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**Advancing African Agriculture  
Proposal for continental and regional level cooperation  
on agricultural development in Africa**

# **Advancing African Agriculture**

## **Proposal for continental and regional level cooperation on agricultural development in Africa**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This paper proposes principles and key areas for EU-AU cooperation on agricultural development in Africa, focusing on regional and continental levels. Cooperation at these levels will complement and stimulate agricultural development at the national level, which is where the most intense cooperation will continue to take place. It will build on the policy orientations set out in the ‘European Consensus’<sup>1</sup> and the EU Strategy for Africa<sup>2</sup>. Both documents reiterate that agriculture and rural development are crucial in terms of reducing poverty and stimulating growth. To contribute to growth, the Community has indicated it will focus on the sustainable intensification of production, competitiveness on regional and international markets and risk management. This should be facilitated in Africa by making use of technological development, supported by agricultural research and extension.

Cooperation will be closely aligned with Africa’s agricultural agenda and aims to stimulate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Broad-based agricultural growth has direct significance in attaining the first MDG (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger) and will be a strong factor in progress towards the seventh MDG (ensuring environmental sustainability).

Agriculture<sup>3</sup> remains the economic base for the majority of the poor in Africa and accounts for about a third of Africa’s GDP and for the bulk of employment. Most agricultural production comes from small-scale farmers, with women playing an extremely important role<sup>4</sup>. Agricultural production, distribution and sales directly affect food security and the nutritional status of household members. Moreover, there is a high multiplier effect for agricultural growth. Higher incomes from agriculture also make the provision and use of social services in rural areas sustainable and affordable. Furthermore, the use made of natural resources by farmers is crucial in terms of the sustainability of ecosystems and of biodiversity.

Agriculture is predominantly a private-sector activity, but will require significant public-sector involvement. First, market failures have been prevalent and have negatively affected socially and geographically marginal groups. Second, environmental externalities exist, which require public regulation and intervention to maintain sustainability. Third, agriculture works much better when public-domain functions are more effective.

The cooperation areas listed in this paper provide a long-term framework for assistance. In a geographical sense, there is a focus on Sub-Sahara Africa, where the agricultural problems are most pressing. Nevertheless a continental scope is relevant in view of the alignment with AU initiatives and as several cooperation areas<sup>5</sup> will have an Africa-wide dimension.

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<sup>1</sup> (2006/C46/01)

<sup>2</sup> COM(2005) 489.

<sup>3</sup> Covering crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry.

<sup>4</sup> Women produce about 80% of all food in Africa.

<sup>5</sup> Like livestock disease control, research and SPS

## **2. AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES IN AFRICA**

### **2.1. Current Challenges**

Agriculture in Africa is regaining economic prominence, with a marked increase in agricultural sector growth: 2.7% in 2002, 3.0% in 2003 and 5.3% in 2004. Favourable price movements for a number of products have contributed to this trend, while improved production conditions<sup>6</sup> have been another factor for growth. However, for sustained poverty reduction, agricultural growth will need to speed up further, particularly in low-income rural societies, where agriculture is likely to remain the main driver for economic growth and employment creation.

The current challenges facing agricultural production and growth in Africa are multiple and inter-related. In disentangling these aspects, six areas have been identified to help prioritise areas of cooperation<sup>7</sup>:

(i) developing an integrated and broadly shared vision on agricultural development and its place in sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation, and translating this vision into coherent development policies, strategies and budgets;

(ii) strengthening agricultural sector governance, by re-defining the roles and interactions of the state, private sector and civil society, and by improving the capacity of the various organisations to participate in policy formulation and implementation;

(iii) improving sustainable rural productivity and enhancing the nutritional value of agricultural produce, by scaling up a range of known technological and managerial innovations, by expanding research and making it more effective for agricultural users;

(iv) accessing remunerative markets, by enhancing physical accessibility and making use of (niche) market opportunities<sup>8</sup>, products and structures leading to higher producer prices, and through trade facilitation, including through improved SPS;

(v) establishing more effective natural resources management regimes and ensuring positive economic returns for sustainable use; and

(vi) reducing risks and vulnerabilities, with respect to pests, diseases, price fluctuations, market insecurity, climate change and adverse weather events.

### **2.2. Africa's Agricultural Agenda**

To foster agricultural development, the AU and NEPAD have launched the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), while Heads of State agreed to significantly increase the share of national budgets for agriculture and rural development<sup>9</sup>. Moreover, an overall AU vision on agriculture has emerged on what should be achieved by 2015.

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<sup>6</sup> Including the advent of peace in some countries.

<sup>7</sup> See the accompanying Staff Working Paper for an elaborate presentation of the six areas.

<sup>8</sup> Markets for biofuels, but also for fair-trade and organic products, are expanding.

<sup>9</sup> In the 'Maputo Declaration' of July 2003, which committed countries to allocate at least 10% of national budgets to agriculture and rural development by 2008/09.

The CAADP initiative takes a continent-wide view, but builds on national and regional plans for the development of agriculture. It contains a set of key principles and targets, in order to (i) guide country strategies and investment programmes, (ii) enable regional peer learning and review; and (iii) facilitate greater alignment and harmonisation of development efforts. For development partners, CAADP offers important opportunities for progress on the Paris Declaration.

CAADP is developing four thematic ‘pillars’ that serve as policy frameworks for national and regional programmes. CAADP programmes at the national and regional levels will follow a specific process in a ‘round table’ format that will result in country and regional ‘CAADP Compacts’, covering policy reforms and guiding public and private investments and interventions.

The December 2006 AU Summit<sup>10</sup> called for some selectivity in pursuing the CAADP commitments, based on a recognition that limited resources and institutional capacities require priorities that will lead to quick but sustainable gains in terms of achieving food and nutrition security.

### **3. EU-AU COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1. Objectives and Principles**

The following proposals for EU-AU cooperation concentrate on continental and regional levels and set out to create an improved enabling environment for agricultural development on the continent. Cooperation will be based on the following principles

- *Commitment to the Millennium Development Goals*, with specific reference to the 1st and the 7th MDG.
- *Alignment with African priorities*, based on the CAADP processes, principles and targets.
- *Donor harmonisation and alignment*, following the principles of the Paris Declaration.
- *Building on other AU-EU Partnerships and Facilities*, complementing EU initiatives which directly or indirectly support rural development in Africa and using existing Africa-Europe partnerships.
- *Drawing lessons from relevant EU experiences and good practice*, building on nearly 50 years of agricultural policy experience in the EU.
- *Application of subsidiarity*, supporting only those regional and continental functions that add value to national level interventions.
- *Policy Coherence*, between EU development policies and agricultural, fisheries, trade, consumer and energy policies.

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<sup>10</sup> Summit on Food Security in Africa, Abuja, Dec. 2006. At the summit a number of strategic commodities were identified for which intra-African trade and marketing would be enhanced.

In line with CAADP demands, cooperation will focus on capacity building and institutional strengthening of regional and continental organisations.

Cooperation will foster a more strategic and effective role for the State in agriculture, based on the view that the State will primarily: provide an effective policy and regulatory framework, create an enabling environment; intervene in situations of market failure; provide services with a public goods character; create safety nets; and be restrictive in its use of subsidies.

### **3.2. Priority Areas for Cooperation**

EU-Africa cooperation on agricultural development will focus on seven areas, based on the main challenges to agriculture in Africa and on African priorities, as reflected in the CAADP.

#### *3.2.1. Agriculture in Development Strategies*

This area will address the need for agricultural development to be an integral and strategic part of the development agenda at national, regional and continental levels, recognising agriculture as a key sector for economic growth and poverty reduction.

Cooperation at regional and continental levels will focus on:

- Analysis and capacity building on the inter-relationship between agricultural performance and macro-economic policies, external shocks, climate change, desertification, and biodiversity;
- Drawing lessons from national policy development experiences and their impact on agriculture and the rural economy;
- capacity building and institutional strengthening in fostering evidence and outcome-based policy design, policy coherence and advocacy;
- coordination and cooperation across sectors;
- supporting the establishment of a continental farmers forum, linking national and regional farming organisations, and strengthening their roles in CAADP processes;
- strengthening the analytical and monitoring functions in comparing and contrasting agricultural development paths of individual countries in economic, social and environmental terms.

AUC, NEPAD and RECs will be the main partners, and cooperation will be in support of their functions of policy analysis, monitoring, peer review and advocacy, as well as their capacity building roles for national-level organisations. Regional Farming Organisations will form another group of partners. Involvement of international organisations in implementation is envisaged, while cooperation with the AUC may involve a twinning arrangement with the EC, involving relevant DGs (such as AGRI, FISH, SANCO, TRADE, ENV, RTD, JRC and REGIO). CTA<sup>11</sup> will be involved in advocacy, will facilitate exchanges of lessons learned and will assist in strengthening farmers' organisations and their linkages with CAADP.

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<sup>11</sup> The Centre for the Development of Agriculture, a joint EU-ACP centre set up under the Cotonou Agreement.

### 3.2.2. *Sector Governance*

This cooperation area will assist in capacity building at regional and continental levels, with a view to improving governance in the agricultural sector at national levels. Improved governance is expected to contribute to a smoother transition of smallholder farming towards commercially viable and sustainable family-based agriculture.

Cooperation on sector governance will include:

- regional and continental policy harmonisation, and facilitating coherence between regional and national agricultural policies;
- monitoring policy undertakings and conducting peer reviews;
- formulating regional and continental guidelines on key governance aspects, including on land and land use policy and on sustainable agriculture;
- capacity building and empowerment for participation in sector governance;
- promoting public-private partnerships and business-to-business alliances;
- strengthening regional and continental-level representations of producer and professional organisations, with effective advocacy and lobbying capacity, and
- comparative analysis and lesson-learning from liberalisation and privatisation processes in agriculture, public-private relations and government performance.

Cooperation is envisaged with AUC in strengthening its political and facilitative role in policy development, coordination and harmonisation; with NEPAD and RECs in capacity building, monitoring, policy analysis and peer review; and with private regional and continental organisations, representing producers and professional organisations, in capacity building, advocacy, negotiation and service provision. CTA will be involved in the latter aspects, as well as in raising awareness on the basis of lessons learned. Learning lessons from EU experiences, involving exchanges with the EC, Member States and private sector organisations in the EU, may also be used as a form of capacity building on governance<sup>12</sup>.

### 3.2.3. *Research, Knowledge Systems and Dissemination*

The aim of this cooperation area is to increase the impact of agricultural research and knowledge systems on rural productivity, poverty reduction, food security and sustainable management of natural resources, taking into account challenges posed by climate change. There will be an emphasis on multidimensional research approaches, on sustainable agricultural production systems and on research with positive impacts on the rural poor.

Regional and continental level cooperation areas include:

- strengthening collaboration between countries in research to reduce fragmentation and create synergies;
- formulating continental and regional research strategies;
- co-financing priority research with supra-national implications;

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<sup>12</sup> DG AGRI may assist in exchange of best practice, provide links with farming organisations and information about standards and research.

- capacity building for new forms and channels of extension, training and education and strengthening of linkages between research systems, extension services and farmers;
- creating and or/strengthening networking platforms for information, knowledge access and exchange<sup>13</sup>; and
- enhancing coordination between national agricultural research systems (NARS) and regional and international research programmes.

Cooperation in this area will take into account the lessons from long-standing research cooperation between the EU and Africa<sup>14</sup>, and guidelines to foster cooperation among European partners<sup>15</sup>. It will be inspired by CAADP pillar 4 and will be aligned with the FAAP principles. The main partners will be FARA and the related Sub-Regional Research Organisations (SROs), the Global Forum on Agricultural Research for Development (GFAR) as well as the European Forum (EFARD) with its operational networks<sup>16</sup>, the CGIAR system, other international organisations and research partnerships, including the JRC. CTA will help to strengthen the networking platforms.

#### 3.2.4. *Trade Facilitation, emphasising Quality Assurance and Improvement*

The aim of this cooperation area will be to strengthen Africa's ability to make markets work for poverty reduction, focusing on regional markets for agricultural produce. Current trade negotiations (EPAs, DDA) are meant to lead to enhanced agricultural trade opportunities for African countries requiring an appropriate supply response. Proposed cooperation includes strengthening the ability to influence, set and adhere to meaningful production and trade standards in order to (continue to) access remunerative markets for agricultural produce and to guarantee product safety for consumers.

Support will specifically build on the opportunities offered by EPAs and will cover:

- regional strategies and capacity building to address structural weaknesses in agricultural input and output markets;
- capacity building for trade policy surveillance, including monitoring of implementation, reporting and enforcement of trade facilitation policies;
- building regional markets and enhancing intra-regional trade, particularly on food commodities;
- establishing legal and regulatory frameworks for harmonisation, standardisation and control; adopting common regional classification systems and standards, and aligning with international ones;
- strengthening reference laboratories, networking with national centres and capacity building for other facilities and institutions involved in testing and compliance;
- enhancing regional capacities to improve understanding and compliance with standards, including on safe residue levels;
- promoting certification schemes for sustainable and socially acceptable production; and

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<sup>13</sup> Including farmer-to-farmer exchanges.

<sup>14</sup> Through both scientific (e.g. INCO, RFP) and development policy instruments.

<sup>15</sup> Developed by EIARD.

<sup>16</sup> ECART-EEIG and NATURA

- capacity building for active involvement in regional and international discussions and negotiations on (food safety, agricultural trade) standards and other forms of trade facilitation.

Main partners will be the AUC specialised agencies (notably IBAR and IAPSC), international normative institutions, certification organisations, research centres, RECs, regional farming and exporters' organisations, reference laboratories and relevant UN agencies. CTA will be involved in improving understanding of SPS issues.

### 3.2.5. *Natural Resource Management: Land, Fisheries, Forestry*

This cooperation area will back improvements in governance and management regimes for land, fish and forest resources that aim to combine environmental sustainability and biodiversity with profitable utilisation and poverty reduction.

Regional and continental aspects involved in this cooperation area are:

- policy coordination and harmonisation, particularly on cross-border resources;
- establishing and strengthening coordination and cooperation mechanisms on cross-border resources, within existing regional frameworks;
- formulating regional and continental guidelines on land policy and on sustainable resource use, combining economic, legal, social and environmental dimensions;
- promoting a policy environment that makes it easier to allocate responsibility and accountability in terms of natural resource use;
- exchanging lessons and supporting peer review on the effectiveness of management regimes;
- monitoring and surveillance of the state of (and pressure on) natural resources and of the effects of climate change on agriculture and natural resources; and
- fostering cooperation in combating illegal resource use (including fishing and forestry) and trade in illegal products<sup>17</sup>.

Under this area, there will be a focus on policy and governance, and on management and institutional arrangements for sustainable natural resource use. In terms of land policy and soil & water management, support will be aligned with CAADP pillar 1 and related international initiatives<sup>18</sup>. Fisheries Partnership Agreements will form the framework to improve the control, monitoring and surveillance of fish resources. Main partners will be AUC, NEPAD, RECs, specialised NGOs, and (sub-)regional land & water management, fisheries and forestry organisations, as well as European and international institutions, networks and platforms specialised in these sectors<sup>19</sup>. CTA will facilitate exchanges of lessons learned.

### 3.2.6. *Livestock Development and Disease Control*

This cooperation area will enhance the sustainability of the livestock sector and its contribution to poverty alleviation and growth, with an emphasis on strengthening animal

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<sup>17</sup> Building on the FLEGT initiative for forestry resources.

<sup>18</sup> e.g. TerrAfrica

<sup>19</sup> Including the JRC ACP Observatory for Sustainable Development.

disease control knowledge and systems. Cooperation will aim to reduce animal mortality, lower livestock production risk and improve public health prevention, as well as to improve access to regional and international markets, facilitate rational land use and reduce livestock-related environmental problems. It involves:

- cross-border cooperation on pastoralism, rangeland management, sustainable livestock production systems and livestock trade;
- analysis on the interrelationship between livestock development in Africa and climate change;
- strengthening coordinated networks of veterinary services and disease control systems, applying international standards,
- strengthening the pan-African system for coordinating regional and national health systems to tackle animal diseases; and
- research, trials and knowledge dissemination on disease prevention methods, including vaccine development.

Main partners envisaged are the specialised livestock agencies of the AUC (IBAR, PANVAC and PATTEC), ILRI and livestock agencies at (sub-)regional levels, FAO, OIE, and regional and international livestock and pastoralism organisations. Use will be made of the African Livestock (Alive) Partnership, in which the main stakeholders are involved.

### *3.2.7. Risk Management*

This area of cooperation will address capacities for reducing risks related to climate change, natural disasters and price shocks, with a focus on organisational questions and financial instruments.

Cooperation at regional and continental levels will include:

- institutional and technical capacity building in disaster preparedness, prevention and responsiveness, including to short-term food shortages;
- research, dissemination of information and capacity building on reduced-risk farming methods and coping strategies;
- innovative systems for reducing the risk of crop and livestock losses due to pests and diseases;
- exchanging information on lessons learned, and capacity building in using market-based price risk management instruments, smoothing schemes and insurance mechanisms; and
- developing and applying regional and continental early warning systems and linking them to national ones.

Cooperation will include building up the capacity of key public and private organisations and improving access for African countries to international financial and insurance markets. Main partners will be AUC, RECs, and international organisations. CTA will be involved in information exchange on reduced-risk farming methods and market-based price risk management systems.

## **4. COORDINATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW**

### **4.1. Coordination**

Coordination on EU-Africa agricultural development cooperation will have three interlinked dimensions: (i) with African institutions; (ii) with other donor coordination and (iii) intra-EU.

Coordination with African institutions will use the CAADP framework and will be under the leadership of continental and regional organisations, with a central role for AUC/NEPAD. The CAADP Partnership Platform is the core mechanism for coordinating involvement of all development partners at the continental level. Similar platforms are being set-up at regional levels. At national level, the CAADP Country Round Table process provides a comparative platform. In thematic terms, coordination will increasingly be arranged around the CAADP ‘pillars’.

Donor coordination and harmonisation and alignment around CAADP will be enhanced by the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD), of which the EC and various Member States are members. The GDPRD will act as donor focal point on CAADP, and will assist in organising the CAADP Partnership Platform meetings.

Coordination within the EU will be reinforced through a proposed EU working group<sup>20</sup> on African agriculture, technically supported by CTA. The working group will strengthen synergies in and improve the quality and visibility of EU financing for African agricultural development<sup>21</sup>.

### **4.2. Monitoring and review**

Progress in implementing CAADP and in cooperation on agricultural development will be monitored predominantly at the CAADP Partnership Platform and the Africa Partnership Forum (APF). Both will use a similar set of indicators that are being reported upon by AUC and NEPAD. In addition, mechanisms are being developed for more detailed progress monitoring within the CAADP pillars.

The GDPRD will assist in the monitoring process, with specific reference to donor funded projects and programmes, to harmonisation and alignment, and to consistency within the CAADP programme.

The relevance of the policy orientations and strategic directions of EU-Africa cooperation in agricultural development will be subject to the same review process as the overall EU-AU cooperation agenda, as currently covered by the EU Strategy for Africa.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Broad-based agricultural growth in Africa is key in progressing towards the MDGs and in ensuring the affordability of social services in rural areas. Recognising this, seven core areas for AU-EU cooperation on agricultural development at regional and continental levels have been set out, based on Africa's agricultural agenda and primarily working through African

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<sup>20</sup> The working group is proposed to report to CODEV

<sup>21</sup> No new financing facility is envisaged.

organisations. They focus on capacity building and institutional strengthening of regional and continental organisations in order to foster improvements in agricultural policies and governance.

Cooperation will combine a competitiveness orientation, focused on productivity and growth, with broad-based development, focusing on poverty alleviation and social cohesion. For both aspects, regional markets for agricultural products will need development, underlining the importance of regional integration and trade facilitation. Moreover, sustainable production systems will be promoted, recognising the need to adapt to external challenges like climate change.

Cooperation will be in line with the Paris Declaration, by providing support for an African agenda and by using harmonised mechanisms for dialogue and review.

## **Annex 1 - Acronyms**

ACP : Africa, Caribbean, Pacific

AGRI : Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (EC)

APF : Africa Partnership Forum

ARD : Agricultural Research for Development

AU : African Union

AUC : African Union Commission

ASARECA : Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa

CAADP : Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme

CGIAR : Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

CILSS : Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel

COMESA : Common Market for East and Southern Africa

CORAF/WECARD : Conseil ouest et centre africain pour la Recherche et le développement Agricole/West and central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development

CTA : Centre Technique de Coopération Agricole et Rural/Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation

DG : Directorate-General

DRC : Democratic Republic Congo

EC : European Commission

ECART : European Consortium for Agricultural Research for the Tropics

ECCAS : Economic Community of Central African States

ECOWAS : Economic Community of West-African States

EDF : European Development Fund

EIARD : European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development

ENPI : European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument

ENV : Directorate-General Environment (EC)

EU : European Union

FAAP : Framework for African Agricultural Productivity

FAO : Food and Agriculture Organisation

FARA : Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa

FISH : Directorate General Fisheries and Maritime Affairs (EC)

FLEGT : Forestry Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade

FP : Framework Programme (Research)

FSTP : Food Security Thematic Programme

GDP : Gross Domestic Product

GDPRD : Global Donor Platform for Rural Development

GFAR : Global Forum on Agricultural Research

IAPSC : Inter-African Phytosanitary Council

IBAR : Inter-Africa Bureau for Animal Resources

IFAD : International Fund for Agricultural Development

IFAP : International Federation of Agricultural Producers

IFPRI : International Food Policy Research Institute

IGAD : Inter-Governmental Agency for Development (Horn of Africa)

ILRI : International Livestock Research Institute

JRC : Joint Research Centre (EU)

MDG : Millennium Development Goal

NARS : National Agricultural Research Systems

NATURA : Network of European Agricultural (tropically and sub-tropically oriented) Universities Related with Agricultural Development

NEPAD : New Partnership for Africa's Development

NGO : Non-Governmental Organisation

OIE : Organisation Internationale de la Santé Animale/World Organisation for Animal Health

PAEPARD : Pan-African-European Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development

PANVAC : Pan-African Veterinary Vaccine Centre

PATTEC : Pan-African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign  
REC : Regional Economic Community  
REGIO : Directorate General Regional Policy (EC)  
RFO : Regional Farming Organisations  
RIP : Regional Indicative Programme  
RTA : Regional Trade Agreement  
RTD : Directorate General Research (EC)  
SADC : Southern African Development Community  
SADC-FANR : SADC's Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate  
SANCO : Directorate General Health and Consumer Protection (EC)  
SPS : Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary measures  
SRO : Sub-regional Research Organisation  
SSA : Sub-Sahara Africa  
SWP : Staff Working Paper  
TP : Thematic Programme  
UN : United Nations  
WFP : World Food Programme  
WTO : World Trade Organisation