

Minutes of the COSTEA Steering Committee meeting of September the 22nd, 2020, by videoconference

List of participants :

Name	First name	Institution	Country
ALOUSI	Nabil	Ministry of Agriculture	Morocco
AYALA	Camille	AFEID	France
BALLIN	Quentin	AFD	France
BETY	Ali	High Commissioner A 3N INITIATIVE (excused)	Niger
BOUARFA	Sami	AFEID/INRAE	France
CHAN	Youttha	Secretary of state of MOWRAM	Cambodia
CHHEA	Bunrith	Director General of technical affairs of MoWRAM	Cambodia
FALL	Khaly	SAED	Senegal
FUSILLIER	Christian	AFD	France
GBENOU	Pascal	ROPPA	Benin
GRAWITZ	Bruno	AFEID (excused)	France
HAMDANE	Abdelkader	Independent	Tunisia
HOFMANN	Alexia	AFD	France
KAMATE	Amedé	ORS (observer)	Mali
NDAO	Seyni	OFOR (observer)	Senegal
OUEDRAOGO	Clément	CILSS (excused)	Burkina Faso
ROLLIN	Dominica	Ministry of Agriculture	France
SCHILL	Marie	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	France
SECK	SIDY	UGB	Senegal
TANGUY	Vincent	E-SUD	France
VENNAT	Benjamin	AFEID/BRL	France
VENOT	Jean Philippe	IRD	France

COPIL background

This is the second meeting of the COSTEA Steering Committee with the new configuration of its members (personalities from the world of irrigated agriculture from the main COSTEA partner countries). The first meeting of the Steering Committee with this same format was held on July the 3th, 2019. This year, COPIL has involved new members from Cambodia (MM CHAN Youttha and CHHEA Bunrith).

This COPIL was held by videoconference. The power point presentation presented during the session can be downloaded from the link <https://dl.brl.fr/hsoicsa>. The audio recording can also be downloaded from the following link: <http://costea-collaboration.net/wakka.php?wiki=CrCopil>.

The previous steering committee met in July 2019.

Reminder of agenda

- Introduction
- Strategic and operational framework
- COSTEA organisation and network
- Communication and the Dakar World Water Forum
- Budget allocation
- Progress of the AS and AC
- Deadlines

AFD's welcoming message (Christian Fusillier TRP Division Chief)

Christian Fusillier (Head of the Agriculture Rural Development Biodiversity Division) said a few welcoming words on behalf of AFD. AFD is very pleased to see the members of the COPIL again and particularly welcomes the remote members who are present (Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, Cambodia...). This meeting is an important moment to gather expertise on agricultural water.

Since March 2020, AFD has reallocated part of its funding for managing the consequences of the covid-19 crisis (e.g. support to rebuild food security stocks in West Africa with ECOWAS / dealing with the risk of locust waves with the FAO / addressing the One Health issue by studying the links between animal health, human health and environmental health with the OIE and CIRAD).

The strategic intervention framework of AFD's Agriculture, Rural Development and Biodiversity Division has been reworked along 3 lines:

- Supporting agro-ecological intensification (produce more, produce better) ;
- For more resilient rural territories: better support for territorial development decisions taken by partners over the long term (fewer one-off projects, avoid silo projects);
- A set of actions to strengthen partners' capacities in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

This COSTEA Steering Committee is a good opportunity to make the point on the Actions and projects already launched. The Collaborative Actions that are in the start-up phase are also particularly important for the COSTEA dynamics (Policy brief on Groundwater, territorial approaches, environmental analysis and CC).

For AFD the priority issues for this steering committee are:

- The validation of a new version of the operational and strategic framework of COSTEA ;
- The setting up of Consultative Groups (GC) to open up debates and enhance the value of the knowledge produced by COSTEA (the core of COSTEA's philosophy) ;
- The challenge of COSTEA's visibility now that the production of knowledge has been launched, regarding in particular the following events :
 - The ICID Forum at the end of 2020 in Marrakech
 - The Dakar Forum in 2021

Revision of the strategic and operational framework

Following the request made during the previous Steering Committee, the COSTEA Permanent Technical Secretariat (PTS) presents the elements of the COSTEA logical framework made up of 4 major challenges that structure the objectives to which COSTEA wishes to respond. These 4 challenges are the following:

- Contribute to the economic and social development of the territories ;
- Strengthening the environmental sustainability of irrigated agriculture;
- Reducing risks and increasing the resilience of irrigated agriculture;
- Accompanying change through technical innovation and institutional reforms.

The objects of analysis of each of the challenges are recalled as well as the 7 Transversal Actions (SA) and the 5 Collaborative Actions (CA), which are the main instruments developed to respond to them.

A summary of the COSTEA monitoring and evaluation framework is also presented. This framework sets out the 3 main results sought from the COSTEA programme and proposes indicators and means of verification. This monitoring and evaluation framework is of particular interest in the perspective of an evaluation of COSTEA 2 and its possible follow-up.

Report of the COPIL exchanges :

No specific remarks made on the strategic framework and logical framework presented. These two elements are therefore validated.

Networking within COSTEA

Beyond the COSTEA governance bodies, whose roles are defined in the strategic framework, the PTS presents the current COSTEA organisation which aims at encouraging the networking of all the actors to "meet together the challenges of irrigated agriculture" (new COSTEA slogan).

The groups forming the COSTEA community are presented, as well as the geographical distribution of the current membership (325 members). This analysis shows that COSTEA members remain for the time being strongly French-speaking, and for a good half of them French.

Report of the COPIL exchanges :

AFD appreciates the work that has been carried out over the last 2 years to enable COSTEA to be objective. It has made it possible to re-characterize COSTEA's bodies (CST, COPIL, Consultative Groups). It is important that the composition of the COPIL reflects the geographical diversity of the partners and that their strategies and issues are discussed.

Dominique Rollin asks about the influence of the COVID crisis on COSTEA's actions? How COSTEA activities have been affected?

Generally speaking, the service providers have adapted their proposed interventions to the context (travel restrictions, implementation of distance working tools) and some activities are seeing their schedules slip, without the impacts being worrying for the moment. The deadlines for the preparation of proposals in the context of contract awards have been extended during the

Lockdown period to allow candidates to adapt. On the AS Flood Zones, field work has been postponed but without compromising the work for the moment (with the hope that field work can be completed by March-April 2021).

Monitoring bodies: Consultative groups and monitoring of SAs / CA Working Groups / SA Supervisory Committee

The PTS presents the role, composition and forms of mobilisation of the Consultative Groups (AGs) for monitoring the Transversal Actions (SAs). The 4 Consultative Groups already created are analysed in terms of the geographical distribution of their members. The PTS emphasises the challenge of involving national institutions that have not been very present in COSTEA until now. The Working Groups (WGs) set up to implement the Collaborative Actions (CAs) are also explained and presented (number of people, state of mobilisation of the group according to the CA).

Report of the COPIL exchanges :

The wish was expressed for the COPIL members to be kept informed of the results of the Actions so as to follow the COSTEA steering more easily (that the COPIL be informed of the results even before the conclusion of the work).

- COPIL members are encouraged to join the Consultative Groups whose role is to ensure methodological support and the valorisation of the deliverables. The AGs will be consulted on a regular basis (2-3 times a year) upon delivery of the main deliverables of the actions validated by the PTS.
- The Scoping Notes and Terms of Reference for the projects launched are accessible in the collaboration area (<http://costea-collaboration.net/wakka.php?wiki=PresEntation>), which enables COPIL members to keep up to date.
- Find a way to share with the COPIL. Putting CGs on the COSTEA platform ?
- A way should be found to communicate regularly with the COPIL (beyond the annual meetings) and assess whether a tool/messages complementary to the COSTEA Instant is needed.

The representative of ROPPA noted that COSTEA's work was progressing, but he did not see more clearly the role of ROPPA within COSTEA. ROPPA represents producers and professional associations in West Africa. It is important that the place and role of ROPPA as a stakeholders in the COSTEA actions and as a structure within COSTEA are recognised.

- it is then necessary to work to bring the SAGI network closer to ROPPA, which has not worked well so far. Just to remind, the SAGI network concerns the SAGIs and their partners, the main ones being the producers.
- The need for financial support to encourage the mobilisation of ROPPA was mentioned.

One option to address the lack of integration of ROPPA would be to start by identifying/mapping ROPPA members in each SAGI zone and invite them to join the working groups on SAGI sites. The PTS will make a proposal of actions to be taken to achieve this identification.

Communication

The PTS presents COSTEA's internal and external communication tools. Remarks made on these tools at previous meetings are recalled as well as the modifications made:

- COSTEA Instant has been taken over from the last COPIL and is presented in a new, more condensed form;
- The Collaboration Space is presented and its function recalled;
- The format and content of the quarterly newsletters, the first of which should be shared in October-November, are presented;
- The redesign of the COSTEA website is confirmed (contracted service provider) and a presentation of the first frame of the site is made. The new site is scheduled to go online in November 2020. The members of COPIL are invited to give their opinion on this first outline quickly, while adaptations are still possible;
- The question of COSTEA's presence on social networks is addressed as well as the question of the support to be favoured.

Report of the COPIL exchanges :

In view of the current and future integration of a number of English-speaking people into the COSTEA community (e.g. new participants from Cambodia), it is suggested that the COSTEA Instant will be translated into English (or even other documents considered important);

The idea of translating certain substantive documents into the local language was also raised (Cambodian participants);

Presence on social networks is debated. A discussion takes place about the need to increase presence on social networks, and the need to prioritize because of the workload that the animation of these networks represents. For some, LinkedIn does not necessarily represent seriousness and professionalism and COSTEA would also have its place on other media (Facebook / twitter). An analysis will be carried out and discussed within the PTS and proposals will be made.

World Water Forum

COSTEA will propose a joint SAED / ROA SAGI / COSTEA stand at the WWF and has submitted a labelling file for the forum.

The main themes that COSTEA could put forward during this forum are proposed. These are the ROA SAGI and its productions, especially groundwater management.

Report of the COPIL exchanges :

AFD inquired about the status of the action sheet submitted on ROA-SAGI support and the links with CILSS on actions concerning groundwater management. SAED confirms that an action sheet has indeed been filed on the Forum's 2D axis and that a protocol between SAED and ROA SAGI will soon be signed.

Seyni Ndao involved in the organisation of the WWF as a member of the Pilot Group on the theme "Water and Rural Development", confirms that COSTEA is well identified by the organisers.

Furthermore, he indicated that the forum is maintained for the moment for the month of March 2021.

The question was raised of the presence of partners from other geographical areas (Cambodia, Maghreb). These partners might be interested in participating, but for the moment they do not have much information from their administrations. In this possible perspective, a point is raised on the interest, for example, with regard to the management of large irrigated areas, to study the opportunity for COSTEA to involve the members from SE Asia and the Maghreb to constitute a wider network of institutions managing agricultural water in the WWF. COSTEA should investigate this question in order to identify areas of common interest. It is recalled that the Marrakech conference (ICID) was supposed to be an opportunity for exchange between SAGI and actors from the Maghreb (Moroccan Offices), but the sanitary issue is creating some uncertainty at present about the planning of this conference.

Budget allocation - Status of SAs

Because of the short available time, a quick summary is presented on the budget allocation and the state of progress of the contractualisations for the Transversal Actions. The work of final valorisation of deliverables resulting from the SA and CA is also discussed, and a summary table on some valorisation works to be envisaged and presented. It is recalled that part of this work will be the responsibility of the PTS, supported by the Consultative Groups.

Report of the COPIL exchanges :

Clarification is requested on the need to analyse structurally blocked actions and to consider a possible shift or reprogramming. The PTS comes back over the difficulties encountered:

- The West African land project was abandoned because the conditions were not in place for it to go smoothly (SAGI Landowner project already on the table, presence of the CTFD...);
- The AS REUSE was complex (6 countries, original organisation) and it took a long time to complete the formulation of its workgroups, especially since the Mediterranean coordinator, who was in the lead on this formulation, left COSTEA at the beginning of 2020. In the end, the formulation chosen was shorter than expected, the compilation of feedback rather than the production of knowledge. The tendering procedure is underway for the international coordination service.
- For the Irrigated Landowner project in the Maghreb and the bottomlands project in West Africa, there are still a few points to be clarified in order to produce finalised ToRs. Notably an exchange with the CILSS on bottomlands (choice of sites...) and the recruitment of the Mediterranean coordinator within the PTS (a position vacant since the appointment of Akiça to the Tunisian government) and which would facilitate the progress of the implementation of the workcamps in the Mediterranean. The recruitment of a new coordinator should be concluded by the end of 2020 ;
- The calendar of the Irrigator & Land Services worksites in SE Asia may be delayed by a few months due to COVID, but this is not a hindrance because they were planned for a short period of time and a postponement of a few months does not compromise COSTEA ;
- Finally, the need to analyse the risks for the continuation of the COSTEA meeting and to include them as an annex to the COPIL report was finally retained;
- The issues of final valuation are notoriously based on the PTS through the production of summary notes of the worksites (risk/load to be evaluated). The members of the PTS are strongly mobilized for the follow-up of the worksites and risk to be unavailable. It is

suggested to anticipate the production of deliverables and the organisation of workshops, while making sure to take into account the contractual deadlines for the return of deliverables to the service providers.

Risk analysis :

The COPIL recommends that COSTEA carry out a risk analysis, taking into account :

- the timetable and actions not yet launched;
- the COVID risk which can slow down activities in the field;
- risks of overload when packages of deliverables have to be analysed and valued concomitantly, and a large number of meetings have to be organised; the possibilities of pooling meetings will have to be examined.

The following table summarises the potential risks that the programme could face and suggests a few points to watch out for:

Identification of risks	Proposed recommendations
Health Risk (COVID) which complicates fieldwork, the missions of international coordinators or the mobilisation of collective meetings in the study countries involving a slowdown or suspension in the implementation of activities.	Maintain close contact with providers and ensure that they have alternative options and that they can implement them in the event of travel difficulties due to the health situation (distant workshops/mobilisation of national actors).
Weak mobilisation and involvement of SAGI Expert Contributors (AS SAGI) resulting in difficulty for the service providers to carry out their mission and poor quality deliverables as well as lower ownership of the work by the SAGI.	Support providers through the ROA network and a better involvement of the ROA coordinator to ensure that the mobilisation of CEs meets expectations. Readjust the focus with providers on the expected contributions of the ECs when problems are brought to our attention. Warn the new international service providers about the difficulties already observed on some sites (transfer to irrigators), in order to take this risk into account in the formulation of their proposal.
Volatile security context in the countries of intervention: risk of armed attacks or banditry in project areas leading to suspension or interruption of activities.	Exchanges with service providers and partners in the countries to analyse the security situation and agree on the adaptation of interventions in case of unacceptable insecurity; carry out a study about the impact of insecurity on SAGI activities.
Risk of insufficient institutional anchoring of the Structuring Actions resulting in a weak appropriation of the results by the contracting authorities of the partner countries.	Establishment of regular exchanges with national administrations by PTS members (important role of the geographical coordinators). Involvement of local AFD agencies. Raising the awareness of service providers on this issue.

<p>Risk of slippage of actions not yet implemented (SAGI MO site; AS REUSE; AS landowner Maghreb; AS bottomlands).</p>	<p>A special effort is planned for a strong mobilization of the PTS by December 2020 so that all these actions can be initiated quickly (punctual increase of the project leader's time) and thus fall within the COSTEA 2 deadlines. The COSTEA AMO is also vigilant in ensuring that the initially scheduled deadlines are met.</p>
<p>Risk of slippage in the validation of service providers' deliverables.</p>	<p>Report delivery schedules are re-stated to the service provider at the start of each mission. Close technical monitoring by the AMO is carried out to limit delivery delays. Penalties for delay may be included in the contracts. Work is well distributed within the PTS to cope with peaks in the validation of deliverables scheduled at certain periods (see action implementation schedule). Validation periods for deliverables are respected so as not to accumulate too much delay. The PTS for this purpose signed a follow-on contract with its AMO for the monitoring of the deliverables. Due to the amounts dedicated for the AMO, this initially unsized contract is currently only in place until the end of 2020.</p>
<p>Risk of slippage in the valuation of service providers' deliverables.</p>	<p>COSTEA has a well-defined strategy for the valorisation of deliverables, it nevertheless requires anticipating the reflections shared between PTS, GC / WG and service providers on the modes of valorisation (purpose of the GCs) and to have the time (PTS availability) and sufficient support from members external to the PTS to produce these valorisation supports (possible recourse to punctual support services).</p>
<p>The quality of the deliverables delivered by the service providers is not satisfactory.</p>	<p>A close technical follow-up will be carried out for each service by the STP. Deliverables are proofread by a PTS pair with delivery of questions/comments/suggestions and request for a 2nd iteration from the provider. The reminder of COSTEA's requirements (at the launch of the project and at milestones) helps to maintain "pressure" on the service providers.</p>
<p>Risk of low involvement of the Consultative Groups (AGs) set up on a voluntary basis, which would result in a low valorisation of the actions and a lack of ownership of the results by the COSTEA community.</p>	<p>The PTS, which is in charge of mobilising these CGs, hopes to be able to set up meetings at a distance and is counting on the good participation of volunteers. The first feedback on this approach should take place in November 2020 following the first mobilisation meetings. Depending on the initial findings, it may be necessary to consider ways of maintaining and sustaining the motivation of KMs.</p>

<p>Risk of slippage of the Collaborative Actions (CA) or impossibility to carry out the planned seminars (link with health risk) which sometimes represent an important part of the CA.</p>	<p>The CAs, once launched, have the vocation to advance in a more autonomous way through the involvement of the Working Groups (WGs). The commitment of WG members is therefore essential. Difficulties in organising the seminars are already being felt in some actions (CA environmental analysis and climate change).</p>
<p>Risk of availability of the PTS, which would materially not have the time to manage all the programmed activities. Beyond the monitoring of SAs and CAs, the animation of CGs and WGs, participation in valorisation, the PTS must also manage the communication, administrative management, network, monitoring and evaluation aspects, etc., while no PTS member is full time on COSTEA.</p>	<p>To face this risk, the PTS must be able to release/reallocate funds within its budget on an ad hoc basis to temporarily increase the mobilization of certain members to meet needs and production peaks, and consider the possibility of temporarily contracting a community member to provide ad hoc support.</p>
<p>Punctual delays in the payment of invoices to partners/providers involving cash flow difficulties.</p>	<p>The AMO ensures the link between the validation of deliverables and the necessary payment orders and provides a quarterly report with the payments to be expected. AFEID is planning to request an advance payment from AFD in order to be able to honour service providers' invoices.</p>

Calendar - Miscellaneous

The short and medium-term deadlines for COSTEA are recalled :

- Mobilisation of the Consultative Groups :
 - o GC Flood Zones: meeting scheduled for 3 November 2020
 - o GC SAGI: meeting to be scheduled at the end of November/early December (after selection of the SAGI MO service provider)
 - o GC agro eco: meeting to be scheduled for the end of November
 - o GC Irrigator Service: meeting to be scheduled following the submission of the inception report
- Realization of seminars within the framework of the Working Groups:
 - o Seminar on environmental assessment and climate change (Before the end of 2020)
 - o Groundwater Management Seminar (Feb 2021)
- COSTEA supervision mission by AFD (week of 30 November 2020)
- COSTEA STC meeting: Mid January 2021