



Distr.: LIMITED  
ECA-WA/ICE.16/2013/01  
Original: French

## THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS (16<sup>th</sup> ICE) OF WEST AFRICA

*Inclusive green growth to accelerate socio-economic  
development in West Africa*

# CONCEPT NOTE

MARCH 2013  
ABIDJAN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE



## **Introduction**

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts is an organ established by the United Nations General Assembly. In West Africa, it meets once every year to review the economic and social developments based on a study carried out by the ECA sub-regional office for West Africa (ECA/SRO-WA).

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), established by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as one of the United Nations' five regional commissions has the mandate to promote the economic and social development of its member States. The five sub-regional offices (SROs) of ECA enable the Commission to translate its normative and analytical work into operational activities at sub-regional levels. They deliver on their mandate through: technical assistance to Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and member States on policy harmonization and advice addressing the special needs of member States; facilitating regional integration by serving as focal points for policy dialogue and information exchange between the Commission and all its stakeholders in the sub-regions.

The ECA sub-regional office for West Africa (SRO-WA), based in Niamey, Niger, covers fifteen countries, all member States of the ECOWAS sub-region. The member States covered by SRO-WA are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Experts from these member States constitute the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts West Africa.

The key role of the Sub-Regional Offices (SROs) has just been emphasized in the new orientations given by the new ECA Executive Secretary. The latter focus on the search for innovative strategies for a rapid transformation of Africa, by redefining the Commission's priorities and programs in response to the challenges which Africa is currently facing. The importance of SROs as the anchor of this transformation is underlined in this new strategic approach and the "Delivery as one" principle within the framework of the United Nations, guides our actions for more efficiency in providing assistance to the RECs and other IGOs as they implement the NEPAD framework, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other sub-regional development initiatives.

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE), made up of senior Government experts from the member States, supervises the work of the sub-regional office and oversees the overall formulation and implementation of its Program of work, including the formulation of the sub-region's priority objectives. The ICE provides program direction for the SRO and makes recommendations towards addressing economic and social development challenges in the sub-region. The guidance provided the ICE ensures that the sub-regional priorities are fully integrated into the work program of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) is hosted each year, at its request, by a member States of the sub-region. The recommendations of the ICE are normally tabled for consideration by the joint AU/ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. As an ECA policy organ, the ICE is thus an important forum for redefining the Commission's mandate according to the current needs, and for strengthening the relevance of its work at the sub-regional level.

The 16th of the ICE for West Africa will be held on 18-19 March 2013 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire under the theme «Inclusive green growth to accelerate socio-economic development in West Africa». This theme carries on from the previous 15th session, hosted by the Malian Government on 15-16 March 2012 in Bamako, centered on the theme "Harnessing Agricultural Potential for Growth and Development in West Africa". It had benefited immensely from the close collaboration with the ECOWAS and UEMOA commissions under the ECA-ECOWAS multi-year program. At the end of this session, important recommendations were made to accelerate progress towards MDGs and to accelerate the development of West Africa.

## **I. The Objectives and Theme of the 16<sup>th</sup> ICE meeting**

The main objective of the 16<sup>th</sup> ICE meeting is to discuss the recent economic and social developments in West Africa, to address the key challenges and to make recommendations to accelerate growth for a rapid transformation of the sub-region. To this end, in addition to the Office progress report, the participants will review the economic and social conditions report prepared by the Office. The latter document will serve as the basis for discussions. Regarding the social component, special attention is paid to the labor market in West Africa. In its thematic part, this report puts into perspective the green economy as one way to achieve sustainable development in the sub-region while participating in the global effort to combat climate change. Moreover, the African Union's vision on the green economy, presented at the Rio+20 international conference in June 2012, will be presented to the participants. The experts will also review the report on the implementation of national and international agendas which focus this year on education in West Africa by building on MDG2 with a view to creating relevant capacities for a structural transformation of our economies.

The 16<sup>th</sup> ICE meeting provisional agenda and provisional work program are appended to this document.

The discussions during the 16<sup>th</sup> ICE meeting will enable to formulate important recommendations which might be taken into consideration during the joint sixth meeting of the African Union (AU) Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development which will also be held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 25-26 March 2013 under the theme «*Industrialization for an emerging Africa* ».

The 16<sup>th</sup> Session of the ICE will be preceded by an Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting on «*West African countries capacity building on green economy for climate change mitigation* » which will be held from 14-15 March 2013 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The recommendations that flow from the discussions between experts will then be submitted to the ECOWAS and UEMOA for consideration.

## **II. Participation**

Participants and delegates to the 16<sup>th</sup> ICE will include representatives from the various 15 States of West Africa, the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions, the other West African intergovernmental organizations, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, academia, the media, the civil society organizations and the United Nations agencies in Côte d'Ivoire. Invitation will be extended to other development partners and to non-governmental organizations.

## **III. Expected outcomes**

The 16<sup>th</sup> ICE Session for West Africa is expected to lead to the following outcomes:

- Heightened appreciation among member States of the economic and social challenges facing the sub-region and the need to develop strategies to overcome them;
- A better understanding on the need to integrate the principles of green economy into development strategies, to create more wealth and green jobs, to reduce poverty and to participate in the global effort to combat climate change;

- Strengthening the Office collaboration with the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions and other Intergovernmental Organizations, including the implementation of the sub-regional poverty reduction strategy; et
- More active engagement by member States in the work of the SRO-WA and the programs developed to assist member States.

#### **IV. Documentation**

The deliberations at the 16<sup>th</sup> ICE Session will be informed by the presentation of the following reports:

- Report on economic and social conditions in West Africa in 2012 and prospects in 2013;
- Report on the implementation of the SRO-WA work program in 2012 and presentation of the work program in 2013;
- Report on the implementation of regional and international agendas, with emphasis on gender dimension in the implementation of MDG2 in West Africa;
- Summary of the Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting work on the «West African countries capacity building on green economy for climate change mitigation»;
- Information note on the African Union vision on green economy relating to the deliberations at the Rio+20 international conference in June 2012;
- Overview of the post-2015 overall development strategy;
- New ECA initiatives (presented by representatives from the Headquarters divisions)

#### **V. Outputs**

The expected outputs of the 16<sup>th</sup> ICE will include:

- Recommendations to address the socio-economic challenges facing the sub-region;
- Recommendations to encourage West African countries to integrate the principles of green economy into development strategies, to create more wealth and green jobs, to reduce poverty and to participate in the global effort to combat climate change;
- Participants enhance their awareness of the sub-region economic and social development issues and commit themselves to integrating the agreed recommendations in their development strategies;
- A well informed ICE on the work of both ECA and SRO-WA and on the ECOWAS-ECA Multi-Year Program;
- Outcome statement from the meeting deliberations;
- Meeting report (to be produced after the meeting); and
- Press release.

#### **VI. Date and venue**

The meeting will take place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 18-19 March 2013. It will be preceded by an Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting on 14-15 March 2013 on green economy.

## VII. Administrative arrangements

The ECA SRO-WA and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire are collaborating on the preparations for the 16<sup>th</sup> ICE and will organize all local logistics, including hotel reservations, airport reception and transportation to and from hotels. The delegations bear their travel and accommodation costs in Abidjan. Participants are advised to provide ECA SRO-WA with details of their travel itinerary no later than 20 February 2013 to facilitate timely logistical arrangements.

Additional details on other administrative arrangements will be provided in the Information Note to be sent to confirmed participants.

## VIII. Contacts at ECA SRO-WA

Confirmation of participation and all other communication on the meeting should be sent to:

### **Aboubacry Lom**

Officer-in-Charge ECA Sub-Regional Office for West Africa

B.P. 744 Niamey, NIGER

Tel: +227-20722961

Fax: +227-20722894

Email: [alom@uneca.org](mailto:alom@uneca.org)

### **and copied to:**

<b>Joseph Foubi</b> Economic Affairs Officer Tel: +(227) 20 72 73 33 Email: <a href="mailto:fjoseph@uneca.org">fjoseph@uneca.org</a>	<b>Jean Baptiste EKEN</b> Administrative and Finance Officer Tel. (227) 20 72 73 24 Email : <a href="mailto:jbeken@uneca.org">jbeken@uneca.org</a>	<b>Kadijatou Amadou</b> Assistant to the Director Tel: +(227) 20 72 73 12 Email: <a href="mailto:kamadou@uneca.org">kamadou@uneca.org</a>
---	---	--