



PRESS RELEASE

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Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF)

**Implementation of the Regional Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) Projects and Programmes:
Working in Synergy for a better Ownership and Coordination at Regional Level**

As part of the promotion of collaborative work, the 2023 meetings of the regional steering committees of ECOWAP projects and programmes will be held in an hybrid format (online and face-to-face in Lomé) from 20 February to 3 March 2023 under the leadership of the ECOWAS Commission.

The implementation of these projects and programmes at regional level mainly involves the following four (04) regional institutions: the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, CILSS and CORAF with the support of technical and financial partners.

For a better ownership and coordination at regional level, stakeholders in the project and programme steering committees recommended in 2019 that the four (04) regional institutions should further promote institutional synergies and collaborative work in the implementation of the projects and programmes of the regional agricultural Policy, ECOWAP.

Since 2021, the steering committee meetings have been held in this format. Discussions are organised around the nine (09) priority thematic areas of the projects and programmes which are: i) livestock and pastoralism, ii) fisheries and aquaculture, iii) agricultural productivity and competitiveness, iv) adaptation to climate change and agroecology, v) environment, forestry and biodiversity conservation, vi) pesticide management, plant pest control and SPS, vii) resilience, food security and nutrition, viii) youth employability and ix) institutional and organisational capacity building.

For 2023, the conclusions of the preliminary discussions of the technical monitoring committees of the projects and programmes held from 26 to 30 September 2022, should facilitate i) the validation of the 2022 activity reports of each project or programme, ii) the validation of the 2023 annual work plan and budget (AWPB) proposals of each project or programme, iii) the analysis of the state of implementation of the recommendations of the 2022 steering committees, and iv) the proposal of new recommendations and exchanges on synergies, convergences and complementarities between projects/programmes working in the same thematic area.

The opening ceremony will be chaired by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture, Mrs. Massandje Litsé Touré. It will be marked by an introductory panel which will allow the main intergovernmental organisations in the region to address the challenges of food and nutrition security.

“Beyond the strengthening of synergies, the Steering Committees remind us that the current context of multidimensional crises (civil and health insecurity, climate change, continuous degradation of arable land, scarcity of resources, Russia-Ukraine conflict, etc.) does not leave us any choice but to take action in working together, combining efforts, and pooling resources to ensure the food and nutrition



security of our fellow citizens”, Commissioner Touré, says.

This is where lies the essence of the Regional Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) adopted in 2005 and revised in 2015.

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RAAF: Feed West Africa

The creation of RAAF by ECOWAS through a regulation in August 2011 and its official launch and installation in September 2013 in Lomé, Togo, is part of the operationalisation of the Regional Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) adopted in January 2005 and revised in 2015. It also reflects the need to create operational agencies with administrative and financial management autonomy to coordinate the implementation of the Regional Agricultural Policy projects and programmes.

RAAF mandate is to ensure technical execution of regional programmes and investment plans contributing to the implementation of the Regional Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) by relying on regional institutions, organisations, and actors with proven expertise. The Regional Agricultural Policy is geared towards a modern and sustainable agriculture, based on the effectiveness and efficiency of family farms and the promotion of agroforestry and fisheries enterprises with the active involvement of the private sector.

In this perspective, the estimated 300 million citizens of the ECOWAS Community can ultimately take ownership for the realisation of the new Vision of ECOWAS: **“ECOWAS of the People: Peace and Prosperity for All”** by 2050.