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**Successes and Challenges in Implementation of the Convention - ECOWAS
Regional pre-preparation meetings**

Agenda item 16

Prepared by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

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ECOWAS Regional pre-preparation meetings on harmonization of matters of interest to be discussed at the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meetings of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

1. Introduction

1.1 The USAID/West Africa Regional Mission and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) work to support the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to advance its vision to create an economic union and common market. In line with this objective ECOWAS is implementing many agreements designed to support the free movement of goods and people throughout the region. In standards, many activities are being implemented with focus on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards. One of the key areas is the phytosanitary measures.

1.2 The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meetings are attended by contracting parties and by observers from organizations such as the Regional Plant Protection Organizations, the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee, the Standards and Trade Development Facility, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Meetings also host a scientific session for discussion of important issues.

1.3 Active participation in IPPC standards setting processes is necessary to ensure that countries public health needs and trade concerns associated with plant health are adequately integrated. It is in this regard that the Expert meeting that could be of NPPOs and subsequent consultation on harmonizing common position on matters of interest were organized.

2. First and second West Africa regional pre-preparation meeting on harmonization of matters of interest to be discussed at the CPM13 (16-20 April 2018) and CPM14 (1-5 April 2019), respectively.

2.1 With the financial support of USDA-APHIS, in collaboration with USDA-FAS, the first regional pre-preparation harmonization meeting of the NPPOs of the 15 Member States to prepare for the CPM13 meeting, was held from 3-5, April 2018, Lome, Togo, prior to the CPM13 meeting from 16-20 April 2018, Rome, Italy.

2.2 This meeting aims to give an opportunity to the newly established West Africa NPPOs taskforce to discuss and agree on common position on matters of concerns to be discussed during the CPM13 meeting.

2.3 Similarly, with co-financing arrangement with FAO-RAF and USDA-FAS the second meeting of the 15 Member States NPPOs has identified matters of interest for the sub-region to be discussed at the CPM14, Rome, Italy from 1-5 April 2019. The pre-preparation meeting to discuss subjects of concern and harmonized common positions on matters of interest for the sub-region to be discussed at the CPM14, held in Lome, Togo, from 25-26 March 2019.

2.4 The objectives of the above indicated regional meetings were to review and discuss in detail the identified matters of interests for the West Africa sub-region to be discussed at the CPM13 and CPM14, respectively, and agreed on common position as well as consolidate these positions and identify lead and support countries to present these positions at both CPM meetings as indicated.

2.5 Reports from the CPM-13 meeting described active participation of West African sub-region delegates, indicating good preparation during the pre-preparation meeting held in Lome, Togo in April 2018.

2.6 On the basis of the positive outcome, it is envisioned to hold this regional harmonization meeting on a yearly basis and sustain the momentum in the West Africa sub-region. In that view, ECOWAS Commission and its technical and financial partners are requested to prioritize and support this initiative.

2.7 Finally, the ECOWAS Commission thanks USAID Regional office, West Africa, USDA-APHIS, USDA-FAS, FAO/RAF for their continuing support.