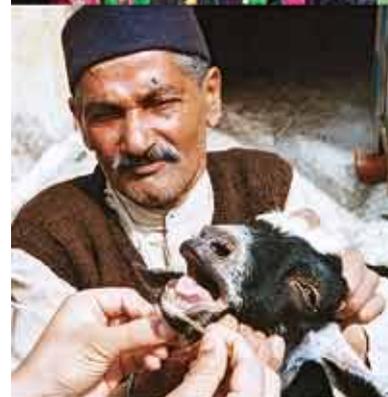


# Strategic vision 2012-2022

Making research a real  
tool for development



Agriculture has a central role to play in tackling the major issues relating to management of the living world, food, energy, health and the environment.

## > A mandate

**CIRAD, a targeted research organization, has a remit from its supervisory ministries to conduct public research for development.**

The final aim is to contribute to sustainable development of rural areas and agricultural supply chains in southern countries, with particular emphasis on fairness and on the world's poorest populations.

## > A belief

**Societies cannot develop long term unless they themselves generate the knowledge they need to design and build their future.**

This belief is borne out by the experience acquired with our partners. Building scientific capacity in the least advanced countries is the only way of reducing the gaps between countries and moving towards sustainable development on a global level. The innovations that will allow rural societies to adapt to current issues have to come from those societies.

## > A vision for the future

**Agriculture has a central role to play in tackling the major issues relating to management of the living world, food and the environment.**

CIRAD proposes working with organizations in southern countries and in the French overseas regions to build a shared, evenly distributed global agricultural research system.

## > Four major ambitions

**The scientific challenges are huge, hence the solutions to be found must associate all the different stakeholders who produce knowledge and create innovations. Agricultural research also has to shed light on ongoing changes.**

- > Expanding scientific production
- > Building and strengthening strategic partnerships
- > Assessing the impact of research and supporting innovation
- > Adapting so as to measure up to these ambitions

# > Expanding scientific production

CIRAD's aim: to contribute to the changing debate about development issues and tackle those issues by generating appropriate, quality scientific and technical knowledge.



This means:

- **Broadening the way in which research looks at agriculture, ranging as far as management of the living world as a whole, well beyond primary production (food, health, the environment, energy, global change).**
- **Targeting poor populations in rural areas and making them the main beneficiaries of research.** This approach has consequences in terms of programming, and also of ethics: human dignity, cultural diversity and changing development policy are all values CIRAD holds dear.
- **Adjusting analysis frameworks to fit the biological, technical and institutional issues.** The aim is to build integrative, systemic approaches to complexity; expand on key notions such as performance, which has to encompass those of ecological and social impact and vulnerability; understand the processes that regulate the frequency and interweaving of crises; explore the role of biological and social diversity in terms of its contribution to sustainable development; and come up with conceptual frameworks, tools and observation facilities to support decision-making on a local and global level.
- **Supporting the necessary changes in farming systems and contributing to innovation engineering** with a view to sustainable development. The next challenge is to understand institutional, local, national and international dynamics by analysing them on three levels: biological systems, technical systems and institutional systems.
- **Organizing research management to take account of those changes.** CIRAD's six priority lines of research define the priority issues and fields of application. New research fronts and transverse topics (biodiversity, climate change, etc) are looked at regularly: each year, with our partners, a particular topic is addressed so as to draft an inventory of current knowledge, controversies and the research required.
- **Adapting the range of outputs to the objectives of targeted research.** In addition to scientific publications, appraisals and training operations, technical reports, softwares, planting material, public decision support databases and systems, meta-analyses, models, foresight exercises and simulations are all outputs.
- **Boosting CIRAD's contribution to debate at the interface between science and policy-making.** CIRAD will be increasing its "lobbying" operations, a recognized part of its culture and collective heritage; the aim is to bring to the political debate relevant knowledge of the role played by agriculture in southern countries and of managing the living world in sustainable development.

# > Building and strengthening strategic partnerships

A recent audit of CIRAD confirmed the importance of synergy between science and partnerships. Building partnership engineering, a skill that ensures innovative research operations that are both shared and more robust in the long run, is an integral part of the establishment's activities.



CIRAD, along with its partners:

- **Sees partnerships as a fundamental aspect of development.** This is an ambitious target, since it means taking full account of asymmetries between partners, in order to reduce them. The aim is to ensure quality scientific and technical outputs by building the skills of the institutions and researchers involved, on a long-term basis.

- **Gives priority to university and professional training,** notably cooperation with universities in southern countries, involving the Agreenium consortium, which federates what France has to offer in terms of agricultural and veterinary research and higher education. Operations with universities in Montpellier, the French overseas regions and other European countries, and involvement in teacher training and reception are also of strategic importance.

- **Develops quality skill sharing and building tools.** Since 2008, CIRAD has set up research and training platforms in partnership (DPs) that focus its human and financial resources on common strategic priorities. The eventual aim is to boost their visibility and attractiveness on the international stage.

- **Opts for integrated scientific partnerships in which interdisciplinarity is shared and sustained.** DPs are places where the establishment's priority lines of research are converted into operational projects. They are a melting pot in which partners can build innovation systems to benefit the development of vulnerable populations.

- **Focuses its efforts on target countries and populations.** The criteria for CIRAD's geographical partnership choices fit in with the French geo-strategic vision of the most disadvantaged rural populations. Organizing international scientific networks (emerging diseases, financialization of agriculture, land tenure, trade, etc) is also a priority.

- **Promotes a new form of global research orchestration.** Supported by the DPs and its unique position in Europe in the field of agricultural research for development, CIRAD is aiming to foster and federate research efforts and ensure that the issues it is working on are recognized at the highest level of French and European strategy. With its French partners, it is heavily involved in bodies in charge of institutional coordination (Agreenium), research programming (AllEnvi), funding and auditing. It intends to contribute to promoting Montpellier's Agropolis platform in Europe and abroad.

- **Is involved in three new fields of expertise: global strategic intelligence,** to identify research issues and priorities; the drafting of a global agenda and a form of **programming engineering** that ensures sharing of long-term objectives; and **the debate on the status of scientific outputs,** particularly intellectual property rules and modes of access.

- **Contributes to integrating southern countries into networks of excellence.** CIRAD plays an active role in leading and supporting the integration of its partners from the South into networks of excellence, in liaison with Agropolis Fondation in Montpellier. This role falls under the patronage of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), which recently transferred to Montpellier, with the CGIAR.

# > Assessing the impact of research and supporting innovation

Working for sustainable development means generating useful knowledge and building the capacity of rural societies to adapt, learn and take action. It also means understanding and fostering the conditions that favour the appropriation of that knowledge. This requires being where innovation is taking place and assessing the impact of research.



CIRAD is devoted to targeted research, and has to ensure the impact of its scientific and technical outputs by playing a full part in innovation systems, in other words:

- **By taking account of all the stakeholders who contribute to innovation:** farming communities, technicians and researchers, NGOs, political, economic and financial players, firms, etc, each with their own role and clout. The approach consists in working together to identify the problems to be solved, translating them into research issues, analysing the available skills and know-how, and conducting foresight exercises with common ethical considerations.
- **By confirming the public status of knowledge within innovation.** In a situation in which private players are widely present, the issue is how to preserve the rights of the most disadvantaged people to make use of that knowledge. CIRAD has adopted a policy of intellectual property and ethics covering all of its outputs, and control over their future.
- **By understanding how innovation systems in southern countries work.** Renewed attention is vital if knowledge generation is to make an effective contribution to innovation for the development of rural societies. Despite initial generous intentions, the end result can sometimes be the opposite of what was expected. Moreover, innovation entails a risk of exclusion or increased dependence. For all these reasons, innovation and innovation systems are research topics in their own right.
- **By building a concern for and culture of impact.** More broadly, it is vital to assess the social usefulness and impacts of knowledge generation, both locally and at a distance, immediately or in the future. In return, this will help in revising the stances and practices adopted by researchers, so as to design and build research projects better, setting out the expected results, targets and partners with whom to work at various stages.
- **By laying "pathways to impacts".** In order to influence scientific and partnership programming, CIRAD is keen to organize a collective experience-sharing and learning capacity. A system of reference is to be developed for researchers and interested groups, partners and institutions. The development of a culture of impact will also fuel the debate and prevailing opinions on the impact of agricultural research for development. Through this debate, CIRAD intends to contribute to international talks on the relations between the different types of knowledge within social change processes.



# > Adapting so as to measure up to these ambitions

CIRAD relies on its teams and network of partners worldwide to boost the visibility and relevance of its operations and of their influence.



This means CIRAD has to change in order to safeguard the future of its values and practices:

- **Promote and anticipate on the range of disciplines and skills** among its staff: research, appraisals, teaching, promotion, support, etc. All the disciplines and know-how at CIRAD contribute to the success of its operations. The mobility of its scientists throughout their career and their ability to work in different environmental and sociocultural situations contribute to that wealth. Anticipatory management of jobs and skills plays a part in this.
- **Foster and organize our collective intelligence.** By building its strategic ambitions collectively, CIRAD has gradually forged a collective identity, ethic and values that make it both strong and proactive and enable it to adapt its operations to changing situations. Those operations are established as part of the participative management strategy that characterizes the organization.
- **Foster the capacity of CIRAD staff to work in the field in the South.** CIRAD's teams are helping to build new links between the DPs and organizations in France. This is attracting scientists from other research and training establishments in the North, particularly in Europe, and also in the South, fostering international collaboration on topics of common interest.

- **See the recruitment and reception of foreign scientists as an integral part of our operations.** Opening up further on an international level means recruiting and boosting our capacity to receive and train scientists from overseas at our different sites and platforms. This opening up also means developing platforms in partnership outside France with other organizations and universities from OECD countries, and international centres.

- **Mobilize our different partners to ensure the continuity of our operations.** To ensure the long-term future of its activities outside France, CIRAD needs to work with its partners to encourage international donors to fund programmes of common interest. Likewise, in the French overseas regions, CIRAD has to find European and regional sources of funding for priority research fields and partnerships.

- **Share our approach and know-how widely.** Throughout its history, CIRAD has trained numerous researchers and research managers from southern countries, who now make up a vast network. It has substantial assets in terms of expertise, collections, unique biological resources, and experience of promoting and building partnerships. Its aim is to share that experience with other research and development players and serve as a lobbying force in international talks on the future of the planet.

