

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:

Laboratory of Experimental and Comparative Ethology (LEEC)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND RESEARCH BODIES:

Université Paris 13

Institut de Recherche pour le Développement - IRD

EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2017-2018
GROUP D



In the name of Hcéres¹:

Michel Cosnard, President

In the name of the expert committee²:

Anna Lindholm, Chairwoman 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 expert committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5);

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

This report is the sole result of the unit's evaluation by the expert committee, the composition of which is specified below. The assessments contained herein are the expression of an independent and collegial reviewing by the committee.

UNIT PRESENTATION

Unit name:	Laboratory of Experimental and Comparative Ethology
Unit acronym:	LEEC
Requested label:	EA
Application type:	Renewal
Current number:	EA 4443
Head of the unit (2017-2018):	Mr Heiko Georg RÖDEL
Project leader (2019-2023):	Mr Heiko Georg RÖDEL
Number of teams:	1

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair:	Ms Anna LINDHOLM, University of Zurich, Switzerland
Experts:	Mr Christian BURBAN, Inra Cestas (supporting personnel) Mr Frank CEZILLY, Université de Bourgogne Mr Sébastien DEREGNAUCOURT, Université Paris 10 (representative of CNU)
HCERES scientific officer:	Mr Jean-François HOCQUETTE
Representative of supervising institutions and bodies:	Mr Jean-Pierre ASTRUC, Université Paris 13

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The LEEC was founded more than 40 years ago at "Université Paris 13", and is situated at the "Institut Galilée" at the Villetaneuse campus. It belongs to the faculty of "Lettres, Langues, Sciences Humaines et des Sociétés". Following the retirement of the previous director, the direction of the team changed since the previous evaluation.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Head: Mr Heiko RÖDEL; deputy head: Mr Christophe FÉRON.

HCERES NOMENCLATURE

SVE4 Neurologie; SVE1_2 Agronomie, Biologie Végétale, Écologie, Environnement, Évolution.

SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN

The unit focuses on ethology, the study of animal behaviour, with a strong empirical research approach. There is a Tinbergen inspired focus on proximate and ultimate causes of behaviour, including an ontogenetic and comparative approach. Research questions fall into the themes of "Individual differences", "cognition and communication", and "reproductive strategies". A diversity of organisms are studied in the laboratory and in the field, primarily social insects, polychaetes, and mammals. The LEEC performs fundamental and applied research, in particular investigating the evolution of behaviour and its underlying mechanisms.

UNIT WORKFORCE

Unit workforce	Number 30/06/2017	Number 01/01/2019
Permanent staff		
Full professors and similar positions	3	3
Assistant professors and similar positions	8	9
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.")	0	0
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	5	6
TOTAL permanent staff	16	18
Non-permanent staff		

Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	0	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs	16	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	2	
PhD Students	6	
TOTAL non-permanent staff	24	
TOTAL unit	40	

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

Since the previous evaluation, the unit has integrated two teams into a single one, and improved its scientific productivity. The major strengths of the unit are their skill pool, the originality of some biological systems, and good management practices resulting in strong cohesion of the whole research team. Further strengths are regular scientific exchanges, continuous and strong involvement in training and higher education at both national and international levels, attractiveness to foreign students and researchers, the astute development of non-academic partnerships, and good integration of applied and fundamental research. The main weaknesses of the team are that the number of HDRs remains moderate, and the scientific productivity of team members is unequal. New opportunities for the unit include a promising new biological model and an opportunity to benefit from a partnership with IRD ("Institut de Recherche pour le Développement"), and teaching the Master degree in English to reinforce international attractiveness. Threats to the team are the risk of losing teaching or technical and animal care positions, the risk of reducing group cohesion through merger with another unit, and the risk of not fully benefiting from the investment from the "Chaire d'excellence" program if the partnership with IRD is not realised.

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