

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

Regional Workshop on Communicating project results to the various audiences.

July 17-21, 2017, Niamey, Niger

**Address by Col. Major BILA Maina, Permanent Secretary, representing
the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Niger**

The Representative of CILSS

The Representative of OSS

The Representative of IUCN

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

First of all, I would like to express my joy to see this **Regional Workshop on communicating the results of the «*Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication and Knowledge Services* » (BRICKS) Project to different audiences**, being held in Niamey, our capital city.

Permit to convey to you the warm congratulations and greetings from the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, who could not be here due to other duties.

I am pleased to hail the remarkable presence at this workshop, of high level specialists who have accepted to travel to Niamey to share their knowledge, experiences and expertise.

I welcome and wish you all a pleasant stay in this hospitable land of Niger.

Distinguished guests

Dear participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

The « *Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication and Knowledge Services* » **(BRICKS) Project** is a six-year project aimed at putting in place a regional knowledge and monitoring center through investment operations of over one billion dollars in a multisectoral portfolio of sustainable landscapes. It was designed to play a role as a regional platform for not only stimulating exchanges on best practices and success stories within the 12 SAWAP countries in view of joint actions by the latter in support of the Great Green Wall Initiative, but also for documenting the performance of the SAWAP portfolio through an effective monitoring-evaluation system.

The general objective of the BRICKS project is to improve the resilience of ecosystems and of the people and support the efforts of the countries in the areas of poverty reduction, food security and sustainable natural resources management. Thus, the BRICKS project intends to bring an effective contribution to the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear participants

Since the launch of the BRICKS project in March 2014, a number of actions were undertaken in the field of communication in collaboration with the country project teams.

These are notably the drafting and implementation of the BRICKS project strategy and annual communication plan, capacity building of communication experts and journalists and development of communication tools.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear participants

Today, we are living in a fast changing world. Therefore, collaboration and experience sharing are indispensable if we are to succeed. In this world of interdependence, the full and constructive commitment of all is required.

In the face of the challenge facing us as a result of climate change and climate disruption, I remain convinced that the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative will enable us to meet these challenges. And in this daily fight, information and communication are indispensable tools.

That is why the Niamey workshop just like the previous meetings, will help among other things, to build the capacity of BRICKS and SAWAP communicators and journalists so that we pay particular attention to strategic communication and storytelling.

This participatory approach is today a management tool that makes it possible to better share best practices, inform and raise the awareness of decision-makers and of the general public in our respective countries in view of the achievements recorded through the implementation of the SAWAP projects and of the Great Green Wall Initiative.

Ladies and gentlemen

After several training workshops organized on the same topic, the Niamey workshop will also enable the following:

- Strengthening the knowledge of participants in terms of effective storytelling strategies and techniques;
- Building a positive attitude and the desire of participants to actively engage in communication approaches of the 21st century for the promotion of the Great Green Wall through nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation in dry lands;
- Further strengthening the skills of participants in the collection and production of success stories that capture the attention of decision-makers and of other stakeholders and motivate them to invest in building the resilience of communities through nature-based solutions so as to adapt to climate change in the arid zones.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As I just said, the goal of this Niamey workshop is to better communicate the results of the BRICKS project which basically relate to the implementation of the Great Green Wall; it is therefore imperative that the participants understand the vision of the Great Green Wall. Indeed, this vision was shifted from a ‘tree belt’ to sustainable, diversified and sound management of all natural resources, notably through customized agro- sylvo- pastoral activities at the local level.

This new vision is supported by different governments and development partners. It is a promising vision that encompasses the desired social and environmental outcomes.

The workshop will provide an opportunity for correctly presenting and recalling the new vision for the benefit of participants.

Indeed, for five days, you will work on the following topics:

- The vision on the Great Green Wall Initiative
- SAWAP projects’ partners and their roles
- Analyzing and sharing data on previous trainings results
- Capacity building of participants in terms of storytelling /success stories
- Communication for sustainable land and water management: monitoring and evaluation of change
- And strengthening the pool of media men and women interested in Sustainable Land and Water Management.

Distinguished guests

Dear participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

I therefore rightly wish to particularly thank the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility as well as all other partners, notably CILSS, OSS and IUCN that relentlessly worked by our side to make our common fight successful.

On this note, and while wishing full success in your deliberations, **I declare open the Regional Workshop on Communicating the BRICKS Project results to the various audiences.**

Thank you for your kind attention