into his speech, the Minister Delegate pointed out that the Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity and Sustainable Development adopted at the just ended 12th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Pyeongchang calls on all development pathways by parties to ensure that biodiversity is maintained and to mainstream biodiversity in national sustainable goals and sector plans.

He stressed that on-going work within the UN General Assembly is expected to result in a new international framework for sustainable development, the post 2015

development agenda, with protection of biodiversity being a priority in Goal 15 which provides as following:

The integration of biodiversity, ecosystems and the services they provide into both climate change adaptation/ mitigation, trade and international cooperation), as well as into sector-specific plans (such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining, energy, tourism, transport and others)”.

Cameroon in compliance with its commitments under these key processes has through the Ministry of Environment Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development carried out the following:

- From an institutional perspective, the extension of the mandate of the Ministry to include Sustainable Development, demonstrates the high political commitment to ensure that biodiversity is integrated in the sustainable development goals;
 - The national Sub Sector Strategy of the Ministry has adopted a major program titled: *Sustainable Development and Biodiversity*. This programmatic budgeting approach and option further demonstrates the commitment to operationalize the link between Sustainable Development and Biodiversity;
 - Cameroon revised its first NBSAP and adopted NBSAP II in 2012 which provides the orientation for all national interventions on biodiversity. This key planning document provides for four strategic goals and 20+ Biodiversity Targets. The goals focus on:
 - Public Awareness and Knowledge on Biodiversity
 - Maintaining
 - Generating Wealth from Biodiversity
 - Mainstreaming Biodiversity in national development and sector plans. (Target 17 calls for the mainstreaming of biodiversity into all national sectors, including the economic planning sector.
 - Priorities for specific ecosystems.
- The new biodiversity policy orientation provided by NBSAP II is of prime importance to the nation’s development process as it aligns with the GESP development options to boost key production sectors that depend on biodiversity. Of equal importance, this document brings Cameroon to a significant level of compliance to its commitments under the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) and other biodiversity related Conventions.
- The Ministry is undertaking a study for the development of the National Sustainable Development Goals

It is on this note that he ended his speech, by thanking the Students and children who through their activities and competition have worked hard to communicate the messages that come out of the NBSAP II and the various activities of the Ministry. He

thanked UNEP and GEF for their continuous support to Cameroon in the process. He also called upon the participants to continue the day's celebrations, to raise awareness on the protection of biodiversity for ourselves and for future generations.

3.7 Visitation of exhibition stands

After the keynote address of the Minister Delegate to the Minister of Environment, Protection of Nature Sustainable Development, the participants led by the Minister Delegate, to the Minister of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development proceeded to take the group picture, and this was closely followed by visitation of the exhibition stands.



Group picture of the different participants

Exhibitions were presented by the different Goal Leads of the NBSAP II. Exhibitions comprised of books, flyers, pictures, and posters related to biodiversity for Sustainable Development and NBSAP II. The visitation of the exhibition stands was accompanied by melodious displays from the dancing band, and it is on this joyful note that the day's celebration came to an end at about 14:00 pm.



**Stand for messages for Goal A,B and D of
NBSAP II**



**Stand for messages for Goal C and
ecosystem specific targets of NBSAP II**

4. APPRAISAL OF THE IDB CELEBRATION

- Preparations for the celebration of the IDB is always difficult due to the fact that other major celebrations such as the National day celebration and the celebration of the World environment day on the 20th of May, and the 5th of June respectively, occur within the same period
- The IDB day's activities proper went on without a hitch and judging from the level of participation, the wide range of stakeholders present, the enthusiasm of the participants, and the positive response to the sensitization exercises, it can be concluded that the objective of this year's IDB celebration was met.