

Press release

Paris, 16 June 2021

Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin is CIRAD's new CEO

Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin was appointed CIRAD Chief Executive Officer by the French Council of Ministers on 16 June, on the recommendation of Frédérique Vidal, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, and Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs. She will head the establishment's Board of Trustees and General Management for the next five years, replacing Michel Eddi, who recently completed his second term in the post.



Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin sets the tone: *"Agriculture is central to our health and that of our planet. The climate crisis is already with us, and biodiversity loss is giving great cause for concern. To achieve sustainable development, we urgently need to radically transform the global food system, and research has a vital role to play".*

The new CEO intends to step up the organization's research in the fields of biodiversity, climate and One Health. CIRAD's sights are set on two of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in particular: achieving food and nutrition security (SDG2), while restoring land and water resources (SDG15). *"Achieving SDG2 along with SDGs 13 (climate change) and 15 (life on land) is our first priority in terms of research."*

Prior to her appointment, Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin had been Director General in charge of Research and Strategy at CIRAD since 2018. Alongside Michel Eddi, she worked with the Directors of

the establishment's three scientific departments (ES, PERSYST and BIOS)* and ten regional offices worldwide to determine its scientific and partnership strategy. During her time in the post, with CIRAD's teams and partners, she was responsible for drafting the 2019-2023 strategy document.

Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin therefore knows CIRAD well, and describes it as an organization that is *"close to her heart"*.

Building more sustainable agricultural and food systems

"I am delighted to be appointed. CIRAD is a leading scientific player in Europe as regards agriculture and development issues", she says. "It is also a very effective public policy instrument with expertise in a wide range of tools, from knowledge generation, appraisals and partnership to innovative solutions."

As she stresses, *"CIRAD's remit is particularly relevant in today's world, and responds to the demand from society as a whole: to help build a more sustainable world, with farming and food systems that produce healthy food, pay producers in tropical and Mediterranean countries a decent wage, and allow them to cope with global change, while preserving natural resources."*

For her time at the head of CIRAD, she has set three priorities for its research, which is always conducted in partnership with countries in the global South, in keeping with the momentum created by Michel Eddi.

Strengthening research in partnership on biodiversity, climate and health

In addition to boosting knowledge generation and impact in the fields of health, biodiversity and climate, the new CEO also intends to strengthen partnerships between researchers in the global South and North, in both France and Europe as a whole. In a globalized world, the issues in North and South are intertwined. *"CIRAD must be a European driver of research in the global South, and use its expertise to influence public policymaking in Brussels, notably to further the agroecological transition and forest and biodiversity preservation."*

Within the French research landscape, CIRAD will be strengthening its links with INRAE, by implementing an action plan for Africa and sketching a road map for the Mediterranean. *"As for IRD, our research topics are very complementary. We are already working together within joint research units, but I'm keen to see even greater synergy with our networks of partners in the global South and elsewhere."* CIRAD also already has strong links with INRAE and IRD in the field of health, which saw the launch of an international initiative, PREZODE, for pandemic prevention. *"We will also be strengthening our links with the Institut Pasteur and INSERM."*

Furthering a culture of impact

"I am determined to pursue the operations launched and implemented by Michel Eddi, notably to further a culture of impact, a drive that has made considerable progress at CIRAD in recent years." As CIRAD's contractual objectives set out, CIRAD is aiming to impact on sustainable development – in terms of changing political, economic and social processes – to benefit producers and people on the ground.

* Biological Systems (BIOS), Performance of Tropical Production and Processing Systems (PERSYST) and Environments and Societies (ES).

A varied career inside and outside Europe, with considerable development expertise

Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin studied at France's prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure and Ecole Nationale d'Administration, and began her career as a researcher in microeconomics. She joined the Civil Service in 1993, and quickly began work under the direct authority of three French ministers (Finance, Research and Foreign Affairs), and for the Spanish government. In 2013, she was appointed Senior Advisor to the Executive Director for France at the World Bank and the IMF in Washington DC, where she worked to build and steer public development aid policy.

In 2016, she returned to France and was appointed Deputy Director for sustainable development at the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs Directorate General for Globalization, Culture, Education and International Development. This varied career has made her acutely sensitive to biodiversity and climate issues within the European and multilateral framework.

Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin joined CIRAD in 2018, as Director General in charge of Research and Strategy, before being appointed CEO on 16 June 2021.

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

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