

# News *from the* Department

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Agriculture  
Environment  
Water Resources



● **Replenishing the Stock  
of the Regional Food  
Security Reserve**

● **One Department,  
three Sectoral Policies**

● **Increasing Efforts  
for a Healthier  
Environment**

● **Taking the Lead  
in the Climate Action**

# Editorial



**Sékou Sangaré**

Commissioner Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources  
ECOWAS Commission

Dear Partners,

*The development of West Africa depends first and foremost on a productive agriculture, a healthy environment and well-managed water resources, but also, and more and more, on the involvement of formal and informal private actors. This development also requires considering the current context of global warming and the worrying security situation that negatively impact the lives of the populations.*

Strengthening people's resilience capacity is therefore essential and must be achieved through the promotion of a local and participatory production system for sustainable development. These are, among others, concerns that justified the adoption by ECOWAS of regional policies in the three complementary strategic sectors of rural development: agriculture, environment and water resources.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources is responsible for the implementation of these policies with the support of technical and financial partners. It provides political and strategic leadership in regional programs formulation and resources mobilization. This leadership is underpinned by a "get it done" strategy of all field activities by civil society operators, local communities themselves and the States.

Major results recorded on ground are, for example, the numerous achievements made by the Agricultural Productivity Program in West Africa and the various dynamics triggered by the other on-going initiatives. Such initiatives are among others, the promotion of products that are strategic for food security such as the "Rice offensive", the promotion of an integrated regional agricultural information system, the governance and development of pastoralism and transhumance, biodiversity and forest governance, fisheries and aquaculture, strengthening of the prevention and management of food crises, financing of climate-smart agriculture, etc.

It is therefore with pride that we are launching this Quarterly Information Bulletin "**News from the Department**", a platform for dialogue and interaction with all our partners. This tool also represents the evidence of our duty to account for our field activities and results. The ECOWAS Commission, through me, reiterates once again its regards, gratitude and frank collaboration.

This first issue of the Department integrated communication gives you an overview of the political orientations of the Heads of State and Government for the development of the rural sector in the region. You will also find some achievements and/or ongoing actions.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2020 to all!

## News from the Department

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## One Department, three Sectoral Policies

*For ECOWAS, these regional policies are the spearhead and the fertile triangle for the region's socio-economic development.*

Since 2005, the ECOWAS Commission has gradually adopted sectoral policies in the areas of agriculture, environment and water resources as levers to boost regional integration. These three sectoral policies are implemented under the coordination and leadership of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources.

The West African Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP), which was adopted in 2005, is a breakdown of the NEPAD's Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP). It is a response to the agricultural and food challenges in the region and affirms the vision of a modern and sustainable agriculture based on the effectiveness and efficiency of family farms and the promotion of agricultural enterprises.

Productive and competitive on the intra-Community and international markets, it must make it possible to ensure food security and provide decent incomes to the populations. This policy was reviewed in 2015 for the next ten years.

In addition to ECOWAP, two other regional policies, namely those of the Environment and Water resources, were both adopted in 2008.

The Common Environmental Policy (ECOWEP) proposes the vision of a peaceful, dignified and prosperous West Africa whose natural resources, diverse and productive, are conserved and managed in a sustainable manner for the development and balance of the sub-regional space. By highlighting regional integration and the strategic role of natural resources, it aims to reverse the serious trends of degradation and reduction of natural resources in order



to ensure a healthy, livable and productive environment. As for the West Africa Water Resources Policy (WAWRP), it aims to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development by directing ECOWAS and its Member States towards water resources management that reconciles economic development, social equity and environmental protection.

It contributes to the West African vision for water, life and environment for 2025 adopted in March 2000 by the ECOWAS Council of Ministers for Water and Environment.

WAWRP anticipates that by 2025, water resources will be managed efficiently and effectively so that everyone has access to safe drinking water for basic needs, waste disposal facilities, food security and poverty reduction, human health and biodiversity of terrestrial and aquatic systems protected.

## Replenishing the Stock of the Regional Food Security Reserve

*Pending the Community resources to cover for the activities and interventions of the Reserve, ECOWAS must maintain the level of the currently acquired stocks (32,178.5 tons) thanks to the food security storage support project in West Africa funded by the European Union with a total budget of € 56 million.*

The decision of the Adhoc Management Committee of the Reserve to initiate the technical rotation of stocks brought to stores in 2017 led to a first operation on December 28, 2018 in Ghana under an agreement between ECOWAS and the Government for the supply of food products to school feeding programs. This operation tested the general rules of technical rotation with 2,750 tons of cereals composed of maize, millet, sorghum and white rice.



In line with its commitment at the highest level to replenish grain-for-grain the stock made available to them, the Government of Ghana has started the process of replenishing the stock of the Regional Food Security

Reserve. Other countries that benefited from the Reserve products should also follow Ghana's example in the coming months.

## Making Agroecology a Success, a Major Challenge for ECOWAS

*For ECOWAS, West Africa must manage its natural resources well in order to produce more to adequately feed an ever-growing population.*

In the current context of climate change and variability, the scaling up of production techniques based on the agroecological approach to resource use (land, water, flora, fauna, etc.) offers an opportunity for West African countries to address the challenge of resilience to food insecurity and nutritional deficiencies that affect poor households. Agroecological intensification is therefore the reference to the implementation of agricultural and livestock techniques and practices that enhance organic mechanisms for increased, sustainable and healthy production.

Among other actions undertaken within the framework of its sectoral policies on agriculture, environment and water resources, ECOWAS has been implementing, since 2018, a comprehensive program to support and assist its Member States in succeeding the development of agroecology co-financed by the French Development Agency and the European Union. Through these actions, ECOWAS stimulates the development of innovative practices that optimize the mobilization of ecological processes in the field of agricultural production and food and nutritional security, mainly in areas affected by agricultural land degradation, rainfall problems and natural resource degradation.

As part of this regional program of more than 16 million Euros, it launched some 15 micro-projects in Member



Stony cord techniques

States last September, lasting two to three years, to identify innovative agroecological practices to be scaled up at the regional level.

Led by grassroots actors and designed on the basis of partnerships, these field projects cover three main areas: agroecological intensification of production within family farms, sustainable development and collective management of natural resources in village areas, catchments and irrigated areas, and the promotion of products resulting from agroecological practices on the market.

## Strengthening Food and Nutrition Security through the Eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants

*For ECOWAS, the eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants is vital for food security, income generation and improvement of the livelihoods of small ruminants farmers.*

The epidemic of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) in West Africa is a health emergency due to its rapid spread. It kills up to 90% of the animals it infects and causes significant economic losses.

In fact, small ruminants are a resource for the world's poorest rural families. For these households, sheep and goats are a source of food and income, a safety net and a means of incomes to face difficult periods.

The control and eradication of PPR through regional approaches to controlling transboundary animal diseases directly impact food and nutritional security. This has led ECOWAS to develop a regional strategy for the eradication of the disease.

The project to progressively control and eradicate PPR in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone is the gateway to the disease control in the region by 2030.

In this perspective, experts from the 3 target countries (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone) met last October in Bamako, Mali to review the roadmap and plan the launch of the mass vaccination campaign set before the end of the year.

The agreed plan includes the use of a less costly and effective identification tool for mass vaccination campaign. It focuses mainly on compliance with the policies of the countries involved and on awareness raising. Animal health networks will be used to provide field vaccination, deworming, surveillance, laboratory and veterinary services. Animal identification is also essential in this pilot project aiming at controlling and eradicating PPR in the region.

The implementation of the PPR project is coordinated by the Regional Animal Health Centre (RAHC) with the financial support of the Swiss Development Cooperation and the contribution of the ECOWAS Commission and its three beneficiary Member States.



A vaccination campaign

## Increasing Efforts for a Healthier Environment

*For ECOWAS, the Environmental Action Plan will ensure the long-term preservation of forest, marine, coastal and biodiversity resources and contribute to climate resilience.*

**A**s part of the implementation of the Environmental Policy (ECOWEP), the Environmental Action Plan was revised in 2018 with the support of the West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change Project to address environmental health risks.

Efforts under strategic axis I, "Strengthening Environmental Governance", have enabled the capacity of West African negotiators to be strengthened within the framework of international conventions and multilateral environmental agreements on climate change, desertification and biodiversity.

The second strategic action line "Promotion and Sustainable Management of Resources" contributed to the launch of the forest dialogue process. It was implemented with the support of FAO and other partners within the framework of the "Forest Convergence Plan for Sustainable Forest Management and Use".

Regarding "the Fight against Pollution, Nuisances and Waste", activities focused on the development of regional strategic intervention documents for the sustainable management of chemicals and hazardous waste.

A communication strategy has also been developed to address environmental education concerns and information sharing with relevant stakeholders.

It is expected that at the end of the implementation of the Environmental Action Plan in 2025, there will be an improvement in sub regional environmental governance and an increase in the effectiveness of international negotiations by ECOWAS Member States.

Environmental policies and regulations at the sub regional level will also be integrated with greater solidarity among countries for the sharing of resources to address the risks associated with natural, industrial and chemical disasters.



## Taking the Lead in the Climate Action

*For ECOWAS, global warming requires joint action within the framework of regional solidarity to enable the region to reduce its vulnerability to the consequences of climate change.*

**W**ith five of the ten most vulnerable countries in the world regarding climate change and despite a low responsibility for the origin of this phenomenon - 1.8% of global greenhouse gas emissions - the region stands out for its vulnerability. Faced with this challenge and by taking actions in leading a concerted regional response, ECOWAS supports and accompanies the various efforts already made by its Member States to minimize the adverse effects of climate change.

With CILSS and the technical and financial support of its partners, notably the European Union, ECOWAS, for example, worked from 2011 to 2016 to strengthen the capacities of countries and regional actors in the formulation and implementation of policies and strategies that integrate climate change into development plans and programs.

In September 2019, ECOWAS organized the launch of the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA+) West Africa plus Chad and Mauritania project, followed by a regional workshop on strategic thinking for climate action.

The climate focal points, regional and national institutions, other regional initiatives and civil society working for the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement have thus laid the foundation for a regional climate strategy and identified concrete means of action.



The Nationally Determined Contributions that have been the subject of a diagnostic report constitute one of the first tools of this strategy.

ECOWAS has also identified potential actions to support Member States. These include (i) pooling efforts to create economies of scale, (ii) strengthening regional leadership, particularly during negotiations, (iii) regional capitalization on innovative public policies and practices, and (iv) support for national policy initiatives and orientations.

## Financing Climate-Smart Agriculture

*For ECOWAS, WAICSA has the potential to improve the food security of 90,000 smallholder farming households in the region and to convert more than 185,000 hectares into climate-resilient and productive agricultural land.*

**A**s part of the mobilization of additional resources for the financing of ECOWAP through the Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food (RFAF), ECOWAS' Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development presented to the "Global Innovation Lab for Climate Finance (The Lab)" its "West Africa Initiative for Climate-Smart Agriculture (WAICSA)". This initiative was selected in early 2019 from the top six out of 250 ideas submitted at the end of 2018 as part of a global call for project proposals.

On September 27, 2019 in New York, on the margins of the Climate Action Summit organized under the auspices of the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Lab's member institutions analyzed the financial mechanisms proposed by the selected promoters in early 2019 in order to officially endorse them.

During the Lab meeting, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Jean Claude Kassi Brou, officially announced the Commission's contribution to WAICSA through the RFAF Fund managed by the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) which has also committed itself to contribute financially to the development of this instrument. The members of the Lab greatly appreciated these interventions in favor of WAICSA and endorsed the initiative to the applause of the audience.

WAICSA plans to establish a blended financing fund to support the adoption of climate-smart agriculture by providing technical assistance and subsidized loans or guarantees to small farmers .

Over the period 2020-2027, WAICSA's target envelope will be USD 80 million, of which 80% will be for the investment financing mechanism and 20% for a technical assistance facility.

WAICSA also seeks the support of investors and other stakeholders such as the ECOWAP donor group. In addition to these commitments, the Fund also aims to mobilize public resources from other institutions and concessional investors as well as capital from private investors.



Partial view of the assembly

## Controlling Fruit Flies, a Major Step in the Promotion of the Horticultural Sector

*With the experience of this pilot project, ECOWAS has accumulated important achievements to be part of a global management perspective of plant protection against pests.*

In order to address the scourge of fruit flies, which can destroy 50 to 80% of fruit production, ECOWAS and its Member States, with the financial support of the European Union and the French Development Agency, set up a response plan in 2015 through the Project to Support the Regional Plan for Fruit Flies Control in West Africa.

After four years of a dubious implementation battle, all stakeholders of the project met last July in Dakar, Senegal as part of the project's closing, results capitalization and sharing workshop.

Discussions have shown that the implementation of this project has impacted the mango sector in the beneficiary countries, in particular (i) the establishment of an operational surveillance system in the 32 mango production basins of the beneficiary countries to track fruit flies infestations and the issuance of early warnings, (ii) capacity building for 8517 producers and technicians in integrated pest management techniques and the provision of certified fruit flies management products to producers, (iii) the strengthening of the technical capacities of 1438 representatives of professional organizations of plant health inspectors and their provision of adequate inspection and/or laboratory equipment, and (iv) the establishment, by ministerial or inter-ministerial order, of 11 national committees composed of representatives of the public and private sectors with a national mandate.

Applied research activities have made it possible to identify new control methods based on local products that are effective, environmentally friendly and less costly for producers. These achievements have contributed to a positive and significant impact on the mango sector in the



Fruit flies on a mango

project's beneficiary countries, in particular through (i) a 57% reduction in mango interceptions at Europe's borders and (ii) a 40% increase in mango exports from the ECOWAS region to Europe.

ECOWAS is currently working with its partners to mobilize additional resources to consolidate these achievements, which still remain fragile with greater involvement of the private sector. To this end, the French Development Agency and the European Union have decided to support ECOWAS in defining a second phase with the objective of strengthening and extending the existing surveillance system and supporting the dissemination and appropriation, by small producers, of innovations resulting from applied research.

## ECOWAP

2025 Vision: « A modern and competitive agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector, inclusive and sustainable, guaranteeing decent jobs, food and nutrition security and food sovereignty».

## ECOWEP

2025 Vision: « A peaceful, dignified and prosperous West Africa whose natural, diverse and productive resources are conserved and managed sustainably for the development and balance of the sub-regional space».

## WAWRP

2025 Vision: « Water resources that are efficiently and practically managed so that everyone has access to safe drinking water for basic needs, waste disposal facilities, food security and reduced poverty; protected human health, the biodiversity of terrestrial and aquatic systems protected ».



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