Project of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) on Intellectual Property and Gastronomic Tourism in Peru and Other Developing Countries: Promoting Gastronomic Tourism through Intellectual Property

Exploratory study of the leading culinary traditions of Cameroon

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Acronyms

CDIP Committee on Development and Intellectual Property

Gl Geographical Indication

MINAC Ministry of Culture of Cameroon

MINTOUL Ministry of Tourism and Leisure of Cameroon

OAPI African Intellectual Property Organization

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNWTO World Tourism Organization

WIPO World Intellectual Property Organization

WTO World Trade Organization

I. Introduction

- 1. A land of contrasts with its plains, plateaus and mountains, its varied climate and vegetation, and its richly diverse people Cameroon is made for tourism. As the world's only country named for a crustacean,¹ Cameroon seems predestined for an initiative linking tourism with local gastronomy.
- 2. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines tourism as the "activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes".
- 3. For tourism so defined, Cameroon offers a combination of features found in no other single African country: topography, climate, flora and fauna, peoples and traditions. That range enables the country to offer different categories of tourism throughout the year: beach tourism, mountain tourism, congress and business tourism, safari and hunting tourism, eco-tourism and cultural tourism.²
 - Cameroon's once-prospering tourism industry dates back to the country's independence. The prosperity culminated in 1978, when tourist visits, and in particular tourism receipts, grew by 23 per cent, reaching levels unequaled, in absolute terms, to this day. Eleven years later, in 1989, the structure for tourism administration was revamped, with the creation of the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure (MINTOUL).³
- 4. While the pandemic has more recently slowed tourist travel, it appears to be giving impetus for the millions it has confined to their homes to a search for new cultural experiences. Even before the pandemic, tourists were being observed to "invest" more in forms of tourism reflecting particular values, such as economic, social and environmental sustainability. That new reality has been an invitation to diversify tourism supply to meet vigorously growing demand in new areas.
- 5. In the case of Cameroon, to what extent can gastronomic tourism become part of that long-term trend?

The question is being addressed by a project launched by WIPO's Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP), entitled "Intellectual Property and Gastronomic Tourism in Peru and Other Developing Countries: Promoting the Development of Gastronomic Tourism through Intellectual Property". Its objective is to build the capacity of economic operators involved in gastronomic tourism, and of national authorities including IP offices, to use and leverage IP tools and strategies to add value to their culinary traditions.

It happens that Cameroon has pursued such a policy for some years now – for agricultural products, through the use of collective trademarks and geographical

¹ Cameroon can be proud to bear a name that originally derives from "camarõ", the Portuguese word for "shrimp". This emblematic appellation was chosen by the Portuguese navigator Fernando Po in 1473 to christen the Wouri River, where those crustaceans abound. Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370 2 High Commission of Cameroon in Ottawa, "Discover Cameroon: A choice destination with a lot of tourist attractions", viewed at https://www.hc-cameroon-ottawa.org/en/discover-cameroon/tourism-a-choice-destination-with-a-lot-of-tourist-attractions/

³ Tchindjang, Mesmin and Kengne, Fodouop, *Le Cameroun : un pays aux potentialités touristiques sous-exploitées*, University of Yaounde I, Juin 2008

indications (GIs).⁴ Protection for the label "*Origine Cameroun Certifiée*",⁵ has also been studied. As a way to link these initiatives with economic development, gastronomic tourism appears to be perfectly on target.

6. Gastronomic tourism is travel from one place to another to discover the history, know-how and culture of a country or region through its culinary specialties.

The relevance of gastronomy to the tourism potential of Cameroon can be gleaned from various online sites and documentation. Those sources showcase the country's cuisine, in some cases by region. There are also books, studies and articles on Cameroonian gastronomy, a reflection of public interest in the subject. In 2017, Céline Guilleux invited contributions on the subject of Cameroonian gastronomy, key aspects of which pertained to gastronomic tourism and culinary traditions.⁶

Cameroon's nutritional and culinary heritage was found to be richly abundant, warranting further study to be properly understood. It is largely plant-based, with vegetables, constituting 30 per cent of the country's diet, consumed in all forms: sautéed in oil, ground in a mortar or accompanied by crushed peanuts. These include the edible leaves of several plants – *ndole* or *vernonia*, *okok*, cassava, plantain, taro, *njango*, baobab, black nightshade (*morelle noire*), *nkui* (stems as well) and *ozom*. Tubers are also important, including cassavas, groundnuts, yams, sweet potatoes and taro/cocoyams. Cameroonians also eat meat (beef, goat, pork, veal) and large quantities of fish and shrimp, particularly in the maritime regions, with generous use of various spices.

But these generalities hardly distinguish Cameroon from neighboring countries. "Cameroonian cuisine is an extremely vast cuisine!" So affirms Toronto chef Guy Dongue, marveling at the abundance of ingredients available throughout the country. ¹⁰ Some rank it among the most varied and refined in Africa. Contributing factors include the country's geological, geographical and climatic contrasts, but also the diversity of Cameroonian ethnicities, each combining spices and condiments according to its own

⁴ A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place. A GI usually contains the name of a product's place of origin. Agricultural products generally have qualities that result from their place of production and are affected by local geographical factors, such as climate and soil. Recognition of a sign as a GI is subject to national law. GIs can be used for a wide variety of natural, agricultural and manufactured products.

See: https://www.wipo.int/geo indications/en/faq geographicalindications.html

⁵ See: Vers la création et la protection du label « Origine Cameroun Certifiée »,

https://www.investiraucameroun.com/promotion/0503-12254-vers-la-creation-et-la-protection-du-label-origine-cameroun-certifiee

⁶ La gastronomie camerounaise, https://calenda.org/405104

⁷ Call for papers, *La gastronomie camerounaise*, Céline Guilleux, 23 May 2017, Calenda, available at https://calenda.org/405104

⁸ La gastronomie camerounaise : une cuisine riche et diversifiée, 3 October 2018, https://lesgourmandisesderk.com/2018/10/03/la-gastronomie-camerounaise-une-cuisine-riche-et-diversifiee/

⁹ Cuisine camerounaise, viewed at http://hack4afrik.org/?page_id=14

¹⁰ Bouchard, Jonathan, *Guy Dongue présente les traditions culinaires du Cameroun*, 9 February 2018, viewed at https://ici.radio-canada.ca/premiere/emissions/y-a-pas-deux-matins-pareils/segments/chronique/58691/bouchardises-guy-dongue-traditions-culinaire-cameroun

traditional recipes. While richly flavorful, their dishes are not always spicy hot and are thus enjoyable for the most delicate of palates.¹¹

7. For MINTOUL, one of the priorities today is finding ways to involve local populations in promoting tourism on a larger scale, with the aim of preserving culinary and cultural heritage while reducing poverty. As part of that effort, Cameroon applied for selection as one of the additional developing countries to be included in the CDIP's gastronomic tourism project in Peru¹² (see document CDIP/22/14 Rev¹³).

The project's overall objective is to promote intellectual property (IP) related to culinary traditions (food and beverages) for use in the gastronomic tourism sector. Its specific objectives are as follows:

- (a) permit the establishment, development and sustainable exploitation of Cameroon's culinary tradition;
- (b) raise awareness among the economic operators involved in gastronomic tourism, as well as national authorities, on the how IP can help strengthen the gastronomic tourism sector; and
- (c) build the capacity of such economic operators, including IP offices, to use and leverage IP tools and strategies.

The project to achieve these objectives rests on three pillars: cataloging, raising awareness, and enhancing value. The first stage will be to catalog 15 Cameroonian culinary traditions associated with gastronomic tourism whose value could be enhanced by IP protection. The role of each tradition can thus be considered in developing the tourism sector. In a second stage, a national roundtable (scheduled for 18 November 2021) will select the dishes to be included in the program. The potential value of each dish as intellectual property will be analyzed in a third stage.

- 8. To catalog traditional Cameroonian dishes and beverages, an international consultant was recruited: Monique Bagal, a Cameroon national and expert in IP and food differentiation strategies. She has worked in close collaboration with the project coordinator in Cameroon, Ms. Jacqueline Etemé Ma'a (maiden name Ongbayokolack), Manager of the office within MINTOUL assigned to enhance the value of Cameroonian cuisine. An interministerial team was then put together within MINTOUL to conduct various consultations¹⁴ often in collaboration with the aforementioned consultant.
- 9. Pursuant to mission objectives, it was decided that the study would combine and cross-reference data from:
 - a preliminary study based essentially on a review of the literature to catalog specialties according to each administrative region of Cameroon;

¹¹ Visiter le Cameroun, Loin du tourisme de masse, https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/

¹² The other country selected from Africa was Morocco.

¹³ Revised Project Proposal on Intellectual Property and Gastronomic Tourism in Peru and Other Developing Countries: Promoting the Development of Gastronomic Tourism through Intellectual Property, 21 November 2018, CDIP/22/14 REV. Viewed at :

https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=421371.

¹⁴ See for example:

 $https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=134623703370643\&story_fbid=1792426850923645,\\ MINTOUL$

- a classification of specialties according to the "socio-cultural zones" in Cameroon; and
- a field survey conducted in Cameroon among Cameroonian residents, coupled with an online survey for a wider public.

It is proposed to select 20 Cameroonian specialties meeting the study's criteria (i.e., showing potential for gastronomic tourism and for enhancement using IP tools). Those specialties will be considered and selected for study to determine the actual prospects for such enhancement.

In view of the pandemic, the consultant was unable to conduct the activities necessary to prepare the study, which required travel and interaction with various actors. At its last meeting, as part of a pandemic mitigation strategy, the CDIP approved a revision of the data collection methodology for the exploratory study, permitting online studies and interviews.

A total of 876 field surveys and 223 online surveys were conducted.

II. Cross tabulation to catalog the Cameroonian culinary traditions best suited for development through gastronomic tourism and IP protection

- 10. As indicated earlier, it is difficult to assign a particular identity to Cameroonian cuisine, which is often said to vary according to geographic region and ethnicity within the country. The 10 regions of Cameroon are reflected by the names of their particular dishes as commonly referred to by Cameroonians as well as foreign visitors so it makes sense to organize this study according to the regions typified by each dish.
- 11. However, as elsewhere on the continent, the country's internal administrative boundaries do not always take account of cultural realities. Reflecting this complexity, there are also boundaries delineating areas of cultural influence within Cameroon, each offering dishes and specialties that neither typify nor are necessarily associated with, administratively-defined regions.
- 12. Last but not least, it is essential to conduct an anonymous survey to convey the voices of producers and consumers in determining which specialties are considered most emblematic of Cameroon by national and foreign residents of the country, Cameroonian expatriates and other friends of Cameroonian gastronomy.

A. Cameroonian dishes identified through a preliminary review of the literature

- 13. Kapferer argues that individuals sometimes form attachments to a place, a region, a country, a tribe or a culture through the particular foods often associated with it. Over time, such foods have become more than ordinary products for consumers, taking on the status of well-established "brands". This has proven true in Cameroon, where each region boasts one or more typical dishes. And this is borne out by the many sources that have chosen to classify Cameroonian dishes by administrative region.
- 14. The Republic of Cameroon is divided into ten regions: ¹⁷ Centre, Littoral, West, Northwest, Southwest, South, East, North, Adamaoua and Extreme North. ¹⁸

Each region is described in generalities for the purposes of this study, with particular attention to any existing tourist sites as well as other projects offering potential synergies with gastronomic tourism. A fact sheet is provided for each of the 20 dishes selected, indicating its name, ingredients, potential for gastronomic tourism and prospects for IP protection. Dishes included on the "list of 20" appear in the text in this

¹⁵ Cuisine camerounaise, http://hack4afrik.org/?page_id=14

¹⁶ Kapferer, J.N. (2013), "Réinventer les marques", Edition Eyrolles, Paris. Mefoute Badiang, Alphonse, L'appartenance ethnique comme source d'attachement et d'engagement envers la marque : une application aux produits alimentaires du terroir au Cameroun, http://archives.marketing-trends-congress.com/2016/pages/PDF/MEFOUTE-BADIANGA.pdf

¹⁷ What were formerly the "provinces" of Cameroon are now called "regions" (see Decree No. 2008/376 of 12 November 2008 concerning administrative organization of the Republic of Cameroon). 18 The regions are divided into 58 departments, divided in turn into 360 *arrondissements*, municipalities and chiefdoms. Each region of Cameroon is placed under the authority of a regional governor and regional council. The governor represents the President of the Republic, the Government and each of the ministers, and in that capacity exercizes the authority of the State in the region.

color. Dishes not sufficiently documented to warrant fact sheets, but confirmed to be of regional origin, are simply noted in the text, without inclusion on the list.

A.1 Centre region

(a) Description of the region

- 15. The principal city of the Centre region, Yaoundé, is the nation's political capital. In respect of foreign visitors, this region ranked second for tourist receipts (27 per cent) and occupancy rates (25 per cent). As seat of the institutions of the Republic, with its international-class hotels and facilities, Yaoundé is a preferred destination for tourists, business people, diplomats, conventioneers and scholars. "City of seven hills", Yaoundé occupies a picturesque site built on the eponymous hills. The region's major tourist attraction is the Ebogo site, about 16 km from Yaoundé, near the town of Mbalmayo.
- 16. The Centre region is also known for its humid climate, lush vegetation and the customs and folklore of its people. It is a region of rugged terrain, equatorial forest and great rivers, ideal for excursions, picnics, ecotourism and rural tourism.²⁰
- 17. The region's The Njock Rail Tunnels²¹ have been tentatively designated²² as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

(b) The main traditional dishes of the Centre region

18. Online research found three dishes to be the most widely mentioned: *kpem*, *ndomba* and *nam ewondo*.²³ In addition, products that have specific qualities associated with their origin and that are eligible for a GI have already been catalogued: Lékié shallots and Bafia pineapples.

¹⁹ Tchindjang, Mesmin and Kengne, Fodouop, *Le Cameroon : un pays aux potentialités touristiques sous-exploitées*, University of Yaounde I, June 2008.

²⁰ La découverte du Cameroun, les 10 régions du Cameroun, http://cameroun.solidarite.free.fr/les-10-regions-du-cameroun.html.

²¹ Njock Rail Tunnels, see: https://whc.unesco.org/fr/listesindicatives/6327/.

²² Sites included on a tentative list of World Heritage sites need to be distinguished from those actually protected as such. The tentative list is a forecast of the properties that a State Party may decide to submit for inscription in the next five to ten years. The World Heritage Committee cannot consider a nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List unless the property has already been included on the State Party's Tentative List. See: https://whc.unesco.org/en/nominations/.

²³ See: Les plats de la cuisine du Cameroun: https://www.petitfute.com/p115-cameroun/guide-touristique/c9449-cuisine-locale.html:

Guide du Cameroun : Cuisine locale, https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/la-cuisine-camerounaise/les-plats/;

Food and beverages: https://discover-cameroon.com/en/food-and-drinks/; and

Visiter le Cameroun avec moi: https://www.facebook.com/visiterlecamerounavecmoi/posts/10-plats-incontournables-de-la-cuisine-camerounaisele-koki-chaudcest-un-plat-qui/1549457525192522/.

(c) Fact sheets for the dishes selected

Kpem

Name of the dish: Also called *kwem*, *kpwem*, *mboam kpem* and "aubergine leaves",²⁴ as well as *sangah* in the South region of Cameroon.

Description and ingredients: *Kpem* consists of a sauce based on cassava leaves, a staple in Cameroon, crushed in a mortar and cooked in palm nut juice, or sometimes peanut paste. The key is to steam the cassava leaves. They are then either crushed with palm nuts or sautéed as vegetables.²⁵ This dish can be vegetarian and either sweet or salty. It is generally accompanied by plantains (less sweet and more creamy than fruit), cocoyams (tubers cooked like potatoes) and cassava tubers or stems.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: This dish is eaten at home but can also be purchased from street vendors. Vacuum packaged portions are sold online and in stores catering to foreign customers. A highly nourishing dish, *kpem* is a staple for most of the population and reputed to increase longevity.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Key questions concern the names or marks under which the packaged portions are sold in Cameroon and abroad; whether the cassava leaves or the type of mortar used are specific to Cameroon; and whether the preparation of *kpem* is the same in the South, where it is called *sangah*.

Ndomba

Name of the dish: Ndomba.

Description and ingredients: *Ndomba* is a method of cooking in banana leaves. It consists of seasoned fresh fish, meat, pork or chicken ²⁶ cooked in papillote using banana or *marantaceae* (arrowroot) leaves. *Ndomba* is eaten with tubers (cassava, yams), cassava stems, plantains and other accompaniments.²⁷

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *Ndomba* is a healthy cooking method that preserves the aromas of all the ingredients. The same technique is used for variants of the dish. These include *nam ewondo*, which is served in most Yaoundé restaurants and therefore offers potential for development through gastronomic tourism.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: The name "ndomba" or "domba" comes from the Éwondo and Bulu peoples and refers merely to a dish cooked in papillote of marantaceae leaves. Could the same dish prepared in a casserole also be called Ndomba?

Another question is whether the particular spices used – *odzom* (laurel) or *messep* (tropical basil) leaves – are unique to Cameroon and thus potentially valuable as intellectual property (a kind of "secret sauce"). *Messep* is a highly prized seasoning for meat broths and sauces (of peanut, wild mango, etc.) and an indispensable ingredient for stews or dishes in papillote.

²⁴ La gastronomie Camerounaise: une cuisine riche et diversifiée, 3 October 2018, https://lesgourmandisesderk.com/2018/10/03/la-gastronomie-camerounaise-une-cuisine-riche-et-diversifiee/.

²⁵ La gastronomie Camerounaise: une cuisine riche et diversifiée, 3 October 2018, https://lesgourmandisesderk.com/2018/10/03/la-gastronomie-camerounaise-une-cuisine-riche-et-diversifiee/.

²⁶ Cuisine camerounaise, http://hack4afrik.org/?page_id=14 27 Bogni, Téguia, La cuisine camerounaise, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370

Nam ewondo

Name of the dish: Also called *nnam olis* (a variant)

Description and ingredients: Peanut paste, spices, shrimp, and meat or smoked fish, are all cooked in papillote of *marantaceae* or banana leaves. Cucumbers are sometimes substituted for the peanut paste. Among other accompaniments, *nam owondo* is eaten with tubers (cassava, yam, potato), plantains, cassava stems or cocoyams.²⁸

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Significantly, *nam owondo* is prepared using the same cooking technique as for other regional dishes, including *ndomba*, which it is sometimes called. It is a traditional technique of the Beti people and therefore offers potential for gastronomic tourism. A variant called *nnam olis* incorporates rice and peanut paste.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: None identified at present.

A.2 Littoral region

(a) Description of the region

- 19. The principal city of the Littoral region, Douala, is the economic capital of Cameroon. The region has an area of 20,239 km² and a population of about 2.5 million. Bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, the Littoral region features many seafood specialties. It is where freshly caught fish can best be enjoyed outdoors on the banks of the Wouri River, for example.
 - Long the country's seaside destination, the Littoral region of Cameroon attracts more visits than any other and is where most foreign visitors stay.²⁹
- 20. The region offers an abundance of tourist sites, including the Bimbia Banadikombo Forest, the Nachtigal Monument, the Pagoda, Saint-Pierre and Saint-Paul Cathedrals and the Maritime Museum in Douala.³⁰ Cameroon has tentatively listed the region's Bimbia Slave Port and associated sites as prospective UNESCO World Heritage sites.

(b) The main traditional dishes of the Littoral region

21. The research indicates two traditional dishes as uncontestably originating in the Littoral region: *ndole* and *mbongo* tchobi.³¹. Another product of the region, Penja peppers, has already been registered as a GI with OAPI. Papaya appears to be the region's only other candidate for GI status.

(c) Fact sheets for the dishes selected

Ndole

Name of the dish: Ndole comes from the Douala word ndolo, meaning love.³²

²⁸ Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370

²⁹ Tchindjang, Mesmin and Kengne, Fodouop, *Le Cameroun : un pays aux potentialités touristiques sous-exploitées*, University of Yaounde I, Juin 2008

³⁰ La région du Littoral en quelques mots, https://visa-cameroun.fr/12-la-region-du-littoral-en-quelques-mots/

³¹ Additional research is required on bush turtles and the *gari aux écrevisses* (crayfish in cassava paste).

³² Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370

Description and ingredients: *Ndole* is a vegetable whose color and texture are similar to spinach. It is prepared using *vernonia* (ironweed) leaves and peanut paste together with smoked fish, meats, shrimp, onions and various spices.³³ It is eaten accompanied by cassava stems or boiled plantain stems. The preparation of *ndole* is delicate: the leaves must be "washed" several times or bleached with natron to reduce their bitterness.³⁴

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Considered the "national dish" of Cameroon by several sources,³⁵ *ndole* appears to top the list of the country's most emblematic specialties, as reflected in laudatory characterizations as a "national emissary". That is impressive praise indeed in such a multiethnic country with such diverse cuisine.

Ndole has been exported and featured on restaurant menus around the world for decades. In Paris, for example, Fatou Sylla, of Senegal, has made it the specialty of her restaurant *Waly-Fay*. According to Christian Abégan, Ambassador for Cameroonian gastronomy, *ndole* is now served throughout the world – from London, Paris and Monaco to Japan – on occasions of various kinds. The idea is to popularize the dish by adapting it according to the substitute ingredients available.

Preserving *ndole*, however, is a delicate process, calling for innovations that could be associated with gastronomic tourism.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: While *ndole* can be found in Benin (Amanvivè), Togo (Aloma), and several English-speaking countries, including Nigeria (bitter leaf), only in Cameroon is it combined with meat, shellfish and peanuts, producing a magic mixture of sweet, salty and bitter flavors.³⁷ This gives an identity to "e*ndole*" that is more than simply a name for a sauce made with spinach.

Beyond the balance that has to be achieved, which is the secret to this dish, the success of *ndole* hinges on another key ingredient: crushed fresh peanuts. They are soaked for an hour before being puréed to act as a binding agent and give consistency to the dish. Gaston-Paul Effa advises against the use of peanuts that become too bloated during soaking. It is also important to crush the peanuts very finely.³⁸

³³ La gastronomie Camerounaise: une cuisine riche et diversifiée, 3 October 2018, https://lesgourmandisesderk.com/2018/10/03/la-gastronomie-camerounaise-une-cuisine-riche-et-diversifiee/

³⁴ Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370

³⁵ Découvrez les recettes du Cameroun,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/cuisine cameroun.php

Bogni, Téguia, La cuisine camerounaise, https://www.editions-

harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370

Le ndolé, l'emblématique plat royal camerounais, https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1097405/culture/serie-le-ndole-lemblematique-plat-royal-camerounais-4-5/

³⁶ Le ndolé, l'emblématique plat royal camerounais,

https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1097405/culture/serie-le-ndole-lemblematique-plat-royal-camerounais-4-5/

³⁷ Le ndolé, l'emblématique plat royal camerounais,

https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1097405/culture/serie-le-ndole-lemblematique-plat-royal-camerounais-4-5/

³⁸ Le ndolé, l'emblématique plat royal camerounais,

https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1097405/culture/serie-le-ndole-lemblematique-plat-royal-camerounais-4-5/

Known for its medicinal benefits, *ndole* is already being used in a diabetes medication. A patent application submitted to OAPI in 2011, by Mr. Luc Kaldjob, was granted in 2017.³⁹ That could well be just the tip of an iceberg: *ndole* in Cameroon may also contain a substance for use against cancer. The genetic resource associated with *ndole*, *vernonia amygdalin*, enters into several patent applications, including one submitted in 2002 by Ernest B. Izevbigie.⁴⁰

Substitution can be made for this rather unique plant to obtain a taste similar to that of authentic *ndole*. In western countries, Christian Abégan advises that vernonia leaves can be replaced with chard, which can mimic the original flavor. "The alchemy can be difficult," he says, "but we manage." Can the name *ndole* be reserved only for dishes prepared with authentic *ndole* leaves? The dish is apparently being considered for listing as intangible heritage by UNESCO. Here again, the popularity of *ndole* seems to have escaped only the people of the Littoral region, having spread as a quasi-national dish to most of the other regions and been adopted by each, in its own way, as part of local tradition.⁴¹

There are secrets associated with the preparation of this dish, and their potential as industrial secrets is worth exploring, at a time when many African dishes are being marketed on a ready-to-use, vacuum-packaged basis. *Mandjanga*, fo instance are dried pink shrimp used to enhance the flavor of *ndole*. Are they of specific local origin?

No one denies the real know-how required to select vernonia leaves and wash them to remove their bitterness. There are ancient, ancestral methods for doing it: crushing the leaves in a mortar, washing and re-crushing them and then washing them again. It is then necessary to stomp for hours on a mesh sack filled with *ndole* and to rinse it until the bitterness has been eliminated.⁴² This control of bitterness by the Sawa people constitutes real, potentially valuable know-how of Cameroonian or Sawa origin. The technique for washing *ndole* has evolved but remains cumbersome. It is first boiled with rock salt, plunged in fresh water and then pressed to expel the bitter water. The operation is repeated as many times as necessary to obtain a bright green color.

Mbongo tchobi

Name of the dish: *Tjobi* means fish in Basaa language; *mbongo* means black sauce. The dish is also called *bongo'o tjobi*.

Description and ingredients: The dish consists of meat or fish with a very spicy black sauce, seasoned above all with the fragrance of amome. Among other accompaniments, the

³⁹ The diabetes medication is a concoction of medicinal plant extracts. It combines *quinkéliba* leaves (huslundia sp), with leaves or pulverized dried bark of the voacanga plant (tabercac montana crasse), green ndole leaves (vermonia amygdalina) in water brought to a boil and then cooled. This mixture is said to restore the pancreas, enabling it to produce the insulin necessary to process sugar in the body. See: OAPI, *Fascicule du brevet d'invention*, 15.12.2011,

http://www.oapi.int/Ressources/memoire/18082.pdf

⁴⁰ See GRAIN concerning access and benefit-sharing (ABS) in respect of genetic resources: https://grain.org/en/article/1340-a-propos-de-l-acces-aux-ressources-genetiques-et-partage-des-avantages-apa. BUT ALSO: Google patents, Phytochemotherapy for cancer, US6849604B2, https://patents.google.com/patent/US6849604B2/en.

⁴¹ Gain, Bruno, former Ambassador of France to Cameroon, cited by Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370. 42 *Le ndolé, l'emblématique plat royal camerounais*,

https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1097405/culture/serie-le-ndole-lemblematique-plat-royal-camerounais-4-5/.

dish is served with steamed ripe plantains, tubers (cassava, yam, or cocoyam), cassava stems and rice.

Mbongo is a traditional dish of the Basaa people (called the "caviar of the Basaas" in Cameroon). Legend has it that a Basaa wife, seeking to rein in her husband's infidelities, considered what dishes might keep him at home. The idea finally came to her to combine aroma that would attract her husband with taste that would keep him. Having succeeded in this effort, the young wife decided to share her secrets with other wives in her clan, and so the knowledge spread.⁴³ It is said that the secret was long kept among Basaa women. If so, it has since gotten out, and the recipe's composition appears to have evolved considerably.

It is said that today, for example, *Mbongo* powder is used to reduce preparation and cooking times.⁴⁴

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: This dish is now prepared and enjoyed throughout the country, and even abroad. It is best suited to palates less sensitive to spicy food.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Over time, as it has spread, this recipe has lost some of its originality and culinary twists.⁴⁵ Controlling how the name of this recipe is used against a set of specifications would surely help to preserve the traditional methods of preparing it, assuming there is sufficient consumer demand for doing so.

Another avenue for IP protection relates to one of the main spices used in this recipe, *mbongo*, which is specific to Cameroon and may be difficult to find. *Mbongo* is a variety of wild Cameroonian black pepper, similar in appearance to nutmeg, which gives the sauce for this dish it's black color. It comes from the maniguette plant, which is native to Africa and known for the fragrance of its foliage and seeds. Its long evergreen leaves are particularly aromatic. Its fruit is a brown clove, resembling a shallot, that forms at the base of the plant and contains many small brown seeds. These maniguette seeds, which are ground for use in the kitchen, resemble pepper but are less hot. Their fragrance is particularly prized for freshwater fish and game and is said to to be an aphrodisiac. ⁴⁶ Do these conditions make *mbongo* suitable for GI protection? The dish is also prepared with the small round seeds of the njansan tree, which must be grilled, roasted, marinated and boiled, and which are commonly used in the cooking of Cameroon as well as Côte d'Ivoire (*akpi*).

A.3 West region

(a) Description of the region

22. Marvelously endowed by nature, the West region of Cameroon has often been compared to Auvergne, in France. Its rolling countryside is traversed by scenic rivers, punctuated here and there by waterfalls. It's rounded mountain ridges, are the legacy of ancient volcanoes. The climate is temperate with average annual temperatures reaching as low as 20° C in some places, such as Dschang, with its outdoor resort. A

⁴³ La recette Du Mbongo Tchobi : Une passionnante histoire d'amour, https://cuisinedumboa.com/la-recette-du-mbongo-tchobi-une-passionnante-histoire-damour/

⁴⁴ La recette Du Mbongo Tchobi : Une passionnante histoire d'amour, https://cuisinedumboa.com/la-recette-du-mbongo-tchobi-une-passionnante-histoire-damour/

⁴⁵ *La recette Du Mbongo Tchobi*: Une passionnante histoire d'amour, https://cuisinedumboa.com/la-recette-du-mbongo-tchobi-une-passionnante-histoire-damour/

⁴⁶ https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/cuisine cameroun.php

land of culture and traditions, the West is known for the rich variety of its artisanry: from terra-cotta pipes and utensils, to copper figurines and masks, to stools decorated with pearls and Bamiléké dancers in picturesque costumes. Foumban is the main center for Cameroonian handicrafts.⁴⁷

23. Cameroon has tentatively listed two sites in this region as prospective UNESCO World Heritage sites: the Bimbia Slave Port and associated sites and the "Grandes Cases" of the traditional chiefdoms of the Grassfields region. The region's other tourist sites are: the Mami Wata Falls, the chiefdom of Bafoussam, the Nyang Nyang festival, the chiefdom of Bandjoun, the palace of the Sultan and its museum, Artisans Row, the Museum of Bamoun arts and traditions, and the feast of Nguong.

(b) Traditional dishes of the West region

24. The traditional dishes selected in the preliminary study for the West region are *nkui* and *topsi banana*.⁴⁸ The region also has two products listed as potentially eligible for Gls in Cameroon: Mbouda avocados and Tonga rice.

Nkui

Description and ingredients: *Nkui* is a gooey sauce made not with gombo but with *nkui* stalks. It is a traditional Bamiléké ethnic dish to which 10 or so spices are added. It can be accompanied by sautéed leaves of black nightshade (morelle noire) and corn couscous.

Nkui is prepared for mothers at childbirth because of its high energy content,⁴⁹ and is said to help them lactate more abundantly. It is also traditionally known for its digestive (laxative) effects and its use to stimulate appetite (as well as galactorrhea), and treat malaria and its colics. It is used as well in food for infants and young children unable to digest starch.⁵⁰ *Nkui* is eaten with the hands and served with corn couscous.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: The recipe is considered easy and quick to prepare. It is also quite light, containing little fat. The sauce has recently become popular and is not sold on the street.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: The preparation of *nkui* includes seasoning with several local condiments: *ngachu'u, lepka'ah, diepse'eh, zehfe*, bark and fruit of the lep, and *susieu*.⁵¹ Are these condiments endemic to Cameroon or to the West region? Are they produced outside that region?

In the Congo, this plant is used in traditional medicine for its hypotensive properties, which help to regulate and stabilize arterial pressure. ⁵² Is such use also known in Cameroon?

⁴⁷ Découvrir le Cameroun, Région de l'Ouest, Région de l'Ouest – Curiosités,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-de-louest/48 Other dishes, such as *tac tac* (crushed corn with beans or vegetables in red oil) were not found to be sufficiently emblematic of the country or region.

⁴⁹ Le Nkui, la sauce gluante des Bamilékés, 15 November 2016,

https://www.groupedaabou.com/2016/11/15/le-nkui-la-sauce-gluante-des-bamilekes/

⁵⁰ Le Nkui, la sauce gluante des Bamilékés, 15 November 2016,

https://www.groupedaabou.com/2016/11/15/le-nkui-la-sauce-gluante-des-bamilekes/

⁵¹ Le Nkui, la sauce gluante des Bamilékés, 15 November 2016,

https://www.groupedaabou.com/2016/11/15/le-nkui-la-sauce-gluante-des-bamilekes/52 *Le Nkui, la sauce gluante des Bamilékés*, 15 November 2016,

https://www.groupedaabou.com/2016/11/15/le-nkui-la-sauce-gluante-des-bamilekes/

Topsi Banana

Name of the dish: Also called topsi ba'ana and banane malaxée.

Description and ingredients: This is a classic Bafang recipe originating in the West region of Cameroon. *Malaxée* means "mixed in the sauce". Once a meal for the poor, it is a mixture of peanut paste, bananas and spices. The peanuts are crushed and then boiled or grilled.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *Topsi Banana* is undeniably one of the best known dishes in West Africa, but at this stage, is not strongly associated with gastronomic tourism. Nor was evidence found of it often being served to tourists.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Being so well known in the West, *Topsi Banana* might warrant a collective mark aimed at promoting production in its place of origin.

A.4 Northwest region

(a) Description of the region

- 25. With an average altitude of 1550 m above sea level, the Northwest is a region of high plateaus dominated by a mountain range whose Oku peaks reach above 3000 m. Its grassy landscape offers captivating contrasts: plains surrounded by mountain chains and interspersed with deep valleys, streams, waterfalls and numerous crater lakes.
- 26. Except during the rainy season (July to October) the region offers a climate well-suited to travel: between mild and cool with temperatures varying around 22°C.
- 27. Bamenda, the region's main town and an important trade center and crossroads for the entire region, is both modern and traditional. A 350 km "Ring Road" lets visitors admire the Northwest in all its diversity: its traditional chiefdoms, panoramas, lakes, waterfalls and wildlife reserves.⁵³
- 28. Some tourist sites, including those tentatively listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites, straddle the West, Northwest and Southwest regions. That is the case of the Bimbia Slave Port and associated sites as well as the traditional chiefdom of the Grassfields, with its Mankon Palace, ruled since 1959 by King Ngwa'fo, an agricultural engineer and businessman. This site is also associated with the West region. Other tourist sites include the Bafut chiefdom, the megaliths of Saa and the archaeological site of Shum Laka.
- 29. The Northwest has a rich tradition of hakndcrafted pottery, and most famously "Nsei-Bamessing", which is sold throughout Cameroon.⁵⁴

(b) Traditional dishes of the Northwest region

30. One of the region's traditional dish is **taro in yellow sauce**, also known as "ashu". Another is mashed potatoes with beans, called "*toukouri*" or "*pilé*". Oku White Honey has been identified by a geographical indication (GI), registered with OAPI in 2013. Njinikon coffee is a candidate for GI registration, appearing on the country's list of products claimed to qualify.

⁵³ Visiter le Cameroun, la Région du Nord-Ouest – Curiosités,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-nord-ouest/54 *Visiter le Cameroun, la Région du Nord-Ouest – Curiosités*,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-nord-ouest/

Taro in yellow sauce

Name of the dish: Also known as "achu" or "ashu".

Description and ingredients: A salty dish, taro in yellow sauce is based on plantain blended with red oil. Taro is a tuber that is mashed to obtain a grayish paste that is eaten with the famous yellow sauce. The sauce consists of palm oil mixed with several spices, mushrooms and meat.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Taro in yellow sauce has historically been reserved for a chiefdom's important personages and dignitaries. It is generally served nowadays at large festive ceremonies to honor invited guests, but has generally been demystified and can be ordered in any Cameroonian restaurant.

It remains nonetheless emblematic of the country's West region.

These positive aspects could make the dish attractive in the context of gastronomic tourism. It is also said to help with digestion, weight loss, immune systems, antibodies, bones, teeth and early hair loss.

There are reports of a YouTube clip featuring two Koreans attempting to prepare this dish.⁵⁵

Possible considerations as to IP protection: No such potential has been demonstrated.

A.5 Southwest region

(a) Description of the region

- 31. The Southwest region is characterized by its abundant rainfall, its lush, always green vegetation, and its extensive agro-industrial activity.⁵⁶
- 32. The region is rich in tourist attractions: its colonial legacy, including the palace of German Governor Von Puttkamer, at Buéa; Mount Cameroon (elevation: 4100 metres), a still active volcano; Korup National Park, a living museum, more than 300 million years old and featuring flora and fauna of rare variety; the Limbé Botanical Garden, created in 1892 by German horticulturalists, the Limbé Zoo; and Lake Barombi, near Kumba, a luxuriant setting. The Southwest also has fine gray-sand beaches along its Atlantic coastline.⁵⁷ And the town of Buéa would be very well-suited to ecotourism.
- 33. Limbé, a small coastal village 80 km from Douala, is one of two seaside resorts, together with Kribi, that are known for their black-sand beaches. Two nature parks are maintained there with cooperation from the United Kingdom: the Limbe Wildlife Centre, where all species of monkey present in Cameroon can be seen, and the Limbe Botanical Garden. Some tourist sites tentatively listed as UNESCO World Heritage

⁵⁵ Gastronomie camerounaise: l'incontournable « street food »,

http://www.unecamerounaiseenvadrouilles.com/2021/04/24/gastronomie-camerounaise-lincontournable-street-food/

⁵⁶ Visiter le Cameroun, La Région du Sud-Ouest

Région du sud-Ouest – *Curiosités*, https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-sud-ouest/

⁵⁷ Visiter le Cameroun, La Région du Sud-Ouest

Région du sud-Ouest – *Curiosités*, https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-sud-ouest/

⁵⁸ Visiter le Cameroun, La Région du Sud-Ouest

Région du sud-Ouest – Curiosités, https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-sud-ouest/

sites in this region, including the Bimbia Slave Port and associated sites, straddle the Southwest as well as West and Northwest regions.

34. Several restaurants offer both Cameroonian and European cuisine, including Bella Restaurant, Bistrot de Milly, Lady L, Le Cocotier and the Limbé Hot Spot.

(b) Traditional dishes of the Southwest region

35. The dishes most mentioned in the literature as originating in Southwest Cameroon are **ekwang** and **eru**.

Eru

Name of the dish: Eru, a mixture of vegetables.

Description and ingredients: The dish consists of a sauce based on the fibrous leaves of the gnète tree (Gnetum africanum) cut in fine strips, combined with water leaves or Calabar spinach. The latter is gooey and serves as a binding agent and tenderizer, making the dish easier to chew. The other ingredients are palm oil, shrimp, fish, meat, and especially fire-grilled ox skins, called *nkanda*. *Eru* is eaten mainly with water *fufu*.⁵⁹

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: It is not always easy to find all the ingredients for *eru*, particularly outside the country, although leaf lettuce can be substituted for the water leaf. There is no evidence of this dish being regularly served to tourists.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Does the value of this dish derive from the scarcity of its ingredients? Is particular know-how required to prepare the fire-grilled ox skins (nkanda)?

Ekwang

Name of the dish: Also called *Ekwana* coco.

Description and ingredients: Oblong dumplings composed of grated cocoyams wrapped in cocyam shoots and cooked in a sauce with palm oil and meat or fish.⁶⁰

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: The preparation of this dish is laborious and time-consuming, but most chefs and restaurant owners consider it a particular customer favorite.

Its potential for gastronomic tourism derives ultimately from the cocyam plant (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium*), called *macabo* in Cameroon.

A root vegetable, cocyam is something of an acquired taste. It has a neutral, somewhat earthy flavor and a mealy texture in the mouth, less creamy than potatoes. In grated form, however, it is not without gustatory interest.

The plant also has multiple benefits – gluten-free, vegan, antioxidant – and is easily digested, owing to its starch content. Presented as an "exotic" antioxidant, cocoyam would not lack for enthusiasts in today's market.

⁵⁹ Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370 60 Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370

Possible considerations as to IP protection: This dish originated among the Southwest's Bafaw people, suggesting potential for value enhancement based on geographic origin. A collective mark, for instance, could certify that origin.

A.6 South region

(a) Description of the region

- 36. The South region represents a complete destination. With its tropical forest it is ideal for rural tourism and ecotourism. Visitors can also experience encounters with pygmies, the forest's first inhabitants.
- 37. As if to accentuate the region's humidity, numerous streams and waterways culminate in spectacular falls and cascades, similar to those in Lobé and Memve'ele. The region's 150 km Atlantic coastline is covered with fine sand, perfect for beach tourism. 61 The Waterfalls of Lobé are a sacred symbol for the surrounding coastal peoples and are generally associated with various natural and cultural rituals. Pygmie indigenous healers performed purification rites for the sick at these falls, plunging them into the waters below. The falls were also part of the enthronement ritual for the king of the Batangas government to receive benedictions from spirits and ancestors, including the *jingou* or *Mami Water*, and water spirit husbands and wives. This mystical representation of the all-powerful water spirits was part of life for centuries for every native of this coastal region. 62
- 38. A popular site for visitors is the village of Kribi, 63 called the Riviera of Cameroon for its superb beaches of fine sand, stretching uninterrupted for kilometers along the coast. 64 Most of the hotels and houses are situated along the beachfront. 65 Kribi is a fishing port and an ideal place for sampling fish and crustaceans, including the famous Kribi or Lobé shrimp. Visitors can watch net fishing technique along the beach: a dugout canoe moves offshore holding one end of a net while people onshore hold the other. In the village center is its fish market, with its fresh sea bass, barracuda, sole, shrimp, prawns and lobster at prices considered affordable. Seafood can be taken out or eaten there in one of the many cafés. 66

Departing from Kribi, tourists can visit several pygmy camps to experience their habitat and ways of life, close to nature. The Bipindi pygmies are particularly well known for their artistic knowledge and skill and their traditional medicine, handed down from father to son.

⁶¹ Découvrir Le Cameroun, Région du sud – Curiosités,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-du-sud/62 Découvrir Le Cameroun, Région du sud — Curiosités,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-du-sud/63 Kribi was once a very active port for exports of wood, coffee and cacao. Visit its lighthouse, built in 1906 during the German colonial era.

⁶⁴ Découvrir Le Cameroun, Région du sud - Curiosités,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-du-sud/65 Découvrir Le Cameroun, Région du sud – Curiosités.

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-du-sud/66 Découvrir Le Cameroun, Région du sud – Curiosités,

https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-du-sud/

39. The tourist attractions associated with the region include the renowned Dja Faunal Reserve, ⁶⁷a UNESCO World Heritage site, and the Lobe Falls, tentatively listed as such a site. Other tourist attractions include the Campo Ma'an National Park, Ebolowa, the Nkolandom Tourist Center, the Rock of Ako'akas and the sea turtles at Ebodj.

(b) Traditional dishes of the South region

40. The region's traditional specialties include *mfiang n'do'o* and *ekomba*. Kribi and Lobé shrimp are on the country's list of products qualified for GIs.

Mfian n'do'o

Name of the dish: Also called *nfiang ndo'o* as well as *mokwa*. It means sauce made from wild mango kernels (also called *ndoha* and *ndjaka*).

Description and ingredients: This creamy sauce goes particularly well with mackeral, a true delight for the tastebuds. "*Ndo'o*" refers to a paste extracted from the mango kernels and tasting similar to chocolate. It often comes in cake form and must be grated to obtain a powder, also used to season fish or meat stews.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: There is no clear evidence of this dish being served to or enjoyed by tourists.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: It is the wild mango, rather than the dish as such, that seems to be best known in Cameroon, and to offer the greatest potential for enhancement as a GI. The wild mango's exploitation, moreover, is regulated by the State (for commercial as well as noncommercial uses). On the other hand, mango trees are common all along the Gulf of Guinea, and the distribution of their fruit extends from Nigeria to Angola. And there is more than one variety: one is sweet (*I. gabonensis*), others bitter (*I. wombolu* and *Irvingia wombolu"*), the latter being small in size and native to the humid forests of South Cameroon.⁶⁸

If not the wild mango, the *ndo'o* paste might have the specificity needed to warrant exploitation, if only as a commercial trademark.

Ekomba

Name of the dish: Ekomba

Description and ingredients: A mixture of corn paste and peanut paste is cooked in the traditional fashion, in papillote of marantaceae or banana leaves.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: In the absence of marantaceae or banana leaves, *ekomba* can be cooked in plastic wrapping. Like some other dishes, (*nnam owondo*, *mintoumba*), *ekomba* can then be dried over charcoal embers for long-term conservation.

This dish is inexpensive to prepare: the ingredients are corn, peanuts, sugar and water. And it definitely has its admirers – some claiming great boosts in energy from eating it.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Not as yet clear.

⁶⁷ The subject of a video that won a contest organized by UNESCO on Instagram.

⁶⁸ See Awono, Abdon and Manirakiza, Diomede, *Projet pour la mobilisation et le renforcement des capacités des petites et moyennes entreprises paysannes en relation avec l'exploitation des produits forestiers non ligneux au Cameroun et en RDC. Etude de base sur la mangue sauvage, December 2007, https://www.fao.org/forestry/15693-0dc91a04d1a8e15cc5409450931cfe7f3.pdf*

A.7 East region

(a) Description of the region

- 41. The East region is among the most vast in Cameroon. It is populated, among other tribes, by pygmies, the region's first inhabitants, still following the practices of hunting and gathering. Also known as the region of the rising sun, the East is an ecological area dominated by giant trees. More than 1500 plant varieties have been identified there some entirely or partially protected and over 500 animal species, with particular diversity in the Dja Reserve, a World Heritage Site.
- 42. The East's many and varied features make it a natural destination for several forms of tourism, and in particular ecotourism, game-hunting tourism and photo and adventure safaris. The region has several protected areas, including the Deng Deng, Lobéké, Boumba Beck and Nki National Parks, in addition to the Dja Biosphere Reserve. Clearings and observation towers within the parks allow animals and birds to be observed and photographed. Exceptional sights and panoramas can be enjoyed by visitors to the great savannas as well as the smaller ones, particularly in Lobéké National Park.
- 43. Given its potential, the East region of Cameroon could be a prime tourist destination. It is where a major portion of the country's natural resources are concentrated. All the types of tourism now popular can be enjoyed there, except, perhaps, the scaling of great mountains.⁶⁹

(b) Traditional dishes of the East region

44. The region's traditional dishes are *mbol* and *kwa ni ndong*.

Mbol

Name of the dish: Mbol

Description and ingredients: This dish, a blend of meat, fish, squash, tropical spices and many other ingredients, is eaten with couscous (*fufu* made from cassava). The particularity of this dish is its use of a non-timber forest product as a binding agent. Called *kanda* in Cameroon (or *nguiriki* in the Central African Republic) it becomes gooey when crushed and mixed with water.

A highly prized dish in Cameroon, it is done in several ways: with meat, smoked sole and other fish, escargot, shrimp, or whatever one wishes.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *Mbol* is often considered a culinary treasure of the East region. Its ability to delight when people first try it is evident from the research.⁷⁰ It is also quite easy to cook and to thicken and requires very little in the way of spices.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Does the particularity of *kanda* in Cameroon suffice to qualify for a GI? Does it differ substantially from *nkui*, in the West region?

⁶⁹ La découverte du Cameroun, les 10 régions du Cameroun, http://cameroun.solidarite.free.fr/les-10-regions-du-cameroun.html

⁷⁰ Le patrimoine culinaire camerounais : une culture riche et délicieuse, https://www.mediaterre.org/actu,20201005133134,6.html

Kwa ni ndong

Name of the dish: Also called Sel Piment.

Description and ingredients: Fish seasoned with salt, pepper and other spices.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: According to the research, this is a very popular dish. However, there is little information about it, apart from the recipe, or evidence of it being emblematic. This is a dish for lovers of hot spicy food.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: The research does not indicate such potential.

A.8 North region

(a) Description of the region

- 45. The North region of Cameroon, beyond its main town of Garoua, is characterized by savanna and two rivers: the Bénoué and the Faro.
- 46. The region boasts three national parks: Bénoué, Faro and Bouba Ndjida. The region's other tourist sites are the Lagdo Reservoir and Dam, the Demsa Lamidat (traditional Muslim chiefdom), the Gorges of Kola and the Garoua Zoo⁷¹. The North region is also known for its traditional dances.

(b) Traditional dishes of the North region

47. Northern traditional dishes are often based on millet (such as fresh millet with milk), corn or sorghum (*crème au sorgho, plat foulbé*), accompanied by beef, chicken or fish. The region's most celebrated delicacy is *sauce foléré*.

Sauce foléré

Name of the dish: Also called sauce foléré.

Description and ingredients: Originating among the Peule people, this sauce is based on *foléré*, or Sorrell of Guinea, the North region's most widely used vegetable. The plant's tangy leaves are consumed as a meal or in juice form, generally accompanied by *foufou* of corn or rice.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: such potential has yet to be demonstrated.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Such potential is still unclear, the question being whether *foléré* grown in this region lends specificity to this sauce.

A.9 Adamaoua region

(a) Description of the region

48. With an area of 64,000 km², Adamaoua is the third-largest region of Cameroon. The land is poor and sparsely populated, but its town of Ngaoundéré has been among the fastest growing in Cameroon. That is because of its location at one end of the Yaoundé-Ngaoundéré railway line (the "*Transcamerounais*").⁷²

⁷¹ Découvrir le Cameroun - Région du Nord — Curiosités, http://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/nord.html 72 Adamaoua,la région la plus proche du paradis, http://ngaoundere.e-monsite.com/pages/adamaoua-la-region-la-plus-proche-du-paradis.html

- 49. The region's main attractions are the Tello Falls, Lake Tison, the Vina Falls and the Ngaoundere Lamidat.⁷³ Written and oral sources concur in considering Adamaoua a crossroads, where the great Bantu and Sudano-Sahelian cultural traditions converged and from which they then spread.⁷⁴
- 50. The main economic activity is zebu cattle farming. The Peuls are the largest ethnic group.⁷⁵

(b) Traditional dishes of Adamaoua

51. This region is famed for its *kilichi*, known as *kilichi* of Adamaoua.

Kilichi of Adamaoua

Name of the dish: Also known as kilichi of Ngaoundéré.

Description and ingredients: Cooked and cured beef seasoned with peanut paste, spices and salt. The name Adamaoua is often associated with *kilichi* in Cameroon.⁷⁶

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: This dish is rooted in the culture of Adamaoua, where its reputation is well established, particularly in Ngaoundéré. It is handy to eat, often as a snack. New varieties of *kilichi* have been appearing that include mutton, goat and even fish. It is currently exported to France, Spain, China and America as well as other countries in the subregion.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: The unique recipe and techniques for making *kilichi* (of Ngaoundéré or of Adamaoua) are a well-kept secret among producers. Steps are being taken to label this product.⁷⁷

A.10 Extreme North region

(a) Description of the region

52. The Extreme North of Cameroon is one of the most beautiful tourist destinations in the country. Its landscape is dominated by grassy steppes and savannas intersected by mountain ridges with strange and twisted forms. These include the stunning vistas of the Kapsiki region, much frequented by tourists. The village of Rhumsiki is also a prime attraction. Living in the region's remote hinterlands, the peoples of the Extreme North – the Foulbés, Matakams, Toupouris, Massas, Kotokos, Kirdis, Choa Arabs, Mousgoums, Mandaras and Mofous – have preserved an authentic culture, as expressed through architecture, art, crafts, traditions and folklore. The region is especially known for its Waza National Park, the country's most famous, most visited

⁷³ Découvrir Le Cameroun, Région de l'Adamaoua – Curiosités,

http://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/adamaoua.html

⁷⁴ Le Cameroun, une destination touristique recommandée pour vos vacances,

https://tourismecameroun.wordpress.com/category/art-et-culture/

⁷⁵ La découverte du Cameroun, les 10 régions du Cameroun, http://cameroun.solidarite.free.fr/les-10-regions-du-cameroun.html

⁷⁶ See: https://www.facebook.com/kilichideladamaoua237/

⁷⁷ See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrUbn4m3mC4&ab channel=Africa24

- and most admired park.⁷⁸ Its volcanic, needle-shaped peaks are a feature of particular geographical interest.⁷⁹
- 53. Every year during the tourist season (from November to May) the region's main towns organize major culture and art festivals, each unlike the next, offering 1001 colorful and diverse attractions. Examples include the Lamidat Festival in Ngaoundéré (FESLAM), the week-long cultural festival in Garoua, and the Maroua Festival. There are also the traditional feasts offered by sultanates and chiefdoms in the areas surrounding Kousseri, Mora and Mokolo.⁸⁰
- 54. The tourist attractions of this region tentatively listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites are the Waza National Park, the Cameroonian portion of the Lake Chad Cultural Landscape, the Goto Goulfey Tower, the Bidzar Petroglyphs, the Diy-Gid-Biy Cultural Landscape, and the Rey-Bouba Lamidat (sultanate).

(b) Traditional beverage of the Extreme North region

Bili bili81

Name: Bili bili refers to the traditional beer of northern Cameroon.

Composition: Bili bili is made from sorghum.

Potential of the beverage for gastronomic tourism: This beverage is known by different names in Africa depending on where it is produced: *mtama* in Tanzania, *dolo* in Burkina Faso, *burukutu* in Nigeria and *Bili bili* in Chad and Cameroon.

The motivation for developing this sector in Cameroon lies in its potential for generating income and value-added for a variety of sorghum less used in the preparation of *la boule* (see the Sudano-Sahelian region below).

Possible considerations as to IP protection: This beverage is produced by ethnic communities living in the savannas of Extreme North Cameroon. As they have migrated, their original production methods, tools and ingredients have been adapted and incorporated elsewhere in the country. There are four variants of the *bili bili* production process and the resulting quality varies accordingly. The effect of different production processes (malting) on the characteristics of *bili bili* is currently under study. This is an avenue worth pursuing with a view to obtaining a GI or collective mark.⁸²

A.11 Literature-based analysis of traditional dishes by administrative region

The analysis by administrative region identified 17 emblematic dishes, as shown below.

Centre Kpem

https://tourismecameroun.wordpress.com/category/art-et-culture/

⁷⁸ Visiter le Cameroun, Découvrir et aimer le Cameroun, Région de l'Extrême Nord – Curiosités, https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-de-lextremenord/

⁷⁹ Visiter le Cameroun, Découvrir et aimer le Cameroun, Région de l'Extrême Nord – Curiosités, https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/index.php/10-regions-formant-cameroun/region-de-lextremenord/

⁸⁰ Le Cameroun, une destination touristique recommandée pour vos vacances,

⁸¹ https://tourismecameroun.wordpress.com/category/art-et-culture/

⁸² Touwang, Charles and Nso, Emmanuel Jong, *Production du Bili-Bili, Biere Traditionnelle de Sorgho du Nord Cameroun : Diversité des Procédés de Production et Qualité des Produits*, in European Scientific Journal, December 2018.

	Ndomba
	Nam ewondo
Littoral	Ndole
	Mbongo
West	Nkui
	Topsi banana
Northwest	Taro in yellow sauce
Southwest	Eru
	Ekwang
South	Mfiang ndo'o
	Ekomba
East	Mbol
	Kwa ni ndong
North	Sauce foléré
Adamoua	Kilichi of Adamaoua
Extreme North	Bili bili

B. Traditional dishes in the sociocultural zones of Cameroon

- 55. With 250 different ethnicities and 10 administrative regions, defined by their compass points, Cameroon has established "cultural zones" that reflect the country's territorial complexity. A cultural zone is a geographical area whose population practices roughly the same culture, irrespective of ethnicity or administrative boundaries.
- 56. Examining such cultural zones is important to the study of culinary traditions. That is particularly true of Cameroon, whose diverse and striking traditions are each identified with distinct regional origins. Such regional identity is the historical legacy of territorial organization based on zones of influence, leaving it clear how the traditional dishes in each zone have been influenced and enriched by those in others. Beyond ethnicity or geography, analysis of those cultural zones of influence is critical to understanding Cameroonian gastronomy.
- 57. The importance of this point was driven home by a recent coordination meeting between the Ministry of Culture of Cameroon (MINAC) and regional delegates, where Minister Bindoung Mkpatt reviewed the challenges ahead for a program entitled "Les routes patrimoniales" (heritage roads). In conjunction with cultural tourism development, MINAC has plans for the identifying, restoring and adding value to the cultural heritage and special features of four defined zones, in line with a marketing strategy to increase tourist visits.⁸⁴

This made it essential to study those cultural zones as part of this project. And the effort did in fact uncover specialties not revealed by the somewhat reductive analysis of the administrative regions. Where special culinary traditions are not confined by

⁸³ Gain, Bruno, former Ambassador of France to Cameroon, in Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370 84 Cameroun Tribune, *Patrimoine national : les atouts des aires culturelles*, par Aissiatou Ngapout, 16 October 2020, https://www.cameroon-tribune.cm/article.html/35723/fr.html/patrimoine-national-les-atours

such borders they can be better understood as originating from the four cultural zones identified: Sawa, Grassfields, Fang-Beti and the Sudanese portion of the Sahel.

B.1 The Sawa zone

(a) Description

- 58. The coastline of Cameroon, which stretches nearly 400 km from the Rey River on the country's western border with Nigeria to Campo near Gabon and Equatorial Guinea is home to various peoples (the Douala, Bakwéri, Bakoko, Batanga, etc.), all sharing the Sawa coastal culture. Sawa history, traditions and cosmogony can be gleaned from the zone's masques and objects of art, and from photos displayed in the museums and art galleries of Douala, Buéa or Limbé. This culture is showing renewed vitality through the performing arts (music, theater, dance and ballet, etc.), which be enjoyed throughout the coastal region.
- 59. The Sawa culture is concentrated mainly in the Littoral (French-speaking) and Southwest (English-speaking) regions of Cameroon. A small portion of the populations concerned is also situated in the South and along the Atlantic coast of Equatorial Guinea (the Batanga and the Yassa, in particular⁸⁵). Together with the Beti-Fang, the Bamiléké-Tikar-Bamun (in the Grassfields) and the Peuls, the Sawa are among the most influential peoples of Cameroon.
- 60. With a population of 2 million, Douala is the economic capital of Cameroon and a major regional metropolis. It is celebrated in the artistic world as the uncontested capital of *Makossa* music. Today, a new generation of *makossamen* now carry the torch passed to them by such glorious pioneers as Manu Dibango, Nelle Eyoum, Mouelle Guillaume, Eboa Lotin and many others.
- 61. Each year during the dry season Douala celebrates the "Fête du Ngondo", serving up its famous pistachio cake. The festival is a great annual rendezvous for the Sawa people with their history and traditions.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ The Sawa culture encompasses numerous peoples in each of the following departments:

Moungo (Nkongsamba): Bakaka, Bakem, Bakoko, Balong, Bankon, Bonkeng, Mbo'o and Pongo;

Wouri (Douala): Douala, Bassa-ba-Douala and Bakoko:

Nkam (Yabassi): Yabassi, Bandem, Banen, Banya, Bibom, Bodiman, Ewodi, Mbang and Moya

Sanaga-Maritime (Edéa): Bakoko, Malimba and Ndonga;

Manyu (Mamfé): Banyangi;

Koupe-Manengouba (Bangem): Bakole, Ngolo-Batanga, Oroko and Yabassi;

Fako (Limbé): Bakossi, Bakweri and Mongo;

Ndian (Mundemba): Bimbian and Oroko; and

Océan (Kribi): Bakoko, Batanga, Bokwe and Yabassi.

See: https://sites.google.com/site/cultureafricaine2050/peuples/sawapeuple

Océan (Kribi): Bakoko, Batanga, Bokwe, YabassiVoir:

https://sites.google.com/site/cultureafricaine2050/peuples/sawapeuple

⁸⁶ Le Cameroun, une destination touristique recommandée pour vos vacances,

https://tourismecameroun.wordpress.com/category/art-et-culture/

(b) Traditional dishes of the Sawa zone

Mintoumba

Name: Also called ntoumba.

Description and ingredients: *Mintoumba* is a traditional cake based on an original Sawa recipe. It consists of fermented fresh cassava and red palm oil and is steamed in papillote. It can be served with a sauce or eaten by itself as a snack.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *Mintoumba* is eaten locally in place of bread for breakfast or dinner. It can be enjoyed with a glass of *matengo* (palm wine). The cooking method ensures long conservation, which makes this dish suitable for the purposes of gastronomic tourism.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: As a traditional Cameroonian cake, *mintoumba* has become part of the national identity. It takes patience and know-how to prepare, it is convenient to eat and it stores very well. All this makes it a likely candidate for protection under a commercial or collective mark, enhancing the value of faithfulness to the traditional recipe.

Nkono ngond

Name: Also called *nnam ngon* (among the Beti), and *ngond'a mukon* (among the Douala).

Description and ingredients: A pistachio cake traditionally served by the coastal Sawa people at Christmas time and for wedding feasts.

The main ingredient of this dish is *cucumeropsis mannii*, a species of cucurbitaceae sold locally as "*graine de courge*" (pistachio-melon seeds). In the Bassa language, the plant is called *ngond*. The preparation of this dish is laborious. The seeds have to be extracted from the fruit and the kernels from their shells. The kernels are then dried, milled and transformed into a paste, to which other ingredients are added as desired, or as the pocketbook permits: cooked or smoked meats, smoked or fried fish, and even certain vegetables, such as fresh cocoyam leaves. All of this is then wrapped in fire-grilled banana leaves, or foil, and stewed for several hours.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: The pistachios used in this dish are entirely different from those familiar in Western countries. They come from the seed of pistachio melons grown around Douala. This dish has already given its name to the traditional Ngondo Festival and the rituals of Cameroon's coastal peoples. The Sawa peoples of the Littoral region gather for this event the first week of every December. In addition to the Festival, a "Ngondo Road" might be envisaged, permitting visitors to see the different stages of production.

The Festival has now been exported to Canada, where the traditional festivities are observed as "Ngondo Afro-Monde de Montréal". The first such event took place in 2009, in Montréal, under the banner "Ngondo ô Canada 2009". Prince René Douala Manga Bell, pesident of the traditional Ngondo assembly, coordinated the festivities.⁸⁷

This tasty speciality stores very well, which should facilitate its development for the purposes of gastronomic tourism.

87 Ngametche, R. (2012). La migration transnationale d'un patrimoine vivant : le cas de la fête du Ngondo des peuples sawa célébrée à Montréal et à Douala. Ethnologies, 34(1-2), 301–318. https://doi.org/10.7202/1026155ar

Possible considerations as to IP protection: As in the case of *mintoumba*, this speciality's appearance, convenience and suitability for long-term storage make it a good candidate for marketing under commercial and collective marks, to enhance the traditional recipe's value.

Fish from Wouri Port

Name: Also called poissons d'Ayos and poissons de Youpwe.

Varieties available: Sole, pike, tilapia, carp, hogfish, and sea bass, large and small.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Roasted or grilled fish can generally be found in every Cameroonian town or village. After nightfall, stalls are set up in front of snack bars and restaurants to grill fish. It is one of the most prized Cameroonian foods.

In the case of the Wouri Port, the Youpwe Market is famous for its wide selection of fish. Located on the Wouri riverbanks, it offers customers a scenic setting in which to enjoy its grilled fish.

It is also a transit center for shipments of smoked fish to other markets in the country. Every day starting at 3 am, the Youpwè Market draws a crowded, cosmopolitan clientele, coming from all parts of town to stock up on fresh fish. Its reputation as a fisheater's goldmine has spread beyond national borders. And yet, the tonnes of fresh and smoked fish sold there are caught using traditional, small-scale fishing methods.⁸⁸

Vendors can also accost customers in the street.

Online sales are available through Facebook: "Youpwe seafood from Douala home-delivered to Yaoundé". 89

It must be noted, however, that the reputation of this seafood is threatened by allegations from the *Centre de Recherche et d'Education pour le Développement* (CREPD) of high mercury content and risk to human health.⁹⁰ That factor needs to be considered in attempting to develop this product's potential for the tourist market.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: The market's location in the second arrondissement of Douala is famous for its brisk commerce in fresh fish. Income- generating activities support fishermen and retailers, as well as fish cleaners, using handmade brushes (nail-studded boards). This small fishing village has been taken by storm owing to the favorable quality-price ratio found there. Overall, despite the downside of mercury content, the geographic origin of Wouri seafood offers potential for development and income generation.

Sangah

Name: Said to be very similar to *kpem*.

⁸⁸ See: https://fr.horyou.com/member/ornella-abondo/action/youpwe-est-un-grand-centre-dapprovisionnement-de-douala-en-poissons-frais

⁸⁹ See: https://www.facebook.com/Poissons-et-Crudit per centC3 per centA9s-youpwe-Douala-livr per centC3 per centA9- per centC3 per centA0-domicile- per centC3 per centA0-Yaound per centC3 per centA9-169557006915936/

⁹⁰ Youpwè is a large center for the supply of fresh fish to Douala, http://www.hubrural.org/Cameroun-Le-poisson-d-Ayos-et-de.html

Description and ingredients: A mixture of black nightshade leaves, lightly grilled peanut paste, fresh chopped corn kernels and sometimes palm nut juice or oil with stem fragments and seeds. This dish can be made either salty or sweet.⁹¹

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: This is a vegetarian dish generally very popular in Cameroon.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Such potential has not been clear from the research to date.

B.2 The Grassfields Zone

(a) Description

62. The Grassfields cultural sphere extends across the West and Northwest provinces. It has become famous for its royal art collections in Foumban, Bafoussam, Bandjoun, Bafut, Bali and Bamoungoum. To this day Cameroonians attribute "a moral force" to the objects of art displayed there. This cultural zone is also reenowned for its sparkling colored and richly embroidered traditional costumes; its ritual and funeral ceremonies; and its dances, both traditional (including Ndanjé, Koungang, Juju, Mewoup, Mékembou and Lali) and modern (Manguembeu, Ben-Sikin, Tchamassi, etc.). The culture is also celebrated for its grandiose cultural events, spectacles and traditional festivals, patterned after the Ngouon Festival in Foumban.⁹²

(b) Traditional dishes of the Grassfields Zone

Poulet DG (CEO chicken)

Name: Poulet Directeur Général, so named as being "reserved for VIPs".

Description and ingredients: *Poulet DG* is a stew of sauteed chicken served with plantains and vegetables. A marinade is prepared using plantains and spices such as *pébè*, also called the "nutmeg of Gabon".

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: This is the dish that has spread most rapidly around the world. The dish appeared in the 1980s. It was only found in those days in the dives where wheeler-dealers of that prosperous era would go to hold court.

At a time when many households could not afford regular staples, *poulet DG* was reserved for the affluent (hence the *DG*). Over time, as household purchasing power improved to some extent, the dish became a must for celebrations of all kinds.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: *Poulet DG* comes from the Bamileke lands in the West region of Cameroon, from which it spread throughout the country. The ingredients are unique but neither rare nor difficult to find. Many of the most basic could be found in any kitchen, in any country. On the other hand, *poulet DG* is sometimes said to lack its old flavor, in which case the name might warrant protection as respecting the original recipe.

⁹¹ Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370 92 *Le Cameroun, une destination touristique recommandée pour vos vacances*, https://tourismecameroun.wordpress.com/category/art-et-culture/

Corn tchap

Name: Also known as "Corn chaff" or "Kontchap"

Description and ingredients: A combination of corn and red beans, with smoked fish for protein.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Corn tchap, inexpensive and easy to make, is not particularly suited to gastronomic tourism.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Such potential is not particularly evident.

Kondre

Name: Also kondrè.

Description and ingredients: A stew made of green plantains, palm oil and spices together with goat, pork, beef or fresh fish, the last three in particular.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: This dish tends to be served at funerals and other ceremonies. It could prove a difficult fit for gastronomic tourism.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: The name *kondre* is a reference to West Cameroon itself, and is used to name this dish by a number of Bamileke tribes. It originated as pidgin English for the word "country", reinforcing the significance of the dish's origin. The fact that it is called *kondre* in each of their tribal languages could help to qualify the name as intellectual property, to enhance and protect the value of the original, authentic recipe.⁹³

Kouakoucou

Name: Also called *ekwankoko* or cocoyam bread.

Description and ingredients: This dish consists of grated cocoyam seasoned and cooked in banana or cocoyam leaves.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *Kouakoucou* takes a long time to prepare, so it should be verified whether Cameroonian restaurants actually serve it. The dish is very rarely found in the restaurants of other countries.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: It is said that the recipe has evolved over time, suggesting there might be potential demand for more authenticity. If so, IP protection (under a mark or collective mark) could be warranted.

Koki

Name: Koki means "cake" in Douala.

Description and ingredients: *Koki* is a spicy dish based on white or red beans, palm oil, corn and cassava, wrapped in a banana or cocoyam leaf and then steamed.

Koki fritters can also be found.

⁹³ Bogni, Téguia, *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *Koki* is marketed in Cameroon as well as abroad

Possible considerations as to IP protection: This speciality may differ from one region to the next.

B.3 Fang-Beti Zone

(a) Description

- 63. The Beti people originally spoke *ati*, one of the Bantu languages. Their origins are complicated. The most commonly accepted version comes from oral tradition. The ancestors of the Beti were the Nanga, of Bantu origin. After reaching Yaoundé, they spread in different directions, with some of the Eton tribe speakers reaching Nkometou (a region of Yaoundé). They migrated in search of rich arable land and sources of salt, which became much more available with colonization.
- 64. The main Beti tribes today are the Eton, the Ewondo, the Bene (brothers of the Ewondo), the Fang (brothers of the Bene by their common father Otolo'o), the Bulu, Manguissa, Ntumu and Mvele, more closely related to the Bulu than to the Eton or Ewondo. Several other Beti lineages were formed through alliances.
- 65. The Beti were great iron workers but did less with wood. They did, however, execute numerous figures of ancestors, reliquary guardians and masks of undeniable sculptural quality, highly sought after by the world's greatest art museums.

(b) Traditional dishes of the Fang-Beti Zone

Okok

Name: Also known as "hikok" or "eru" in the Northwest. Other countries, including Gabon and the Congo, call this dish "fumbwab".

Description and ingredients: Especially popular in the South and Centre regions, this dish is prepared with leaves of the *okok* (gnetum) plant, crushed peanuts (or grilled peanut paste, depending on the region) and palm nut juice. ⁹⁴ It is accompanied by cassava stems or boiled cassava.

This is a typical dish of central Cameroon. The *okok* plant (*Gnetum Africanum*) grows in Gabon, the Congo (*koko*) and Nigeria (*afang*).⁹⁵ In Cameroon, the recipe appears to have evolved over time. The more modern versions include *dibamba* (crayfish), meat and *bifaka*, a small fish. The texture of *okok* is denser in the Centre than in the Littoral region. The dish is quite different in the Southwest and can be sweetened. It can also be served as a vegetarian dish.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: This is a dish eaten at home. It can be purchased in vacuum packages either online or in foreign specialty stores.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: There are several variants of this dish in different regions. It would be useful to know if *okok* leaves are being marketed based on their origin (pre-preparation) and if those grown in Cameroon, as opposed to other countries, have

⁹⁴ La gastronomie camerounaise : une cuisine riche et diversifiée, 3 October 2018, https://lesgourmandisesderk.com/2018/10/03/la-gastronomie-camerounaise-une-cuisine-riche-et-diversifiee/

⁹⁵ Recipe for okok from the Centre region of Cameroon, https://www.lacuisinettedelaurette.com/okok-du-centre-du-cameroun/

any particular qualities. Different variants of the dish could be developed under collective marks referring to the origin of each variant.

B.4 Sudano-Sahelian or Northern Zone

(a) Description

- 66. The cultural zone of Cameroon's northern regions extends from the high plateaus of Adamaoua, through the plaines of Bénoué and Diamaré, over Cameroon's Mandara and other mountain ranges, and finally to Lake Chad.
- 67. This northern cultural sphere is distinguished by at least two fundamental features. The first is a cultural heritage characterized as "indigenous", referring to the peoples inhabiting this part of the country prior to the Peule revolution. Those peoples included the Mboum of Adamaoua, the Fali and Bata of Bénoué, with their highly refined music, the Guiziga and other Kurdish peoples (called "heathen" by the Peuls). Some of those groups echo the famous Sao civilization. The second fundamental feature of this zone is its Islamic-Peul culture. The Peul revolution, launched from Sokoto in the early 19th century by Shéhu Ousman dan Fodio, led to the creation of vast and powerful "*lamidas*", which included Garoua, Maroua, Ngaoundéré, Tibati and Banyo. Under the dynamic leadership of the scholar Modibo Adama, a new Muslim society emerged, with its own ways of life, attire, sociocultural organization and artistic expression. 96

(b) Traditional dishes of the Sudano-Sahelian Zone

- 68. The foods of choice in these northern lands include millet, sorghum, young shoots of the *sissongho* plant and roselle juice (locally called *jus de foléré*). Meals generally consist of starches, with meat cut in very small pieces and plant-based juices to drink made from *foléré*, fruit and grains (*goriba*, *jujubes*, *baobah*, *watoudjé*) and dates a way to pass the time and top off the meal, by way of dessert. There are also candies called *abaakuru*, made from grilled peanuts, ginger and ground peppers.
- 69. Apart from the famous *jus de foléré*, there are several alcoholic beverages, usually prepared by women. These include *bili bili*, as mentioned earlier, and *kwata*.98

La boule

Name: La boule refers literally to couscous made from millet.

Description and ingredients: The couscous is in fact made from corn, rice, or millet flour, or the flour of tubers (cassava or yam). It is then cooked in boiling water and can be accompanied by any sauce.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *La boule* is everywhere in the Sudano-Sahelian Zone. Whether used in vegetable broths or soups, *la boule* is extremely popular in this zone and is consumed an average of five out of every six days. It can take several forms, such as "*cobbal*", and is thus a naturally good fit for gastronomic tourism.

⁹⁶ According to the anthropologist Léo Frobenus, "Traditional Peoples and Societies of Northern Cameroon", Stuttgart 1987.

Le Cameroun, une destination touristique recommandée pour vos vacances,

https://tourismecameroun.wordpress.com/category/art-et-culture/

⁹⁷ Art culinaire : Le cousous où la boule, https://chateaunews.com/fr/2014/01/13/art-culinaire-le-cousous-ou-la-boule/

⁹⁸ A home-brewed beer based on milllet or corn.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: There is nothing here of relevance, at this stage, for intellectual property.

Kotoko fish appear to be emblematic of this zone.

Kotoko fish

Name: Kotoko refers to the Kotoko people, of Central Africa, living mainly in Cameroon but also in Chad and Nigeria. Their population is estimated at approximately 90,000. Most are Muslims but more traditional beliefs subsist, particularly involving water spirits.

Description and ingredients: The fish themselves are noteworthy more for the technique used to catch them, and the related history, than for their culinary distinction.

Some impressive fish-processing techniques have been developed for conservation and export throughout the Chad Basin – and even in Central Africa, notably in Ndjamena, Bangui, Yaoundé, Maiduguri and Northern Cameroon. The town of Maroua, in the Sudano-Sahelian Zone, was for decades the convergence point for that activity and the main collection and distribution point in this region for fresh and processed fish (smoked or dried). The weekly market every Monday was the biggest magnet for seafood retailers and consumers, sometimes coming from the far reaches of the province to stock up on Kotoko fish.

In the absence of cold storage, since the only market for fresh fish was at Ndjamena and the town of Kousseri (Cameroon), where demand was weak and the selling price paltry, local populations were shown conservation techniques, such as smoking and drying. Smoked fish, locally called *banda*, was packaged for export to nearby Nigeria in special green papyrus baskets (which eventually disappeared from trading circuits).

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Descendents of the legendary Sao, the Kotoko are known for their large size, corpulence and exploits.

They are renowned as professional fishermen, and their history is intimately linked to that activity. Over the course of their history, they developed a fishing device called a *zemi*, a triangular net mounted on a canoe (*wam*). The technical design and application of this device are unique to this region, whose streams and waterways are abundantly and continuously replenished year-round. This traditional practice, so fundamental to their cultural heritage and fishing prowess, is all but gone today. ⁹⁹ Initiatives have more recently been promoted, including through local festivals, to resurrect the *zemi* – and that could also help revive the consumption of Kotoko fish.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: While abandoned in practice, *zemis* are now sought after by the curators of ethnographic museums. Miniaturized *zemis* are on display in six museums to educate tourists on the region's past. This equipment consists of a large canoe (*wam*), a means of locomotion, and a triangular net (*zemi*) used to catch the fish. Designed for collective fishing campaigns, it is viewed by local populations today as the finest achievement of Kotoko ingenuity.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Mahamat-Abba, Ousman, *La diversité du patrimoine technique africain. L'exemple du Cameroun, La technique de pêche au Zemi : un savoir-faire en voie de disparition dans les abords du lac Tchad,* https://journals.openedition.org/ephaistos/3407.

¹⁰⁰ Mahamat-Abba, Ousman, *La diversité du patrimoine technique africain. L'exemple du Cameroun, La technique de pêche au Zemi : un savoir-faire en voie de disparition dans les abords du lac Tchad,* https://journals.openedition.org/ephaistos/3407.

Models have been designed on a scale of about 1:50 for display in the ethnographic museums of this cultural zone, to perpetuate the memory and physical representation of this fishing technology among the young generation of tourists visiting the region. Can these representations qualify for IP (perhaps copyright) protection?

The traditional dishes identified for each cultural zone

· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·				
Sawa	Fish of Wouri Port Mintoumba Ngondo (pistachio cake) Sangah			
Grassfields	Poulet DG Corn tchap Kondre Kouacoucou Koki			
Fang-Beti	Okok			
Sudano-Sahelian or northern zone	La boule Kwata (beverage) Odontol (beverage) Kotoko fish			

A total of 14 dishes were identified in analyzing these sociocultural zones.

C. Cameroonian dishes identified through the surveys

- 70. A field study was initially planned as the first phase of this project but was reconsidered because of the pandemic. Meetings were held on 24 March and 21 April 2021 with the interministerial committee assigned to select the 15 dishes most emblematic of Cameroonian gastronomy. It was then decided to conduct a survey, both in the field and online. The use of online research and interviews to collect information for exploratory studies was allowed by the CDIP's pandemic mitigation strategy, adopted on 26-30 July 2021.¹⁰¹
- 71. The objectives of the survey were as follows:

Objective 1: Provide an alternative to the field mission initially planned for the study's research but canceled because of the pandemic, given the travel and multiple interactions entailed.

Objective 2: Permit the study to reflect a wide view of culinary traditions in Cameroon based on the opinions of persons living there, Cameroonians living abroad and anyone having experienced the country firsthand.

Objective 3: Give legitimacy to the selection of the 15 dishes to be developed as part of a second study, to make it as representative as possible of public opinion.

Objective 4: Provide numerical data on Cameroonian gastronomy for use in long-term planning by national authorities.

- 72. The surveys were prepared in French and English for the following categories:
 - National residents: Category A or RN
 - Non-national residents: Category B or RE
 - National non-residents: Category C or NRN
 - Foreign non-residents: Category D or NRE

The Minister of Tourism and Leisure, Mr. Bello Bouba Maïgari, issued a nationwide press release, in French and English, about the online and field surveys (see Annex 1).¹⁰²

- 73. The online survey was conducted on 21 October 2021 with the participation of 235 individuals. The breakdown by category was as follows:
 - National residents: Category A or RN = 131
 - Non-national residents: Category B or RE = 30
 - National non-residents: Category C or NRN = 60
 - Foreign non-residents: Category D or NRE = 14

Factors considered in determining the number of online participants included Internet connection problems and symptoms of "technological overload" (regular beeps over the telephone, resulting problems with computer zapping, the regular demands of such an exercise, and so on).

¹⁰¹ For more information, see:

https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/fr/cdip 26/cdip 26 2.pdf.

¹⁰² Links to surveys still ongoing are provided in Annex 2 to this document.

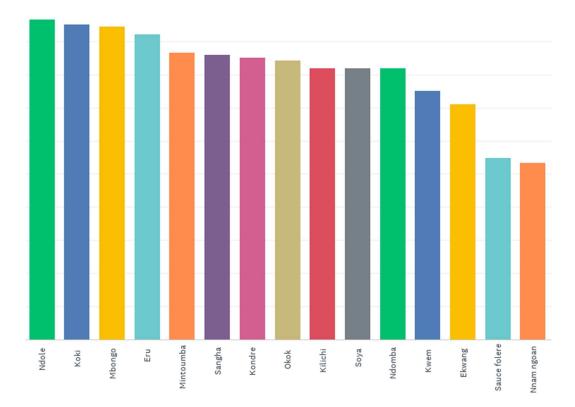
- Nevertheless, the rate of completion, requiring 10 minutes at most, appears close to 100 per cent. Responding participants therefore took the time they needed and their answers can thus be validly considered.
- 74. Of the field surveys, 876 qualified as valid for consideration. These were completed for the most part by Cameroonian residents indicating their views about the country's gastronomy, which are thus reflected in the overall findings.
- 75. It was decided to start by analyzing responses to the questions about dishes known to the respondents and considered suitable for promotion in other countries. These two questions appear best to encapsulate the concept of gastronomic tourism: travel from one place to another to explore the history, knowledge and culture of a country or region through its culinary specialties.
- 76. Additional questions can be used to refine the "top 20" dishes to be selected as suitable for enhancement through gastronomic tourism under IP protection.

C.1 Online surveys

(a) Findings for Category A: Cameroonian nationals residing in Cameroon

77. As indicated in Figure 1 below, the 15 dishes best known to respondents in this category, in descending order, were as follows: *ndole*, *koki*, *mbongo*, *eru*, *mintoumba*, *sangah*, *kondre*, *okok*, *kilichi*, *soya*, *ndomba*, *kwem*, *ekwang*, *sauce foléré* and *nnam ngoan*.

In terms of their preferred dishes, *ndole* ranked highest in the online surveys, chosen by about 40 per cent of the respondents.



- 78. Category A responses as to the country's most marketable dishes yielded the following ranking (from most to least suited for the promotion of Cameroonian gastronomy): **eru**, **ndole**, **koki**, **sangah**, **okok**, **ndomba**, **mbongo** and **kondre**.
- 79. With respect to beverages, the three best known to these respondents were *foléré* (known to 97 per cent), *kossam* (91 per cent) and *bili bili* (61 per cent). Asked about "other familiar beverages" most of the respondents indicated palm wine, date wine, *kounou* (sugarcane juice), *rouwa* (corn + ginger + sugar) and baobab juice.

(b) Findings for Category B: foreign nationals residing in Cameroon

80. All of the country's foreign residents surveyed (100 per cent) were familiar with *ndole*. Nearly as many knew *beignets-haricots-bouillie* (BHB – see details below), followed by *soya* (details below), *kilichi*, *koki*, *eru*, *okok*, *mbongo*, *sauce foléré*, *sangah*, *kwem*, *ndomba*, *mintoumba*, *kondre* and *ekwang*.

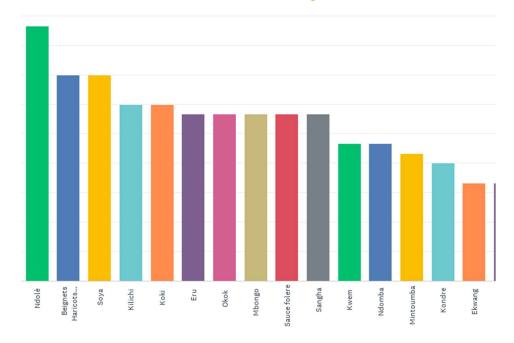
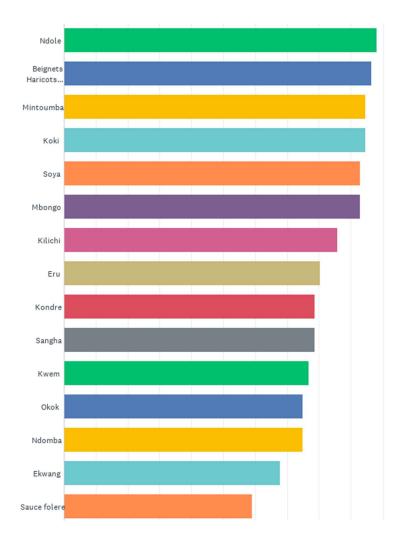


Figure 2: Dishes best known to foreign residents

- 81. While most of these respondents (77 per cent) considered Cameroonian gastronomy "varied", only 27 per cent considered it exportable and only 23 per cent, practical. This category of respondent considered *koki* the dish best suited to international sales, followed by *mbongo*, *ndole* and *kondre*.
- 82. The beverages best known to foreign residents were bili bili, kossam and foléré.

(c) Findings for Category C: Cameroonian nationals residing abroad (diaspora)

83. Among the country's diaspora the dish best known was *ndole* (known to 98 per cent), followed by BHP, *mintoumba koki*, soya, *mbongo*, *kilichi*, *eru*, *kwem*, *okok*, *kondre*, *sangah*, *ndomba*, *ekwang* and *sauce folere* (known to 58.93 per cent).



84. The dishes these respondents considered best suited for international promotion were *ndole*, *eru*, *koki*, *mbongo* and *okok*.

In terms of beverages, those best known to this category were *foléré* (known to 96 per cent), *kossam* (85 per cent) and *bili* (59 per cent).

(d) Findings for Category D: Other friends of Cameroonian gastronomy (i.e. foreign nationals not residing in Cameroon)

- 85. The following dishes were known to this last category of respondents: *ndole*, BHB, *eru*, *soya*, *koki*, *sangah*, *mbongo*, *ndomba*, *kilichi*, *mitoumba*, *kondre*, *mviang ndo'o*, *okok*, *ekwang*, *acu* and "yellow soup".
- 86. The beverages best known to them were: *foléré* (known to 72 per cent), *kossam* (54 per cent) and *bili bili* (45 per cent).

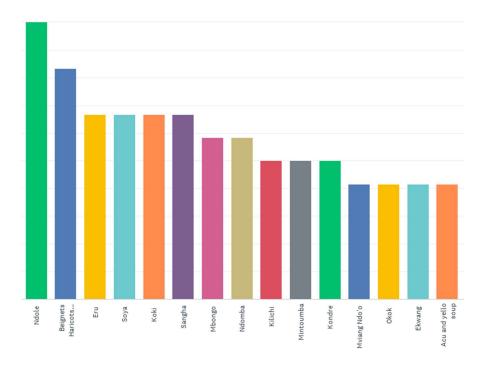


Figure 4: Dishes best known to friends of Cameroonian gastronomy

- 87. **Ndomba** and **ndole** were most often indicated by these respondents as warranting international promotion.
- 88. To sum up, the following table shows the results of the online surveys on the dishes best known to all respondent categories (based on the total number of responses from all categories indicating knowledge of each dish).
- 89. Interestingly, the other inventory methodologies indicated the same dishes as being the best known. On the other hand, two remarkable culinary traditions identified by the online surveys *soya* and *beignet haricot bouillie* (BHB) did not appear in the inventories by region or by sociocultural zone.

Cameroonian dishes (predetermined list) ranked from best-known to least-known, by respondent category				
Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	All Categories
Ndole	Ndole	Ndole	Ndole	Ndole (4/4)

Koki	Beignets haricots bouillie (BHB – fritters and beans in porridge)	ВНВ	ВНВ	Mintoumba (4/4)
Mbongo	Soya	Mintoumba	Eru	Eru (4/4)
Eru	Kilichi	Koki	Soya	Sangah (4/4)
Mintoumba	Koki	Soya	Koki	Kondre (4/4)
Sangah	Eru	Mbongo	Sangah	Okok (4/4)
Kondre	Okok	Kilichi	Mbongo	Ndomba (4/4)
Okok	Mbongo	Eru	Ndomba	Mbongo (4/4)
Kilichi	Sauce foléré	Kwem	Kilichi	Soya (4/4)
Soya	Sangah	Okok	Mitoumba	Koki (3/4)
Ndomba	Kwem	Kondre	Kondre	Kwem (3/4)
Kwem	Ndomba	Sangah	Mfiang ndo'o	Ekwang (3/4)
Ekwang	Mintoumba	Ndomba	Okok	Sauce foléré (3/4)
Sauce foléré	Kondre	Ekwang	Ekwang	BHB (3/4)
Nnam ngoan	Ekwang	Sauce foléré	Acu and Yellow Soup	Kilichi (2/4)
				Nnam ngoan (1/4)
				Mfiang ndo'o (1/4)

Beignet haricots bouillie (BHB)

Name: BHB (fritters and beans in porridge)

Description and ingredients: Beignet haricot (BH) is one of the country's most popular dishes, eaten by Cameroonians with gusto morning noon or night. Accompanied by a white porridge, the dish combines fried and sugared fritters, succulent and round, with fragrant and spiced red beans.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Fritters made from flour or *makala* are one of Cameroon's most irresistible recipes. Extremely popular with Cameroonians, the dish is served at all times of day. *Beignetariats* (fritter shops), the local fast food, can be found on every street. These are fast service cafés offering BH as the main plate on every menu.

One such café, *Tchop et Yamo*, specializes in BHB. Launched by a young Cameroonian entrepreneur in 2011, it took just five years to become the venue of choice for BH enthusiasts. While still outpaced by American fast food, this promoter believes he can continue gaining ground with investor support.

"Beignets-Haricots-Bouillie is a dish for everyone. Whether you're rich or poor, you have eaten it at least once. From north to south and east to west it is a common denominator – the dish most consumed by all Cameroonians." ¹⁰³

After-work "BH parties" are now one of the ways they do.

¹⁰³ *Tchop et Yamo : le specialiste du BHB "Beignets, Haricots, Bouillie" au Cameroun*, https://www.voaafrique.com/a/tchop-et-yamo-le-specialiste-du-bhb-beignets-haricots-bouillie/3303519.html

Possible considerations as to IP protection: This is a dish found in several African countries under different names: *mikaté* in the Congo, "puff puff" in Ghana, *froufrou* in Mali and *gbofloto* in Côte d'Ivoire. It is eaten in Cameroon with beans (similar to a meatless chili) and a fermented corn porridge. Interviewed by *VOA Afrique*, Idriss Nguepnang, the creator of *Tchop et Yamo*, described it this way: "the idea was to create a 100 per cent Cameroonian product and brand – a world-class example of African gastronomy." 104

The dish can already be found through online platforms such as *Fadoof* (Family Food) enabling users to locate fellow expatriates cooking, or preparing to cook, dishes from their countries of origin. BHB costing 5 euros per person was found on this platform.¹⁰⁵

The value added to such products could permit higher pricing, which would help to cover initial investments and rising costs (for flour, sugar, oil, etc.). It is important, however, that prices remain affordable for consumers.

Soya

Name: Called suya in neighboring Nigeria.

Description and ingredients: Soya is a recipe based on grilled West African beef. The meat is marinated with spices mixed with peanuts and then barbecued on a metal grill, sometimes skewered. Chicken, goat or any meat can be substituted for the beef. ¹⁰⁶

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: The recipe is widely known beyond Cameroon: in Nigeria (where it is called *suya*) and Ghana (*chichinga*).¹⁰⁷ Still popular today, *soya*, can easily be bought from street vendors.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: The name of this dish comes from its seasoning rather than geographic origin, there being little apparent difference between the recipes in Cameroon, Nigeria and Ghana. The brand "Soya du Cameroun" might possibly derive value from the distinctive methods of cooking it in Cameroon.

90. The dishes to be promoted were selected using a "word cloud" automatically generated by the survey platform to illustrate the words most frequently used in responding.

Cameroonian dishes offering potential for promotion				
Category A	Category B	Category C	Category D	All Categories
Eru	Koki	Ndole	Ndomba	Ndole
Ndole	Mbongo	Eru	Ndole	Koki
Koki	Ndole	Koki		Mbongo
Sangah	Kondre	Mbongo		

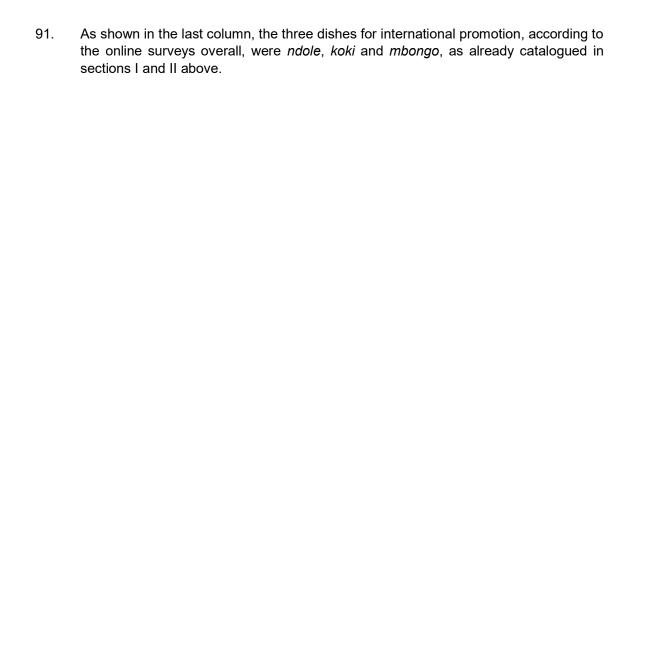
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¹⁰⁴ Tchop et Yamo : le specialiste du BHB "Beignets, Haricots, Bouillie" au Cameroun, https://www.voaafrique.com/a/tchop-et-yamo-le-specialiste-du-bhb-beignets-haricots-bouillie/3303519.html

¹⁰⁵ See: https://www.ecwid.com/store/fadoof/Beignets-Haricots-Bouillie-de-ma per centC3 per centAFs-p143801740

¹⁰⁶ Recette de Viande Soya, http://www.recettesafricaine.com/soya.html

¹⁰⁷ Recette de Viande Soya, http://www.recettesafricaine.com/soya.html



C.2 Field surveys

(a) Dishes best known to Cameroonian residents

Out of the 33 dishes listed in the survey, most of the Cameroonian residents said they knew 15 (roughly half), most of the time, as shown in this table.

1	Ndole	876
2	Mbongo	831
3	Mintoumba	798
4	BHB	591
5	Eru	582
6	Koki	570
7	Okok	541
8	Kilichi	536
9	Soya	515
10	Sauce foléré	467
11	Kondre	411
12	Mbol	365
13	Kwem	353
14	Lalo	324
15	Sangah	320

92. The dish found to be best known by the field survey, though not by the previous exercises, was *lalo* (see details below).

(b) Beverages best known to Cameroonian residents

Out of the 12 beverages listed in the survey, most of the Cameroonian residents said they knew six, most of the time, as shown in this table.

1	Foléré	678
2	Kossam	601
3	Bili bili	514
4	Arki	401
5	Cha'a	306
6	Meyock melen	265

Lalo

Name: Also known as gombo (okra) sauce, kelen kelen and ndjango.

Description and ingredients: This recipe combines okra leaves and cassava leaves for a complete dish, simple and rich in vegetables. It is eaten with corn couscous or *foufou*.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: It has been difficult to evaluate whether this dish is served to tourists.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: This traditional dish goes under different names – apparently according to region. However, *kelen kelen* originated primarily in North Cameroon. Can value be derived from that origin?

Jus de foléré

Name: Foléré juice. Also called bissap, oseille de Guinée (roselle) or hibiscus flower.

Description and ingredients: Hibiscus leaves are first washed and mixed with condiments (lemon, ginger, sugar, and mint for example), then brought to a full boil, and the juice drained and served.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Il It is not clear that *jus de foléré* is served more than other beverages to tourists.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Called *jus de foléré* in Cameroon, this beverage is also consumed in other countries of West and Central Africa. The *jus de foléré* served in Cameroon is distinctive only for its name.

Kossam

Name: Kossam

Description and ingredients: *Kossam* is Cameroon's version of yoghurt, based on a mixture of different dairy products.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: Highly popular in Cameroon, *kossam* is eaten on every street corner.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: This form of yogurt is produced industrially and packaged in cups or bags. "*Kossam*" is the brand name of dairy products processed by the company Sogelait, in Ngaoundéré.

Arki

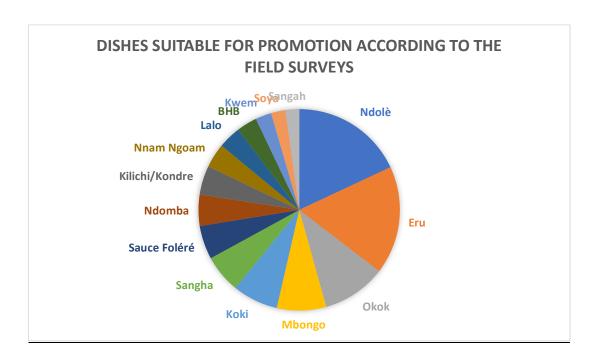
Name: Arki is a generic name for all brandies and similar spirits (such as *odontol*, *malamba*, and $h\hat{a}$) produced in the Centre, South and East regions of Cameroon.

Description and ingredients: The formula used to produce these beverages sometimes varies from one region to the next and according to the availability of raw materials. They are served neat or diluted. On ceremonial occasions, they can be consumed in record-breaking amounts.

Potential of the dish for gastronomic tourism: *Arki* is classified the same as whiskey because of its high alcoholic content (more than 40 per cent). Until recently, the sale of "homebrewed" versions was prohibited – but no longer. Craft beverages are now promoted and sold locally, attractively presented in bottles or bags, in direct contact with consumers or by word-of-mouth. Consumption of *arki* among Cameroonians is on the rise.

Possible considerations as to IP protection: Given the popularity of this beverage, and the simple equipment needed to produce it, *arki* represents a significant source of income for its producers, and of foreign exchange for Cameroon.

(c) The dishes most suitable for promotion according to Cameroonian residents



III. Points for consideration by the roundtable on 18 November 2021

- 93. As indicated above, a review of the literature found the following specialties to be most emblematic of each administrative region: *kpem, ndomba, nam ewondo, ndole, mbongo, nkui, topsi banana,* taro in yellow sauce, *eru, ekwang, mfiang ndo'o, ekomba, mbol, kwa ni ndong, sauce foléré, kilichi* and *bili bili*.
- 94. For each of the country's **cultural zones** the specialties indicated by the literature as most emblematic were the following: **fish of Wouri Port**, **mintoumba**, **ngondo**, **sangah**, **poulet DG**, **corn tchap**, **kondre**, **kouacoucou**, **koki**, **okok**, **la boule**, **kwata** (beverage), **odontol** (beverage) and **Kotoko fish**.
- 95. The specialties indicated in response to these surveys will also be considered in the final ranking. They tend to overlap those indicated by the other methodologies and thus to corroborate which are the best known in Cameroon. Specialties indicated by the surveys but not by the other methodologies are considered a useful subject for analysis by the roundtable. For example, all of those surveyed were familiar with *soya*, ranking it 14th as a dish suitable for promotion. *Lalo* ranked 14th among dishes known to Cameroonian residents, and 11th (out of 15) as suitable for promotion. *Jus de foléré*, *kossam* and *arki* were all widely known to survey respondents.
- 96. Based on cross-comparisons, the final list of 20 culinary traditions is catalogued in the table below. The colors green, red and yellow indicate each of the ranking methodologies for Cameroonian dishes and beverages. The results of each methodology were analyzed to yield the final list of 20 traditions to be discussed at the upcoming roundtable: those showing both potential for gastronomic tourism and possible prospects for IP protection, as indicated by checkmarks in the table below.

	Listing methodolog y	Culinary tradition	Potential for gastronomic tourism	Prospects for IP protection	Final "list of 20" for Roundtable validation
1	Ву	Kpem	?	✓	
2	administrative	Ndomba	✓	✓	Ndomba
3	region	Nam ewondo	✓	?	
4		Ndole	✓	✓	Ndole
5		Mbongo	✓	✓	Mbongo
6		Nkui	✓	✓	Nkui
7		Topsi banana	?	?	
8		Taro in yellow sauce	✓	?	
9		Eru	?	✓	
10		Ekwang	✓	✓	Ekwang
11		Mfiang ndo'o	?	✓	
12		Ekomba	✓	?	
13		Mbol	✓	✓	Mbol
14		Kwa ni ndong	?	?	
15		Sauce foléré	✓	✓	Sauce foléré
16		Kilichi	✓	✓	Kilichi
17		Bili bili	✓	✓	Bili bili
18	Ву	Fish of Wouri	✓	✓	Fish of Wouri
	sociocultural	Port			Port
19	zone	Mintoumba	✓	✓	Mintoumba
20		Ngondo	✓	✓	Ngondo
21		Sangah	?	?	
22		Poulet DG	✓	✓	Poulet DG
23		Corn tchap	?	?	
24		Kondre	✓	✓	Kondre
25		Kouacoucou	?	?	
26		Koki	✓	✓	Koki
27		Okok	?	✓	
28		La boule	?	?	
29		Kwata (beverage)	?	?	
30		Odontol (beverage)	?	?	
31		Kotoko fish	✓	✓	Kotoko fish
32	By survey	Soya	✓	✓	Soya
		BHB	✓	✓	ВНВ
33		Lalo	?	?	
34		Jus de foléré	?	?	
35		Kossam	✓	✓	Kossam
36		Arki	✓	✓	Arki

A. Confirming the link between the specialties and gastronomic tourism

- 97. Gastronomic tourism, sometimes called "gourmet tourism", 108 has clearly become part of contemporary life. With the expansion of transport capacity, a country can now export its culinary specialties to all corners of the world whether shipped or transmitted by visiting tourists.
- 98. Restaurants are thus a leading vector for gourmet tourism and must be visited to confirm the list of specialties actually compatible with such tourism (a).

Ndomba, nam ewondo, nodlé, mbongo, nkui, taro in yellow sauce, ekwang, ekomba, mbol, sauce foléré, kilichi, bili bili, fish of Wouri Port, mintoumba, ngondo, poulet DG, kondre, koki, Kotoko fish, BHB, soya, kossam and arki Kpem, topsi banan, eru, mfiang ndo'o, kwa ni dong, sangah, corn tchap, kouacoucou, okok, la boule, kwata, odontol, lalo, jus de foléré

Restaurant menus need to be examined to see what dishes are being offered, but without overlooking "street food", also an important vehicle for gastronomy in Cameroon (b).

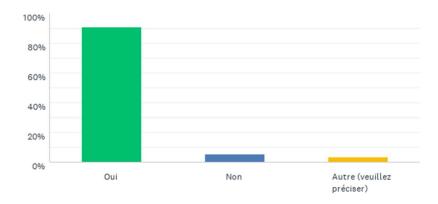
- 99. One of the respondents, a resident of Cameroon, faulted the country's food "for not being mainstreamed. In Cameroon, food is usually found on the street, or at the 'Neighborhood Mother's house, while the big restaurants serve dishes mostly from elsewhere." On the web, Christiane objects to "the obsessive avoidance of local dishes observed among local restaurants, though run by local residents."
- 100. While most of the respondents residing in Cameroon said they ate Cameroonian food at home, the research found a variety of commercial venues serving Cameroonian food. Responses from the diaspora rated Cameroonian food as much better in Cameroon, but that analysis may be based on the local restaurants where they live.

¹⁰⁸ See: Etcheverria, Olivier, *Le tourisme « gourmand » existe-t-il ?* 2016, in *Tourisme et Gastronomie*, 2016, https://journals.openedition.org/teoros/2968?lang=fr

¹⁰⁹ Gastronomie camerounaise: l'incontournable « street food »,

http://www.unecamerounaiseenvadrouilles.com/2021/04/24/gastronomie-camerounaise-lincontournable-street-food/

Is Cameroonian food better in Cameroon?¹¹⁰



- 101. The research confirms that there are numerous restaurants in Douala and Yaoundé some of which offer Cameroonian cuisine: *Bois d'anastasia* or the Yaoundé Hilton, for instance.
- 102. Cameroonian gastronomy can also be experienced in the country's "street food", generally served on corners outdoors. Referred to as "maquis" (thickets), "tournedos" or "chantiers" (construction sites), the mood surrounding such places is invariably convivial and the food usually authentic and local in origin if presented less elegantly than by the restaurants mentioned. Their service capacity is generally limited to take-out meals. 111 Tchop et Yamo, which opened only recently, 112 is the first Cameroonian fast food establishment. 113 The concept is intended to revolutionize food service in Yaoundé, combining American-style fast-food service with authentic Cameroonian gastronomy.

Makeshift barbecues grilling elegantly arranged plantains, corn, plums and sometimes fish are a common site. ¹¹⁴ Similar streetcorner operations sell fritters, either sweetened (*makala*) or salted (*koki*), a favorite of all ages, rich and poor. ¹¹⁵

103. Each restaurant needs to be considered in terms of the 19 Cameroonian specialties served in such establishments, to determine which if any are offered – with particular focus on the final, top-15 list. In the case of some specialties, consumer convenience issues need to be addressed.

¹¹⁰ The last column in the figure showing "other" consisted of two responses: "It depends on who is cooking it" and ""They are simply excellent".

¹¹¹ Gastronomie camerounaise: l'incontournable « street food ».

http://www.unecamerounaiseen vadrouilles.com/2021/04/24/gastronomie-camerounaise-lincontournable-street-food/

¹¹² Located on Avenue Germaine-Karoka, featuring hamburgers with *plantain tapé* (mashed plantain).

¹¹³ https://www.slateafrique.com/2689/cameroun-decouverte-tchopetyamo-un-fast-food-la-sauce-camerounaise ET https://cameroonceo.com/2017/01/13/linevitable-succes-des-fast-food-tchop-et-yamo-au-cameroun-analyse-dun-projet-bien-structure/

¹¹⁴ Gastronomie camerounaise: l'incontournable « street food »,

http://www.unecamerounaiseenvadrouilles.com/2021/04/24/gastronomie-camerounaise-lincontournable-street-food/

¹¹⁵ https://www.editions2015.com/cameroun/cuisine_cameroun.php#poulet_dg

B. Confirming suitability for IP protection

104. In addition to their potential for gastronomic tourism, the final list must include specialties suitable for IP protection. Some examples are illustrated below.

Kpem, ndomba, nodlé, mbongo, nkui, eru, ekwang, mfiang ndo'o, mbol, sauce foléré, kilichi, bili bili, fish of Wouri Port, ngondo, poulet DG, kondre, koki, okok, Kotoko fish, BHB, soya, kossam and arki

nam ewondo, topsi banana, taro in yellow sauce, ekomba, kwa ni dong, sangah, corn tchap, kouacoucou, la boule, kwata, odontol, lalo, jus de foléré

C. The roundtable's final verdict: "the list of 20"

105. A roundtable will be organized to give final validation to a ranking of **20 Cameroonian gastronomic traditions**, as proposed below following discussion with relevant actors in Cameroon during the course of 2021. The ranking is based on domestic and international renown, contribution to gastronomic tourism and suitability for IP protection, as discussed above.

1	Ndomba
2	Ndole
3	Mbongo
4	Nkui
5	Ekwang
6	Mbol
7	Sauce foléré
8	Kilichi
9	Bili bili
10	Fish of Wouri Port
11	Mintoumba
12	Ngondo
13	Poulet DG
14	Kondre
15	Koki
16	Kotoko fish
17	Soya
18	ВНВ
19	Kossam
20	Arki

CONCLUSION

- 106. "All of Africa in a single country." That is often said of Cameroon, and truly so, which makes it difficult to define a culinary identity specific to the country. Cameroon is rich in a diversity of customs, regional ingredients and street gastronomy. The culinary arts contribute to a country's national identity. As a subset of global tourism, gastronomic tourism connects individual motivation to visit a place, a town, or a country with its food, in terms of its defining culinary products as well as customs. However, as pointed out by Bruno Gain, a former Ambassador of France to Cameroon, the country's cultural policies rarely treat gastronomy though often sampled at culinary events and festivals as part of its sociolinguistic and sociocultural identity.¹¹⁶
- 107. And that is what MINTOUL seeks to accomplish through this study. Its objective is to determine what tourists identify with Cameroon and then take measures to build on that identity. Italy is identified with its original pastas, France with its grand cru wines, Japan with its sushi. Tourists travel long distances and pay astronomical sums to eat at a restaurant in Dubai called "Salt Bae", for the particular way in which its chef (who goes by that nickname) salts his dishes!¹¹⁷

Which of Cameroon's specialties might inspire such passionate devotion?

The country's first "Festival des saveurs du cameroun et du monde" (Festival of the flavors of Cameroon and the world), from 27 to 29 May 2021, in Yaoundé's convention center, was encouraging. The festival sponsor intends to develop a strategy of using trademarks to maintain and consolidate the competitiveness of Cameroonian culinary traditions.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Gain, Bruno, former Ambassador of France to Cameroon, quoted by Bogni, Téguia in *La cuisine camerounaise*, https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/index.asp?navig=catalogue&obj=livre&no=62370 116 *Le ndolé*, *l'emblématique plat royal camerounais*.

¹¹⁷ Gastronomie camerounaise: l'incontournable « street food », http://www.unecamerounaiseenvadrouilles.com/2021/04/24/gastronomie-camerounaise-lincontournable-street-food/.

¹¹⁸ Video viewed at: https://youtu.be/0ShSUbvTXAw.

Annex 1. Press release issued by the Minister of Tourism and Leisure

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN Paix -Travail - Patrie

MINISTERE DU TOURISME ET DES LOISIRS

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

DIRECTION DES ENTREPRISES TOURISTIQUES

SOUS-DIRECTION DES AGREMENTS ET DU CLASSEMENT



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON Peace – Work – Fatherland

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND LEISURE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM ENTERPRISES

SUB DEPARTEMENT FOR AUTHORIZATION AND CLASSIFICATION

2 3 JUIN 2021

RELEASE

Cameroonians, both residents and non-residents, as well as the international community are hereby informed that within the framework of promoting Gastronomic Tourism, Cameroon was retained by the World Intellectual Property Organization together with other countries (Peru, Morocco and Malaysia) to implement the Project "Intellectual Property and Gastronomic Tourism in Peru and other Developing Countries: Promoting Gastronomic Tourism through Intellectual Property".

In order to select the final 15 dishes that will be analysed by the said intellectual property, the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure is carrying out a survey through an anonymous physical and electronic questionnaire in English and French to be administered throughout the national territory and beyond from Monday 28 June, 2021 for a period of twelve days, via the following links:

- https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/SH2TSHP for Resident nationals (Category A or RN):
- https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/3KZY7VY for Resident foreigners (Category B or RE);
- https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/S32FW5X for Non-resident nationals (Category C or NRN);
- https://fr.surveymonkey.comGPCFF/r/ST for Non-resident foreigners (Category D or NRE).

To this end, the Minister of State, Minister of Tourism and Leisure encourages and invites Cameroonians and all other persons of any nationality to kindly take a few minutes of their precious time to properly fill out the anonymous questionnaire referred to.

In addition to this electronic survey, resident nationals may also be called upon to fill out the said forms physically by our designated field personnel.



REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN Paix -Travail - Patrie

MINISTERE DU TOURISME ET DES LOISIRS

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

DIRECTION DES ENTREPRISES TOURISTIQUES

OUS-DIRECTION DES AGREMENTS ET DU CLASSEMENT



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON Peace - Work - Fatherland

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND LEISURE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM ENTERPRISES

SUB DEPARTEMENT FOR AUTHORIZATION AND CLASSIFICATION

Yaoundé, le 2 3 JUIN 2021

COMMUNIQUE PORTE

Il est porté à la connaissance des Camerounais résidents et non-résidents ainsi qu'à la communauté internationale, que dans le cadre de la promotion du Tourisme Gastronomique, le Cameroun a été retenu par l'Organisation Mondiale de la Propriété Intellectuelle avec d'autres pays (le Pérou, le Maroc, et la Malaisie), pour participer à la mise en œuvre du Projet « la Propriété Intellectuelle et le Tourisme Gastronomique au Pérou et dans d'autres pays en voie de développement : promouvoir le Tourisme Gastronomique au moyen de la propriété Intellectuelle ».

En vue de procéder à la sélection définitive de 15 mets qui feront l'objet de l'analyse de la propriété Intellectuelle proprement dite, le Ministère du Tourisme et des Loisirs se propose d'organiser sur l'ensemble du territoire national et au-delà des frontières, à partir du Lundi 28 Juin 2021 pour une durée de douze jours, une enquête à travers un questionnaire anonyme physique et électronique en français et anglais via les liens ci-après :

- https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/SH2TSHP pour les Résidents nationaux (Catégorie A ou RN);
- https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/3KZY7VY pour les Résidents non nationaux (Catégorie B ou RE);
- <u>https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/S32FW5X</u> pour les Non-résidents nationaux (Catégorie C ou NRN);
- https://fr.surveymonkey.comGPCFF/r/ST pour les Non-résidents étrangers (Catégorie D ou NRE).

A cet effet, le Ministre d'Etat, Ministre du tourisme et des loisirs, encourage et invite les Camerounais et toutes autre personne de toute nationalité que ce soit de bien vouloir prendre quelques minutes de leur précieux temps pour répondre dument au questionnaire anonyme y relatif.

Parallèlement à cette enquête électronique, les nationaux résidents pourront également être appelés au renseignement physique desdites fiches par nos enquêteurs commis à cet effet.

Annex 2. Personal message on the surveys

Dear network,

Cameroonian gastronomy needs your assistance. This involves participating in a survey to select dishes that could be enhanced by gastronomic tourism. This survey is organized by the Cameroon Ministry of Tourism in partnership with the UN Agency for Intellectual Property. To participate, you can click on the link that best suits your situation.

Cameroonian nationals residing in Cameroon: https://lnkd.in/dpc3j-D

Foreign nationals residing in Cameroon: https://lnkd.in/d6GMsSj

Cameroonians living abroad (Diaspora): https://lnkd.in/dEtUfFB

Other friends of Cameroonian gastronomy: https://lnkd.in/dhsYxbj

Best regards

Cher réseau,

La gastronomie camerounaise a besoin de votre assistance! Il s'agit de participer à un sondage permettant de sélectionner des mets qui pourraient être valorisés par gastronomic tourism. Ce sondage est organisé par le Ministère du Tourisme du Cameroun en partenariat avec l'Agence de l'ONU pour la Propriété Intellectuelle. Pour y participer, vous pouvez cliquer sur le lien qui correspond au mieux à votre situation.

Résidants camerounais: https://lnkd.in/dTGsukw

Etrangers résidants in Cameroon: https://lnkd.in/dhn_QUr

Diaspora camerounaise: https://lnkd.in/dnVyT7E

Other friends of Cameroonian gastronomy: https://lnkd.in/dfsymjS

#saveursducameroun #tourismegastronomique #savoirfaire #bienmanger #Cameroun

Bien cordialement

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