

CAMEROON



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2013
NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE NEEDED

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

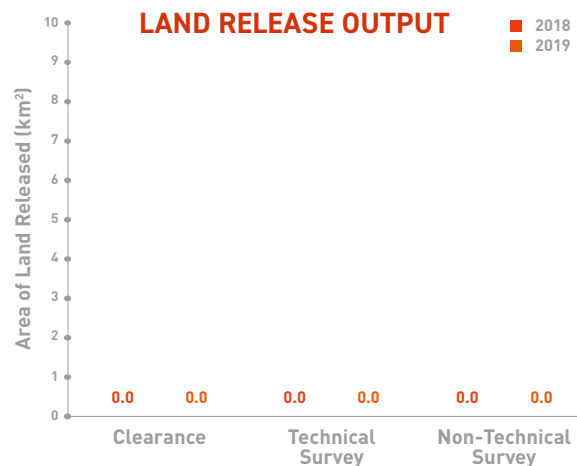
LOW, EXTENT UNKNOWN

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0 km²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

UNKNOWN



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan Commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Mines of an improvised nature continued to claim casualties in 2019, particularly in Cameroon's northern districts along the border with Nigeria amid escalating military activity by Boko Haram but also in other regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Cameroon should respect its obligations to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).
- Cameroon should inform States Parties to the APMBC of the discovery of any anti-personnel mine contamination, including mines of an improvised nature. It should report on the location of all suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for their destruction in its Article 7 transparency report.
- Cameroon should request a new APMBC Article 5 deadline.
- As soon as security conditions permit, non-technical survey should start in the Extrême-Nord (Far North) region, which is reportedly the region most affected by conflict.
- Cameroon should try to mobilise and facilitate assistance and expertise from humanitarian demining organisations for survey and clearance.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or national mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Army Engineer Corps

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Cameroon faces a continuing threat from mines of an improvised nature and other explosive devices, mainly as a result of escalating Boko Haram insurgency spilling over from Nigeria into the Lake Chad region. The extent of contamination, which seemingly includes both anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines, is unknown.

The threat appears to be concentrated in Cameroon's Far North region between Nigeria and Chad where its armed forces continue to conduct counterinsurgency operations as part of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The government has also accused Anglophone separatists of responsibility for a mine incident that killed four police in the south-west in 2019.¹

One member of Cameroon's elite Rapid Intervention Battalion was killed and eleven others injured in February 2019 when their truck detonated a mine of an improvised nature in the vicinity of Kerawa on the border with Nigeria. The troops were returning from an operation in which soldiers reportedly destroyed four workshops which were producing improvised mines and found to hold hundreds of containers of explosives, batteries, and detonators. Two other detonations in the area in October 2018 involving mines or improvised devices reportedly caused the deaths of three soldiers and injured six others. Seven soldiers were killed in two separate incidents in the same area in April 2019.² Media also reported that two Cameroonian soldiers were killed after their truck drove over a mine near the town of Eyumedjock in an area of the South West region near the border with Nigeria where English-speaking separatists are active.³

A senior army officer commented in 2017 that some roads in areas bordering Nigeria were "riddled with mines."⁴ A Cameroonian analyst commented that insurgents were using "homemade mines" with increasing frequency on roads as well as in houses and vehicles.⁵ The effect has been to reduce access for humanitarian organisations working in the area. International Organization for Migration (IOM) personnel who visited the Far North region in September 2018 were denied permission to visit a number of towns in Mayo-Tsanaga,⁶ a department bordering Nigeria, because of the presence of mines and reports of kidnappings.⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Cameroon does not have a functioning mine action programme. Mine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) are the responsibility of the Cameroon Military Engineer Corps.

Cameroon informed the United Nations in 2019 that casualties from mines and improvised devices had increased 43% compared to the previous year, which required a change of approach by the government. It appealed for international assistance but provided no information about any action it had taken or was planning to address the issue.⁸

Over the past four years, the Army has received military training in demining and counter-IED [improvised explosive device] measures, mainly from the France and the United States.⁹ Cameroon received demining/EOD equipment from the United States and Russia in 2015, with armoured mine-detection vehicles being provided by the US Army Africa Command.¹⁰ The US also donated significant quantities of demining equipment, including metal detectors, to Cameroon in 2017.¹¹ US Army Africa and the French Army's French Elements in Gabon (EFG) provided further demining and EOD training up to Level 4 EOD in March–April 2018.¹²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Cameroon did not report results of any clearance and EOD conducted by its Army engineers in 2019 or 2018.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR CAMEROON: 1 MARCH 2003



ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2013

NEW ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE REQUEST REQUIRED
LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): LOW

Cameroon is a State Party to the APMBC. Its Article 5 deadline to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control expired on 1 March 2013.

Cameroon has not submitted an Article 7 report since August 2009 when it reported there were no areas of mine contamination under its jurisdiction or control. In view of the casualties reported by Cameroon from mines and/or victim-activated mines of an improvised nature, Cameroon needs to revise its position.

Under the APMBC's agreed framework, Cameroon should immediately inform all States Parties of any newly discovered anti-personnel mines since the expiry of its Article 5 deadline (in 2013) and ensure their destruction as soon as possible. It should also submit a request for a new Article 5 deadline, which should be as short as possible and not more than ten years. Cameroon must continue to fulfil its reporting obligations under the convention, including on the location of any suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for the destruction of all anti-personnel mines within them.

-
- 1 "Cameroon: l'explosion d'une mine tue 4 policiers dans le Sud-ouest", Journal du Cameroun, 17 June 2019, at: bit.ly/2YnZwte.
 - 2 "Boko Haram landmines inflict heavy toll on Cameroon", Latin American Herald Tribune, 30 May 2019, at: bit.ly/2XUT4ef; "Cameroon: Boko Haram mine kills four soldiers in Far North region", Journal du Cameroun, 13 April 2019, at: bit.ly/2Z50c3u.
 - 3 "Mine blast kills two Cameroon soldiers", News24, 21 April 2018, at: bit.ly/2JRyDoR.
 - 4 P. Kum, "Landmine explosion kills two Cameroon soldiers", Anadolu Agency, 28 September 2017, at: bit.ly/2LxKjQ0.
 - 5 "Boko Haram landmines inflict heavy toll on Cameroon", Latin American Herald Tribune, 30 May 2019.
 - 6 The towns were Talla-Katchi, Assighassia, Zéméné, and Cherif Moussari.
 - 7 IOM, "Cameroon, Far North Region, Displacement Report, Round 15, 3-15 September 2018", Report, p. 8.
 - 8 Cameroon statement to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 23 October 2019.
 - 9 "Military Cooperation: mine clearing training (Sept. 19-30th 2016)", French embassy in Yaoundé webpage at: bit.ly/2Z3ShnY; M. E. Kindzeka, "Cameroon Vigilantes Hunt for Boko Haram Landmines", Voice of America News, 4 March 2016, at: bit.ly/2XZGxGM.
 - 10 M. E. Kindzeka, "Land Mines Hamper Cameroon, Chad in Fight Against Boko Haram", Voice of America News, 3 March 2015, at: bit.ly/2XX0fkD; and "US Helps Cameroon in Fight Against Boko Haram", Voice of America News, 17 October 2015, at: bit.ly/2y1GeeR.
 - 11 "US donates mine-clearing devices to Cameroon", Journal du Cameroun, 24 April 2017; at: bit.ly/2Z3Hryl.
 - 12 "Génie Militaire - Des démineurs formés", Cameroon Tribune (Yaoundé), 23 April 2018, at: bit.ly/2M2uoJO.