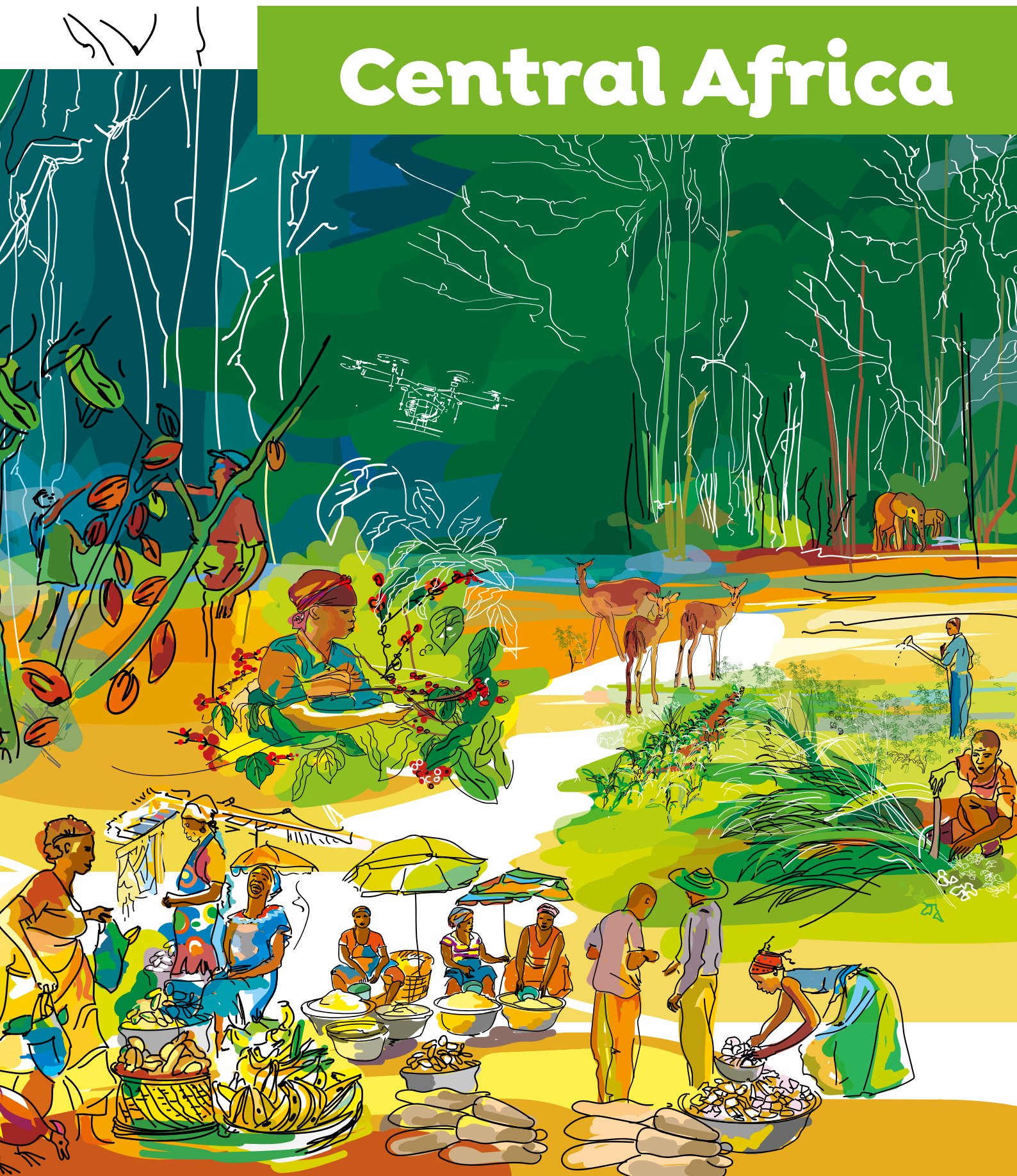


Central Africa



The CIRAD Regional Office

42
employees



including 19 scientists

30 
to 40
PhD and Masters
students
supervised each year

6 **priority**
research
topics



Biodiversity
Climate change
Food systems
Territories and collective action
Agroecological transitions
One Health



5
tropical
agricultural
value chains

Cocoa • Coffee • Cotton
Roots and tubers •
Forest resources

2 **platforms**
in partnership
for research
and training



4 **research**
units



10 **active**
projects



120
missions
a year
in the region



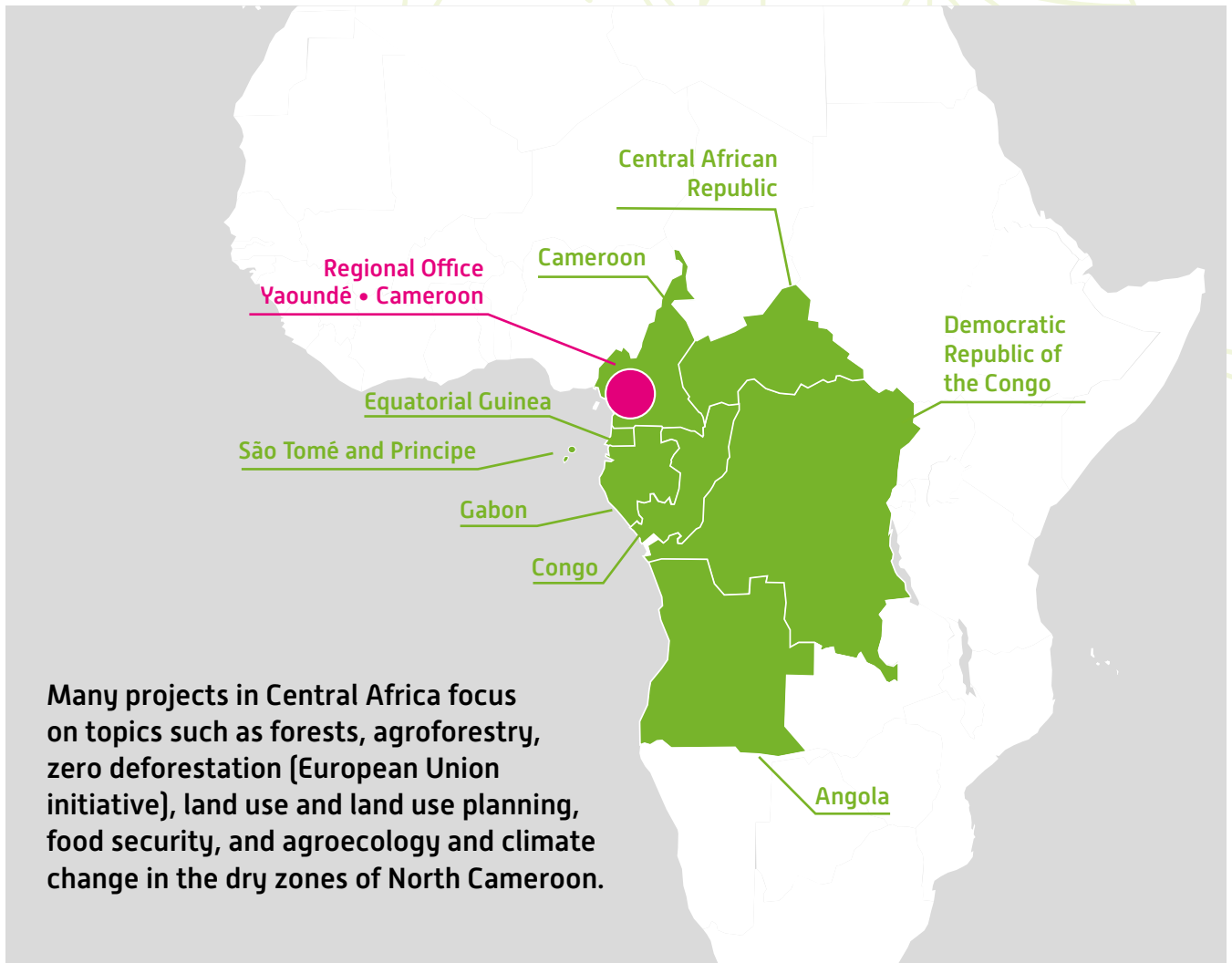
59
partner
organizations

49 on a local level

4 on a regional level

6 on an international level

Central Africa



Two platforms in partnership for research and training (dPs), on the issues surrounding agroforestry and deforestation

Research network on the forests of Central Africa

R2FAC

Contributing to development and to the sustainable management of the environment and forestry systems in Central African countries.

Research and knowledge production operations take account of the local ecological, socioeconomic and political realities. The network associates the main national forest research organizations.



Agroforestry systems in Central Africa

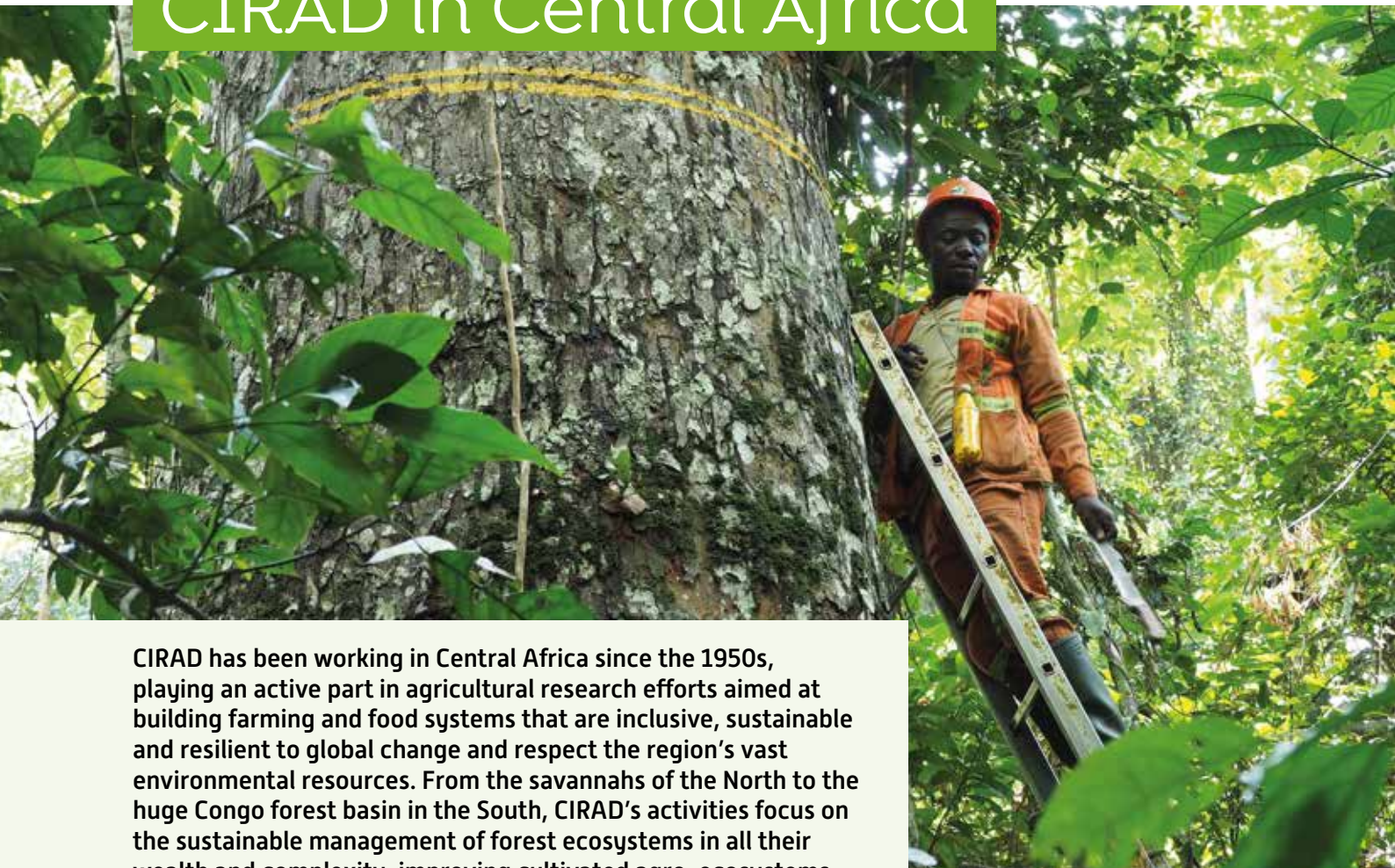
Agroforesterie Cameroon

Working to develop agroforestry systems based on cocoa, coffee and fruit trees, for family farms in Cameroon.

This platform is supporting agroforestry system transformations geared towards ecological intensification and greater resilience to global changes such as climate change and increasingly globalized markets.



CIRAD in Central Africa



Forest measurement campaign
in northern Congo
© Y. Van Hoef, Konkouati-Douli National Park

CIRAD has been working in Central Africa since the 1950s, playing an active part in agricultural research efforts aimed at building farming and food systems that are inclusive, sustainable and resilient to global change and respect the region's vast environmental resources. From the savannahs of the North to the huge Congo forest basin in the South, CIRAD's activities focus on the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in all their wealth and complexity, improving cultivated agro-ecosystems, and boosting the performance of the main agricultural and food chains.

The CIRAD Regional Office in Central Africa is based in Yaoundé, Cameroon. It has expatriate staff members in the region, based in three countries: Cameroon, Congo and Gabon. CIRAD's teams have a dozen ongoing projects focusing on development as well as research, in collaboration with national organizations (research institutes, universities, ministries and the private sector) and international research centres (CIFOR-ICRAF, IITA, WCS, WWF, WRI, HCVN).

Building sustainable production systems based on agroecology and agroforestry

Despite their significant agricultural potential, the economies of the countries of Central Africa largely rely on producing and exporting extractive commodities [oil, mineral ores, wood, etc]. As a result, there is a need to invest in

agricultural development, poverty levels are high, and food security is not universally guaranteed. Moreover, agricultural development, productivity, and natural resource – particularly forest resource – management are hampered by insecurity linked to conflicts, and the need for policy support.

CIRAD is therefore focusing on the priority issue of food and nutrition security, a matter of increasing concern in urban areas. We are working to develop sustainable, inclusive production systems based on the principles of agroecology, such as agroforestry systems. Territories are a lever for development, right up to food and commercial product processing and marketing. To address the second priority issue of sustainable forest and biodiversity management, our scientists take a One Health approach, encompassing plants, animals and ecosystems. Training and capacity building requirements are also seen as a major issue in their own right.

Main research fields

- Integrated management of the forest and wildlife resources of the Congo basin.
- Promotion of legal wood value chains, the fuelwood economy.
- Improvement and diversity of tree crop-based agroforestry systems: cocoa, coffee, fruit trees, etc.
- Performance and agroecological development of the main agroindustrial value chains: banana, coffee, cotton, cassava, oil palm, etc.
- Innovation to support farming and food system development, geographical indications.
- Animal epidemiological monitoring, zoonotic disease control.
- Public policy, agricultural advice and extension support.

Research framed by six priority topics

Biodiversity

An initiative to save the world's forests and biodiversity

In Gabon, the One Forest Vision initiative (OFVi), launched at the 2023 Libreville One Forest Summit, is working to improve tropical forest conservation in Central Africa, notably by monitoring carbon stocks and biodiversity. The main aim is to achieve the ambitions of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which set out to protect 30% of the world's land and seas by 2030. The initiative supports research, training, and the development of tools to conserve the carbon and biodiversity in tropical forests.

In practical terms, it will be mapping the most vital carbon and biodiversity reserves in the forest basins of the Amazon, Africa and Asia down to the nearest tree, and measuring their carbon balance, over the next five years. The idea is to gather and compile high-quality data on a landscape scale, to map deforestation, forest degradation and carbon emissions more effectively. This will confirm Gabon's place as a model of resilience and protection in this field.

Timespan > 2023-2028



Sustainable wildlife management in Africa

The Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme - phase 2 (SWM2), funded by the European Commission, set out to protect the natural heritage of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States while improving the livelihoods of local communities. In Ogooué-Lolo province, Gabon, the local wildlife, which is crucial to food security and income in small rural communities, is under threat as a result of growing demand for bushmeat.

To address this issue, the project, coordinated by CIRAD in collaboration with the Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche médicale de Franceville (CIRMF), the Institut de recherche en écologie tropicale (IRET) and the Ministry of Water and Forests (MINEF), is encouraging sustainable management of village hunting. Extending this community management model and establishing a legal framework to encourage sustainable wildlife management could make Gabon a leader in the field.

Timespan > January 2024-July 2026



Hunters in Gabon

© Brent Stirton/Getty Images for FAO, CIRAD, Cifor and WCS

Climate change

Making small-scale cotton producers more climate-resilient

The Adapting Innovations for Resilience to climate change for smallholder Cotton farmers in Africa (AIRCoA) project is working to improve the poor cotton yields achieved in West and Central Africa, which have been further exacerbated by climate change, soil degradation and biodiversity loss.

Timespan > December 2022-December 2025





Description of a trial of shade management techniques in cocoa plantings © S. Koutchou, CIRAD



Agroecological transitions

Building sustainable farming systems through agroecology living labs

The project to drive agroecological transitions in the humid tropics of Central and Eastern Africa through transdisciplinary Agroecology Living Labs (CANALLS) project, funded by the European Commission, is working in zones marked by conflict and vulnerability. It associates 22 partners: European and African universities and research centres, NGOs and farmers' associations, and production companies. The project is tackling the complex environmental, social and economic challenges in the region through transdisciplinary, multi-stakeholder agroecology "living labs", with the aim of improving food and nutrition security.

There are eight living labs, in Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, involving more than 20 000 farmers and other stakeholders. The aim is to co-create optimum agroecological practices for vital crops (cassava, rice, maize, cocoa and coffee), while assessing their socioeconomic and environmental performance.

Timespan > December 2022-December 2026

Territories and collective action

Agriculture, forests, fuelwood and environment: ensuring sustainable land sharing

The Republic of Congo, via its Ministry of Land Use Planning, Infrastructures and Highway Maintenance, has launched a sustainable land use programme (PUDT) and a land use investment programme, KOPEKOB (Kolona Pe Kobatela – Cultivate and Protect), supported by the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), the Agence française de développement (AFD) and the European Union (EU). The PUDT is intended to build a national rural land planning process and draft a national land use plan to reduce the impact on forests. CIRAD is supporting Congo in this land use planning process (agriculture, forests, energy and environment).

The KOPEKOB programme is working to build climate-smart agriculture, foster a regulated, sustainable fuelwood supply chain, and ensure sustainable management of peatlands and forests, preserving High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) zones.

Timespan > 2023-2028



Forest track in the tropical rainforest of northern Congo © Laurent Tellier, CIRAD





Human, animal and environmental health is interconnected
© R. Belmin, CIRAD

One Health

Preventing zoonotic diseases in Africa and Cambodia



The AfriCam project set out to reduce the risk of emergence of epidemic-prone zoonotic diseases in Africa and Cambodia. The aim is to cut that risk by supporting national monitoring, prevention and warning strategies in the following target countries: Cambodia, Cameroon, Guinea, Madagascar and Senegal.

It is funded by the Agence française de développement (AFD) under the umbrella of the PREZODE (Preventing Zoonotic Disease Emergence) initiative, and centres on the One Health approach, encompassing human, animal and environmental health. AfriCam is focusing on building knowledge of the risks of zoonosis emergence, local monitoring strategies, the impact of gender inequalities, and training local stakeholders. It is jointly managed by CIRAD and the Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD), and involves a broad consortium of partners including public research operators, private organizations, universities, civil society organizations and the relevant local authorities.

Timespan > May 2022-October 2026

Food systems

Transforming urban food systems



The AfriFOODlinks project, funded by the European Commission, set out to transform urban food environments in more than 65 towns and cities in Africa and Europe, by addressing issues relating to food insecurity and the environmental impact of food systems. In response to galloping urbanization in Africa, which is forecast to have 1.489 billion inhabitants by 2050, the project is working to promote the adoption of healthy, sustainable diets, strengthen local governance and support entrepreneurship, particularly among women and young people.

AfriFOODlinks takes an inclusive, multi-stakeholder approach, involving local authorities, small businesses and communities in transforming food environments. It is studying three factors that drive the urban food environment: infrastructures, from production to consumption; social and cultural preferences; and business innovation, in order to improve urban food supplies and make food systems more sustainable. The project is coordinated by ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability - Africa, and associates 26 partners: research organizations, food system practitioners, city networks and human rights organizations.

Timespan > December 2022-December 2026

Main partners

CIRAD is hosted by the following partners:

Cameroon

- Institut de recherche agricole pour le développement (IRAD)
- International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
- Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF)

Gabon

- Ministry of Water, Forests, Sea, the Environment, charged with the Climate Plan and Land Use Planning (MINEF)
- Centre national de la recherche scientifique et technologique (CENAREST)

Congo

- Ministry of Forest Economy (MEF)
- Centre de recherche sur la durabilité de la productivité des plantations industrielles (CRDPI)
- École normale supérieure (ENS)
- Institut national de recherche forestière (IRF)
- Institut national de recherche agronomique (IRA)

Other international research centres

- Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- World Resources Institute (WRI)
- High Conservation Value Network (HCVN)

CIRAD
Regional Office for
Central Africa

Rue Joseph Essono Balla
BP2572 Yaoundé
Cameroon



CIRAD
in Central Africa
on social media



CIRAD is the French agricultural research and international cooperation organization working for the sustainable development of tropical and Mediterranean regions.

It works with its partners to build knowledge and solutions for resilient farming systems in a more sustainable, inclusive world. It mobilizes science, innovation and training in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Its expertise supports the entire range of stakeholders, from producers to public policymakers, to foster biodiversity protection, agroecological transitions, food system sustainability, health [of plants, animals and ecosystems], sustainable development of rural territories, and their resilience to climate change. CIRAD works in some fifty countries on every continent, thanks to the expertise of its 1750 staff members, including 1200 scientists, backed by a global network of some 200 partners. It also supports French scientific diplomacy operations.

CIRAD is a public establishment (EPIC) under the joint authority of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

Working together for tomorrow's agriculture



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agreenium