



## Press Release

### **Sustainability of the Ecowas Fruit Flies Surveillance System: Stakeholders of the Region hold consultations in Ouagadougou**

*Lomé (Togo), 19 November 2018.* From 23 to 27 November 2018, a high-level regional workshop will be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on the sustainability of the surveillance and control system for fruit flies in the Ecowas space.

Indeed, fruit flies constitute a serious headache for the horticultural sector in West Africa. They can destroy 50 to 80% of fruit production. In 2006, for example, they caused the interception, at the EU borders, of shipments of about € 9,000,000 mango exports, namely more than a third of the total value of that year's shipments. The negative impact of these pests on the physical performances (yields), economic (income), commercial (exports, competitiveness) and financial performance of the fruit sectors (the mango sector in particular) is very important.

With the financial support of the European Union and the French Development Agency, Ecowas set up in 2015 through the Support Project to the Regional Plan for Fruit Fly Monitoring and Control in West Africa, a response plan for Ecowas and its member States to deal with this scourge.

One of the main achievements of the project to date is the establishment of a Surveillance System for fruit fly infestations in all mango producing basins and the issuance of alerts via SMS messaging to actors.

The Ouagadougou discussions will allow each country and the beneficiaries of the project to take ownership of the surveillance system and its multiple features in order to find out the most appropriate financing mechanism to sustain the fruit flies surveillance and control system in West Africa. While focusing on how to sustain the system after the end of the project scheduled for August 2019, the exchanges will cover aspects such as the functions and mechanisms of data collection, management and analysis on the one hand, and the features for alert and decision support for the development and implementation of control strategies as well as that of access to control products on the other hand. They will also make it possible to define the operational modalities for the appropriation, financing, implementation and sustainable management of the system. In other words, Ecowas will collect the opinions and comments of technicians on the usefulness of the product on the one hand and gather their recommendations for its finalization and especially, its sustainability on the other hand.

Ecowas wishes to set up a global management approach to plant protection against pests such as fruit flies with the objective of (i) reducing interceptions for export to the European Union and worldwide, (ii) improving the incomes of fruit and vegetable producers, (iii) enhancing food security and (iv) alleviating poverty in West Africa.

To recall, the Support Project to the Regional Plan for Fruit Flies Monitoring and Control in West Africa covers all Ecowas countries, especially on the dissemination of research results, information and awareness. However, actions are concentrated in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo, 11 countries for which the fight against fruit flies represents a major economic concern. The project specifically aims to (i) increase available volume of non-infested fruits on local markets, (ii) control fruit and vegetable losses from infestations to reduce constraints for exports, (iii) set up organizational arrangements and structures to control pest risks and (iv) strengthen Ecowas in its coordinating role of the sector policy.

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