

# **Agriculture, food security and climate change in the Sahel and West Africa: CILSS experience**

**Issa Martin BIKIENGA**

**Deputy Executive Secretary of CILSS, Ouagadougou,  
BURKINA FASO**

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# INTRODUCTION: The CILSS in brief



The Permanent Inter State Committee for drought control in the Sahel (CILSS) was created on 12th September 1973 to combat desertification and its effects at the sub-regional level

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## Member Countries

### 9 countries :

- 4 costal countries (The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal)
- 4 landlocked countries: Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad
- 1 island country: Cape Verde



# Mandate

**« To devote efforts towards achieving food security and combating the effects of drought and desertification for a new ecological balance in the Sahel ».**

Today this mandate covers all the Sahelian and west African countries (17 countries)

CILSS is structured into 3 institutions:

- The Executive Secretariat, based in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) : strategy and policy formulation, analysis, coordination and harmonisation;
- The Sahel Institute (INSAH) based in Bamako (Mali) : agro-socio-economic research;
- The AGRHYMET Regional Centre based in Niamey (Niger) : research, information and training in agronomy, meteorology, hydrology, instruments and computer science.

# CILSS fulfills its mandate through:

- Strategy and policy formulation, analysis and harmonization;
- Strengthening of scientific and technical cooperation;
- Data collection, processing and dissemination;
- Capacity building of the various stakeholders, including the private sector;
- Capitalization and dissemination of experiences and assets;
- Support for strategy and programmes implementation.

# Regional Support Programmes

1. Food Security, Desertification Control, Population and Development : increase of agricultural production, improved management of natural resources, food crisis prevention in the Sahel and in West Africa;
2. Access to markets: market information systems, cross border trade flows, capacity building of the stakeholders;
3. Water management: supply the communities with drinking water and irrigation.

# Main achievements

- Formulation and implementation of food security strategies and programmes;
- Setting up the Food Security Prevention Network in the Sahel and in West Africa;
- Financing many micro-projects to combat desertification initiated by the Civil Society;
- Supplying the communities with drinking water through solar energy;

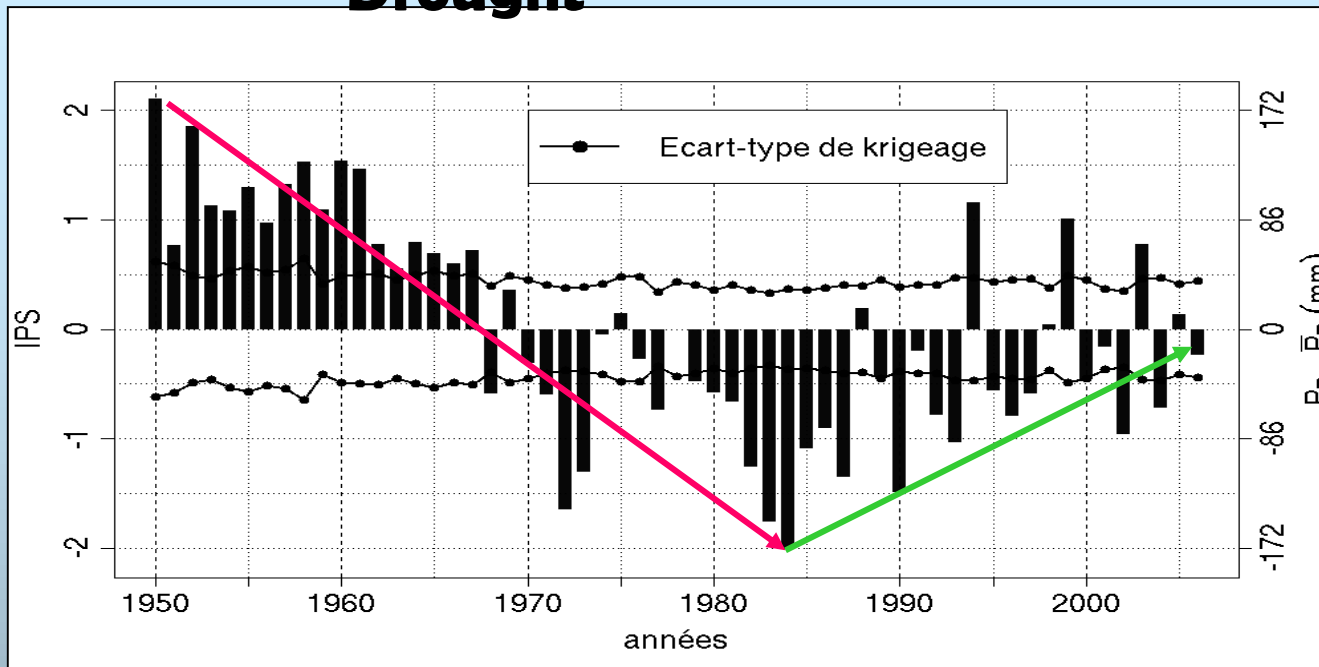
**These achievements were possible because of the regional approach.**

# Linkages between food security, climate change and terrestrial carbon

Climate change is a threat for food security and sustainable development in the Sahel and in West Africa, because of their vulnerability:

- agriculture: losses of seeds and reduction of yields;
- livestock: insufficient pasture land that affects animal production;
- water resources: reduction river flow;
- natural ecosystems: land degradation and loss;
- energy supply: scarcity of wood to ensure low cost energy supply for the poor;
- Public health: recurrent malaria and meningitis.

# Drought



- Years 1950-1970 humid
- Years 1970-1980 dry
- in the 1990, increase with persistent deficit

Source, A. Ali et al. 2008

Le Fleuve Niger à NIAMEY : étiage sévère connu en 1985



N.B. Cas aussi du Bani à DOUNA (Mali) respectivement en 1984 et 1987



**Crop pests (*locust invasion*).**



**Cumulative action from drought and locust = reduction of agricultural production in 2004/2005 in the Sahel**



# Actions in progress

- Elaboration of a Sub-Regional Action Plan on reduction of vulnerability to natural, economic and social systems in West Africa and Chad with respect to climate change;
- Implementation of a project on adaptation to climate change funded by Canada;
- Evaluation of carbon storage capacity to access funds;
- Promotion of projects and programmes for clean development mechanism (CDM), involving agroforestry;
- Capacity building of member States in the adaptation to climate change.

# Conclusion

- Climate change must be taken into account in the elaboration and implementation of all projects and programmes regarding sustainable development and poverty reduction;
- Climate change is trans-boundary: all the countries must cooperate with a strong regional approach;
- CILSS is a key institution in West Africa capable to manage successful projects and programmes to combat climate change;
- CILSS needs to be supported by the International Community and especially by the US Government in order to reduce the harmful impacts of climate change and ensure food and nutritional security in West Africa.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION**