



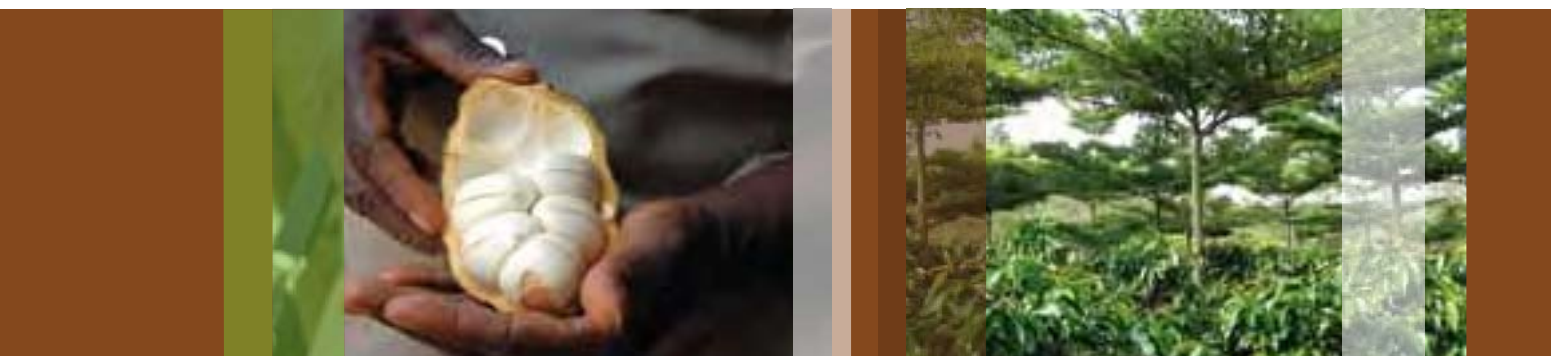
*An AIRD proposal**

Programme for Tropical Agroforestry Research

The French Inter-Agency on Research for Development (AIRD) has decided to launch the Programme for Tropical Agroforestry Research. A response to the growing importance of agroforestry in dealing with the pressing challenges facing developing countries (poverty alleviation, food security, climate change, biodiversity crisis), the AIRD Programme is the joint agroforestry initiative of two of its members with extensive experience in the field: Centre for International Co-operation in Agronomic Research for Development (CIRAD) and Institute for Research and Development (IRD).

Internationally renowned institutions CATIE (Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza, Costa Rica) and ICRAF (World Agroforestry Center, Kenya) are partners in this initiative.

The French Inter-Agency on Research for Development (AIRD) brings together a number of higher learning institutions and French development-oriented research organizations. It includes CIRAD, CNRS, CPU, INSERM, IRD and Institut Pasteur. Its mandate is to mobilize institutions involved in development research and coordinate scientific activities in, with, and for developing countries. Its programs combine research, training, knowledge-sharing and knowledge-transfer.





Enhancing the Potential for Sustainable Development in Tropical Countries

Agroforestry is a set of land-use practices based on combining crops and/or livestock with woody perennials including trees, shrubs, palms and bamboo. It has been part of traditional land-use systems around the world for centuries. Agroforestry systems host numerous tree species and derived products are used for food, medicine, cooking fuel, and animal fodder. They are critical for the livelihoods of millions.

Agroforestry has the potential to become a model of sustainable agriculture, provided we come to a better understanding of it and can better control production factors. The combination of trees and crops creates an ecosystem that helps preserve biodiversity. It can increase carbon levels stored in biomass and soil, and contribute to erosion control and maintaining soil fertility. Tree cover contributes to local climate moderation and reduces plant transpiration, thereby mitigating the effects of climate change. Finally, because agroforestry systems make limited use of chemical inputs, they have a limited negative impact on the environment, making their products eligible for eco-certification.

From a socio-economic standpoint, agroforestry systems are a major resource in rural communities. They diversify income by providing new commercialization opportunities in national and international markets, and reduce exposure to price volatility of export crops. Tree plantations are also a critical component of household wealth, passed on from one generation to the next.

The benefits of agroforestry practices in tropical regions are still insufficiently understood. Generating knowledge in this area will shed light on the importance of agroforestry as a production system in its own right, and increase its visibility in the agricultural and forestry sectors.

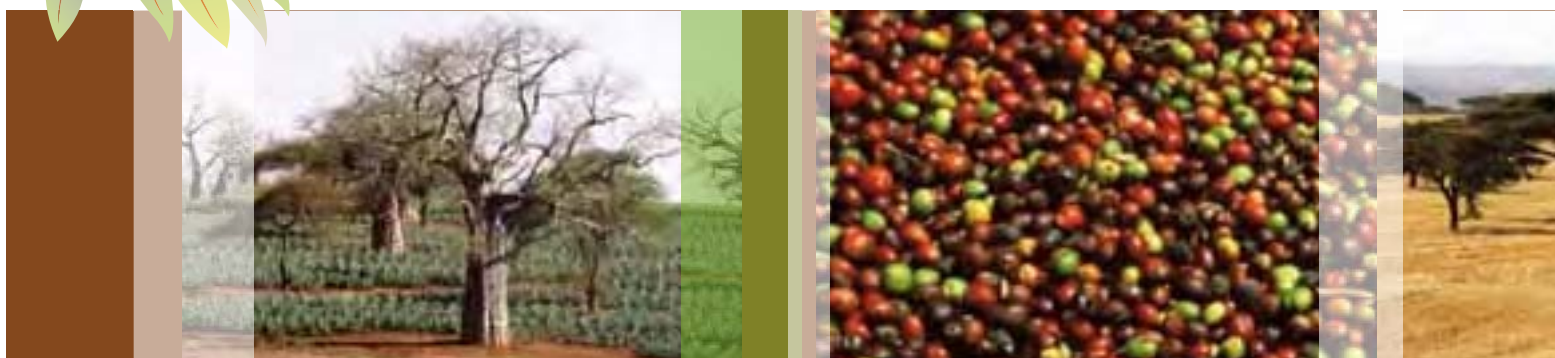
Better management through deeper understanding

The research effort is designed to better understand key tropical agroforestry systems, their impact on livelihoods and national economies; to analyze the ecological processes that optimize resource use and tree-crop interactions and to demonstrate how agroforestry can help tropical countries adapt to climate change and market globalization.

The Programme should result in proposals for innovative practices aiming at improving productivity while maintaining or even enhancing the environmental benefits of agroforestry. It should also result in better recognition of agroforestry by both the agricultural and forestry sectors as a land-use system in its own right.

The Programme endeavors to:

- fund research;
- train students from developing countries in research (PhD and Master's degree programmes);
- contribute to setting up Master's programmes specialized in tropical agroforestry;
- formulate recommendations for policy-makers.



A framework to pursue agroforestry research and training

Call for proposals

Selected research projects should have an education component, must run at least 3 years and involve researchers from developed and developing countries to explore at least one of the following areas:

- the **role of institutional, economic and political mechanisms** (eco-legal certification, CDM, REDD*, PES) in optimizing the contribution of agroforestry to local and national economies and improving living conditions of rural communities;
- the role of agroforestry practices in the provision of environmental services: preserving biodiversity, carbon sequestration, conservation of water and soil resources;
- **Productivity gains** that can be achieved while maintaining or increasing the environmental benefits of agroforestry systems. The Programme will prioritize four areas of research:
 - ecological processes involved in the use of light, water and nutrients for primary production and carbon sequestration,
 - mechanisms for disease and pest control,
 - trees - crops associations,
 - selection of species and varieties adapted to agroforestry contexts;
- **adaptation** and **resilience** of agroforestry systems to climate change, market globalization, declines in agricultural activity, urbanization and the development of communication technologies, for instance.

*United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries.

Regional focus

The Programme will fund projects in tropical regions where research capacities are strong and existing partnerships are in place between developed and developing countries.

Here are examples of systems that may be considered: agroforestry systems based on perennial crops in West Central Africa and Central America, parklands in the Sudano-Sahelian zone, coffee based agroforestry systems in East Africa and Central America.

Cross-cutting activities in the form of training and knowledge-sharing

The education of young researchers is a key priority for the future of agroforestry. Student involvement in research projects and the establishment of a Master's programme that draws on CATIE's experience will help develop a community of agroforestry specialists in developing countries.

To encourage consistency and complementarity between selected research projects, the Programme will coordinate crosscutting activities to leverage and disseminate research and to strengthen the capacity of partners in developing countries. These will include workshops, scientific symposiums, degree programmes for young researchers, publication support and access to scientific information and technology



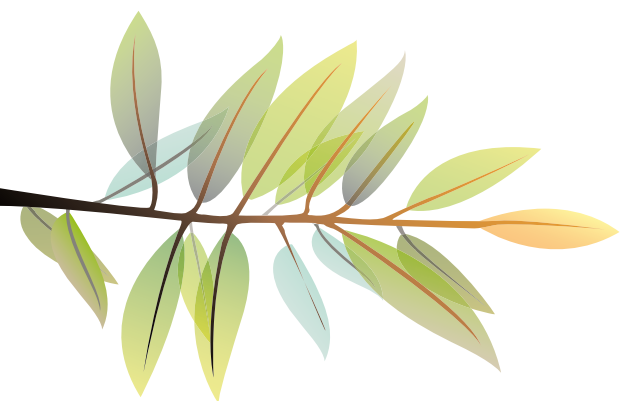
Partners from developing countries at the heart of the Programme

The Programme for Tropical Agroforestry Research addresses some of the most pressing issues facing developing countries. It was designed and will be implemented in partnership with institutions from developed and developing countries, which will also participate in the programme's governing bodies. Proposals submitted and led by partners from developing countries will be prioritized.

The **Steering Committee** will be comprised of all the programme's partners, including donors and institutions representing beneficiaries in developing countries (research or technical centers, universities, ministries of agriculture or research, private sector organisations). Its role is to establish guidelines for the programme and the call for proposals, and approve projects.

The **Scientific Advisory Committee** will be made up of qualified individuals from developed and developing countries. Its interdisciplinary composition will reflect the Programme's thematic and regional priorities. Its mission is to define the research areas for the call for proposals, evaluate submissions, propose projects for approval by steering Committee and monitor projects.

Programme implementation will be entrusted to AIRD. The Agency will manage tender processes, oversee disbursement to research teams, coordinate cross-cutting activities and conduct technical and financial reporting.



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