

## Press release

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### Serge Morand appointed member of the One Health High-Level Expert Panel

The World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have announced the launch of a high-level expert panel on the One Health approach. Serge Morand, a health ecologist at CNRS, on secondment to CIRAD in Thailand, has been appointed as one of the 26 international experts.

Proposed at the initiative of France, with the support of Germany, the creation of this expert panel was officially announced during the Paris Peace Forum on 12 November 2020 by the French and German Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the heads of the WHO, OIE, FAO and UNEP. The panel has just been launched by the four international organisations. The goal of this interdisciplinary group of 26 independent experts is to inform public decision-making with a view to preventing and addressing future health crises.

The group of scientists will conduct its research according to the One Health approach, which recognises the linkages between human, animal and environmental health, and stresses the need to consult specialists from multiple sectors in order to address health threats.

Of the 26 experts selected by the international organisations, Serge Morand, CIRAD-CNRS, is the only French expert, chosen for his work at the interface between environment, biodiversity, animal health and human health.

**An ecologist and parasitologist by training**, Serge Morand has a wealth of field experience in collaboration with local communities and the authorities in charge of animal, human, agricultural and environmental health (hospitals, veterinary services, national parks, etc.). Over the last 10 years, he has coordinated some 30 field studies in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines and Vietnam, which have given rise to more than 200 academic publications, reference and outreach works, as well as numerous lessons.

Serge Morand is a **pioneer in the field of the socio-ecology of health**, which links environmental and land-use changes to biodiversity, the social economy, evolutionary ecology and the epidemiology of zoonotic diseases at the interface between human and animal health (One Health / EcoHealth / Planetary Health). He thus has **unique expertise in multidisciplinary research**, ranging from the genetic analysis of infectious agents (and their resistance to antibiotics), to the evolutionary ecology of reservoirs and vectors, and the modelling and geospatial analysis of disease transmission.

For several years, he has been developing thinking and practices on the ethics of individual and community engagement (consent, participatory approaches, etc.), as well as on health and environmental governance.

*"I am delighted to join this interdisciplinary group whose members all have very complementary areas of expertise, and to contribute to its future work towards shared health", says Serge Morand.*

The members of the panel will meet at least three times a year and will produce reports and recommendations to advise the four international organisations in the development of a long-term global plan of action to avert new outbreaks of diseases.

The work of the panel can build on research by the PREZODE initiative, launched by three French research organisations (IRD, CIRAD, INRAE) with a number of international partners.

### **About CIRAD**

CIRAD is the French agricultural research and international cooperation organization working for the sustainable development of tropical and Mediterranean regions. Along with its partners, it is convinced that agriculture has a central role in the major transitions required to guarantee a sustainable future for every country in the global South. Generating and sharing new knowledge, contributing to innovation processes and building the capacity and skills of stakeholders in those countries to support their sustainable development are the drivers of its operations. In particular, its activities centre on issues such as biodiversity, the agroecological transition, climate change, health (of plants, animals and ecosystems), the development of rural territories, and food systems. CIRAD works in some fifty countries on every continent, thanks to the expertise of its 1650 staff members, including 800 researchers, backed by a global network of partners. [www.cirad.fr](http://www.cirad.fr)

### **About the CNRS**

The French National Center for Scientific Research is one of the most recognized and renowned public research institutions in the world. For more than 80 years, it has continued to attract talent at the highest level and to nurture multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research projects at the national, European and international levels. Geared towards the public interest, it contributes to the scientific, economic, social and cultural progress of France. The CNRS is above all 32,000 women and men, more than 1,000 laboratories in partnership with universities and other higher education institutions bringing together more than 120,000 employees and 200 professions that advance knowledge by exploring the living world, matter, the Universe, and the functioning of human societies. The CNRS ensures that this mission is carried out in compliance with ethical rules and with a commitment to professional equality. The close relationship it establishes between its research missions and the transfer of acquired knowledge to the public makes it today a key player in innovation in France and around the world. Partnerships with companies are at the heart of its technology transfer policy, and the start-ups that have emerged from CNRS laboratories bear witness to the economic potential of its research. The CNRS provides also access to research findings and data, and this sharing of knowledge targets many audiences: scientific communities, the media, decision-makers, economic players and the general public. [www.cnrs.fr](http://www.cnrs.fr)

### **Find out more**

Joint communication by WHO, FAO, OIE and UNEP:

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1401159/icode/>

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