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Page: 1/3

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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## **ECOWAS IMPLEMENTED SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY ACTIVITIES DURING THE PERIOD OF NOVEMBER 2022 – FEBRUARY 2023**

### **COMMUNICATION FROM ECOWAS-USAID SENIOR SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) STANDARDS ADVISOR**

The following communication, received on 28 February 2023, is being circulated at the request of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1. The Economic Community of West African States and its partners work to implement and address SPS related issues at regional level that contribute to the 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.

1.2. In view of improving and strengthening SPS activities in the ECOWAS and Sahel region, the following activities were implemented during the period of November 2022 - February 2023. It is to note that since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic that is still with us, and the Russia-Ukraine war have impacted the smooth implementation of SPS-related activities at national and regional levels.

## **2 PLANT HEALTH AND PLANT PROTECTION**

### **2.1 Completion of training workshop on the "Use of the Harmonized Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guide"**

2.1. It is important to recall that this in-country training should be conducted in all 15 ECOWAS member States plus Chad and Mauritania. The continuation and completion of the training workshop on "The Use of the Harmonized Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision-Making Guide" was held in N'Djamena, Chad for phytosanitary inspectors of Mali, Chad and Mauritania. This is an effort of USDA-FAS complemented by USAID West Africa Office dedicated to support West Africa NPPOs Taskforce to disseminate the harmonized Guide in order to promote best practices in the conduct of plant quarantine operations in the sub-region. This training was conducted in N'Djamena, Chad from 6-9 February 2023, bringing the total number of trained phytosanitary inspectors to 335 for the entire region.

2.2. Overall, this series of trainings at national level is a game changer and has helped to achieve the following outcomes:

- 15 trainings sessions conducted at national level in all 17 member States amounted \$320 k;
- 1 technical document available, edited and disseminated;
- 335 inspectors trained and capacitated with inspection kit;
- 1 regional platform of phytosanitary inspectors established for real-time exchanges, experience sharing;
- joint collaboration and inspection at the borders improved;
- Contribute to facilitate the communication among inspectors at national level;

- contribute to mobilize additional resources at national level in the conduct of step-down training within the country.

2.3. Recalling the key sessions were about:

- presentations and discussions on the provisions of the Guide related to phytosanitary inspection procedures for Import and Export;
- Presentation of ISPM: 05, 07, 11, 12, 23, 31 and 32;
- Exercises with practical demonstrations of inspection, sampling, pest detection and identification and decision-making;
- Field visit of one of the land borders between Chad and Cameroon.

2.4. Also, it is important to recall the programme aims at:

- training in the countries, plant quarantine inspectors on a better understanding for further use of the Guide;
- simulation exercises with practical demonstrations of phytosanitary inspection including pest detection and identification at the laboratory;
- testing the applicability of the Guide.

## **2.2 Sixth West Africa National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) and Partners' Taskforce annual meeting and preparation of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-17) meeting, Praia, Cabo Verde, 27 February to 3 March 2023**

2.5. The Regional West Africa NPPOs and Partners Taskforce was established in August 2017 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso as a consultation framework to address phytosanitary related issues in the region. Since then, a regional action plan has been validated and implemented. In this framework, regular annual meetings have been organized to identify and address NPPO priorities as well as annual pre-CPM meetings to develop consensus among countries on common positions to be presented at the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM/IPPC), feeding into continental consolidated and harmonized positions. Therefore, it has become necessary to sustain this important regional coordination, consultation and harmonization mechanism as a statutory regional meeting for decision-making and information sharing instrument for a takeover of the region's priorities by the NPPOs.

2.6. The meeting aims to review West Africa and Sahel NPPOs Taskforce priorities, discuss major plant health and SPS trade issues, and prepare for West Africa and Sahel member countries' common positions to build, to address the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-17) agenda. The key outcomes:

- Major plant health and SPS trade issues in the region are shared and discussed;
- Regional NPPOs Taskforces and partners action plan is reviewed and 2023 priority activities are defined;
- Common subjects and positions to defend during the CPM-17 meeting are discussed and recommendations adopted, and the lead as well as alternate countries to present the adopted common position identified.

## **3 FOOD SAFETY**

### **3.1 Participation in the African Union experts meeting on food additives to discuss, formulate and propose recommendations and common positions on matters related to the 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA), to be held in Hong Kong, China, from 27 to 31 March 2023**

3.1. A statutory African Union Experts meeting was organized from 20 to 24 February 2023 with the aim to discuss and recommend common positions on matters related to the 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA). A common position document has been drafted and is being shared with African Union member States as a basis for further national consultations and presentation at the 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the CCFA.

#### **4 GENERAL CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD**

4.1. The ECOWAS Commission takes this opportunity to thank all partners for their continuing support in advancing SPS-related issues in the ECOWAS and Sahel sub-region, and to call for more collaboration, technical assistance and support for future implementation.

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