

"Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication and Knowledge Services" (BRICKS) Project

**Regional Workshop on communicating project results to various audiences.**

**July 17-21, 2017, Niamey, Niger**

**Welcome remarks by Mister Jacques Somda, Representative of the Regional Director**

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**The Permanent Secretary, representing the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Niger,  
The Representative of CILSS  
The Representative of OSS  
The National Coordinator of PAC3  
The country experts of SAWAP projects  
The Directors General and Central Directors of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development  
Distinguished guests  
Dear participants**

I am very delighted to take the floor today on the occasion of the **Regional Workshop on communicating project results to various audiences.**

First of all, I would like on behalf of the Regional Director of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and on behalf of the implementing partner institutions (CILSS, OSS) to welcome you to Niger and wish you a very pleasant stay in Niamey.

**Dear participants,**

The present workshop is part of the "*Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication and Knowledge Services*" (BRICKS) Project, a six-year programme financed by the Global Environmental Facility through the World Bank and officially launched in March 2014 in Ouagadougou. It aims at enhancing the resilience of landscapes and people's livelihoods, thereby contributing to poverty reduction and halting natural resources degradation.

As part of the Sahel and West Africa Programme (SAWAP) in support of the Great Green Wall Initiative, BRICKS delivers operational, technical and consultative services to the following 12 countries that are already

implementing or preparing large scale investment operations: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and Togo.

The BRICKS Project focuses on South-South learning through the implementation of activities related to environmental change monitoring, geo-spatial analyses, strategic communication, biodiversity planning, effective drought control and sustainable land and water management.

To achieve this work, the Permanent Inter-States Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and IUCN are the regional centers of excellence in charge of implementing the BRICKS Project in collaboration with the country teams and actors of the 12 SAWAP countries:

- CILSS is responsible for knowledge management and dissemination;
- OSS is in charge of geospatial applications and monitoring - evaluation of the project portfolio; and
- IUCN is the lead agency in the fields of biodiversity, networking and communication strategies.

### **Dear participants,**

The unique role of IUCN is based on:

- A conservation approach that is rooted in the linkages between environmental health and human well-being; and
- A change strategy that leads to knowledge improvement and empowerment of actors in order to achieve good environmental governance.

To reach this, our Union:

- Provides credible and reliable knowledge on the status of natural resources of the Earth;
- Brings together and builds up partnerships for action ;
- Values the local visions and experiences to influence policies at the local, regional and global levels.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Since the inception of the BRICKS Project, diverse actions were undertaken in the field of communication, in collaboration with the SAWAP Project teams, including the following: drafting and implementation of the BRICKS Project strategy and annual communication plans, capacity building of communication experts and provision of tools for enhancing the impact of the information disseminated on target audiences, including through communication tools and channels such as Facebook, Twitter, the website [www.sawap.net](http://www.sawap.net), ...), setting up of a functional regional network of BRICKS communicators and journalists, mapping of SAWAP Project beneficiaries for each of the 12 countries and provision of other types of support to targeted SAWAP countries.

The present workshop is therefore in line with the responsibilities entrusted with IUCN as part of the BRICKS Project. It makes it possible to involve the media men and women in the efforts towards combating land and water degradation and mostly, the understanding, development and implementation of successful conservation approaches through wider and targeted dissemination according to the various audiences. For them to fully play their role, the media men and women should be trained, informed and sensitized on the collection and production of stories that captivate decision-makers and other relevant actors.

During the next five days, various issues will be addressed, including:

- Assessment of progress accomplished by the participants who attended the previous training workshops;
- Strengthening of the participants' knowledge in effective story telling strategies and techniques that convey the GGW vision which promotes the implementation of nature-based solutions of climate change adaptation in arid zones;
- Facilitating a positive attitude and desire of the participants to actively engage in communication approaches of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that promote the GGW through nature-based solutions;
- Strengthening the competencies of the participants in the collection and production of stories that stick decision-makers and other stakeholders and create in them the desire to invest in building the resilience of communities;

- Organization by the SAWAP Niger Project - Programme of Community Actions -Phase 3 of a field trip to the a SAWAP Project site in Niger, in view of sharing experiences on Water and Soil Conservation / Soil Defense and Restoration.

**Ladies and Gentlemen, dear participants,**

I am convinced of the competencies and expertise of each and every one of us here present, and of our commitment to working towards improved natural resources management in general, and land and water management in particular; I therefore have no doubt about the brilliant outcomes of the deliberations.

To conclude, I wish to use this opportunity and thank the World Bank which, in accordance with their development objectives for the Africa Region, has expressed interest in supporting the 12 African countries, enhancing their resilience capacity in order to combat starvation and poverty.

My appreciation also goes to CILSS and OSS for their involvement in the organization of the meeting and for the perfect collaboration in the implementation of the BRICKS Project.

I also express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Niger and to the Programme on Community Actions-Phase 3 (PAC 3) which spared no effort to facilitate the organization and smooth running of the workshop in Niamey.

I can assure you that IUCN will always be available for working in synergy in view of building a sustainable community of practice for "**A world that conserves and values nature**".

Thank you for your kind attention.