

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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The Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ) has signed a definitive agreement for it to manage and develop the Zone d'Investissement Spécial (ZIS) d'Ikolo (Ikolo special investment zone). Australia-based miner Fortescue Metals Group (FMG) has reached an agreement with the Gabonese government to carry out a 12–18-month feasibility study at the Belinga iron ore site, which has estimated reserves of 1 billion tonnes. France-based Africa-focused industrial group Eranove and Gabon Power Company (GPC), a subsidiary of the Fonds Gabonais d'Investissements Stratégiques (FGIS) (Gabonese strategic investment fund), have signed mandates to raise €300m (\$337.9m) to finance the construction of the Ngoulmendjim hydroelectric power station. France-based TotalEnergies (ex-Total SA) has outlined its new scope of activities in Gabon and confirmed the finalisation of the sale of its non-strategic assets to Perenco Oil & Gas Gabon, a subsidiary of Franco-British independent petroleum firm Perenco. A vaccine passport mandate commences on 15 December despite public discontent and calls for civil disobedience against the measure. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects Gabon's economy will grow by 1.5% in 2021 and 3% in 2022.

Special Economic Zone to manage new special investment zone at Ikolo

The **Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ)** and the **Gabonese** state have signed the definitive agreement for the GSEZ to manage and develop the **Zone d'Investissement Spécial (ZIS) d'Ikolo** (Ikolo special investment zone).¹ The ZIS, located in **Moyen Ogooué Province** capital **Lambaréné**, will specialise in wood processing activities, serving as an industrial hub for wood transformation from the first to fourth stages of the process.² Investment and public-private partnership minister **Carmen Ndaot** chaired the signing ceremony on 29 November, also attended by economy and recovery minister **Nicole Janine Roboty**, water and forestry minister **Lee White**, and GSEZ director general **Kumar Mohan**.³

The GSEZ is a public-private-partnership between the Gabonese state (which has a 38.5% shareholding), **Arise Integrated Industrial Platforms (Arise IIP)**, a subsidiary of **Singapore**-based agro-industrial giant **Olam International**, and **Nigeria**-headquartered **Africa Finance Corporation (AFC)**.⁴ The GSEZ will develop the ZIS in tandem with **India**-headquartered **Greenply Middle East**, majority shareholder of **Greenply Gabon**.⁵ The ZIS was created in June by decree No. 00157, and construction work commenced in July.⁶ ZIS signed its first investor contract on 28 July with Greenply Middle East (see *ARC Briefing Gabon August 2021*).

Ndaot described the ZIS as a realisation of President **Ali Bongo Ondimba's** (2009-present) vision to promote economic diversification in Gabon.⁷ Greenply plans to transform 6,000-8,000 cubic metres of **Okoumé** wood into veneer sheets for export to **European** and other foreign markets.⁸ The ZIS aims to

¹ Gabon Media Time, 29 Nov 2021

² Le Nouveau Gabon, 30 Nov 2021

³ Gabon Media Time, 29 Nov 2021

⁴ Gabon Review, 29 Nov 2021

⁵ Gabon Review, 29 Nov 2021

⁶ Le Nouveau Gabon, 30 Nov 2021

⁷ Gabon Actu, 2 Dec 2021

⁸ Le Nouveau Gabon, 29 Jul 2021

export 300 containers of processed wood monthly, with Greenply shipping an estimated 150 of those. The government hopes the ZIS will be a benchmark for timber processing on the continent.⁹

The ZIS is expected to attract five to six businesses from 2022. Other investors have expressed interest in setting up operations, with a second factory currently under construction.¹⁰ White hopes the ZIS will create 1,000 jobs in 2022, and an additional 3,500 direct jobs and 7,000 indirect jobs over the next four years.¹¹ The ZIS will contribute to the development of infrastructure such as a wharf that will allow for the export of finished and semi-finished products to Gabon's economic capital, **Port Gentil**, and **Nkok**, where the GSEZ is located.¹²

The GSEZ has contributed significantly to development of Gabon's infrastructure, attracting investment and improving its industrial competitiveness.¹³ Operational since 2011, the GSEZ has resulted in the creation of 5,000 direct jobs and 16,000 indirect jobs, with a cumulative target of 35,000 jobs set for 2030.¹⁴ Over the next 10 years, the ZIS aims to increase tenfold the number of companies established in the GSEZ, which currently hosts 85 businesses from over 20 countries including **China**, **India** and **Turkey**.¹⁵ In September, it was accorded zero-carbon certification from **Switzerland**-based **SGS**, the first such distinction for an **African** industrial zone.¹⁶

However, the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has called on Gabonese authorities to review the tax exemptions it has granted to companies that have set up operations in the GSEZ. These include 25 years of exemption from value added tax (VAT), unlimited repatriation of profits, and a 10-year exemption from corporate tax. According to the IMF, Gabon lost an estimated 436 billion FCFA (\$751.5m) in potential tax revenue in 2019 alone as a result of these exemptions. As part of the economic assistance and reform package signed with Gabon in July, the IMF has recommended that corporate tax exemptions be reduced to a maximum of five years from 2023.

Gabon plans to create five additional SEZ's focused on agricultural activities. With the enactment of the **African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA)**, the special economic zones are expected to help Gabon improve its trade balance through the export of finished goods produced there.¹⁷

Fortescue Metals to start feasibility studies at Belinga iron ore deposit

Australia-based miner **Fortescue Metals Group (FMG)** has reached an agreement with the Gabonese government to carry out a 12–18-month feasibility study at the **Belinga** iron ore site.¹⁸ The studies aim to confirm the potential of the mining project located on the hills of **Mt. Belinga** in the **Ogooué-Ivondo** province in north-east Gabon, which has reserves of high-grade iron ore estimated at 1 billion tonnes. The agreement was signed at the presidential palace on 24 November and confirmed by Fortescue on 15 December.¹⁹ Fortescue CEO **Elizabeth Gaines** said in a statement that the company is pursuing global opportunities in iron ore that align with its strategy and expertise:

*"We look forward to working with the Gabon Government on this project as we continue to invest in assets to optimise growth and returns in our iron ore business."*²⁰

The Belinga iron ore project is one of the most promising untapped mining reserves in Africa.²¹ The government granted a mining operating licence to **China Machinery Engineering Company (CMEC)**

⁹ Gabon Actu, 2 Dec 2021

¹⁰ Gabon Review, 29 Nov 2021

¹¹ Gabon Review, 29 Nov 2021

¹² Gabon Review, 29 Nov 2021

¹³ Gabon Review, 29 Nov 2021

¹⁴ Jeune Afrique, 12 Dec 2021

¹⁵ Le Nouveau Gabon, 30 Nov 2021

¹⁶ Jeune Afrique, 1 Oct 2021

¹⁷ Gabon Review, 26 Nov 2021

¹⁸ Le Nouveau Gabon, 30 Nov 2021

¹⁹ Reuters, 15 Dec 2021

²⁰ Reuters, 15 Dec 2021

²¹ The Africa Report, 28 May 2014

in 2006 but suspended it in 2011 following a dispute with the company.²² CMEC and its partner, **Pangang Group**, which held 75% of shares in the **Compagnie Minière de Belinga (COMIBEL)**, the joint venture established to exploit the mine, transferred its stake in the firm to the Gabonese state in December 2013.²³

Fortescue has progressively assessed Belinga since 2018.²⁴ According to **France-based publication Africa Intelligence**, President Bongo's eldest son, **Nourredin Valentin Bongo**, who served as director of presidential affairs from June 2019 to September 2021, reportedly played an important role in facilitating Fortescue's involvement in the project.²⁵ Bongo reportedly met Australian billionaire and Fortescue founder **Andrew Forrest** on the sidelines of the 26th **Conference of Parties to Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow (United Kingdom)** in November.²⁶

The agreement between Fortescue and the Gabonese state includes a 36-month exclusivity period over the 5,500 km² area. Fortescue will create a Gabonese mining company, owned 80% by Fortescue, to hold tenure over the project.²⁷ Fortescue reportedly intends to use green hydrogen technology as a source of energy to develop the mine, in line with Gabon's sustainable development objectives.²⁸ Fortescue is developing the green hydrogen technology across the continent, notably with Gabon's neighbour, **Cameroon**.²⁹

The relaunch of activities at the Belinga iron ore project is good news for Gabon, which has taken steps over the last few years to make the mining sector an increasingly important and strategic sector of the economy. Mining activities contributed 6% to Gabon's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019.³⁰ Gabon's 2021-2023 economic development agenda, the **Plan d'Accélération de la Transformation (PAT)**, cites economic diversification as one of its key pillars, and the valorisation of the mining sector will help to achieve this objective. Mines and petroleum minister **Vincent de Paul Massassa** stated:

*"We hope to get these projects back on track, which would make the mining sector contribute more to the country's economy and budget."*³¹

While iron ore exploitation could help to achieve the above mentioned target, manganese activity is already a well-established mining domain in Gabon as the country produced 15% of the world's manganese in 2019 (see *ARC Briefing Gabon March 2021*).³² Gabon also produced a record 8.448 million tonnes in 2020, a 25.2% increase from the 2019 total of 6.8 million tonnes (see *ARC Briefing Gabon April 2021*).³³ In June 2019, France-based metallurgical firm **Eramet**, which owns Gabon's largest mining enterprise, the **Compagnie Minière de l'Ogooue (Comilog)**, unveiled its 419 billion FCFA (\$725m) five-year investment plan for its manganese mining operations in Gabon (see *ARC Briefing Gabon July 2019*). Other foreign players such as **Commerciale des Mines de Huazhou (CICMHZ)**, a subsidiary of **China-based Citic Dameng Mining Industries Ltd**, have also helped to raise the profile of Gabon's nascent mining industry over the last few years.³⁴

TotalEnergies presents new scope of activities in Gabon

France-based **TotalEnergies (ex-Total SA)** has outlined its new scope of activities in Gabon. **TotalEnergies** Africa director **Henri-Max Ndong Nzué** met President Bongo on 30 November to present the scope of activities the company will undertake in Gabon from 2022 as part of its energy

²² Le Nouveau Gabon, 30 Nov 2021

²³ www.gide.com, 23 Jan 2014

²⁴ Reuters, 15 Dec 2021

²⁵ Africa Intelligence, 30 Nov 2021

²⁶ Africa Intelligence, 30 Nov 2021

²⁷ Reuters, 15 Dec 2021

²⁸ Agence Ecofin, 30 Nov 2021

²⁹ Agence Ecofin, 30 Nov 2021

³⁰ Agence Ecofin, 30 Nov 2021

³¹ Agence Ecofin, 30 Nov 2021

³² Direct Infos Gabon, 25 Sep 2020

³³ Gabon Media Time, 13 Apr 2021

³⁴ Gabon Media Time, 1 Mar 2021

transition into domains other than oil and gas, promoting the development of renewable energy and preservation of the environment.³⁵ Ndong Nzué said Total plans to focus on solar energy development, transformation of forests and carbon, and reduction of burning gas (flaring) amongst others.³⁶ Ndong Nzué, accompanied by **Total Gabon** director general **Stéphane Bassene**, assured President Bongo that the company would continue to invest in Gabon, noting Total's "important and historic partnership" with Gabon:³⁷

*"We are redeploying ourselves but remain active in Gabon both in our traditional businesses but also by developing new activities."*³⁸

Ndong Nzué's audience with Bongo comes as Gabon embarks on accelerated energy transition. The energy ministry has opted to switch from fuel (diesel and gasoline) to gas, to supply Gabon with electricity and to operate vehicles.³⁹ Bongo commended the role Total intends to play in preserving the environment and fighting against climate change.⁴⁰

In line with its objectives, Total confirmed the finalisation of the sale of its non-strategic assets to **Perenco Oil & Gas Gabon**, a subsidiary of **Franco-British** independent petroleum firm **Perenco**, on 8 December.⁴¹ The sale was initially agreed in July 2020, with Perenco paying Total the equivalent of \$350m for its assets (see *ARC Briefing Gabon August 2020 and November 2021*). Perenco will obtain seven maturing fields in which Total had 58% shareholding, and the **Cap Lopez** oil terminal. Ndong Nzué said the transaction is aligned with Total's strategy to enhance its portfolio by divesting maturing, high break-even fields.⁴² The strategy was launched in 2017 and will see Total prioritise the operation of offshore assets in **Arguille** and **Torpille** sectors.

Eranove and FGIS to finance construction of Ngoulmendjim power station

France-based and **Africa**-focused industrial group **Eranove** and **Gabon Power Company (GPC)**, a subsidiary of the **Fonds Gabonais d'Investissements Stratégiques (FGIS)** (Gabonese strategic investment fund), have signed mandates to raise €300m (\$337.9m) to finance the construction of the **Ngoulmendjim** hydroelectric power station.⁴³ In terms of the mandates, the **African Development Bank (AfDB)** will have a transaction arrangement mandate while **United Kingdom (UK)**-based **Standard Chartered Bank (SCB)** will carry out the financial structure mandate.⁴⁴

GPC and Eranove officially entered the financial mobilisation phase of the development of the hydroelectric power station on 22 November.⁴⁵ Both firms will act on behalf of the FGIS-Eranove consortium to identify institutions to participate in the financing of the energy project and examine the files with the aim of signing credit agreements that will lead to the start of construction.⁴⁶

The Ngoulmendjim hydro project will have installed power generation capacity of 82 megawatts (MW) and annual estimated production of 550 gigawatts (GWH).⁴⁷ It is located on the **Komo River** in **Estuaire** province, 125 km from the capital **Libreville**, and aims to address the growing demand for electricity in Gabon's capital, which hosts nearly half of the country's population.⁴⁸ The project will be carried out by **Asokha Energie**, a joint venture in which Eranove and FGIS respectively hold 60% and 40% shares. The project is expected to have a significant economic impact, creating 800-1,000 direct

³⁵ Gabon Review, 1 Dec 2021

³⁶ Direct Infos Gabon, 1 Dec 2021

³⁷ Gabon Review, 1 Dec 2021

³⁸ Le Nouveau Gabon, 1 Dec 2021

³⁹ Le Nouveau Gabon, 1 Dec 2021

⁴⁰ Direct Infos Gabon, 1 Dec 2021

⁴¹ Energy Voice, 9 Dec 2021

⁴² Energy Voice, 9 Dec 2021

⁴³ Agence Ecofin, 25 Nov 2021

⁴⁴ Afrik21, 26 Nov 2021

⁴⁵ Agence Ecofin, 25 Nov 2021

⁴⁶ Direct Infos Gabon, 30 Nov 2021

⁴⁷ Agence Ecofin, 25 Nov 2021

⁴⁸ Agence Ecofin, 25 Nov 2021

jobs during the construction phase and many more indirect job opportunities.⁴⁹ Energy will be transported through a 225-KV transmission line, approximately 125 km long.⁵⁰ The power station will emit six times fewer greenhouse gas emissions than Gabon's current energy mix, in line with the government's objective to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 50% compared to their 2010 level.⁵¹ Eranove Group director and CEO **Marc Albérola** highlighted the impact of the mandate signing:

*"The signing of these mandates is a notable progress towards the effective financing of this hydroelectric power station project, which meets the best international standards in the environmental, social and societal fields, as confirmed by the independent evaluation carried out with the tool by the **International Hydropower Association (IHA)**".⁵²*

FGIS director general **Akim Daouda** said the signing of the mandates shows the confidence of international investors such as Eranove in the economic viability of GPC's projects,

"but [is] also an encouragement to the pursuit of our mobilisation in favour of responsible investment".⁵³

The PAT aims to increase electricity capacity by an additional 250 MW by 2023 as part of the **Plan Sectoriel Électricité** (sectoral electricity plan), a component of Gabon's long-term economic development programme, the **Plan Stratégique Gabon Émergent (PSGE)** (2010-2025).⁵⁴ Throughout the second half of 2021, the government has concluded several energy infrastructure-related deals with foreign investors, using the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model. These include:

- 35-MW **Kinguéle Aval** hydroelectric power station (see *ARC Briefing Gabon July 2021*);⁵⁵
- 50-MW photovoltaic (solar) plant in **Grand Libreville** (see *ARC Briefing Gabon July 2021*);⁵⁶
- 20-MW photovoltaic (solar) plant at **Douba** (see *ARC Briefing Gabon September 2021*);⁵⁷
- 120-MW natural gas thermal plant at **Owendo** (see *ARC Briefing Gabon October 2021*);⁵⁸

With the conclusion of these projects, the Ngoulmendjim power station and the imminent start of construction of the 15 MW **Dibwagnui** hydroelectric dam, Gabon will be several steps closer towards realising its electricity output goal for 2023.

Covid passports kick in amid public discontent

As of 15 December, Covid-19 vaccination certificates or negative PCR tests are required to access public places in Gabon, including administrative buildings, businesses, restaurants and snack bars.⁵⁹ A nationwide boycott took place on 15 December amid civil society groups' opposition to the new measures, which are intended to encourage greater uptake of Covid-19 vaccines.⁶⁰ Civil society group **COPIL Citoyen** lodged a complaint at the **Cour Constitutionnelle** (constitutional court) on 13 December against the imposition of the new measures.⁶¹ The **Dynamique Unitaire** trade union and civil society group **Cercle des Libérateurs Réformateurs** have also criticised the latest restrictions.⁶² During organised civil disobedience against Covid-19 measures in February, two individuals were

⁴⁹ Le Nouveau Gabon, 25 Nov 2021

⁵⁰ Afrik21, 26 Nov 2021

⁵¹ Agence Ecofin, 25 Nov 2021

⁵² Le Nouveau Gabon, 25 Nov 2021

⁵³ Agence Ecofin, 25 Nov 2021

⁵⁴ La Tribune Afrique, 25 Aug 2021

⁵⁵ La Tribune Afrique, 4 Jul 2021

⁵⁶ Gabon Review, 12 Jul 2021

⁵⁷ La Tribune Afrique, 25 Aug 2021

⁵⁸ Direct Infos Gabon, 22 Sep 2021

⁵⁹ Gabon Review, 27 Oct 2021

⁶⁰ Gabon Review, 15 Dec 2021

⁶¹ Gabon Review, 14 Dec 2021

⁶² Gabon Media Time, 3 Nov 2021

killed in Libreville, following protests there as well as in Port Gentil (see *ARC Briefing Gabon February 2021*).

Health minister **Dr. Guy Patrick Obiang** announced the new restrictive measures in October and published them in the government gazette on 25 November. In terms of the directives, those who are vaccinated against Covid-19 are exempt from curfew restrictions (see *ARC Briefing Gabon November 2021*).⁶³ Individuals vaccinated against Covid-19 will also not require special authorisation to travel to the interior of the country, while unvaccinated persons will have to present a negative PCR test valid for 14 days, according to interior minister **Lambert Mbatha**.⁶⁴ International passengers will be screened upon arrival, while unvaccinated individuals will be placed under mandatory five-day quarantine.⁶⁵

Transport minister **Brice Constant Palliat** announced on 29 November that the government had banned flights and passengers from **Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa** and **Zimbabwe** due to the discovery of the **Omicron** variant of Covid-19.⁶⁶ Palliat justified the move as a precaution to maintain Gabon's downward trend in Covid-19 cases. Presidency spokesperson **Jessye Ella Ekogha** announced on social media platform **Twitter** on 30 November that President Bongo would not undertake any international trips until further notice, due to the outbreak.⁶⁷

Gabonese have been reluctant to get vaccinated against Covid. By 27 November, Covid vaccines had been administered to only 13.64%, versus the government's target of 50% by the end of 2021.⁶⁸ Obiang has encouraged vaccination against Covid amid expectations of a fourth wave of infections in the first quarter of 2022.⁶⁹

Gabon has sufficient supply of vaccines. On 25 November, during a visit to Gabon, **Greek** foreign minister **Nikos Dendias** offered 50,000 doses of the **United States (US)**-manufactured **Moderna** vaccine on behalf of his government.⁷⁰ The US donated 100,000 doses of its **Pfizer** vaccine on 6 December.⁷¹ Gabon also has supplies of the China-manufactured **Sinopharm**, **Russia**-manufactured **Sputnik V** and US-based pharmaceutical company **Johnson & Johnson's Janssen** vaccine.⁷²

At time of writing, Gabon had recorded 37,626 cases of Covid-19 in its population of 2.2 million, with 34,522 recoveries and 285 deaths.⁷³ Health authorities had vaccinated 219,775 people as of 12 December.⁷⁴

2021 in review and looking ahead to 2022

Prime minister **Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda** kicked off 2021 with presentation of Gabon's **Plan d'Accélération de la Transformation (PAT)**, the national economic agenda from 2021-2023. The PAT aims to accelerate Gabon's economic transformation following a 4.9% economic contraction in 2020, due in large part to Covid-19 and the massive drop in petroleum prices.⁷⁵ The IMF executive board approved a 36-month arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for Gabon in July, which will enable it to access the equivalent of \$553.2m. The funding aims to provide short-term

⁶³ Gabon Review, 27 Oct 2021

⁶⁴ Gabon Review, 27 Oct 2021

⁶⁵ Gabon Review, 27 Oct 2021

⁶⁶ Le Nouveau Gabon, 29 Nov 2021

⁶⁷ Gabon Review, 1 Dec 2021

⁶⁸ Gabon Review, 30 Nov 2021

⁶⁹ Gabon Review, 14 Dec 2021

⁷⁰ Gabon Review, 26 Nov 2021

⁷¹ Le Nouveau Gabon, 6 Dec 2021

⁷² Le Nouveau Gabon, 6 Dec 2021

⁷³ Infocovid.ga, 13 Dec 2021

⁷⁴ Infocovid.ga, 12 Dec 2021

⁷⁵ Gabon Review, 4 Sep 2020

support for the government's Covid-19 pandemic response and implementation of the PAT.⁷⁶ The IMF projects economic growth will reach 1.5% in 2021 and accelerate to 3% in 2022.⁷⁷

Planner

17-19 Dec 2021 **Istanbul (Turkey) Turkey-Africa Summit**
2023 **(Gabon)** Local and national assembly elections

Chronology

15 Dec 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** projects economic growth will reach 1.5% in 2021 and improve to 3% in 2022;

12 Dec 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Jeune Afrique*. The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has reportedly expressed reservations about the tax exemptions granted to foreign companies that set up operations in the **Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ)**, a subsidiary of **Singapore-based Olam** and **Nigeria-headquartered Africa Finance Corporation (AFC)**;

9 Dec 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. **TotalEnergies Gabon**, subsidiary of **France-based Total Energies**, announced the finalisation of the sale of its non-strategic assets to **Perenco Gabon** for 203 billion FCFA (\$348.9m)

7 Dec 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. Water and forestry minister **Lee White** says Gabon absorbed 105 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere in 2020;

2 Dec 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Gabon Review*. **Australia-based miner Fortescue Metals Group** has signed an agreement with the Gabonese government to undertake feasibility studies at the **Belinga** iron ore deposit, which has estimated reserves of 1 billion tonnes;

1 Dec 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. **Henri-Max Ndong Zué**, Africa director for **France-based Total Energies (ex-Total)**, presents the company's new plan of action, entailing development of renewable energy, to President **Ali Bongo Ondimba**;

25 Nov 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. **France-based Eranove** and **Gabon Power Company (GPC)**, subsidiary of the **Fonds Gabonais d'Investissements Stratégiques (FGIS)** (Gabonese strategic investment fund), intend to raise €300m (\$339.8m) for the construction and development of the **Ngoulmendjim** hydropower plant (82 MW) on the international financial market;

25 Nov 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. Presidency spokesperson **Jessye Ella Ekogha** says a presidency task force has discovered 750 billion FCFA (\$1.294 billion) in unverified public debt claims, out of a total 1,100 billion FCFA (\$1.899 billion) that has been audited;

25 Nov 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Le Nouveau Gabon*. Gabon has expressed interest in becoming the first **African** country to procure supplies of the **Moroccan-manufactured Covid-19** vaccine, which has been produced in partnership between **China-based Sinopharm** and **Morocco-based Sothema**;

23 Nov 2021 **Libreville (Gabon)** *Direct Infos Gabon*. Water and environment minister **Lee White** says the **Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ)**, a subsidiary of **Singapore-based agro-industrial giant Olam** that specialises in wood transformation, will open furniture stores in **Miami (United States)**, **London (United Kingdom)** and **Paris (France)** in 2022;

⁷⁶ Gabon Review, 6 Aug 2021

⁷⁷ Direct Infos Gabon, 15 Dec 2021

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