NIGERIA-CAMEROON ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND THE LAKE CHAD BASIN COMMISSION, 1964-2015

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ABSTRACT
The water bodies, the fertile nature, and the rich biodiversity of the Lake Chad Basin have attracted both human and animal population to the region; many of the inhabitants of this region engaged in different productive economic activities. These economic activities have in turn led to the establishment of economic relations among countries bordering the Lake Chad- an economic relation that dates back to pre-colonial era. Undoubtedly, the natural endowment and rich biodiversity of the Lake Chad Basin have been fundamental to the development of, and engagement in productive economic activities such as fishing, farming, animal husbandry, manufacturing, mining, oil exploration and exploitation, among others, by its inhabitants since pre-colonial times. In 1964, the Lake Chad Basin Commission was established to regulate, control and manage water, natural resources as well as promote regional cooperation among member states. In spite of the rich biodiversity and natural resources of the Lake Chad and the institutional

arrangement put in place, the Lake Chad Basin has been plagued by political crisis, high rate of poverty, high population, high rate of illiteracy, hydrological shift, among others, thus, threatening the livelihood of millions of people that depend on its natural resources for survival. This paper seeks, therefore, to examine the factors militating against the effectiveness of the Lake Chad Basin Commission as well as the consequences of the commission's inability to fulfill its mandates on Nigeria-Cameroon economic relations. Data was elicited through both primary and secondary sources while thematic historical analytical approach was adopted in the interpretation and analysis of the data. The study revealed that the somewhat inability of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to effectively discharge her responsibilities due to several factors, some of which have been discussed herein, has in no small measure contributed to the contraption of the Lake Chad and its attendant consequences, the evolution and development of insurgents, violent conflicts between herders and farmers in the Nigeria and Cameroon sector of the Lake Chad Basin. All of these factors have impacted Nigeria-Cameroon economic relations negatively. We recommend that the organs of the LCBC should live up to their responsibilities so as to mitigate against some of the challenges facing the LCBC.

Key words: *Lake Chad Basin, Lake Chad, L*ake Chad Basin Commission, Economic Relations.

The Lake Chad Basin: An Introductory Note

The inhabitants of parts of West and Central Africa, from pre-colonial era, have earned a living through their exploitation of the water and natural resources in the Lake Chad Basin. The water bodies, the fertile nature, and the rich biodiversity of this area have attracted both human and animal population to this region many of whom engaged in fishing, manufacturing, mining, herding, farming and other agricultural activities. These economic activities have in turn led to the establishment of trading and

economic relations between and among communities and countries bordering the Lake Chad; a trading interaction and economic relations that date back to pre-colonial era. In post-colonial era, Nigeria has had to sign bilateral and multilateral agreement with other countries in Africa in a bid to maximally harness one another's potentials and prevent conflicts over access to, and usage of natural resources. The Lake Chad Basin Commission is one of such organizations aimed at promoting inter regional cooperation.

The natural resources that the Lake Chad Basin is endowed with are not just of strategic socio-economic significance to the riparian communities but to national and regional economies. Neiland and Bene (2002:188-257), for example, noted that the Lake Chad and its flood plain represent the single most important inland water fisheries ecosystem in West and Central Africa. They argued that fishing activities constitute the major source of livelihood of millions of inhabitants of the Lake Chad Basin and that from 1960 to 2002; about 1.7 million tons of fishes have been caught from the Lake Chad Basin. On the other hand, Ovie, et al., (2007: 66-76) argues that over 900,000 tons of corn and other agricultural products such as cowpea, vegetable, pepper, etc, and 150,000 tons of fish valued at $54 million dollars were caught and sold by the riparian countries from the Lake Chad flood annually. Apart from fishery and farming, a whole lot of informal economic activities go on in the Lake Chad Basin ranging from mining of gold, oil exploration and exportation, manufacturing activities such as brewing, cloth ginning, leather works, milling, food industry, animal rearing, etc. The natural endowment and rich biodiversity of the Lake Chad Basin has been fundamental to the development of the area and has facilitated productive economic activities such as livestock farming, agriculture, fishing, among others, in the riparian communities, thus making the area a food exporting hub as well as the epicenter for food security for the inhabitants of this area that had an estimated population of 47 million inhabitants (Lake Chad Basin Commission: 2015:1).

It should be noted that in spite of the natural endowment and rich biodiversity of the Lake Chad Basin, the area is bedeviled by political crisis, insecurity, high rate of poverty, illiteracy, high population growth and as well prone to hydrological shift. Since the 1970s, economic activities in the Lake Chad Basin, particularly livestock rearing, farming and fishery have dropped significantly. This has been attributed to massive change in climatic factor, particularly, the significant reduction of the lake area from about 25,000km^2 in the 1960s to less than 2000km^2 in the 1990s (Ovie and Belah 2011:66-76). Thereby, threatening the livelihood of millions of people that depends on the natural resources of the Lake Chad Basin.

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP 2004:125) noted that the Lake Chad Basin in its original form covers about 2.5 million km^2. This is approximately 8% of the total African land mass. Geographically, the Lake Chad Basin is situated between latitude 12^o 20' and 14^{o}20' North and 15^{o}20' East in the centre of Africa and the southern edge of the Sahara Desert (Antimbom 2016: 29). It is bounded to the north by the Ahagger Mountains in Algeria, from this summit, the border descent southward towards Tibesti Highland that forms the border between Libya and Chad and continues to about 19^o north near Djabel Mara Volcanic Mountain in Sudan. The southern border is defined by the Mangos Hill in Central Africa Republic and the Adamawa Mountain at about 6^o north and further west by the Mandaras in Northern Cameroon at approximately 10^o north. The Jos Plateau marks the western boundary in the Nigeria sector of the basin and further north the Air Plateau in the Niger Republic (UNEP & GIWA, 2004:125). The Lake Chad Basin is occupied by inhabitants of these countries in the following percentages: Chad (45%), Cameroon (2%), Niger Republic (28%), Central Africa Republic (9%), Nigeria (7%), Algeria (4%), Sudan (4%), and Libya (0.5%) (Global Water Partnership 2013:5)

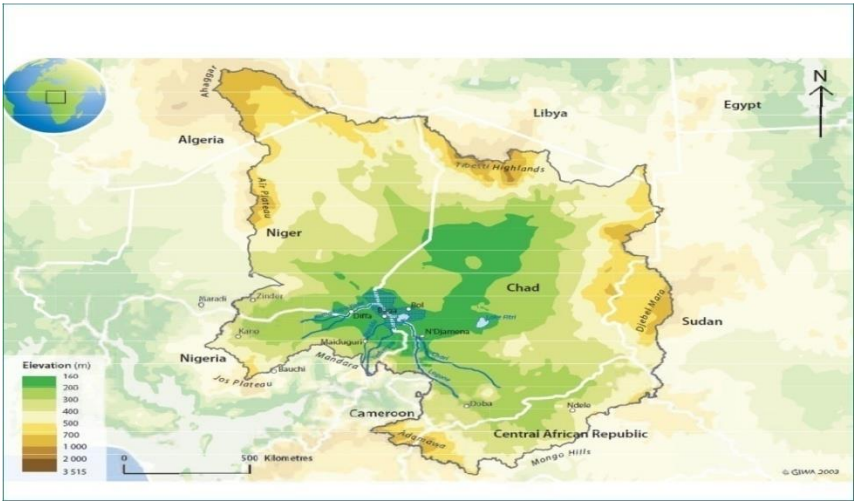

Figure 1. Map Showing the Boundaries of the Lake Chad Basin

S.I. Ovie and E. Belah, Identification and Reduction of Climate Change Vulnerability in the Fishery of Lake Chad Basin, FAO/LCBC Workshop, N'djamena, Chad, 18th -20th November, 2011, p. 31.

The Global Water Partnership (2013:5) notes that the Lake Chad Basin is one of the largest sedimentary ground water basins in Africa. It is made up of three main aquifers; the Upper Quaternary with lower Pliocene, the Continental Terminal and the Cretaceous. The Basin is made up of couples of transboundary waters and networks of catchment rivers. The main water supply to the Lake Chad Basin comes from the Chari-Logone River. The Chari-Logone River Basin is located in Central Africa Republic, Cameroon and Chad. It has various rivers that traversed the Mongos Hill in Central Africa Republic, the Adamawa Plateau and the Mandara Mountain in Cameroon. The major tributary to the Chari Logone sub-system is Pende; this tributary becomes Logone oriental on entering Chad and the Chari (Global Water Partnership, 2013:6). The Chari-Logone sub-system covers

approximately 650,000 km^{2,} hosting the Chari River and the Waza-Logone flood plain, providing about 95% of the total water input and empty into the southern pool and the Komadugu-Yobe River (UNEP and GIWA, 2004:.4) The Komadugu- Yobe River on the other hand, is situated in Niger Republic and Nigeria. It is formed by various rivers particularly the Hadejia, Jama'are and Misau River which flows from the Jos Plateau (UNEP and GIWA, 2004:.4). The Komadugu-Yobe sub-system covers 148,000km^2 but contributes only or less than 2.5% of the total river inflow into the Lake Chad Basin (Global Water Partnership, 2013: 6). The balance of the water inflow into the Lake Chad Basin is highly variable, thus resulting in fluctuating open surface water which has experienced significant raise and compression in recent times.

The Lake Chad Basin, it must be noted, is not synonymous with the Lake Chad. The Lake Chad is parts of the areas that constitute the Lake Chad Basin. The lake was one of the fourth biggest lakes in Africa in the first half of the 20th century. It has a total surface area of about 25,000km^2 and located in the Sahel Region of Africa. The Lake Chad is bordered by Chad to the east, Niger Republic to the northwest, Nigeria to the west and Cameroon to the south (European Union and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development, 2015:5). The Lake Chad is formed by two basins, the north and south basin. These basins are separated by a shoal called the "Great barrier". The southern basin feeds the Chari River directly; a major tributary to the lake while the remaining supply of water to the lake comes directly from rain falls and other smaller tributaries including the Komadugu-Yobe River to the northwest and El-beid to the south (European Union and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development, 2015:5).

The Lake Chad, due to climatic conditions, drought, and uncoordinated water management by states in the region, among other factors, has experienced dramatic contraction since the 1960 to present. The factor that necessitated this contraction shall be discussed extensively somewhere in this paper. However, we shall proceed immediately to examine the institutional arrangement

and authority invested with the responsibility of managing the resources in the Lake Chad Basin, the factors affecting the effectiveness of this institutional authority as well as the consequences of the failure of this institution to manage the resources of this region on Nigeria's economic relations with Cameroon**.**

The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)

The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) is an inter-governmental agency which regulates the control, management and utilization of water and natural resources in the Lake Chad Basin as well as promotes regional cooperation among member states, among others. This international organization came into existence in 1964 based on the Fort-Lamy convention (Now N'Djamena) and statute signed by four lacustrine countries of Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad. The Central Africa Republic was admitted as the 5th member in 1994, Libya in January 2000 and Sudan in July 2000 (EU and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development, 2015:19-20).

The organs entrusted with the responsibility of actualizing the vision, mission and mandate of the Lake Chad Basin Commission are: The Summit of Heads of States and Government; The Council of Ministers and the Executive Secretary which is assisted by the various subsidiary organs. The Summit of Heads of States and Government is the highest decision making body of the LCBC. It is tasked with the responsibility of designing strategic guideline and policies of the body while the Council of Ministers acts as a technical committee that binds all the government departments that handles issues relating to the Lake Chad Basin. The functions of the council include but not limited to the preparation of technical document that is to be submitted to the Summit of Head of States; monitoring the implementation of resolution(s) and decision of the Summit of Head of States as well as facilitating the working of the Executive Secretary of the LCBC.

The Executive Secretary, on the other hand, serves as the executive organ of the LCBC. Its core duties include: ensuring that the

principles, statutes and convention of the body is applied; collating, considering and sharing data relating to project prepared by member state as well as recommending action plan for the development of the Lake Chad Basin. Other of her functions include: liaising with member states with a view to promoting seamless and efficient utilization and exploitation of the basin's water; plan, coordinating and carrying out regional project as well as promoting regional cooperation through peaceful settlement of dispute between states (*EU and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development, 2015:21).*

The subsidiary bodies of the LCBC include the technical committee, the regional parliamentary committee and the inter-ministerial technical committee. The responsibilities of the regional parliamentary committee include monitoring payment of financial contribution(s) from member states as well as assisting the LCBC to obtain fund for its project. The inter-ministerial committee is made up of experts from member states. One of its main duties is to disseminate information regarding the commission's activities to the different levels of administration / structure of the LCBC member states. The technical committee was formed in 2000 to among others, contribute to the harmonization of water resources management of the basin, promote and ensure interaction and dialogue between and among member states on issue of the Lake Chad Basin, prepare technical and expert contributions for meeting of the summit of head of states and council of minister, develop a common template for water management, harmonize regulations and policies relating to water and the environment of member states (*Global Water Partnership 2013:*.8-9). The LCBC is funded by member states through yearly statutory contributions. Other source of fund for the organization comes from international donors and development partners such as the UN, World Bank, UNESCO, UNEP, UNDP, etc. Below is the chart for statutory contributions of member states to the body.

Table 2: LCBC Funding Sharing Formula among Member States

Countries	Old Sharing Formula (1964-2009)	Current Sharing Formula from 2010
Nigeria	52%	40%
Cameroon	26%	20%
Libya	Not yet a member	18%
Chad	11%	11%
Niger	7%	7%
Central Africa Republic	4%	4%
Total	100%	100%

Source: LCBC, "The Lake Chad Basin: A Bet in Danger for the Future" to Save Lake Chad Background , Paper presented at High Level Conference on Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa: The Challenges of Climate Change, Sirte, Libyan Arab Jama hiriya, December 15th -17th, 2008, p.5

Factors Militating against the Effectiveness of the Lake Chad Basin Commission

The germane questions this paper seeks to addressed are: has the LCBC fulfilled its mandate? If no, what are the factors militating against its effectiveness? Are there consequences arising from the LCBC's inability to meet her mandate on Nigeria economic relations with Cameroon?

In spite of the achievements of the LCBC, there is no doubt that the Lake Chad Basin Commission has not achieved all of the goals as contained in her statute in spite of concerted effort by member states. A study undertaken by the LCBC in 2015 revealed that despite the efforts to strengthen the Commission and help her fulfill her mandate, over the years, the Commission has somewhat failed, particularly in its responsibility of promoting equitable and integrated management of water and natural resources in its basin. This may not be unconnected with the levity with which member states treat issues relating to water management of the basin. For example, the 2015 LCBC report revealed that the

parliaments of the three member states have not ratified the water charter of the Commission and so the water charter has not been operational (*Adamu 2008)*.

In addition, it was noted that the utilization and management of water by member states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, especially the riparian countries are far from being adequate. This is because governments of member states do not pay considerable attention to matters concerning water management. They also do not transfer water matters to the LCBC. These countries have over the years, unilaterally constructed large and gigantic water infrastructures such as dams, irrigation systems, deep wells, among others, without putting into consideration the effects of such action on other riparian countries and without referring to the LCBC. This action has in turn played a crucial role in the contraction of the Lake Chad Basin, particularly the Lake Chad as well as undermining the actualization of the mandate of the LCBC.

Lack of adequate funding is one of the major challenges facing the Lake Chad Basin Commission. This is largely attributed to non-remittance and/or late remittance of statutory dues by member states despite decisions and resolutions by the Summit of Heads of States and Government of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the vigorous follow up by the executive secretary to ensure prompt payment of statutory contributions by member states (UNEP and GIWA, 2004: 4). This has made the body to be heavily dependent on international donor agencies and development partners. The mismanagement and misappropriation of fund provided by donor agencies and development partners in the past, has led to loss of confidence and trust by development partners, hence worsening the precarious financial inflow of the LCBC. The table below show the monumental amount of statutory contributions owed the organization by almost all member states.

Table 3: Breakdown of Outstanding Arrears of Member States

Country	Outstanding Arrears (FCFA)
Cameroon	948, 723, 814 FCFA since 2004
Central Africa Republic	274, 061, 123 FCFA since 2000
Niger	392, 733, 866, FCFA since 2002
Nigeria	1, 242, 723, 943 FCFA since 2006
Chad	537, 898, 840 FCFA since 2003

Source: *M. S. Adamu, Annual Report of the LCBC presented to the Summit of Heads of States and Government of LCBC, Abuja, 26th March, 2008*

One major noticeable factor militating against the effectiveness of the Lake Chad Basin Commission is the ecological fluctuation of the Lake Chad Basin including the Lake Chad. One major consequences of this ecological fluctuation is the increase in the ground water abstraction and contraction over the years. The United Nations Environmental Programme and Global Water International Water Assessment (2004:16) for example, noted that the open water surface of the Lake Chad Basin, particularly the Lake Chad has significantly reduced from about 25,000km² in the 1960s to less than 2000km² in the 1990s. A study undertaken by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (GFMECD) attributed the water contraction of the Lake Chad Basin and the Lake Chad in particular to climatic changes, heavy demographic pressure, increased pressure arising from human activities such as poor fishing practice, irrigation, dam construction, cutting down of wood, uncontrolled, unharmonious and non-unified water resources management by states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (*EU and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development, 2015:*.44-45).

The study further revealed that four riparian countries since the 1960 scrambled against each other in the construction of vast dams and irrigation network from water course flowing into the Lake Chad in their bid to boost agricultural activities as well as generate electricity. Consequently, irrigation construction quadrupled between 1983 and 1994. Currently, over twenty dams have been constructed by the riparian countries that divert water from this river, thus significantly reducing the volume of water inflow into the Lake Chad (*EU and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development, 2015:5*).

The diversion of water from these rivers is further worsened by climate change. Evans (1999:45) has argued that the climatic variability experienced throughout the history of the basin played a significant role in the fluctuation of the basin. Studies suggest significant decrease of rainfall in this region. This decrease has consequently led to drought experienced in the region especially from the 1970s to the 1990s. Xue and Shukaria (1998), on the other hand, observed that land anomalies played a key role in the recent trend of climatic change in the basin. They noted that a combination of factors including but not limited to vegetation cover, soil moisture, monsoon dynamics and sea surface temperature (SST) explained the reduction in the Lake Chad Basin. The shrinking of the basin has affected economic activities such as fishery, animal rearing, and farming. This has threatened the livelihood of the riparian communities.

The Lake Chad Basin Commission has also failed in its responsibility of building capacity of the commission to ensure food security and provide adequate employment for people living in the basin without degrading the environment. A Lake Chad Basin Commission audit revealed that there is inadequate state investment in the Lake Chad Basin by members. Apart from the paved road from N'Djamena to Karal in Chad, there is no access road to the Lake Chad from the interior. The access roads in the Nigerian sector of the Lake Chad are in poor state, the story is the same for other member state, especially the riparian states (World Bank, 2002).

TABLE 4: A GENERALIZED SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE LCBC RIPARIAN COUNTRIES

Health and Education indicators		Chad	CAR	Cameroon	Nigeria	Niger	Sudan	Libya	Algeria	Sub-Saharan Africa
Life Expectancy (2000)		48	43	50	47	46	56	71	71	41
Infant mortality per 1,000 live births (2000)		101	96	76	84	114	81	26	33	91
Prevalence of under nourishment, % of pop (1996-1998)		38	41	19	8	46	18	ND	5	33
Incidence of tuberculosis per 100,000 people		270	415	335	301	252	195	24	45	339
Physicians per 1000 people (1990-1999)		<0.05	<0.05	0.1	0.2	<0.05	0.1	1.3	1.0	0.1
Health care expenditure, % of GDP		2.9	3	5	2.8	2.6	3.3	ND	3.6	4.9
Adult illiteracy, % ages 15 and over (2000)	Male	48	40	18	28	76	31	9	24	30
	Female	66	65	31	44	92	54	32	43	47
Gross primary enrolment, % of school-age group (1998)		67	57	90	ND	31	56	153	109	78
Population		10 (8)*	4(1)	15(2)	150 (23)	16(2)	(3)	(0)	(0)	
% Living below 1 US$		64	67.4	40	34.1	63.0				

HDI	155	154	125	136	161				

Note: ND = No Data; * Values in brackets represent population within the basin.

Source: World Bank, 2002.

Apart from the inadequate state investment on critical infrastructures by member states, the Lake Chad Basin Commission countries are among the poorest in the world. The LCB countries, as indicated by the table above, is characterized by inadequate infrastructure, low productivity, poor governance, lack of dynamic private sector, corruption, political instability, high poverty rate, illiteracy, mortality, low life expectancy and her economies are highly vulnerable to domestic and external shocks. A World Bank report on GNI per capital put Chad, Central African Republic, Niger and Nigeria among the 23rd poorest countries in the world (Ovie and Belah, 2011:37). The economic growth of Chad, Sudan and Central African Republic has steadily declined since 1997 (Global Water Partnership, 2013:5). The abysmal state of the economies of these countries has been compounded by AIDS pandemic that has ravaged the vibrant and active population. This deplorable state of the economy of the Lake Chad Basin Commission countries has further impoverished the people of this region.

The Impact of the Challenges of the Lake Chad Basin Commission on Nigeria-Cameroon Economic Relations

The main economic activities in the Basin include but not limited to mining especially for gold, oil exploration and exploitation, fishery, livestock rearing, manufacturing activities such as cotton ginning, food industry, milling, leather work, etc, as well as farming especially in cotton, groundnut, sorghum, onion, millet, cowpea, vegetables, among others (Neiland and Bene, 2002:38). Of these economic activities, fishery is the most significant economic venture people in this basin engaged in. Between 1960

and 2015, over 1.7 million tons of fish have been caught at the Lake Chad Basin (EU and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development 2015:.9). These fishes caught in the Lake Chad Basin are usually traded between and among the riparian countries. These economic activities, especially fishery, constitute a vital contribution to food security and a major means of livelihood to the inhabitants of this area. This economic activity appears threatened by the shrinking of the Lake Chad Basin especially the Lake Chad; a shrinking attributed to the inability of the LCBC to manage the water resources of the Basin. Consequently, the volume of fish caught and traded between Nigeria and Cameroon has reduced considerably. Thus, reducing revenue accruable to both countries.

Following the continuous drying up of the Lake Chad, fishermen are put out of business forcing many of them into other economic activities such as farming, trading or herding. Many of the inhabitants of the area since the 1960s have migrated out of the Lake Chad. Being that Chad and Cameroon still have sufficient surface water within their respective national section of the Lake Chad. This has prompted migration of citizens of other states that bordered the Lake Chad, especially Nigerians to migrate in substantial number to Cameroon territory since the 1970s. Consequently, about 30 villages were said to have been created by this Nigerian immigrants in Cameroon segment of the Lake Chad. This influx over time created boundary tension at the northern border between the government of Nigeria and Cameroon. This tension, which led to the militarization of the border between the two countries, has undoubtedly affected trade interaction and economic relations between them. Following the futile attempt by the Lake Chad Basin Commission to find solution to this boundary dispute, in 1994, the Cameroon government sought the assistance of the International Court of Justice. In 2002, the ICJ delivered judgment adopting wholly the technical committee of the Lake Chad Basin Commission framework which Nigeria refused to ratify as the border between her and Cameroon.

Another economic activity that is badly affected by the shrinking of the Lake Chad is farming. Farming as noted earlier was another major productive economic activity engaged in by the inhabitants of the Lake Chad Basin. Over 2,800,000 hectares of land area were said to have been cultivated in the Lake Chad Basin in the following proportion by the riparian countries: Nigeria: 560,000 hectares, Niger: 2,010,000 hectares, Chad: 125,000 and 44,500 hectares by Cameroon (Vivekananda and *et al*, 2019: 50). The drying up of the Lake Chad has made more cultivatable lands available, however, agricultural activities appeared threatened due to the contraction of the lake since irrigation is the major means by which people living in the Sahel region of the Lake Chad Basin can practice intensive agriculture. The declining agricultural output arising from climatic factors has reduced articles of trade between and among the riparian countries, particularly Nigeria and Cameroon.

It is imperative to note that the changing climatic condition of the Lake Chad Basin has had severe negative consequences on food production in riparian countries of the Lake Chad Basin. This precarious situation has been compounded by the activities of Boko Haram which has engulfed the region. The evolution and development of the Boko Haram has received adequate attention by scholars and so shall not be repeated here. Suffice it to say, that the birth of this terrorist organization is attributed to several factors among which are high rate of poverty, illiteracy, endemic corruption, religious fundamentalism, rising inequality, re-occurring economic crisis, climate change, among others (Kah, 2017: 183). All of these factors indicate failures on the part of the Lake Chad Basin Commission in its responsibility of promoting the socio-economic well being of inhabitants of the Lake Chad Basin which was one of the core mandates of the body. The activities of Boko Haram insurgents undoubtedly have had severe consequences on Nigeria's economic relations with Cameroon. The violence unleashed on the inhabitants of the Lake Chad Basin, especially the Nigeria and Cameroon sector had made many people to abandon their farms, fishery, herding and other

economic activities. This in turn has led to food insecurity in Northern parts of Nigeria and Northern Cameroon. Kah (2017:186) for example, observed that the activities of Boko Haram insurgents have significantly contributed to decrease of food production and other agricultural related business in the region of Nigeria and Cameroon. He noted that Boko Haram attacks on markets in different parts of Northern Nigeria which serves as commercial centres for Niger, Cameroon and Chad, have undoubtedly affected trading relations between Nigeria and Cameroon.

In addition to the activities of Boko Haram, Fulani militia and bandits, the Lake Chad region is also bedeviled by herders-farmer's conflicts. Scholars contend that the contraction of the Lake Chad has triggered migration of herdsmen southward in search of greener pasture; a factor responsible for the incessant violent conflict between herders and farmers**.** The conflict between herdsmen and farmer, banditry and attacks from Boko Haram on the innocent inhabitants of the different Lake Chad Basin Commission member states have created regional security challenges, humanitarian problems, and economic instability among others for the region. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affair (UNOCHA:2015) estimated that over 2.5 million Nigerians and 1 million Cameroonians have fled their home and about 10.7 million persons are in dire need of humanitarian assistance in Nigeria and Cameroon. These millions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria and Cameroon, who are undoubtedly facing food insecurity and famine, are thus incapacitated and constrained from engaging in economic activities. There is no denying the fact that the violence and insecurity that has come to characterize the Nigeria's and Cameroon's segment of the Lake Chad Basin, affects the two countries' economic relations.

The fragile Nigeria's economic relations with Cameroon occasioned by the activities of Boko Haram insurgents, Fulani militia, bandits and herdsmen-farmer's conflict worsened following the closure of the Nigeria northern border with

Cameroon by President Goodluck Jonathan in February 2011 in an attempt to curb attacks from Boko Haram. This border closure, undoubtedly affected Nigeria's economic relations with Cameroon. Ngala (2019) for example, noted that the border closure affected business, household and as well led to reduction in custom revenue in Cameroon. He quoted the custom bureau chief for Limani, Mr. Alain Nzie as having said that there was a reduction of custom revenue from $718,000 to $239,000 within ten days of the border closure. In the border of Fokotol, instead of the $40,000 that is usually collected during the month of January, only $4000 was received following the closure of the border. In fact, the regional custom bureau chief noted that 80% of Cameroon regional economy shrunk following the border closure (Ngalam: 2019). However, this downward trend in Nigeria economic relations with Cameroon arising from the activities of insurgents was revised following the resuscitation of the LCBC Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF).

CONCLUSION

The Lake Chad Basin Commission is a demonstration of member states effort within the purview of multilateralism to promote cooperation and collaboration. The Commission is an instrument for forging integration and cooperation through dialogue and diplomacy. The successes of this body will not have only served as catalyst for economic development for Nigeria and Cameroon but for riparian countries in the Lake Chad Basin. However, the somewhat inability of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to effectively fulfill her mission and vision due to complex factors, some of which have been discussed herein, has in no small measure, contributed to the contraction of the Lake Chad and its attendant consequences, the evolution and development of insurgents, violent conflicts between herders and farmers in the Nigeria and Cameroon sector of the Lake Chad Basin; all of these factors have had tremendous negative consequences on Nigeria's economic relations with Cameroon.

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