

PRESS RELEASE

In the framework of the implementation of two initiatives that are, the AU-IBAR Genetics project "*Strengthening the Capacity of African Countries and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation of African Animal Genetic Resources*" and the technical cooperation project between the Regional Office of FAO and AU-IBAR "*Assistance for a Regional Initiative on Animal Genetic Resources in Africa*" was held in the premises of CEBEVIRHA in N'Djamena, Chad from 28 to 30 August 2014, a regional workshop on "*Strengthening capacities on the genetic resources management in Central Africa and the West*".



The workshop registered the attendance of national coordinators of animal genetic resources, the focal points for the AU-IBAR project genetics from West and Central Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Chad and Togo), representatives of sub-regional, regional and international institutions (CEBEVIRHA, ECCAS, CIRDES, CORAF/WECARD, FAO, ITC/WALIC and AU-IBAR). The main objective was to strengthen the capacity of the sub-regional focal point (S-RFP) for West and Central Africa to improve the management of animal genetic resources through better coordination and networking.

More specifically, the workshop aimed to:

- Assess the progress made in the implementation of the activities of the SRFP since the last meeting in Libreville in 2011;

- Agree on the most desirable institutional set-up considering the progress assessed, the present institutional environment in West and in Central Africa
- Agree/confirm the geographical coverage of the S-RFP or otherwise decide;
- Select institution(s) to host the secretariat of the S-RFP(s);
- Elect Steering committee(s) for the S-RFP(s);
- Propose a mechanism for the sustainability of S-RFP(s) beyond projects support.

Officially opened by His Excellency Mr Issa Ali Tahir, Minister of Livestock and Hydraulics in the presence of the Special Adviser for Livestock to the Prime Minister, Mr Marc Abdala, Country Representative of the FAO in Chad and Dr. Simplicie Nouala representing the Director of AU-IBAR, the regional workshop deliberated in a General assembly on several topics in plenary meetings and group works.

The following conclusions and recommendations were drawn:

- a. The General Assembly has decided, for more efficiency in the coordination of the management of animal genetic resources, the creation of two sub-regional focal points in lieu of a single focal point for both regions. There will be a Sub-regional focal point for Central Africa and Sub-regional focal point for West Africa.
- b. CEBEVIRHA was selected to host the Secretariat of the S-RFP for Central Africa after consultation of Central Africa countries. Thus, the Steering Committee for Central Africa is composed of representatives of the elected Member States, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon and Chad which will be joined by ECCAS as chair, FAO, PRASAC, AU-IBAR and the University of Dschang (Cameroon).
- c. CORAF/WECARD was selected to host the Secretariat of the S-RFP for West Africa after consultation of the West Africa countries. The Steering Committee for West Africa is composed of representatives of the elected Member States which are Ghana, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Niger and Benin which will be joined by ROPPA, RBM, APESS, ECOWAS as chair, ITC/WALIC, CIRDES, FAO, AU-IBAR and the University of Ghana.
- d. For resources mobilisation to enable the S-RFP to sustainably operate, the General Assembly recommended the solicitation of effective financial support of States, regional economic communities and development partners.
- e. The General Assembly recommended the strengthening of collaboration between the members of the sub-regional Focal Points for West Africa and Central Africa in order to encourage exchanges between national coordinators for animal genetic resources and the national focal points of the genetics project and strengthen coordination on initiatives and activities involving genetic resources.
- f. The General Assembly recommended that the establishment of the different focal points is accompanied by information and advocacy towards the Member States and by the awareness of all stakeholders on the importance of AnGR in Africa.

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