

Learning from pilot projects for better adaptation to climate change in West Africa

What assessment can be made of the agro-ecology and climate-smart agriculture (CSA) pilot projects initiated under the auspices of ECOWAS in West Africa? How to improve their impact in terms of adaptation to climate change? What should be retained in order to move from the local to the regional level, towards more resilient agricultural and climate policies? These are crucial questions for the implementation of the Paris Agreement which will be discussed on 4 and 5 October during a regional online workshop organised by the ECOWAS Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF), within the framework of the Global Climate Change Alliance - West Africa (GCCA+ WA) project.

The workshop will be an opportunity to share some of the concrete results of agricultural projects that seek to adapt to climate change in West Africa on a daily basis. It will explore the conditions under which the deployment of agro-ecology and climate-smart agriculture (CSA) approaches can effectively support successful adaptation. Within the framework of the GCCA+ WA project, the process of capitalisation of the climate-smart agriculture and agro-ecology pilot projects will have made it possible to raise important questions about the convergence of these concepts, the West African challenges of adaptation to climate change, and the role of capitalisation in feeding agricultural and food policies at the regional level. The good practices identified during the capitalisation will be promoted after the workshop and during COP 27 in order to disseminate even more widely the solutions that have been experimented locally, often in very isolated communes, in the ECOWAS-CILSS area.

Capitalisation as a method of analysis

This workshop is based on a vast capitalisation project involving the holders of 15 pilot projects in 11 West African countries within the framework of the GCCA+ WA project, with the support of Expertise France and a consortium of 3 consultancy firms (Ramboll, Oréade Brèche and Com4Dev). This cross-capitalization exercise was designed to understand the conditions for successful adaptation in the framework of climate-smart agriculture and agro-ecology projects. The workshop will provide an opportunity to share and debate the lessons learned from the capitalisation exercise. The latter aims in particular to develop both the processes of calls for projects, at the initiative of the funders, and the implementation of the projects themselves by the project leaders.

During the exercise, the capitalisation team produced numerous documents, starting with a **methodological guide** for the implementation of capitalisation for project leaders. According to the definition of capitalisation, which is to "transform experience into shareable knowledge", the lessons learned can only emerge from the people who were on the front line to observe the changes.

Cornerstone for scaling

The 15 projects led by civil society organisations emerged from two calls for proposals launched by the GCCA+ WA project, financed by the European Union, implemented by Expertise France and under the political and institutional leadership of ECOWAS, and with CILSS in 2019 and 2020. At a time of stocktaking, it was important to capitalise on the results

obtained and to identify the potential and conditions for replication in the ECOWAS/CILSS area. Capitalisation ensures that the results of the pilot projects will have **an impact beyond each pilot project**, at the national and regional level for the benefit of all.

Towards a more climate resilient agricultural policy

The regional workshop will also discuss other West African pilot projects, including those of the PATAE/PAE project funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the European Union under the leadership of the RAAF, implemented over the period July 2019-2022, in 5 countries different from those of the GCCA+ WA project.

Alongside institutional actors and project leaders, the workshop will also be attended by representatives of professional organisations, research centres, technical and financial partners and all stakeholders in more climate resilient agricultural projects.

Presentations and debates will focus on 3 capitalization themes: **1) Integrated water resources management; 2) Climate services; 3) Capacity building to address climate change.**

The results of the capitalisation - of which the workshop is a step - will contribute to ECOWAS' mission of accompanying its Member States towards a climate resilience trajectory, notably in the elaboration or updating of the National Agricultural Investment and Food Security and Nutritional Plans (NAAFSIP) in which the countries will be able to better integrate the climate dimension in the long term based on relevant practices identified and which will be strengthened through the implementation of the ECOWAS regional climate strategy adopted by the 15 Member States this year.

More about the GCCA+ WA project: <https://www.expertisefrance.fr/en/fiche-projet?id=721711>