



THE CAMEROON ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

BRIEF HISTORY

The 1974 and 1982 sessions of the National Council for Higher Education and Scientific and Technical Research, presided over by President Ahmadou Ahidjo (Cameroon's head of state at the time), called for the creation of professional associations and a National Academy of Sciences. This call was not heeded until 1990 when a group of 12 Cameroonian scientists and scholars met in Douala at the end of the Pan-African Conference on Agriculture and Agricultural Research in Africa, organized by the African Academy of Sciences (AAS), to discuss the possible creation of the Academy. The influence of the AAS inspired the scientists and scholars attending the conference to give substance to the call first made more than 16 years earlier.

Under the leadership of Prof. Victor Anomah Ngu, the 12 scientists held their first meeting on 9 November 1990, and laid the foundation for the Academy. On 5 January 1991, the constituent assembly of the Academy ratified the decision of the Douala group and adopted the draft statutes. The Cameroon Academy of Sciences (CAS) was formally recognized (Reg. 00701/RDA/Jo6/BAPP) on 29 May 1991 by the Cameroon government in accordance with law No. 90/053 of 19 December 1990, regulating freedom of association. The Academy was finally inaugurated on 10 February 1993 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister and head of government, Mr. Simon Achidi Achu. The Academy has 78 members (71 men and 7 women) who are divided into the Colleges of Biological Sciences (39), Mathematical and Physical Sciences (18), Social Sciences (20), and an honorary member(1). The election of new members occurs every year.

VISION

The vision of the Cameroon Academy of Sciences is to be the prime mover of science and technology synthesis, making scientific knowledge available to decision and policy makers about investments and priorities in science and technology and promoting the use of science and innovation in the economic, social, and cultural development of Cameroon.

MISSION

The mission of the Cameroon Academy of Sciences is to promote excellence and relevance in science and technology and to provide advice to the government.

The Academy produces robust forum and committee advisory documents and reports on priority problems and issues and delivers them to policy and decision makers and the public. The independence, highly qualified membership, multidisciplinary composition, and rigorous procedures for objective and unbiased analysis enable the Academy to effectively deliver credible advice.

CORE VALUES

The following are the core values important to the Cameroon Academy of Sciences:

1. **Quality** of fellowship and Academy products
2. **Objectivity** of documents, reports, and opinions

3. **Integrity** of documents, reports, and opinions supported by evidence
4. **Independence** from pressure groups — public or private
5. **Relevance** to the problems of the society

The main goal of the Academy is to promote the progress of science, technology, and innovation for the economic, social, and cultural development of Cameroon.

Specific objectives to achieve this goal include the following:

- Promoting research and technological training at the highest level
- Advising the national government and other national and international policy makers on issues related to science and technology in the service of humanity
- Popularizing science and technology in culture
- Contributing to the defense of science and the franchise of scientists
- Developing scientific and technological relations with the private and public sectors of the national economy
- Promoting scientific and technological cooperation at the international level

COLLABORATION

In carrying out its work, the Academy collaborates with the various ministries of the government of Cameroon, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (USNAS), the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS), the U.K. Royal Society, the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC), the InterAcademy Panel on International Issues (IAP), the InterAcademy Medical Panel (IAMP), and other international and national organizations.

MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

- *Prioritizing Food Security Policies for Health and Development in Africa: Science Academy–Policymaker Interaction for Evidence-Based Decision Making* (2007); 86 pp, Cameroon Academy of Sciences, P.O. Box 1457, Yaoundé, Cameroon.
- *Modern Biotechnology: Genetically Modified Crops, Foods, and Feeds: Cameroon Perspectives* (2006); 76 pp, Cameroon Academy of Sciences, P.O. Box 1457, Yaoundé, Cameroon.
- *Malaria Research and Control in Cameroon: Present Status, Institutions, and Actors* (2005); 160 pp, Cameroon Academy of Sciences, P.O. Box 1457, Yaoundé, Cameroon.
- *Journal of the Cameroon Academy of Sciences* (JCAS) (published three times per year since 2000 with financial assistance from the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation). JCAS is listed by African Journals online at <http://www.inasp.info/ajol>.
- *Conserving and Managing Biodiversity in Central Africa: Global Challenges and Local Solutions* (1999); 222 pp, Cameroon Academy of Sciences, P.O. Box 1457, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

PAST ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND FORA

- National Forum on Food Security: *Exploring Opportunities to Eliminate Food Insecurity in the Sudano-Sahelian Region of Cameroon*, 18 June 2008, Yaoundé, Cameroon (in collaboration with the Ministry in charge of Scientific Research and Innovation)
- Seminar on Inquiry-Based Science Education in Franco-phone Africa, 4–6 February 2008, Yaoundé, Cameroon (in collaboration with the Ministries in charge of Basic Education, Secondary Education, and Scientific Research and Innovation; the InterAcademy Panel on International Issues; and the Network of African Science Academies)
- Second Annual International Conference of the African Science Academy Development Initiative: *Prioritizing Food Security Policies for Health and Development in Africa: Science Academy Policy Maker Interaction for Evidence-Based Decision Making*, 15–16 November 2006, Yaoundé, Cameroon (in collaboration with the U.S. National Academy of Sciences)
- National Workshop on Modern Biotechnology: *Genetically Modified Crops, Foods and Feeds—Cameroon Perspectives*, 23–24 July 2004, Yaoundé, Cameroon (in collaboration with the Ministry in charge of Scientific and Technical Research and the Ministry in charge of Environment and Nature Production)
- International Workshop on the African Genetic Diversity: *Reconstructing African-American Genetic Origins*, 29–30 November 2002, Yaoundé, Cameroon (in collaboration with the University of Maryland, College Park, USA, and the Ministry in charge of Scientific and Technical Research)
- *Conserving and Managing Biodiversity in Central Africa: Global Challenges and Local Solutions*, 1–3 March 1999, Yaoundé, Cameroon (in collaboration with the Ministry in charge of Forestry and Environment, the United Nations Development Program, and the Central African Regional Program for the Environment)

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

For the past few years, the Academy has organized two to three public lectures each year. For 2008, there have been public lectures on VANHIVAX and HIV/AIDS (by Prof. Victor A. Ngu and Prof. W. Muna) and various aspects of climate change in Cameroon (Climate Change: Past, Present, and Future by Prof. F. Mkankam; Climate Change in Cameroon During the Last Century: Trends, Environmental Impacts, and Future by Prof. Samuel Ayonghe; and Climate Change: Impact and Mitigation Strategies by Prof. Maurice Tsalefac).

AWARD OF RESEARCH EXCELLENCE PRIZES

A total of seven research excellence prizes have so far been awarded to young scientists in the agricultural sciences, physical sciences, medical sciences, and engineering. This has always been done in collaboration with the Academy of Sciences of the Developing World (TWAS), the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation, and the Ministry of Higher Education.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The Academy has facilitated the project on malaria drug production by Cameroon's Institute of Medical and Medicinal Plant Research (IMPM), the Ministry of Public Health, and U.S. partners.
- The Academy is facilitating the organization of a workshop on scientific writing by the InterAcademy Medical Panel and the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences of the University of Yaoundé.
- The Academy has selected scientists and young scientists for conferences, workshops, and commissions as requested by various partners.

PRIORITY AREAS AND CURRENT WORK

The Academy's strategic plan for 2006–2010 has the following core programs:

Increasing and Strengthening the Visibility and Credibility of the Academy

Since the creation of the Academy, efforts have been made to create relationships with government ministries, local governments, donors, and other stakeholders who need the services of science and technology. In the execution of the present strategic plan, the Academy is maintaining an active relationship with the executive and legislative branches of government as well as with local government authorities (councils and their mayors, government delegates, etc.).

The Academy is proactively using the media to promote its image through the regular coverage of its activities, especially forum meetings, public lectures, and prize award ceremonies. The *Journal of the Cameroon Academy of Sciences* (JCAS) is published regularly to maintain its role as the lead organ for the dissemination of the country's research results and the Academy's stand on scientific issues of national character.

The efforts made so far in the execution of this core program have resulted in:

- the designation (by Ministers) of CAS focal points in various ministries;
- increased input by CAS into ministerial activities (participation in commissions and projects);

- participation of CAS in the evaluation and promotion of researchers; and
- increased participation by stakeholders in CAS fora, workshops, and public lectures.

Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening

The current absence of our own physical infrastructure and the lack of competent administrative staff constitute a major handicap to the achievement of the objectives of the Academy. The key to success lies in aggressive public relations that can open channels to scarce resources that will enhance the Academy's staff performance and enable the creation of a more conducive infrastructure (larger office space through the acquisition of land and construction of the Academy's headquarters). The recruitment and training of staff, as well as the establishment of a website, will further enhance the image and performance of the Academy. The website is presently being set up. New computers and printers have been acquired.

Increasing the Fiscal and Financial Sustainability of the Academy

Increasing the financial strength of the Academy is critically important for the realization of its goals and objectives. Since its creation, the Academy has survived largely on the financial contributions of its fellows. To increase the financial strength of the Academy, we either are carrying out or intend to carry out the following activities:

- Renewing the membership drive
- Sensitizing the Cameroon government to fund some of our activities (such as the publication of the journal, fora, and workshops)
- Targeting international partners (e.g., NASAC, TWAS, USNAS, the UK Royal Society) for sponsorship of some activities
- Creating an endowment fund

Implementation of Projects That Guide Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy or Provide Evidence-Based Advice to Stakeholders

In addressing and focusing on the strategic interest of government and other stakeholders involved in the economic and social development of the country, the Academy is undertaking activities to guide science, technology, and innovation policy and to provide evidence-based information vital for policy formulation and implementation. The Academy's role in all of this is to listen carefully to policy makers and stakeholders and try to address their problems. By observing societal trends and concerns, the Academy will provide policy advisory products to guide government action.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Prof. Sammy Beban Chumbow
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Prof. Victor A. Ngu
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College of Biological Sciences

Prof. Samuel Domngang
College of Mathematics and Physical Sciences

Prof. Sammy Beban Chumbow
College of Social Sciences

JOURNAL OF THE CAMEROON ACADEMY OF SCIENCES (JCAS)

Prof. Vincent P. K. Titanji
Editor-in-Chief

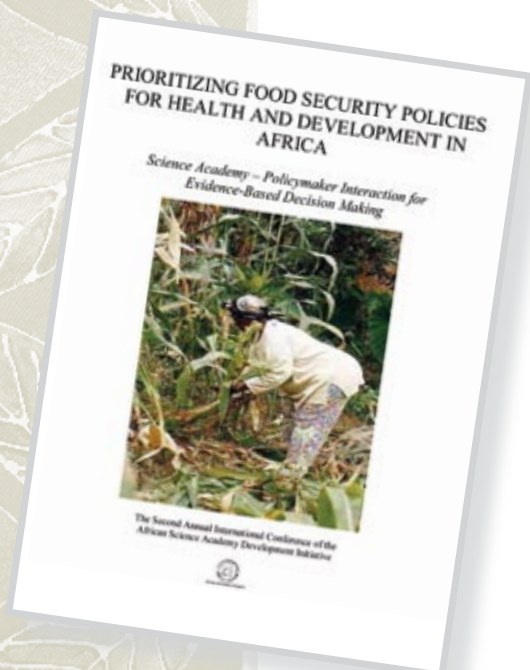
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Support for this publication was provided by the Presidents' Circle Communications Initiative of the U.S. National Academies.

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