



Review of ECOWAS's application to be recognized as an RPPO

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat)

1. Background

- [1] In June 2019, the IPPC Secretariat received a letter from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to request for recognition as a Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) under Article IX of the Convention. ECOWAS is a regional group with a mandate of promoting economic integration in all fields of activity of the constituting 15 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d' Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo). The IPPC Secretariat started the procedure for recognition of new RPPOs¹ reviewing their request working with the FAO Legal Office.

2. Process for recognition of new RPPOs

- [2] The procedure for recognition of new RPPOs was approved by ICPM-4 in 2002 and consists of four steps as follows:
- (1) The prospective RPPO presents documentation authenticating an intergovernmental agreement and a written request for recognition as an RPPO under Article IX of the IPPC (1997) to the Chairperson of the Interim Commission.
 - (2) The FAO Legal Counsel reviews the legal status of the submission.
 - (3) The Technical Consultation among RPPOs (TC) assesses whether the prospective RPPO meets the Guidelines adopted by ICPM-4 for the Recognition of RPPOs. These have as a minimum the following functions:
 - coordinate the activities among National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in the regions covered, in order to achieve the objectives of the IPPC
 - harmonize phytosanitary measures
 - participate in activities to promote the objectives of the IPPC
 - gather and disseminate information
 - (4) The Technical Consultation submits a recommendation for consideration by the Interim Commission.
- [3] As prescribed by the above rules, the FAO Legal Office (LEG) reviewed the agreement establishing ECOWAS in order to confirm that the prospective RPPO meets the requirements laid down in Part K of the FAO Basic Texts. Upon review, LEG can confirm that it has been established by an international convention (Treaty of Lagos signed in 1975 and revised in 1993) by 16 States; (ii) the Authority of Heads of State and Government of member States is the supreme institution of the Community and is composed of representatives of the Members States (chapter III of the Treaty); and (iii) its income comes from members' contributions and other sources of funding (chapter XIV of the Treaty). In light of the above, LEG confirmed that ECOWAS is an international organization in line with Part K of the FAO Basic Texts and is therefore eligible for being recognized as an RPPO by the Convention.

¹ Procedure for the recognition of new RPPOs available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88704/>

- [4] To move on to Step 3 in the procedures, the document as presented in Annex 1 was submitted by the ECOWAS to the IPPC Secretariat for the TC-RPPO to assess whether they meet the guidelines.
- [5] It should be noted that if the TC-RPPOs approves this proposal during the 32nd TC-RPPO, there is not enough time for the Secretariat to process a CPM paper with translation in time for CPM-15, so it will have to wait a year to be presented to CPM-16 (2022).
- [6] The TC-RPPO invited to:
 - *Review* the submission from the ECOWAS and consider whether the ECOWAS meet the guidelines adopted by ICPM4 for the Recognition of RPPOs

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COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO

ECW/CAERE/ADR/AST/L/MEXICO/021/17/12/2020/aa *St*

Abuja, December 17, 2020

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MEXICO

Subject: Request to the establishment of Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) at ECOWAS sub-region

Dear Sir,

Plant health issues are now priority domain for ECOWAS member States. As such, ECOWAS donors and partners have been given substantial support to the sub-region to address plant health and sanitary and phytosanitary issues at large. Given the achievement and the involvement of the Member States in the international standards setting process as well as the position of the sub-region in the international and regional trade, we request the IPPC to grant the ECOWAS sub-region the status of Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO).

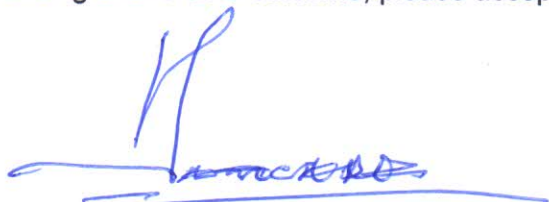
The ECOWAS Commission plays key role in the coordination of the activities among National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in the region comprising of 15 member States, in order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the IPPC, harmonize phytosanitary measures by convening regular regional harmonization meetings, participate in activities to promote the objectives of the IPPC including the CPM meetings as observer; and gather and disseminate information among NPPOs and other stakeholders.

It is important to note that there have been several regional consultations meetings, regional harmonization on common position on matters of interest for the sub-region to be discussed and adopted at the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM13, CPM14, CPM15). The regional meetings have increased substantially the understanding and the effective participation of the Member States in the plenary discussion at the CPMs. For instance, at the CPM14, there was an active and effective participation of the contracting parties from the ECOWAS Member States including the presentation related to "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)" CPM 2019/CRP/11 under Successes and Challenges in Implementation of the Convention - ECOWAS Regional pre-preparation meetings as well as the taskforce of NPPOs and

partners to discuss, plan for mitigating priority phytosanitary issues, share relevant phytosanitary and plant health information. The regional taskforce aims for coordinating and better management of plant pests and diseases in the sub-region. As a consequence, it has contributed to enhance regional coordination on issues related to plant health.

The above mechanisms are to be sustained and the momentum in the ECOWAS sub-region that is comprises of 15 Member States including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo. In view of this, this request for granting the ECOWAS sub-region the status of Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO).

Pending a favorable outcome, please accept, Sir, the expression of our distinguished consideration.



Sékou SANGARE

*Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment
and Water Resources*

Attached: - *Report of the implemented plant health and harmonization activities at the sub-regional level*
- *Report of the taskforce meetings*

CC: *Alain Sy TRAORE – Director of Agriculture and Rural Development*



Presentation of ECOWAS

Welcome to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Established on May 28 1975 via the treaty of Lagos, ECOWAS is a 15-member regional group with a mandate of promoting economic integration in all fields of activity of the constituting countries.

Member countries making up ECOWAS are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo. Considered one of the pillars of the African Economic Community, ECOWAS was set up to foster the ideal of collective self-sufficiency for its member states. As a trading union, it is also meant to create a single, large trading bloc through economic cooperation.

Integrated economic activities as envisaged in the area revolve around but are not limited to industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial issues, social as well as cultural matters.

Expectations of economic integration have always been high and a lot has been accomplished by the regional group since the endorsement of the treaty which gave it the required legal teeth. Going by current assessments, the regional body has exceeded the expectations of its founding fathers. Today, the organisation is being acknowledged globally as a successful regional body, a toast to a workable integration and regional co-existence.

The Vision of ECOWAS is the creation of a borderless region where the population has access to its abundant resources and is able to exploit same through the creation of opportunities under a sustainable environment. What ECOWAS has created is an integrated region where the population enjoys free movement, have access to efficient education and health systems and engage in economic and commercial activities while living in dignity in an atmosphere of peace and security. ECOWAS is meant to be a region governed in accordance with the principles of democracy, rule of law and good governance.

It was in order to realise this vision unimpeded that the ECOWAS administrative machinery based in Abuja, Nigeria, transformed its Secretariat to a Commission in January 2007. Instead of an Executive Secretary, what we now have is an empowered President of the Commission with a Vice President and Fifteen Commissioners. By their working, ECOWAS is now pre-occupied with the implementation of critical and strategic programmes that will deepen cohesion and progressively eliminate identified barriers to full integration as envisaged.

Considerable efforts have now been made in harmonising macroeconomic policies and private sector promotion towards achieving economic integration. These efforts have given rise to some initiatives which include implementation of the roadmap for the ECOWAS single currency programme, monitoring and evaluation of performance and macroeconomic convergence, management of the ECOWAS Macroeconomic Database & Multilateral Surveillance System (ECOMAC) as well as co-operation with other regional and international institutions.

Within a region energised by a common purpose, West African citizens can also take ownership for the new vision of moving from an ECOWAS of states to an ECOWAS of people by 2020.

The body of ECOWAS is made up of Institutions and Specialised Agencies. The Institutions comprise: The Authority of Heads of States and Government, The Commission, The Community Parliament, The Community Court of Justice, Council of Ministers, Specialised Technical Committees as well as the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID).

The following are ECOWAS Specialised Agencies: West African Health Organisation (WAHO), West African Monetary Agency (WAMA), Inter-governmental Action Group against Money Laundry and Terrorist Financing in West Africa (GIABA), ECOWAS Gender and Development Centre, ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre, ECOWAS Water Resources Coordination Centre, West African Power Pool, ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE), ECOWAS Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERERA), ECOWAS Infrastructure Projects Preparation and Development Unit (PPDU) as well as ECOWAS Brown Card Scheme.

More information on the organization may be found at <http://www.ecowas.int/>



OVERVIEW OF ECOWAS IMPLEMENTED SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY ACTIVITIES

Directorate of Agriculture and rural Development (DARD)

Period: March 2017 – December 2020

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. The USAID/West Africa Regional Mission works to support the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to advance their 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, a USAID/West Africa Cost Reimbursement Implementation Letter no 2 was signed between CILSS and USAID/West Africa. It is through this agreement focus will be on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards. There has also been support from USDA through its LoA agreement with African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF).

1.2. The SPS activities fall under the following results and performances of the project document.

- **“Result 2:** the customs, trade and free movement department and the Industry and Private Sector Department strengthen their governance capacity in trade policy and harmonization of agri-food standards and norms”
- **Performances**
 - Performance 2.1: The leadership of the Industry and Private Sector Promotion Department on efforts to harmonize standards is provided” and
 - Performance 2.5: SPS and OTC standards defined by the region are fully internalized by the States and the private sector actors

1.3. With reference to the approved work plans and in view of improving and strengthening SPS activities in the ECOWAS region the following activities were implemented.

1.4. These efforts serve:

- to strengthen capacities in the SPS area,
- to supply on the markets products of good quality and safe which comply with international standards.
- to safeguard the health of people, animals and plants.
- to harmonize relevant standards and to increase the access of countries to regional and international markets.

2. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

2.1 Establishment of institutional SPS working group

2.1.1. In the framework of the ECOWAS/USAID cooperation programme on SPS, the Industry and Private Sector Promotion Department of the ECOWAS Commission, organized a technical meeting of the working group on sanitary and phytosanitary on 3 May 2017 in Dakar, Republic of Senegal. The purpose of this meeting was to establish the ECOWAS working group on SPS matters and to analyze draft terms of reference for the working group on SPS matters and its adoption.

2.1.2. So, the working group on sanitary and phytosanitary was established and comprise of:

- ECOWAS Commission:
 - Department of Industry and private sector Promotion;
 - Department of Trade;
 - Department of Agriculture and Rural Development;
- West Africa Health Organization (WAHO);
- UEMOA: Food safety, agriculture, mines and environment;
- USAID West Africa Regional Mission;
- Observers:
 - AU-InterBureau on Animal Resources;
 - AU-InterAfrican Phytosanitary Council;
 - FAO-SFW and FAORAF

2.1.3. The term of reference of the working group was reviewed, amended and validated by all participants. This working group will provide scientific comment and guidance on SPS matters to member States of the region and lead to a secretariat to better manage and provide leadership on the SPS matter.

2.2 Auditing and revitalizing national SPS committees and regional consultation in prioritizing SPS matters

2.2.1. In view of strengthening national food safety and quality system, in-country SPS committees were created through the support of previous projects including the PanAfrican Standards Setting project led by AU-IBAR with the support of European Union. It was observed that these national SPS committees were not active/nonfunctional especially in the ECOWAS member States. This situation was the results of various conditions and challenges encountered by member States. These challenges are not well known. Further, solutions to address them are not yet proposed.

2.2.2. From 5-7 July 2017, a regional SPS and stakeholders meeting was convened to review status of country SPS committees, update on progress made since creation, challenges encountered, perspectives for moving forward and creation of regional SPS committee's network for advancing SPS matters in the region with the view of boosting intra-regional and international trade. In term, based on the recommendations, a regional action plan is being developed.

2.2.3. However, it was recommended to Member states where SPS committee is not established, such as Benin, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, to do so by Dec. 31, 2017. Other Member states where the SPS committee is established to make sure it is functional i.e. holding regular meetings and consultation at national level. ECOWAS Commission should support and ensure implementation of the above recommendations to member states.

2.2.4. Over the years, the ECOWAS Commission has received many supports and the establishment of a functional regional SPS working group is envisioned and planned for March 2021. So, with all these development it is important to establish the regional plant protection organization in the sub-region of West Africa.

2.3. Plant health and plant protection

2.3.1 The agriculture sector in West Africa continues to play a key role in the economic development of the ECOWAS member states. Agriculture contributes 30% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 55% of employment for the rural population. The region has for a long time experienced mixed fortunes as far as food production and productivity are concerned. The region continues to experience an increase in population, which stands currently at 330 million, and should translate into 500 million by 2025. This demographic scenario requires a concerted effort to increase production through intensification to feed the growing population with 60% predicted to be living in the urban period by 2025. Grain production rose from 16 million metric tons in 1980 to 56 million metric tons in 2013. Root and tuber production has also risen in the tropical wet zones and today it stands at 150 million metric tons. Despite these laudable achievements, the

region continues to experience food deficits because of number of factors such as low production, climate change, pest and disease prevalence, declining soil fertility, unfavorable trade and economic environment and limited access to technology amongst farmers in the region. A critical factor that limits production is the prevalence of transboundary plant pests and diseases, which affect food and cash crops, causing significant losses to farmers and threatening food security. It is in this light the ECOWAS Agriculture Policy 2025 perspective places a lot of emphasis on the need to develop a holistic approach to plant pest and disease prevention/mitigations plan for the region. PREVENTING is better than TREATING DISASTER.

2.3.2. The objective was to develop a West Africa (ECOWAS) comprehensive plant pest and disease prevention, surveillance and mitigation framework that will contribute to the realization of the food and nutrition objectives of the ECOWAS Agriculture Policy (ECOWPA 2025/RAIP-FSN 2020) under the CAADP framework (Malabo Declaration 2014).

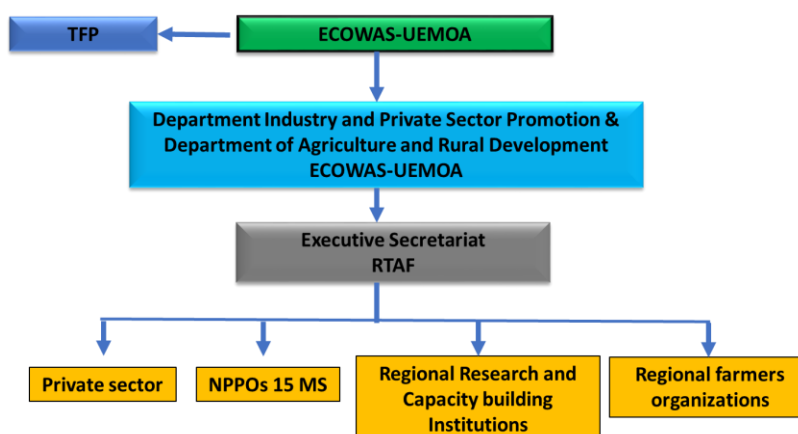
2.3.3. From 6-7 June 2017, a regional stakeholders meeting was held and a comprehensive action plan on plant pest and disease prevention, surveillance and mitigation for the ECOWAS region developed, reviewed and validated. This action plan is being implemented with the support of technical and financial partners. However, there is need for seeking more support to enable full and sustainable implementation of this regional action plan.

2.3.4. As a follow-up to the regional meeting held from 6-7 June 2017 to develop a West Africa (ECOWAS) comprehensive plant pest and disease prevention, surveillance and mitigation Framework that was validated by all stakeholders, and with the support of USDA-APHIS, bureau of Dakar, Senegal, a regional meeting was held from 7-8 August 2017 to establish a Regional Taskforce for Surveillance, Prevention and Control of Crop Pests. The composition, organigramme, objectives and missions of the regional Taskforce (RTAF) are as following:

- **Composition**

- NPPOs of the 15 Member States of ECOWAS;
- Regional research and capacity building institutions (CABI, CORAF, IITA, CILSS (INSHA, CSP), FARA, AGRA);
- Technical and financial Partners (CEDEAO-UEMOA, FAO, USAID, USDA, World Bank, EU, WHO, ICIPE);
- Regional farmers organization (ROPFA);
- Private sector (CropLife)
- Each member state shall establish national Taskforce: NPPO, National extension services, national research institutes, financial and technical partners, farmers organization, private sector

- **Organigramme**



TFP = Technical and Financial Partners

- Objective

- ***Contribute to the strengthening of the community phytosanitary system against the negative impact on agricultural crops production and trade***
- Missions
 - Develop a synergy between national phytosanitary risk prevention mechanisms measures in the Community
 - Promote appropriate methods of control, best practices
 - Facilitate capacity-building activities of Member States in the areas of prevention, surveillance and control
 - Conduct monitoring and evaluation of actions
 - Ensure communication and information sharing within space

First West Africa National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO) and Partners Taskforce meeting to address regional priorities and review IPPC instruments including the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, IITA-Benin, 15-16 February, 2018.

2.3.5. Furthermore, the Regional NPPOs and Partners Taskforce Task Force for Surveillance, Prevention and Control of plant Pests was established during the meeting held from August 07-08, 2017 in Ouagadougou – Burkina Faso, supported by APHIS, following the recommendations of both USDA-APHIS workshop on "Surveillance, Diagnostic Capacities and Reporting of plant pests in West Africa" held from August 9-11, 2016 in Abidjan and the joint ECOWAS/WAEMU/USAID meeting on "Development of the regional Framework for the Prevention, Surveillance and Mitigation of Pests and Plant Diseases" held from June 5-7, 2017 in Accra – Ghana. Such initiative stem from countries weak capacities to tackle the negative impact of harmful transboundary plant pests in crop production, population livelihood and trade and the need for countries to join efforts and harmonize strategies. This is evidenced by the numerous interceptions recorded at foreign borders causing significant economic losses for farmers and countries. The meeting aims to review regional priorities, develop a priority action plan for 2018-2019 and agree on harmonized position for the preparation of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-13) meeting planned from April 16-20, 2018 in Rome-Italy.

Participants were NPPO from all 15 ECOWAS member States, WAEMU, technical and financial partners including USAID, USDA, APHIS, FAO, IITA, CIMMYT.

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) (CPM 2019/CRP/11)

2.3.6 This presentation was made at the CPM14 under the agenda item 16 ‘Successes and Challenges in Implementation of the Convention – ECOWAS Regional pre-preparation meetings’ 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. 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.

2.3.7 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. 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.

2.3.8 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. 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.

Third ECOWAS member states common position on matters of interest for CPM15

2.3.9 As in previous years, in early 2020 a meeting was planned with the financial support of USDA for the 15-ECOWAS Member States, to be held in Cotonou, Benin, in March 2020. The meeting was intended to discuss subjects of concern and harmonize common positions on matters of interest for the sub-region at the CPM15 first planned from March 30th to April 3rd, 2020, in Rome, Italy. The objectives of the preparatory meeting were to review and discuss in detail the identified matters of interests for the West Africa sub-region to be discussed at the CPM15, and agreed on common position as well as consolidate these positions and identify lead and support countries to present these positions at the CPM15.

2.3.10 Because of the current COVID-19 pandemic situation the CPM meeting was postponed by the IPPC on a provisional basis for June 29 – July 3, 2020. In the event that delegates could not travel to Rome, Italy for the CPM meeting, the Online Comment System (OCS) is being discussed at the CPM bureau level, as an alternative. Considering that it was uncertain when and if the meeting is going to be performed in 2020, different alternatives were analyzed and it was decided that Dr. Benoit Gnonlonfin, Ana Maria Peralta and Dr. Cheikh Fall should consider the CPM15 agenda, review all relevant documents and draft a provisional common position document for consideration by the ECOWAS NPPOs. The draft proposal was developed and sent to all NPPOs for comments, with deadline for submission of those comments by May 29, 2020.

2.3.11 The comments received were compiled and sent again to NPPOs for validation with a second deadline by June 16th, 2020. These comments were put into virtual discussion by Zoom in 3 sessions held on July 14, 17 and 24, 2020. Thus, this draft proposal has been finalized and common position consolidated taking into account all the comments received and views of NPPOs as the final joint ECOWAS proposal to present at the CPM15 meeting which will be organized using remote mechanisms as the online Commenting System (OCS).

Third States Consultation Meeting for The Establishment and Animation of The West African Pesticide Registration Committee (WAPRC), 19-24 November 2018, Bamako, Mali

2.3.12. The objectives of this regional meeting were i) to validate the harmonized registration tools for the establishment of the West African Pesticide Registration Committee (WAPRC) in May 2019, ii) to evaluate the implementation status of the roadmap and recommendations of the 2nd consultation meeting held from 23-26 May 2018, iii) to review the inputs of Wetland states to the draft of pesticide registration application, iv) to reach an agreement upon the content of the draft application dossiers for the registration of and propose their adoption by the 3 signatory IGOs of the cooperation agreement in the field of pesticides, v) to Consider the inputs of Wetland states to the draft WAPRC procedural manual.

2.3.13. The outcomes of this regional meeting were as following:

- The content of the registration dossier for pesticides for agriculture use was reviewed and inputs provided by Wetland countries. The other five documents were not reviewed because of lack of time.
- The implementation status of the road map was discussed and it was agreed that the Inter-governmental organizations of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS to make meaningful inputs into the ongoing process for the operationalization of the joint pesticide registration body.
- The meeting requested for additional for Member states to continue reviewing the documents submitted and studied at this meeting so as to take into account the views of other national experts.
- To transmit to the Member states the harmonized final version of the documents and tools after the inputs of Member states before the effective implementation of WAPRC.
- The inputs of the Wetlands to the draft procedure manual was not done due to limited time available. However, it was agreed that the Member states will review the document during the national consultation process early 2019.

- The draft procedure manual to be finalized during the national consultation meeting in the Member states

The following are the recommendations:

- To the Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development
 - Organize by no later the end of February 2019, consultation meetings in Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Guinea as part of the implementation of their National Committee on Pesticide Management.
 - Establish rapidly the Coordination Unit provided for by the Tripartite Agreement, no later than the end of January 2019, as a pre-requisite for holding the first WAPRC in May 2019. This has been delayed by the global COVID-19 pandemic.
 - To support the NCPMs financially to organize national retreat workshops to finalize, in a short time, the review and validation of the draft documents and tools necessary for the joint registration of pesticides.
 - Embark on resource mobilization for the implementation of the Harmonized Pesticide Regulation as expressed in the Tripartite Agreement.

Currently plans have moved head, and the processes for the implementation of the West Africa Pesticides Registration Committee are on track and should be established during the first quarter of 2021.

Strengthening the monitoring, prevalence and impact of Fall Armyworm (FAW) at the country level in West Africa: Experiences, Options and Solutions

2.3.14. FAO has also put in place various monitoring, risk measurement, impact and dashboard decision support tools to monitor and warn about the FAW situation. To map it by linking it to agricultural practices, ecology and natural enemies. In line with the monitoring, joint missions (FAO-ECOWAS-CILSS) were organized and highlighted key findings and challenges that were presented to RPCA in Banjul in December 2018. To overcome these challenges, a four-day workshop was jointly planned and organized in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from April 15 to 18, 2019, at the Azalai Hotel, to build capacity on the measurement of prevalence, risk, impact on food security and livelihoods, and the development of decision support dashboards. This workshop aims to promote the sharing of information and experiences between the countries concerned and to work on the drafting of a country action plan for 17 countries (Guinea Bissau, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Chad, Togo) from West Africa and Sahel with more than 40 participants.

2.3.15. Following the training, countries have developed draft national action plan for the implementation of key activities to control FAW and sustain actions at national level. It was also suggested the development of regional holistic programme for "Plant pest control program in West Africa with emphasis on fight against Fall Armyworm".

Key recommendations were as following:

- To Country and Region
 - Draft country action plan finalized with consultation and contribution of all national stakeholders concerned.
 - Effective implementation of FAW tracking tools: FMEWS, FAW risk, FAW impact and Dashboard
 - Dashboards in countries and at regional level (once per season and or twice if possible) developed
 - National task forces should be formalized and made operational in all ECOWAS and Sahel countries
 - Term of reference to guide the establishment of National Task Forces developed
 - Support countries for the implementation of action plans (Fonds HQ and AfDB) provided. It is important to note that in the short time (May-December 2019), support is being provided by FAO to Benin and Burkina Faso for USD\$80,000 and USD\$60,000, respectively.

- The regional holistic programme for “Plant pest control program in West Africa with emphasis on fight against Fall Armyworm” developed and under consideration by the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Training workshops on Keys tools and steps for development, implementation and management of an Electronic Phytosanitary Certification system for import and export of plants and plant products.

2.3.16. The Training workshop on “Keys tools and steps for development, implementation and management of an Electronic Phytosanitary Certification system for import and export of plants and plant products” was organized with the support of USDA-FAS Washington in cooperation with USDA-APHIS Dakar, USAID West Africa, ECOWAS and Ghana Plant Protection and Regulatory Services (PPRSD). Representatives of National Plant Protection Offices from the 15 West Africa countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo) attended the training. The main objectives were: i) to help countries better understand electronic certification system’s principles, advantages and challenges, ii) to learn key tools and steps to follow for a migration to E-certification system and, iii) to establish a “Regional e-Phyto Taskforce group” to start working together to address this new challenge.

Key recommendations were:

- To send a communication to ministers of member states for promotion and use of e-phyto
- The ECOWAS Commission and its technical and financial partners to continue assisting member states with funding support towards the implementation of the e-phyto and other related activities
- To assist member states in resolving issues arising in relation to the development and implementation of their national e-phyto projects
- Member states should start working on the implementation e-phyto activities.
- In the next meeting of the regional taskforce (schedule for December 2019) updates on progress made should be presented by the ECOWAS Regional e-phyto Taskforce Group.

So, far, all countries are in the process of providing information and fill the on-boarding document. On the other hand Ghana is leading and is already on both GeNs and the HUB platform and able to train with EU and the United States of America.

Regional conference on sustainable management of FAW in the Sahel and West Africa: 10-12 September 2019, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

2.3.17 The recent introduction of the fall armyworm (FAW) as well as the discovery of the new alien invasive pest identified in West Africa and its growing threat to agriculture and food security have caused much concern in about 44 countries in the sub-Saharan region including 15 West African countries. The FAW is crop-destroying worm and can cause high damage to maize, rice, sorghum, vegetables. These attributes have made the control of FAW a challenging task. There have been efforts to sensitize, build capacity for the pest identification, knowledges sharing, etc. Overall, development of long-term management options has mobilized international experts and the national capacities of affected countries and raised general attention to caterpillar attacks on various crops. In the sub-region of West Africa, a taskforce of National Plant Protection Officers and partners of West Africa sub-region was established to ensure joint management of the pest and others. From 10 – 12 September 2019, a regional meeting was convened by the Government of Burkina Faso, with the support of FAO, CILSS, UEMOA, ECOWAS, USAID, CORAF and other partners. The objectives of the meeting were i) to exchange experiences and lessons learned from the recent FAW invasion in Africa, ii) to mobilize a community of experts to provide technical and policy advice for effective control at regional and national level by Member States. The meeting brought together 346 participants from 21 countries, including the 17 CILSS-UEMOA-ECOWAS countries, and Southern, Central and Eastern Africa; university professors and researchers. NGOs, technical and financial partners (TFP), farmer apex organizations, private sector, ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, G5-Sahel, CORAF, FAO, CABI, ICIPE, IITA.

Key recommendations were:

- To conduct sensitization actions during the International Year of Plant Health in 2020;

- To accelerate the harmonization of phytosanitary regulations to strengthen regional coordination in the management of FAW and beyond, other crop pests,
- To continue advocacy for greater mobilization of human, material and financial resources for an effective and sustainable response to FAW and other crop pests in the Sahel and West Africa.
- To operationalize the phytosanitary emergency fund through a mechanism for levying a percentage on exports from member countries,
- To strengthen human resources for the conduct of research activities and the implementation of operational actions,
- To promote an integrated pest management (IPM) approach and scale up already proven control methods.
- To support Member States and regional economic community in the region in the search for solutions against the scourge of the fall armyworm which poses a serious threat to the food and nutritional security and food safety of the Sahelian and West African populations.

Development, validation and pilot trainings conducted in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria on the "Use of the Harmonized Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guide"

2.3.18. The development and validation of regional harmonized inspection and decision making guide went through rigorous consultation processes. In-country trainings are ongoing on the "The Use of the Harmonized Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guide" It was dedicated:

- to train Plant quarantine inspectors
- to test the applicability of the Guide.
 - Introduction and discussions on the provisions of the Guide related to the Procedures for Inspection at Import & Export
 - Simulation exercises with practical demonstrations of Phytosanitary Inspection, sampling, pest detection and identification and Decision-making.

So far, trainings have been completed in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. The plan is to cover the 15 ECOWAS member states plus Chad and Mauritania.

In term, it is important to stress that plans are underway to strengthen and sustain plant health issues at the regional level in the context of Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to support countries and facilitate safe trade.

2.4. Food safety and capacity building

2.4.1. A recent four country study on cereals sourcing for the agro-industrial sector in West Africa revealed that aflatoxin issues constitute a critical challenge to the regional grain trade. Aflatoxin contamination represents a threat to both human health and the economic growth of this sector. The West Africa Trade Hub and Investment has designed a three-day Training of Trainers workshop on aflatoxins control and management. Key stakeholders were Approche Communale pour le Marché Agricole (ACMA Project), Benin's cereals farmer's umbrella organization, FUPRO-Benin, West African Grains Network, civil society and youth agri-foods enterprises.

2.4.2. From 21-23 June 2017 in Porto Novo, Benin a training of trainers session was jointly facilitated by the West Africa Trade Hub and Investment, USAID West Africa Regional Mission and ECOWAS Commission.

2.4.3. Thirty-three (33) actors were trained on aflatoxin management and control strategies to guarantee the safety of maize, groundnut and other susceptible agricultural commodities. This training is a pilot program, specific to Benin, but will provide a model for expanding and escalating this type of training throughout the region.

First ECOWAS Member States capacity strengthening on Codex related activities

2.4.4. In view of strengthening national food safety and quality system, National Codex Contact Point

appointed and in-country SPS committees were created in ECOWAS Member States through the support of previous projects including the PanAfrican Standards Setting project led by African Union-InterBureau on Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) with the support of European Union. Further, Codex Trust Funds (CTFs) was created in 2003 to enhance Codex Members physical participation in codex meetings and build in-country capacity.

2.4.5. The phase 1 of the CTF contributed immensely to widening and strengthening participation of developing and transition countries in the work of Codex and helped improve awareness of Codex in most beneficiary countries. Based on the successes of CTF1, the CTF Secretariat launched CTF2. Globally, the Secretariat received 41 applications through the on-line system by deadline of 3rd May, 2016. 38 out of 41 applications were accepted after meeting pre-screening criteria. Therefore, 38 (24 from Africa region) applications were sent to FAO/WHO Regional Food Safety Advisors for comments thereafter they were submitted to the Technical Review Group for assessment.

2.4.6. It was noticed that many ECOWAS member states were not able to apply for the first round of application due to many reasons including the application process, difficulties in conducting national consultation and scientific assessment and be able to fill the application form. Most importantly, the low rate of success is mostly due to the lack of real and functional national Codex structures in Africa in general and in ECOWAS member countries in particular.

2.4.7. After the first round of application, it was observed that only 2 (13.33%) countries from the ECOWAS region namely Senegal and Ghana were successful. Hence, benefited from the funds. At the last Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting held from July 17-22, 2017 in Geneva, a progress report of the 1st year implementation of the activities was presented by delegates from Senegal and Ghana. Both countries presented success stories that need to be capitalized and information shared between member states and other relevant stakeholders.

2.4.8. Furthermore, one of the cardinal pillars for effective participation in Codex is to establish strong national Codex structures such as a functional Codex Contact Point (CCP), a National Codex Committee (NCC), consultation mechanism for engaging stakeholders on Codex issues, etc. Strong national Codex structures are necessary for presenting coordinated and unified regional positions on Codex issues.

2.4.9. In 2015, a Food Safety Actors Network in ECOWAS country to develop synergy of actions in the field to better protect the interests of member countries was created. An interim committee was established to coordinate activities as follows: Chairman (Senegal); Vice-chairman (Nigeria); 2 Secretariat: Secretary general (Ghana) and Deputy secretary (Benin). However, it was observed that since creation the coordination unit and the network have not been functional. As there were no coordination meetings held, no up to date activities conducted, no feedback to members regarding status.

2.4.10. It is in view of addressing the above gaps that a regional capacity building workshop was held from 11-15 September 2017 in Banjul, The Gambia. The objectives of this workshop are:

- To capitalize success stories of 1st year implementation of CTF2 activities in Ghana and Senegal
- To share information and lessons learnt among member states
- To build capacity of member states in order to submit a bankable CTF2 application
- To review activities of the national codex committees as well as the Food Safety actors network
- To identify challenges faced by the Food Safety actors network
- To define strategy to alleviate the identified challenges
- To define mechanism for financing and sustainability of the network

2.4.11. At the end of this workshop, the following were achieved:

- success stories of 1st year implementation of Codex Trust Funds 2 (CTF2) activities in Ghana and Senegal documented
- information and lessons learnt shared among member states
- capacity of member states built to have a bankable CTF2 application submitted before the deadline of 15 October 2017
- member states committed to submit online application before the set deadline
- national codex activities as well as for the food safety actors network reviewed

- Food Safety actors network revitalized and coordination bureau confirmed with clear activities to be implemented in the short term as following:
 - the transmission of official correspondence to the ECOWAS Commission for the recognition of the network,
 - the necessary support to countries for the submission of applications to the CTF2,
 - the development of the statute texts of the network,
 - the proposal of a road map presenting the activities of the bureau.

2.4.12. Conclusion: Burkina Faso has submitted successfully its application. Other member states are in the process for submission before deadline of 15th October 2017.

2.4.13. Following the codex trust funds secretariat evaluation, the application of the following member states from the region were successful and granted funds: Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Cape Verde.

2.4.14. Over the years the ECOWAS Commission has provided technical support to the 15 ECOWAS member states in the area of food safety and enhance the participation of countries in the international standards setting bodies including codex.

Joint trade Africa border inspection workshop

2.4.14 Further, in the framework of Trade Africa initiative, USDA-FAS is providing technical expertise to the government of Cote D'Ivoire to support building capacity to implement the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and to strengthen Cote D'Ivoire's SPS regime. Supported activities include "Phytosanitary Border Control Protocols Project (PBCP)". Through its PASA with USAID, USDA-FAS also developed a 2017 West Africa Work Plan to help West Africa countries develop and implement harmonized phytosanitary border procedures, including risk-based inspection protocols, pest identification, border operations, etc. It is in line with the objectives of this framework that a joint FAS/APHIS regional training workshop on "Practical tools and procedures for Phytosanitary Inspection and Sampling for Pest detection and Introduction to basic tools for Pest Identification" was held from 28-31 August 2017 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

2.4.15. The main objective was to strengthen the capacity of inspectors and phytosanitary departments with focus on border inspection. Specifically, the training workshop aims to build capacities on practical tools for plants and plant products inspection, sampling procedures and pest identification, to help promote plant quarantine operations and safe trade of plants and plant products in West Africa and beyond.

2.4.16. Forty (40) NPPOs were trained and capacitated to conduct proper plants and plant products inspection at borders. It shall be noted that key recommendations were made including:

- To Member States: Harmonize regulatory texts; Strengthen and build human capacity, material, logistics, infrastructures, and financial resources; Support specialization of plant protection personnel.
- To ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions: Support Member States in harmonizing regulatory texts particularly the list of quarantine and non-quarantine pests; Support Member States in capacity-building initiatives for inspectors and ensure refresher training; Organize frequent experience and success stories sharing sessions between inspectors; in collaboration and with the support of technical and financial partners train and equip plant health inspectors on inspection and sampling procedures; Updating and making available to the inspectors the lists of regulated and quarantine pests; proposing a simple hygro-metric of ISPM 31 table in relation to the determination of the sample size; equip border inspection posts with the adequate phytosanitary inspection equipment; develop formal frameworks between government and universities for pest identification.

2.4.17. The following recommendations were made:

- To ECOWAS Commission
 - Equip border inspection posts with the adequate phytosanitary inspection equipment;
 - Update and make available to the inspectors the lists of regulated and quarantine pests;

- Build capacity of inspectors and ensure refresher training (scaling up);
- Identify the pests of a crop that is not under control before allowing it to be imported;
- Develop formal frameworks between government and universities for pest identification.

First Regional Private Sector Information/Awareness-raising meeting on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards and Regulations and their Involvement in SPS Activities

2.4.18 From 22 to 24 November 2017, the ECOWAS Commission held, with the support of USAID, in Abidjan, the first regional meeting on private sector capacity building in this domain. This meeting was held within the context of the implementation of the USAID-ECOWAS' programme on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS).

2.4.19 The meeting objectives were i) to strengthen the capacities of private sector actors and Consumer Associations on SPS standards, ii) to share successful experiences in implementing SPS requirements, iii) to review and document challenges of private sector companies with regard to SPS issues in the relevant priority sectors and iv) identify common areas of cooperation between the private sector and the ECOWAS Commission to help improve compliance with SPS requirements. Participants were all 15 ECOWAS member States representatives, consumer associations, and resource persons.

2.4.20 Key recommendations addressed to ECOWAS Commission are as follows:

- a. Create an information and communication platform for the private sector on SPS standards
- b. Train/ regularly strengthen the capacities of private sector actors on SPS agreements
- c. Mobilize private sector financing to contribute to the functioning of SPS committees and international SPS actions.
- d. Encourage the formulation of common positions on SPS measures at the national, regional and continental level with the effective participation of the private sector
- e. Strengthen the role/participation of the private sector in the functioning of national SPS committees
- f. Organize a regional meeting bringing together private and public actors (SPS, Codex, IPPC, OIE Contact Points)
- g. Facilitate knowledge sharing on good practices
- h. Conduct a study on the economic impact of the application of SPS standards on regional trade (releases)
- i. Develop/promote the establishment of regional standards and facilitate their application
- j. Support laboratories in the certification process
- k. Raise awareness of the importance of SPS measures
- l. Develop a regional SPS strategy

Training workshop on aflatoxin sampling protocols in West Africa, Dakar, Senegal, 12-13 December 2017

2.4.21 Sampling and testing are major components in identifying aflatoxins and determining the levels. Proper sampling and testing methodologies should be used in order to minimize the impact of aflatoxins on the health of the people as well as trade. Sampling is the most important step that contributes to the variability of analyses, due to the non-homogenous nature of aflatoxin distribution in foods and feed. Statistically sound sampling protocols are critical for establishing national aflatoxin monitoring programs for the purpose of food safety regulatory enforcement. If samples are not properly attained, compliant food/feed may erroneously be condemned and destroyed or non-compliant food/feed may be passed for human consumption and subsequently rejected (when importing countries identify them as uncompliant).

2.4.22 This workshop was to address the following challenges:

- The unacceptably high rejection of certificates, by importing countries;
- The present situation where multiple (Importing & Exporting Countries) testings are practiced

- for an export consignment;
- The current practice of subjecting export consignments to more than one laboratories to increase reliability of analysis results; and
- The use of non-Harmonized Sampling and analysis protocols across countries.

2.4.23 The objectives were i) to present aflatoxin sampling protocols for maize and groundnuts that were first developed by NC State University for COMESA; ii) to train participants on the sampling protocols through a hands-on demonstration; iii) to initiate discussions on the protocols, harmonized Maximum Limits, policies and regulatory frameworks; iv) to initiate discussion on the ECOWAS Mutual Recognition Framework. Participants were laboratory technicians, regulator from all 15 ECOWAS member States, Chad, AUC, USAID, USDA, PACA, CILSS/CHAD, CORAF, COMESA, Resource Persons, Media.

2.4.24 The following recommendations were made to the ECOWAS Commission and follow up actions will be conducted.

- a. ECOWAS Commission to support the establishment and or strengthening of laboratories for aflatoxin testing in the member states.
- b. ECOWAS Member states to adopt and implementation international testing standards in the absence of national and regional standards.
- c. To request that Member states conduct risk assessment as a prelude to the development of regional standards.
- d. Capacity development at all levels of the agricultural value chain.
- e. Development partners were requested to provide technical and financial support to the ECOWAS Commission and the Member states with regards to aflatoxin control and mitigation.
- f. Development partners should support technology development and dissemination for aflatoxin control.
- g. ECOWAS and development partners to address aflatoxin control and mitigation within the context of climate change in the region.

2.4.25 As key follow up action, a concept note was developed on Harmonizing Achievable Maximum Limits for Aflatoxin in Groundnuts in ECOWAS region. This concept note waiting approval and implementation, expected to start in 2018.

2.5 Study tour and capacity building on FAW

2.5.1 The recent introduction of the Fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*; FAW) (FAW) as well as the discovery of the new alien invasive pest identified in West Africa and its growing threat to agriculture and food security have caused much concern in about 44 countries in the sub-Saharan region including 15 West African countries. The FAW is crop-destroying worm and can cause high damage to maize, rice, sorghum, vegetables. These attributes have made the control of FAW a challenging task. There have been efforts to sensitize, build capacity for the pest identification, knowledge sharing and study tour. Overall, development of management options has mobilized international experts and the national capacities of affected countries and raised general attention to caterpillar attacks on various crops.

2.5.2 A high-level FAW study tour in Brazil (visited cities Brazilia, Sete Lagoas) was organized with the support of USAID in collaboration with USDA, EMBRAPA, CIMMYT, Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), from 24-29 March 2018. Participants were Member States: 10 African Countries (Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique, Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Zambia, Ethiopia); Organizations: FAO, AUC, ECOWAS, SADC, AATF; Private Sector: Syngenta, AgBiTech, Corteva Agriscience™, IntreXon Crop Protection.

2.5.3 The objectives were to (i) Demonstrate proven and successful technologies to combat the Fall Armyworm, (ii) Understand advantages and limitations of various technologies, (iii) See how institutions are addressing pest problems through sustainable diversification, (iv) Learn what makes certain technologies scalable, (v) Understand the key policies to develop and apply these technologies in your own countries.

2.5.4 A wide range of proven and successful technologies to combat the Fall Armyworm demonstrated (both theory and field visit).

- EMBRAPA maize and sorghum and Trichogramma wasp (biocontrol)
- Crop-livestock integration
- Irrigated maize field and Trichogramma wasp (release in the field using drone technology, intensive agriculture)
- Use of neem leaves (*Azadirachta indica*) extract
- Use of genetically modified organisms (GMO crops) such as Bt maize

2.5.5 Next steps

- Convene in the short time a regional meeting for restitution (feedback to member states, NPPOs) of the outcomes of the FAW study tour in Brazil with focus on the potential technologies available to control FAW
- Pilot biocontrol technologies in selected member states (short and mid-term action)
- Organize awareness campaigns to sensitize policy-makers, politicians, parliamentarians on benefits to adopt GMO in controlling FAW
- Initiate/Start dialogue for policy review
- Exploring possibility for signing MoU with EMBRAPA, ABC for collaboration on the effective management of FAW in ECOWAS member countries (long term action)

2.5.6 From 12 August to 14 September 2018, there is a joint mission of ECOWAS-CILSS-FAO that is being touring in the most affected ECOWAS member countries including Togo, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Cape Verde with the overall objective of assessing the magnitude of the FAW infestation at national level, and to assess the level of coordination of the response in these countries.

Specifically, the joint mission will have to:

- Exchange with the respective FAO Representations of the countries to be visited as well as the national technical partners (Agronomic Research Institutions, Plant Protection Directorate, Agricultural Extension Service, Ministry of Agriculture, Universities, NGOs, etc.) on ongoing actions against FAW, challenges and perspectives
- If possible, exchange with financial partners (WB, AfDB, etc.) for their possible participation in the FAW control effort in the countries;
- Advocate for the establishment and operationalization of taskforces as FAW national coordination structures with the country's competent authorities
- Train / retrain stakeholders on FAMEWS (practical training)
- Undertake a field visit (2 to 3 days minimum depending on the importance of cultures) in collaboration with the national partners in order to appreciate the extent of FAW damage and interact with producers through individual discussions and focus group;
- Make an inventory of the infestation in the countries (update)
- Write a report with relevant recommendations to improve response coordination and effective management of FAW infestation in the visited countries

Harmonization of SPS issues in the region

2.5.7 There was a regional workshop for discussion on harmonization of food safety policy, trade standards, and capacity building on preventive controls qualified individual (PCQI) and lead instructors (LI) from 16-25 august 2018, in Accra, Ghana.

2.5.8 Following the harmonization discussion, a regional SPS strategy (2019-2021) was developed and recommendations were made for its implementation.

2.5.9 Regarding the training, 29 PCQI and 15 LI were trained.

2.5.10 Further, there was a regional workshop to harmonize and have common position on matters to be discussed at the CPM13, CPM14, CPM15 (virtual meeting). These harmonization meeting were held in different locations within the region. More information on the detailed reports of these meetings will be provided further requested.

2.6. Attendance at regional, international SPS fora

2.6.1. The ECOWAS Commission is an Intergovernmental Observer organization in Codex, OIE and WTO SPS committee. As such a representative has participated in the international meetings from March 2017.

2.6.2. Since 2017, the ECOWAS commission, as observer organization, has been participated in the informal and regular WTS SPS committee meetings and regular updates on the implemented SPS activities provided to the committee.

2.6.3. Taking into consideration the above achievements, granting ECOWAS Commission the Observer status at the IPPC standards settings meetings would be beneficial and as such enhanced facilitation and coordination of plant health issues and participation in the standards setting processes. This will allow that ECOWAS Commission to establish the Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO).

3. MAIN DIFFICULTIES

3.1 The main challenges are related to fund to implement plant health activities at national level, in particular. In addition the COVID 19 global pandemic situation has negatively impacted implementation. However, with the commitment of the ECOWAS partners, these challenges are under control.

4. PERSPECTIVES

4.1 The ECOWAS Commission take this opportunity to thank USAID, USDA, USDA-APHIS, EU and all partners and donors for their support in advancing SPS issues in the region and beyond. Also want to call for more collaboration, support for the implementation of actions to better address SPS matters in the region.

4.2 Further there is need for:

- Establishing regional plant protection Organization (RPPO), as ECOWAS member states are experiencing challenges to get engage at the continental level to effectively participate in the harmonization and the plant health standards setting processes, hence the request
- Enhancing, strengthening and sustaining the regional coordination mechanisms in the area of plant health, animal health and food safety.
- Increasing awareness / training and capacity building of stakeholders on SPS issues
- Supporting the establishment of SPS National Committees (where this committee is not yet established) and ensure their smooth operation in all 15-member countries
- Ensuring the application of SPS standards and measures, monitoring and proper coordination of SPS activities at the level of the ECOWAS region
- Ensure the financing and sustainability of SPS activities at the level of the ECOWAS region.

Second West Africa National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO) and Partners Taskforce meeting to address regional priorities and review of IPPC instruments including the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM14) preparation, functioning and harmonization of regional priorities

18 -20 february, 2018, Cotonou, Benin.



FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The second annual meeting of the Regional Task Force of NPPOs and Partners of West Africa was held from 18 to 20 February 2018 in Cotonou, Benin. It was organized by ECOWAS in collaboration with the Plant Protection Directorate of Benin, with the participation of representatives of ECOWAS partner institutions, in particular: UEMOA, USAID West Africa Office, CILSS, AGRHYMET Regional Center, CORAF, FAO, IITA-Ibadan and USDA-APHIS.

The meeting was officially opened by Mr Innocent TOGLA, representing the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, with the presence of Mr Jorge ALIVEIRA, representing USAID and Mr Ernest AUBEE, representative of ECOWAS.

The workshop aimed to:

- review the phytosanitary situation of countries;
- discuss the regional priorities of the taskforce;
- identify priority issues on the agenda of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures CMP14;
- inform participants about TCP / RAF / 3705

The meeting was attended by Directors and / or representatives of NPPOs from 15 West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo).

The work focused on the following points:

- Presentation and discussion of the phytosanitary situation of the ECOWAS countries

- Update on the regional pest surveillance strategy, particularly the fruit fly, implemented as part of the Regional Fruit Fly Control and surveillance Plan in West Africa (PLMF)
- Regional and international seed exchanges for breeding and research.
- Review of the objectives and missions of the Regional Taskforce - Assessment of the status of implementation and action plan of priority activities for 2018 - Validation of the program of activities for 2019.
- Update on status of national lists of regulated pests
- Review of the agenda of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CMP 14) and validation of matters of interests to be discussed at a subsequent regional preparatory meeting
- Upgrade participants on the TCP / RAF / 3705
- Establishment at the West African sub-regional level of the overall process of harmonization of international standards in the SPS domain and the effective participation of experts and all stakeholders in the standard-setting process of international organizations (Figure 1).

After fruitful discussions, participants agreed on the following:

1. Development of national lists of regulated pests, the following observations have been made

Benin:	list not validated, update of the list established in 2013 in progress
Burkina Faso:	list validated in December 2018 and published
Cape Verde:	list not validated
Ivory Coast:	list not validated
Gambia:	list not validated
Ghana:	list validated in December 2018 and published
Nigeria:	list not validated
Guinea:	list validated in 2011, review and update in progress
Guinea Bissau:	list validated in December 2018 and signature procedure in progress
Liberia:	list not validated
Mali:	list updated and validated in 2018 and signature procedure in progress
Niger:	list not validated
Togo:	list validated in November 2018 and signature procedure in progress
Senegal:	list validated in December 2018 and published
Sierra Leone:	list validated, in January 2019 and signature procedure in progress

2. Activity program of the Taskforce for the year 2019, the following activities have been agreed

- Develop identification and decision-making guides on major pests and standard operating procedures for phytosanitary measures
- Build the capacity of NPPOs by:
 - o strengthening and promoting the plant clinic

- o Conducting an assessment of the phytosanitary capacity of the Member States.
- Upgrade regional laboratories (based on the model of PMLF project)
- Enhance information exchange among NPPOs in the region
- Conduct regional research on invasive pests, e.g FAW.

3. Preparation of the CMP14 meeting, the priority matters of interests to be discussed during the next pre-preparatory meeting are as follows

8. Governance and Strategy

- 8.2 IPPC Strategic Framework for 2020-2030
- 8.4 Focus Group on Commodity and Pathways Standards
- 8.5 Facilitating safe trade for plants and plant products - Action Plan
- 8.6 Five year strategic plan for ePhyto: Transitioning from project to business as usual operation
- 8.7 IPPC e-Commerce proposed project work plan and budget
- 8.8 Concept of emerging pests and emergency issues
- 8.9 Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)
- 8.10 CPM recommendations

9. Cooperation of Standards and Implementation

- 9.1 Task Force on Topics and 2018 Call for Topics: Standards and Implementation
- 9.2 Surveillance pilot project analysis
- 9.3 Framework for standards and implementation

10. Standards Setting

- 10.1 Report of the Standards Committee (SC)
- 10.2 Adoption of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures

11. Implementation and Capacity Development

- 11.2 Status of ISPM 15 Symbol Registration

12. International Year of Plant Health 2020 (IYPH 2020)

- 12.1 Report of the IYPH Steering Committee
- 12.2 IYPH action plan and budget

13. IPPC Network Activities

- 13.1 The IPPC Regional Workshops 2018 report
- 13.2 The 30th Technical Consultation (TC) among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs)

16. Successes and Challenges in Implementation of the Convention - *Fruit flies ISPMs* implementation: IAEA

17. Special Topics Session on Plant Health and Capacity Development

17.4 Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE)

18. IYPH: Promoting and celebrating the IYPH - Sharing ideas

19. Confirmation of Membership and Potential Replacements for CPM Subsidiary Bodies

19.1 CPM Bureau members and potential replacement members

19.2 SC members and potential replacement members

4. Establishment in the subregion of the general SPS harmonization process

The overall SPS harmonization process was introduced by Dr. Gbemenou Joselin Benoit, Senior SPS Advisor. Figure 1 below shows the different phases to follow for an effective implementation of this process.

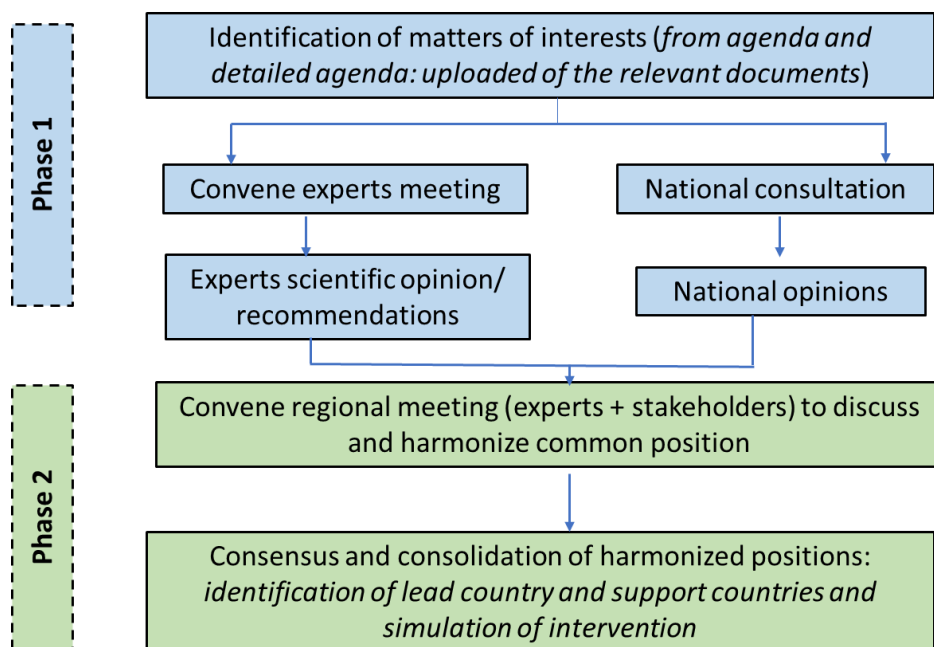


Figure 1. Diagram of the general process of SPS harmonization

5. TCP / RAF / 3705 Strengthening ECOWAS coordination and communication on Fall Armyworm's (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) monitoring and impact assessment in West African countries

The general objective is to improve food security, trade and livelihoods through enhanced plant pest management and phytosanitary regulatory system in West Africa.

The specific objectives are:

- Strengthen countries capacities in emergency management to enhance preparedness of the Members States to respond adequately crops pests and diseases outbreaks within the West African region.
- Improve the regional coordination in case of emerging crops pests and diseases threats.

Expected results and activities

Output 1: Regional and national capacities to respond transboundary pest outbreak Enhanced

- 1.1 Organize training to enhance national and regional preparedness (capacities to detect, prevent and respond to FAW)
- 1.2 Training of farmers/extension officers on the pest management and tools for monitoring, surveillance and early warning (FAMEWS)
- 1.3 Improve communication on FAW within the sub-region risk assessment
- 1.4 Support priority research to address gaps in FAW control

Output 2: Regional coordination to address plant pest and disease outbreaks strengthened

- 2.1 Enhance ECOWAS' Agriculture and Rural Development Directorate technical capacity on FAW
- 2.2 Establish an experts network for monitoring, surveillance and rapid response to address emergency outbreaks
- 2.3 Improve information flow and report among stakeholders
- 2.4 Conduct various assessments on FAW prevalence, risk and impact in the region

6. Recommendations

To Regional institutions (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS)

- Conduct a regional study of countries' phytosanitary capacity, extracted priorities, translate them into a regional capacity building project
- Establish and operationalize the regional structures provided for by Regional harmonized Regulation C / REG / 21/11/10 and operational rules for the safety of plants, animals and food in the ECOWAS region
- Organize the pre-preparation meeting for CMP15 in 2020
- Strengthen the capacity of NPPOs of Member States on notifications
- Accelerate the process of pesticide registration and availability
- Accelerate the COAHP operationalization process

To Member States

- Establish and operationalize the national structures provided for in Regulation C / REG / 21/11/10 harmonizing the structural framework and operational rules for the safety of plants, animals and food in the ECOWAS region
- Establish, formalize and operationalize and SPS National Committees as appropriate
- Accelerate the process of pesticide registration and availability
- Devote more financial resources to phytosanitary and SPS activities

Acknowledgements

The participants thank:

- The Government of Benin and more particularly the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, for the support and the good organization of the meeting as well as for the warm welcome they have been given
- ECOWAS for the preparation and smooth running of the meeting organization
- All scientific and technical partners: UEMOA, USAID, CILSS, AGRHYMET, CORAF, FAO, IITA and USDA-APHIS for their active participation and support.

Cotonou on February 20th, 2018.

The 3rd West Africa NPPO & Partners Taskforce Annual Meeting & Validation workshop of the “Harmonized Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guides”.

Held from December 09 to 13, 2019 in Dakar - Senegal.

FINAL COMMUNIQUE



December 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The 3rd West Africa NPPO & Partners Taskforce Annual Meeting & the Validation workshop of the “Harmonized Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guides” were jointly organized by USDA-FAS Washington, FAO and ECOWAS in cooperation with the Directorate of plant Health of Senegal.

Representatives of 14 West Africa countries namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo attended the training. It was to note the attendance of technical and donor partners including UEMOA, CILSS, USDA, USAID, CABI, FAO.

The meeting was launched by the General Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment of Senegal, with the presence of Representatives of regional and international institutions including: WAEMU, AGRHYMET, CILSS, CORAF, CABI, USAID, USDA-APHIS, AFBD and UA-BIRA.

2. FACILITATION

The event was facilitated by:

- Mr Abdoulaye Ndiaye, Focal Point IPPC, NPPO Senegal
- Mr James Bud Petitdemange, Phytosanitary Expert
- Dr Kevin Rice, Entomologist, University of Missouri
- Dr Gbemenou Joselin Benoît Gnonlonfin, ECOWAS, SPS Lead
- Dr Cheikh S. Fall, Consultant, UMAP

Reporters of the meeting included:

- Mr Eric Adossou (Benin)
- Mr Ouedraogo Sibiri (Cote d’Ivoire)
- Mr William Lampsey (Ghana)
- Mrs Raymonda A. B. Johnson (Sierra Leone)

3. OBJECTIVES

The meeting aimed to:

- a. review West Africa NPPO & Partners Taskforce Action Plan Progresses and challenges, address Pending Priorities, identify new key activities and validate a work plan for 2020 and beyond
- b. review and validate the Harmonized “Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guides”

4. CONTENT

Topics addressed included

- a. Update on West Africa Phytosanitary main issues and Current Initiatives:
- b. Review of West Africa Taskforce Action Plan: Progresses and challenges
 - Update on the participation of West Africa to the 2019 CPM14 meeting in Rome
 - Discussions on the procedure for recognition of West Africa Taskforce as RPPO
 - Review of progress made on E-phyto implementation in West Africa countries
 - West Africa Taskforce Action Plan
 - Pending priorities to address
 - Identification of New key Priorities
 - Validation of West Africa Taskforce Workplan for 2019/2020 (Please see Appendix 1 below, table 1 attached).

- c. Workshop for Validation of the Harmonized “Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guide”
- Overview of the process of development of the “Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision - Making Guide”
 - Review of ISPM 23, Guidelines for Phytosanitary Inspection
 - Review on comments and validation of the Inspection Guide and decision-making and provisions for its implementation (the validated harmonized document is inserted below).



GUIDES Harmonise
valide 13 Dec. 2019-I

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

After fruitful discussions, participants agreed upon the following key recommendations:

To the regional NPPO Taskforce

- To organize the pre-preparation meeting of the CPM15 in March 2020
- To organize the next annual meeting in December 2020
- To ensure that the representation of NPPOs at both meeting, be consistent

To Countries

- As for the celebration of the international year of plant health in 2020 (IYPH 2020):
 - to Develop a budgeted national action plan emphasizing awareness and advocacy towards authorities for adequate support for NPPOs and send copy to the ECOWAS Commission, before February 15, 2020.
- to provide ECOWAS Commission with the lists of training and other activities conducted during 2019 by December 20, 2019;
- to Develop and publish the national lists of Quarantine Pests by December 2020;
- to Send to IPPC secretariat their requesting letters for migrating to the e-Phyto platform by 30 December 2019.
- Operationalize the “Phytosanitary inspection and decision-making guide” in:
 - a. Testing of the guide in the field for feedback in the 15-ECOWAS countries
 - b. Editing the validated document, translated into Portuguese as well
 - c. Organizing trainings of border inspectors on the use of the validated harmonized guide.

To ECOWAS and technical and financial partners

- to engage the internal official process for the recognition of the Taskforce as the Phytosanitary Sub-Committee acted in Chapter 3, Art.13 of the “*Regional harmonized Regulation C / REG / 21/11/10 and operational rules for the safety of plants, animals and food in the ECOWAS region*”, and to consult FAO Legal Office on the modalities of creating a RPPO for the West African sub-region;
- to organize a validation workshop for the “West Africa Plant pest control program with emphasis on Fall Armyworm control” in March 2020 with African Development Bank (AfDB)

and FAO in cooperation with member states before its submission to approval by AfDB commission for approval;

- To provide supports for the implementation of the agreed action plan 2020
- Translate into Portuguese the harmonized validated inspection guides and decision-making

To FAO

- to support NPPOs in raising awareness of national authorities on the financial impact of damage caused by harmful organisms on crops in order to encourage them to provide substantial budget for their NPPOS operations);

ECOWAS - UEMOA - CILSS

- to Diligent the harmonization of phytosanitary regulations.
- to Contribute to building capacities of:
 - NPPOs human resources and designate the AGRHYMET center as a training center for NPPO personnel in the region.
 - Member States plant pest's surveillance systems, and particularly introducing digital surveillance tools.
 - Laboratory diagnostic of pests in countries

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Participants address their best thanks to:

- The Government of Senegal, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment and the Directorate of Plant Protection for accepting to host the meeting and providing their technical support for its smooth running and,
- Technical and financial partners, including USDA, USAID, FAO and ECOWAS for their support.

Dated on December 13, in Dakar, Senegal.

APPENDIX 1

Table 1. The Action plan (2020) and beyond

Activities	Objectives	Outcome	Target Group	Proposed Dates	Financial Partners	Technical Partners
Development of national lists of regulated pests, the following observations have been made	Identify regulated pest within member states To prevent the introduction of regulated pest in our sub-region To facilitate trade	_ developed and updating national regulated pest list _Develop regional regulated pest list	Farmers, inspectors, exporter and importers Travelers Policy makers Research/scientist Extension service NPPOs IPPC Transporters Customs Civil society, media etc	Dec 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU	CABI, CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri
Develop identification and decision-making guides on major pests and standard operating procedures for phytosanitary measures	to harmonize phytosanitary procedures in the sub-region to facilitate standards Implementation	Phytosanitary compliance harmonize implementation tools	Phytosanitary inspectors NPPOs Extension service Agriculture professional organization Academia/scientist etc	September 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri
Build the capacity of NPPOs by: <i>strengthening and promoting the plant clinic</i>	To build capacity of frontline staff To strengthen general surveillance	Improve pest diagnostic To ensure early warning against outbreak To prevent the spread of pest	Farmers Extension service Inspectors Scientist academia	Jan – Nov 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri National universities
<i>conducting an assessment of the phytosanitary capacity of</i>	Identify the strengthen and weakness of NPPOs	National strategy to improve the	NPPO Policy makers Academia	Nov 2020	National government	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP

<i>the Member States.</i>	Building the capacity of the NPPO To do stakeholder mapping	phytosanitary capacity of NPPO Sensitization of partners Capacity building needs are identified	Research Importers Exporters Private sector		USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB	University of Missouri National universities
Upgrade regional laboratories (based on the model of PMLF project)	To strengthen the regional capacity	To assess laboratories capacity Designate laboratories Equipping of the labs training of the lab technicians SOPs develop	Lab technicians NPPO Research academia	Nov 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri National universities
Organize the 4 th annual NPPO and partners taskforce meeting	Enhance information exchange among NPPOs in the region Harmonise decision making among NPPOs	Prioritise activities within the action plan Evaluate achievement and challenges in NPPO implementation	NPPO Partners Regional bodies	Dec 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri National universities
Conduct regional research on invasive pests, e.g FAW	To identify sustainable management practices To understand the biology and ecology of the pest	Use of integrated control measures Enable the region to coordinate the same action in all countries	NPPO Extension service Farmers Research scientist	Jan-Nov 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri National universities
Conduct a regional study of countries' phytosanitary capacity, extracted priorities, translate them into a regional capacity building project	Start 2020					

	chain actors to be compliant	number of notifications reduced			EU AfDB, World Bank	University of Missouri National universities
IYPH celebration 2020	To sensitize the general public on the importance of plant health	Public knowledge on plant health enhanced	NPPO Regional bodies Partners General public etc	Jan-Dec 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB, World Bank	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri National universities
Operationalize phytosanitary inspection and decision-making guide: 1. Testing of the guide in the field for feedback in 15 countries 2. Edit the validated document, translated into Portuguese as well 3. Organize training for the relevant actors on validated harmonized phytosanitary inspection guide in member states	to distribute the guide in member states	phytosanitary inspection and decision-making guide disseminated inspectors trained on the guide	NPPOs ECOWAS Partners	Jan- Dec 2020 Jan-April 2020	National government USAID, USDA, UEMOA ECOWAS EU AfDB, World Bank	CABI, IITA CORAF CILSS FAO, COLEACP University of Missouri National universities