

Strengthening Fisheries Management in ACP Countries



The 4th and final regional monitoring workshop of the ACP Fish II programme took place in Banjul from 18 to 20 September 2013. The first meeting of the ACP Ministers in charge of Fisheries was held back in June 2009 in Brussels to establish a roadmap for the ACP Ministerial Fisheries Mechanism. The ACP Fish II programme: 'Strengthening Fisheries Management in ACP Countries', is funded under the 9th EDF €330 million and is expected to phase out in November 2013.

The meeting gathered focal points from across ACP countries with the overall objective of contributing to the sustainable and equitable management of fisheries; thus leading to poverty alleviation and improving food security in ACP states. Thirty-six projects have been financed in West Africa under the programme during its four years of implementation. The programme has always considered the needs that have been identified by the regional fisheries bodies of the different countries in the region.

Hon. Mass Axi Gai, Minister of Fisheries and Water Resources, noted that fisheries in ACP countries are an important sector with respect to the income and

livelihood of communities dependent on marine and inland aquatic resources. The minister revealed that 600,000 persons rely on fisheries for their subsistence, and therefore the sustainable development of fisheries remains in many cases a poorly understood priority; particularly given the contribution that fisheries make to income generation, employment, food security and trade.

Minister Gai acknowledged that the EU remains the largest destination for ACP fish and fisheries products, accounting for 68 per cent of export value. However, a number of developments have contributed to reducing the advantages enjoyed by ACP producers, such as differentiated trade agreements and concession, rules of origin and sanitary rules and regulations, among others.

Representing the Delegation of the European Union to The Gambia, Mr Josselin Amalfi reiterated the importance of the programme which has contributed immensely to the fisheries sector of ACP countries due to the multiple roles it plays in terms of its contribution to the creation of national wealth.



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CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON THE PROGRAMMING OF THE 11th EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (EDF) FOR THE GAMBIA

Consultation Workshop on the proposed EU Response to Agriculture for Economic Growth & Food Security



L-R: Mr Mod Ceesay, Permanent Secretary 2, Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs & Deputy NAO of the EDF, Mme Agnès Guillaud, Chargée d' Affaires of the EU to The Gambia, Mrs Ada Gaye, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Mrs Perpetua Katepa-Kalala

Consultative group discussion

The National Authorising Officer - Support Unit together with the Delegation of the European Union to The Gambia on 23rd October 2013, held a stakeholders consultative meeting on the EU response strategy for Agriculture for Economic Growth & Food Security.

In his opening remarks, the Deputy NAO underscored the determination of the Government of The Gambia in its efforts to achieving agricultural development, and food security.

"The Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Policy and The Gambia National Agricultural Investment Programme (GNAIP) combine policy, institutional, infrastructure and technology related measures to address the multiplicity of supply-side constraints of the growth of The Gambia's agriculture. The government plans, within the context of GNAIP, to increase agricultural growth from 4% in 2009 to 6% by 2015 and national households' incomes (reduction in number of people below poverty line from 61% in 2009 to 44.6 % in 2015) to achieve growth rates necessary to achieve the MDG1".

Mr. Mod Ceesay, Deputy NAO & Permanent Secretary 2, Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs

Mme Agnès Guillaud, Chargée d' Affaires of the EU to The Gambia, in her statement pointed out that the European Union has chosen agriculture and food security as priority focal sectors for the next five years, which is also a major priority for the PAGE. It is also a major priority for the West African sub-region which was a subject of discussion at the recently concluded CTA regional workshop in Banjul. She underscored the ongoing EU funded project underway in agriculture notably the EU MDG Initiative. She recognised the fact that agriculture is the fuel of growth and a major source of employment in the sub-region.

Present at the meeting were the Gambia's Ambassador to the EU & BENELUX, UNDP, Resident Representative & Coordinator, WFP Country Manager, FAO Representative, Permanent Secretaries, senior government officials, staff of both the EU delegation and the NAO Support Unit, representatives of the various farmer groups, CSO's and members of the media fraternity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: THE NATIONAL AUTHORISING OFFICER SUPPORT UNIT (NAOSU)
Tel: (+220) 439 9626/5 or Email: info@gambia-ec.gm | DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO THE GAMBIA

74, Atlantic Road Fajara, P.O. Box 512, Banjul, The Gambia. Tel: +220 4495 146 / 4497 846. Website: www.ecas.europa.eu/delegations/gambia/index_en.htm



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CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON THE PROGRAMMING OF THE 11th EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR THE GAMBIA

Consultation Workshop on the proposed EU Response for the Exit Strategy to the Transport Sector

On 10th October 2013, the National Authorising Officer – Support Unit in collaboration with the Delegation of the European Union to The Gambia held a stakeholders consultative meeting on the EU response strategy to the Transport Sector with a particular focus on the Governance of the Road Transport Sector in The Gambia.

Speaking at the meeting, Mme Agnès Guillaud, Chargée d' Affaires of the EU to The Gambia, reiterated the importance of the sector and underlined the support the EU provides to the overall Gambia National Transport Plan.

When opening the training session, Mr. Ebrima Darboe, Director of Loans of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs who represented the and National Authorizing Officer of the EDF in The Gambia, elaborated on the impact of the sector on the livelihoods of the people of the Gambia.

The meeting was well attended by senior government officials, National Road Authority officials, and staff of both the EU delegation and the NAO Support Unit, representatives of the Civil Society Organisations, contractors, and members of the media fraternity.

“It is well known that in the past as well as at present the Government of The Gambia has identified in their PRSP II as well as in the on-going PAGE that the interconnectivity by road is a requirement to achieve most of its development goals. Substantial efforts have been made by the Government, with major support by the EU in this sector, to achieve that 70% of the primary road network is in a good condition at present, which corresponds to 277km of the trunk road network. However, the Government is well aware and has identified through its road transport policy that there are still major issues to be addressed in the governance of the roads, to be able to execute an efficient and sustainable management of the sector and in particular in the area of the maintenance.”

Mme Agnès Guillaud, Chargée d' Affaires, EU Delegation to The Gambia



Stakeholders at the consultative workshop on the proposed EU response for the Exit strategy to the transport sector held at the Paradise Suites Hotel



Soma/Basse road project funded by the EU

Regional Dialogue on the 11th EDF: Farmers' perspectives on the priorities in the resilience context



The ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the European Commission (DG DEVCO - EuropeAid) and the ACP Group of Ambassadors organised in collaboration with ROPPA (the regional farmers organisation of West Africa), two major events in 2013 in Brussels: A high-level briefing on 4th March 2013 on “Agricultural Resilience in the face of crisis and shocks” followed by a Roundtable on “Sustainable Agriculture as a means to increase resilience: the vision of West African farmers and producers”, held on 12 June with representatives of farmers' organisations in Africa which discussed the AGIR initiative. Chaired by the Gambian Ambassador to the European Union, H.E. Mamour JAGNE, participants recommended a regional meeting with ECOWAS, WAEMU and CILSS to further develop their proposals for the 11th EDF programming. After consultations with the regional organisations in West Africa, ROPPA proposed a regional dialogue on the perspectives of producer organisations in the context of agricultural resilience and the 11th EDF.

It was in this regard that the regional dialogue took place from 21-22 October 2013 in The Gambia.

During the opening of the event, the EU Chargée d' Affaires, Madam Agnès Guillaud, pointed out the six major food crises witnessed by the Sahel region, the increasing food prices and effects of climate change. She underscored the central role accorded to agricultural resilience in EU policies for the region, and the great importance attached to the active participation of farmers and farmer organisations.

The Gambian Minister of Agriculture, Mr Solomon Owens, in his opening statement, recounted the consultations done by the Ministry of Agriculture involving farmers and farmer organisations, and acknowledged the advocacy activities being undertaken by ROPPA and NACOFAG focusing on priorities for the farmers. He said that the challenge now is to fill the gap between supply and demand of food in the West African sub-region in the midst of poor performance of the agricultural sector in spite of abundant resources.

The workshop sessions included priorities for the agricultural sector for the region which addressed the priorities for the agricultural sector by the regional organisations i.e. ECOWAS and UEMOA priorities in the EDF framework, and Framework on resilience presented by CILLS.

Also, the EU policies relevant to the region in support of sustainable agriculture were presented by Darrel SEXSTONE of the EUD in The Gambia. He dilated on the main EU initiatives and specific regional programmes in support of the agricultural sector.

The workshop ended with a session on the way forward which consolidated the suggestions and elements made in the previous sessions and proposed a roadmap, which entails developing and submitting a regional proposal by ROPPA, to the tune of approximately €30 million, to the CTA before end October 2013.