



# Coraf.Echo

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## DCE-CORAF/WECARD's partnership:

### Stéphane Halgand at the Association's headquarters

After the visit of CORAF/WECARD's delegation to the Headquarters of the European Commission's Delegation (DCE) in Dakar, on 22nd January, for the revival of the partnership, Stéphane Halgand, the DCE's agricultural sector officer promised reciprocate by visiting the Executive Director, Dr Paco Sérémé.

On 3rd March 2009, he in fact came to the Association's headquarters to familiarize himself with it. Dr Paco Sérémé and his colleagues presented CORAF/WECARD to him. The new research programmes and, above all, ongoing changes that aim at revitalizing the organization to enable meet the numerous agricultural challenges faced by the region were also presented.

Mr. Stéphane Halgand expressed satisfaction with the ongoing reforms in CORAF/WECARD and promised the European Commission's effective support in 2010. □

## DONATA: the monitoring team visits five countries

The team in charge of monitoring the activities of the Programme, Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa (DONATA) conducted field visits from 5th to 22nd March 2009 in Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo and Sierra Leone to obtain first hand information on progress of Programme implementation.

(Continued on page 2)

## SCARDA: renewal of the partnership between CORAF/WECARD and AGRHYMET

Sir Mohamed Yahya Ould Mohamed Mahmoud, Director General of the Agrhyment Regional Centre, and his colleague in charge of the programme, Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research for Development in Africa (SCARDA) held a working session with the CORAF/WECARD managers on 31st March, 2009 at the CORAF/WECARD Headquarters.

As CORAF/WECARD's main service provider in the framework of SCARDA, the Agrhyment Centre assists in, among others, the management of capacity strengthening activities, beneficiary institutions' activities and graduates' careers.

After few years of partnership, the two parties met to conduct an assessment. The role of each actor in the SARDa Programme was revisited for a common understanding; some misunderstood points were clarified. CORAF/WECARD and the Agrhyment centre agreed to renew and to further their partnership that will



An overview of CORAF/WECARD and the AGRHYMET centre's senior managers exchanging on the renewal of their partnership.

this time be characterized by strengthening the monitoring system for activities through quarterly meetings. □

## ECHO IN BRIEF

(Continued from page 1)

In each country visited, they reviewed the activities planned for 2008 and those that have effectively been implemented during this period.

To sum up, platforms have been established and have started operating according to the planned procedures. It was generally observed that established platforms were rather operating like cooperatives instead of groups comprising all the value chains actors.

A workshop is therefore going to be held in order to clarify the notion of «value chain » that is still misunderstood by many of the national focal points. □

### Resource mobilization: experts meet to develop a strategy

Upon the invitation of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), a workshop was organized on 5th and 6th March, 2009 in Accra for the defining of the main line items on of the advocacy and resource mobilization strategy in the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme's implementation (CAADP).

These two day workshop aimed at developing a consensual framework for drafting of the advocacy and resource mobilization strategy with respect to the subsidiarity principle. This will guide FARA's approach of intervention in Sub-regional Organizations' activities and also guide the SROs approach in the activities of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS).

The main line items of this resource mobilization strategy were defined by the participants and will be used by consultants when writing the report which will be used by FARA and the SROs in the framework of the developing their resource mobilization strategy.

CORAF/WECARD was represented at this workshop by its Director of Finance and Administration, Mr Jean-Rostand Kamga who has been selected as one of the resource persons to accompany FARA in the implementation of its advocacy and resource mobilization activities. □

### FARA's Governing Board: CORAF/WECARD presents its activity report

The stakeholders and decision-makers of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) met from 25th to 28th March in the framework of the Subregional Organizations' retreat and of their Governing Board session at the FARA headquarters in Accra.

The SROs' retreat was an opportunity for each organisation to present its 2008 activities. Dr Paco Sérémé, the Executive Director of CORAF/WECARD presented his organisation's report. He presented the activities connected with advocacy, scientific cooperation, programmes' management, information and resource management for the year 2008.

The SROs' retreat also presented an opportunity for discussing (I) emerging issues that require interventions at the continental level and (II) the management of regional initiatives.

The Governing Board paid much attention to the reports of the Programmes, auditing and finance, and governance subcommittees for their examination and approval. The Executive Secretariat's progress report was reviewed and approved.

The main recommendation of this meeting came from the trustees that requested the convening of the SRO's retreat at a date different from the date of the Governing Board's session in order to spend enough time for issues connected with FARA and SROs' life. □

### SCARDA : the second management training for agricultural research managers

The managers of research in Congo, the Gambia, Ghana and Mali from the four beneficiary countries of the Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA) Programme met from 24th to 26th March in Mali for a second training workshop.

After the Kumasi workshop that dealt with the issues and concepts in connection with the management of research in terms of innovation systems, Bamako workshop represented an opportunity for the participants to draft, present, criticize and refine the projects for the action plans they drafted.

This 12 session-meeting enabled the participants to get familiar with the methods and strategies needed to build capacity in agricultural research management that will enable them effect changes in institutional changes of the beneficiary Institutions. □

### AGRODEP: experts meet in Pretoria

The experts in agricultural growth and development policy met on 19th and 20th March in Pretoria (South Africa), after the Dakar meeting in November 2008, in the framework of the second planning meeting for the activities of the African Growth and Development Policy (AGRODEP) Modeling Consortium.

The participants discussed the activities that should lead to the establishment of the consortium, and particularly the priorities for the next three years, the choice of models relating to identified priorities, the coordination of field research and the governance of the consortium.

## ECHO IN BRIEVE

At the end of the discussions, it was decided that, for the next three years, trade, natural resources and environment, agriculture and food security will be the priorities.

Dr Remi Cole, Advisor to the Executive Director, represented CORAF/WECARD at this important meeting. □

## ECHO FROM NARS

### CARBAP: the Governing Board satisfied with the management of the Centre

The African Research Centre for Banana and Plantains (CARBAP)'s governing board convened on 5th March a session at Centre's headquarters in Douala.

Dr Simon Zok, Director General of the Cameroon Agricultural Research and Development Institute (IRAD) also the Chairman of CORAF/WECARD and Dr Marcel Nwalozie, the Director of Programmes, represented the institution at this meeting of CARBAP one of the CORAF/WECARD's base centres. The 2008 financial year's report was amended and approved as well as the current year's budget and activity plans. Some of the centre's management manuals were amended and approved. The Governing Board also recommended, among others, the strengthening of resource mobilization with partners.

Dr KODJO Tomékpé, Director of the Centre was part of CORAF/WECARD's delegation to Brussels and Paris on 9th and 10th March. He presented CARBAP to the European Commission (EC) and to the French Foreign and European Affairs Ministry (MAEE). □

### Sierra Leone: inauguration of the Rokupr research centre

Sierra Leone's agriculture authorities inaugurated the recently rehabilitated Rokupr research centre on 27th March.

The long years of war have had harmful consequences on the Sierra Leonian agricultural research system. Since 2007, the Government has decided to rehabilitate the eight research centres. After the Njala Agricultural Research

Center (NARC), specialized in research on cassava, sweet potato, yam, groundnuts and soya beans, it is the Rokupr Agricultural Research Center (RARC) that has just been rehabilitated. This centre, specialized in research on rice and sorghum, was inaugurated.

CORAF/WECARD, represented by the manager of its Staple Crops programme, Dr Asiedu Ernest, was impressed by the efforts being made at rehabilitating Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI)'s which started in 2007. Dr Dixon has been the new Director General of the Institute since 2008. □



The administrative authorities and the scientists were eager to attend the RARC's inauguration ceremony.

### 9th CORAF/WECARD GA: Cotonou reasserts its will to host this meeting in 2010

In the framework of the preparations for CORAF/WECARD's 9th General Assembly, CORAF/WECARD's Chairman and the Executive Director met with Benin Authorities in Cotonou on 12th and 13th March, 2009.

The Benin Agriculture, livestock and Fishery Minister, Sir Roger DOVONOU did not fail to express his pleasure in

welcoming Dr Simon ZOK and Dr Paco Sérémé who presented CORAF/WECARD and its role in the coordination of agricultural research activities, in strengthening the capacity of National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) and in the management system for the competitive agricultural research funds.

The Minister, on behalf of the Government, reasserted his country's willingness to welcome all agricultural research stakeholders and partners in West and Central Africa for the Association's 9th General Assembly in 2010. □

## ECHO FROM HEADQUARTERS

### EC-CORAF/WECARD: effective support in 2010

In the framework of the advocacy activities for resource mobilization, CORAF/WECARD's managers, along with the managers of operational units, like the African Research Centre for Banana and Plantains (CARBAP) and the Regional Pole of Applied Research to the Development of Central Africa Savannas (PRASAC), went on a mission to the European Commission in Brussels on 9th March 2009.

CORAF/WECARD's delegation, led by its Chairman, Dr. Simon ZOK, held discussions with Mr. Gary QUINCE, the Director of the Commission for Development Aid and his colleagues.

The meeting mainly dealt with the European Commission's support to CORAF/WECARD's Operational Plan for the thematic programme on Food Security; presentation of CORAF/WECARD's new programmes in accordance with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP); ongoing changes in the organization, and presentations of PRASAC and CARBAP.

After the discussions, the European Commission agreed to effectively support CORAF/WECARD in 2010. Beforethen, some activities would need to be conducted by each of the two parties. CORAF/WECARD will be responsible for drafting the intervention and actions to be ratified by the EC before November 2009 and for providing, as soon as possible, the report on ongoing institutional reform. □

### CORAF/WECARD- AusAID: an expert on the ground

The anticipating partnership between CORAF/WECARD and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is taking shape. An AusAID expert visited the Association's Headquarters and the Regional Centre for Studies on the Improvement of Plant Adaptation to Drought (CERAAS) from 9th to 10th March, 2009.

Dr. Simon Hearn, Principal Advisor to the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), on behalf of the AusAID, was introduced to CORAF/WECARD and to its operating system through the research programmes before going to CERAAS in order to experience first hand research activities in laboratories and on the field.

After visit, the two parties agreed on the following areas for partnership: biotechnology, soil management, livestock and capacity strengthening. This visit will facilitate the drafting of the terms of reference that should lead to the establishment of the partnership. An AusAID staff is expected to arrive at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat in May 09 for the finalization of future collaboration. □

## AGENDA

**4th – 9th April 2009, Nairobi.** Meeting of the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)'s Governing Board. CORAF/WECARD, member of this Council, was invited for attendance at this meeting.

**4th – 10th April 2009, Bonn, Germany.** The RAILS Project managers in FARA and Subregional Organisations participate in a training on the e.RAILS, a new tool for agricultural information delivery and management.

**6th – 8th April 2009, Uganda.** CORAF/WECARD is invited to participate in the Scientific directors' 6th annual meeting.

**7th April 2009, Ouagadougou.** CILSS, WAEMU and ECOWAS consultative meeting on the harmonization of Biosafety initiatives. CORAF/WECARD is represented there.

**10th – 11th April 2009, Dakar.** Launch workshop of the subprogramme on « Institutional strengthening under the Regional agricultural Investment Programme for the implementation of the ECOWAS Common Agricultural Policy ».

**20th – 22nd April 2009, Lomé, Togo.** Validation workshop of the « sustainable agricultural development » thematic group's report led by CORAF/WECARD and IFDC was held.

**20th – 24th April 2009, Garoua, Cameroon.** International colloquium on "Developing African Savannas: innovate for sustainability ». It aims at assessing research – development activities in the Sub-Saharan Africa savanna's lands.

**27th – 30th April 2009, Accra.** Workshop for the strengthening of the SCARDA programme's communication and management strategies.

**29th April 2009, Nairobi.** International workshop organized by the Bio-sciences in the East and the International Livestock Research Institute on the following theme: « From technology to the product for the farmer". □



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