AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FUND

GABON

LONG-TERM STRATEGY CONSULTATION MEETING

April 3rd, 2012
Summary Report on the LTS Gabon Consultation Meeting
Libreville – April 3rd, 2012

The summary below captures the main points that were discussed during the national consultation meeting in Libreville, and is not intended to be a detailed set of minutes for the meeting. The comments have been summarized along the following thematic areas: (i) Context and drivers of change; (ii) Vision for Africa for the next decade; (iii) Operational focus and role of the Bank; (iv) Financing; and (v) Institutional reform.

1. Context and Drivers of Change

The workshop validated the key drivers of change proposed in the paper for the regional and national consultations. Participants identified the improvement of access of vulnerable populations to basic goods and services, including food, health, education, clothing, transportation, water and electricity, as major challenges.

2. Vision for Africa for the next decade

3. Operational focus and role of the Bank

The recommendations for sub-themes (inclusive growth and green) are:

- **Inclusive Growth:**
  - Develop a participative development framework, widely distributed, with distinctions by social groupings with a clear focus on access to basic goods and services for vulnerable groups;
  - Develop an effective social protection policy taking into account populations in non-integrated neighborhoods, and out of school youth;
  - Strengthen the role of the state in the redistribution of growth benefits;
  - Develop a policy of food self-sufficiency, and re-train local populations on agricultural skills, develop a network of village cooperatives and strengthen capacities of local communities;
  - Promote price controls on essential commodities, such as through the creation of a fund for food products like the "cocoa stabilization fund," and develop SMEs specialized in agriculture and livestock services;
  - Include agriculture in national educational curricula from the third grade (CE1 in the French Education system) and make arrangements to have practical agricultural training sessions in order to encourage new vocations in this field; and establish a graduate school (after high school graduation) for students interested in becoming agricultural experts.
o Promote equitable access to health throughout the country and strengthen existing health facilities;
o Strengthen the education system, notably through the provision of free education, feeding school canteen, boarding, books, while taking into account transport costs and infrastructural renovations required to ensure meaningful access to these social services;
o Develop the concept of "inhabited forest" to enable people living in villages to exploit their forestry, even when it is assigned to operators.

**Green Growth:**
o Develop strategies (almost finalized in Gabon), notably on land use plans to avoid conflicts and promote awareness on how to meet the conditions to access the Green Fund; in addition, a fund could be established to support victims of climate change;
o Prepare additional studies to better examine specific issues related to the effects of climate change in Central Africa and Gabon, in addition to also identifying strategic sectors for the green economy as regards employment and emerging green jobs;
o Establish an observatory to control, analyze, monitor, and evaluate the environmental impact of industrial operations (flaring gas, mining and large agro-industrial programs), in addition to effecting a policy for transforming household waste.

*In addition, the following actions were also recommended by the participants.*

**Education / Training / Research**, the Bank should:
o Develop a training policy for young people specifically in the management, technical and scientific fields in line with the needs of the economy, at national and regional levels (decision of the 17th Summit of Heads of State in Malabo)
o Promote Research, ICT (a CYBER space; Scholarships; e-learning, etc.), Science and Technology;
o Support the promotion of corporate culture through the introduction of entrepreneurship training from an early age to boost local economic development. In addition to these training initiatives, establish a program to support young entrepreneurs/promoters;
o Support the development of educational infrastructure (construction of school infrastructure, academic and training (technical and professional) for youth employment.

**Land use planning**: controlling the phenomenon of urbanization would allow for better land use planning, and monitoring the levels of rural exodus.

**Private sector support**: the Bank could do the following:
Promote growth and job creation through sustained support for a competitive private sector, through training and support geared towards the creation of enabling activities and the settlement of new farmers;

Increasing the volume of investments, notably in infrastructure and skills training related to business needs;

Promote applied research to the private sector;

Mobilize financial tools (including local savings to finance MSMEs and micro-finance); strengthen direct financial support to the private sector especially SMEs / SMIs

Supporting the quality process in companies and innovative activities in the context of sustainable development;

Improving governance in the private sector by setting up information, control and audit systems with specialized structures;

Be more visible towards the private sector.

- **Infrastructure:** It is important to upgrade transport, energy and communication infrastructure.

- **Governance:** Governance of public and associative sectors should be strengthened by engaging with civil society organizations (CSOs) for greater ownership (Monitoring and Evaluation) Capacity Building for Civil Society Organizations.

- **Extractive industries:** The Bank could set up a reference framework for negotiating mining and oil contracts, in addition to building the capacity of States in negotiations of major contracts (infrastructure, mining, oil, etc.).

The participants advocated that the Bank should retain its triple role: as an adviser, a supporter of capacity building and a financier, in addition to the following actions:

- Specialization in areas where the Bank has a comparative advantage while strengthening synergies with existing African institutions (ECA - UN Economic Commission for Africa), partners and other stakeholders engaged in the development of Africa and the rest of the world, including:
  - Partnerships with the Bretton Woods institutions, OECD, AU and ECA;
  - Enhanced cooperation with regional development banks;
  - Framework for direct consultation with youth representative institutions (National Youth Council and the Pan African Youth Union), and the network of CSOs involved in monitoring and assessing projects.

- Leadership on issues of development financing especially for sub-regional projects and linked to the green economy;

- Participants listed the following as defining the Bank's comparative advantage relative to the World Bank's:
  - Interface between African states and financial markets / donors;
  - Capacity building and advice to States;
  - Strengthening of these comparative advantages through studies.
4. **Financing**

- The use of ADF resources would increase and optimize ADB loans especially in the fight against climate change;
- There should be an increase of resources for regional and multinational projects.

5. **Institutional reforms**

Participants suggested:
- Improved responsiveness in interventions and simplifying procedures to reduce time considered too long between a request being lodged for funds, and the effective start of works;
- A review of the policy of counterpart funding, including in middle-income countries, which can be a source of delay.