



INFORMATION ON SPS ACTIVITIES OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

The following communication, received on 3 July 2017, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of the African Union Commission (AUC).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. The African Union Commission Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture is responsible for coordinating continent-wide initiatives in agriculture, fisheries, food and nutrition security, strengthening the resilience of African food production systems, facilitating harmonisation of agricultural and knowledge support systems policies, mobilizing resources to address implementation of priority issues in the continent and advocacy for implementation of priority programmes in Africa.

1.2. The Commission, the European Union (EU) and the Estonian government as current chair of the European Union organized the 2nd AU-EU Agriculture Ministers Conference under the theme "Making Sustainable Agriculture a future for the youth in Africa" on 2 July 2017. The event was focused on four themes namely and roundtable dialogues were channelled around four main thematic areas namely: (i) responsible private sector investments and access to markets in agri-food sector in Africa, with key deliverables on SPS and development of Geographical Indications as a tool for rural development in Africa; (ii) research and innovation and the role of digitization in agriculture; (iii) sustainable agriculture water management in a climate resilient environment; (iv) climate Smart Agriculture and reducing food losses and waste; and (v) AU-IBAR organized a special session on animal health focusing on Pestes des Petit Ruminants (PPR). The Ministerial Conference was preceded by an Agribusiness Investment Forum on 1 July 2017 and followed by the FAO Conference from 3-8 July 2017 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, AU-EU Minister's conference.

1.3. The Commission and the government of Turkey organized its inaugural Africa-Turkey Ministers of Agriculture meeting and Agribusiness Forum from 27-28 April 2017. The Conference discussed: (i) technology development and transfer in irrigation and agricultural mechanization, storage and post-harvest loss prevention; (ii) agricultural inputs sector development such as seed production and marketing as well as fertilizer production and distribution; (iii) knowledge sharing and transfer in different areas such as climate smart agriculture, land registration and titling as well as youth employment; (iv) agricultural value chain development for different priority crops such as cocoa, cotton, maize, rice, cassava, etc. for local consumption and export; (v) livestock production and trade including fisheries; (vi) agribusiness development including supporting small and medium enterprises and agro-industry development; and (vii) soil management. As part of the conference, the government of Turkey represented by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock signed bilateral agreements with six African countries to cooperate and boost agriculture in their respective countries. Over a period of two days, business people and entities from Africa were matched to their counterparts from Turkey on a one-to-one basis. The business people came from all segments of the agricultural value chain both in Africa and Turkey. Good business deals were struck during these meetings.

1.4. The 13th Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme Partnership Platform (CAADP-PP) meeting was held in Uganda June 2017. The CAADP-PP is an open, African Union (AU) member States-led forum and organized to reflect, on one hand, an element of continued learning to ensure its adaptation to changing circumstances, needs and aspirations and thereby,

remaining relevant in advancing the CAADP vision and objectives. On the other hand, the CAADP PP stimulates and facilitates a process of sharing and learning on substantive agricultural transformation issues including policies, institutions, technologies, partnerships and alliances, as well as skills and knowledge. Representation in the 13th CAADP-PP was drawn from: Government political/policy and technical officials; Parliamentarians; RECs; farmers and farmers' organizations; private sector; civil society organizations; knowledge and research institutions; development partners; and the development partners etc. The 13th CAADP-PP was held under the theme, "Strengthening Mutual Accountability to Achieve CAADP/Malabo Goals and Targets".

1.5. Under the coordination of the Department of Trade and Industry, the Commission organized a series of meetings related to advancing the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) negotiation processes. This included the first and second CFTA Technical working Group in SPS in Kigali, Rwanda and Nairobi, Kenya respectively, the CFTA Task Force meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, the CFTA Negotiating Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. These meeting have guided the systematic development of the SPS Appendix, amongst other activities for the trade in goods Annex of the CFTA protocol.

1.6. The African Union Commission, together with key regional organizations (OAPI, ARIPO, RECs) and supported by partners at international level (FAO, EU), are in advanced stages with the development of a Continental Geographic Indications Strategy. The strategy is expected to facilitate promotion of unique African commodities and origins-linked marketing within the overall framework of intellectual property and provision of the Trade Related Aspect of Intellectual Property (TRIPS). The Aspirations of Agenda 2063 represent an inspiring guidance for the GI African strategy, so to ensure transformation and sustainable development of the African Continent for future generations.

1.7. The Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) continued with the implementation of its strategy in its six country of focus. PACA organized the Business Meeting for Senegal in May 2017 in Dakar. The meeting was attended by the relevant stakeholders targeted for strengthening partnership in managing aflatoxin in Senegal.

1.1 The African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)

1.8. The Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources is a technical office of the African Union Commission with the mandate of providing leadership in the development of animal resources for Africa through supporting and empowering AU member States and Regional Economic Communities. The SPS-related activities undertaken by AU-IBAR include supporting member States to harmonize SPS regulatory frameworks, supporting the participation of member States to participate effectively in the WTO SPS Committee, in the standard setting processes of OIE and CAC and promoting compliance with international standards through targeted capacity development programs.

2 ANIMAL HEALTH

2.1. The 9th Panafrican Chief Veterinary Officers meeting and three meetings of African animal health experts to analyze and comment on OIE proposed changes to the Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes were held between December 2016 and June 2017.

2.2. Outcome: Animal health issues of common interest to African countries were identified, coordinated positions proposed and articulated during the OIE Code Commission in and 85th OIE General Session in 2017.

3 FOOD SAFETY

3.1 Expert meetings

3.1. The 8th Panafrican National Codex Contact Point Officers meeting was held in June 2017 to develop common positions on draft standards to be adopted by the 40th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. African food safety expert's consultation on nutrition and foods for special dietary uses, Food Additives, Contaminants in Foods and Pesticide Residues were organized

to examine agenda items for the respective session of the Codex committees between November 2016 and March 2017.

3.2. Outcome: The meeting of food safety experts provided scientific advice to African Union member States during their preparation of national positions for the Codex committees. This is an effort of African Union to improve the effective participation of AU member States in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and was implemented in collaboration with the Coordinator for CCAfrica.

3.3. AU-IBAR jointly organized a colloquium with the US Codex Office between Africa and US Delegates to share experiences and information on issues pertaining to the Codex Committee on Food Additives, Pesticide Residues and Contaminants in Foods.

3.2 African Pesticide Residue Data Generation Project

3.4. The project has been running from 2013 and will end in 2017. It is sponsored by the STDF and co-implemented by AU-IBAR and USDA. The objective for this project is to strengthen regional capacity in pesticide residues data generation and monitoring for establishing, implementing, and complying with Codex Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticides. The project is intended to enhance the capacity of African countries to meet pesticide-related export requirements based on Codex standards. It provides practical experiences for African countries in conducting standard practices in residue field trials and risk analysis based on internationally accepted procedures.

3.5. Residue field trial has been conducted in all five participating countries namely Senegal, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya. The field trial was conducted for sulfoxaflur (a reduced risk insecticide) to be applied on mango crops. Several laboratory technicians have also been trained in Laboratory Quality Assurance and GLP pesticide residues analysis. Results from laboratory analysis of the field trial samples will be sent to the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues for the development of Codex Maximum Residue Levels. The objective for this training is to enhance expertise in generating, reviewing, and interpreting field trial data.

4 ACTIVITIES RELATED TO SPS COMMITTEE

4.1 Workshop for members of the Pan African Parliament (PAP) on improving the understanding of the sanitary and phytosanitary issues

4.1. AU-IBAR organized two workshops to improve the understanding of members of the Pan African Parliament (PAP) on Sanitary and Phytosanitary issues for French-speaking PAP members in Côte d'Ivoire and for English-speaking PAP members in November 2016. Forty PAP members attended the workshop. The workshops are part of AU-IBAR's advocacy strategy on facilitating domestication of SPS requirements into national legislations and their implementation.

4.2 AU-IBAR discussion forum on SPS matters in preparation for the 68th and 69th sessions of the SPS Committee in March 2017

4.2. AU-IBAR organized discussion forum for African delegates to the SPS Committee in order to discuss and prioritize SPS issues of interest to the African region. Priority matters for the 68th and 69th session of the SPS Committee were agreed on.

4.3. AU-IBAR organized a 4-day training workshop on SPS and Codex in June 2017 for members of the Liberia SPS Committee and National Codex Committee on SPS and Codex issues.

4.3 The African Union Inter African Phytosanitary Council (AU-IAPSC)

4.4. The African Union Inter African Phytosanitary Council (AU-IAPSC) is the Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) for Africa and responsible for the coordination of plant health related matters in the continent. AU-IAPSC participated in the 12th Session of the Committee on Phytosanitary Measure (CPM-12) of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) held in Incheon, South Korea from 5 to 11 April 2017. IAPSC convened meetings of African delegates in the margins of CPM-12 to discuss strategic issues for Africa, particularly the rapid spread and infestation of fall army worms.

4.5. IAPSC also organized its annual General Assembly in Cairo, Egypt to discuss governance and management of plant health in Africa. The AUC convened three preparatory meetings of the AU member States represented in the meeting to prepare common position to respond to matters arising in CPM-12.
