IBRAHIM PAM
Chairperson
The Inspection Panel

August 14, 2025

IPN REQUEST 24/01

**MEMORANDUM TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS AND ALTERNATES
INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Inspection Panel Notice of Non-Registration
on a
Request for Inspection**

Republic of Cameroon: Electricity Transmission and Reform Project (P152755)

Summary

1. In accordance with paragraph 18 of the Resolution of the World Bank Board of Executive Directors ("the Board"), the World Bank Accountability Mechanism: Inspection Panel and Dispute Resolution Service (the Resolution)[1], I hereby inform you that on June 26, 2025, the Inspection Panel ("the Panel") received a Request for Inspection (the "Request") related to the Cameroon: Electricity Transmission and Reform Project (P152755) (ETRP or the "Project"). The redacted Request is attached at Annex 1.

2. The Request was submitted to the Panel by two executive officers from ESHAC-Engineering Design SARL, in Cameroon (ESHAC-EDesign), a company registered in Cameroon and a subsidiary of ESHAC & Co Capital Inc., a U.S.-based capital firm. The Requesters indicate that they are acting on behalf of the shareholders and legal representatives of ESHAC-Engineering Design SARL, which, according to them, is the corporate entity and titleholder of the land they claim has been affected by the Project.

3. The Request alleges that the Project's implementing agency, the National Power Transmission Utility of Cameroon, (Société Nationale de Transport de l'Electricité, SONATREL) forcibly expropriated land without providing compensation, after the initial offer was refused by the Requesters. The Requesters allege that the compensation offered for approximately 2.5 hectares of the company's land in Piti-Dibamba, Dizangue Subdivision, in Cameroon, was below full replacement cost, which according to them is required by both national standards and World Bank policy. The Request also alleges that the expropriation was carried out based on a 2017 decree that was subsequently declared void. The Request adds that the expropriation took place without consultation, negotiation, or compensation. The Request further claims that the World Bank failed to verify the legality of the expropriation and has allegedly not ensured proper supervision, contravening the World Bank's policy on Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12), Cameroonian

[1] The World Bank Resolution No. IBRD 2025-0001 – The World Bank Accountability Mechanism: Inspection Panel and Dispute Resolution Service, 7 March 2025. (the "Resolution").

law, and other bilateral investment agreements. The Request claims that these actions have caused significant commercial losses, impaired their business plan and disrupted their livelihoods.

4. After conducting its initial due diligence, the Panel concluded that this Request does not meet the admissibility criteria of the Panel's Resolution. I am therefore notifying you that the Panel is not registering this Request.

The Project

5. The Board approved the Project on December 7, 2016, with a total cost of US$375.00 million. Of this amount, US$325 million was allocated from the IBRD, while the Government of Cameroon contributed US$50 million as counterpart financing. The current closing date of the Project is June 30, 2026. The implementing agency is Cameroon's power utility company SONATREL. The project has an Environmental Category A and has triggered the safeguard policies on Environment Assessment (OP/BP 4.01), Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04), Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP 4.11), Forests (OP/BP 4.36), Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10), and Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12).

6. The development objective of the Project is to improve the capacity, efficiency, and reliability of Cameroon's national electricity transmission network[2] in three components:

- **Component 1: Provision of Support towards the Operationalization of SONATREL's Transmission Activities.** This component supports the Government of Cameroon in the operationalization and capacity building of the new national electricity transport company, SONATREL.[3]

- **Component 2: Strengthening of the National Transmission Grid.** This component supports the improvement of the capacity and reliability of Cameroon's national electricity transmission network by financing priority investments to upgrade and extend the national transmission networks and strengthen the reliability of power supply in the interconnected systems.[4]

- **Component 3: Project Management Support and Capacity Building**. This component finances technical assistance, analytical work, and capacity building support to key sector stakeholders, including the Rural Electrification Agency (Agence d'Electrification Rurale, AER), the Regulatory Agency for the Electricity Sector (Agence de Régulation du Secteur de l'Electricité, ARSEL), and the Ministry of Water and Energy (Ministère de l'Eau et de l'Energie, MINEE), to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities, further bolstering sector governance within the context of the new sector framework.[5]

[2] Project Appraisal Document (PAD), p. 8, para 29.
[3] PAD, p. 11, para 36-37.
[4] PAD, pp. 11-12, para 38.
[5] PAD, p. 13, para 43.

The Request

7. The Requesters state that their company, ESHAC-EDesign, is the holder of legal title of a registered land parcel measuring 120 hectares, located in Piti-Dibamba, Dizangue Subdivision, Cameroon. The Request states that the company was offered compensation by the Government for approximately 2.5 hectares of this land which was acquired by the Project. This parcel of land was expropriated after the Requesters refused to accept the initial compensation offered. They add that they declined the offer of compensation because it did not reflect the full value of their company's land. They claim that SONATREL expropriated this privately owned land for "*public utility*," without consultation, negotiation, or adequate compensation.

8. The Requesters claim that the affected land was designated as a cornerstone element of a U.S.-capital-led initiative, the GreenLand Smart City, valued at US$25 billion, and with resources already allocated to master planning, feasibility studies, and financial modeling—activities reported to have incurred costs of several million US dollars. They add that the forced reduction in available land, resulting from the expropriation, has directly led to the cancellation of a shovel-ready sub-project. They add that the economic loss is considerable and that the expropriation not only undermines the financial viability of the affected sub-project but also jeopardizes the broader objectives and anticipated benefits of the GreenLand Smart City initiative.

9. The Request states that the expropriation of approximately 2.5 hectares of land was conducted under two expropriation decrees, issued in 2017 and 2019, respectively, which had expired before physical expropriation occurred in 2023. The Request alleges that the World Bank failed to supervise the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), which Requesters claim relied on flawed compensation methodologies, thereby violating both the replacement cost principles provisioned in the Bank's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement (OP 4.12) and relevant national laws. According to the Request, the RAP grossly undervalued the affected land by offering compensation based on an incorrect legal classification. The Requesters claimed that, as a result, the proposed compensation was significantly below the administrative minimum, let alone the full replacement value required by the Bank's policy. The Request alleges that despite unmistakable evidence of economic displacement resulting from the Project, this impact was neither accurately assessed nor mitigated in accordance with policy requirements.

10. The Request alleges that the World Bank did not adequately verify the validity of the legal instruments prior to financing or supporting the Project's implementation on the land owned by the company the Requesters represent. Specifically, the Requesters claim the RAP does not reference the *"Government Declaration of Public Utility (DUP)"* order, which directly impacts this land. The Request alleges that, contrary to the requirements of OP 4.12, the Bank did not ensure that the Borrower adhered to national legal requirements or conducted meaningful consultations regarding land acquisition. It adds that the Bank failed to undertake early identification of risks, maintain transparent communication, and facilitate meaningful stakeholder engagement prior to displacement or land acquisition. Requesters claim that they suffer harm and likely to suffer harm due to the Project's alleged non-compliance with the World Bank's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12), Cameroonian law, and the rights afforded to investors under the bilateral investment agreements between Cameroon and the United States.

Panel's Observation and Determination

11. Upon receiving the Request, the Panel met with the Requesters on July 18, 2025. In accordance with its Operating Procedures,[6] the Panel subsequently issued a Notice of Receipt on its website on July 22, 2025. After reviewing the Request, the Panel had a follow up meeting with the Requesters August 5, 2025, to seek further clarification. The Panel also met with Bank Management on August 8, 2025.

12. The Panel verified that the Request is not frivolous, absurd, or anonymous, and was submitted by two community signatories from the Project area in Cameroon. The Panel notes that the Requesters reached out to the Bank Grievance Redress Service in January 2024. The Panel noted Management's several interactions with the Requesters and the implementing agency, the latest being June 10, 2025. The Panel also noted that the subject matter of the Request does not concern issues of procurement. In addition, the Panel has not previously made a recommendation on the issues raised in this Request.

13. On the substance of the alleged harms, the Panel noted that in 2017, the approximate 2.5 hectares of land in question was declared eminent domain by a Government Decree. The Panel notes from the documents provided by the Requesters and Management that the declaration was renewed in 2019 and finally ratified in 2022. The Panel learned from Management that three Project Affected Persons (PAPs) were compensated for this land at market value before work commenced, and that they had been identified based on the censuses carried out for the entire transmission corridor prior to the RAP cut-off date of May 27, 2019.

14. The Panel notes that documents provided by both Management and the Requesters indicate that the land being claimed as owned by the Requesters amounted to around 117.5 hectares rather than the entire 120 hectares, as stated in the Request.

15. During the Panel's meeting with the Requesters, the Requesters claimed that they had initiated conversations with the former owner of the land and acquired the Power of Attorney on the 120 hectares of land in 2019, although the certificate of ownership they provided to the Panel is dated June 2, 2025. The Panel notes this is more than five years after the census was conducted during RAP preparation and the 2019 RAP cut-off date. The Panel notes that eminent domain was initially declared in 2017, well before the Requesters acquired any interest in the land. The Panel also notes that the 120 hectares of land was not owned by the Requesters at the time the right-of-way land surveys were carried out and before the RAP cut-off date.

16. The Panel also notes that the Requesters' allegation of present and future commercial losses cannot be linked to the Project, as the interest of the company and its shareholders in the land, as shown in the certificate of ownership in June 2025, was after the declaration of eminent domain by the Government and acquisition of the land for the Project.

17. In its meeting with the Panel, Management stated that the land being claimed by the Requesters has become the subject of competing ownership claims, including community claims to the land, and that the case is currently being investigated by the authorities in Cameroon. The

[6] Inspection Panel Operating Procedures, December 2022

Panel notes that, in addition to the compensation that Management states it has already paid to the three identified PAPs, with the Bank's agreement, the Borrower has taken additional precautionary measures and prepared compensation funds to be placed in an ESCROW account while the competing land claims are being resolved.

18. Considering the foregoing, the Panel notes that the Request does not meet the admissibility criteria set out in paragraph 13 of the Resolution and paragraph 15(a) of the Operating Procedures, as the Requesters were not the party concerned during the land acquisition. I therefore inform you that the Panel is not registering this Request for Inspection.

Yours sincerely,

Ibrahim Pam

Attachment

Copy to:

Mr. Ajay Banga, President, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Mr. Ousmane Diagana, Regional Vice President, Africa West (AFW)

Annex 1

Request for Inspection
(Redacted)

FORMAL REQUEST FOR INSPECTION REGARDING ALLEGED NON-COMPLIANCE WITH WORLD BANK POLICIES AND RESULTING MATERIAL ADVERSE HARM RELATED TO THE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION AND SECTOR REFORM PROJECT (PRRTERS – P152755) IN CAMEROON – CASE OF ESHAC-ENGINEERING DESIGN

To:

The Chair, Inspection Panel
The World Bank Accountability Mechanism,
MSN: MC 10-1007, 1818 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20433
Email: **ipanel@worldbank.org**
Phone: +1 202 458 5200
Fax: +1 202 522 0916 (Washington, DC).

Filed by:

[redacted] Shareholder and Managing Director

[redacted] Shareholder and Director of Operations

This Request is submitted in our capacity as executive officers duly authorized to act on behalf of the shareholders and legal representatives of ESHAC-Engineering Design SARL, the affected land titleholder and corporate entity.

ESHAC-Engineering Design SARL (Cameroon) and
Affiliated with ESHAC & Co Capital Inc. (USA)

Headquarters: Makepe, Douala, Cameroon
Email: [redacted]
Phone 1 : [redacted] / **Phone 2 :** [redacted]

Date: June 26, 2025

Phone: [redacted] **Email**: [redacted]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / PREAMBLE – Filed by Affected Legal Entity (Cameroon-based)

We, the undersigned individuals, residing in Cameroon and acting respectively as **Managing Director** and **Director of Operations** of **ESHAC-Engineering Design SARL** ("ESHAC-EDesign"), respectfully submit this **Request for Inspection** to the **World Bank Inspection Panel**, pursuant to its Operating Procedures.

Filed by:

- [redacted], Shareholder and Managing Director
- [redacted], Shareholder and Director of Operations

On behalf of:

- **ESHAC-Engineering Design SARL** and its shareholders
- A legally incorporated Cameroonian company
- Legal land titleholder of the impacted site
- Officially affiliated with **ESHAC & Co Capital Inc.**, a U.S.-registered company

This Request is submitted by **ESHAC-EDesign**, a legal entity that represents and is directly composed of multiple affected individuals—its **owners, shareholders, and employees**—whose fundamental property rights and economic livelihoods have been severely compromised by the **World Bank-financed PRRTERS project (P152755)**. The collective interests and future investment returns of these stakeholders are directly tied to the viability of ESHAC-EDesign's assets and business plan.

a. Legal Standing and Exhaustion of Remedies:

This request satisfies all **Inspection Panel eligibility criteria**, as:

- It is filed by a directly affected legal entity through its executive officers.
- It presents **clear evidence of material harm**, including uncompensated expropriation, **projected loss of income**, and legal violations.
- The company is legally incorporated and holds the land title affected by the project.
- All **local remedies have been exhausted**:
  - Over **7 months of unilateral correspondence with SONATREL**, starting January 3, 2024.
  - A **10-month GRS mediation process** under reference **FY25-GRS-2921 (starting August 22, 2024)** , which failed to **ensure fair, timely & lawful resolution** to our grievance till now.

b.Nature of the Complaint:

- **Legal Land Title:** [redacted] ¦ **Land Area Impacted:** 2.4969 hectares
- **Location:** Piti-Dibamba, Dizangué Subdivision, Cameroon
- **Administrative Land Valuation:**
  - 2.4969 ha = **24,969 m²**

- Compensation requested: **24,969 m² × 15,000 XAF/m² = 374,535,000 XAF** (approx. **$611,000 USD**)
- **Compensation Received**: None

- **Projected Economic Loss Due to Forced Suspension of Planned Investment:**
  - **$56.4 million USD in Net Present Value** over a 10-year horizon
  - Supported by independently prepared feasibility studies and conservative financial models
  - **Compensation Received:** None

This economic harm stems from the non-compliance expropriation of land planned for the **GreenLand Smart Aeroponics Hub**, a central element of the **GreenLand Smart City**, a U.S.-capital-led initiative valued at over **$25 billion USD**.

c. Project at Risk:

SONATREL's actions have not only halted the Aeroponics Hub but now threaten the viability of the entire Smart City development project, whose investment protections are afforded by the U.S.-Cameroon Bilateral Investment Treaty. The affected project components include, but are not limited to:

- **Smart Hospital Complex** (1,103 beds)
- **Smart Education Complex** from Pre-K to University (26,764 students)
- **Smart Business Center** (635,281 m² of office space)
- **8,751 Residential Units (single-family and multi-family units)**
- **Smart Hotel (6-star)**, **Artificial Lagoon beach**, **Water Treatment Plant**, **Wastewater Treatment Plant** , **Smart Nexus Center** and **Innovation Hub.**
- **Smart Mobility Infrastructure & Multi-Story Parking** – 3,300 parking spaces

Several million USD has already been committed to early-stage development. The **reputational and financial damage** extends to both **private investors** and **sovereign risk assessments**.

d. Broader Implications:

- Undermines **Cameroon's investment charter**, BIT obligations (especially with the U.S.), and green urban policy agenda
- Sends a **negative global signal** that a World Bank-funded project may expropriate land without compensation, enforce invalid decrees, and ignore investment protections
- Sets a precedent that jeopardizes climate-aligned, private-sector-led urban megaprojects in fragile jurisdictions

We respectfully request the Inspection Panel to register this submission and initiate a full investigation. The **future of GreenLand Smart City**, and the credibility of World Bank safeguards, are now at stake.

e. The World Bank's operational policies procedures nor followed: OP 4.12 / BP 4.12

Dear Inspection Panel Members,

ESHAC-EDesign, a duly registered company in Cameroon and a subsidiary of ESHAC & Co Capital Inc., a U.S. capital firm, hereby formally submits this Request for Inspection. We allege that actions and omissions by the World Bank, through its supervision of the Electricity Transmission and Sector Reform Project (PRRTERS – P152755) implemented by SONATREL in Cameroon, constitute non-compliance with the Bank's operational policies and procedures, resulting in direct and material adverse harm to our company and its stakeholders.

This Request for Inspection follows a prolonged engagement with the World Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS) **since August 22, 2024** and preceded by a **7 months of unilateral correspondence with SONATREL**. Despite our diligent efforts to provide requested documentation and clarify critical facts, the GRS mediation process has failed to adequately address our fundamental concerns regarding non-compliance with World Bank policies and Cameroonian law, or to facilitate a commitment to fair and just compensation.

Part 1: Identification of Requesters and Direct Harm Suffered

1.1. Direct and Material Adverse Harm Suffered

ESHAC-EDesign has suffered and will still suffer direct and material harm resulting from the World Bank's failure to ensure compliance with its own safeguards, notably in connection with the PRRTERS Project:

a. Uncompensated and Unlawful Expropriation of Land

Our company holds legally registered land title No 66/SM for a parcel measuring **120 hectares, 66 ares, and 15 centiares (120ha 66a 15ca)** located in **Piti-Dibamba, Dizangue Subdivision**. Out of this, **2 hectares, 49 ares, and 69 centiares (2ha 49a 69ca)** have been **forcibly expropriated** in violation of Cameroonian law, World Bank safeguard requirements, and the rights afforded to investors under US bilateral agreements between Cameroon and USA, and **all this without compensation**. This expropriation was executed through a void or non-existent decree declaring public utility and without prior consultation, negotiation, or payment as required by Cameroon laws.

b. Loss of Strategic Land Use and Economic Disruption

The expropriated portion had been specifically allocated per our official **Urban Integrated Development Programming Report** for the construction of the **GreenLand Smart Aeroponics Hub**, a cornerstone of our larger **$25 billion valuation GreenLand Smart City Project**. This component was not merely hypothetical, but a validated and programmed investment, with master planning, feasibility studies, and financial modeling already completed. The **forced reduction of our master plan** due to this expropriation has directly resulted in the loss of this sub-project, leading to a **potential economic loss of over USD 56.29 million** in **Net Present Value (NPV) over a 10-year period horizon**.

c. Broader Economic and Operational Damage

This unlawful expropriation in violation of the US-Cameroon Bilateral Investment Treaty, Cameroon Laws and World Bank Policies has disrupted our business trajectory, delayed implementation timelines, and seriously compromised financial projections, strategic partnerships, and investor confidence. It also jeopardizes the employment and incomes of individuals whose livelihoods are tied to the successful deployment of the **GreenLand Smart City Project initiative**.

Part 2: Alleged World Bank Policy Non-Compliance and Causation of Harm

2.1 Violations of Cameroonian Law and Implications for Bank Policy Compliance (OP 4.12)

a. Absence of Legally Mandated Prior Negotiations

- **Violation**: Article 15, paragraph 1 of Decree [redacted], requires state-owned companies (such as SONATREL) to **engage in prior negotiations** with affected owners or rights-holders before seeking expropriation for public utility. These negotiations **never occurred**.
- **Inconsistency within PRRTERS**: The RAP for the Northern Interconnection Sub-Project (August 2023) explicitly references this Decree and acknowledges the legal need for negotiation—demonstrating SONATREL's **selective compliance** across sub-projects.
- **Implication**: SONATREL acted improperly as a **ministerial authority**, not a state-owned company, by bypassing negotiation and directly seeking decrees—**violating due process** and creating a double standard within the PRRTERS program.
- **Bank's Failure**: The World Bank failed to ensure its Borrower respected national legal requirements—contrary to OP 4.12, which mandates legal compliance and meaningful consultation.

b. Expropriation Carried Out Under Legally Expired Decrees

- **Violation**: Article 15 of *Décret n°87/1872 du 16 décembre 1987* stipulates that before any expropriation for public utility initiated by public entities such as **local authorities, public institutions, public service concessionaires, or State-owned companies (like SONATREL)**, the beneficiary entity **must first conduct prior negotiations** with the concerned property owners or right-holders.
- **Broader Legal Requirement under Article 16**: Furthermore, Article 16 mandates that in case negotiations do succeed, the public entities must conform to **rules of acquisition under common law**—not arbitrary administrative action.
- **SONATREL failed to conduct any prior negotiation** with us or initiate arbitration before requesting expropriation. This omission **violates Article 15** and **16** and renders the expropriation process procedurally defective.

- **Violation**: The original expropriation decrees (March 21, 2017) expired on March 21, 2019, under Article 13 of Decree No. 87/1872. A renewal decree dated April 15, 2019, also became void no later than April 15, 2021.

- **Harm**: Physical expropriation on our land occurred in 2023—**two years after the legal basis had expired**, making the act **legally null**.

- **Bank's Failure**: The Bank did not verify the validity of the legal instruments before financing or supporting project implementation on our property—thus failing to supervise the RAP's compliance to OP 4.12.

c. Absence of Public Disclosure of the DUP Order Used to Justify the Expropriation of Our Land

A serious procedural irregularity concerns the **absence of any public disclosure or legal evidence** of the existence of the **Declaration of Public Utility (DUP) order** allegedly used to justify our expropriation.

- The **final Resettlement Action Plan (RAP)** for the **Douala Subcomponent – Transmission Lines, Substations, and SCADA**, Volume 1 of 7 (report number SFG6771), cites under **section 3.3.1 "Legal Texts"** the **Order No. 000067/MINDCAF/SG/D1/D14/D141 dated April 15, 2019**, which supposedly renews the public utility declaration for the construction of the 225kV Missolé double-circuit line and related infrastructure.

- The RAP asserts that this legal instrument is attached in **Annex 3**. However, this is **factually incorrect**: after comprehensive verification, **this decree is not included** in Annex 3 or anywhere else among the 7 publicly available volumes published on the World Bank's official website.

- In contrast, the only DUPs orders that are attached to the RAP documentation Volume 1 of 7 (report number SFG6771) are the **2017 decrees in Annex 1**, which had already become **null and void by March 2019**, pursuant to **Article 13 of Decree No. 87/1872 of December 16, 1987**. Specifically, **Order No. 000293/MINDCAF/SG/D1/D14/D141 dated March 21, 2017** is explicitly cited and included in the annexes of the RAP (Volume 1 of 7, report number SFG6771) as still valid, which is legally false.

- The **complete lack of publication or evidentiary existence of Order No. 000067/MINDCAF/SG/D1/D14/D141 dated April 15, 2019** applicable to our land, combined with the official reliance on a 2017 decree that was no longer legally in force, demonstrates:
    1. A **lack of transparency** in the expropriation process;
    2. A **violation of legal certainty and due process**;
    3. A **failure by the World Bank to exercise due diligence** in its appraisal and supervision of project safeguards, as it validated a RAP grounded in documents that were never made publicly available and may not legally exist.

- Furthermore, while **all other renewed DUP orders from 2019** are properly disclosed and attached in **Volume 6 of 7** of the Yaounde RAP (document titled *Annexes – Yaoundé Subcomponent*), **the DUP order that directly affects our land—Order No. 000067/MINDCAF/SG/D1/D14/D141 dated April 15, 2019**, **dated April 15, 2019—is the only one not included**, despite its citation in the RAP's main body.

d. Erroneous and Systemic Misapplication of Compensation Scale

- **Violation**: The RAP applied **Decree n°2014/3211/PM**—which sets land prices for the "private domain of the State." Our land, being **privately titled**, should not be subject to this pricing scale.

- **Systemic Pattern**: The same mistake appears in the RAP for the Northern Interconnection Sub-Project. This reveals a **program-wide misuse** of State land valuation methods to undervalue **private property**, causing significant economic harm.

- **Harm**: This misapplication suppressed the compensation offered (500 or 2,000 XAF/m²), while the administrative minimum for titled private land in Douala is at least **15,000 XAF/m²** as officially appraised by the **Tax Department of Cameroon**. Applying the lower valuation constitutes a **misclassification of our property** and violates both domestic valuation principles and the World Bank's safeguard policies, which require compensation at full replacement cost.

- **Bank's Failure**: The Bank accepted and financed RAPs based on flawed compensation methodologies that **violated both OP 4.12** (replacement cost principle) and national law.

e. Disregard for Coordination and Meaningful Consultations

- **Violation**: The RAP admits on page 32 that the census survey (February 2019) was conducted ***"without respecting the coordination rules established during the consultation sessions."***. This admission reveals a failure to conduct the participatory process required by both **OP 4.12**, including early identification, transparent communication, and meaningful stakeholder engagement prior to displacement or land acquisition.

- **Bank's Failure**: The Bank failed to ensure the Borrower followed required protocols for public participation, contrary to the **Bank's policy on meaningful consultation and informed participation under OP 4.12**.

2.2 Failure to Apply OP 4.12, BP 4.12 and Ensure Livelihood Restoration

The PRRTERS Project (P152755) was approved in December 2016, before the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) became effective on October 1, 2018. Therefore, the

applicable safeguard policy for resettlement and compensation is **Operational Policy 4.12 (OP 4.12) on Involuntary Resettlement**.

a. Non-Compliance with OP 4.12, BP 4.12 - Key Failures:

- **No Compensation at Replacement Cost**: OP 4.12, BP 4.12 requires compensation at full replacement cost. The RAP grossly undervalues our land and offers payments based on an incorrect legal classification, failing to meet even the administrative minimum, let alone replacement value.
- **No Livelihood Restoration Measures**: OP 4.12 mandates not only compensation for lost assets, but also restoration (or improvement) of income sources and livelihoods. In our case:
    - The expropriated area was programmed for the **GreenLand Smart Aeroponics Hub**, a documented investment project expected to generate over **$56.4 million USD in revenue** over 10 years.
    - This figure is backed by feasibility studies, business plans, architectural programming, and financial modeling.
    - By failing to compensate or provide support to re-establish this lost activity, the RAP **violates the core livelihood restoration objective of OP 4.12** (para. 2 and 6a), and BP 4.12.
- **No Economic Displacement Assessment**: OP 4.12 considers people economically displaced when "their means of livelihood are adversely affected." Our business plan, submitted to and acknowledged by the GRS and Bank teams, shows economic displacement clearly occurred—yet was **never assessed nor mitigated**.
- **OP 4.12 Applies to Future Income, Not Just Existing Businesses**: The loss of a documented and shovel-ready project with confirmed programming and stakeholder engagement clearly falls within OP 4.12's scope. The Bank's failure to address this lost opportunity violates its duty to mitigate **lost income-generating potential**.

Part III: Steps Taken to Address the Issue with Bank Management and Management's Response

We formally engaged with the World Bank's **Grievance Redress Service (GRS)** beginning on **August 22, 2024**, to raise concerns regarding serious violations of both **Cameroonian law** and the Bank's own **Operational Policy OP 4.12** in relation to the expropriation of our land.

In our detailed correspondence dated **June 10, 2025, at 06:35**, we explicitly outlined the following issues:

- The **illegality of the expropriation procedure** under Cameroonian law, particularly the absence of the legally required prior negotiations and the use of void expropriation decrees;
- The **invalidity of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP)** due to its reliance on outdated or unpublished legal instruments;
- The application of **inappropriate valuation methodologies**, including land prices reserved for the State's private domain, rather than for privately held land;
- The **economic harm exceeding USD 56.4 million** in lost future revenue, based on documented feasibility studies, market analyses, and architectural programming for the "GreenLand Smart Aeroponics Hub."

In response, the GRS requested that we once again submit various legal documents, including the **certificate of ownership** and the **updated land title**—despite the fact that these had already been provided in our earlier submissions. We complied once more and also submitted the **administrative land valuation**, to reinforce the legality and legitimacy of our claim.

These repeated requests were made at the instigation of **SONATREL**, whose shifting and unsubstantiated legal arguments appear designed to delay or avoid rightful compensation. Throughout this process, SONATREL has failed to provide any credible legal basis for its actions, and the GRS has not effectively challenged this behavior.

Despite our sustained good-faith efforts and the submission of exhaustive, well-documented evidence, the GRS mediation process has **failed to deliver a resolution that addresses the core issues of non-compliance**. GRS's communications have reflected either an **inability or unwillingness to compel the Borrower (SONATREL)** to bring the expropriation process into compliance with the World Bank's own safeguard policies and Cameroonian law.

Part IV: Additional Protections and Consequences of Non-Compliance

As a subsidiary of ESHAC & Co Capital Inc., a U.S. capital firm, our investment in Cameroon is protected by the **Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) between Cameroon and the United States**, as well as the **Cameroonian National Investment Charter**. The uncompensated expropriation and the procedural irregularities highlighted above constitute a clear violation of these international and national instruments, designed to protect foreign investments and ensure fair treatment. Such breaches carry significant legal and reputational consequences for both the host country (Cameroon) and for the World Bank.

While the GRS's role is facilitative, we understand that unresolved issues of non-compliance with World Bank policies and national law can and should lead to escalation within the Bank's broader accountability

framework. The Bank's failure to ensure compliance in this matter poses significant reputational risk and could adversely impact Cameroon's access to future Bank funds.

Part V: Strategic, Economic, and Legal Risks to a Climate-Aligned, U.S.-Linked Smart City Development

a. **Destruction of Investor Confidence & BIT Exposure:**
We are defending the integrity and viability of a **globally-scaled, climate-aligned smart city project** led by a U.S.-linked entity. The refusal to compensate not only for the land value (15,000 XAF/m² as per administrative evaluation) but also for the **USD 56.4 million in lost potential revenues** sends a profoundly negative signal to institutional and private investors. This is especially damaging given that our **project risk mitigation reports** have clearly identified **political interference** as the **primary threat** to project viability.

b. **Violation of Bilateral Treaty Protections (U.S.–Cameroon BIT):**
This concern is not speculative. The **Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)** between **Cameroon and the United States** explicitly protects against **state interference** and non-compensated expropriation of U.S.-linked investments. If a **state-owned enterprise**, operating under government authority and financed by a **World Bank loan**, forcibly expropriates a legally acquired site **without compensation**, it validates the very **political risk** the BIT was designed to prevent and severely undermines our project's legal and financial security.

c. **Massive U.S.-Capital Commitment Already Deployed:**
To date, our group has **committed several million USD** toward feasibility studies, legal structuring, architectural programming, and environmental/urban assessments. The planned **$30 billion+ GreenLand Smart City** includes several internationally compliant sub-projects, now at risk of **abandonment** due to the unresolved violation:

   - Smart Hospital (1,103 beds)
   - American-style educational complex (Kindergarten to University: 26,764 students)
   - Smart Business Center (635,281 m²)
   - Nexus Innovation Hub (105,000 m²)
   - 8,751-unit residential program
   - Artificial beach & lagoon (6.9 ha)
   - Water treatment facility (250,000 m³/day)
   - Wastewater treatment (7 ha)
   - Smart hotel complexes (onshore & offshore: 120,000+ m²)
   - Mobility infrastructure (3,300 parking spaces)

d. **Contradiction with Cameroon's National Policy Commitments:**

The Republic of Cameroon has **actively promoted private sector-led development**, and offers **investment incentives** (via the Investment Charter), including land facilitation and legal security. For a **state-owned entity**, backed by the **World Bank**, to undermine this policy via **non-compensated expropriation** would set a damaging **precedent**, **accelerate capital flight**, and expose both **Cameroon and its development partners** to reputational and legal consequences under international law.

Part VI: Formal Request to the Inspection Panel

In light of the **material adverse harm** suffered by ESHAC-EDesign and the **World Bank's alleged non-compliance** with its **Operational Policy OP 4.12 – Involuntary Resettlement**, and given the **unsatisfactory outcome of the GRS mediation process**, we hereby **formally request the Inspection Panel** to:

a. **Register this Request for Inspection** in accordance with the Inspection Panel's established procedures and mandate.

b. **Recommend a full investigation** into the Bank's alleged failure to comply with OP 4.12 during the **design, appraisal, and supervision** of the PRRTERS project (P152755), particularly in relation to:

   - The invalid Resettlement Action Plan (RAP);
   - The unlawful expropriation carried out without legally mandated prior negotiations;
   - The absence of a valid, publicly disclosed expropriation decree (Arrêté DUP);
   - The serious economic and operational harm suffered as a result.

c. **Acknowledge that the expropriation was implemented under void legal instruments**, including the absence of a renewed and publicly disclosed Arrêté DUP affecting our parcel, despite being referenced in the RAP. This constitutes a **major violation of both national law and OP 4.12 requirements**.

d. **Investigate the Bank's failure to ensure compliance with Cameroonian expropriation law**, notably Article 15 of [redacted] which obligates public entities such as SONATREL to conduct **prior negotiations** before any expropriation. No such negotiation ever occurred.

e. **Recognize the systemic misapplication of compensation scales** throughout the PRRTERS program, including in the Douala subcomponent, where compensation was calculated using land values designated for State-owned land (500 to 2000 XAF/m²), instead of the legally applicable **private domain administrative valuation (at least 15,000 XAF/m² for our land)**.

f. **Assess the Bank's responsibility for the loss of USD 56.4 million** in documented, future revenue resulting from the economic displacement caused by the expropriation. This loss is supported by

feasibility studies, architectural programming, and business planning, and should be **recognized under OP 4.12's livelihood restoration provisions**.

We respectfully request that the Inspection Panel take prompt action, given the imminent closure of the PRRTERS project (June 30, 2025), and the urgency of redressing the serious harm caused by this situation.

Part VII: Supporting Documents:

- Decree No. [redacted]
- loi n° 85/9 du 4 juillet 1985
- A **Certificate of Ownership** for the property located in Piti-Dibamba, identified by reference No. [redacted]
- **Land Title No.** [redacted]
- **Administrative Land Valuation**, bearing the reference No. 185/MINFI/DGI/CRILEXT/CDSM.
- Notably, the **updated Land Title Plan No.** [redacted] precisely details an area of **2 hectares, 49 ares, and 69 centiares (2ha 49a 69ca)** that is specifically occupied by the 53C electrical transmission line. This revised plan was formally endorsed by both the Departmental Head of the Cadastre and the Head of Cadastral Updates, a process initiated by a formal requisition from the Land Registrar. The certifications provided by these officials, who are sworn civil servants of the State of Cameroon, carry full legal authority and serve as irrefutable evidence. For optimal viewing, the plan is fully legible when printed on A0 paper or when digitally zoomed to 180% on a computer screen.

We remain available to provide any further information or documentation required by the Inspection Panel as follows:

- all supporting documents related to the aeroponics agricultural project affected, including valuation reports, feasibility studies, business plan, market studies, risk studies, financial studies, and architectural programming reports.
- Documentation of correspondence with SONATREL.
- Copy of mails with the GRS .

Part VII: Signatories

By completing and submitting this form, we authorize the Inspection Panel to investigate the issues as described in this form and disclose our identity.

[redacted]
Managing Director
ESHAC-EDesign SARL
Phone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

[redacted]

TCHANA NKOUENDJEU Séverin
Director of Operations
ESHAC-EDesign SARL
Phone : [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

[redacted]

Sincerely,

Attachments to the Request for Inspection

The following attachments to the Request for Inspection are available with the Inspection Panel and may be provided upon request:

1. Certificate of Land Ownership (June 2, 2025)
2. Updated Land Plan (May 8, 2025)
3. Copy of the Land Certificate (January 9, 2024)
4. Decree No. 87/1872 regarding expropriation for public purposes and terms of compensation (December 16, 1987)
5. Cameroonian Law No. 85-09 relating to expropriation for public utility and compensation procedures (July 4, 1985)
6. Administrative Evaluation of Land Title (December 15, 1952)