



Dubbed "the Show of the modern era", the agro pastoral fair of Ebolowa, in the South, will have provided thousands of participants with the opportunity to discover one of the first milestones of this new agriculture.

Thus, on 20 January 2011, President Paul Biya was able to try out Sonalika-made combine harvester with the words "Assembled in Cameroon". "This can revolutionize our agriculture. It is strategic. This is the future Cameroonian agriculture", the Head of State said congratulating the Minister of Economy, Louis Paul Motazé, architect of the project. He further requested the latter to immediately initiate reflections to facilitate the accessibility of these agricultural machines to as many farmers as possible. The factory costing over 18 billion francs and covering an area of 10 ha, is the outcome of an agreement signed in New Delhi on 20 April 2009 between the Cameroonian government and Eximbank of India. It is meant to not only modernize local agriculture, but to turn Ebolowa into an agricultural pole for the supply of the sub-regional market. For the first phase, there are plans to assemble 1000 tractors and train 2000 drivers and mechanics. In addition to the 1000 tractors, 500 motor-pumps, about a hundred shellers and 25 combine harvesters being assembled, will be provided. This marks the start of a new era for Cameroonian agriculture.

Besides, the issues of unavailability and the high costs of chemical fertilizers in farming practices in Cameroon are being settled. According to the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Jean Nkuete, poor soil productivity, which is the main cause of the decline in production of various agricultural commodities, is a direct result of the insufficient use of fertilizers. As an illustration, he observes that in Cameroon, 15 kg of fertilizers are used per hectare (ha) against 50 in other African countries like Kenya and 200 in France.

After removing the import duties on the product to make it accessible to farmers, the government takes a further step by encouraging the establishment of factories for the production of chemical fertilizers. Within this framework, the Prime Minister recently launched an appeal to all experienced multinationals for the establishment, in partnership with the Government, of fertilizer factories which would also benefit from the availability of local inputs. A chemical fertilizer factory, recently opened in Douala, is expected to produce about 400 tons of fertilizer granules and powder daily. A framework agreement on the proposed construction of a chemical fertilizer factory in Cameroon, with an annual capacity of 80,000 tons of ammonia and 130,000 tons of urea, has been signed with Chinese operators for a value of more 130 billion CFA francs. It would benefit from local oil exploitation as raw material for the production of fertilizers. The new factories which the authorities are looking forward to, should be able to cover national consumption at affordable prices, and export to the major CEMAC market.