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Project title: International symposium on 'Innovation and sustainable development', 2010

Unit managing the project: INNOVATION (Innovation and development in agriculture and the agrifood sector) (INRA, CIRAD, SupAgro)

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Country involved in the project: Netherlands

Research units from the Foundation's scientific network involved: DIADE, GREEN, LAMETA, MOISA

Subthematic axes: STDI-1 (Socio-Technical Dynamics of Innovation 1: *Agri-environmental innovations, agri-ecosystems, resources management*), STDI-2 (Socio-Technical Dynamics of Innovation 2: *Agrifood innovations, food and non-food use of plant crops*), STDI-3 (Socio-Technical Dynamics of Innovation 3: *Innovation processes, social management of innovations*)

Objectives:

'Innovation' is a research theme addressed by different scientific disciplines, often with the use of several definitions and methods of analysis. However, most of the questions and work conducted today are focused on the conditions of innovation, procedures for the involvement of stakeholders in innovation processes, the effects of innovations in sustainable development and the possible forms of public accompaniment. Agriculture and the agrifood sector have an important position in this research work because of a new context marked in particular by the upsurge of quality and its many definitions, the evolution of relations between science and society and the appearance of the sustainable development paradigm.

Innovation processes in agriculture and the agrifood industry are the subject of different forms of interdisciplinary approaches for reasons of their technical, sociological and economic dimensions: bid invitations and research projects, international conferences and seminars, books or issues of journals. These multidisciplinary approaches to innovation make it possible to question the coexistence of different innovation paradigms, to re-examine the targets of the stakeholders who innovate and to engage in more rigorous analysis of the effects of the development (without any connotation of positive or negative value) of these processes.

The objectives of this international symposium in Montpellier in 2010 are as follows:

- to set Montpellier agricultural research facilities in international discussions—from the angles of both science and society— of the study of innovation processes, the position and role of agricultural research in these processes and the results and effects of these processes with regard to sustainable development.
- to set a framework for interdisciplinary discussion centred on new approaches to innovation (participatory research, interactions between scientific knowledge and hands-on knowledge for example) and development (original development practices and pathways raising new questions for the research sector)

Action carried-out and results obtained:

Following the meetings of the scientific committee, the following programme has been suggested:

Montpellier, France – Corum, June 28 – July 1, 2010

Facing the crisis and growing uncertainties, can science and societies reinvent agricultural and food systems to achieve sustainability?

Come exchange with researchers and actors from the whole world, around the evolution of innovation systems, to build together new perspectives for scientific agendas, and help renew actions and policies to better achieve sustainability.

Recognized personalities will present their views during key note lectures:

- Andy Hall (United Nations University) : Questions put at stake for innovation systems today
- Papa Seck (Africa Rice, ex-ADRAO): How to conceive innovating agricultural policies in Africa to feed this continent in a sustainable and sustained way?
- Juliana Santilli (Public Ministry, Brazil) : Innovating to enhance agrobiodiversity, recognize collective intellectual rights and enable more social equity
- Lawrence Busch (Michigan State University) : Acting sustainably: Governance through standards in a times of « corporate science »
- Robert Watson (DEFRA - University of East Anglia) : Renewing agricultural research

Parallel sessions will enable to discuss specific issues, by exchanging experiences with actors from the whole world

350 papers will be presented. Come discuss innovations for agroecology and ecological intensification, producer inclusion and social equity, adaptation strategies facing change, social construction of standards, participatory research, etc.

During round tables, key stakeholders will share their practices and reflections on the challenges research is currently facing.

Parallel round tables:

- Innovation systems in practice: challenges and perspectives. Organised with the World Bank
- Innovation policies: case of the Mediterranean region. Organised with OECD, IFAD and ArimNet
- Regional dynamics of innovation. Organised in partnership with the Languedoc-Roussillon region and the PSDR project (Pour et Sur le Développement Régional – On and For Regional Development).

Final round table : Perspectives to reinforce links between research and action in innovation systems

Prospects for the future:

The Symposium will be held from June 28 to July 1.

Expected diffusion:

Papers will be published on a CD-Rom which will be distributed during the conference and then posted on-line as the conference proceedings. For each session, agreements will be engaged to publish special issues in international journals (English-, French- and Spanish-language journals).

A special book will be published to present a global view of issues dealing with innovation and sustainable development, including key note lectures and the syntheses of round tables and parallel workshops.

We will invite representatives of the general press as well as of professional reviews dealing with political issues or with advisory and support services. The results of the symposium will also be used in training workshops and research schools to feed reflection on research methods and practices in Northern and Southern countries.

Total Agropolis Fondation funding: € 30,000 (3 months contract for a librarian, travel expenses, running costs, organisation of the meeting)

Funding categorie(s): Agropolis Fondation small grants (support for the organisation of high-level scientific events (conferences, seminars)

Project duration: December 1 2007 – December 30 2010

Keywords: innovation – sustainable development – agronomy – social sciences - symposium