



# The agroecology newsletter

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## Agroecology in the ECOWAS regional climate strategy



ECOWAS HAS ADOPTED a Regional Climate Strategy adopted by the 61<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS held in Accra , on July 3, 2022. It is, on the one hand, the result of a long process of consultation with institutions, departments and agencies specialized bodies of ECOWAS, the Member States, the specialized regional institutions, and on the other hand,

the culmination of a history of several years of intervention and action by ECOWAS in the fight against climate change. This strategy is part of the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement and is implemented in each ECOWAS country through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

This strategy includes all sectors including agriculture, forestry and livestock which represent a significant share of CO2 and methane emissions. Although the region contributes very little to global warming, it is committed to focusing the strategy on two dimensions: mitigation and adaptation.

The investments made by ECOWAS and its partners in the promotion of agroecology and agroecological transition are simultaneously part of these two dimensions: mitigating emissions and adapting production systems to climate change. This is a major issue as our agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries sector

plays a central role in most of our economies. It is also a colossal challenge because the sector is called upon to develop strongly to meet the economic and food needs of a population of more than 424 million inhabitants, which is expected to double by 2050.

The ecosystems and productive systems of our region are extremely diverse. There can therefore only be one approach that combines increasing yields, reducing emissions, and improving the resilience of farms and territories in the face of climate change and the increasing occurrence of exceptional climatic phenomena. .

Faced with these challenges, the agroecological transition is not a doctrine but an imperative necessity. For ECOWAS, it covers technical changes in conventional systems ( food system transformation process using natural and biodiversity-friendly farming methods, promotion of agroforestry practices, organic farming including climate-smart agriculture as well as as the adoption of sustainable land management practices ) and all the multi-actor actions and initiatives deployed to support agro-ecological transitions in the capacity to respond simultaneously to social, food and environmental issues at both local and global level.

**Mrs Massandjé Touré-Litsé,**  
**Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture of the ECOWAS Commission**

### The number...



**Since 2018, 69 organizations have joined the Alliance for Agroecology in West Africa (3AO): these are farmers' organizations, social movements, CSOs, NGOs, research centers and international organizations.**

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## Launch of capacity building activities for innovative partnerships

As part of the implementation of the component “Advisory support and popularization of technological innovations for sustainable agricultural intensification and adapted to the production methods of small producers” of the Agroecology Program in West Africa (PAE), the ECOWAS (via the regional PCU and RAAF) and the National Correspondents of the program proceeded, at the end of a long process, to the selection of 15 experiences bearing lessons in terms of collaboration between OPAs (organizations of producers agriculture), research centers, and agricultural training and/or extension/advisory support organizations.

Each partnership must offer a new opportunity to create favorable conditions for the development of agroecology, by improving the capacities, skills and services of each actor in favor of agroecology.

Representatives of these partnerships were invited by

ECOWAS to Lomé from 22 to 26 May 2023 to participate in a workshop to launch activities, plan and build capacity.

At the end of the workshop, 14 of the 15 grant agreements were signed for a cumulative amount of €700,000. By supporting partnerships through these agreements, ECOWAS seeks to:

- promote participatory and inclusive research while experimenting with the needs of OPAs in this area and providing them with methodological support;
- co -design research systems adapted to the needs of small producers;
- disseminate research products through producer platforms, processors and other agricultural networks; And
- Accompany the members of the OPA in the agroecological transition while strengthening its internal system of advice and popularization in agroecology.

## Back to the IRAM Study Day

On July 29, 2023, the Institute for Research and Applications of Development Methods (IRAM) organized its Study Day 2023, in Paris, on the theme “Agroecological transitions : challenges and support conditions”. The objective of this event was to contribute to the reflection on the many questions that arise in terms of supporting agroecological transitions:

- agroecology ensure sufficient food production to meet the needs of a growing world population?
- how to reconcile the current demographic dynamics (in particular the urbanization of the population which leads to a drop in the labor available in rural areas) with the need for labor in agro-ecological production systems?

- what place should be given to chemical inputs in production systems?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of breeding systems?
- can we or should we support all agricultural models in transition (place of capitalist farming, export crops, “innovations” to be promoted)?

Just over 120 people were physically present and nearly 100 people followed the debates remotely.

For more information: <https://www.je2023.iram-fr.org>

1. IRAM is a technical partner in the implementation of the PAE.

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## Actors' points of view

### Importance of advocacy for the inclusion of agroecology in public policies in Guinea-Bissau, June 2023 Colidio Vieira, National Correspondent of the EAP

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Guinea-Bissau, through the National Correspondent designated for the implementation of the Agroecology Program in Guinea-Bissau, organized a national workshop on lobbying and advocacy techniques to the inclusion of agroecology in public policies.

This workshop was an opportunity to recall that the agroecological transition “demands efforts from everyone and

that it is not possible to develop this program by relying solely on the efforts of the national consultation framework”. The national correspondent, Colidio Vieira, pointed out that “the dynamism of agroecological activities will depend a lot on the commitment of political decision-makers, because they are the ones who signed the convention, therefore they must facilitate the implementation of this program”.

### What role for extension services in agroecological transition? Are they able to help producers integrate agroecological practices into their farming systems?

Sena Adessou, Secretary General of INADES Formation and Kado Alphonse Simba, in charge of training and advisory support within the PAE

As with agricultural research, the situations are diverse in ECOWAS countries according to the results of studies commissioned by the EAP. Some countries are far ahead of others. A priori, all extension services are able to help producers integrate agroecological practices into their farming systems. It's all a question of political will and orientation of agricultural policies in the countries. If the actors of the services are well trained and the agricultural policy framework allows it, these actors can support the farmers in this

direction. Moreover, the private sector does this through the financing of projects and programs but it is often for a limited target depending on the means available and the duration of the projects/programs. This is why the PAE has included in its working approach to strengthen the actors of agricultural advice in the countries in parallel with the influence of public agricultural policies in favor of agroecology.

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## Studies and Publications

PAE, 2023. Report on the state of consultation frameworks, national and sub-regional networks and platforms in the field of agroecology:

<https://app.box.com/s/k486clzirq1uqpkfdypzcmik32j43vcw>

PAE, 2023. Reports of the Study on Financing Mechanisms for Agroecological Transition in ECOWAS:

Inventory report:

<https://app.box.com/s/yyfp0w4cfuyeo8emiex7n607jlfpz0xy>

Case Study Report:

<https://app.box.com/s/s3pttdba9d4tciuqj77cu1y5lb0edpgr>

ECOWAS-Expertise France, 2023. Set of capitalization notes on good practices and summary note of the GCCA+ project, which aims to strengthen the capacities of regional institutions and their member countries, and to bring out innovative solutions for adaptation participating in the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement: <https://app.box.com/s/z1guohj0z1mff6sbrts5hetjwu9z1hk/folder/222296494943>



## Events on the agenda

September 18–19, 2023 – Lomé, Togo – Validation workshop of the study on the mechanisms for financing the agroecological transition in West Africa.

September 20–22, 2023 – Lomé, Togo – Training workshop on information and communication management for national correspondents of the PAE and the 3AO Alliance.

**“If we don’t change the way we produce and consume, greenhouse gas emissions from the agri-food sector could increase by 30 to 40% by 2050, while the number of people suffering from hunger could increase by 10 to 20%”**

Excerpt from “Agroecology , a winning alternative to overcoming hunger and protecting the planet”. Oxfam France

<https://www.oxfamfrance.org/agriculture-et-securite-alimentaire/agroecologie/>

*The agroecology reduces carbon emissions, protects soils and biodiversity, cares for women, men, ensures their food and provides them with the livelihoods to protect, educate and care for their children, the future generations.*



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