

## Context and justification

Agriculture faces a new societal demand for healthy and quality farming practices for the environment. Subsequently, due to the heightened requirements of consumers on social realities and living conditions in producing areas, it is important to impart added value to farmers' products with a view to establishing a model of sustainable agriculture by generating a production chain that is more conscious of people and of the environment.

In addition, in the light of these issues, there is a need to reposition all export crop sectors to empower them for more competitiveness and profitability.

The concern for cocoa was brilliantly highlighted by H.E. Allassane Ouattara at the official opening of the World Conference on Cocoa in November 2012 as he declared: «The challenge for a sustainable Cocoa economy is consumption and this requires a sustainable manufacturing program based on a sustainable production of cocoa». This is equally valid for other products such as coffee, palm oil, cashew, cotton shea butter, rubber, fruits etc.

Thus the development of a sustainable economy is the best solution in the fight against poverty. Promoting the development of each specific crop in a process of simplification, (especially in sustainable production) will facilitate a holistic approach to certification.

As a result, the certification of agricultural products is an essential tool to fight poverty and therefore an important remedy to achieve a sustainable development that will solve problems related to the protection of the environment and increase the income and improve the social conditions of producers.

In this context, the first international conference on "Sustainable Agriculture: Stakes and Perspectives of Certification" was held in Yamoussoukro from September 16 to 18, 2014 with more than 220 people participating.

The proceedings took place around several communications during three days of including 6 plenary and 3 thematic workshops.

The last day was devoted to products and 3 meetings were carried out simultaneously with experience sharing on the following industries:

- Coffee-cocoa
- Fresh Fruits -Palm oil tree
- Cotton-cashew nut

### Plenary sessions

- Actions of the producing countries
- Role of international organizations and NGOs
- Prospects for producers organizations
- Financing certification programs
- Social and environmental aspects of certification
- Productivity: Rational use of pesticides

### Thematic Workshops

- Management Policy
- Market Access Policy
- Financing policy

At the time of his opening speech at the 3rd edition of the SARA (International Fair for Agriculture and Animal Resources), his Excellency Mr. Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire indicated 3 challenges facing agriculture in this country :

- Agricultural productivity
- Processing our agricultural products
- Access of our agricultural products to international and regional markets

It is thus advisable to note that the certification of our agricultural products has become an indispensable condition for export on certain international markets and allows labellized companies to be more competitive.

In order to sensitize the various actors of the value chain on the importance of these problems in the promotion of our agricultural products on the external markets and in the development of our economies, the second edition is planned for the International Conference on the certification of agricultural products with the following principal topic: **CERTIFICATION : VALUATION AND COMPETITIVENESS TOOL FOR AGRICULTURAL SECTORS**

## **EXPECTED OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS**

The general objective assigned to the conference is to create an international platform for experience sharing of the various actors intervening in the certification process and also to make Cote d'Ivoire the think tank of sustainable agriculture given the stakes represented by agriculture in its economy. The purpose of the second edition of this Conference is to look further into the discussions started at the time of ICC 2014, and to integrate more actors of the value chain, in particular industry and the consumer countries.

### **Specific objectives**

- Make an inventory of certification in International Trade
- Enable better awareness of certification issues on trade
- Facilitate discussions for the implementation of a legal and regulatory framework
- Build capacity of agricultural enterprises to make them more competitive.
- Involve government authorities for their active participation in the process
- stimulate the dynamism of producer organizations and the various stakeholders of the agricultural sector;

### **Expected results**

The Second Edition of ICC aims at the following results:

- Appropriate responses are made to key issues related to certification with a focus on market access, food safety, traceability, financing
- The challenges of agricultural certification on international trade are known;
- The establishment of a legal and regulatory framework at the level of producing countries
- A strategy and a common vision is shared for better repositioning of the certification at the heart of sustainability and external marketing activities.

## **Date and place**

The conference will be held over 4 days from December 8 to 11, 2015 in Abidjan

### **• KEY POINTS**

- This is the first conference (of its kind) with a focus on major export crops.
- It provides an opportunity to involve all stakeholders in one of the biggest problems of sustainable agriculture
- The conference is of an international scope with over 400 guests and delegates taking part.

### **• MAIN ACTIVITIES**

- Opening and Closing ceremonies
- Plenary sessions
- Workshops
- B 2 B meetings
- Exhibition stands
- Gala dinner

## **PARTICIPANTS**

- Producers
- Manufacturers
- Cooperative organizations
- Importers
- Regulatory bodies
- Certification organizations
- Public authorities
- Financial institutions
- International organizations and development partners (World Bank, PNUD, FAO, etc.)
- Embassies
- NGO and consumers associations