PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS OF A COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AMONG WEST AFRICAN STATES

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I. Introduction

In Europe, America, Africa and Asia, the Twentieth Century has witnessed movements towards economic unions and/or common trading arrangements. The fact that early movements at common trading policies were among advanced countries, indicate that even economies at such advanced stages of development see ample benefits to be derived from such associations. The early theories of economic co-operation centred on trade creation and trade diversion are said to be static and are therefore inapplicable to the situation in developing countries. This is due in most cases to their low volume of trade in the world and even between the developing states themselves. Hence economic co-operation here is seen in the light of its contribution to economic growth and/or structural transformation of these developing countries. Thus alliances like those for cocoa and coffee are seen as a means of obtaining high export prices to provide the foreign exchange necessary for economic development.

The movements in West Africa which culminated in the setting up of an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had their origin in various groupings both during the colonial era and post independence period. Such movements include the Federation of French West Africa (AOF) which enjoyed close links in trade, finance and common services. In 1959 there was the West African Customs Union (UDAO) which included Dahomey now (Republic of Benin), Ivory Coast, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Mali and Upper Volta. This soon ran into trouble over import duties allocation. There were others like the Ghana - Volta customs union 1961. Ghana - Guinea agreement of 1961 Senegambia in 1962.

In 1966 at Niamey and 1967 in Ghana articles of association for a West African Economic Community were considered. However it is the ECOWAS which has included all the countries of West Africa. These countries are listed in Table 1. The treaty setting up the community includes articles on most facets of socio-economic policies. But this paper considers only two of the articles dealing with Agriculture. These articles are 34 and 35. Article 34 states that

"Member States undertake to work towards the harmonisation of their internal and external agricultural policies in their

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relation with one another." While article 35 states that "Member states undertake to take all measures of a common policy especially in the fields of research, training production, processing and marketing of the products of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries".

Though at present no measure has been announced as regards such common policies, this paper attempts to evaluate the problems and prospects of common policies in the areas identified by the treaty. This exercise is embarked upon mainly because the authors feel that policies on these lines are likely to have greater effects on the population of West Africa when compared to policies relevant to other sectors of the economies such as industries. First the bulk of the population (between 70 and 90 per cent) depend on agriculture for livelihood. The proportion depending on agriculture is less than 20 per cent for most EEC counties. Secondly, the GDP contributed by Agriculture ranges between 20% in Liberia to 51% in Niger. While in the EEC, it ranges between 3% in U.K. to 15% in Ireland. Even in a country like U.K. where the contribution of agriculture to GDP is small and the percentage of people in Agriculture is only about 10 per cent, the working of a common EEC agricultural policy has featured most prominently in British negotiation. This is because that country is concerned about the welfare of her few farmers.

It seems certain therefore that the articles relating to agriculture are the most important as far as the majority of citizens in West Africa are concerned and a common agricultural policy on the lines stated in articles 34 and 35, needs careful examination in order to identify prospects and problems of getting a workable agricultural policy. This exercise, we hope, would not only be of use to those who would see to the realisation of these objectives but could be of value to other developing areas in Africa, Asia, Latin America where agriculture is the main stay of the economy and there are drives towards economic unity.

Table 3 shows the countries in ECOWAS together with their population, total and per capita GDP in U.S. dollars. GDP per head is low and ranges between 65 U.S. dollars in Upper Volta to 347 in the Ivory Coast. A large proportion of the GDP in West Africa is derived from Agriculture. This is shown in Table 2 which also gives the comparable situation for Europe. This further underlines the importance of agriculture in the West Africa sub-region. In other words, every agricultural policy is bound to have very significant impacts on the majority of the people living in the region.

In the rest of this paper, section II discusses the agricultural economy of West Africa, section III, the resource endowments, section IV, trade, section V, gains and problems of integrated agricultural policies, while section VI presents the summary and conclusion.

II. The Agricultural Economy of West Africa

West Africa is a primary producer of agricultural commodities both for domestic consumption and for exports. The majority of the population in each country (70 - 80 per cent) live in rural areas and are engaged in agriculture. The crops grown are similar, running across the area from east to west along the same latitudes. The rainfall pattern, with heavy rains along the coast and gradually thinning out as one moves northwards dictates the vegetation and cropping pattern. There are however small pockets whose extra rainfall or special soils support the growth of some specific crops such as rubber in Liberia and parts of Nigeria.

A. Crops grown by member countries: Table 4 shows the main crops grown by each of the 15 countries listed in the ECOWAS charter. The proportions of these crops produced by each country are presented with the total actual tonnage so that the relative importance of each country as a producer can be easily seen while the absolute magnitude of its production in 1971 can be estimated. The table indicates that for major food grains, the leading producers are Nigeria for sorghum and millet, followed by Niger, Mali and Senegal. Nigeria tops the list in maize followed by Ghana and Ivory Coast. The largest volume of rice produced came from Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Upper Volta. The smallest total production for millet and sorghum came from Gambia, Ivory Coast and Mauritania while three countries - Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone had no production figures for 1971. Dahomey produced very negligible quantities of paddy rice while Mauritania and Tago came close to nothing too. No estimate of maize in Gambia and Guinea Bissau were available while Mauritania and Niger had very little output.

For the roots and tubers, Nigeria produced the largest crops of yams and potatoes as well as cassava followed by Ghana, the Ivory Coast and Tago. Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone had no production figures while Guinea Bissau and Upper Volta produced the least cassava.

Senegal led the production of groundnuts followed closely by Nigeria, Niger, Mali and Gambia. Ghana is number one producer of cocoa, Nigeria was second and Ivory Coast third in 1971.

For several other crops, total production was negligible and individual countries' shares were small. Several countries had no production of some crops as shown in Table 4. It is however possible that some quantities were produced by FAO had problems with the estimation. Such crops include citrus, of which Nigeria produces a small quantity, bananas which also grow in the country but have not been shown in the production estimates.

Although Nigeria featured prominently as a major producer, her production of several crops will become very small compared to many other ECOWAS members when calculated on a per capita basis.

The similarities in production patterns limited the exchange of food crops among the countries and the poor infrastructural development and lack of processing/packaging further reduced the chances of trade.

Livestock Development: The eco-systems favour the production of livestock in countries farther away from the rain forest belt. These areas are free of trypanosomiasis which cause death to livestock particularly beef cattle. These livestock, including sheep, goats and beef cattle are sent down to the coastal areas for sale. From all indications the supply of livestock is falling short of demand. The reasons for these are many and include the increased demand for livestock by the coastal countries whose incomes have risen in recent years. Secondly the nomadic Fulani system of management restricts the off take among slaughtered cattle to as low as 15 per cent per annum. Furthermore droughts have destroyed almost half of the cattle in the Sudanian and Sahelian savannahs of West Africa. It is generally believed that the rate of livestock production can be increased in West Africa if there can be stratification whereby cattle reared in the savannah are finished in the medium to heavy rainfall area (given that the susceptibility of the zebu cattle to trypanosomiasis can be overcome). A common agricultural policy which aims at achieving this objective would have the effect of increasing livestock production in the sub-region.

As shown in table 4, Nigeria is the largest single producer of cattle, sheep goats and poultry. Mali and Niger are next and Mauritania comes forth. Mali occupies the second place in poultry production and Ghana is third. Gambia leads the way in pig production with Nigeria coming second. For horses, asses and camels which are work and transport animals, production is largest in countries which have expansive savannah terrains. Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Mauritania and Senegal feature prominently in these. The production figures tend to mislead unless placed on per capita basis. If this was done, Nigeria will appear to produce the least, given its large population. This has implications on intra ECOWAS trade in livestock.

Interstate trade in livestock, especially cattle goes on among ECOWAS members in the north-south direction. Thus Niger, Mali, Upper Volta with higher per capita production sell livestock to Nigeria, Ghana and Ivory Coast, where per capita incomes are reasonably higher.

A harmonisation of processing and distribution of livestock products would help to reduce the high disparities between prices prevailing in countries of West Africa. For instance some of Nigeria's imports of cattle from Chad, Niger and Dahomey are latter sent enroute to Ghana, with the effect that price of beef in Ghana is sometimes twice what it is in Lagos - Nigeria.

The nomads would pose problems in any effort at harmonising livestock policies in West Africa. At present most nomads move freely across national boundries in search for food and water for their cattle. Even when individual countries are aware of the need for settling nomads, the problem is not easy. A possible solution will have to be the establishment of common grazing reserves across national frontiers. These would provide necessary amenities for these nomads irrespective of where they come from. The cost would have to be borne by the community.

Another aspect of the problem of livestock development is that the Fulanis rarely sell their young animals. Hence the possibility of increasing meat output through stratification in production between the north and south in West Africa is highly limited. Therefore ranches would have to be set up in some of the southern countries, where trypanosomiasis resistant breeds of cattle can be reared. But then the problem of the nomads would still need to be tackled in the context of the whole West Africa.

All these suggestions imply a complete submission of individual countries to an agricultural policy making body which would have the power to dictate where, how and what quantity of different products must be produced. The chances of such total submission are very slight.

III. Resource Endowments

A. Land: As shown in table 2 there is abundant supply of arable land. A total of 4614.08 thousand square hectares is distributed as shown in the table. Some countries are more thickly populated than others and some areas within the same country have a higher concentration of population. This leads to wide variations in per capita arable land available. But given that agricultural progress will further release people from the land, there is adequate supply of land for agricultural production.

B. Labour: Column 2 of Table 1 shows the total population of the sub-region while column 3 shows the proportion of the population that is assumed rural. By 1970, the sub-region had a population of about 100 million on land area of 4.6 million square kilometers. At least 70 per cent of the population live in rural areas. The rate of growth of population in this sub-region is put at between 2.5 to 3 per cent per annum. Average population density ranges between 70 persons per square mile along the Coastal countries to less than 5 persons per square mile in the inland countries like Niger, Mali, and Upper Volta. These disparities have led to the existence of pockets of over-cultivated land with low marginal productivity. There is also the question of age distribution of farming populations. The general trend is for the youth to obtain some education and drift to the cities or industrial centres in search of clerical jobs. This had gradually raised the mean age of active farmers and consequently lowered productivity as their capacity to work declined.

A common phenomenon of labour in West Africa is its migratory nature, both within a country and between countries. The causes of migration are diverse but the most important seems to be the quest for economic opportunities particularly in agriculture. Infact, it is estimated that over 90 per cent of migrants from Niger, 84 per cent from Upper Volta and 74 per cent from Tago were involved in agriculture. In the 1960's Upper Volta, Niger and Mali recorded between 17 to 42 per cent of their total population migrating to other areas as farm workers. For instance most of the migrants from Upper Volta were found in Ivory Coast where they are employed on plantations. Nigerians also went to Equitorial Guinea to work on plantations.

A factor which has eased the flow of labour from one country to another is the existence of ethnic affinity between citizens of two to three countries. Fulanis for instance are found in practically all countries of West Africa. The Yerubas who are the major ethnic group in Western Nigeria are also found in Republic of Benin. Again Ghana and Tago have similar situations just like Gambia and Senegal. The existence of job opportunities are easily identified and communicated to relatives wherever they may be. This situation would probably continue on a larger scale if within the community no restrictions are placed on labour movement so that labour could move to areas where its marginal productivity is higher. This could have been an ideal situation because of shortages of labour which are often complained of in rubber, coffee and cocoa plantations. The shortage of labour in these plantations are due to a number of factors. Among them can be named the recent migration of workers to urban areas in search of real or imagined employment, the emancipation of women and free primary education all of which have deprived the farmer of his traditional sources of labour supply. This is worsened in recent times by the existence of the aging people in agriculture.

Can the present treaty make for easy migration of labour? Particularly when it is known that some countries impose restrictions on migrants from neighbouring countries? For instance the Republic of Benis in 1975 closed its borders with Togo, the main reason being that there was a fear that Togolese nationals were coming to the Republic of Benin to cause political trouble. In the same way Nigerians were sent packing from Ghana and recently from Equitorial Guinea, where they had been working on plantations for years. This is a major challenge to the policy makers in the ECOWAS union.

If agreements could be reached towards a reasonable migration policy, it would serve a lot of beneficial purposes. First agriculture would have sufficient supply of labour, which it is hoped would help to increase productivity in that sector. Again since most of the people who move are unable to get employment in their respective countries, it would go a long way into solving unemployment in these countries, thereby making the maximum use of labour resources.

C. Capital: There is very little capital investment so far in the region's agricultural enterprise. The implements are still the simple hoe and cutlass, farm structures, machinery and equipment are almost non-existent. In a few cases, plantation agriculture has resulted in some investment in processing equipment such as oil mills and rubber processing equipment. Cotton ginnery and textile mills are also important sources of capital investment in agriculture

If the existing permanent crops (cocoa, oil palm,rubber, cashew etc.) were capitalised, substantial amounts of capital can be estimated. Although water dams are primarily for hydro-electric power, they could be turned to agricultural investment through irrigation.

D. Moisture and Water: This is a critical factor determining the pattern of agriculture in West Africa. Rainfall is high near the coast and gradually thins out as one moves north. Much of the rainfall water runs off into the rivers and eventually enter the Atlantic, carrying with it a lot of rich surface soil. Lack of water critically limits production and forces large numbers of farmers to seek alternative jobs or remain idle for parts of the year. The production and annual yields of such crops as rubber, swamp rice, oil palm and citrus depend on having considerable amounts of moisture.

At present various member countries are setting up dams with the intention of retaining some of the water and using it for irrigation so as to develop among other things, market gardening, and to have year round production of some crops. These projects generally require heavy capital expenditures to harness the water 1/.

E. Technology: The production technology in the region has remained simple and disturbingly unchanging for centuries. The maximum productivity possible with this technology can be assumed to have been attained. New technology must be applied in order to raise productivity and reduce the drudgery of farm work. Since agriculture provides employment for up to 70 per cent or more of the population, the policy makers generally fight shy of introducing capital - intensive technologies which would rapidly displace millions of farm workers. However they forget that the next stage to move into is the processing, packaging and distribution of these products such that the new agro-industries can complement farming and absorb much of the released manpower. With the stock of horses, donkeys, asses bullocks and camels, the animal draft power can continue to be used at an intermediate technology level in parts of West Africa. The displacement of labour from the land is loss rapid under such conditions. But the most important aspect of technology is to employ such new methods that will minimize total production costs so as to make the West African region competitive with other parts of Africa as well as the world, given the transportation costs for agricultural commodities.

IV. Trade

A. Trade Between ECOWAS, The Rest of Africa and The World: Tables 5 and 6 indicate the values of imports and exports of some ECOWAS members in 1973. Imports from the rest of Africa ranged from \$5.4 million in Togo to \$37.3 million U.S. dollars in Ivory Coast, Imports from the entire world ranged from \$49.7 million in Upper Volta to \$1,505.03 million in Nigeria. These imports included processed agricultural commodities such as sugar, canned beef, frozen meats, tobacco, textiles, tomato puree and some vegetable oils.

The 1973 values of ECOWAS exports to other African countries ranged between \$0.64 million in Liberia to \$3,412.9 million in Senegal while exports to the entire world ranged from \$15.9 million to \$1,793.2 million in Upper Volta and Nigeria respectively. It is feasible that as processing and distribution of agricultural commodities among ECOWAS members increases, the gap between their imports from and exports to the outside world will narrow.

Looking at exports only to the traditional metropolitan countries of Europe, it is observed that Ghana, Niger, Dahomey, Senegal and Nigeria had the highest percentages of exports while Sierra Leone, Upper Volta and Mali had the least. Those with high export percentages

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1/ The Kanji dam project cost Nigeria close to 200 million Naira.

can expect the formation of ECOWAS to affect their export earnings significantly.

B. Intra-West African Trade: What, if any, has been the trade pattern among the countries constituting ECOWAS? There are no adequate data on traded agricultural commodities and the general similarities in food crop production reduces the trade potentials in these. However ethnic afinities (e.g. Yorubas in Dahomey (now Republic of Benin) and Western Nigeria) as well as North-South differentials in the pattern of production (crops versus livestock) have led to substantial trade in agricultural products.

Table 4 illustrated the proportions of various crops and livestock produced by the member countries. Food crops have been essentially for home consumption but sorghum and millet have moved south as major ingredients for livestock feeds, especially in Nigeria. Cattle, goats and sheep have played prominent roles in the southward movement of products. The lack of processing and packaging has denied the centres of high population the consumption of many animal products such as milk which is a major by product of cattle, goat and sheep industry in the northern parts of the region. Expansion of distribution of animal products along the east-west coast of West Africa must await the development of convenient packaging, refrigeration and efficient handling and haulage.

Tables 7 and 8 indicate the intra-West African trading activities in 1971. Trade balances can be deduced by combining these two tables. The values of imports and exports include re-exports of many processed agricultural commodities. If ECOWAS materialises, the trade among members can be expected to increase with the removal of some artificial barriers and the development of infrastructural facilities.

Ilori (2) showed that 98 per cent of Mali's intra-West African exports were made of agricultural commodities. Niger came second with 91 per cent while Upper Volta had 87 per cent. Ghana had 34 percent and Nigeria had 20 per cent. Liberia's share was the least, only 2 per cent. For imports Ghana topped the list with 87 per cent Togo had 40 per cent, Upper Volta 31 percent and Nigeria and Niger had 6 and 2 percent respectively.

In general, agricultural products have accounted for increasing proportions of Intra-West African trade. But the exchanges are not even among the countries and this could have far reaching effects on the ECOWAS. For example, with the exception of Ghana, Mali, Niger and Upper Volta, agricultural share of intra-State trade is less than 50 percent in the ECOWAS. This is significant in view of predominance of agricultural commodities in the region's production.

C. Direction of Trade: This can be examined at the intra-ECOWAS level, inter-African States level and the level of trade with traditional trading partners in metropolitan Europe. Olayemi and Olayide (3) have constructed the matrices for these three levels and they indicate movement of export trade from Ivory Coast to Mali, Senegal and Upper Volta, then from Mali to Ghana, Upper Volta to Ghana and from Niger to Nigeria. The major import directions are from Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria and Upper Volta to Ghana, from Ivory Coast to Mali, from Ghana to Togo and from Ivory Coast to Upper Volta. In the subregion therefore, Ivory Coast, Mali, Senegal, Upper Volta, Ghana Niger, Nigeria are the countries with the strongest trade relations and they will be expected to form the strongest trading poles. As shown in table 6 of Olayemi and Olayide (3), five countries - Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Sierra Leone and Togo generally had negative trade balances in the period 1965-1970.

In summary trade among West African countries has grown and a few of them have sought new trading partners among the other countries of Africa while the trade with established traditional partners in Europe has weakened considerably due in part to the problems created by the EEC.

V. Gains and problems of integrated agricultural policies

The overall aim of ECOWAS should be to develop a large internal market for manufactured or processed agricultural commodities. When the market is large and all artificial barriers to exchange of products and/or resources are removed, economies of scale can be enjoyed in processing, transportation and distribution of these commodities Efficiency in location of processing centers can be obtained through the application of transportation models and pooling resources and identification of major centers of production of specific commodities even when these cut across state boundaries.

The undisputable gains with little or no political hindrance involve common research effort. This was effectively used prior to independence so that we had WAIFOR, WACRI, WAISER etc. serving the English-speaking West African Countries. Today more than ever before, the duplication of effort and the consequent poor use of scarce research personnel ought to be avoided. Part of the agricultural research effort is at present being carried out at the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA). More physical facilities can be provided for research based on ecological zones and crop-specific research to be strategically located in various parts of the region.

A. Agro-Allied Industries: The location and efficient operation of fertilizer manufacturing plants, agricultural implements manufacture, jute bags production, textiles, livestock and various crop processing centers can be based on the expected demands of the regional market, the sources of supply of raw materials and the export potentials for these processed commodities. Each member of the ECOWAS has carried on substantial trade in processed food, textiles, agricultural machinery and others. Import substitution within the region will now take the form of export expansion for the particular area in which each processing plant is located, since it will be expected to serve the neighbouring members of ECOWAS.

In this way a nitrogenous fertilizer plant can be based on the gas industry of Nigeria while a phosphate plant can be established in Senegal or Tago where phosphates are known to exist. Large scale production of small implements and farm transportation equipment can be developed in step with an iron industry in Nigeria and possibly in Sierra Leone, Liberia or Mauritania. Certain countries have specialized in the production of identifiable qualities of textiles such as Akwete and Ankra from Ghana, the Monrovia print from Liberia and Aso Oke from Nigeria. Large scale production of these for distribution within the region will help create employment and import substitution.

Sugar is one of the most highly demanded commodities in the region. There are areas with great sugar growing potentials where optimum plant sizes can be erected to serve the region. In all these developments, the road, rail, water and air transportation complement present enormous opportunities for expanding employment for the population. Supportive businesses such as banking, credit houses insurance are bound to spring up. Tourism within the area would expand considerably.

B. Development Assistance by ECOWAS:

There is bound to be differential development among member states. The agricultural policy secretariat will be called upon to formulate policies that minimize the differences. This will be partly fulfilled through making available free, the research results from centrally organized research pools. Then more developed countries will be called upon to subsidize the less advanced members in their programmes. The overall aim would be to ensure increased welfare for all citizens of West Africa. Whether such development assistance is seen as an advantage or disadvantage will depend on who gives and who receives it. The point may be stretched farther by arguing that internal assistance among ECOWAS members would relieve the rest of the world of part of its commitments to assist the region.

C. Pricing Agricultural Products: This is a problem area. The EEC sets and maintains an artificial price for several of its agricultural products with the aim of protecting the internal farmers and preventing dumping by outside producers of the same commodities. The same would be expected of the ECOWAS, but this is difficult to operate where there is massive lack of education and the infrastructure is still so poorly developed that pockets of surplus exist simultaneously with pockets of acute scarcity within the region. There is the aggravating problem of lack of accurate statistics. For the export crops, a common policy making body should present a stronger bargaining position when facing the buyers, who in the past tended to dictate the prices and to make producers' association ineffective through driving a wedge between them.

For food crops, the guaranteeing of steady supply may follow the ability to process and store with research determined shelf lives that allow for reasonable transportation and storage between producer-consumer locations. The most serious criticism against ECOWAS common agricultural policy can be used on the fact that all the countries produce similar food and cash crops. There is little exchange among them while they tend to direct their exports towards the same countries outside the region. This has been true till today but changes are likely to occur if the transformation of products into processed and packaged, refrigerated commodities take place. A substantial proportion of intra-West African trade is made up of re-exports which include processed agricultural items like sugar, dairy products, confectionery items and textiles. It is the contention of the authors of this paper that such re-exports can be replaced by primary exports of products whose processing value added will accrue to indigens of some members of ECOWAS.

D. Problems of Over-production: If one goes by the experiences of some highly developed countries like the U.S., the suggestions presented above can lead to over-production, the control of which will be one of the most thorny political problems facing ECOWAS agricultural policy makers. No matter how good the research on storage and preservation is, there is a limit to the shelf life of agricultural commodities. And even when it is possible to store products, the storage costs increase with time and quantity stored. The carrying costs may completely destroy the expected gains from storage. Even if one argues for insurance against disastrous events such as the drought of 1972 to 1974 in the region, it is difficult to predict such recurrence. Much politics goes on between the producers who want the government to buy and store when there is surplus but are unhappy if government attempts to unload reserve to reduce the price effects of scarcity. There is bound to be serious conflicts of interest among the members.

E. Retaliatory Measures from Importing and Exporting nations.

Even when cotton, cocoa, rubber and groundnuts were exported directly to feed the processing plants of Europe and America, these countries worked diligently to find substitutes for these commodities. The recent ganging up and mounting of massive effort to find alternative sources of energy as a result of OPEC action on petroleum is a lesson in regard to what ECOWAS can expect if there is unification and a strong single voice among the members. Many EEC and other countries will intensify their search for substitutes and eventually try to leave our agricultural products to us. The short-run action they will take may be to encourage production in other parts of the world-oil palm and rubber, Malaya for example. This will be in addition to political maneuvers to break up or prevent the formation of ECOWAS. The third world people must by now have wondered how genuine is the cry for and aid to their development coming from the so-called developed world. If our own people continue to be unemployed or underemployed while we create the demand for the industrial products of the developed world, something must be wrong with our thinking and politico-economic orientation.

F. Smuggling between States.

Smuggling between West African States, sometimes reaches alarming levels that law enforcing agencies are sometimes stationed along borders to prevent it. Smuggling takes place without the condemnination of the culprits even when the offended country makes protest about this. This attitude is seen as a sign of official approval if not of support for those concerned. Of course no one can know for certain the value of commodities smuggled but in some cases like Nigeria and Dahomey (Republic of Benin) sometimes as much as one quarter of cocoa produced near the common border finds its way to the Republic of Benin, particularly in years when producer prices are low in Nigeria as compared to those in Republic of Benin.

Now with a common agricultural policy, will smuggling be stopped? It may or it may not, depending upon how much a country gains by smuggling in pre-common policy period. For small countries like the Republic of Benin and Gambia, smuggling means much to their economy. In fact, it is sometimes said that smuggling is the greatest industry in Gambia. Moreover such a union can prevent smuggling if it is not recognised as a legitimate means of trade and the amount of goods smuggled are not recorded and as a result compensation cannot be asked for. Now the ability of a country to determine what it expects from a union is a reflection of the domestic political setting in that country. If people who direct the affairs of the state are also the businessmen in smuggling or supporters of businessmen (there is a positive correlation between wealth and political power irrespective of whether it is a military or civilian regime) then it might be difficult to come to a solution.

But solution to smuggling can come if countries adopt common price policy. For instance if export prices for cocoa are the same in say Nigeria and Republic of Benin, then there will be no urge to smuggle. But soon it will be realised that smuggling of cocoa from Nigeria to Republic of Benin is not due to price differential alone. Often goods imported to Dahomey are cheaper than those imported to Nigeria because of the higher import duties in the latter country. Hence smugglers use the proceeds from smuggling to import goods like textile, tomatoe puree and tobacco to Nigeria. So in addition to common prices for export crops, such countries must also have the same rates for import duties on these goods but cannot afford to do so because the masses in that country will not be able to afford them. Nigeria cannot afford to reduce import duties of these items as the higher import duties, say on tobacco, cigarettes and tomatoe puree which features most prominently in goods smuggled to Nigeria), are meant to protect the home industries producing these commodities. Will the Republic of Benin be prepared to take Nigerian goods and rely less on France for trade? Can the prices be brought down through increased production and reduced transportation costs? Moreover, smuggling may be difficult to curtail because of the existence of the same ethnic groups in different countries in West Africa. Sometimes such trades are termed to be normal since they are carried on between relations in both countries. From the point of view of countries concerned of course it is smuggling. There must be a way on which smuggling can be prevented but how it can be done is highly debatable and this will be an important question for common agricultural policy makers.

VI. Summary and Conclusions

West African states have responded to the general world trend towards formation of economic blocs by the formation of ECOWAS. The great similarities in production patterns and levels of economic development in the region make one wonder what the chances are for ECOWAS success. Any successful policy must contain a well planned agricultural component since agriculture is the mainstay of the subregion. This paper therefore examined some issues bearing on the chances of success of a common agricultural policy among ECOWAS members.

The agricultural component of intra-West African trade is not easy to estimate but can be considered to be small except in regard to livestock. The lack of processing, packaging and distribution was suggested as a factor responsible for the limited exchange of agricultural inputs and products. The creation of a large internal market will hopefully improve the planning, siting and operation of agro-industries.

A joint agricultural policy will have great advantages with respect to coodination of research efforts and dissemination of findings. But production and marketing policies will require total submission of member states to a central policy making body with the authority to dictate what, where and how much to produce.

Other problems to be tacked include pricing problems, development assistance to slower developing members, possible retaliatory measures from the rest of the world and the question of smuggling between states. In the face of political differences, diametrically opposed interests and differences in affiliations to traditional trading partners, one may be tempted to say that a common agricultural policy will not be workable. But if looked at from the point of view of development effort for the region rather than the usual trade creation - trade diversion theory of customs union one can see the hope for success. If European countries which are individually well developed formed the EEC to enhance their mutual economic positions, there is no reason why ECOWAS should not be given a trial.

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Table 1

ECOWAS: Arable land and labour resources

	Arable land '000 Km^2 (1)	Total Population million (2)	Rural Population million (3)	Arable land per Rural person
Dahomey	86.72	2.69	1.88	0.046
Gambia	8.47	0.36	0.25	0.034
Ghana	178.90	8.64	6.05	0.096
Guinea	183.77	3.92	2.74	0.067
Guinea Bissau	36.13	0.56	0.39	0.093
Ivory Coast	241.85	4.31	3.02	0.081
Liberia	83.53	1.52	1.06	0.079
Mali	930.00	5.05	3.54	0.263
Mauritania	773.03	1.16	0.81	0.954
Niger	950.25	4.02	2.81	0.338
Nigeria	692.83	55.07	38.56	0.013
Senegal	147.14	3.93	2.75	0.053
Sierra Leone	53.81	2.55	1.79	0.030
Togo	42.00	1.97	1.38	0.031
Upper Volta	205.65	5.38	3.77	0.054
Total	4,614.08	101.13	70.80	

Sources : (1) Olayide S.O. (1)
(2) U.N. Demographic Yearbook 1973
(3) Assumes 70% of total population is rural.

Table 2

G.D.P. Contributed by Agriculture in some countries of ECOWAS and EEC

West Africa (1969)	Percentage	Europe (1972)	Percentage
Niger	51	Ireland	15
Ghana	47	Italy	8
Nigeria	44	Denmark	7
Togo	43	France	6
Upper Volta	37	Belgium	4
Ivory Coast	30	Germany	3
Liberia	20	U.K.	3

Source : U.N. Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics 1973.

Table 3

Estimates of population, total and per capita domestic product among members of the ECOWAS 1970

Countries	Population	Gross Domestic Product US $	Per capita GDP US $
	million[1]	million US $[2]	$
Dahomey	2.69	221	82
Gambia	0.36	46	128
Ghana	8.64	2214	256
Guinea	3.92	320	82
Guinea Bissau	0.56	127	227
Ivory Coast	4.31	1495	347
Liberia	1.52	417	274
Mali	5.05	267	53
Mauritania	1.16	180	155
Niger	4.02	298	74
Nigeria	55.07	7711	140
Senegal	3.93	852	217
Sierra Leone	2.55	451	177
Togo	1.97	264	134
Upper Volta	5.38	347	65

Sources : (1) Population : U.N. Demographic Year Book 1973.
(2) G.D.P. U.N. Yearbooks of National Accounts Statistics 1973.

Table 4: Percentages of total output of crops and livestock produced by each ECOWAS member in 1971

Crop/Animal	Dahomey	Gambia	Ghana	Guinea	Guinea Bissau	Ivory Coast	Liberia	Mali	Mauritania	Niger
Maize	8.0	-	17.0	3.0	-	11.0	1.0	3.0	0.1	0.08
Millet and Sorghum	0.6	0.4	2.0	1.4	-	0.5	-	8.0	0.8	10.0
Rice Paddy	-	2.3	2.7	15	1.3	13	3.5	5.7	0.5	1.5
Yams and Sweet Potatoes	3.8	-	5.2	0.5	-	9.0	-	0.4	-	-
Cassava(Manioc)	9.1	0.05	12.0	3.6	0.3	4.3	2.8	1.2	-	1.4
Dry Beans	2.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.9	1.0	15.0
Other Pulses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Groundnuts	2.2	4.4	2.7	0.9	2.5	1.6	-	5.4	-	9.7
Cocoa	0.9	-	43.0	-	-	19.4	0.2	-	-	-
Coffee	0.9	-	1.7	0.4	-	87.4	1.5	-	-	-
Palm Oil	-	-	9.0	-	3.0	9.0	-	-	-	-
Palm Kernel	12	0.4	7.0	-	2.3	3.6	3.2	-	-	-
Cotton Seed	18.5	-	-	-	-	10.8	-	16.2	-	3.0
Cotton Lint	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	23	-	3.7
Rubber	-	-	-	-	.07	9.4	54.0	-	-	-
Citrus Fruits	-	-	52.0	48.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bananas	-	24.0	-	24.0	-	52.0	-	-	-	-
Pineapples	-	-	14.0	6.0	-	80.0	-	-	-	-
Onions	-	-	26.0	23.0	-	-	-	-	-	50.0
Copra	-	-	21.0	-	-	58.0	-	-	-	-
Tobacco	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dates	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75.0	25.0
Cattle	1.7	0.8	2.6	5.2	0.8	1.1	0.08	15.5	7.5	12.4
Sheep	2.0	0.5	5.0	1.7	0.2	3.0	0.6	21.0	9.9	9.9
Goats	1.5	0.2	3.8	1.1	0.4	1.7	0.3	12.7	5.4	14.0
Poultry	-	0.1	4.8	1.8	-	3.4	0.7	5.9	1.06	2.96
Pigs	6.4	56.0	3.7	0.5	2.8	3.1	1.5	0.62	-	0.5
Asses	-	-	1.05	0.1	0.1	-	-	20.0	9.8	16.2
Horses	-	-	0.4	-	-	-	-	18.2	2.4	18.9
Camels	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.9	51.1	30.4

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Table 4--Continued

Crop/Animal	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo	Upper Volta	Total Production '000 metric tons
Maize	48.0	2.0	0.7	4.0	2.0	2,529.5
Millet and Sorghum	59.0	6.0	1.2	9.0	-	10,613
Rice Paddy	21.0	3.9	14.2	0.8	14.1	2,626
Yams and Sweet Potatoes	78.0	-	-	6.6	0.3	17,421
Cassava(Manioc)	56.0	-	-	9.0	0.3	13,136
Dry Beans	70.0	2.2	-	2.0	9.0	9.96
Other Pulses	27	-	-	7	67	120
Groundnuts	32.3	35.0	0.05	0.7	2.6	2,629.3
Cocoa	33.0	-	0.7	3.0	-	924.7
Coffee	1.3	-	3.0	3.9	-	306.7
Palm Oil	73.0	-	7.0	-	-	689.4
Palm Kernel	59.0	-	9.0	3.4	-	524.6
Cotton Seed	30.0	8.0	-	5.0	9.0	259.0
Cotton Lint	36.0	-	-	5.5	14	109.0
Rubber	36.5	-	-	-	-	137.5
Citrus Fruits	-	-	-	-	-	166.0
Bananas	-	-	-	-	-	358.0
Pineapples	-	-	-	-	-	218.0
Onions	-	-	-	-	-	64.0
Copra	14.0	-	-	7.0	-	14.6
Tobacco	96.0	-	-	-	4.0	18.3
Dates	-	-	-	-	-	20.0
Cattle	32.7	7.6	0.7	3.4	6.2	35,527.0
Sheep	29.0	9.9	0.2	-	7.0	28,142.0
Goats	53.0	-	0.4	-	5.9	44,587
Poultry	35.1	-	1.27	0.8	4.2	236,134.0
Pigs	15.7	3.3	0.6	2.6	2.6	5,355
Asses	35.8	8.3	-	0.09	8.3	2,208.2
Horses	31.4	21.2	-	0.09	7.3	953.9
Camels	1.5	0.5	-	-	0.5	1,349.0

Source: Africa South of the Sahara, 1974: Europa Publications Ltd., London.

Note: Figures are FAO Estimates. Where no figure are given, either the production is negligible or an estimate was impossible.

Table 5

West African States imports from Africa as percentage of total imports 1970

Countries	Imports from Africa (1)	Imports from the world (2)	1 as percent of 2
	'000 U.S $	'000 US $	
Dahomey	9,901	76,323	12.97
Ghana	24,384	433,639	5.61
Ivory Coast	37,294	398,148	9.35
Liberia	9,016	162,228	5.56
Mali	11,571	59,265	19.52
Mauritania	9,476	62,993	15.04
Niger	7,576	52,991	14.30
Nigeria	14,623	1,505,028	0.97
Senegal	28,565	218,001	13.10
Sierra Leone	15,470	113,121	13.6
Togo	5,372	70,024	7.67
Upper Volta	12,835	49,660	25.85

Source U.N. International Trade Statistics 1973.

Table 6

West African States Exports to Africa as percent of total Exports 1970

Countries	Exports to Africa	Exports to the World	1 as percent of 2
	'000 U.S $	'000 U.S $	
Dahomey	4,808	41,938	11.46
Ghana	5,703	341,415	1.67
Ivory Coast	49,699	455,571	8.93
Liberia	642	98,482	0.65
Mali	18,570	36,012	51.57
Mauritania	3,501	93,895	3.73
Niger	14,059	38,373	36.64
Nigeria	27,244	1,793.171	1.52
Senegal	12,926	34,887	37.05
Sierra Leone	2,896	222,374	1.30
Togo	3,220	56,354	5.71
Upper Volta	8,580	15,868	54,07

Source: U.N. International Trade Statistics 1973.

Table 7.--Intra-State Trade Among the ECOWAS Members Exports F.O.B. 1971 '000 U.S.

Countries	Mauritania	Senegal	Mail	Ivory Coast	Dahomey	Gambia	Liberia	Niger	Nigeria	Upper Volta
Mauritania	--	874	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Senegal	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mali	487	2900	--	9797	50	--	63	654	--	--
Ivory Coast	--	8447	--	--	1404	--	499	1832	1267	5207
Dahomey	--	667	--	150	--	--	--	447	2055	--
Gambia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Liberia	--	23	175	284	--	--	--	--	209	--
Niger	--	53	50	948	1706	--	--	--	9817	184
Nigeria	--	2158	--	6623	90	--	145	247	--	--
Upper Volta	--	13	590	6094	49	--	--	153	--	--
Guinea	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ghana	--	--	77	396	152	--	126	13	2836	32
Togo	--	30	--	273	776	--	--	155	1	15
Sierra Leono	--	6	3	--	263	91	--	--	54	1
Guinea-Dissau	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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Table 7.--Continued --

Countries	Guinea	Ghana	Togo	Sierra Leone	Guinea Dissau
Mauritania	--	65	--	--	--
Senegal	--	--	--	--	--
Mali	304	2835	--	--	--
Ivory Coast	--	727	529	--	--
Dahomey	--	333	547	--	--
Gambia	--	--	--	--	--
Liberia	233	418	--	97	--
Niger	--	43	381	--	--
Nigeria	--	11670	--	4380	--
Upper Volta	--	1610	69	--	--
Guinea	--	--	--	--	--
Ghana	--	--	473	--	--
Togo	--	351	--	--	--
Sierra Leone	--	--	--	--	--
Guinea-Dissau	--	--	--	--	--

Table 8.--Intra-State Trade Among the ECOWAS Members--IMPORTS C.I.F. 1971 '000 U.S.

Countries	Mauritania	Senegal	Mali	Ivory Coast	Dahomey	Gambia	Liberia
Mauritania		4,900	3	155	1	1	956
Senegal	33		1,080	10,800	008	92	1
Mali	267	3,724		6,231	1		17
Ivory Coast	1	7,185	1,434		121		9
Dahomey	1	2,207	47	1,504			21
Gambia							
Liberia		478	148	742			
Niger	3	1,053	8	2,040	340		2
Nigeria		679		996	204		47
Upper Volta		782	2,241	1,701	11		
Guinea							
Ghana	41	61	2,368	401	509	14	138
Togo		300		719	690		
Sierra Leone		533		199	2	16	108
Guinea Dissau							

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Table 8.--Continued

Countries	Niger	Nigeria	Upper Volta	Guinea	Ghana	Togo	Sierra Leone	Guinea Dissau
Mauritania								
Senegal	1	2,267	3	5	1	2	123	
Mali	32	30	109	111	513		7	
Ivory Coast	577	3,316	204		210	51	87	
Dehomey	4	1,373			39	3,220	18	
Gambia								
Liberia		203		218	418		259	
Niger		1,253	115		98	80		
Nigeria	109				1,403	104	140	
Upper Volta	142	08			420	72		
Guinea								
Ghana	11	7,323	1,946	14		962	18	
Togo	144	620	119		1,806			
Sierra Leone		5,530		24	151			
Guinea Dissau								

Sources (1) U.N. Year Book of International Statistics 1974
(2) U.N. Stat. and Econ. Info. Bulletin for Africa. E/CN/14SEC 1973