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WAQSP NEWS



PRODUCT CERTIFICATION

ECOWAS has set the legal and operational framework of the regional Mark of conformity with ECOWAS Standards



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- Training on the Occupational Health and Safety Management System (ISO 45001: 2008): Beninese quality auditors and consultants equipped with the necessary tools

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▶ FOCUS

ECOWAS SETS UP A REGIONAL CERTIFICATION SYSTEM AND LAUNCHES ITS MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH STANDARDS

- The priority products which are to be granted the regional mark of conformity with ECOWAS Standards have been selected
- The lists of Member States' priority products have been collated.
- The Program has allowed for four product certification services to be established and accredited
- In the field of pharmaceutical inspection, the WAQSP currently supports four national drug regulatory agencies
- Promotional activities have strengthened the system

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CHECK-IN WITH... DR KAFUI CODIO KOUASSI, PRESIDENT OF ECOCONF

DR KAFUI CODIO KOUASSI, PRESIDENT OF ECOCONF

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SPOTLIGHT ON.....

Two women who are outstanding in their field: Olga ASSOVIE KOUASSI, founder and director of the Bureau Norme Audit (BNA) & Mrs Celine ONI, Managing Director of NGCL (NECA Global Certification Limited).

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▶ PARTNERS' ACTIVITIES

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- Strengthening ECOWAS-EU-UNIDO cooperation: Commissioner Mamadou Traore visits Brussels and Vienna.
- SOAC welcomes ILAC as an affiliate member, signing up in full to AFRAC and conducting its first audits.

▶ DID YOU KNOW ?

- Four (4) priority products have been proposed by ECOWAS member countries to receive the regional mark of conformity with ECOWAS standards
- Seven (7) criteria have been defined to select the priority products which will be granted the regional mark of conformity with ECOWAS Standards
- Member States proposed the first five (5) priority products

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WAQSP NEWS

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UNIDO -WAQSP

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EDITORIAL

Mamadou Traoré

Industry and Private Sector Promotion Commissioner



Dear readers,

In an effort to provide our region with a Quality Infrastructure similar to internationally recognized ones, and to ensure the protection of consumers, the competitiveness of products and services and promote the wealth creation, in particular through the development of industry, Heads of State and Government adopted in February 2013, the Regional Policy of Quality (ECOQUAL). Six years later, great progress has been made in all areas of this ECOWAS Quality Infrastructure. Most of them were recorded as part of the implementation of the West Africa Quality System Programme (WAQSP), a community programme, specifically designed to support the implementation of ECOQUAL.

In terms of governance, the main decision-making body which is the Community Quality Council (CQC) was established by the Community Regulation N°C/REG.19/12/13 in its article 7, and then set up in June 2017 by two Regulations of the Council of Ministers of ECOWAS. It is chaired by the minister in charge of quality of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The five subcommittees of the CQC, which were set up in November 2017, are now operational: ECOSHAM for standardization, ECOMET for metrology, ECOREG for technical regulation, ECOCONF for conformity assessment and ECORAS for accreditation. These priority works were validated in January 2018, in Dakar, Senegal, at the first meeting of the CQC.

Since then, the WAQSP, in liaison with other partner programs such as the PTB in the field of metrology, has been working to support the implementation of the activities included in the approved action plans.

The activities carried out as part of their implementation will be reported in this newsletter, which focuses on the issue of the Product Certification, particularly with the validation of the management rules of the Regional Certification System which set the legal and operational framework of the regional Mark of conformity with ECOWAS Standards.

To ensure the success of this Mark of Conformity, substantive work has been done upstream with a first core of product certification bodies and a pool of accredited testing and analysis laboratories. The credibility of this Mark depends, in fact, on the reliability of the monitoring system, in the back office. This system relies on both laboratories and certification bodies, whose competence must be recognized, particularly through their accreditation. To do this, the cost dimension has also been taken into account. One of the great challenges was then to ensure that the region had its own accreditation system, which has the advantage of assessing the competence of these laboratories and certification bodies at reduced costs.

To date, the results are encouraging because the region now has three (03) accreditation bodies: the GhaNAS, the NiNAS of Nigeria and the SOAC (which covers eight (08) Member States). The last two (02) are fully operational. The process for their recognition by the African and international accreditation cooperations, respectively AFRAC and ILAC, was initiated. In addition, a substantial expertise has been developed in each technical field related to Quality Infrastructure, for twenty (20) years. A database is being set up to easily identify all the structures and skills of the device in place. In addition, the executive arm of the CQC called ECOWAS Quality Agency (ECOWAQ), in charge of coordinating the secretariat of all the organs of the CQC, held its constituent general assembly in Dakar, Senegal, in January 2018.

Finally, the challenge of active consumer participation in the decision-making bodies of the Quality Infrastructure was noted in November 2018, in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), consumer associations validated the modalities of their representation in different committees. Similarly, a Community text on consumer protection was initiated.

In our next newsletter, we will inform you more about ongoing efforts to better engage the private sector, consumers and civil society in the implementation of the ECOWAS Quality Infrastructure for the well-being of our people and the competitiveness of our companies. ■

Good reading,

 **Mamadou Traoré**

NEWS

GOVERNANCE OF THE WAQSP Eighth WAQSP Steering Committee

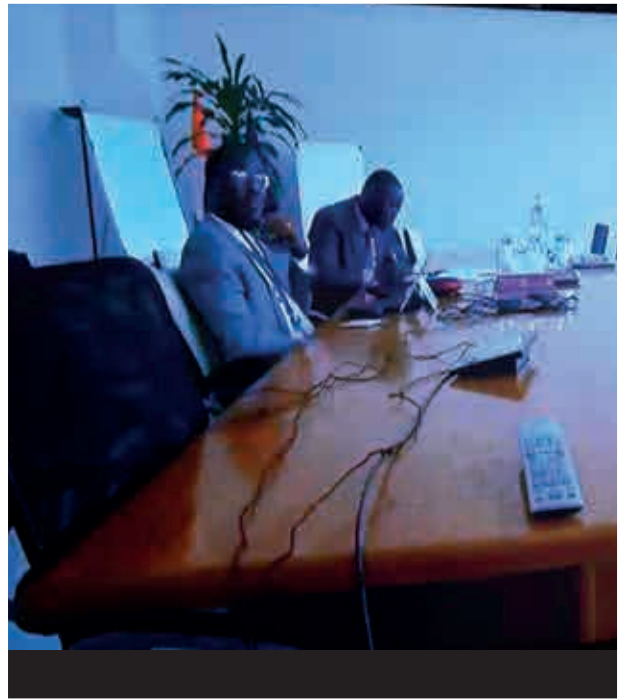
The eighth meeting of the WAQSP Steering Committee was held on 8 October 2018 at the European Union Delegation in Abuja (Nigeria). Under the effective chairmanship of Commissioner Mamadou TRAORE, it recorded attendance of the following stakeholders: European Union, ECOWAS, UEMOA, UNIDO, Private Sector (FWAEA).

The meeting discussed the following agenda items:

- Status of the implementation of the recommendations of the last Steering Committee meeting;
- Status of the implementation of WAQSP activities from February to August 2018;
- Timetable of activities in the second half of 2018;
- Information on the Regional Value Chain Programme;

Miscellaneous:

- Extension of the duration of the Programme
- Date of the next meeting of the Steering Committee



PARTICIPANTS BASED IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE (SOAC, FOPAO)

At the end of the meeting, Commissioner Traore expressed his satisfaction with the progress made over the period, as well as the relevant contributions of the participants during the exchanges. He also welcomed the good cooperation between the members of the Steering Committee and thanked the EU and UNIDO for their continued support to the region. Finally, he thanked the European Union for the logistical facilities made available, particularly the video conference rooms in Abuja, Ouagadougou and Abidjan, which made it possible for the meeting to run successfully. ■



(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): FRANK OAKFOR (EU), YAYA NIAFO (ECOWAS), NADIA CANNATA (EU), COMMISSIONER MAMADOU TRAORE (ECOWAS), INGA STEPHANOVIC (EU), AKA KOUASSI (UNIDO / WAQSP), CHRISTIAN KAFANDO (WAQSP/ONUDI)

QUALITY POLICY

The monitoring mission in Benin and Guinea by the Head of the WAQSP has made a promising start: both countries will adopt their Quality Policy documents

NEWS

The Programme Manager of the WAQSP, Mr. Bernard BAU, conducted a three-day (8-10 August 2018) working and monitoring mission of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Guinea. With the Guinean authorities, he reviewed the state of implementation of the WAQSP. Also, he inquired about possible difficulties related to the implementation of the Programme.

During his stay, Mr. BAU also discussed with the competent authorities the actions and other future activities to be undertaken in Guinea by UNIDO. The Guinean authorities expressed their satisfaction with the significant support of UNIDO which they described as useful and very timely for the development of Guinea's Quality Infrastructure (QI).

They recalled in particular the contribution of the WAQSP in the elaboration of the document of Quality Policy (QP) which constitutes, wording to these authorities, a «strategic document for the consolidation of (their) QI». They took the opportunity to announce the inscription of the PQ of Guinea on the agenda of the Interministerial Council, Tuesday, August 14, 2018. Finally, the Guinean authorities requested UNIDO's support for strengthening the operational capacity of technical quality structures through a country programme, such as The National Quality Infrastructure Project for Nigeria (NQI).

Mr. BAU, for his part, urged the Guinean authorities to become more involved in the implementation of the WAQSP at the national level. He also advocated for Guinea's integration into the West African Accreditation System (SOAC).

In Benin, the Programme Manager discussed the implementation status of the WAQSP with the National Technical Organisation (NTO) and stakeholders. It was on Thursday 5 July, 2018, at the headquarters of the National Agency for Standardisation, Metrology and Quality Control (ANM) in Cotonou. During this meeting, he was accompanied by the UNIDO Senior Expert, Mr Taoufik CHAABANE.

Under the supervision of the Managing Director of the Agency, the National Technical Coordinator of the WAQSP, Mr. Youssouf MAMA SIKI, presented the major activities completed or in progress without ignoring those to come. These include assistan-

ce to the DG of the West African Accreditation System (SOAC) in making appointments in the ministries concerned by the future activities of his institution in Benin; the evaluation of two (02) specialized laboratories; training in ISO 14001 standards; the scheduling of a feedback session on the learning points from the Lomé workshop on the United Nations Consumer Protection Guide and the organisation of the second edition of the National Certification Day. He also informed the participants of the meeting for the Government to adopt the National Quality Policy (NQP) in the coming days. Finally, he pleaded for the WAQSP to support the initiative for accreditation of Benin's temperature and pressure laboratories by SOAC as soon as possible.



MR. BAU, DURING HIS PRESENTATION TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL COORDINATION OF THE WAQSP AND THE STAKEHOLDERS

In response, Mr. BAU explained that the WAQSP will contribute to SOAC's accreditation audits of both laboratories. He also mentioned the prospects, offering a glimpse of the new value chain competitiveness program, which will have an impact on several countries in the region. A fact-finding visit to unit ANM standards has been proposed to ensure traceability of measurements at the company level. In this regard, expert Taoufik CHAABANE intends to get involved.

The monitoring mission of the Programme Manager Bernard BAU ended on Friday 6 July with a series of visits to companies supported by the Programme. ■

NEWS

QUALITY POLICY

Adoption of the National Quality Policy (NQP) at a national level in Benin and Guinea

To the great satisfaction of quality stakeholders, company leaders and consumers at the grassroots level, the Republics of Benin and Guinea have adopted their National Quality Policies (NQPs). In Benin, the decision to adopt the document was taken on 11 July 2018, on the occasion of the Council of Ministers chaired in person by the Beninese president, H.E. Mr. Patrice Talon.

Indeed, the National Quality Policy document for the Republic of Benin occupied a prominent place among the communications recorded for this weekly Council of Ministers. According to the Minutes of the Council of Ministers, «quality issues are of particular importance because they condition the competitiveness and access of products to regional and international markets». During this Council of Ministers, the Government also validated the process of drafting a National Quality Goods and Services Policy document with an action plan.

«This document will enable the Government to take the appropriate measures to harmonize and align the powers of the conformity assessment mechanisms provided for in the framework of the reforms undertaken,» the Council of Ministers' minutes noted.»

The National Quality Policy approved in this way is in line with the strategic area on the consolidation of the macroeconomic framework and the maintenance of stability, in pillar 2 of the Government's Program of Action, namely:

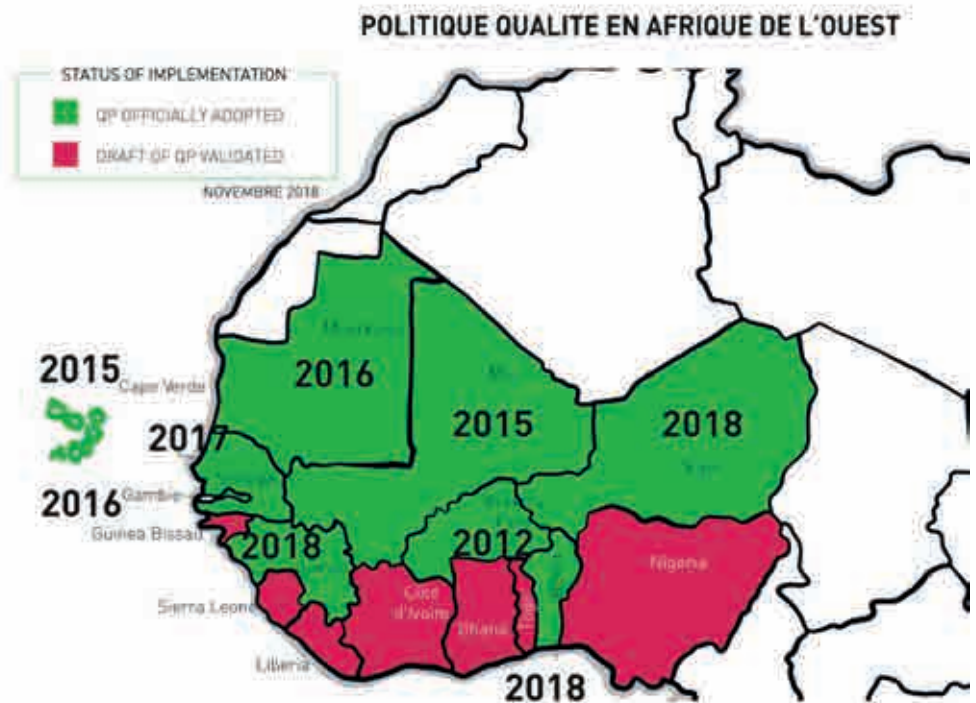
to initiate the transformation of the economy. It will upgrade small and medium-sized enterprises and will have an impact on all sectoral policies in Benin,» the Council of Ministers' communiqué stated. Therefore, in adopting it, the Council recommended to the Ministers to work on the diligent implementation of this National Quality Policy.

On 15th November 2018, Guinea followed suit. «The Minister of Trade, acting interim of the Minister of Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises, has informed (the Council of Ministers, Ndlr) of the development of a National Quality Policy document realized in close collaboration with the different concerned national actors and with the technical support of the WAQSP implemented by UNIDO and funded by the EU.»

For the Minister, the National Quality Policy aims to establish a framework for the operation and development of the National Quality Infrastructure (Standardization, Metrology, Conformity Assessment, etc ...).

This policy allows (Guinea) to integrate into regional and international trade by providing goods and services that meet market requirements, but also to protect the consumer and preserve the environment. From this point of view, the Minister reassured the Council that it fits perfectly into the vision of the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES 2016-2020)».

In the Minister's view, these objectives will be achieved through the implementation of concerted actions in three strategic areas:



- 1) Establish a harmonized legal and regulatory framework;
- 2) Establish an efficient and effective National Quality Infrastructure;
- 3) Promote a national culture of quality within the population and economic sectors (public and private).

«The Council is aware of the importance and necessity of a National Quality Policy as a lever of competitiveness for the economic development of Guinea in compliance with international standards. The Council recognized the importance and necessity of a National Quality Policy as a lever of competitiveness for the economic development of Guinea in compliance with international standards and norms, and adopted the document ... «Extract from the Communiqué of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Guinea of November 15, 2018.» Today eight (08) West African countries out of fifteen (15) have adopted their NQP.■

ACCREDITATION ◀ NEWS



KALILOU TRAORE (FORMER ECOWAS COMMISSIONER) VISITING LANAC ACCOMPANIED BY AKA KOUASSI, FATIM TRAORE (FORMER ECOWAS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT), ABOUBACRY BARO (NTC OF THE WAQSP, SENEGAL) AND VICTOR DJEMBA (FORMER UNIDO REPRESENTATIVE, SENEGAL)

Control of products: West Africa strengthens its mechanism thanks to the support of the WAQSP ▶

Two laboratories in Senegal that are supported by the WAQSP are extending the scope of their accreditation to include the analysis of products that are highly strategic for the region. These are the CERES Locustox laboratory and the Laboratoire National d'Analyses et de Contrôle (LANAC).

By extending their scope of accreditation to include analyses of histamine in fishery products and iodine in fortified salt, LANAC has become the first laboratory in the region to have its expertise recognized for the quality control of iodised salt and the third laboratory in the region (after ONISPA - Mauritania and GSA Mycotoxin & Histamine - Ghana) to be qualified in the field of fisheries products quality control. It should be remembered that LANAC was initially accredited to perform the determination of vitamin A in enriched oils, with the support of the program in its previous phases.

CERES Locustox has extended the scope of its accreditation to include pesticide residue tested on:

- Vegetable products rich in water and chlorophyll, for example: onion, garlic, shallot, cabbage, broccoli, leek, celery, asparagus, apple, pear, melon, mango, tomato, pepper, peach, cucumber, chanterelle mushroom, salad, spinach, basil, peas, green beans, sugar beet and fodder leaves, fresh vine leaves, fodder and sugar beet roots, carrot, potato, sweet potato.
- Products of vegetable origin rich in oil (oilseeds), for example: peanut, rapeseed, sunflower, cottonseed, soya, sesame, oil etc.

In addition, the program had already extended the accreditation scope, respectively in June this year, of the ATS and LERGC laboratories in Benin, the only accredited civil engineering laboratories in the region to carry out tests on building materials and soil analysis. The extension focused on tests for compressibility, swelling, shear and fragmentation resistance of building materials.

To maintain the trend, eight (08) other laboratories are being supported by the program and will be put forward for accreditation in the coming months. Four (04) of them have already taken their pre-audit:

- the Food Technology Department (FTD) of IRSAT/CNRST (Burkina Faso)
- the Laboratoire National de la Santé Publique (Côte d'Ivoire);
- the ENVAL Laboratory (Côte d'Ivoire),
- the Physical Chemical Laboratory of the National Office of Sanitary Inspection of Fishery and Aquaculture Products - ONISPA (Mauritania)

The remaining four (04), all from Ghana, will take the pre-audits in April 2019:

- the GSA-Mycotoxin & Histamine Laboratory (Ghana)
- the GSA Laboratory - Pesticide Residue (Ghana)
- the GSA Laboratory - Metallic Contaminants (Ghana)
- the Laboratory of the Food Research Institute (Ghana) ■

NEWS ► ACCREDITATION



GROUP PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS

Candidate assessors, accreditation focal points and human persons from pharmaceutical inspection bodies trained to meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020 v 2012 ►

From 11 to 13 July 2018, the WAQSP held a regional training workshop on the ISO/IEC 17020 standard in Abuja, Nigeria, for candidate assessors of the ECOWAS Regional Accreditation System (ECORAS) accreditation bodies, national focal points of the fifteen (15) ECOWAS Member States and stakeholders in the pharmaceutical sector. Initiated by the ECOWAS Commission, as part of the implementation of the WAQSP, this training workshop aims to increase the skills of these participants and thus build the critical mass of assessors and pharmaceutical inspection stakeholders for the ISO/IEC 17020 standard in the region.

The opening ceremony was presided over by Mr. Francis ALANEME, representing the Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment for Nigeria, in the presence of Mr. Mamadou TRAORE, ECOWAS Commissioner for Industry and Private Sector Promotion, and Mr. Aka Jean Joseph KOUASSI, representing UNIDO.

Mr. KOUASSI reminded those present that the workshop was part of a bigger picture about building a sustainable Quality Infrastructure for the region. «Indeed, since the effective establishment of regional quality structures, the skills development workshop on ISO/IEC 17020 has been part of a series of activities initiated by the WAQSP in order to make them quickly operational,» he mentioned.

Mr. TRAORE, for his part, stressed the importance of the issue of tainted medicines circulating in the West African region.

He explained that in order to limit these issues, it is necessary to have inspection bodies working in accordance with applicable international rules. Unfortunately, the number of accredited conformity assessment bodies remains very low with only about 60 accredited bodies throughout the ECOWAS region, while in North Africa, for example, there is an average of more than one hundred (100) per country. He therefore urged the ECOWAS accreditation bodies to work to close this gap as soon as possible, particularly in the field of inspection, which is one of the poor relations in terms of accredited conformity assessment bodies.

Mr. Francis ALANEME, after recapping the international background that had led to the adoption of ISO/IEC 17020, invited the inspection bodies in the region to take ownership of the standard in order to carry out inspections with competence, independence and impartiality.

The workshop was facilitated by the Tunisian expert Mr. Med Hédi BANNANI, an accreditation assessor according to the ISO/IEC 17020 standard for several international accreditation bodies. It provided an opportunity to review all the requirements of the standard.

Participants made suggestions such as organizing other sessions, especially on the standards ISO / IEC 17024, ISO / IEC 17065 and ISO / IEC 17025. ■

QUALITY PROMOTION ◀ NEWS



A VIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM WITH YOUSSEUF MAMA SIKI, THE NTC OF THE WAQSP IN BENIN, (STANDING, ON THE LEFT)

Consumer protection: ECOWAS is developing tools for the harmonization of Consumer Protection regulations. ▶

Competition between professional producers often leads to abusive practices at the expense of consumers. Several associations have been created in the West African region to protect consumers from the excesses of professionals. Unfortunately, up to now, these associations have very often run into the issue of the lack of relevant legal frameworks that would enable them to carry out their activities effectively.

To fill this gap, the WAQSP, whose objective is to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Quality Policy, has begun growing the skills of consumer associations and organisations with responsibility for consumers to provide better consumer protection. This work was carried out between 11 to 12 April 2018 in conjunction with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

On the basis of the recommendations from this workshop, the programme then committed, on the one hand, to supporting the establishment of a regional regulatory framework and discussions between consumer associations and, on the other hand, proposing a mechanism for appointing representatives of consumer associations.

As a result, between 19 and 21 November 2018, the WAQSP organised a regional workshop in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) to approve the Community regulatory framework for consumer protection and a mechanism for consumer representation in ECOWAS quality infrastructure bodies.

The participants (representatives of consumer associations and state consumer protection structures) from the fifteen (15) member countries of ECOWAS and Mauritania discussed and adopted the provisions of this legal text, which will now harmonise the activities of consumer associations in the region after the adoption of this regulatory framework by ECOWAS bodies.

The main objective of this meeting was to strengthen the consumer protection mechanism in West Africa. In addition, it was about realising their involvement in consumer protection initiatives in the area through their representation in ECOWAS Quality Infrastructure bodies.

The UNIDO permanent representative in Burkina Faso, Mrs. Ba Safyatou, indicated that the workshop is one way of anticipating potential quality issues with consumer products that are produced locally and imported from various sources. For Commissioner Mamadou Traoré, «The aim is to propose, on the one hand, an environment which is better suited to the activities of consumer associations that regularly initiate actions to inform or protect us as consumers and, on the other hand, a mechanism that enables consumer associations in the region to be represented in regional quality infrastructure bodies”.

“This regulatory framework will strengthen the existing regional legal framework relating to Quality and put in place thanks to the contributions of States and technical and financial partners», Mr. Charles Eugene Nabollé, technical adviser representing the Minister of Trade, Industry and Crafts, pointed out that in the current context of globalization, marked by the deregulation of trade and the opening-up of markets, the quality of products and services offered to consumers is an indisputable factor of competitiveness. ■

NEWS ► QUALITY PROMOTION

Benin and Côte d'Ivoire are implementing at a national level the knowledge acquired from regional training on the United Nations Practical Guide to Consumer ►

Benin and Côte d'Ivoire have identified the support for the organisation of a Consumer Day as one of their Quality Policy actions which would benefit from the support provided to each State which is covered by the WAQSP.

It is therefore within the framework of the implementation of the action plan resulting from their national policies that the WAQSP has supported Benin and Côte d'Ivoire to organize for their consumer protection associations a workshop on the transfer of knowledge on the United Nations Practical Guide on Consumer Protection.

protection for their citizens as consumers; facilitating the development of consumer protection associations; promoting international cooperation in the field of consumer protection to share experiences in the field of protection; and facilitating production and distribution methods which match the needs and wishes of consumers.

Furthermore, he indicated that consumer health and safety require the adoption of regulatory texts by the State, the establishment of control teams, raising awareness among economic operators of the benefit of consumer protection and, above all, vigilance by the consumer him or herself.

«The consumer must ensure his or her health and safety without waiting for the state», he advised participants. The Executive Secretary of the Ivorian Commission for Competition and the Fight against the Cost of Living, Mr. N'kon Minanou, stated that this



GROUP PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS

This follows the regional workshop held in Lomé on 11 and 12 April 2018. Two representatives from each country were trained: a representative of the Consumer Association and a representative of the government organisation in charge of consumer protection. A total of fifty-one (51) people were trained twenty-five (25) from Benin and twenty-six (26) from Côte d'Ivoire).

The Benin Director General of Trade, Mr. Jean Bernard FAVI, one of the two (02) trainers, presented the content of the United Nations Practical Guide to Consumer Protection to the participants.

According to him, the guide has multiple objectives. These include seeking to help countries to ensure or maintain adequate

type of workshop was of major interest not only to the government, but also especially to the consumer.

«The State of Côte d'Ivoire, through the Ministry for Trade, is constantly taking decisions that seek to protect consumers. As proof of this, I would like to mention the adoption of Act No. 2016-412 of 15 June 2016 on consumption and its various implementing decrees. This law was adopted to strengthen existing policies based on United Nations guidelines and relevant international agreements for consumer protection. The participants took ownership of the content of the Practical Guide and then committed themselves to integrating it within their respective organisations to improve and effectively run their consumer protection actions in the field.» ■

QUALITY PROMOTION ◀ NEWS



OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE TRAINING IN MAURITANIA BY MRS. KHADIJA M'BARECK FALL, MINISTER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND TOURISM, WITH ON HER RIGHT MR. MOHAMED ETHMANE, NATIONAL FOCAL POINT OF THE WAQSP

National training workshops: the WAQSP improves the skills of more than 700 resource persons to meet the requirements of the Quality Management System (QMS) and Environmental Management System (EMS) standards ▶

Among its activities, the WAQSP had planned capacity building in the sub-region in Environmental Management System (EMS). Indeed, the previous Quality Programmes (phase I and phase 2), the ECOWAS-GIZ programme, as well as other private or public initiatives have allowed creating a core of regional competences in the field, and the region, in particular to satisfy the development of quality culture.

With the support of the National Technical Organisations, the WAQSP has identified priorities for the three (03) technical areas which are environmental management, quality management and food safety management. For the most part, the Food Safety Management System is the number one priority, followed by quality and environmental management.

In 2012, the WAQSP ran a series of training courses in Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS), which resulted in the qualification of about 100 resource persons in this field in all countries, excepting Nigeria (assisted in FSMS by the National Quality Programme of Nigeria).

Following the second series of Quality Management System (QMS) training courses, the WAQSP organised a third series of Environmental Management System (EMS) training courses in each beneficiary country.

The objective is to strengthen the critical mass of national experts so that they develop their skills in the fields concerned to better support the economic structures of the region. ■

NEWS ► QUALITY PROMOTION

The tables below show us the distribution of staff and beneficiary countries

ISO 9001 V 2015	
Countries	Total Participants
Benin	23
Burkina Faso	25
Cabo Verde	28
Côte d'Ivoire	26
Gambia	23
Ghana	24
Guinea	22
Guinea Bissau	25
Liberia	25
Mali	22
Mauritania	14
Niger	16
Senegal	16
Sierra Leone	51
Togo	20
	360

ISO 14001 V 2015	
Countries	Total Participants
Benin	23
Burkina Faso	28
Cabo Verde	39
Côte d'Ivoire	24
Gambia	25
Ghana	17
Guinea	23
Guinea Bissau	26
Liberia	28
Mali	25
Mauritania	15
Niger	17
Senegal	13
Sierra Leone	36
Togo	21
	360

Total bénéficiaires : 720



GROUP PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS



GROUP PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS

QUALITY PROMOTION ◀ NEWS



GROUP PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS

West African media and regional accreditation experts familiar with regional quality management systems ▶

The two (02) workshops organised by the WAQSP on behalf of the ECOWAS Commission, for regional experts and the media from the ECOWAS region and Mauritania, ended on a positive note in Abidjan on Wednesday, 28 November 2018, according to the Commissioner in charge of Industry and Private Sector Promotion at the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Mamadou TRAORE.

Over the three (03) days, participants were informed about the ECOWAS Quality Infrastructure Scheme, the ISO/IEC 17011 standard, the results achieved by the WAQSP, the ECOWAS Mark of Conformity with Standards, the ECOWAS Quality Award and the ECOWAS Regional Accreditation System (ECO-RAS).

According to Mr. Komenan MOUGO, representing Mr. Souleymane DIARRASSOUBA, Ivorian Minister of Commerce, Industry and Promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises, journalists will «...now be able to play (their) part in promoting the Regional Quality Infrastructure, the National and Regional Quality Awards and finally the Regional Certification Mark.»

Earlier, Commissioner Mamadou TRAORE, through General Costa Emilio, Chargé d’Affaires at the ECOWAS Delegation in Côte d’Ivoire, pointed out that these two (02) workshops «are in line with the implementation of the West African Common Industrial Policy (WACPP), adopted in 2010 by the Heads of State and Government with the objective of maintaining a solid, globally competitive industrial structure that is environmentally friendly and capable of significantly improving the living conditions of the West African people by 2030. « «We urge you to promote culture of quality in our region», he concluded. >>>>



GROUP PHOTO OF JOURNALISTS VISITING ENVAL LABORATORIES. 1ST ROW, FROM L TO R, SURROUNDED BY TWO JOURNALISTS FROM NIGERIA AND GHANA: AKA KOUASSI (WAQSP), HAROUNA MAYAKI (ECOWAS), BAKARY COULIBALY (DG ENVAL LABS) AND ROXANA TORAN VILLARROY (EU)

NEWS ► QUALITY PROMOTION

>>>>>The other leading figures, Tidiane BOYE, UNIDO Representative in Côte d'Ivoire and Mrs. Roxana Toran VILLAROYA of the European Union Delegation in Côte d'Ivoire, welcomed the good cooperation between their respective institutions and the ECOWAS Commission, as well as the results achieved by the WAQSP since its launch. They also reiterated their commitment to further supporting and cooperating with ECOWAS in the implementation of various projects aimed at improving the living

conditions of its citizens, strengthening cooperation and regional integration.

It should also be noted that these two workshops saw the participation of experts from the three (03) accreditation bodies that operate in the community area, namely the West African Accreditation System (SOAC) created by UEMOA, whose headquarter is in Abidjan, GhanaAS (Ghana) and NiNAS (Nigeria).■



AREAS OF EXPERTISE OF ENVAL LABORATORIES

Training on the Occupational Health and Safety Management System (ISO 45001: 2008): Beninese quality auditors and consultants equipped with the necessary tools ►

Based around the Occupational Health and Safety Management System, this training, held between 18 and 20 November 2018, provided "... the guarantee of a pragmatic view vision of ISO 45001: 2018, its understanding and application», according to the Director of Cabinet of the Minister of Industry and Trade, Phileas

Yvon Martial PATINVOH. According to Mr. Anicet Babatoundé ANIAMBOSSOU, quality and organisational management expert at the National Agency for Standardisation, Metrology and Quality Control (ANM), «This is the very first West African training course. Instead of training only on the requirements, the organizers went further by giving participants the necessary tools to start the implementation of this new standard in companies. As for the representative of the recipients, Salimath Raimi DENDE, of the company «Jehovah Nissi Petroleum SA», she affirmed that «From now on, we are better equipped to implement the standard ISO 45001 version 2018.»■



GROUP PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS

ECOWAS SETS UP A REGIONAL CERTIFICATION SYSTEM AND LAUNCHES ITS MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH STANDARDS

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Certification is the provision by an independent body of written assurance (a certificate) that the product, service or system in question meets specific requirements. In a multilateral trading system, certification provides benefits to producers, buyers and government regulators. Certificates (i) inform global suppliers about high quality products, reducing transaction costs and technical barriers to trade, (ii) allow consumers to compare different products in terms of quality, safety or other desirable characteristics, and (iii) provide decision-makers with a mechanism to enforce health, safety and environmental legislation.

Product certification (e.g. CE marking, organic labels, OEKO-TEX standards, etc.) and the certification of systems (e.g. ISO 9000, ISO 14000, HACCP or ISO 22000 series, etc.) are the two main types of relevant certification for international trade. The certification process may be carried out by the producer, buyer or an independent third party, depending on the applicable legislation or standard. These third parties or certification bodies may be private or public entities. In order to produce credible assessments of a product, service or system, they must be accredited by an accreditation body.

The WAQSP supported the development and implementation of a regional certification system to reduce the impact of technical barriers to trade, build consumer confidence and open up new markets for producers. It has provided support to certification bodies in the region on the route to accreditation and has worked to develop an ECOWAS certification mark.

In order to implement the ECOWAS Quality Policy (ECOQUAL) adopted by the ECOWAS Assembly of Heads of State and Government by Supplementary Act No. A/SA.1/02/13 in February 2013, in December 2013 the ECOWAS Council of Ministers adopted Regulation C/REG.19/12/13 implementing the ECOWAS Quality Infrastructure Scheme. The latter creates, among other things, regional quality structures, including:

A Community Quality Council (CQC), with the following four (04) committees:

The Community Committee on Standardisation (ECOSHAM)

The Community Committee for Metrology (ECOMET)

The Community Committee for Conformity Assessment (ECOCONF)

The Community Committee for Technical Regulations (ECOREG)

The Regional Accreditation System (ECORAS)

In order to ensure the effective implementation of these structures and allow them to start operating, the ECOWAS Commission has been implementing the WAQSP since September 2014. At the end of its meeting held in Monrovia, Liberia, on 1st June 2017, the ECOWAS Council of Statutory Ministers adopted the texts (Regulation C/REG.10/06/17) on the organisation and operation of the five Community Committees, including the Community Committee for Conformity Assessment (ECOCONF) which deals with certification issues.

Following this, the ECOWAS Commission invited each of the States to designate their respective representatives for the different structures. The representatives thus appointed were then invited to the set-up meetings of the various organisations held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 6 to 9 November 2017. During these meetings, the President and vice-president of ECOCONF were elected, as were the other committees: Kafui KOUASSI from Togo (French-speaking, male) as President and Isatu Binta KAMARA from Sierra Leone (English-speaking, female) as Vice-President. ECOCONF approved its 2017-2018 work programme.

At its first meeting, on 29 January 2018, the CQC to which ECOCONF reports, validated the 2017-2018 activity programme and defined the profile for the ECOCONF Secretary to be recruited at a later date.

This action plan includes, among other things, support for the implementation of the certification mechanism across ECOWAS. To this end, an international expert has been recruited. The expert proposed draft documents relating to the operation of the ECOWAS Product Certification Scheme. It is within this framework that ECOCONF has been able to implement the following activities:

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ECOWAS SETS UP A REGIONAL CERTIFICATION SYSTEM AND LAUNCHES ITS MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH STANDARDS



GROUP PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS; SEATED OF G. TO D. ISATU BINTA KAMARA (ECOCONFVP) AND KAFUI K. KOUASSI (ECOCONF PDT)

>>>>>

■ Validation by national experts of draft texts relating to the introduction of the certification mechanism for products in the ECOWAS region, before their submission to ECOCONF for approval;

Note: In August 2016, the WAQSP improved the skills of experts from certification bodies (products from Member States) that are operational or in the process of being set up. Following this workshop, certification (products) has grown across the region with six (06) certification bodies already accredited. These are the experts who have been deployed to validate the draft documents.

- The establishment of ECOCONF subcommittees;
- The amendment of ECOCONF's rules of procedure in order to take account of its three (03) subcommittees
- Adoption of the rules of procedure of the subcommittee working groups;
- The adoption of documents relating to the establishment of the ECOWAS Regional Product Certification System relating to:
 - the general rules for the management of the Certification Mark (EcoQmark);
 - templates of specific certification rules;
 - the rules for mandating of national product certification bodies and their testing laboratories;
 - the terms of reference for the development of the logo for the Mark;
 - the criteria for selecting the priority products which are to be granted the Regional Mark.

According to Mr. Bako ILLIASSOU, Director of the National Agency for Verification of Conformity with Standards of Niger (AVCN), "it was a very important meeting for each country and for the sub-region because when we analyse what is happening in this area, we can see that intra-regional trade is very little developed. Thus, our expectations with regard to the ECOWAS Community Brand are that it can significantly boost intra-regional trade in products so that, on the one hand, we create wealth within the space and on the other hand, products are promoted at the level of international trade. I leave here very satisfied with the results obtained at the end of the meeting and we hope that very soon, this Community brand will produce its effects at the level of our sub-region within the framework of the intra-regional trade."

Today, the following achievements have been realised, among others:

The priority products which are to be granted the regional mark of conformity with ECOWAS Standards have been selected

- The selection criteria were proposed by the Member States' product certification experts at a regional workshop held on 31 May and 1st June 2018 in Cotonou, Benin. These criteria were adopted by the members of the ECOWAS Community Committee for Conformity Assessment on 26 and 27 July 2018 in Abuja, Nigeria.

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(1) Organisation Ouest Africaine de la Santé
(2) Organisation des Nations-Unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture

ECOWAS SETS UP A REGIONAL CERTIFICATION SYSTEM AND LAUNCHES ITS MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH STANDARDS

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The criteria adopted are:

- Existence of regional standards or harmonised technical specifications
- Belonging to one of the ECOWAS priority areas (food processing, pharmaceuticals, buildings and construction materials and automotive) and any other product with a high economic and social impact
- Presence of accredited or competent laboratories to carry out the tests
- Product widely consumed by the populations of the region and with a high economic and social impact.
- Product which is the subject of a regional health issue or raised at WAHO or FAO level and with a high safety impact
- Product belonging to a value chain that has regional added value or selected under the 11th EDF
- Product with a major need for certification.

The lists of Member States' priority products have been collated.

All ECOWAS Member States have sent their respective lists. A total of forty-four (44) priority products were proposed using the adopted selection criteria.

The most common products are: roasted cashew nuts (Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone), drinking water (Benin, Gambia, Niger, Togo), fish (Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea Bissau and Togo), cement (Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Nigeria) and palm oil (Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone). Therefore they constitute the first five (05) products recommended for the granting of the regional mark of conformity with ECOWAS Standards.

The Programme has allowed for four (04) product certification services to be established and accredited, which are:

- the Senegalese Standards Association (ASN) - Senegal, accredited for drinking water;
- the National Metrology Agency (ANM) - Benin, accredited for carbonated beverages;
- the Ivorian Association for Standardisation (CODINORM) - Côte d'Ivoire, accredited for electrical cables;
- the Nigerien Agency for the Verification of Conformity to

Standards (AVCN) - Niger, accredited for dried meat (Kilichi).

In this regard, Abdel ASSOGBA, Director of Studies of the AVCN said that «the product selected for accreditation, namely the dried meat (kilichi), is a difficult product. Guaranteeing the quality of meat and by-products is often complicated. We chose kilichi, the country's internationally renowned product, but people often doubt the ability of procedures to produce and make available to consumers a safe and healthy product. We chose kilichi and started with the General Rules of Certification for kilichi, the

Special Rules of Certification for kilichi and, today, the producers of the kilichi can be sure that across the ECOWAS region, we have an organisation which is accredited internationally.

This will allow us to discover whether the kilichi can help to conquer the international market. We are a certification body. As a result, a product certified by a certification body can easily conquer the regional and international market. At AVCN, it is no coincidence that we have chosen the kilichi; internationally, it is becoming a competitive product. This product is gaining in respectability. Producers no longer need to spend several million CFA francs to look for certification bodies elsewhere. Today, and thanks to ECOWAS, producers now have access to an on-site certification body, at a lower cost, but offering real quality.



ABDEL ASSOGBA, DIRECTOR OF STUDIES OF AVCN (NIGER) ON THE LEFT, INTERVIEWED BY SERGE D. ZOUEME, COMMUNICATION EXPERT OF WAQSP

(1) West African Health Organization
 (2) United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
 (3) European Development Fund

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ECOWAS SETS UP A REGIONAL CERTIFICATION SYSTEM AND LAUNCHES ITS MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH STANDARDS

In the field of pharmaceutical inspection, the WAQSP currently supports four (04) national drug regulatory agencies:

- in Gambia: The Gambian Bureau of Standardisation (TGSB)
- in Sierra Leone: the Sierra Leone Pharmacy Agency (PBSL)
- in Liberia: the Liberian Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority (LHMRA)
- in Nigeria: the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration (NAFDAC)

Promotional activities have strengthened the system

■ More than 100 key stakeholders from the region were trained during the 2016-2018 period on the competence, consistency and impartiality requirements of certification bodies for products, processes and services, as well as on internationally recognised good practices of independence, objectivity and confidentiality, which are internationally recognized.

- Training in the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17065 standard (Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Cape Verde): fifty-five (55) resource persons, including seventeen (17) women
- Training of certification and impartiality committees (Mali, Gambia): fifty-two (52) resource persons, including eleven (11) women
- Fact-finding visit for two (02) Guinea-Bissau certification officers, including one woman, to the Senegalese standardisation body, ASN.

This year, sixteen (16) resource persons from Cape Verde received ISO 17065 training in order to better understand the theme of product, process and service certification.

■ The National Agency for Standardisation, Metrology and Quality Control (ANM) organised, on 17-19 October 2018, in the Azalaï Hôtel in Cotonou (Benin), the second

edition of the Benin National Certification Day. It took place under the aegis of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Benin and with the support of the WAQSP, the Beninese Movement for Quality and other local companies. A series of commemorative activities were held, including communications, debates, testimonials, stands, exhibitions and the presentation of certificates to companies. The chosen theme was:

«Certification, a guarantee of safety for the local consumer. Demand certified products». Several public and private administration authorities, business leaders, quality stakeholders and consumer associations actively participated in the event. The Director of Cabinet and representative of the Minister of Industry and Trade of Benin, Mr Phileas KPATINVOH, indicated that the chosen theme is in line with the priority approach of the government's policy in promoting enterprise in general and consumer protection in particular.

«Quality is no longer the preserve of industries or high-tech companies. It concerns all areas of the economy, whether in the manufacturing or service sectors, including self-employed professions,» he said. He also added that certification is a high priority as it is a prerequisite for our products to easily access national and regional markets. «It is one of the subject areas of Benin's National Quality Policy adopted by the government on 11 July 2018,» he said, before congratulating all of the stakeholders, sponsors and partners who made the day possible. «I would like to invite Beninese companies, from the largest to the smallest, to fully participate in the activities of the ANM and to actively participate in promoting quality in our country, for their own benefit and that of consumers and the national economy,» concluded the Minister's representative.

Testimonials and exhibitions of various products and services were also organised to show off Beninese brilliance and innovations. Several companies took advantage of the opportunity to collect their certificates after submitting their certification requests for specific products to the ANM. Thus, SCB BOUCLIER received its certification for cement, the Société des Huileries du Bénin (SHB), its own for "Vitalor" oil and finally some groups received theirs for improved fireplaces.

As we can see, significant progress has been made since the last publication of the state of play in April 2016 (Newsletter 3 from the WAQSP).

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ECOWAS SETS UP A REGIONAL CERTIFICATION SYSTEM AND LAUNCHES ITS MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH STANDARDS

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THE PRESIDENT OF ECOCONF (RED TIE, IN THE MIDDLE) SURROUNDED (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT) REPRESENTATIVES OF NIGERIA, SIERRA LEONE, CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND GHANA

Mr. Francis ALANEME, representing the Nigerian Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Okechukwu ENELAMAH, referenced the value of the programme to be implemented, confirming: «This regional product certification system with the ECOWAS Conformity Mark is one of the tools that will serve as a reference for consumers to identify products that meet quality standards in the region... conformity assessment must be competitive globally and must improve trade in ECOWAS regions».

In her speech at the ECOCONF meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 26 and 27 July 2018, Oshionehe BRAIMAH (Expert from the Nigerian Standards Organisation - SON) added that «...it is the beginning of a massive project for West Africa that must ensure that only quality products and services leave this region.»

To confirm the relevance of the process, EU Ambassador Ketil KARLSEN, represented by Mrs. Nadia CANNATA, noted that «... with the series of standards developed by ECOWAS and the increasing number of manufacturing companies in the region, the time has come to ensure that dangerous or non-compliant products cannot access the ECOWAS market and cannot even be exported from West Africa.» She also noted that the region has not yet reached this stage but commended ECOWAS and UNIDO for the progress made so far in building confidence among consumers, public authorities and manufacturers regarding product conformity in West Africa.

SGS-Ghana's Quality Manager, Mrs. Helen DOE-ASHINYO SARBAH (representative of Ghana), stressed that «it is important that we reach a point where, for the ECOWAS community, we will be able to harmonise our quality issues and at the same time, prepare our systems and products for the mark of excellence.»■

In the following interview, the President of ECOCONF tells us more about it..



THE PRESIDENT OF ECOCONF DURING HIS INTERVENTION



MRS KOUASSI ASSOVIÉ OLGA, DG BNA, CÔTE D'IVOIRE REPRESENTATIVE

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CHECK-IN WITH ... DR KOUASSI KAFUI CODJO, PRESIDENT OF ECOCONF



FROM L TO R : K. K. KOUASSI; MARCEL GBAGUIDI (DG SOAC); COMMISSIONER MAMADOU TRAORE, IHOU YAОВI ATTIGBE, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND TOURISM OF TOGO; FRANÇOIS KPAKPO (FOCAL POINT OF THE WAQSP IN TOGO), ASSA LOLONYO, VP SOAC

Introduce yourself

I am Dr. KOUASSI Kafui Codjo, Assistant Professor at the University of Lomé in charge of Teaching and carrying out Research in Biochemistry, Nutrition and Quality Management. Since 2009, I have regularly provided consulting services to the UEMOA Quality Program, West Africa Quality Programme and West Africa Quality System Programme, as an expert in conformity assessment. And since November 2017, I have been President of the ECOWAS Community Committee for Conformity Assessment (ECOCONF) with a 3-year term of office.

You are therefore leading one of the five Community Quality Committees. At the first meeting of this body in Dakar (Senegal) on 29 January 2018, its activity programme for 2017-2018 was approved

by the Community Quality Council, what is it about, exactly?

This programme comprises thirteen (13) activities, one (01) of which has been completed, eight (08) are in progress and four (04) have not yet started. With regards to the activity already completed, it should be noted that Mr. Koissi MIDAYE, WAQSP expert in charge of conformity assessment, has been appointed to serve as temporary secretary of ECOCONF.

The eight (08) ongoing activities are:

I. Continued support for the accreditation of ECOWAS-selected CAOs with a regional focus (twelve (12) testing laboratories supported by the WAQSP: four (04) accredited laboratories/support

CHECK-IN WITH ...

DR KOUASSI KAFUI CODIO, PRESIDENT OF ECOCONF

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with equipment, reagents and small consumables/ Eighty-five (85) trained laboratory technicians).

2. Seven (07) certification bodies supported: four (04) accredited organisations.

3. Four (04) inspection bodies supported by the WAQSP in working towards ISO 9001 certification / one hundred seventy-four (174) trained staff.

4. Support for participation in inter-comparison networks for selected laboratories (proficiency testing campaigns launched in the food sector: 2-3 October 2017/microbiology and food physical chemistry).

5. Design and protection of the ECOWAS Certification Mark/Training of staff from national certification bodies mandated by the Regional Accreditation System (twenty-three (23) experts trained in product certification (ISO IEC 17065) in Abidjan from 9-10 July 2016, with a view to setting up the first CAs. Set-up meeting of ECOCONF held in Abuja, from 7 to 9 November with the establishment of the bureau, the adoption of the rules of procedure and the 2017-2018 Action Plan).

6. Adoption of the general rules for the management of the Regional Mark of Conformity with ECOWAS Standards (the draft documents relating to the establishment of the ECOWAS Regional Certification Scheme were validated by ECOWAS Member States' Experts at the regional meeting held in Cotonou, Benin, from 31 May to 1 June 2018. These consist of: General rules for the Certification Mark, specific certification rules, mandate rules, terms of reference for the logo, criteria for selecting priority products to benefit from the granting of the Mark, official visits by the President of ECOCONF).

7. Adoption of the architecture for specific rules for the management of product certification/adoption of the architecture for the rules for mandating certification bodies (11 April 2018 in Lomé, Togo: the President of ECOCONF took part in the official visit of the ECOWAS Commissioner for Industry and Private Sector Promotion to the Minister of Industry and Trade of Togo. In this context, the President of ECOCONF visited two (02) laboratories supported by the Quality programmes, notably the National Hygiene Institute and the Biasa Clinic. From May 31 to June 1, 2018 in

Cotonou, Benin: The President of ECOCONF participated in the meeting on the certification of ECOWAS products. He also took part in the meeting of the WAQSP with its beneficiaries, held alongside the meeting on 30 May in Cotonou. He then attended the meeting with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Industry of Benin. Finally, the President of ECOCONF was part of the SOAC (West African Accreditation System) delegation that visited the UEMOA (West African Monetary Union) Resident Representative in Cotonou, Benin on 30 May 2018).

8. Support for the implementation of the certification mechanism for products at ECOWAQ level. These are strategic support actions.

The four (04) activities which have not yet started are:

1. Ensuring the technical validation of the mandating files for national product certification bodies for the award of the Conformity Mark to Regional Standards.

2. Harmonising analytical methods in priority areas.

3. Supporting the development of business plans for selected conformity assessment bodies.

4. Promoting the ECOWAS Certification Mark.

Will it be a question of popularising and promoting the national marks or rather ratifying regional standards as part of a harmonised Community programme ?

This is an essential step, because product certification is based on the standards adopted and/or approved.

Which sectors and products will you start with?

The food, construction and pharmaceutical sectors are very strategic and important for consumer protection. A process to identify priority products is underway with proposals from each country.

What will be the role of the ECOWAS Quality Agency in this process of issuing the ECOWAS Certification Mark?

This agency will intervene in the process of mandating the CAOs that will issue the Mark. It will also make careful decisions to prevent or manage potential conflicts if necessary. ECOCONF reports to this agency. ■

FOCUS ► SPOTLIGHT ON.....

Two (02) women who are outstanding in their field: Ms. Olga ASSOVIE KOUASSI, founder and director of the BUREAU NORME AUDIT (BNA) & Ms. Celine ONI, Managing Director of NGCL (NECA Global Certification Limited).

The WAQSP actively supported public and private institutions in the region for their accreditation, including training on the technical and organisational requirements of the ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO/IEC 17021 standards: legal and contractual, organisational, outsourcing, skills, equipment and working environment, evidence and record keeping, confidentiality and transparency and internal management..

Six (06) certification bodies (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger and Senegal) have been accredited for product certification, including one (01) headed by a woman, Mrs Olga KOUASSI, Founder and Director of the Bureau Norme et Audit (BNA) of Côte d'Ivoire.

Four (04) certification bodies (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria) have been accredited for the certification of systems, including (02) headed by women, Mrs Olga KOUASSI and Mrs Celine ONI. They tell us more about themselves below.

Can you tell us about your career?

Director of BNA -Trained as an agricultural engineer, I was previously Quality Manager at PPDEA (World Bank/ CIDA Project) and Deputy Director of the EBAS West and Central Africa Office (EU/ACP Programme). Since



MRS KOUASSI ASSOVIE OLGA,
DG BUREAU NORME ET AUDIT, CÔTE D'IVOIRE

2002, I have been an expert in Quality Management and I have 19 years of experience in this field.

I am the first female woman certified ISO 9001 auditor in Côte d'Ivoire and the first consultant to successfully lead an Ivorian company to ISO 22000 certification, which was also the first cooperative to obtain EUREGAP/GLOBALG.A.P. ISO 9001/ ISO 22000/GLOBALGAP and UTZ auditor; internal trainer and Manager GLOBALG.A.P, UEMOA, UNIDO and COLEACP Quality Expert through the programmes (PIP 1 and 2, EDES, PAEPARD and Fit for Market). Graduated from MDE Business School Abidjan/IESE Barcelona in Program for Management Development" (PMD), President of the PMD 2012 Promotion and Member of the Alumni Executive Board.

MD NGCL - Celine Oni is the Director, Training and Development, of the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA). She is also the Managing Director of NGCL (NECA Global Certification Ltd), the first internationally accredited local certification body in Nigeria. Celine has over 20 years of experience in business consulting, strategy, human resources management, leadership, labour relations and employment, communications and entrepreneurship. Her role at NECA has deepened her expertise in deploying diverse training solutions for organisations from all sectors of the Nigerian economy.

Celine Oni represents NECA on the Board of Directors of the Industrial Training Fund, the NNEW Microfinance Bank and the Boards of Directors of other government agencies, parastatal companies, departments and committees. Working in collaboration with UNIDO, she is part of the joint working group to promote quality infrastructure and standardisation in Nigeria.

She is a certified lead auditor and implementer of the

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SPOTLIGHT ON.....

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Two (02) women who are outstanding in their field: Ms. Olga ASSO-VIE KOUASSI, founder and director of the BUREAU NORME AUDIT (BNA) & Ms. Celine ONI, Managing Director of NGCL (NECA Global Certification Limited).



MS. CELINE ONI, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NGCL, NIGERIA

Quality Management System (ISO 9001:2015), the Environmental Management System (ISO 14001:2015) and the Food Safety Management System (ISO 22000). She is a trainer with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and an accredited facilitator of ETDP SETA, South Africa. She has extensive experience in training programmes and conferences at national and international levels. Celine is a working mother, strategist and decision maker.

Tell us about your organisation and its area of operation..

Director BNA - Bureau Norme Audit (BNA) is an Ivorian capital company created in 2006 for the purpose of training, auditing and leading quality management studies. Until 2014, we trained and supported several Ivorian and international companies in the field of quality, including ISO 9001, ISO 22000, ISO 14001, GLOBALG.A.P and other food safety standards such as: IFS, BRC, HACCP, etc. Since February 2014, we have become a certification body and have obtained

ISO 17065 accreditation: 2012 for the certification of agricultural products. In June 2017, BNA obtained a second accreditation, ISO 17021: 2015 for the certification of Quality Management Systems ISO 9001 (2015) and ISO 22000 (2005).

These two (02) accreditations were issued by the DAKKS (German Official Accreditation Body).

Bureau Norme Audit is now the first accredited certification body not only in Côte d'Ivoire but also in whole the French-speaking sub-Saharan region.

MD NGCL -

MD NGCL - NGCL (NECA Global Certification Limited) is the first internationally accredited local certification body in Nigeria. NGCL is accredited to issue Quality Management Systems with the ISO 9001:2015 certification, both locally and internationally. This accreditation complies with the ISO/IEC 17021 standard from the Egyptian Accreditation Council (EGAC), a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). NGCL is a member of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA). NGCL auditors have been assessed and approved by EGAC as having the qualifications, skills and depth of experience to conduct audits and to add value to the organisation. NGCL is ready to promote quality, improve business competitiveness and advance economic growth through certification and training. As a certification body, NGCL provides services that enable continuous improvement, accelerate the achievement of corporate objectives and thus ensure customer satisfaction.

NGCL is a product of UNIDO and one of its success stories, was to implement the National Quality Infrastructure Project (NQIP) in Nigeria. Over the years, Nigerian companies have had limited access to the Quality Infrastructure, which has limited the competitiveness of their products and services on a global scale. The European Union (EU), having identified this gap and having collaborated with the Federal Government of Nigeria, approved the National Quality Infrastructure Project (NQIP) for Nigeria in 2014.

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FOCUS ► SPOTLIGHT ON.....

Two women who are outstanding in their field: Olga ASSOVIÉ KOUASSI, founder and director of the BUREAU NORME AUDIT (BNA) & Mrs Céline ONI, Managing Director of NGCL (NECA Global Certification Limited).

This programme was implemented to establish an internationally recognised Quality Infrastructure in the country that ensures the security, integrity and marketability of goods and services, as well as the removal of technical barriers to local, regional and international trade. The project was funded by the EU and implemented by UNIDO.

Under the NQIP, the skills of the organised private and public sectors have been developed in terms of quality standards, quality management systems, metrology and certification. As a stakeholder in Nigeria's organised private sector, NECA supported the creation of NGCL (NECA Global Certification Limited) as a local certification body. In accordance with the objectives of the NQIP and with the technical support of UNIDO, NGCL successfully completed the international accreditation process.

NGCL benefits from the cooperation and tremendous support of EGAC for all of our certification activities. Through its global partnerships, its network and its in-depth understanding of the company's needs, NGCL is already impacting the quality landscape in Nigeria and removing technical barriers to trade.

In your opinion, what makes a client choose your organisation and not your competitors in the region and abroad

BNA Director - To date, we are the first and only local certification body to have dual accreditation, ISO 17065 and ISO 17021. BNA has an experience to share. This means defined by three (03) core values: skills, openness and cost.

- Skills in our different areas of operation, because we make sure that we respect the standards of our various accreditations.

- Openness to our customers and all of our stakeholders involved in the process at the local level to facilitate the work and provide an excellent return.

- Our costs are accessible to all because our ambition is to enhance the value of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by allowing them to have access to certification. Above all, we place a primary emphasis on working ethically.

To date, we have carried out certifications in Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Mali and Senegal. Our footprint covers the entire West and Central African region.

MD NGCL - NGCL, through its parent company (NECA), has been influencing and supporting business development in Nigeria for more than sixty (60) years, giving it a unique perspective and advantage in providing services that will improve business competitiveness, impact the quality infrastructure landscape in Nigeria and break down barriers to global trade. NGCL accreditation also came at a time when the government is chiefly interested in diversifying the petroleum sector and promoting exports from other sectors. In addition, NGCL has a «value-added» approach to providing services to its customers. To do this, it has a pool of qualified, competent and highly experienced auditors who are able to work in a variety of environments and cultures. With its global collaborations, network and in-depth understanding of the company's needs, NGCL will make a difference to your company.

What are your challenges as a woman and certification body in West Africa??

BNA Director -As a woman, my challenge is to reconcile my family and professional lives. Bureau Norme Audit (BNA) has set itself the challenge of making a significant contribution to the development of certification in West and Central Africa by offering local certifications suitable for the context of the different sectors. We contribute to facilitating access to certification for small producers and bringing African SMEs up to international quality standards.

MD NGCL - These challenges include gender stereotypes, multiple roles for women, work-life balance and low representativeness in governance. ■

STRENGTHENING ECOWAS-EU-UNIDO COOPERATION :

Commissioner Mamadou Traoré
visits Brussels and Vienna

PARTNERS' ACTIVITIES



COMMISSIONER MAMADOU TRAORE AND HIS DELEGATION WELCOMED AT UNIDO

An ECOWAS delegation led by Commissioner Mamadou TRAORE, accompanied by Kemjika AJUOKU, Principal Programme Officer of the IPSP Department and Mr. Aka Jean Joseph KOUASSI, Principal Technical Adviser of the WAQSP, visited UNIDO headquarters and its liaison office in Brussels to discuss cooperation, initiatives and strengthening partnerships with European Commission decision-makers.

The visit was organised as part of the ECOWAS Quality Programme (WAQSP) implemented by UNIDO with funds from the European Union and with the aim of establishing a regional quality infrastructure in the areas of standardisation, accreditation, conformity assessment, metrology and quality promotion.

UNIDO and ECOWAS discussed in particular cooperation and support for the implementation of the 2015-2020 strategy of the West African Common Industrial Policy (WACIP), which aims to accelerate the industrialisation of the region through the promotion of four (04) regional priority sectors: the agro-industry and food processing, pharmaceutical industry, construction, automotive and machinery.

Commissioner TRAORE expressed a strong interest in several areas of UNIDO's expertise, in particular the new approach to modernisation, the establishment of regional technical centres and support for industrial parks, special economic zones and clusters - with a particular focus on youth employment and the protection and empowerment of women.

The delegation's visit to Brussels allowed it to deepen its understanding of the current European development model and to learn best practices from the main stakeholders in the Quality Infrastructure. The delegation exchanged information on the ECOWAS Regional Quality System with policy and decision makers from the European Commission and the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Secretariat. Meetings

were also held with entities responsible for standardisation and accreditation, including the European Committee for Standardisation and the European Committee for Electro-technical Standardisation (CEN-CENELEC) and the Belgian Accreditation Body (BELAC).

Mr. TRAORE also presented ECOWAS' industrial strategy to the diplomatic community in Vienna at an event dedicated to the Third Decade for the Industrial Development of Africa 2016-2025 (DDIA 3). The highlight of the mission was a visit to the Fraunhofer Industry 4.0 Institute in Vienna, where the delegation was able to find out more about intelligent, futuristic and innovative solutions for automation and robotisation. «The findings from the various meetings held will be used to develop important programmes and projects that will benefit the development of the ECOWAS region in general. This will help to strengthen our privileged relations and to provide ECOWAS with good support in future areas of cooperation. It also provides a good basis for the newly launched West African Competitiveness Program (WACP),» Traoré said at the end of the visit. ■



WORKING SESSION

PARTNERS' ACTIVITIES

SOAC JOINS ILAC

as an affiliate member, signing up in full to AFRAC and conducting its first audits

SOAC, the West African Accreditation Body, was accepted as an affiliate member of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) on 16 August 2018 and as a full member of the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC) on 27 August 2018.

Gaining membership of ILAC gives SOAC the recognition of its commitment to provide accreditation services in accordance with relevant international standards (including ISO/IEC guides and standards) and ILAC policies for the accreditation of inspection bodies and laboratories. Full membership of AFRAC is recognition of SOAC to being designated as the accreditation body for eight (08) member States in West Africa. In addition, SOAC undertakes to operate in accordance with international standards (including ISO/IEC guidelines and standards), relevant international documents (ILAC policies and International Accreditation Forum (IAF) policies on the accreditation of certification bodies) and AFRAC requirements.

As a full member to AFRAC, SOAC has several advantages. In particular, it allows SOAC to participate in AFRAC's strategic meetings with the necessary voting rights. The next challenges for SOAC will be to issue the first accreditation certificates and prepare for international acceptance of these certificates. This outcome for SOAC strengthens the ECOWAS Regional Accreditation System (ECORAS). Indeed, it should be remembered



FROM G. TO D. : DG OF SOAC; ABOUBACRY BARO, PRESIDENT OF SOAC; A. E. AKA, MINISTER OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC HYGIENE, CÔTE D'IVOIRE; DOUDOU BRIDJI, QUALITY MANAGER OF LNSP, CÔTE D'IVOIRE

that ECORAS has so far registered three (03) accreditation bodies: GhaNAS from Ghana, NiNAS from Nigeria and SOAC for UEMOA countries. NiNAS was accepted as a full member of AFRAC in May 2018 and as an associate member of ILAC in June 2018. ECORAS was also accepted as a full member of AFRAC in April 2018. This allows ECORAS to build on its international recognition for the benefit of West African conformity assessment bodies. ■



FROM G. TO D. : KOBENAN MOUGO, DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY, CÔTE D'IVOIRE; PRESIDENT OF SOAC; SOULEYMANE DIARRASSOUBA, MINISTER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND SME PROMOTION; DG OF SOAC; TIDIANE BOYE, UNIDO RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

► **FOUR (04) PRIORITY PRODUCTS** HAVE BEEN PROPOSED BY ECOWAS MEMBER COUNTRIES TO RECEIVE THE REGIONAL MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH ECOWAS STANDARDS

► DID YOU KNOW ?

COUNTRY	PRODUCTS PROPOSED	COUNTRY	PRODUCTS PROPOSED
1 Benin	Product 1 Ananas Product 2 Water and Carbonated Beverages Product 3 Cassava and its derivatives Product 4 Cashew nuts	11 Niger	Product 1 Kilishi (dried meat) Product 2 Onions Product 3 Sesame Product 4 Mineral water
2 Burkina Faso	Product 1 Sesame Product 2 Cashew nuts Product 3 Shea butter Product 4 Mangoes Product 5 Tomatoes	12 Nigeria	Product 1 Palm oil Product 2 Shea butter Product 3 Yam Product 4 Ginger and its derivatives Product 5 Beans and their derivatives Product 6 Tomatoes Product 7 Potatoes Product 8 Peanuts Product 9 Vasoprin Product 10 Paracetamol Product 11 Roof tiles Product 12 Cement Product 13 Wall tiles Product 14 Nails Product 15 Iron wire Product 16 Doors Product 17 Cars Product 18 Motorcycles
3 Cape Verde	Product 1 Frozen fish Product 2 Frozen fish fillets Product 3 Wine Product 4 Fresh and salted cheese	13 Senegal	Product 1 Iodised salt Product 2 Cement Product 3 Purified filtered water in bags Product 4 Cables
4 Cote D'Ivoire	Product 1 Electrical cables Product 2 Cement Product 3 Cosmetic products Product 4 Paint	14 Sierra Leone	Product 1 Cassava flour Product 2 Red palm oil Product 3 Roasted cashew nuts Product 4 Gari
5 Gambia	Product 1 Drinking water in bags Product 2 Cement Product 3 Electrical cables Product 4 Edible nuts	15 Togo	Product 1 Mineral water Product 2 Packaged mineral water Product 3 Frozen fish Product 4 Smoked fish Product 5 Fortified wheat flour Product 6 Fortified salt
6 Ghana	Product 1 Fresh/frozen fish Product 2 Canned food (fish) Product 3 Corn Product 4 Roasted cashew nuts		
7 Guinea Bissau	Product 1 Cashew nuts and derivatives Product 2 Mangoes and derivatives Product 3 Fish and fish products Product 4 Rice		
8 Guinea Conakry	Product 1 Rice Product 2 Corn Product 3 Palm oil Product 4 Fish		
9 Liberia	Product 1 Palm oil		
10 Mali	Product 1 Mangoes Product 2 Shea butter Product 3 Cement and reinforced concrete Product 4 Food oil		

► DID YOU KNOW ?

► **SEVEN (07) CRITERIA HAVE BEEN DEFINED TO SELECT THE PRIORITY PRODUCTS WHICH WILL RECEIVE THE REGIONAL MARK OF CONFORMITY WITH ECOWAS STANDARDS**

A. CRITERIA IN TERMS OF CONSTRAINTS THAT COUNTRIES MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WHEN SENDING THEIR LISTS OF PRIORITY PRODUCTS	Product 1 :	Product 2 :	Product 3 :	Product 4 :
1. Existence of regional standards or harmonised technical specifications				
2. Belonging to one of the ECOWAS priority areas (food processing, pharmaceuticals, buildings and construction materials and automotive) and any other product with a high economic and social impact				
3. Presence of accredited or competent laboratories to carry out the tests				
B. CRITERIA TO BE USED BY THE ECOCONF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE				
N° Criteria				
4. Product widely consumed by the populations of the region and with a high economic and social impact.				
5. Product which is the subject of a regional health issue or raised at WAHO or FAO level and with a high safety impact				
6. Product belonging to a value chain that has regional added value or selected under the 11th EDF .				
7. Products with a major need for certification.				

► **MEMBER STATES HAVE PROPOSED THE FIRST FIVE (5) PRIORITY PRODUCTS**
THE RANKING IS AS FOLLOWS:

RANK	PRODUCTS
1 ^{er}	Drinking water (mineral/drinking water)
2 ^{ème}	Cashew nuts (Roasted cashew nuts)
3 ^{ème}	Palm oil
4 ^{ème}	Cement
5 ^{ème}	Fish (frozen, etc.)

Drinking water, cashew nuts, palm oil, cement and fish are therefore recommended for the granting of the ECOWAS Regional Conformity Mark.

⁴ Scoring matrix: High (3 points), Medium (2 points), Low (1 point)- Decision criteria: A product is selected if it obtains a total score greater than or equal to 80%.

⁵ West African Health Organization - ⁶ United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization - ⁷European Development Fund



European union



WEST AFRICA QUALITY SYSTEM PROGRAMME (WAQSP)
SUPPORT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOWAS QUALITY POLICY (ECOQUAL)
FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

JULY 2018
WEST AFRICA
MAJOR PROGRESS IN MATTER
OF PRODUCT CERTIFICATION

4 PRODUCT CERTIFICATION BODIES

of the region have gained international recognition of their competence through their accreditation to ISO IEC 17065 v2012 by ACCREDIA, the Italian accreditation body.



Agence de Normalisation, de Métrologie et du Contrôle de la Qualité (ANM)
accredited in the field of soft drinks.



CODINORM, accredited in the field of electrical wires and cables.



Association Sénégalaise de Normalisation (ASN),
accredited in the field of drinking water



Agence Nationale de Vérification de Conformité aux Normes (AVCN)
accredited in the field of dried meat "KILICHI"



This result was obtained within the framework of the WAQSP. With the Bureau Norme Audit (Côte d'Ivoire) accredited to ISO IEC 17065 (by DAKKS, the German Accreditation Body) to certify agricultural productions according to the Global GAP and GHANA STANDARDS AUTHORITY of Ghana, also accredited to ISO IEC 17065 by DAKKS, (Roasted Cashew, Chocolate, Bottled Drinking Water, Bottled Mineral Water, Fruit Juice, Gin, Whiskey, Canned Tuna), these organizations are the top six product certification bodies accredited according to ISO IEC 17065, in West Africa. With this achievement, ECOWAS now has the first internationally recognized regional competencies to assess the conformity of products traded on its market. Indeed, accredited bodies for product certification are one of the pillars of the ECOWAS regional product certification system.

▶ DID YOU KNOW ?

PROCESS FOR MANDATING
NATIONAL CERTIFICATION BODIES
TO ISSUE THE ECOWAS STANDARDS
CONFORMITY MARK (ECOQMARK)

CERTIFICAT D'ACCRÉDITATION Accreditation Certificate

ENREGISTREMENT N. **283B RÉV. 00**
ACCREDITATION N.

DÉLIVRÉ PAR **DIPARTIMENTO CERTIFICAZIONE E ISPEZIONE**
ISSUED BY

ON DÉCLARE QUE
WE DECLARE THAT

**Agence Nationale de Vérification
de Conformité aux Normes**

SIÈGE/HEADQUARTER:
• 917 - Niamey - Niger

SATISFAIT AUX EXIGENCES **EN/ISO/IEC 17065:2012**
DE LA NORME

MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS **EN/ISO/IEC 17065:2012**
OF THE STANDARD

COMME ORGANISME DE **Certification de produits/services**
(comme énoncé dans les annexes du présent certificat)

AS BODY FOR THE **Certification of products/services**
(as stated in the Enclosures to this Certificate)

Date de 1^{re} émission
1st issue date
28-05-2018

Date d'expiration
Expiry date
27-05-2022


Dott. Emanuele Riva
Le Directeur du Département
The Department Director


Dott. Filippo Trifiletti
Le Directeur Général
The General Director


Ing. Giuseppe Rossi
Le Président
The President

Le présent certificat ne doit pas être retenu valable s'il n'est pas accompagné des relatives annexes et il peut être suspendu ou révoqué à n'importe quel moment en cas de non-conformité constatée par ACCREDIA. La validité de l'accréditation peut être vérifiée sur le site WEB (www.accredia.it) ou en demandant directement au département compétent.
This Certificate is not valid without the relative Enclosures and can be suspended or withdrawn at any time in the event of non fulfillment as ascertained by ACCREDIA. Confirmation of the validity of accreditation can be verify on website (www.accredia.it) or by contacting the relevant Department.

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ACCREDIA



WAQSP IN A FEW WORDS

West Africa Quality System Programme

Support to the implementation of the ECOWAS Quality Policy

DONOR

European Union

FUNDING AMOUNT

EUR 12 000 000

BENEFICIARIES

Regional Level

UEMOA Commission, ECOWAS Commission

National Level

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo & Mauritania.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY

UNIDO

ISSUES

Quality Infrastructure : Quality policy, Accreditation, Metrology, Standardization, Conformity assessment, Quality promotion
Technical regulations



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