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## Central Africa EPA

- **CENTRAL AFRICA CONFIGURATION**

The region is composed of 8 countries:

Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sao Tome and Principe (STP) and Chad
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- **EPA STATE OF PLAY (MARCH 2013)**

***Interim EPA negotiations and agreements:***

Integration of the region at institutional level has not yet been completed. The eight countries are part of the ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States), but only six of them have reached an agreement on the establishment of a CET within the framework of the CEMAC (Central African Economic and Monetary Community); (STP) and the DRC still apply their own tariffs. DRC is participating in two other regional integration processes, the SADC (Southern African Development Community) and the COMESA<sup>1</sup>

With the exception of Cameroon, Congo and Gabon which are not LDCs, CA's countries have duty free access to the EU under the Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme while full EPA negotiations continue.

On 15 January 2009 the EU and Central Africa Region (Cameroon) signed an interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)<sup>2</sup>. This interim EPA, which involves only Cameroon, is a temporary solution while negotiations to replace it with a full EPA covering the entire Central African region are ongoing.

The text of the trade in goods provisions has been largely agreed but still contains points of divergence where negotiators are looking for compromise, such as on export taxes, regional levies or the MFN clause. Central Africa proposed in 2008 a common market access offer for goods that is being used as a basis for negotiation.

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<sup>1</sup> On 22 October 2008, following a meeting between heads of state of the EAC, the COMESA and SADC, an agreement was signed with a view to the eventual creation of a free-trade area between these three regions, bringing together 26 states, including the DRC. However no precise timetable has been fixed.

<sup>2</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:057:0002:0360:EN:PDF>

Due to domestic CA reorganisations, no relevant progress on the negotiations has been reached up to date. The objective of the EU and Central Africa is to conclude an agreement at regional level, which would support development and foster regional integration.

More information on state of play of negotiations:

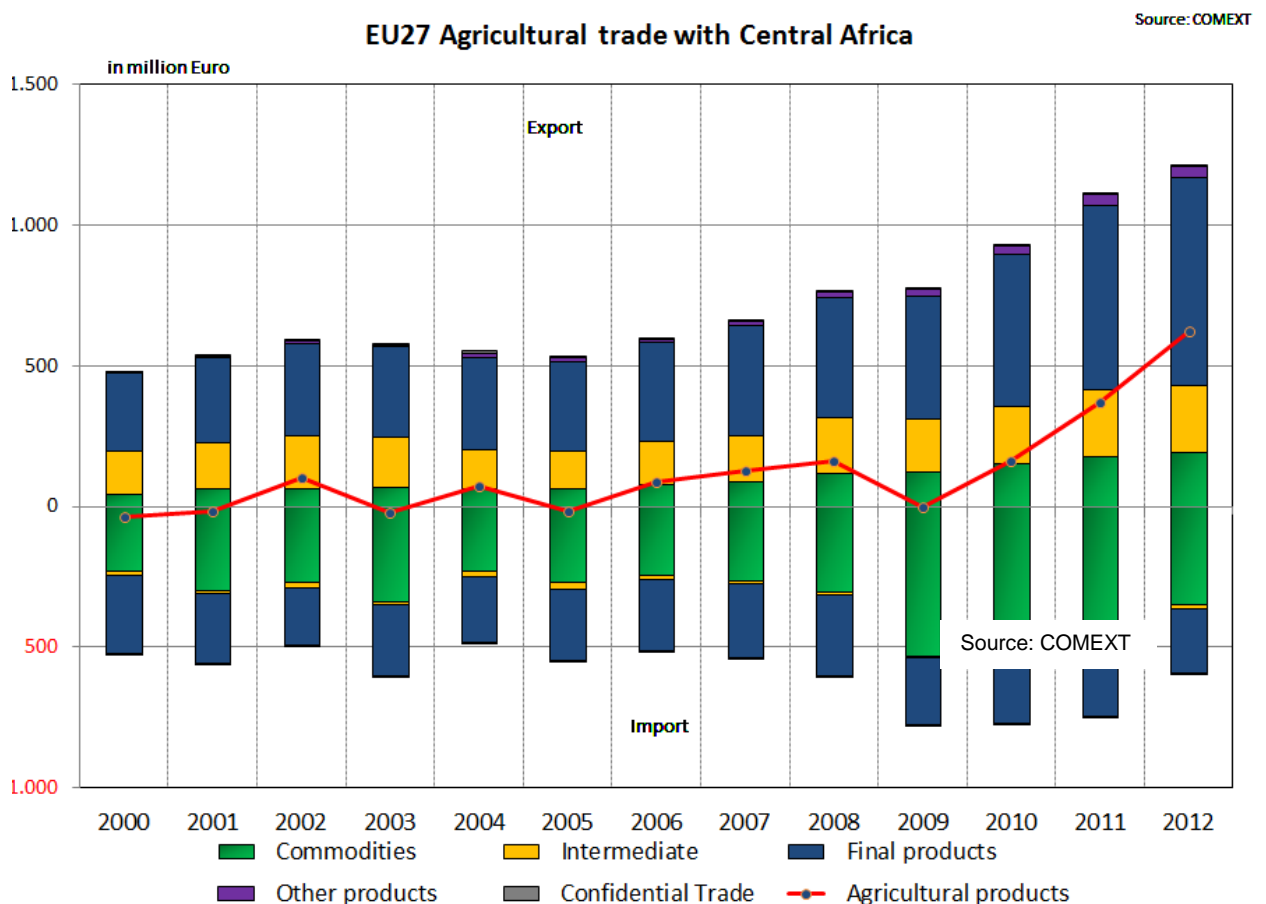
<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/regions/central-africa/>

## IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE IN CENTRAL AFRICA REGION

Country	Population (millions)	GNI per capita Atlas (\$)	Value added, agriculture (% of GDP)
Cameroon	19.6	1180	19
Gabon	1.5	7740	4
Equatorial Guinea	0.700	14550	3
Congo Brazzaville	4.0	2150	4
DRC-Democratic Rep. of Congo	66.0	180	43
Chad	11.2	620	14
Central African Rep.	4.4	470	56
São Tomé e Príncipe	0.165	1200	..

Source: The Little Data Book 2012. The World Bank

- **AGRICULTURE TRADE**



- **AGRICULTURE ISSUES IN EPA**

As in other EPA configurations all CA agricultural goods benefit from duty free/quota free access to the EC market, the exception being sugar which is subject to a transitional period. In addition, a number of CA agricultural products will be

excluded indefinitely from liberalization within the EPA to ensure that local producers are protected.

The share of agricultural products in exports of the Central African countries, is smaller than in other sub-regions of the ACP zone, due to export oil or wood products. In the case of exports to the EU they account for only 9%. Cameroon contributes 82% of the region's exports.



*Agriculture  
and Rural  
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