

**Conseil Ouest et Centre
Africain pour la Recherche et
le Développement Agricoles**



**West and Central African
Council for Agricultural
Research and Development**

Terms of Reference for Consultancy

Identifying Priority Research Areas for Sustainable Natural Resources Management in West and Central Africa

Introduction

The West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD) is one of the four Sub Regional Organizations of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). Its vision is *"A sustainable reduction of poverty and food insecurity in West and Central Africa through increased agriculture-led economic growth and improvements in key aspects of the agricultural research system"*. CORAF/WECARD is currently composed of National Agricultural Research Systems of 22 member states in West and Central Africa (WCA). These countries cover an area over 11.5 million km² blessed with varied and valuable natural resources, which support livelihoods of about 70 % of the sub region's population (about 318 million people), most of whom are dependent on agriculture. There are, however, growing concerns over the unsustainable use of the natural resource base with adverse consequences on the livelihoods of farmers and future generations.

Shifting cultivation and grazing, although adapted to the physical environment of some WCA countries, are becoming increasingly unsustainable particularly in the face of rapid population growth. The current and future threats posed by climate change, unsustainable practices in the use and management of inshore and water resources require adoption of an ecosystem based management approach to achieve sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity conservation. An innovative approach to environmental and resource management based on robust scientific-economic, social, and traditional knowledge is required to make informed decisions towards appropriate actions that will ensure the achievement of desired national development outcomes.

In order to obtain rational justification for the set of priority programs and institutional reforms that will be required to achieve the target 6% growth in agriculture prescribed by CAADP, CORAF/WECARD commissioned the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to conduct an analysis of the agricultural sector in West and Central Africa. The study brought to light potential contributions of specific commodities and cross-cutting themes to achieving the desired agricultural growth in the three zones of WCA. These results helped in identifying specific gaps for research and development interventions which led CORAF/WECARD to make a strategic choice of a programme approach, that ensures a more general and global approach to implementing its Operational Plan. This approach is complemented by networking of several institutions mainly comprising research networks, regional centres of excellence and research poles. A critical and important task, however, is that of identifying the natural resource management research and development constraints and priorities for WCA. If addressed, this

would significantly contribute to the 6% growth in agriculture while preserving the natural resource base.

The CORAF/WECARD Natural Resource Management Programme, one of the eight CORAF/WECARD programmes, aims to contribute towards broad based agricultural productivity for the WCA region through:

- developing appropriate technologies and innovations for natural resource management
- identifying and supporting the development of strategic-decision making options for effective natural resource management policy and institutions;
- strengthening and coordinating the sub regional agricultural research system relevant to natural resource management;
- facilitating and meeting the demand for agricultural knowledge relating to natural resource management for targeted clients.

These terms of reference stipulate the conditions under which a study will be conducted to better orientate investments in the research for development in the area of natural resources management in West and Central Africa.

Objective

The scoping study aims at identifying priority constraints and opportunities associated with natural resources management and developing a research agenda framework that will guide the NRM programme of CORAF/WECARD in directing and coordinating the implementation of research and development activities for the sustainable management of natural resources in West and Central Africa, in line with the CORAF/WECARD Strategic and Operational Plans. It will also integrate the analysis of constraints and opportunities linked to policy, markets and trade options as well as capacity strengthening.

Expected output

A 30 page report comprising:

- I. Status of natural resources in West and Central Africa determined
- II. Socio economic implications in NRM research and development identified and analysed
- III. Gaps and opportunities in NRM research and development identified
- IV. Relevant partners and partnership arrangements identified
- V. Capacity strengthening needs identified for various stakeholders to sustainably manage natural resources
- VI. At least 5 priority research themes and related projects identified

Tasks

Under the supervision of the CORAF/WECARD NRM Manager, the consultants will have the following tasks:

- i. Identify, analyse and prioritise the major components and status of natural resources endowments related to agricultural development in West and central Africa
- ii. Identify, analyse and prioritise the key NRM issues cutting across the three agro ecological zones

- iii. Clearly identify, and analyse relevant policies, market and trade options as they relate to sustainable management of natural resources
- iv. Identify the key research gaps in the sustainable management of natural resources in the three agroecosystems particularly in the context of climate change.
- v. Identify possible opportunities for the advancement of NRM research and development in WCA.
- vi. Identify key stakeholders in NRM and possible collaborating partners in NRM research and development
- vii. Identify capacity building needs of various stakeholder groups to sustainably manage natural resources.
- viii. Prepare a detailed operational mechanism for monitoring and evaluation, together with a set of activities and partnership arrangements for the implementation of priority interventions by the NRM programme of CORAF/WECARD.
- ix. Participate in a regional workshop organized by the CORAF/WECARD Executive secretariat to amend and validate the report.

Methodology

A team of 3 consultants comprising a soil and water management specialist, a biodiversity conservation and management specialist and a socio-economist, will be hired to carry out the study. The consultants will provide a draft methodology for the study, including questionnaires and other instruments, as well as a work-plan and timetable for the field visits. These will be discussed and validated at the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat.

Consultants are expected to visit not more than three countries in each of the three CORAF/WECARD agroecological zones (Coastal, Sahelian and forest zones) and consult with key representatives of communities, organizations and institutions that are stakeholders in Natural Resources Management. These would include key target groups such as FBOs, CBOs, NGOs, women organizations, national and international research organizations (NARS, IITA, WARDA, ICRISAT) etc. The most experienced and versatile consultant from among the 3 consultants will be appointed to lead the team.

Relevant CORAF/WECARD documents such as the CORAF/WECARD Strategic and Operational Plans, the IFPRI study report, the Staple crops scoping study report and other available documents and information from CORAF/WECARD partners and other sources, will be made available to the consultants. The consultants are however, expected to source additional information through their established contacts.

A workshop involving key representatives of stakeholders in natural resource management research and development in WCA will be held in Dakar to validate the results of the scoping study. The team leader will synthesize the final report before submission to CORAF/WECARD and also facilitate the validation workshop.

Qualification and Experience

The Consultants should have the following qualifications and expertise:

- (i) A Ph.D. holder in one of the following fields (Soil science, Plant breeding, and Social

Science) or related fields with at least 10 years post Ph.D. experience in Agricultural Research and Development

- (ii) A proof of knowledge of the operations of the agricultural research system in WCA, including the NARS, CG centres, networks etc.
- (iii) Proven track record of having worked with Agricultural Development Initiatives at national and international levels in West and Central Africa
- (iv) Strong professional experience in identifying and analysing biophysical and related socio economic constraints with particular reference to policies, and relevant gaps in NRM research
- (v) A minimum of 10 relevant publications in peer review journals
- (vi) Fluency in both English and French is an advantage
- (vii) Equal opportunity in gender considerations

Duration of engagement

The assignment is expected to last for 30 working days with effect from January 2010.

Presentation of reports

The lead Consultant will submit an electronic copy of the draft report written in either French or English to the Executive Director of CORAF/WECARD through the Executive Secretary (secoraf@coraf.org) 7 days after field visits and the final report, 5 days after the validation workshop.