



## Press release

Abuja, 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2021

Directorate of Communication

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### **ECOWAS develops a Regional Climate Strategy to strengthen coordination of climate action in West Africa**

#### **A year 2021 to lay the foundations for long-term concerted climate action**

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century, with negative impacts on the livelihoods of communities. To address this, ECOWAS already has several regional public policies that contribute to the fight against climate change in West Africa in a multisectoral and cross-cutting manner.

Because coordinated regional action has more impact than the addition of national policies alone, ECOWAS has been working throughout 2021 to develop a Regional Climate Strategy. This strategy will contribute to strengthening the region's resilience to the impacts of climate change, in particular through support for the implementation of the commitments made by its Member States under the Paris Agreement.

This large-scale project is led by the President of the Commission, H.E. Mr. Jean Claude Kassi Brou, and the Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, Mr. Sékou Sangaré.

*"Climate change has a strong impact on the West African region. Acting on climate change in a coordinated and ambitious manner means first and foremost protecting the populations and improving living conditions in the region in changing climatic conditions. It is also an opportunity to build a low-carbon development and an innovative economy. For all these reasons, climate action is a priority of the ECOWAS Commission and the Regional Climate Strategy currently being prepared will be the basis for regional climate action"* said H.E. Jean Claude Kassi Brou, President of the ECOWAS Commission.

#### **Realistic and ambitious objectives for long-term action**

The Regional Climate Strategy is developed through a participatory process and is based on a steering committee that brings together most of the ECOWAS Commission's departments and regular consultation with Member States, other regional institutions such as CILSS and UEMOA, and civil society and private sector actors.

Built on existing policies, the regional climate strategy will set out objectives for 2030 and 2050 for adaptation to the impacts of climate change and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as an action plan for the region's priority sectors in terms of development, such as agriculture, energy, forestry, water, and transport and infrastructure.



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"The objectives of the future Regional Climate Strategy are based on the desire to build a West African community resilient to the impacts of climate change and which was able to leverage economic opportunities related the fight against climate change in favour of long-term sustainable development for the region" said Mr Sékou Sangaré, Commissioner in charge of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources.

### **From 2022, validation and implementation of an ambitious regional climate strategy**

Taking into account the increased ambitions of ECOWAS Member States through their recently revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the process will continue in 2022 and the Regional Climate Strategy will be finalised and validated by all institutional stakeholders in the first half of 2022, before its adoption by the Council of Ministers. It will constitute the framework for ECOWAS' action on climate-related issues.

### **West Africa represented at COP26**

ECOWAS will present an interim progress report on the regional climate strategy at COP26 during an event on the African pavilion on **Friday 5 November from 9:00 to 10:30** (UTC), which can also be followed online [at the following link](#).

ECOWAS co-organizes with Expertise France, which is implementing the GCCA+ West Africa project, a side-event entitled "Working at different scales of public policies in West Africa to meet the challenge of implementing the Paris Agreement" on the European Union pavilion on **Tuesday 2 November from 19:00 to 20:00** (UTC), which can be followed online, after [registration here](#).

In addition, in order to amplify the voice of West African countries, ECOWAS will operationalize in 2021 its **Regional Advisory Group for Climate International Negotiations** (RAG-CLIN) which aims to strengthen the capacities of national negotiators of Member States, but also to bring out common regional positions to reinforce West African leadership within the African group and more globally within international negotiations. Thus, the RAG-CLIN, created with the support of the GCCA+ West Africa project, will meet every two days throughout the COP to coordinate the priorities of the West African region within the negotiations.

In parallel, ECOWAS will work with the Member States, Transboundary River Basin Organizations, RAG-CLIN, as well as Civil society and Private Organizations, to ensure an **effective and responsible participation of all West African stakeholders in the "WORLD WATER FORUM"** that will be organized in Dakar from 21 to 26 March 2022.

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Press contact: