

The work of the Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) in the Indo-Pacific

CIRAD set out its scientific and partnership strategies in the overseas territories and in South-East Asia between late 2024 and early 2025, following multiple consultations with its technical, scientific, institutional and political partners. In a regional environment characterized by steady economic growth, exceptional, though endangered, biodiversity, and growing vulnerability to climate change, the CIRAD strategy in the Indo-Pacific operates around several key thrusts:

- A solid anchoring in global and cross-cutting challenges, such as the erosion of biodiversity, climate change, food and nutrition security and sovereignty, and the sustainable management of natural resources, particularly water and forests;
- A strong commitment to the agroecological transition of production systems: reducing synthetic inputs, developing agroforestry, implementing inclusive territorial and landscape approaches;
- Heightened focus on health security, using the One Health approach, increasingly incorporating the health of plants and soils in addition to preventing zoonotic diseases;
- Strengthened platforms in partnership for research, allowing joint creation of innovative research projects, tailored to local contexts and with high potential for dissemination (digital agriculture, sector performance, dialogue between scientists and decisionmakers, etc.);
- Implementation of research and development projects in close liaison with the private sector.

A network that extends across the Indo-Pacific

CIRAD research and training groups rely on high-level infrastructures, particularly in La Réunion (180 CIRAD employees), in eight countries of South-East Asia, and more recently in Australia and China. They all make use of a dense partnership network of 160 researchers, including 30 CIRAD expatriates, collaborating with 38 institutions within structured platforms:

- The Regional Platform for Agricultural Research for Development in the Indian Ocean (PReRAD-OI), for sustainable agriculture in the south-west of the region (La Réunion, Mayotte, Comoros, Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique);
- Platforms dedicated to biocontrol, epidemiological surveillance and the improvement of the control of animal and human infectious diseases (BioControl-OI & One Health-OI dP¹, for La Réunion, Comoros, Mayotte, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles);
- Platforms dedicated to the promotion of the agroecological transition through the joint design of innovative agricultural systems which reduce the use of synthetic inputs and which strengthen the resilience of small farmers in the face of climate hazards (ASEA dP, for Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Australia);
- Platforms dedicated to the prevention of emerging health risks through the "One Health" integrated approach and via the analysis of interactions between human, animal and

¹dPs are platforms in partnership for research and training designed and implemented with CIRAD partners. There are currently 21 located in Africa/Indian Ocean, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Mediterranean region (<https://www.cirad.fr/en/worldwide/platforms-in-partnership>).

environmental health (GREASE dP, for Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam);

- Platforms dedicated to the transformation of food systems by connecting agricultural production, urban markets and consumption (MALICA dP, for Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and China);
- Platforms dedicated to the response to the specific challenges of family rubber tree plantations in the face of climate change and the volatility of markets (HRPP dP, for Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam);
- Platforms dedicated to biodiversity, regional governance, changes in agricultural and forestry practices in the mosaic of landscapes of the islands of South-East Asia (SALSA dP, for Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines).

Solid regional and international alliances

CIRAD is also a stakeholder in scientific networks of excellent quality, such as Agroecology for Sustainable Aquaculture in a context of global CHAngeS (ASACHA), the Common Microbial Biotechnology Platform (CMPB), and the Center of Excellence for Soil Research in Asia (CESRA). It cooperates closely with centres of international research², local and regional universities, and institutions of excellence like the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT).

CIRAD is also strengthening ties with regional multilateral and scientific organizations such as ASEAN, the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) and the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), thereby fostering the effective incorporation of scientific results in public policies.

Furthermore, CIRAD maintains close relations with local representations of international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in order to develop large-scale projects in South-East Asia and strengthen the scaling-up of research results.

Active presence in the Pacific overseas communities

In the Pacific (New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia), CIRAD operates through two officials based in New Caledonia, in addition to frequent expert missions. Topics of interest focus in particular on the dynamic of tropical forests, silvopasture systems and food sovereignty.

CIRAD is a member of the Consortium for Research, Higher Education and Innovation in New Caledonia (CRESICA). Key partners of CIRAD in the region are the Institut Agronomique Calédonien (IAC), the University of New Caledonia (UNC), the Research Institute for Development (IRD), the Directorate of Agriculture of Polynesia, the Vanuatu Agricultural Research and Technical Centre (VARTC), the National University of Vanuatu (NUV), the Vanuatu Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and the Centre d'Appui au Développement Rural Loyaltien (CADRL).

² Biodiversity- International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Center for International Forestry Research –World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), WorldFish, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and International Water Management Institute (IWMI)

Some flagship CIRAD projects in the Indo-Pacific:

- International Preventing Zoonotic Disease Emergence (PREZODE) initiative [WdBk, Afd, EU]
- Agroecology and safe food system transitions in South-East Asia (ASSET), Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam [EU-DeSIRA, AFD, FFEM]
- TrAining on LandscapE maNagemeNT (TALENT) Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam [AFD]
- Germplasm exchange network and enhancement of seed systems (GENESS), Madagascar, Malawi, Comoros and Mozambique [Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs]
- SANOI-APTAE-OI "Appropriation des pratiques pour la transition agroécologique dans le sud-ouest de l'océan indien" (Ownership of practices for the agroecological transition in the South-West Indian Ocean region), La Réunion, Mauritius, Comoros [EU-FED / IOC]
- PRERISK-OI One Health initiative to improve the surveillance and control of infectious risks in the South-West Indian Ocean region, La Réunion, Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, Seychelles [EU-Interreg]
- NAAP "Agriculture and food nexus in the Pacific Island States": improve the contribution of traditional agricultural practices to food and nutritional security in New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna and Vanuatu [MEAE]