



ALLIANCES
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Agence des Cafés Robusta d'Afrique et de Madagascar

REGIONAL MEETING ON AFRICAN ROBUSTA CAFES

«Post Covid – 19, what approach for the resilience of the Robusta Coffee Sector in Africa ?»

Hôtel 2 Février, Lomé (Togo), 26 – 30 April 2021.

9th ACRAM GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF THE COOPERATION AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER COMMITTEE

The meeting of the Cooperation and Technology Transfer Committee of the 9th General Assembly of the Robusta Coffee Agency of Africa and Madagascar (ACRAM), was held on Thursday, April 29, 2021 in the FAZAO room of the Hotel February 2 in Lome, Togo, under the chairmanship of Dr. Pascal Komlan WEGBE, former Director of Research and Development at the IACO.

AGENDA :

1. Adoption of the draft agenda
2. Presentation of the ACRAM Coffee Academy project
3. Scientific Communications
4. Discussions and perspectives
5. Other items

A. The Agenda was adopted unanimously.

After submitting the draft agenda to the distinguished delegates, the Chairman of the Committee noted that there were no comments and had the agenda adopted.

B. Communications

The Chairman of the Committee gave the order of passage of the speakers and the maximum time allowed. The following communications focused on:

1. Framework Agreement ACRAM - CIRAD.

Dr. WEGBE read the Framework Agreement initiated by the Executive Secretariat, and signed between ACRAM and CIRAD in December 2020. This Framework Agreement is an operational partnership that will focus on collaboration and cooperation in favour of sustainable agriculture that respects the environment and development objectives.

ACRAM and CIRAD agree to cooperate, in general, in all initiatives that can contribute to the production and promotion of "top of the line" African Robusta coffees in strict compliance with the obligations arising from International Agreements.

2. Presentation of the ACRAM Coffee Academy project, by Professor Chahan YERETZIAN, University of Zurich.

This project was born from the series of webinars co-organized between ITC and ACRAM in June 2020, then from the exchanges between the Executive Secretariat and Professor Chahan.

The ACRAM Coffee Academy is a project funded by ITC and the University of Zurich over a period of 5 years. It is positioned as the first Robusta coffee training center in Africa, with the objective of:

- Set up a mixed online training program with three supported content on Robusta,
- Organize conferences and workshops and launch robusta research programs,
- Prepare the next generation of coffee experts and industry leaders,

- Create a strong network for the realization of new business opportunities,
- Improve the livelihoods of coffee farmers in the ACRAM region.

The first phase will start with 40 participants.

3. The genetic diversity of Robusta: New data by Dr. Thierry LEROY of CIRAD.

During his presentation, Dr. Thierry Leroy presented Robusta Diversity Studies in Africa from 1983 to 2021. Then, he highlighted the research programs underway in the ACRAM space, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Madagascar.

He ended his presentation by proposing avenues of research to be developed on the evaluation and use of present, native or introduced diversity, the selection of hybrids and clones using molecular tools, facilitate possible exchanges between countries with specific diversities for the creation of an exchange bank.

4. The global seed industry and how could ACRAM organize governance on this issue? by Dr. Benoît BERTRAND, CIRAD.

In his presentation, Dr. Bertrand represented the 4 pillars of a coffee breeding program. He cited, pre-selection, selection, production, and distribution/marketing. He later explained that it is more complicated to start programs than in the past. And this is linked to global warming and the loss of biodiversity. He thus directed the end of his presentation on the creation of new varieties designed for farmers and adapted to the major challenges of sustainable development, and the creation of a working group of researchers who would propose a research program to ACRAM.

5. The Coffee Guide, by Dr. Martina BOZZOLA and Sarah CHARLES from the University of Zurich and ITC.

These two experts have the new Coffee Guide published by the International Trade Centre (ITC). It provides a detailed overview of world trade coffee as well as advice on marketing, certification, contracts, logistics, insurance, arbitration, futures, hedging, trade credit, risk management, quality control, « e-commerce », and much more.

This book is an important source of practical and neutral information around the world on the international coffee trade.

Regional project, Creation, improvement and dissemination of the plant material of the Robusta coffee tree: valorization of the pedo climatic specificities of the production areas, by Dr Yacinthe LEGNATHE, CNRA

Dr. LEGNATHE returned to the presentation of a project that had already been adopted by the 5th General Assembly of ACRAM. It is on the strength of the Agreement – Framework signed between ACRAM and CIRAD that the Cooperation and Transfer of Technology Committee saw fit to exhume this presentation in the hope of arousing cirad's interest. In view of the similarities with previous presentations, CIRAD has shown itself willing to accompany this programme. He concluded by pointing out, like his predecessors, the weak scientific collaboration in the ACRAM space in the field of coffee.

Participants deplored the fact that some African countries producing Robusta import their plant material out of Africa.

Recommandations

At the end of the communications and exchanges that followed, the committee makes the following recommendations to the General Assembly.:

- a. To encourage the President and Executive Secretary of ACRAM to formalize a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding ACRAM – ITC – ZHAW;
- b. To invite ACRAM members to facilitate the implementation of the ACRAM Coffee Academy;
- c. To invite the countries of the ACRAM area to facilitate possible exchanges between them on the specific diversities for the creation of an exchange bank;
- d. To encourage the leaders of the ACRAM space, to sign a Charter for the promotion of coffee research,
- e. To seek the leadership of its President to personally ensure the previous recommendation (d);
- f. Encourage ACRAM members to take ownership of the Coffee Guide to adequately meet market demand;
- g. To give its agreement for the establishment of a working group that will refine the Regional Program in collaboration with CIRAD to submit a detailed Research Program and its business plan.

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