



Research evaluation

FINAL RESUME ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:
Agroecology and Sustainable Intensification of
Annual crops (AÏDA)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE
FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND
RESEARCH BODIES:

Centre de Coopération Internationale en
Recherche Agronomique pour le
Développement – CIRAD

EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2019-2020
GROUP A

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High Council for evaluation of research and higher education



In the name of Hcéres¹:

Nelly Dupin, Acting
President

In the name of the experts committee²:

Jan Diels, Chairman of the committee

Under the decree No.2014-1365 dated 14 November 2014,

¹ The president of Hcéres "countersigns the evaluation reports set up by the experts committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5);

² The evaluation reports "are signed by the chairman of the experts committee". (Article 11, paragraph 2).

Tables in this document were filled with data submitted by the supervising body on behalf the unit.

UNIT PRESENTATION

Unit name:	Agroecology and Sustainable Intensification of Annual crops
Unit acronym:	AïDA
Current label and N°:	UPR 115
ID RNSR:	
Application type:	Restructuration
Head of the unit (2019-2020):	Mr Éric SCOPEL
Project leader (2021-2025):	Mr Krishna NAUDIN
Number of teams and/or themes:	3

EXPERTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair:	Mr Jan DIELS, KU Leuven, Belgique
Experts:	Mr Christian GERMAIN, Bordeaux Sciences Agro, Gradignan
	Ms Séverine PIUTTI, Université de Lorraine/Ensaia, Vandœuvre-lès-Nancy
	Mr Raymond REAU, INRAE, Thiverval Grignon (supporting personnel)
	Mr Denis THIÉRY, INRAE, Villenave d'Ornon

HCÉRES REPRESENTATIVE

Mr Serge DELROT

REPRESENTATIVES OF SUPERVISING BODIES

Mr Éric JUSTES, CIRAD

Mr Jean-Paul LACLAU, CIRAD

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The AIDA research unit is based at CIRAD in Montpellier and is one of the twelve research units reporting to the Performance of Tropical Production and Processing Systems (Persyst) Department. Following the last AERES evaluation exercise, AIDA results from the merger of two research units, "Annual Crop Systems" (SCA, itself the result of various previous mergers between 2008 and 2010) and "Agronomic Systems and Engineering" (SIA) which worked mainly on Conservation Agriculture (CA)-based cropping systems. These two groups were very complementary, as confirmed by the previous AERES evaluation, justifying their effective merger within a single unit.

Of the unit's 80 permanent employees, 43 are located in Montpellier. On this site, they benefit from a single location on the Lavalette Campus, with only the employees of the Laboratory of Technology and Characterisation of Natural Fibres (LTC) located in a nearby building in the technology park (4 people).

However, like for most of CIRAD units, parts of the employees are located outside mainland France, 20 are in Réunion Island and 17 in tropical countries (mainly in Africa).

Management team

Director current evaluation period: Mr Eric SCOPEL

Director in future period: Mr Krishna NAUDIN

HCÉRES NOMENCLATURE

SVE1-3 Biotechnologies, sciences environnementales, biologie synthétique, agronomie

THEMATICS

AIDA (French acronym for Agroecology and Sustainable Intensification of Annual Crops) is a CIRAD research unit that focuses on the sustainable intensification of annual crop production in the constrained environments of tropical small-scale farming systems. The unit's research aims to fully exploit available resources by mobilizing the ecological processes that govern their dynamics within agro-systems. It works on the analysis, assessment and design of cropping systems

UNIT WORKFORCE

Agroecology and Sustainable Intensification of Annual crops (AïDA)		
Active staff	Number 06/30/2019	Number 01/01/2021
Full professors and similar positions	0	0
Assistant professors and similar positions	0	0
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	0	0
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	0	0
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	61	61
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	17	17
Permanent staff	78	78

Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	0	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs (except PhD students)	2	
PhD Students	22	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	9	
Non-permanent staff	33	
Total	111	78

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

AIDA is a CIRAD research unit focusing on the sustainable intensification of annual crop production in tropical small-scale farming systems. The unit's research aims to fully exploit available resources by mobilizing the ecological processes that govern their dynamics within agro-systems. AIDA works on the analysis, assessment and design of cropping systems.

The scientific output of AIDA is good but varies widely between individuals. Some researchers show a prolific publication record and two scientists are among the 1% most cited in the domain 'agricultural science' field of the Web of Science. Many scientific articles are published in the best international journals in their research discipline.

Interactions with the non-academic world are one of the strengths of AIDA. This is well demonstrated by the numerous partnerships carried out with countries in the Global South, and also by the software tools and web platforms developed. However, adoption of innovations by small-scale farmers seems rarely quantified, and the economic impact is hard to assess. Of course, it should be noted that the evaluation of these outputs in smallholder farming systems in developing countries is notoriously difficult, and progress often is the result of many interventions and factors that are hard to disentangle.

The unit's involvement in training is good as this unit hosted a fair number of PhD students, most of them being from developing countries. The average PhD duration and the average number of publications per student indicate the good quality of the supervision.

AIDA has an excellent internal organization, which has taken into account the diversity of its staff and which proves to be adapted to the specific missions entrusted to it by CIRAD and to the fact that numerous AIDA researchers work abroad for a significant portion of their career.

Its scientific strategy and projects for the future 5 years are very good. However, it will be crucial to stimulate collaboration between teams and to pursue a strategy in order to increase the number of HDR and the publication output.

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