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## **[GIs in Benin: consequences and perspectives to take into consideration for climate change]**

[The impacts of intensive agricultural practices are clearly identified as causing increasing pressure on natural resources and contributing significantly to climate change and associated severe weather events. In this context, local agri-food systems are seen as an interesting alternative due to their ability to foster dynamic local development processes that can be, under certain conditions, economically viable, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

In Benin, the strategic plan for the development of the agricultural sector (PSDSA) highlights four major challenges to be overcome in order to improve agricultural production and income. The establishment of Geographical Indications is one of the tools identified to help meet the challenges highlighted. Indeed, Benin is endowed with rich natural resources and bio-cultural diversity that represent assets to be preserved and promoted, especially in a context of climate change, persistent food insecurity and poverty. Several missions to identify GI products have been carried out and have highlighted products that could be recognized as geographical indications. These products include: Sugar Loaf Pineapple from the Plateau of Allada, Gari Sohoui from Savalou, Peanut Oil from Agonlin, Cashew nuts from Benin, Wagashi, Grey Shrimps, Salt from Djêgbadji, Shea Butter, etc. Among these products, one is already registered and others are in the process of being registered

Several studies have revealed that climate change is an obstacle to the implementation of geographical indications in Benin. This problem can be addressed at two levels: at the macro level, with the development of a global mechanism for taking the environment into account in the production process of GI products, and at the micro level (at the commodity chain level) during the development of specifications.

Regardless of the nature of the GI product, it is necessary to take into account climate change adaptation strategies during the development of the specifications. The main challenge is to be able to maintain production (preserve the characteristics and volumes of production) while guaranteeing a fair income for producers. The issues related to taking climate change into account in the process of developing specifications are: (i) to define collectively the strategy for adapting to and/or mitigating climate change; (ii) to assess the effects of climate change on production; and (iii) to identify the elements on which it is necessary to adapt and/or mitigate the effects.

From the different experiences of elaborating the specifications in Benin, the following elements emerge:

- Set up a multidisciplinary group to support the actors in the process of developing the specifications
- Analyze and evaluate the impact of climate change on the GI product
- Identify the practices and strategies already implemented by stakeholders to cope with climate change
- Propose innovative strategies to stakeholders without altering the characteristics of the GI product
- Introduce these different strategies in the specifications.

**[Bibliographic references]**