Record Nr. UNINA9910973349303321

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Titolo Fiscal Surveillance in a Petro Zone : : The Case of the CEMAC / /

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Pubbl/distr/stampa Washington, D.C.:,: International Monetary Fund,, 2004

ISBN 9786613775054

Edizione [1st ed.]

Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (28 p.)

Collana IMF Working Papers

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Petroleum industry and trade Equatorial Guinea, Republic of

Lingua di pubblicazione

Inglese

**Formato** 

Materiale a stampa

Livello bibliografico

Monografia

Note generali

Description based upon print version of record.

Nota di contenuto

""Contents""; ""I. INTRODUCTION""; ""II. METHODOLOGY""; ""A. Gap Analysis""; ""B. Sensitivity Analysis of the Market Value of Equity (MVE)""; ""C. Duration""; ""D. Value at Risk""; ""E. Issues in Estimating Interest Rate Risk Exposure of Banks""; ""F. Data Description""; ""III. RESULTS""; ""A. Cross Sectional Heterogeneity""; ""IV. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS""; ""References""

Sommario/riassunto

This paper discusses fiscal surveillance criteria for the countries of the Central African Monetary and Economic Union (CEMAC), most of which depend heavily on oil exports. At present, the CEMAC's macroeconomic surveillance exercise sets as fiscal target a floor on the basic budgetary balance. This appears inadequate, for at least two reasons. First, fluctuations in oil prices and, hence, oil receipts obscure the underlying fiscal stance. Second, oil resources are limited, which suggests that some of today's oil receipts should be saved to finance future consumption. The paper develops easy-to-calculate indicators that take both aspects into account. A retrospective analysis based on these alternative indicators reveals that in recent years, the CEMAC's surveillance exercise has tended to accommodate stances of fiscal policy that are at odds with sound management of oil wealth.