



INTERNATIONAL BAMBOO
AND RATTAN ORGANIZATION

Central Africa Regional Office
(CARO)



ABARC 2022

20 - 22 April, Yaoundé

REPORT OF THE AFRICA BAMBOO AND RATTAN CONGRESS

20-22 APRIL 2022, YAOUNDÉ-CAMEROUN

**MAKING BAMBOO AND RATTAN
THE ENGINE OF A RESILIENT AND
SUSTAINABLE GREEN ECONOMY
IN AFRICA**

International Bamboo and Rattan Organization (INBAR)
Central Africa Regional Office (CARO)

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Under the distinguished Patronage of **H. E. Paul BIYA**, Head of State of the Republic of Cameroon, the Government of Cameroon, in partnership with the International Bamboo and Rattan Organization (INBAR), hosted the first Africa Bamboo and Rattan Congress in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 20 to 22 April 2022, under the theme “**Making Bamboo and Rattan the Engine of a Resilient and Sustainable Green Economy in Africa**”. During that congress, the Yaoundé Declaration, highlighted the determination of African Ministers in charge of Environment, Forestry, Climate and Agriculture in achieving the goals set out in INBAR’s 2015–2030 strategic plan. The Congress seeks to provide a Platform for sustainable and inclusive development in South-South and South-North cooperation as well as further enhance the achievement agenda of the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), regarding the sector, with a particular emphasis on Climate change mitigation and adaptation.



2 Opening Ceremony



2.1. The opening ceremony was attended by the Director General of the International Bamboo and Rattan Organization (INBAR) Mr. Ali MCHUMO, the third Deputy City Mayor of Yaoundé Mr. Palalou MINDJIYAWA and the Minister of State, Minister of Tourism Mr. Bello BOUBA MAIGARI personal representative of the Prime Minister, Head of Government on behalf of the Government of Cameroon.





2.2. In his welcoming remarks, Mr. Palalou MINDJIYAWA welcomed and thanked all the participants attending this important meeting in the City of seven hills, which is indicative of the efforts made by Cameroon in the sustainable management of its forest resource, especially bamboo and rattan. He invited them to fully enjoy the legendary hospitality of Yaoundé city-dwellers.



Mr. Palalou MINDJIYAWA

2.3. Mr. Ali MCHUMO thanked the participants for being present at this first Africa Regional Bamboo and Rattan Congress in Cameroon. He set the stage of the Congress and presented the general program, which included a High-level Ministerial Meeting which will examine issues relating to the contribution of these resources to African Economies. Mr. MCHUMO also highlighted issues like the importance of the South-South cooperation in this sector, climate change and industrial development, among others.



Mr. Ali Mchumo

2.4. In his opening address, The Minister of State, Minister of Tourism Mr. Bello BOUBA MAIGARI on his part, expressed his gratitude to the Director General of INBAR for choosing Cameroon as Africa’s first ever host of this Congress. He further reminded the audience that while bamboo and rattan are source of employment to tens of millions of people, they are drivers for poverty alleviation, green economy, climate change mitigation, resilience and environmental protection and account for about USD 60 billion of global trade. Hoping the bamboo and rattan sector experiences a real lift off regarding its production, processing and marketing continent-wide, he ended his speech by wishing fruitful South-South cooperation and declared the Congress open.

High-level Ministerial Dialogue

2.5. The High-level Ministerial session was presided over by the Minister of Forestry of Cameroon and incumbent Chair of INBAR Council, Mr. Jules DORET NDONGO, who welcomed all Ministers and head of delegations. Outlining the program for the three-day event, he expressed his wish for more positive outcomes and resolutions at the end of discussions. He concluded by saying that he was optimistic about the future of bamboo and rattan in Africa and looked forward to the Yaoundé Declaration.



Mr. Bello Bouba Maigari



High-lvel Ministerial session

2.6. Ministers present thanked the Republic of Cameroon for the warm welcome given to them. They underscored the various uses and economic advantages of bamboo and rattan, as well as processing or/enhancement challenges that they face in their respective contexts.





2.7. During this high-level session, Mr. Ali MCHUMO, encouraged countries with observer status, i.e. Chad and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and special invited countries including Côte d'Ivoire and Equatorial Guinea, to join the Organization in a bid to promote the use of bamboo and rattan in their countries.



3 The Bamboo and Rattan Exhibition



3.1. The Bamboo and Rattan Exhibition was organized alongside the congress. The objective of the exhibition was to offer to artisans and other bamboo and rattan engaged stakeholders in Cameroon the platform to showcase the repertoire of bamboo and rattan products, handicrafts made in Cameroon.

3.2. The Bamboo and Rattan Exhibition was inaugurated just after the opening ceremony by the Minister of State, Minister of Tourism Mr. Bello BOUBA MAIGARI in presence of all the dignitaries present at the opening ceremony.

3.3. Artisans and other exhibitors came from all 10 regions of Cameroon and they exhibited a variety of products including furniture, household utensils, bamboo for construction, fishing utensils, basketry, bamboo charcoal, bamboo for construction, and bamboo for cosmetics. Including public administrations, more than 20 exhibitors participated in the exhibition.



B&R exhibition



3.4. According to the Minister of Forestry of Cameroon and incumbent Chair of INBAR Council, Mr. Jules DORET NDONGO, artisans from Cameroon and other exhibitors have demonstrated skills and talent and good mastery of processing of bamboo and rattan products. However, the need for advance machinery and further capacity building of the artisans have been identified and the Government of Cameroon and INBAR will continue to work closely to address these limitations and support the sustainable industrialisation of the bamboo and rattan sector as means of the import substitution.







Participation

The Congress was attended by African Ministers; delegates from 19 countries namely: (Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia; Malawi, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda); international experts, development and technical partners and organizations (including the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID); specialized departments and units of the Cameroonian ministries concerned as well as local and regional administrative authorities, research institutions, private sector, civil society, craftsmen, etc.



5 Reports on recommendations of break-out sessions



Technical sessions

5.1. During the three-day event, besides, the High-level Ministerial Dialogue, twelve (12) parallel break-out sessions were held during which scholars, decision-makers as well as representatives and experts from international, regional, and local organizations shared views and discussed on opportunities provided by bamboo and rattan to enhance South-South/South-North Cooperation and green economic recovery. This first dialogue was to increase the understanding about bamboo and rattan's benefits for Africa, help them make better use of these commodities.

5.2. Every session started with a keynote speech from a seasoned expert, followed by a panel discussion involving a larger and diversified number of experts from within and outside the continent.

5.3. The items covered and discussed during the Congress were the following:

- **Session 1:** Strategies for developing green and circular economy with bamboo
- **Session 2:** Rattan processing, value addition, innovative products, technologies and commercialization
- **Session 3:** Policies and strategies for sustainable development of the Bamboo and Rattan sector
- **Session 4:** South and triangular Cooperation for Bamboo and Rattan Development (SSTC)
- **Session 5:** Bamboo processing, value addition, innovative products, technologies and commercialization
- **Session 6:** Successful country level Bamboo and Rattan Development experience
- **Session 7:** Standards and Certification

- **Session 8:** Quantifying and monitoring Bamboo's potential for climate change mitigation and adaptation in Africa
- **Session 9:** Resource mobilization for Bamboo and Rattan Development
- **Session 10:** Investment promotion Strategies
- **Session 11:** Bamboo for Bio-energy research and development
- **Session 12:** Contribution of Bamboo and Rattan to economies and livelihoods for local development of Councils and Regions in Cameroon (FEICOM).

a) Strategies for developing green and circular economy with bamboo

5.3. The importance of innovation and reliable supply chain for developing a green and circular economy has been highlighted lengthily, drawing from existing experiences and best practices for a full utilization of bamboo products. It includes a cycle of production, distribution, consumption and recycling/re-using. In other words, partnerships and technical cooperation should be developed for knowledge transfer and networking. The ecologically friendly and renewable qualities of bamboo should also be considered as well.

5.4. The Panel recommended the following:

- Rethink the place of bamboo in sustainable development.
- Formulate and enhance policies for a sector development, especially in developing countries.
- Gradually improve the local usage of bamboo and rattan

in industrial processing.

- Transition towards sustainable bamboo and rattan development.

To do so, African countries must formulate policies or strategic plans that clearly outline a transformative pathway, including a sustainable source of financial resources to create viable and competitive industries.

Design specialized projects at the national level for chain development, based on domestic needs and the potential to develop.

Design and implement management and monitoring systems for the existing bamboo and rattan-related policies, strategies, and projects.

b) Rattan processing, value addition, innovative products, technologies and commercialization

5.5. An overview of rattan species, diversity and forms with emphasis on economic species, enable one to understand how rooted it is in rural African communities; but also, to better promote activities around rattan production and utilization to obtain larger profits. The whole idea is to enhance the management and improve farming techniques of that commodity in Africa.

5.6. Rattan has a comprehensive value chain, which contributes significantly to the informal economy. It is, therefore, necessary to strengthen countries capacities and help them access technologies to process and manufacture the raw material and develop this sector to its full potential, without ruining the environment.

5.7. The Panel recommended the following:

- Encourage plantation in natural forests and agroforestry.
- Implement research findings for improving resource management and the quality of rattan products.
- Retrieve the indigenous and unique skills and designs to sustain the industry with appropriate interventions
- Forster support from professionals in contemporary and modern designs and products.
- Manage rattan sustainably to renew existing rattan stocks and ensure the sustainability of its value chain.
- Promote policy interventions and sustainable harvesting in rattan cultivation.
- Embrace innovation for efficient rattan processing, product designing and standardization which will be more competitive with a high-value.
- Create awareness and interest among the public.
- Strengthen capacities to have a better-organized environment and an improved productivity.
- Include urgent, specific guidelines in the forestry Codes of producing countries regarding the harvest and trade of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) as well as to capture non-timber revenues.

c) Policies and strategies for sustainable development of the Bamboo and Rattan sector

5.8. Bamboo and rattan sector can play an important role in climate change mitigation and adaptation, but also in poverty reduction by sustaining the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, as well as investors in the sector. This is only possible if, producer countries, particularly African countries, develop

and implement policies and strategies for its effective and profitable management. To be able to achieve that goal, Governments need to put in place a very conducive environment to stimulate private sector investment in that sector. Obviously, there is a need to rethink the place and role of bamboo and rattan in achieving sustainable development goals.

5.9. The Panel recommended the following:

- To maintain a proper competitive edge in the market while positively affecting the environment, companies ought to innovate.
- Supply chain and supporting stakeholders, like policy makers, must focus on developing a circular bamboo supply chain.
- Establish partnerships and technical cooperation for knowledge transfer, networking, etc. which will further accelerate the transformation of the bamboo supply chain.
- Develop legal and policy framework for the circular economy business model.
- Promote the Anji Model for a highly efficient bamboo biomass use.

Encourage the use of bamboo as a sustainable, renewable, and eco-friendly material over plastics.

d) South and triangular Cooperation for Bamboo and Rattan Development (SSTC)

5.10. It is worth mentioning INBAR's role in facilitating the establishment of multi-scale development programs and providing various technical support across all continents. It

has also been able to push the bamboo and rattan agenda forward thanks to the various cooperations which have resulted in peer learning and sharing, replication of good practices, knowledge, and skills enhancement (through capacity building), and research and development.

5.11. Moreover, through all these various bilateral and multilateral programs and projects, the contribution of bamboo and rattan to smallholder farmers (especially youth and women) livelihoods and climate change adaptative capacities can be significant, provided their participation is effective and scaled up. Those initiatives aim to develop networks, SMEs, industries, etc. around bamboo-related issues, including carbon sequestration, soil management, water catchment, environmental metrics.

5.12. The Panel recommended the following:

- Formulate and roll out development projects and programs.
- Scale up and diversify bamboo and rattan value chains that promote industrialization and investment opportunities.
- Replicate and integrate bamboo and rattan into country development plans and international commitments.
- Capitalize on success stories and best practices from other countries and to be open to innovation.
- Create the enabling environment for investment.
- Develop the appropriate expertise and skills for bamboo development.
- Attempt to create a continental market for bamboo products in Africa.
- Establish a bamboo resources base across Africa.

e) Bamboo processing, value addition, innovative products, technologies and commercialization

5.13. Bamboo is present in many countries. It offers thousands of products and applications and represents billions of dollars in international trade in 2019. Bamboo culms give a quick yield, do not require a high investment cost and capitalize on traditional knowledge and cultural value system.

5.14. The Panel recommended the following:

- Develop the best way to capitalize on the bamboo resource
- Breed confidence among partners and strengthen business opportunities
- Achieve some of the goals of the SDGs, namely Goals 1, 2, 5, 8 and 17
- Create a platform for public-private partnership (PPP)
- Advocate for poverty reduction and employment opportunities
- Improve the occupational health system
- Intensify research and development to improve product performance
- Conduct a comprehensive and authoritative environment and energy consumption assessment for the raw materials
- Scientifically explain the advantages and the properties for a better promotion of these commodities.

5.15. The focus of this session was on defining the role of policies, strategies and development planning in bamboo

f) Successful country level Bamboo and Rattan Development experience

and rattan sector. To this effect, INBAR was presented as a premier partner with its scope of action and intervention clearly outlined. Various speakers during this session took stock of the achievements so far across the different regions, with and/or without INBAR support and assistance.

5.16. Best practices were presented. Examples of countries like China, India Vietnam and Ecuador, their policies and strategies to develop the bamboo sector were showed case. It was an opportunity to assess “what works and what cannot work”, “what might work” as well as identify potential challenges and how to overcome them.

5.17. The Panel recommended the following:

- Exchange best international practices on management of plantations and new product development.
- Collaborate in skill and capacity development of local communities, bilaterally, but also through international and multilateral public and private organizations.
- Strengthen scientific and technological innovation platforms for the industry.
- Build strategic alliance to foster innovation.
- Encourage participation in national and international standard development.
- support active academic research exchanges at home and abroad.

g) Standards and Certification

5.18. Mr Rene Kaam started by characterizing and giving an overview of bamboo standards around the world. He stressed the three level bamboo standards: an alternative to conventional timber, its role in the protection of tropical forests and it is an important strategic resource for the UNSDGs (1, 7, 11, 12, 13 and 15). He further stated a lack of compliance of standards could present a risk, reason why some countries have taken the lead in developing national standards (with three of them advanced, namely Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda), which should be encouraged.



5.19. Ideally, the objective of these standards is to provide and ensure bamboo forest management plans, which include long term sustainable harvest levels and measures; providing

protection of water quality and quantity; measuring adaptation and mitigation to climate change; limiting the susceptibility of bamboo forests to the undesirable impacts of forest fires, improve laws and regulations through research, science and technology, increase participation through public and community awareness and education.

5.20. The Panel recommended the following:

- Currently, most African countries are limited by the absence of standards, codes and supporting policies for the development of the bamboo and rattan industry, market and trade.
- Over the next decade, standards and certification of bamboo forests and products will be crucial to the development of a globally competitive market for bamboo and rattan.
- Capacity building and awareness raising has become a necessary tool for countries to recognize the value and importance of bamboo and rattan in sustainable development and also as an alternative “green” option at various levels.
- The development of Harmonized Coding System for both commodities in Africa must be done within the framework of continental and international dialogue, negotiation and cooperation among countries and key stakeholders.

h) Quantifying and monitoring Bamboo’s potential for climate change mitigation and adaptation in Africa

5.21. From the first day of the meeting, various speakers pointed out the role of bamboo and rattan in the fight against climate change and all its related consequences on the environment. Now, it is up to the African continent to take ownership of the existing guidelines, principles, cultivation and production techniques, and innovative applications.

5.22. A lot of scientific research and studies have been conducted in Africa revealing the tremendous advantages and benefits of bamboo and rattan farms on sustainable development goal achievement, carbon emissions reduction, just to name a few.

5.23. The Panel recommended the following:

- Bamboo shall be used by decision makers and environmentalists for ecosystem restoration to alleviate poverty while contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Encourage regular harvesting of bamboo to boost the levels of carbon sequestration.
- Formulate strong policies to enhance bamboo diversity, distribution, and carbon stocks in developing countries.
- Carry out further research and awareness on bamboo carbon sequestration to improve the relevance and understanding of policymakers and other stakeholders.
- Boost the levels of carbon sequestration, sustainable bamboo management and regular harvesting of bamboo to be incorporated into national REDD+ and NDC policies.
- Define effective policies and strategies by Government to enhance bamboo diversity and distribution, and increase bamboo stock for climate change.

- Developing countries should copy China's example, which adopted a national development and reforms commission's decision to reduce the use of plastic export
- Evaluate the existing models of bamboo biomass and carbon stock.
- Develop specific models for the estimation of bamboo root biomass.
- Encourage carbon projects based on carbon as an additional source of income for the farmers or investors.

i) Resource mobilization for Bamboo and Rattan Development

5.24. The forum is an opportunity to pool efforts of several development agencies in mobilizing resources to support the bamboo and rattan value chains and smallholder farmers in this sector. In short, the main idea is to facilitate high-level dialogue between representatives of member countries, donors and companies interested in investing in bamboo-based development. How can financial mechanisms for bamboo and rattan development, and resources for the implementation of bamboo and rattan-based projects contribute to Sustainable Development Goals?

5.25. During this session, some of the existing projects or programs in Africa were appraised, including the Third industrial development framework for Africa 2016-2025 (IDDA3) with multiple stakeholders (ILO, FAO, COMESA, ISDB). However, the forthcoming Summit on Africa Industrialization and Economic Diversification in November was mentioned during the discussion.

5.26. How to build on the existing to strengthen partnerships, mobilize resources and scale up technical cooperation and investments? These are the major objectives of the session. Draw lessons from others' experiences to boost the continental bamboo and rattan business.

5.27. The Panel recommended the following:

- Develop innovative models that integrate nature, systems and livelihood for bamboo and rattan sector development
- Consider Bamboo more than a substitution for conventional wood. Plan and prioritize resources that can equally contribute substantially to economic growth and National Domestic Product (GDP)
- Develop concepts for investments and resource mobilization outlining the integral nature of bamboo for nature-based solutions, markets and livelihood
- Promote the market system development approach, that highlight the critical role of private sector engagement, quality and standardization, and economic incentives for bamboo and rattan industry growth
- Explore different financing mechanisms (grants, guarantees, challenge funds, etc.)

5.28. For this purpose, specific tasks have been conferred on INBAR namely to:

- Identify the most promising bamboo project concept(s) jointly with intended future project partner(s).
- Decide if the selected concept shall be proposed as bilateral or tri-/multi-lateral cooperation, as this will

determine which donors or funding mechanisms need to be contacted.

- Exchange with identified donors on the selected concept to reach an agreement on proposal preparation.
- Make the most of the Relationship Agreement signed in October 2021, between INBAR and UNIDO, to accelerate the industrial development of the bamboo and rattan sector in Africa within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) context.
- Upscale up and integrate actions and other initiatives at national, regional, and continental levels in a multistakeholder partnership approach.
- Build on existing experience, develop large size regional/ pan African program with a medium to long term horizon for industrialization of the bamboo and rattan sector in Africa and promote with relevant stakeholders and partners.

j) Investment promotion Strategies

5.29. The green economy is eco-friendly with bamboo and rattan coming as special services. For Mr. Solomon Saybana (CEO of Agro Health Africa), both can be used to promote green economy. For this to succeed, he opined public and private sector ought to be involved, and special financial schemes should also be developed to attract investors, develop markets, and create new business models. Furthermore, innovation needs to be factored into this general picture.

5.30. It was the opportunity to introduce and further dwell on concepts like landscape restoration, deforestation driven emissions, etc.; but also, to reflect on the role of Youth in

Africa and on how to attract more Youth, which brought up issues of job creation leading to poverty alleviation, rural-urban migration, climate change mitigation, amongst others.

5.31. Other aspects have also been touched on, notably sustainable financing options and role of policy, different investment levels, sources of investment, possible lenders, credit model.

5.32. The Panel recommended the following:

- Reviewing the role of policy to promote investment at three levels (macro, meso and individual enterprises).
- Reviewing innovative financing and investment models and best practices from other developing countries.
- Creating a one-stop platform from end-to-end enterprise development solutions and knowledge products, which will enable potential entrepreneurs and investors to explore business opportunities in the sector.
- Raising awareness on successful government support schemes to help increase credit offtake and reduce credit risk.
- Instilling bamboo's values in children from the earliest stages of their lives.
- Considering innovation and risk insurance for investment in the sector.
- Integrating bamboo development in the national vocational and technical education program to attract the youth into the sector.

k) Bamboo for Bio-energy research and development

5.33. Access to modern energy is essential to reduce poverty and improve health and agricultural productivity. Household energy use for heating and cooking accounts for about 68% of total energy consumption. Thus, the global energy challenge today is to provide affordable services for the well-being of billions of people, to improve their living conditions and increase economic opportunities for those who cannot access electricity. This diagnostic has been posed by Prof. Abel Olajide, Vice-chancellor of Dominion University Ibadan (Nigeria).

5.34. By way of a response to the above diagnosis, bamboo has been presented as a potential sustainable source for bio-energy production. Various experiences and initiatives have been shared on how to reach a net-zero target by hosting bamboo plantations in areas devoted to land restoration and reforestation.

l) Contribution of Bamboo and Rattan to economies and livelihoods for local development of Councils and Regions in Cameroon (FEICOM).

5.35. The Panel recommended the following:

- More studies be conducted on local species to show how to produce various forms of biofuel.
- Need to explore and further develop this innovative source of energy.
- Advocate for the ownership of biomass resources for bio commodity and bioenergy production at local, national, and international levels.

- Improve the regulatory framework and incentives for the exploitation of the bamboo resource at its full potential, at all levels.
- Include bioenergy from bamboo in national strategies for bio commodity, sustainable development (UN-SDGs) and climate change (NDCs, REDD).

5.36. This session was dedicated to the host country in order to ascertain what Cameroon has achieved. The partnership between INBAR and the organ in charge of local Development of Councils and Regions in Cameroon (FEICOM) was showcased. This relationship dates to 2017 with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between both institutions to support the development of the bamboo sector. This cooperation included capacity building of FEICOM staff on one hand, and that of municipal councillors on the other hand. The main target being to continue developing synergies to make bamboo a lever for economic development and poverty alleviation in municipalities, and a tool to combat climate change, among others.



5.37. Furthermore, concepts like “legal persons under public law”, transfer of competencies are reviewed to clearly show the nexus between administrative management autonomy and policies with job creation, improvement of population’s living environment and conditions through the products resulting from the implementation of this kind of joint project and partnership.

5.38. This can only be possible, if, in the case of Cameroon:

- The Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF), INBAR and FEICOM are really involved in the implementation of those municipal projects on bamboo and rattan.
- The support from FEICOM and other government units in securing land areas is effective.
- A greater mobilization of various actors in building the capacities of local elected officials and technical staff of Councils is gained.
- The support in setting up bamboo and rattan production units.
- The support of local councils in the restoration of natural bamboo and rattan forests provided.





Presentation of the Maounde Declaration



6.1. The Ministers of Members States of the International Bamboo and Rattan Organization (INBAR) gathered in Yaoundé, Republic of Cameroon, from 20 to 22 April 2022, for the first Africa Bamboo and Rattan Congress under the theme: “Making Bamboo and Rattan the engine for a green resilient and sustainable Economy in Africa”, came up with certain number of recommendations to boost this promising sector.

6.2. Mindful of all African peculiarities, global trends and conditions, they agreed and signed a document summed up in eighteen (18) points on various topics lankily discussed by technical experts. The Yaoundé Declaration covered items related to communication, capacity building, technology transfer, public policies, market development and security, partnerships, and cooperation at all levels, amongst others. Worthnoting, in the declaration, the Ministers of INBAR members state agreed to convene African Bamboo and Rattan Congress every three years in different countries.





Closing ceremony



Participants thanked the Head of State, H.E. Paul Biya, President of Cameroon, for his unwavering support and distinguished patronage of the Congress. They also thanked and congratulated the Government of Cameroon for the excellent collaboration with INBAR and for the organization of the Congress and acknowledged INBAR's achievements. In their concluding remarks, the Ministers also thanked donors for their support in the achievement of INBAR's objectives and seized the opportunity to appeal to all international partners for greater support in

the promotion of bamboo and rattan in international trade. In addition, China's role and leadership in this sector, since the inception of INBAR, has been recognized and commended. The ceremony ended on a high note with the ministers expressing their gratitude to the people of Cameroon for their hospitality and contribution to the success of the event and urging them to take ownership of and development of bamboo and rattan sector.





YAOUNDE DECLARATION

“We, Ministers of Member States of the International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation (INBAR), came together in Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon, from 20 to 22 April 2022, for the Africa Bamboo and Rattan Congress under the theme: “**Making Bamboo and Rattan the Engine for a Green, Resilient and Sustainable Economy in Africa**”.

Aware of the need to develop bamboo and rattan value chains, and to integrate them into the national development priorities of African States.

Concerned with the need to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Climate Pact adopted at COP 21 in 2015, and COP 26 in 2021 respectively, and guided by the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities, and respective capabilities, taking into account different national circumstances.

Considering that measures taken to address climate change must be closely coordinated with social and economic development, taking into account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries, namely sustainable economic growth and poverty eradication.

Recalling the Kunming Declaration on Biodiversity and the important progress made in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Noting the Dakar Declaration and Action Plan of the 8th Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FCSA/FOCAC) reaffirming China and Africa’s commitment to follow the principle of common, intensive, green, safe, and open development in the

promotion of bamboo and rattan.

Noting the Declaration of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) Member States for the Forests of the Congo Basin and its neighbouring areas, calling on the international community to increase its technical, financial and diplomatic support in an effective manner within a shared responsibility approach.

Considering the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning of the Organisation and in the achievement of its strategic goals.

Recall INBAR’s contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals set out in both the African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Stress our determination to achieve the goals set out in INBAR’s 2015-2030 strategic plan.

Recommend the following:

1. The popularisation of INBAR activities and awareness raising on the benefits of activities relevant to the use of Bamboo and Rattan on the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of countries.
2. The encouragement of more Bamboo and Rattan producing and non-producing African countries to join the network and commit themselves to promoting these sectors by adopting and implementing appropriate national economic/public policies and equally supporting the relevant actors for a better visibility and contribution to

international trade in by-products or products derived from both resources.

3. The support of the development and further enhancement of Bamboo and Rattan at the local level.

4. The promotion and development of research centres on Bamboo and Rattan as well as the enhancement of research results in member States.

5. The capacity building of various actors, including vulnerable groups and rural populations, especially women and youths to better involve these categories in the development of Bamboo and Rattan value chains in particular, and the sustainable development of member States in general.

6. The facilitating of technology transfer and innovation in order to make the Bamboo and Rattan professions more accessible.

7. The inclusion of Bamboo and Rattan in the Industrialisation Plans of African member countries in order to put competitive and high value-added products to market.

8. The development of public policies on Bamboo for the construction of low- income housing, and renewable energy for the development of Bamboo in developing countries.

9. The promotion of Bamboo and Rattan by twinning initiatives between countries and regions within the South-South cooperation framework.

10. The increased consideration of the strong potential of Bamboo as a tool for carbon sequestration, agroforestry and the restoration of degraded landscapes.

11. The consideration of Bamboo as a resource for achieving the objectives of the Bonn Challenge Initiative, aimed at restoring 100 million hectares in Africa (AFR100) by 2030.

12. The support of efforts of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) and other African initiatives, in the sustainable management of forests through the development of Forest Products, especially Bamboo and Rattan.

13. The support of measures taken by Board and Council to improve the financial mechanism for INBAR to undertake bamboo and rattan development in member states.

14. The support and conduct of research for promoting bamboo and rattan in universities, research centres, vocational institutions and schools to mainstream it in educational curricula.

15. The support and conduct of efforts to secure market access for investors and producers of bamboo and rattan products in Africa.

16. The encouragement of African members states to implement tax/fiscal mechanisms that support bamboo and rattan reforestation and development.

17. The further strengthening of INBAR Regional Offices according to the specific needs, strengths,

opportunities and challenges of the different regions.

18. The organisation of an Africa Bamboo and Rattan Congress (ABARC) in Africa every three years.

Thank all the donors who support the achievement of INBAR's objectives and strongly appeal to all international partners for a greater mobilisation in support of the promotion of Bamboo and Rattan in international trade.

Thank the Secretariat and the Director General of INBAR for their commitment and active contribution to the organisation of this congress.

Express our great appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of China for its strategic role in the Organisation since its inception and for its commitment to actively support Africa's capacity building in the sustainable management of Bamboo and Rattan resources, following the Dakar Action Plan (2022-2024) of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

Profoundly thank and Congratulate the Government of the Republic of Cameroon and welcome the excellent collaboration with INBAR and delegations of member states as well as the strong demonstrated commitment shown by H.E PAUL BIYA, President of the Republic of Cameroon for his relentless support to the mission and activities of INBAR. We express our gratitude for the hospitality of the Cameroonian people which has contributed to the success of the current congress.

Done in Yaounde (Cameroon), on 22 April 2022

For the Government of the Republic of Cameroon	For the Government of the Republic of Congo
(e)signed	(e)signed
JULES DORET NDONGO Minister of Forestry and Wildlife	MATONDO ROSALIE Minister of Forest Economy
For the Government of the Republic of Malawi	For the Government of the Republic of Uganda
(e)signed	(e)signed
EISENHOWER MKAKA Minister of Natural Resources and Climate Change	Hon. BEATRICE ATIM ANYWAR Minister of State for Environment
For the Government of the Central African Republic	For the Government of the Republic of Liberia
(e)signed	(e)signed
H.E AMIT IDRIS Minister of Water, Forest, Hunting and Fisheries	MIKE DORYEN Managing Director of the Forestry Development Authority

FINAL STATEMENT

1. Under the Distinguished Patronage of H.E. Paul BIYA, Head of State of the Republic of Cameroon, and the leadership of the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife of the Republic of Cameroon, Chairman of the 12th Council Session of the International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation (INBAR), the first Africa Regional Bamboo and Rattan Congress was held from 20 to 22 April 2022 at the Yaoundé Conference Centre, under the theme “Making Bamboo and Rattan the engine of a green, resilient and sustainable economy in Africa”.

2. The Congress was co-organized by the Government of Cameroon and INBAR.

3. During the event, one high-level ministerial working session and twelve parallel breakdown sessions were held.

4. The congress had participation of ministers, representatives and delegation from 19 countries including 15 INBAR Member States (Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda), 2 INBAR Observer States (Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo), and 2 non-members (Equatorial Guinea and Ivory Coast).

5. The Congress was attended by international experts and INBAR staffs from 7 nationalities: China, Germany, India, Netherlands, Peru, South Africa, Spain.

6. The following also attended on behalf of Cameroon: sector services and structures under the supervision of the relevant authorities, Local and Regional Authorities, research institutions, the private sector, civil society, craftsmen and development partners.

7. The official opening ceremony was marked by three addresses:

that of the City Mayor of Yaoundé (the City with Seven Hills), the Director General of INBAR and the opening address of the Minister of State in charge of Tourism and Leisure, Representative of the Prime Minister, Head of Government of the Republic of Cameroon.

8. In his address, the Deputy City Mayor of Yaoundé welcomed all participants. He equally hailed the organization of this important meeting in the City with Seven Hills, choice of the latter testifying the recognition of the international community for the efforts made by Cameroon in the sustainable management of its forest resources, especially bamboo and rattan. He invited the participants to take advantage of their presence in Yaoundé to visit its nooks and crannies, fully taste and enjoy the legendary hospitality of this city which is one of the foundations of its fame.

9. While taking the floor, the Director General of INBAR thanked the participants for the opportunity to hold the first Africa Regional Bamboo and Rattan Congress in Cameroon. He specified that the congress includes a high-level ministerial meeting, which will examine issues relating to the contribution of these resources to the green economy in Africa, South-South cooperation in this sector, climate change, and industrial development among others. This renders the meeting a real opportunity for INBAR member countries and particularly those of the African Region. He emphasized the importance to note that bamboo and rattan easily adapt to changes in climate and allows the mitigation of its causes and effects, contributes to the reduction of pressure on wood species, to the restoration of degraded soils and landscapes as well as to the preservation of biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

10. In his opening address, the Minister of State in charge of Tourism and Leisure warmly welcomed the various delegations and wished them pleasant stay in Cameroon. He expressed his gratitude to the Director General of INBAR for choosing Cameroon to host

the ever first Congress of its kind on the African soil. Recalling that bamboo and rattan, whose global trade stands at about 60 billion dollars providing employment to tens of millions people, are drivers for poverty alleviation, support for the green economy, climate change mitigation, resilience and environmental protection, he pointed out the importance of these resources that may contribute to 7 Sustainable Development Goals. He finally wished that the foundations of South-South cooperation should be effectively established and that the bamboo and rattan sectors in Africa should experience a real revival in terms of production, processing and marketing aspects before declaring the deliberations open.

11. The congress has also received message from the heads / senior representatives of IFAD, UN FAO, UNIDO, UNFF and Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID).

12. The high-level ministerial session was presided over by the current Chair of INBAR Council who welcomed all ministers and heads of various delegations. He thanked them to have hailed this meeting by their presence and hoped that it would lead to fruitful resolutions. He also outlined the programme for the three-day congress. He concluded by saying that he was optimistic about the future of bamboo and rattan while hoping that a Yaoundé Declaration during this Congress.

13. Other speakers, namely ministers of countries represented, thanked Cameroon for the warm welcome accorded to their various delegations. They emphasized on the uses and economic importance of bamboo and rattan, and problems encountered with processing or/and enhancement of these two resources.

H.E. ALI MCHUMO SAID, Director General of INBAR encouraged countries such as DRC, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, to join the Organisation in a bid to promote the use of bamboo and rattan in their various countries.

The following 12 technical sessions were held:

- **Session 1:** Strategies for Developing Green and Circular Economy;
- **Session 2:** Rattan Processing, value addition, innovative products, technologies and commercialization,
- **Session 3:** Policies and Strategies for Sustainable Development of Bamboo and Rattan Sector,
- **Session 4:** South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Bamboo and Rattan Development (SSTC)
- **Session 5:** Bamboo Processing, Value Addition, Innovative Products, Technologies and Commercialization,
- **Session 6:** Successful Country Level Bamboo and Rattan Development Experience,
- **Session 7 :** Standards and Certification,
- **Session 8:** Bamboo and Rattan for Climate Change,
- **Session 9:** Resource Mobilization for Bamboo and Rattan Development,
- **Session 10:** Investment Promotion Strategies,
- **Session 11:** Bamboo and Bio-Energy,
- **Session 12:** Contribution of Bamboo and Rattan to the Development of Decentralized Territorial Communities (CTD)

The congress ended with the adoption of the Yaoundé Declaration.

Participants thanked:

- the His Excellency Paul BIYA, President of the Republic of Cameroon, for His unwavering support, His Distinguished Patronage for the congress, thereby acknowledging the importance of bamboo and rattan as well as the numerous opportunities offered by their enhancement;
- INBAR for co-organizing the congress with Cameroon and for providing support to stakeholders of the sector;
- the Government of Cameroon for the efforts in the organization of the Congress.

Done in Yaounde, 22 April 2022

The participants





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