



DeSIRA+ OI

Sustainable food systems transition through agroecological innovations at scale in Western Indian Ocean



OBJECTIVES

The general objective is to contribute to the agroecological transition in the Western Indian Ocean region (OI-O), through the scaling up of proven practices and associated support schemes. This acceleration should help strengthen the food systems resilience to climate change and contribute to improving food security and producers' incomes.

The specific objectives are (i) to increase the resilience and productivity of the agricultural sector through the scaling up of agroecological innovations, and (ii) to contribute to the development of an institutional environment conducive to agroecological transitions.



LOGIC OF INTERVENTION

Initial hypotheses: Effective agroecological practices have already been identified in certain contexts. Their spatial dissemination and adoption by a greater number of actors require robust support mechanisms (actor networks, public and private advisory services). The ability of these mechanisms to generate scalable change depends heavily on ecological, socioeconomic, and political contexts.

Actions implemented:

- Participatory capitalisation (assessments of the agroecological situation in each country, contrasting case studies, co-design, and experience sharing) with practitioners, researchers, and decision-makers;

- Selection, funding, strengthening, and monitoring of national and regional projects that support agroecological transitions, tailored to scaling challenges identified through the capitalisation process;

- Support for political and institutional dialogue to promote agroecology in national and regional strategies.

Expected changes:

- Short term: emergence of coherent national and regional projects at territorial level, diversification and strengthening of advisory services and other support mechanisms, dissemination and adaptation of proven agroecological practices.

- Medium term: Scaling up through three pathways: horizontal (spatial diffusion of practices to a diversity of stakeholders and territories), vertical (institutional and political integration), in-depth (evolution of norms, values, and behaviours).

- Long term: Sustainable anchoring of agroecology in farm practices and value chains in Indian Ocean territories, and contribution to food systems resilience.



MAIN INTERVENTIONS/COMPONENTS

Component 1: Capitalisation and preparation for scaling

This component will be dedicated to the characterisation and the analysis of a diversity of agroecological initiatives in the OI-O through the development of

a multi-criteria analysis grid. The approach will build on complementary perspectives and methods, developed within the framework of DeSIRA projects (such as MAKIS, DISSEMINN and DeSIRA LIFT). In-depth case studies will be conducted on some emblematic initiatives and transversal actions will be organised for sharing experience and good practices, to the benefit of the supported project leaders (Activity 1).

Furthermore, on the basis of the first analytical results, terms of reference and selection criteria for the call for projects will be developed, and an in-itinere monitoring and evaluation framework and capacity building actions for supported project leaders will be identified. At this stage, the call for projects should be launched by the end of 2025. The intervention themes to be considered (currently being developed) must be adapted around common themes: water and soil preservation, enhancement of agroecological product value chains, ecosystem services, plant health, etc. (Activity 2).

Finally, the component will provide elements of advocacy and identify the necessary conditions to remove institutional and political obstacles to successful scale-up of agroecological practices during multi-level and multi-stakeholder workshops (Activity 3).

Component 2: Support to scaling

Building on the critical analysis carried out under component 1, a regional activity, under the PRÉRAD-OI lead, will establish a regional dynamic for the promotion of agroecology, by supporting networks of actors and the emergence of initiatives in the West Indian Ocean to support agricultural and food transitions. The PRÉRAD-OI is a regional think tank, mobilising actors of agroecology in the region, and will help to strengthen partnerships through their mobilisation to facilitate and support a science-policy dialogue by engaging selected strategic partners (Activity 1).

Once the guidelines of the call for projects will be established, a selection committee will be put in place to select final beneficiaries (Activity 2).

Finally, through this component and the implementation of the selected projects from the call, a specific activity is dedicated to the implementation and monitoring of selected projects, including monitoring of environmental and social impacts and effects (Activity 3).

Component 3: Coordination of the action

This component is dedicated to the coordination and the monitoring of the whole action (administrative and financial aspects). It will insure (i) relevant monitoring scheme implementation; (ii) sensitisation of local stakeholders to the theory of change; and (iii) mobilisation of national authorities (or their designated focal points) to promote integration of agroecological transition in sectorial policies.

In a cross-cutting way, the case studies and valorisation of the call for projects will contribute to the memento of agroecology. The project has also taken note of a request for financial contribution and is looking into possibilities for budget redistribution.



STATE OF PLAY OF THE PROJECT

Information and request for nomination of national focal points.

Constitution of a panel of 7 technical experts, with a range of thematic and geographic expertise, to develop the call for projects' guidelines.

Constitution of the regional coordination unit (mainly based in Madagascar; support in La Réunion, where technical support of the PRÉRAD-OI is established).

Preparation in progress of administrative project documents) and knowledge dissemination plan.



BASIC INFORMATION

Contracting entity: AFD (Agence française de développement).

Implementing partners: AFD, Cirad (Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement), Ministries of Agriculture, national research institutes (Madagascar: FOFIFA, FIFAMANOR, Comoros: INRAPE, and Mauritius: FAREI, University of Mauritius), international research organisations (CGIAR centres), non-research organisations, private sector.

Countries: Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles (regional approach) and mobilisation of France (overseas collectivities – regional approach).

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Duration: 4.5 years.

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