



## ALL ACP AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES PROGRAMME

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### EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

It is with great delight that I seize this opportunity offered by the Newsletter of the « All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme » (AAACP) to write briefly about the *Comité d'orientation et de suivi* of the



EU-Africa Partnership on cotton or Cos-coton which was created in the wake of the 2004 Paris Forum that gave birth to the **EU-Africa Partnership on cotton**.

Cos's mission is precisely to ensure the coordination and monitoring of the Partnership, seeing to it that its objectives are met as set. These objectives cover two components: international trade and development. The former aims at fairer trade at the international level. The development component seeks to enhance the competitiveness of African cotton while reducing the vulnerability of cotton value-chains.

Following a hesitant beginning, due to lack of resources, Cos-coton has now reached cruising speed. On the basis of an external evaluation conducted early in 2009, we have worked during these past months to bring improvements drawn on its recommendations. These relate mainly to the Action Framework of the Partnership and to the decentralisation of the Cos-coton. I wish to underline that the Action Framework provides us with both a reference strategy document and a monitoring tool useful in following the activities undertaken under the Partnership. Decentralisation, on the other hand, will be instrumental in generating a greater ownership of Cos-coton where it matters most; that is in our cotton producing countries and by the main stakeholders of the sector, with our producers at the forefront.

Besides the international institutional partners, the ACP Group of States, the EU, CTA, CDE, Cos-coton has the privilege to have among its members representatives of all the main actors of the African cotton value chain. Thus, AProCA stands for the producers; ACA represents the ginner, while ACTIF represents industrialists engaged in local processing. We should also mention the WAEMU which sits on the committee as the representative of all African Regional Eco-

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### Commercial Standardization of Instrument Testing of Cotton

Due to ever increasing requirements of buyers and processors for good quality cotton worldwide, the sector had to adapt itself to these evolutions and witnessed a professionalization of the structures at all stages of the value chain. In this context, the necessity to provide objective and reliable test results on cotton lint became inevitable. Cotton-importing countries, indeed, integrate more and more data provided by High Volume Instrument (HVI) testing in cotton trade.

Many developed countries have already established their own cotton quality-testing systems and are using instrumental classification which grants them a competitive advantage in the global market. This situation forced African cotton-producing countries to adopt testing systems recognized internationally if they want to integrate global markets. To this end, the programme is implementing, in co-funding with CFC and under ICAC supervision, a HVI testing system for measuring the quality of cotton lint, adoptable by all producing countries and that would enable them to meet the minimum criteria set by the international market.



The AAACP programme notably supports African laboratories to assist them in meeting international standards and requirements for reliable instrument testing of cotton. To this end, two Regional Technical Centers (RTCs) have been established in Dar-Es-Salaam (Tanzania) and Ségou (Mali) to provide the national laboratories of the two regions concerned with all the necessary assistance for the application of instrument-based testing procedures. The RTC East (Dar es Salaam) has been inaugurated in April 2010, while the formal opening of RTC West (Ségou) is expected to take place in early June. In the coming months, the programme will focus on the development and the strengthening of RTCs' internal management and operational structures, as well as the formulation and the implementation of operational work programmes.

## UNCTAD launches a Sustainability Claims Portal

After 18-month of work, the Sustainability Claims Portal – developed under the auspices of the EU-funded AAACP programme – has finally been launched in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 31 March 2010.

At the occasion of a two-day sub-regional workshop, organized by UNCTAD and Vanuatu National Codex Committee, the Portal has been inaugurated in the presence of Hon. Stephen Kalsakau, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Livestock and Quarantine.



Participants to the workshop

Speaking to about forty participants, the Minister expressed his gratitude towards UNCTAD and the EU for having chosen Vanuatu – small developing island state – to inaugurate the tool. *‘The launching of the portal is expedient given the proliferation of private and public food security standards, and the influx of ‘sustainable development’ labels in the market. Therefore an affordable access to high-level information on these new developments is vital for the success of agri-food and commodities exports from and within Pacific island countries (PICs)’*, he declared.

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## An Action Framework for the EU-Africa Partnership on Cotton

Following the recommendations of an external review of EU-Africa Partnership on Cotton, the action plan was transformed to an Action Framework. The latter reasserted the relevance of the EU-Africa Partnership on cotton and the necessity to pursue it while adapting it to the current context.

The action framework is both a **reference strategic document** and a **monitoring tool for the activities carried out under the EU-Africa Partnership on cotton**.

As a reference document with strategic objectives and orientations, it constitutes a monitoring instrument for all African cotton-specific interventions which is regularly updated on the basis of information provided by other donors and inter-professional organizations evolving in African cotton-specific value chains.

### A reference strategic document, at least until 2015

The overall objective of the action framework is to support African cotton value chains so that they can contribute to the development of agriculture and to poverty alleviation. Its specific objective is to improve competitiveness, value addition and sustainability of these value chains while optimizing the impact on producers’ incomes.

Six strategic focus areas have been defined on the basis of an analysis of problems and challenges to overcome as perceived by the stakeholders:

- Improvement of the capacities to develop, monitor, assess and update national and regional cotton strategies;
- Improvement of the institutional environment, the internal organization and their efficiency;
- Improvement of the competitiveness of the cotton value chains in Africa;
- Reduction in the vulnerability of cotton value chains;
- Increase value addition generated by the cotton value chains;
- Strengthening efficiency and effectiveness of coordination at international, regional and national levels.

The scope of the strategic focus areas have been designed broadly enough to enable regional cotton strategies to hinge on it, with their own action plan and in addition to national cotton strategies. For the Eastern and Southern Africa region, the ‘Cotton to Clothing’ strategy has been set up in June 2009. Regional cotton strategies are being drafted for both Western and Central Africa.

### A monitoring tool for activities undertaken under the Partnership and other African cotton-specific supports

Different agencies are supporting and implementing a wide range of African Cotton-related interventions. As of today, they are estimated to some €282 Million, from which €170 Million are being funded by the European Union and €112 Million by EU Member States. Adding other support funded by other bilateral cooperation initiatives, multilateral agencies and regional bodies, the total amount approaches €440 Million, the EU contributing for about 2/3 of this sum.



Annex 1 of the Action framework provides a comprehensive list of cotton-specific interventions, broken down by strategic focus areas defined in the Action Framework. The annex also includes activities of projects and programmes funded by other donors working at regional and international level.

Regularly updated, this Annex of the Action framework is more than a simple inventory since it enables the Action Framework to also constitute a monitoring tool for all African cotton-specific support in order to facilitate their coherence, complementarity and coordination.

The complete versions (English and French) of the Action Framework for the EU-Africa Partnership on Cotton are available on-line on the Cos-Coton website:

[http://www.coton-acp.org/docs/acpue/COS%20Cadre\\_ActionFch%201502102.pdf](http://www.coton-acp.org/docs/acpue/COS%20Cadre_ActionFch%201502102.pdf)

[http://www.coton-acp.org/docs/acpue/Cos\\_Action%20Fram%20EngV51.pdf](http://www.coton-acp.org/docs/acpue/Cos_Action%20Fram%20EngV51.pdf)

The Coordination Unit is delighted to inform you that Mariane Tambwe, Communication Expert, has recently joined the team. She is responsible for the dissemination of the programme information.



Participants discussed about seven presentations on Pacific national and regional initiatives. They also focused on the portal content, quality, relevance and sustainability. Furthermore, they urged regional and international organizations to quickly implement the seven recommendations formulated during the workshop, including follow-up programmes to scale up awareness and training on the portal. As such, the latter would meet their development needs, ensure sustainability and improve competitiveness and incomes of agri-food and commodities producers in PICs.

As sustainable commodities invade the market, it is essential for consumers to be able to make informed choices on the products they buy and are protected against vague, false or misleading labels which would compromise their health and global environment. Similarly, ACP producers and exporters must know and be able to meet the requirements of sustainable claims. The Sustainability Claims Portal aims at filling in this gap while providing critical information on food safety and health standards, and sustainable products from 'farm to fork'.

The Sustainability Claims Portal is expected to be rolled-out in selected ACP countries under the AAACP programme in 2010.

For further information, please consult the following link [www.unctad.org/scp](http://www.unctad.org/scp)



**Launching of Videoconferences on issues affecting the Horticulture Industry in ESA region**

The World Bank (WB) has just launched a series of videoconferences addressing various issues affecting the horticulture industry in Eastern and Southern Africa. In order to better address the issues and ensure the sustainability of the proposed interventions, the WB has sought the collaboration of the *Global Horticulture Initiative*, an Arusha-based institution with has an extensive expertise in the horticulture sector throughout the entire region.

The first session was held in May 2010 and gathered 5 countries of the region, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and South Africa, with a good attendance of between 8 to 12 people by country. This session raised the issue of 'Fighting against fruit flies in Eastern and Southern Africa'.

Other virtual seminars will be held until December this year with a possible extension in 2011. At the end of each session, preparation documents, presentations and briefs will be recorded on a CR-Rom to be circulated among participants.

For further information on the project, please visit the programme website: [www.euacpcommodities.eu](http://www.euacpcommodities.eu).

**A regional Symposium on Risk management in the Caribbean**

A regional symposium on Risk management will be held in Antigua from 16 to 19 June 2010. This event, organized by the World Bank (WB) aims at ensuring transfer of knowledge in favor of public and private sector seeking technical information on how to design agricultural risk management strategies. This is also an opportunity for AAACP partners, WB and FAO, to present the support they have provided in the region under the AAACP programme :

- A study on a comprehensive financial weather risk management strategy for agriculture in Jamaica;
- Technical assistance relating to price and other risk management (supply chain risks assessment) for the coffee sector in Haiti;
- Pre-feasibility studies for the introduction of market-based risk management mechanisms and instruments in Belize and Grenada;

An assessment of formal and informal risk management mechanisms in the Guyanese cassava value chain in order to facilitate access to funding and identification of alternative risk management tools, including insurance products.

*(From page 1)*

conomic Communities. The membership of the COS ensures that the Action Framework will benefit from a wide dissemination and adoption, and that our decentralisation efforts will bear fruit.

I am reasonably upbeat for our immediate future. Resources channelled through the AAACP allow us to fulfil our mandate and, within the limit of our means, to support our partners in their strategic activities. The AAACP has also enabled us to launch some 40 interventions in our various regions for a total amount slightly over 15M euros. These interventions have been screened and approved by members of the Cos-coton. They will contribute to re-establish the competitiveness of the African cotton sector.

The operational phase of the AAACP comes to a close in December 2011. It is not premature to think and plan ahead. How can we ensure the sustainability of the Partnership in such a way that it continues to support African cotton producers and African cotton value-chains? How to guarantee in future the funding of Cos-coton as a monitoring and follow-up mechanism?

The organisation by the end of the year of a meeting bringing together our partners will contribute to finding answers to these questions. A study to identify and formulate a cotton programme under EDF10, being launched shortly, may also provide us with some leads. It is therefore crucial that all cotton stakeholders contribute to these two initiatives. The conclusions and recommendations that will follow should reflect the concerns and priorities of all stakeholders.

I therefore conclude by calling for greater participation of all stakeholders in the affairs of the **EU-Africa Partnership on cotton**. Together, we can build a better future.

**His Excellency  
M. Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo,  
President of the Cos-coton**

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