

HORIZONS

THE MAGAZINE OF COLEACP AND ITS PROGRAMMES

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FOCUS: SUSTAINABILITY

Agenda 2030 and the SDGs,
COLEACP's sustainable
development programme,
entrepreneurs' words and stories

MEETINGS

Atsuko Toda, African Development
Bank

Audu Grema, Bill & Melinda Gates
Foundation

TRENDS

Access to finance, SPS
regulations, local markets,
gender...

EDITORIAL

BUILDING BRIDGES TOGETHER FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE WORLD

COLEACP has been building bridges between European and ACP horticulture for nearly 50 years. Our acronym stands for “Europe-ACP Liaison Committee”, an association with a Board of Directors comprising equal numbers of European and ACP business leaders, all committed to the sustainable development of their activities at all levels – economic, social and environmental.

During its first decades, COLEACP focused on connecting private operators to develop horticultural export flows from African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries to the European Union. Now, as a result of various food safety crises and increasingly stringent international trade rules, export chains have come to require increasingly skilled human resources.

In 2001, to meet the requirements on pesticide maximum residue levels, traceability and hygiene, COLEACP, with the support of the EU and ACP, launched the PIP 1 programme, which provided technical assistance and training to ACP operators. After three years and a very positive evaluation, it was renewed through successive programmes until 2015.

Since then, our activities have developed, particularly our ‘fair and revolving training system’, which promotes stakeholders’ ownership of the horticultural sector through their active participation in the continuous improvement of technical and educational materials. Bridges are being built between the ACP and EU academic sectors, industry, civil society and public administrations. The ‘professionalisation’ of the horticulture sector poses major challenges, but at the same time provides opportunities for the most vulnerable populations, including young

people and women, to find decent work and have prospects for professional development.

Between 2005 and 2015, COLEACP evolved into one of the main actors in capacity building in the sector, going beyond its initial field by intervening in the coffee and cocoa sectors, and especially through its work in all of the the agronomic, social, environmental and economic issues related to development of the horticultural sector – focusing above all on the human aspect.

This focus is now visualised in our new identity, *Growing people*.

Producing food has become an act of precision and control for which we need to create a new generation of farmers. Similarly, it has always seemed inconceivable to us to create a two-tier agriculture in terms of food safety. Developments financed by export activity benefit local marketing channels. More bridges, this time between international, regional and local markets.

Growing people is ultimately about growing the companies and individuals for and with whom we work. This takes place from generation to generation as we work together for a competitive and respectful agriculture for all through improved economic, social and environmental justice.

In this new special issue of *Horizons* devoted to sustainability, you will learn more about COLEACP, its role, and some of the European, African, Caribbean and Pacific actors who are helping to build the agriculture of tomorrow.

Jeremy Knops
General Delegate of COLEACP

Guy Stinglhamber
Special Advisor,
Former General Delegate of COLEACP

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NEWS



New logo, new face for COLEACP

At the beginning of this year, we changed our logo and baseline to reflect that our vision and values are clearly oriented towards human beings and the future. "Growing people" means putting people at the heart of our mission, especially enabling young people to benefit from the opportunities that will arise in the coming decades with the development of agriculture in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

As the African Development Bank's President Akin Adesina often rightly reminds us, sub-Saharan Africa will become the youngest continent on Earth in 2050, with 840 million children and adolescents. So many mouths to feed, brains to train well, hopes to be fulfilled, and actors for the sustainable development of Africa.



COLEACP's team and services are getting stronger



Sebastian MARINO-COTO, new COLEACP Administrative and Financial Lead

In 2019, with the launch of the Fit For Market SPS programme, the COLEACP team strengthened all its services.

Sebastian Marino-Coto, our new Administrative and Financial Lead, joined the team in January 2019, consolidating the administration and finance department. With a background in mergers and acquisitions in the banking sector, Sebastian also contributes to strengthening COLEACP's skills in business development and access to finance for producers and companies.

The Technical Assistance Department has been expanded to include two project managers and two regional programme managers. On the training side, the offer has been strengthened with priority themes in sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) and commercial skills.

The Market Intelligence Service strengthened its capacity to better understand the processing and analysis of international and regional trade data in fruit and vegetables. It can now also

centralise information related to SPS interceptions of imported fruit and vegetables on EU territory, and provide it in a way that is understandable to the actors concerned. A study on sub-Saharan regional fruit and vegetable markets is under way and will be published later in 2019.

In addition, the Research and Innovation Department can now carry out testing in plant protection, for example to establish pesticide maximum residue levels.

Access to finance: COLEACP at the service of ACP producers and exporters

Access to finance remains a challenge for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in ACP countries. Yet access to capital is a key factor in ensuring that the private sector plays its role as a vehicle for economic growth and competitiveness.

Since the beginning of the Fit For Market programme, COLEACP has worked to establish lasting and transparent relationships with financial institutions adapted to the projects of its beneficiaries in order to facilitate support and networking.

This activity grew significantly in the second half of 2018 and the first quarter of 2019, with an increase in the number of partners with whom COLEACP aims to establish lasting relationships to cover all the needs of its beneficiaries, and also an increase in requests for support in financial planning and access to capital markets.

Since January 2019, 17 companies from 10 ACP countries have been supported in their search for financing, both directly through members of the COLEACP permanent team and indirectly through its network of experts.

New programmes in Guinea and Cameroon

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) has entrusted COLEACP with new programmes in Guinea and Cameroon, based on the same principles as our current programme in Togo.

The new project in Guinea aims to strengthen the national phytosanitary control and certification system in the fruit and vegetable sector. It will develop the capacity of public and private stakeholders to meet international phytosanitary standards and requirements. The project covers: improving the legislative and regulatory framework for phytosanitary control in accordance with IPPC standards and SPS requirements; strengthening the organisation and technical programmes; improving the basic infrastructure necessary for operations; and strengthening the information and communication system as well as the dynamics of collaboration. The mango and potato sectors are particularly targeted.

In Cameroon, the new project entrusted to COLEACP will last three years and concerns Penja pepper (the first Protected Geographical Indication in sub-Saharan Africa), aiming to improve its market access and sustainable development. This sector has real potential, in line with the country's export strategy, but its security and sustainability must be strengthened.

The first outputs from the project will include a sectoral guide and training tools on risks and good practices to comply with international standards; training on plant protection products and fertilisers; compliance with HACCP standards; and the creation of an exchange platform to promote public-private dialogue.



E-services: new GAP database for for COLEACP and all its programme beneficiaries

COLEACP beneficiary companies now have access to the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) database for the fruit and vegetable sector. This new e-service is designed to help companies comply with regulatory requirements for SPS controls, to ensure they can maintain their market share in the European Union (EU), as well as in local and regional markets.

Users can consult national lists of registered plant protection products (pesticides), as well as the GAPs that ensure compliance with the maximum residue limits set by the EU and the Codex Alimentarius. Additional information, such as the status of active substances in the EU, the World Health Organization classification and the resistance group, is also available to help

companies choose the active ingredients they will use.

The database interface is available in French and English.

eservices.coleacp.org



Fit For Market SPS: a new programme to meet the sanitary and phytosanitary challenge in the ACP-EU fruit and vegetable sector

In response to the many SPS challenges identified in ACP countries and in a context of evolving European regulations, COLEACP was mobilised by the ACP Secretariat in December 2018 to implement a new intervention programme, complementary to the Fit For Market programme and dedicated to strengthening SPS systems in the horticultural sector. This is the Fit For Market SPS programme. The existing COLEACP infrastructure and ACP network, as well as the synergy

with the original Fit For Market programme, have allowed a rapid launch and deployment of Fit For Market SPS activities from the beginning of 2019.

The two programmes complement each other operationally and serve a common overall objective: to reduce poverty, improve food security and safety, and ensure sustainable and inclusive growth by strengthening agri-food value chains in ACP countries. The expected results of the two

programmes are complementary and will be integrated into an implementation framework aimed at building and strengthening capacity at national and regional levels to ensure effective and efficient national SPS systems are in place.



FIT FOR MARKET SPS PROGRAMME

Duration	4 years
Budget	€15 million

Direct beneficiaries in ACP States:
producers, support and training structures, national authorities, regional economic communities



www.coleacp.org/ffm-sps?lang=en

COLEACP on track to obtain the Ecodynamic Enterprise label

This label promotes the environmental initiatives of companies and associations located in the Brussels region, covering activities around eight themes: water, waste, mobility, energy, green space, noise, purchasing and organisation.

Good practices are assessed on four levels: legal obligations (100% compliance is required), mandatory good practices, non-compulsory good practices, and bonuses.

Within COLEACP, an ECODYN team raises awareness among all employees (with an activity entitled "It Starts With Us!") and engages everyone, including management, in this collective and individual challenge.

Given the nature of COLEACP's activities, particular attention is devoted to travel (train, air) with a (current) carbon footprint compensation procedure.

A dashboard helps us to monitor progress – to date, 100% of legal obligations have been met and nearly a quarter of good practices are also being met. The aim is to obtain the famous label in 2019.



www.ecodyn.brussels



TRENDS



Access to finance for SMEs in the agricultural sector: the challenge remains immense

Agriculture is the main economic activity in ACP countries, and a large majority of the agricultural population are still employed in informal markets and MSMEs. Yet, despite the importance of the sector, many challenges remain, including limited access to formal markets, unpredictable weather and nature, price uncertainty, lack of adequate risk management products and services, and very limited access to financing.

According to the World Bank's International Finance Corporation, while agriculture employs about 55% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa, only 1% of bank loans go to the agricultural sector. In addition, only 5.9% of adults in rural areas have a bank account.

And in COLEACP's experience, of even the few loans granted to the agricultural sector, only a minority go to horticultural producers (fruit and vegetables), who comprise COLEACP's membership and are the focus of our two Fit For Market programmes⁽¹⁾.

Horticultural companies always present a high perceived

investment risk (especially those operating exclusively in the unprocessed fresh produce markets). Traditional sources of financing, such as local commercial banks, tend to be very cautious when working with this sector. Fruits and vegetables have a very limited shelf life and high exposure to SPS risks. They require specific infrastructure and logistics to ensure that products are available on the market in a timely manner and in compliance with quality standards.

That is why COLEACP is committed to supporting its beneficiaries by providing them with targeted funding sources and strengthening their business skills. COLEACP works with its beneficiaries to develop comprehensive and structured business plans that take into account the requirements of various investors who examine different aspects of the business equation (social, economic, environmental impact, owner profile, etc.).

COLEACP hopes to contribute in this way to mitigating this financing gap, which is due to both the risky nature of the

sector and the size of existing structures – the horticultural sector is largely dominated by informal structures and MSMEs. The challenge is enormous, but the opportunities are also there for entrepreneurs and investors. Faced with global trends and growing challenges in the sector, access to finance and the strengthening of business skills are increasingly being taken into account, which is why the COLEACP team has been strengthened in 2019 with experts combining agronomic technical knowledge and business expertise on access to finance.

[1] Fit For Market and Fit For Market SPS: www.coleacp.org/nos-programmes-en-cours





Evolution of European Union SPS compliance regulations

In the European Union, the ACP fruit and vegetable sector is facing new challenges in terms of SPS compliance:

- The strengthening of phytosanitary rules (under the current Directive 2000/29/EC and the new EU Regulation 2016/2031), which imposes increased requirements on inspection services and national plant protection organisations (NPPOs) in ACP countries.
- Developments under Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, which governs the placing on the market of plant protection products – this review process leads to a considerable loss of plant protection products, affecting the viability and competitiveness of some ACP exports, aggravating plant health problems, and leading to non-compliance with EU maximum residue limits (MRLs).

To succeed in agricultural trade at local, regional and international levels, ACP countries must provide competitive food products while meeting market standards and regulatory requirements. Although most of these countries have been exporting agricultural products to Europe for many years, the rapid evolution of SPS and market requirements (private environmental, social and ethical standards) can compromise ACP countries' ability to export to the EU and other emerging markets.

Changing EU SPS regulations – including the strengthening of phytosanitary rules and the evolution of regulations governing the placing of plant protection products on the market – mean that many horticultural producers, farmers' organisations, MSMEs, local experts and competent authorities may not have the required skills, preventing them from exploring new opportunities.

However, compliance with SPS measures and market requirements is not only a constraint, but also an opportunity that contributes to modernising agricultural processes and increasing international and intra/interregional trade, as well as ensuring food safety in domestic markets. This is the context of the Fit For Market SPS programme, financed by the European Union at the request of the ACP Group of States.

Local markets in Africa: ACCOR and CFAO-Carrefour in discussion with COLEACP

For the first time at the beginning of 2019, the volume of fruit and vegetables marketed on local and regional markets by ACP companies supported by COLEACP exceeded the volume they exported to the European Union. This is a sign of what is happening in the fresh and processed fruit and vegetable market, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. In parallel with a relatively stronger increase in exports of African horticultural products to export markets outside the EU (mainly Asia), the continental market is growing rapidly (both including and excluding South Africa).

In this context, COLEACP entered into discussions in the first half of 2019 with the ACCOR and CFAO-Carrefour groups. Such collaboration is potentially a win-win situation for all stakeholders. On the supply side, many local SMEs that have been successful on the EU market and have long been beneficiaries of COLEACP's activities are not necessarily known to the major international groups that are setting up or developing their activities in Africa. However, these SMEs are potential suppliers likely to meet the requirements of ACCOR and CFAO-Carrefour in Africa in terms of quality,

quantity and sustainability. And while these large groups already have some local suppliers, too often they are unable to meet their expectations. COLEACP is well positioned to intervene on both fronts to support the sustainable development of these new local supply chains in fruit and vegetables through capacity building of existing local suppliers of CFAO-Carrefour and ACCOR, and facilitating contact of these two potential customers with African SMEs that already have the technical, commercial and logistical capacity to meet their specifications.



Gender equality, a priority of the French Development Agency applied to COLEACP's activities

Camille LE BLOA



© Eric THAUVIN

TRENDS

Camille Le Bloa, you work at the French Development Agency (AFD), can you summarise for us what its mission and vision are?

AFD, a public financial institution, is the central actor in France's development policy. It is involved in projects in developing countries in many sectors: agriculture, energy, employment and training, health, transport, urban development, etc., through a network of 85 branches abroad. Its activities are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

You are working on the gender issue. What is the gender approach at AFD?

More specifically, I work on gender support in AFD's operations, which is included in a more global approach to promoting gender equality, also integrating the promotion of gender equality internally and in partnerships. This approach is based in particular on France's International Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2018–2022). With regard to operational support, my work consists in identifying gender issues on projects subject to AFD financing, supporting gender analysis, proposing specific activities to promote gender equality in these projects, and monitoring their implementation. In this context, dialogue with AFD's partners, and in particular project stakeholders, is essential.

You have recently initiated a pilot experiment with COLEACP on this gender issue. Why? What do you expect from it?

This experience is part of a renewed historical collaboration with COLEACP. Given COLEACP's mission, which takes a sustainable development approach, as well as the scope of COLEACP's network of partners, a greater consideration of gender issues in your activities can have a very significant impact in reducing inequalities between women and men. It seems to us that this gender approach could be based in particular on capacity building work for the benefit of COLEACP collaborators and their partners. My work in recent weeks has been to analyse COLEACP's gender mainstreaming and propose recommendations to strengthen this approach to gender and gender equality.

What are your first impressions from your meetings with the COLEACP team?

They're excellent! I received a very positive welcome from the COLEACP team and felt a real desire to make progress on the subject. The working sessions we held made it possible to identify areas of collaboration for the construction of a gender action plan structuring all COLEACP activities, both internally and externally.

What are the next steps in your collaborative approach with COLEACP on this gender issue?

The finalisation and implementation of an action plan and specific monitoring on gender issues in COLEACP, both internally and in its technical assistance activities in ACP countries. On the AFD side, we will monitor gender mainstreaming and remain available as needed to discuss the subject.

www.afd.fr

My work consists in identifying gender issues on projects subject to AFD financing



Crop protection for fruit and vegetables in ACP countries: urgent need for innovation!

Fresh fruit and vegetables have a short shelf life compared with other products, and are subject to strict requirements in terms of quality attributes. Tolerance to damage caused by pests and diseases, for example, is very low. In tropical countries, where the pressure of pests and diseases is high, it is particularly important to manage them effectively. But it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain the necessary controls while responding to changing regulations and market requirements.

The urgent need for innovations in crop protection for export crops to the European Union (EU) stems from the introduction of stricter plant health rules (current Directive 2000/29/EC and new EU Regulation 2016/2031); and from developments in regulations on plant protection products – including Regulation (EC) 1107/2009, which governs the placing of plant protection products on the market, and Regulation (EC) No 396/2005, setting maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides. The review process for Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 is leading to a dramatic loss of plant protection products, affecting the safety, viability and competitiveness of certain ACP fresh products in internal, regional and international trade. Producers increasingly lack access to effective, available and affordable pest control measures, which often makes it extremely difficult to comply with new phytosanitary

rules and increases the number of cases of non-compliance with MRLs.

Minor use crops require the mobilisation of private and public actors

The issue is exacerbated in the case of so-called “minor use crops”, for which pesticide use is low on a global scale. These include most fruits and vegetables. Plant protection products for minor use crops in ACP countries represent a relatively small market, so manufacturers and input suppliers are less inclined to invest in new solutions. The increasing cost of residue trials under the new guidelines (covering residue definition) will exacerbate this “minor use problem” and further discourage manufacturers (and others) from investing in defending MRLs or obtaining import tolerances.

It is essential to provide ACP producers with access to appropriate crop protection technologies to ensure the protection of human, animal and plant health in national, regional and international markets. With the appropriate resources and means, it is possible to transform these challenges into opportunities to support the overall development of agri-food value chains in ACP countries. During its previous PIP programmes (2001–2015),

COLEACP’s role as an innovation broker demonstrated that, although it is a facilitated process, it is possible to develop a multi-stakeholder activity programme that brings crop protection solutions to a stage where they can be registered and adopted by ACP producers. It requires the contributions of (and the creation of links between) global manufacturers, ACP producers, EU and ACP researchers, as well as ACP regulatory authorities.



FOCUS

SUSTAINABILITY

From the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform, everyone is talking about sustainability. But what does sustainability mean in practice for companies, and SMEs in particular? How can they achieve it? How do they assess their sustainability? How can they value their progress? This is the challenge of the Fit For Market programme and specifically, via Fit For Market, the implementation of COLEACP's Self-Assessment System.

Sustainable development on the United Nations agenda

In 2015, the United Nations adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which succeed the eight Millennium Development Goals, within its Agenda 2030. This Agenda defines no fewer than 169 targets (sub-objectives) to be achieved by 2030.

To facilitate communication of the 17 SDGs and their ownership by stakeholders, they can be grouped into five domains (the five Ps): people, prosperity, planet, peace, partnerships. The Stockholm Resilience

Centre has developed a graphic, based on a wedding-cake model, which shows how food links all the SDGs and suggests that the economic and societal dimensions are included in the environmental dimension.

This model changes our development paradigm and breaks with an overly sectoral approach where the different pillars of sustainable development can be perceived as independent. In line with this model, the economy develops in the service of society and within

the limits of the biosphere. Each State has taken action to take ownership of the SDGs and implement them at different levels and with different actors.

Actions can be collective, involving institutions (international, national, local) and civil society organisations (business federations, trade unions, NGOs, educational institutions). Actions can also be personal, carried out at the level of an individual or a family.



Stockholm Resilience Centre,
Stockholm University, © Azote Images

COLEACP's sustainable development programme on the international political agenda

COLEACP, through its sustainable development programme, specifically targets the following Sustainable Development Goals: poverty, hunger, food security and sustainable agriculture, sustainable water management, inclusive and sustainable growth, employment and decent work, as well as gender equality, land degradation and climate change. By guiding its activities in this way, COLEACP remains fully committed to respecting the principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment.

In Communication COM (2013) 92 "A decent life for all: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future", the EC reflects UN policy and adopts the objective of sustainable and inclusive economic development and related support mechanisms for its post-2015 development agenda. COLEACP's action is also in line with the EC strategy, set out in the document "Agenda for Change" (2011), in which agriculture is considered a priority area and an important driver of inclusive and sustainable growth. The programme also highlights the need to address the lack of competitiveness in the context of substantial and growing EU support for business, economic

partnership and other free trade agreements, regional integration and the strengthening of regional trading blocs.

In accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2011), COLEACP is part of a joint and coordinated effort to transform African agriculture. Partnership agreements have been signed and collaborative actions have been launched by COLEACP with many international organisations, development partners, research centres and civil society organisations working for this purpose.

In the current context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the private sector must play a major role in development through the creation of productive capacities and decent employment, with a particular focus on sustainable agriculture. COLEACP's sustainability programme was designed in this context, based on its position as a private sector association and its experience in managing community technical assistance programmes for horticultural value chains.

COLEACP offers SMEs a method for implementing sustainable practices (particularly in the fruit and vegetable sector), based on three pillars:

- a Sustainability Charter to which ACP suppliers can commit on a voluntary basis, which is based on seven key principles;
- a sustainability training system adapted to the ACP horticultural sector;
- a Self-Assessment System with key indicators to measure progress in adopting good practices and compliance with the principles of the Sustainability Charter. ►



► COLEACP's Sustainability Charter

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals have also permeated the economic world. In this context, COLEACP has developed its Sustainability Charter, through which producers and exporters in the ACP fruit and vegetable sector, and importers in the EU, commit themselves to carry out their activities in a sustainable manner.

The Charter sets out this commitment as follows:

We see sustainability as an ongoing process towards the economic, social and environmental well-being of all those involved in our activities: customers, consumers, workforce, suppliers, local communities and other stakeholders. We recognise the role that our industry can play in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, and we are committed to conducting our activities in a manner that promotes these objectives. In particular, we recognise the role we can play in the development of workers and managers in the agricultural and horticultural sector, leading to improved economic, social and environmental outcomes for our industry and the communities in which we operate. We also recognise the importance of our supply chain for food security and rural development as a driver for increased economic and social development.

We recognise that sustainability requires an ongoing commitment on our part, both as individual companies and in our work with other stakeholders. This Charter defines our commitment to sustainability around seven areas:

1. Laws and regulations
2. Societal practices
3. Commercial practices
4. Working conditions
5. Environment
6. Product quality
7. Good agricultural practices •

Mr Régis MÉRITAN
European Commission DG-DEVCO



It truly is one of the success stories of EU-ACP cooperation. COLEACP is a pioneer (...) And all the experience it has built up offers an excellent base for future initiatives (...)

Our mandate is clear and unique. We must focus our work on the wellbeing of our populations. (...) 20% of the trainers (of COLEACP) used to be from ACP countries (15 years ago), but the figures we saw before giving our OK to the new programme showed that the trainers in the field are now 90% ACP and 10% European. And that's the kind of transformation we want.



M. Viwanou GNASSOUNOU
Deputy Secretary General ACP Group of States



Fit For Market: the ACP-EU sustainability programme for the fruit and vegetable sector

Fit For Market is part of COLEACP's sustainable development programme, which focuses on analysing business profitability so that the adoption of good practices not only facilitates market access, but also effectively helps suppliers to manage more efficient, profitable and resilient businesses. The Fit For Market programme is part of the intra-ACP indicative programme (2014–2020) for cooperation between the European Union and the ACP Group of States (11th European Development Fund financing). It falls within the medium- and long-term policy support area to strengthen productive capacity, inspire innovation and improve the viability and competitiveness of the private sector.

Sustainable intensification is the main focus of COLEACP's

programme activity, aiming to increase production while minimising negative impacts on climate, ecosystems and the productive environment. It also addresses the social and economic dimensions of sustainability, including livelihoods, economic viability, social justice and inclusiveness. Particular emphasis is placed on the participation of small-scale producers, young people and women, who are often the most disadvantaged by changes in local and global supply chains, and who often have the most to gain from improved production conditions, employment and trade.



COLEACP'S SELF-ASSESSMENT SYSTEM SUPPORTS THE FIT FOR MARKET PROGRAMME

All companies applying for support under COLEACP's Fit For Market programme must sign our Sustainable Development Charter (*see page 22*) and use our Self-Assessment System. By completing the checklist and parameters of the Self-Assessment System, COLEACP is able to establish with each beneficiary a reference point for their company in terms of sustainability, and to identify gaps and opportunities. The results of this exercise are used to guide the personalised action plan implemented as part of Fit For Market.

Companies are advised to complete the Self-Assessment System once a year to establish their profile, assess their progress and demonstrate improvements in key performance indicators. This allows them to adjust and evaluate their Fit For Market action plan as support is put in place.

The Self-Assessment System is not an audit – it is a management tool at the service of the company. The data provided belongs to the company and is not shared. COLEACP uses the data only to manage its support to the company and, anonymously, to provide reports to donors.

In 2019, COLEACP will be able to aggregate the Self-Assessment System reports of all companies benefiting from the Fit For Market programme.

For its part, the company can use its Self-Assessment System reports as a means of marketing its sustainability status to its customers.

Number of Fit For Market requests for intervention in June 2019

701

i Changing volumes of fresh fruit and vegetables exported from ACP countries to:

+16.7 %

EU

+120.2 %

ACP

+129.2 %

REST OF
THE WORLD



FOCUS

For ACP fruit and vegetable producers and suppliers, the adoption of sustainable practices can have a positive impact on their company's financial results. With the right assessment and monitoring tools, there are ways to make farms and businesses more efficient, profitable and resilient. Improved soils increase yields and reduce the need for inputs such as fertilisers; reduced post-harvest losses increase profits; efficient energy use reduces costs; and better conditions for workers improve productivity.

For ACP producers, companies, cooperatives and farmers' groups, ticking the sustainability box opens access to high value-added and niche markets, both regionally and globally. In fact, with their low-input farming systems and awareness of the development impact, ACP horticultural producers are already well placed to produce the sustainable crops and food that are increasingly in demand by markets. There are clear opportunities to capitalise on these advantages and develop new markets in the fruit and vegetable sector.

THE PROOF IS SEEN IN THE FOLLOWING ENTREPRENEURS' TESTIMONIES



► GAMBIA - Gambia Horticultural Enterprises

From fruit and vegetable production to agro-industrial processes, the company integrates sustainability into its relationships with small-scale producers. Its social policy is reflected in its strong involvement in the employment of local communities and direct assistance to the population.



© GHE

Founded in 1991, Gambia Horticultural Enterprises (GHE) is a versatile family and agro-industrial company covering the entire horticultural value chain. Divided into six operations, our activities cover seeds, fertilisers, fruit and vegetable production and processing, agri-food machinery and tools, and pest control products.

The main products we export are fresh fruits and vegetables out of season such as mangoes, peppers, bitter melons, onions, tomatoes, eggplants, green beans, papayas and cashews. We also process some of our products, particularly mango, into pulp, juice, jam and chips. More than half of our production comes from our own plantations. The remainder is produced by independent farmers (5%) and small producers (42%). Of these, a good third are women.

Horizons: How do you integrate sustainability into your value chain?

Momodou Ceesay, Managing Director. We carry out economic, social and environmental audits. We are GlobalG.A.P. certified and have performed the SMETA audit. This means that our society must comply with decent work, health and safety, environmental impact assessment and business ethics standards. Our agri-food processes are also HACCP certified. We are therefore committed to implementing good manufacturing practices, respecting food safety and high quality standards, and being socially responsible.

Could you give some examples?

Two thirds of our production is organic. We have implemented efficient water management through a drip irrigation system. Our compost, made of production waste, allows us to use less chemical fertilisers.

We are using fewer synthetic pesticides through integrated pest management and the adoption of biopesticides such as neem oil. We have also introduced environmentally friendly cultivation and treatment techniques and good waste management – to reduce waste, surplus production that cannot be sold as fresh produce is processed.

How do you support the farmers with whom you work? Could you tell us more about your social approach?

GHE employs more than 130 people, 70% of whom are young people and 80% of whom are women. We strive to take care of the well-being of our employees by creating a supportive work environment. We also support small farmers, especially village women who grow vegetables, by offering them an opportunity to sell their products. ►

We also train young Gambians in agro-industrial and agro-food operations, and provide drinking water to the entire district.

Regarding the sustainability of your activities, what has COLEACP brought you?

We have requested COLEACP's support under the Fit For Market programme, which aims to

strengthen competitiveness and sustainability in the horticultural sector in the ACP region. COLEACP's intervention enabled us to call on several consultants who helped us to strengthen our capacity to manage audits, improve our water management and set up self-assessment processes. We are currently

working on an organic production system that should first be implemented on our farms and then benefit small producers. COLEACP's support is invaluable and has enabled us to make our company more competitive on the European markets. •

www.gamhort.gm

GHANA - HPW Fresh & Dry

By working with more than 1,400 small local producers, HPW addresses major human and energy challenges. It provides them with a framework within a vast sustainable plan covering commercial, social and environmental aspects.

We collect, process and export premium quality dried fruit: mango, pineapple and coconut. Our factory employs more than 1,000 people and cooperates with 1,400 small producers. Every year, we produce 1,800 tonnes of dried fruit, 95% of which goes to Europe. We are distinguished by our many certifications and high standards of quality and food safety, highly appreciated by our customers. We are also heavily committed to innovation: a new packaging centre, several products launched in the last 12 months (100% sugar-free dried fruit bars, three new coconut chip flavours, extra virgin coconut oil), and new partnerships for the production of pure plant extracts, seeds and fruits, and moringa powder.

Horizons: How do you integrate the sustainable component into your activities?

Hans Peter Werder, CEO: Our business model is extremely sustainable. We have become the largest employer in the region but also the largest buyer of smallholder fruit in Ghana, within a radius of 1,500 km. We therefore carefully supervise our suppliers, both through training and technical support. We are also working to improve the diversity of



our plantations. We are Fairtrade and BRC Food AA certified in terms of food safety. In general, we are extremely attentive to the ecological impacts of our activities.

Specifically, could you give some examples of your ecological approach?

Energy and water are critical elements for our activities. All organic waste – mango kernels and coconut shells – is transformed into energy in our plant and fed into the drying ovens. We have also invested in a biogas plant whose residues we use as fertiliser. We have

a photovoltaic installation connected to generators. Finally, our water management is remarkable because the water we use comes from our own resources (eight wells, rainwater storage and purification facility, and wastewater treatment system).

How is your involvement in the well-being of your employees reflected on site?

The entire chain of operations is Fairtrade certified, including farms. The well-being and daily satisfaction of our employees are very important to us. We charter free buses for their ►



FOCUS

ENTREPRENEURS' WORDS & STORIES



home-to-work trips, and our cafeteria prepares two free meals a day. We also guarantee them continuous training.

What has COLEACP brought you in terms of sustainability?

Like other development cooperation actors, COLEACP has helped us to set up programmes to manage the risks associated with working with many small producers. Currently, we employ 12 agronomists in the agricultural regions who are responsible for monitoring the production of certain fruits. We provide technical support to

All organic waste – mango kernels and coconut shells – is transformed into energy in our plant and feeds the drying ovens

all our suppliers. We manage demonstration areas and train producers in maintenance, climate impacts and harvesting. Finally, we have improved diversity, reduced risks and increased harvests in our mango nurseries and test farms. •

www.hpwap.ch
www.tropicks.ch

BENIN - AS Green

Supported by its manager, trained in entrepreneurship and a specialist in the sector, this fruit juice company wants to increase its production capacity and thus have a more sustainable impact on the pineapple sector in Benin.

Since 2016 we have been transforming pineapple, one of Benin's flagship resources, into natural juice with no added sugar, no colouring and no preservatives. We also offer cocktails of ginger, papaya, watermelon, baobab, mint and passion fruit, all made with pure pineapple juice. These drinks are marketed under the brand name FESTTI in 25-centilitre, 30-centilitre and 1-litre containers. Our clients are located in Benin, Burkina Faso and the West African Monetary Union.

Horizons: How is your business sustainable?

Clémence Kougbla, General Manager: Benin imports almost all of its food products, including fruit juices and cocktails, despite the diversity of fruits it abounds in. It was therefore urgent to promote the processing of our fruits in order to create added value at the local level. Our products are a healthy and cheap alternative, and are gradually replacing imported beverages whose origin is not

always known. We have a direct link with pineapple producers grouped in cooperatives, allowing a stable and guaranteed supply. The energy we use is produced from palm nut waste and a small solar panel. The waste resulting from processing the fruit will very soon be composted to feed the pineapple production fields and thus complete the loop.

How do you finance your activity?

Our activity is financed by our own funds. The company is headed by the Chief Executive Officer. She is trained in entrepreneurship, management and has more than ten years' experience in juice and dairy product processing. It is extremely dynamic and has a strong entrepreneurial character. Every year since the company was founded, the results have been in surplus, and our ambition is to quadruple our turnover in the coming years. We know that we are facing increasing demand from local and regional markets but are unable to meet it because our production capacities are too

limited. We want to produce and market on a larger scale and have a significant impact on the pineapple sector. In addition to our own funds, we are therefore currently seeking other sources of financing.

What did COLEACP bring you?

COLEACP accompanies us in the search for financial partners to realise our development project. It is helping us to move our production centre, acquire industrial machinery, increase our production capacity, upgrade our management tools and obtain certifications – currently inaccessible due to the small size of our production workshop. For example, COLEACP will help us to implement the HACCP approach. For our pineapple producers, COLEACP supervises them by training them in both production and good hygiene practices.



Illustrative photo



KENYA - Fair Trade Enterprises

The company relies on its contracts with small-scale producers to make them autonomous and thus contribute to the sustainable development of the region, while offsetting its carbon footprint.

Fair Trade Enterprises Ltd is a social enterprise whose objective is to promote sustainable rural development through Fairtrade practices and the export of organic avocados grown by small producers. We export about 1,000 tons of fresh products annually.

Horizons: Why did you choose organic farming?

James Weru, Sales

Director: There are many reasons for this. It benefits farmers more by reducing their production costs. The soils are more fertile thanks to the addition of organic matter. Pests are less resistant and need fewer pesticides. And, of course, human and environmental health are better respected: reduction of soil, water and air pollution. We also follow GlobalG.A.P. standards to ensure that our products have been grown, transported,

packaged and exported in accordance with the highest quality and hygiene standards.

What is your vision of the agricultural sector in Kenya? How do you choose the farmers you work with?

We are convinced that agriculture is the solution to achieving sustainable rural development in our regions and the empowerment of small producers. Growing an average of 10 to 25 avocado trees, for a long time they were exploited by intermediaries who paid them a derisory price. Our strategy is to increase their incomes and food security by improving the sustainability and efficiency of the entire value chain. We select producers on the basis of the following criteria: they must be organic, affiliated to a farmers' association or self-help group

and, finally, present only low risks of contamination due to proximity of non-organic farms. They have a contract with us, and we offer them access to equipment, technology, credit and other services. Today, about 1,500 households participate in the programme. Producers meet in agricultural groups to simplify production and storage processes. ►

We are convinced that agriculture is the solution to achieving sustainable rural development in our regions and the empowerment of small producers

You are sensitive to your carbon footprint. Can you explain your efforts to reduce it?

We are aware that food accounts for nearly 20% of carbon emissions each year, and that exporting fresh produce by air contributes significantly to this. We were the first in East Africa to reduce our footprint, and have implemented a carbon offset programme. To earn credits, 1,000 people were recruited and trained to replant avocado trees and use clean energy to grow them. In addition, the resulting operation provides them with income. We treat pests and weeds biologically and centralise the transport of fruit from the farm to the packing centre. Every year, energy- and water-use audits are carried out. We have implemented a strategy to reduce water consumption and we practise mixed farming.

Regarding the sustainability of your activities, what has COLEACP brought you?

Thanks to this collaboration with COLEACP, we have been able to train people in organic farming and good agricultural practices. These trainers, in turn, train our producers. COLEACP also helped us to analyse the costs and benefits of avocado cultivation, allowing us to increase the number of avocado plantations and reduce post-harvest losses. •

www.fairfresh.net



FRANCE - Société Internationale d'Importation

The Omer-Decugis & Fils group was founded in 1850 by Omer Decugis. It has been developing from father to son for six generations. Navigating between tradition and innovation, the group has stood the test of time by remaining true to its heritage. Société Internationale d'Importation (SIIM), a subsidiary of the family group, is a company that produces, imports, matures and distributes tropical fruits and vegetables. It is one of the references in the European market and a leader in Africa. SIIM is a member of COLEACP, of which Vincent Omer-Decugis has been Treasurer since 2003.

In terms of sustainability, SIIM has developed a quality and social responsibility policy that is integrated into its general policy and corporate promise, with the following commitments:

- Flavour and taste at the heart of agricultural strategy
- Safe and sustainable agricultural practices at the international level: food security, social practices and environmental protection, being a responsible employer in communities
- A high-performance supply chain to the customer

- The co-construction of sustainable and balanced relationships with all stakeholders
- A commitment to communication for better consumer information: creating links to create trust
- Philanthropic actions in line with the group's values and activities through the Louis Omer-Decugis Foundation

In concrete terms, this is reflected at all levels of corporate social responsibility (CSR), as the following examples demonstrate.

Relationships and working conditions: SIIM is an active member of the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI). 100% of the West African mangoes marketed by the company are BSCI certified. SIIM is also a member of the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (Sedex), the first collaborative platform for the exchange of ethical data on the supply chain and thus participates in the Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) social audit, which guarantees respect for labour rights and good working conditions for its employees. The group also has a proactive internal social policy, for example welcoming and integrating disabled people; conducting

vaccination and cardiovascular risk-awareness campaigns; and offering staff warm-up sessions to limit musculoskeletal disorders.

Environment. SIIM supports the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard, which is used to manage natural resources and preserve biodiversity. The SIIM has developed a range of organic products (one-third of the bananas marketed by the group come from organic sectors; 100% of pineapple from Benin and 100% of coconut sold by SIIM are organic).

Society: In Côte d'Ivoire, SIIM is a founding member of RISA, whose mission is to help produce healthy food from all sources. In particular, RISA fights against the non-compliant use of pesticides. At Rungis, the group is involved in various social and food waste prevention initiatives through the rational management of unsold and downgraded products from its subsidiaries in order to provide daily fresh and quality products to solidarity grocery stores (e.g. agreement with ANDES on the Rungis Market of National Interest). ►

SIIM SUPPORTS THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

SIIM joined the United Nations Global Compact in March 2015 and is committed to promoting and respecting the 10 principles that underpin it, which are grouped into four main areas: human rights, labour standards, the environment and the fight against corruption.





Vincent Omer-Decugis

HORIZONS: Your annual CSR report shows that your group's commitment to sustainability is well established, both internally and externally. If you take stock today, how has sustainability been a positive thing for your group?

Vincent Omer-Decugis, President of SIIM: Sustainability is intrinsically linked to the development of our group. It emanates from the strong values that underlie our action: transparency, equity, sharing, protection. We firmly believe that this sustainable approach is also good for business. Internally, it

also allows our employees to strongly support our projects, beyond the purely economic and entrepreneurial approach.

You know West Africa well. What are the main sustainability challenges facing fruit and vegetable sector operators today who want to export to Europe or develop their sales on the local and regional markets, which are currently growing rapidly?

The needs of West African operators are of course different depending on the sectors and types of society. In general, West Africa must assert itself as a major player in the agri-food export sectors. It must show the quality of its companies and its know-how. This is done of course through product quality, social and environmental practices, but also through the modern organisation of export sectors and infrastructures to ensure the security of supply programmes. West Africa's potential is undeniable, let's develop it!

How do COLEACP and programmes such as PIP, and now Fit For Market, contribute

to meeting these challenges? Can sustainability be a factor in competitiveness for the smallest and most numerous SMEs in the fruit and vegetable sector in sub-Saharan Africa, and how can this be achieved?

Since its creation, and particularly in the past 20 years with the undeniable success of its programmes, COLEACP has been one of the fundamental actors in the adaptation of African agri-food companies to the upheavals in the sector, enabling the upgrading of the smallest players and the modernisation of the most important companies. COLEACP has been able to create consultant networks to serve as a single network, bringing together all companies in the sector from production to distribution, relying on major research organisations, including CIRAD, the University of Gembloux, and others. This vibrant, dynamic and economically efficient fabric is now the basis of the horticultural sector in sub-Saharan Africa. •



MEETINGS



Meeting... With Audu Grema from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Audu Grema, Senior Regional Advisor for Agriculture



Audu Grema

African farmers in a time of great peril and of great promise



HORIZONS: The global agri-food industry is changing, and must change its model. In this context, doesn't sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have a real opportunity to be the driving force behind a new, sustainable model of agriculture? The same innovations that can make African farmers more productive and profitable also can make food production in the region more sustainable and resilient. And that's one of the exciting things about current efforts under way to transform production on Africa's smallholder farms. It's occurring at a time when there is a widespread realisation that these issues are really inseparable – a productive farm is also one that is sustainable and capable of adapting to climate change. The situation for African farmers today is that they are living in a time of great peril, but also one of great promise.

There are new challenges from climate change, for example, that already are threatening the productivity of staple crops like maize. There are surging crop pests like fall armyworm and the spread of crop diseases like cassava mosaic virus that are a major concern.

At the same time, there are advances in crop breeding that can deliver new varieties of high-yielding drought- and disease-resistant crops. There are new technologies for rapidly and affordably analysing soils to guide farmers to much more effective and efficient ways to maintain soil health.

What's needed today are the investments and policies that can drive innovation, targeting the needs of smallholder farmers, and take them to scale. That's particularly important for enabling African farmers to adapt to climate change. Funding for adaptation has significantly lagged investments in mitigation, and farmers in Africa already are experiencing significant impacts. But again, helping them adapt also can make food production more sustainable.

For example, we're supporting a research team that recently published a study showing it may be possible to boost crop productivity up to 40% by improving critical aspects of photosynthesis. A lot of work remains to be done. But we're hopeful these insights eventually can lead to new crop varieties that could allow farmers to

significantly increase food production without needing additional water – that would be a big advance for areas where dry conditions are common.

The Gates Foundation is very active in the agricultural industry in SSA. What are your top priorities for contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals through sustainable development of agriculture in SSA?

Agriculture has a central role to play in achieving the SDGs. That's of course true for SDG2 and its commitment to end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition. SDG2 includes a target (SDG2.3) that we strongly support, which is to double agricultural productivity and incomes for small-scale food producers. But agriculture also has a role to play in SDG1 and its commitment to end poverty in all its forms. A key reason we invest in smallholder agriculture is because around the world it has a very strong track record of building wealth where there is poverty – of giving people an equal shot at living a productive life. And in SSA, growth in the agriculture sector is two to four times more effective in reducing poverty than growth in other sectors. ►



But the benefits don't stop there. Creating wealth for smallholder farmers has a strong track record of lifting entire economies from low- to middle-income status. Look at China and Vietnam. Agriculture was once the dominant sector. Their rise started by making smallholder farming more productive and profitable.

We think smallholder agriculture can do the same for Africa – and there are strong signs it's starting to have a similar impact in places like Ethiopia, Ghana and Rwanda. The economic opportunities are significant.

But farmers in much of Africa lack a lot of what they need to succeed – like better seeds and livestock breeds, healthy soils, financing and access to markets. Our investments are seeking innovations that can help farmers in Africa overcome the many challenges they have long endured – and adapt to the new pressures caused by climate change.

ACP MSMEs in the agri-food industry are particularly exposed to certain risks inherent in their activities. In your opinion, what urgent measures need to be taken to secure MSMEs' development in terms of access to finance?

True, in ACP countries MSMEs are faced with a lot of challenges and risks, associated with a glaring lack of access to finance, a pervasive lack of readily available start-up capital, and the difficulty in accessing insurance protection.

We believe in providing support through the whole spectrum of the small operator ecosystem by analysing the entire smallholder farmer and MSME value chain, and defining specific entry points through which sustainable service provision could be provided by service providers. For example, our work in the agricultural finance space (through AgriFin) has enabled us

to penetrate six countries in SSA, reaching 2.8 million beneficiaries working with 70 private sector partners with the infrastructure developed by our vendor, Mercy Corps, building digital ecosystems that cover access to finance, insurance, inputs aggregation, market information systems, and extension provision.

We believe achieving institutional reform could open up the market with far-reaching impact on the MSMEs in a given country, rather than a small, occasional approach to improving access. For example, our Financial Services team have done a pioneering effort in Nigeria, working with the Central Bank of Nigeria, by supporting a critical structural reform of the landmark laws and regulations governing the non-financial institutions' ability to provide equitable access to finance to MSMEs. This is opening up the market to millions of entrepreneurs, who will otherwise miss out on the needed catalytic boost to support start-ups and business growth.

The change that is needed in the global agri-food paradigm will require capacity building and continuous training for all economic actors in the agricultural and food system in SSA, for current and future generations. How does the Gates

Foundation plan to meet this challenge?

We work with a large constellation of partners in the public and private sector because the successful transformation of food production in SSA requires contributions from multiple actors.

Our work starts with a focus on innovation and investments in agriculture R&D. We believe in the power of agriculture research to produce breakthroughs that will allow smallholder farmers to sustainably increase production of nutritious staple crops and protein-dense livestock products. And we are especially committed to bold ideas that might seem too risky to attract commercial investment. But they could produce what Bill Gates calls "earth-shaking returns."

We understand that private sector partners are essential for translating the results of research funded by the public sector and philanthropies into practical, affordable product innovations for farmers. We also look to the private sector to provide models for the kinds of technology and business practices that can improve public sector efforts – like crop breeding technology and strategies that can help countries keep pace with the complex needs of ►



Bill Gates, © Toshifumi Kitamura—AFP/Getty Images

their smallholder farmers. We're currently working with the CGIAR to generate support for a major, donor-led initiative to modernise crop breeding programmes at CGIAR research centres around the world, particularly to help smallholder farmers adapt to climate change. We are looking to the private sector for guidance in developing the technology, breeding methods and very customer-focused business practices that make commercial seed programmes so effective and responsive.

Of course, governments have a central role to play, and more and more are seeing the benefits of investing in agriculture. The 40 countries that have signed on to the continent-wide Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) are producing larger yields per field than farmers in countries that have not embraced the pact.

We have supported efforts in several African countries to develop detailed national

agriculture strategies, along with policy reforms encouraging new investments that can give smallholder farmers many more options for the seeds, fertilisers and other critical farm inputs they need. We also support efforts by the African Union to develop and implement a comprehensive, transparent system for tracking each country's progress toward achieving its agriculture goals. •



Meeting... With Atsuko Toda from the African Development Bank

Atsuko Toda, Director, Agricultural Finance and Rural Development

We must work in closer partnership with more organisations like COLEACP that have experience in Africa and skilled trainers on the ground.

HORIZONS: The global agri-food industry is changing, and must change its model. In this context, doesn't sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have a real opportunity to be the driving force behind a new, sustainable model of agriculture?

Africa has a huge opportunity to feed itself. Currently, roughly 65% of African agriculture is subsistence-based. It does not have to be this way, and African agriculture can be framed as a business. This requires fostering the growth of a private sector on the African continent with the skills and capital to drive long-term agribusiness growth. There is a critical need to take an integrated approach to developing agricultural value chains, and to ensure there is a simultaneous increase in production (and productivity) and quality. This will enable smallholder farmers and SMEs to benefit from increased incomes, and better infrastructure that allows the growth of markets to realise the value of increased production.



Atsuko Toda, © AfDB

The African Development Bank (AfDB) is very active in the agricultural industry in SSA. What are your top priorities for contributing to the SDGs through sustainable development of agriculture in SSA?

The key priorities for the AfDB in SSA are as follows.

First, achieve self-sufficiency in key staples. A focus on better developed value chains will require activities such as cluster development, downstream market development, increased productivity and scaled-up climate-adaptation practices. New financing streams can increase sector-wide investment

in hard infrastructure (e.g. irrigation, energy, transportation, logistics) and soft infrastructure (e.g. human capital) and the development of agricultural finance systems.

Second, gain a 'fair share' of export-oriented commodity value chains. As an initial step, the strategy will aim to support Africa in gaining its 'fair share' in key export-oriented value chains where a comparative advantage might exist. The overall agribusiness environment should also be improved to expand access to regional and international markets. ►



Third, create African capability to serve consumer demands and nutrition needs. African demand for protein will lead to fast-growing consumption of animal products, as well as associated feed inputs. Cassava, soy, maize, beef and dairy will be key priorities. Examples of future targeted value chains include poultry and aquaculture.

And finally, leverage the potential of untapped and undertapped regions in order to close the gap between what African agriculture produces today, and what it can sustainably produce. Transforming priority value chains in these regions (sorghum, millet, cowpea and livestock in the Sahel; maize, soybean, dairy and poultry/livestock in the Guinea Savannah) will mean increasing production in the Sahel region and unlocking the potential of the Guinea Savannah.

ACP MSMEs in the agri-food industry are particularly exposed to certain risks inherent in their activities. In your opinion, what urgent measures need to be taken to secure MSMEs' development in terms of access to finance?

Unfortunately, MSMEs are a very difficult segment for the AfDB

to finance directly, and we need to focus on working with local commercial banks that have proximity to these important clients to spur employment and growth. The informal private sector is critical in supporting young people, and most of the working-age population is employed by MSMEs.

The change needed in the global agri-food paradigm will require capacity building and continuous training for all economic actors in the agricultural and food system in SSA, for current and future generations. How does the AfDB plan to meet this challenge?

AfDB is supporting Regional Member States through its ENABLE Youth programme that specifically addresses the training and capacity-building needs of young entrepreneurs in the agricultural space. The Bank is also coordinating a programme called Jobs for Youth in Africa that reaches all sectors for youth employment and empowerment. However, to increase reach we must work in closer partnership with more organisations like COLEACP that have experience in Africa and skilled trainers on the ground.

The AfDB and COLEACP know each other well and work with similar objectives in the service of sustainable development of agriculture in SSA. How could they work together on concrete projects?

AfDB and COLEACP could work together in the context of its agro-industrialisation projects as well as value chain development projects to support the training and capacity building needs. We would have to find focus areas to partner so that we can scale up the partnership over time. The first steps have been taken in understanding the skills that COLEACP and its wider network of experts can offer. •

African Development Bank and COLEACP could work together in the context of its agro-industrialisation projects as well as value chain development projects.



EVENTS

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European Development Days 2019

Fighting inequalities: building a world that leaves no one behind

European Development Days (EDD), the largest European congress dedicated to international cooperation and development, takes place every year in Brussels. The theme of the 2019 event (18–19 June) is “Addressing inequalities: Building a world which leaves no one behind”. Focusing on promoting equality and shared prosperity in the context of sustainable development, the event is organised around three main themes:

- Why inequalities matter for sustainable development;
- Understanding the structural causes of inequalities;
- Working better together through more effective policies to address inequalities.

Participants in the 2019 EDD discussed a wide range of topics, including access to education and employment, inequality of opportunity, bridging the digital divide, gender inequality, climate change and environmental inequality.

The EDD Village consists of 100 stands that showcase successful projects from all over the world. It is an opportunity to build relationships with participants and share experiences in the field. The COLEACP stand presents the Fit For Market approach, its main results and impact by emphasising the involvement of all stakeholders in the agricultural industry, from field to management positions, contributing to poverty reduction through education in ACP countries.

This year the COLEACP stand was animated with a studio set that allowed journalists to interview the different stakeholders of our organisation’s programmes: beneficiaries who came for the occasion, representatives of European and ACP institutions, and development practitioners including COLEACP experts.

Each year, the forum attracts more than 8,000 participants from over 140 countries, representing 1,200 development organisations.

www.eudevdays.eu

AFRICA BIO AT EDD 2019

Africa Bio is a production, processing and export company of tropical fruits and vegetables based in Cameroon. This family business manages an area of 35 hectares devoted to organic farming. One of the human challenges is to retain and motivate the rural workforce, who are often young. Building a local and sustainable agriculture is one of the strong values of this company, which also seeks to establish itself in the national market, in particular with a range of fruit juices.



Fruit Logistica, Biofach, Macfrut...

COLEACP with ACP companies is following the rise of European trade fairs specialising in the fruit and vegetable sector



Fruit Logistica is the world's leading fruit and vegetable trade fair, which takes place every year in Berlin (Germany) at the beginning of February. Since 2018, the organisers have created a hall dedicated to Africa, where COLEACP has its stand. In 2019 we met 180 companies from 41 different countries (up from 32 countries in 2018).

In parallel with this essential exhibition in the international fruit and vegetable business, other exhibitions are gaining momentum, such as Biofach in Nuremberg (Germany) where COLEACP was an exhibitor for the first time in 2019 (Africa Pavilion, 70 companies met working in organic agriculture); and Macfrut in Rimini (Italy).

The 36th Macfrut exhibition, in May 2019, focused on the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Exhibitors included Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Other countries from the region

sent delegations to meet fruit and vegetable buyers from the European market. In 2018 there were 43,000 visitors to Rimini (up from 39,000 in 2017), a quarter of whom were international. Another success of the fair was the Tropical Fruit Congress, which this year highlighted the pineapple sector (following 2018's gatherings of the mango and avocado sectors), with 300 operators taking part, 80% of whom were from overseas. Our objectives in attending Macfrut 2019 were to meet the ACP companies present and discuss their action plans as part of the Fit For Market programme, to promote ACP fruit and vegetables to European buyers, and to assess the opportunities the fair represents for the EU-ACP fruit and vegetable sector's business development.

Macfrut 2019 enabled the COLEACP team to review the ACP companies present at the fair as part of the plans for its Fit For Market programme; to promote ACP fruit and vegetables

to European buyers; and to assess the opportunities that this European fair represents for business development in the EU-ACP fruit and vegetable sector.

Macfrut Exhibition
www.macfrut.com

Fit For Market Programme
www.coleacp.org/ffm

Fit For Market SPS Programme
www.coleacp.org/ffm-sps

Africa, the continent of opportunities
www.macfrut.com/en/c/126/africa_the_continent_of_opportunities

COLEACP's presence
www.eservices.coleacp.org/en/actu/rimini-italy-macfrut-2019-spotlight-on-sub-saharan-africa



International Plant Protection Convention: 25 ACP countries mobilised around SPS

COLEACP presented its Fit For Market SPS programme to the competent authorities of ACP countries at a meeting of the International Plant Protection Convention's Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (Rome, 1–2 April 2019). This provided an opportunity to exchange views on SPS issues facing the fruit and vegetable sector in ACP countries; discuss possibilities for COLEACP support under the Fit For Market SPS programme; and review the first requests for support already received by COLEACP.

Twenty-five ACP countries were represented through the Directorates of their National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs): Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi,

Mali, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Suriname, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

In the context of changes in European plant health regulations (which will come into force in December 2019) and those on the use of plant protection products, National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) must ensure that they have the necessary human and financial resources and skills. All the operational procedures and skills required by the evolving rules on the European market will need to be quickly in place and operating efficiently. The Fit For Market SPS programme, funded by the European Union at the request of the ACP Group of States, was launched to contribute to this challenge.

At the meeting in Rome, COLEACP presented to the

NPPOs the Fit For Market SPS intervention strategy, based on the four dimensions of effective SPS systems: governance, operational processes, skills management and communication dynamics. To make the best use of programme resources, a principle of prioritisation by fruit and vegetable sector will be followed.

www.coleacp.org/ffm-sps



FLASHBACK

K



10 years already...!

2009 zero residues

As early as 2009, the second phase of COLEACP's PIP programme placed sustainable development at the heart of the ACP fruit and vegetable sector. The objective "zero pesticide residues" was clearly stated in the principles underlying the PIP programme.



FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACP HORTICULTURAL INDUSTRY



FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN-CARIBBEAN-PACIFIC HORTICULTURAL INDUSTRY

PIP is a European cooperation programme managed by COLEACP. It is financed by the European Development Fund and implemented at the request of the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) Group of States. A second phase of PIP was launched in October 2009 for a period of five years. In accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, the global objective is to: "Maintain and, if possible, increase the contribution made by export horticulture to the reduction of poverty in ACP countries". The horticultural trade is an important driver for economic growth in many countries, and PIP helps ACP exports reach their full potential by enabling producers and exporters to meet the demands of the EU market. While export horticulture is the main focus, outputs are adapted to local and regional markets wherever possible to also benefit ACP consumers.



2009-2014:

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PIP 2009-2014 MISSION STATEMENT



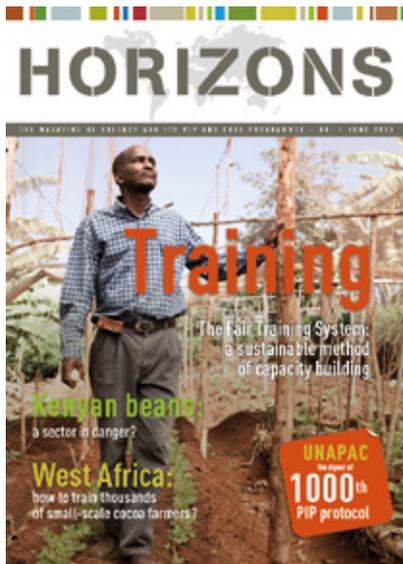
The following principles underlie the second phase of PIP:

- 1. Towards zero pesticide residues.** Mindful of market demands concerning the environment and human health, PIP promotes measures that are both technically and economically viable and enable the supply of fruit and vegetables with minimal pesticide residues.
- 2. Meeting the demands of European consumers.** Besides food safety, environmental protection as well as fair and ethical trade are becoming the most pressing consumer concerns. In the same way that it tackles food safety, PIP addresses these new issues to help ACP suppliers take the necessary action.
- 3. Raising awareness and influencing policy.** PIP lobbies policy makers to ensure that the impact of their decisions on ACP players, and on achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, can be taken into account. This includes public sector (e.g. EC legislators) and private sector players (e.g. retailers), as well as NGOs.
- 4. Facilitating trade to support smallholder farmers.** European supermarkets are increasingly aware of their roles and responsibilities in promoting sustainable trade and poverty alleviation. PIP strives to keep small-scale growers at the heart of ACP horticultural supply chains. This means reducing technical and economic barriers, as well as helping producers and exporters to overcome them.
- 5. Contributing to sustainable and safe food for local markets.** The considerable progress made in improving production for export should also benefit and be a factor in the modernisation of local ACP horticulture. PIP adapts production guides for use by support programmes to improve production and distribution for the local market.
- 6. Developing fair trade.** A means of saving socially important but threatened supply chains. Faced with increasing production costs due to the combined demands of supermarkets and new legislation, PIP develops Fair Trade supply chains in the fruit and vegetable sector in collaboration with key players in the industry.
- 7. Contributing to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).** Through the activities of PIP, COLEACP encourages and supports its members and other private sector players (e.g. retailers), to ensure that the horticultural trade contributes to the achievement of the MDGs: poverty alleviation, food security, and environmental protection.

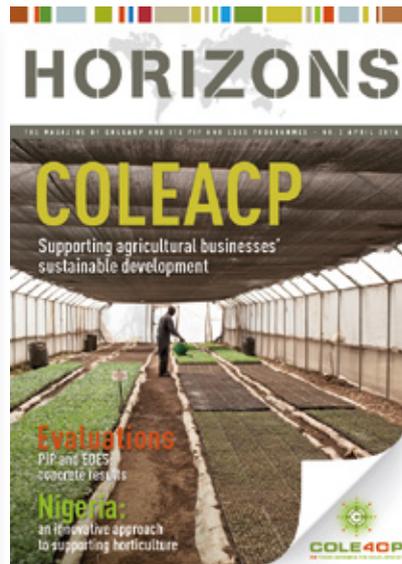
HORIZONS

Each publication contains reports and news on our activities and programmes. It also provides an opportunity for us to step back and put our activities into perspective, and to share our working methods and results with all our stakeholders.

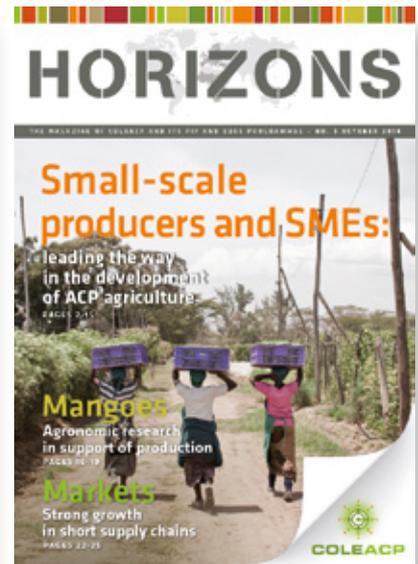
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TRAINING



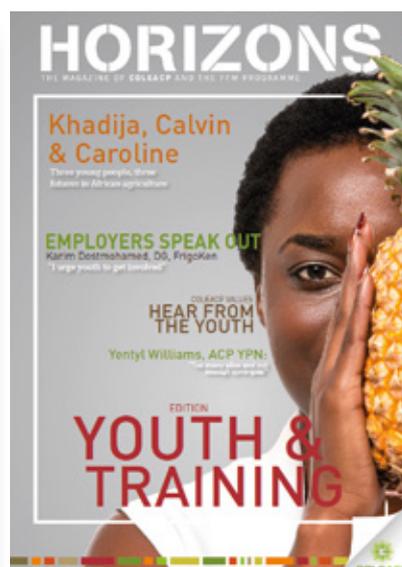
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The Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP) is a professional association created in 1973 whose mission is to develop an inclusive and sustainable trade in agricultural and food products (fruits and vegetables in particular), as a priority in the ACP States and between these countries and the European Union.

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