



Project for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions (SARD-M)

*"Strengthening mountain populations' livelihoods with improved policies
for sustainable agriculture and rural development"*

Work plan for 2005
(23rd February 2005)

Introduction

The SARD-M Project is focused on supporting the **design, implementation and evaluation of new policy packages for sustainable agriculture and rural development in mountain regions** and upland-lowland integration through action-oriented and demand-driven activities.

Activities will involve **many different partners** (i.e. governments, civil society including private sector, governmental and non-governmental international organisations) and be **articulated at various levels** (i.e. local, country, regional or sub-regional and global levels) so as to facilitate interchange and interactive processes among different stakeholders.

Implementation modalities include, among others, the establishment of specific partnership agreements. In particular:

- in **each FAO region**, project activities should be supported by one or more **focal points**, covering a mountain range or a geo-political unit. The regional/sub-regional level is expected to play a pivotal role with other levels in relation to the SARD-M Project Team.
- at the **country level**, at least one country per region would directly participate in the project if possible; at the same time special attention will be paid to collaboration/involvement of decentralized authorities both from the North and the South.

According to the participatory and evolving design of the SARD-M Project, the **2005 project activities will remain open** to possible adjustment.

1. Criteria for prioritising activities to be implemented

In order to keep the project focused on policy packages for SARD in mountain regions, a list of criteria for selecting priority activities has been established in line with the recommendations of the Second Meeting of the Adelboden Group held in Rome on 4 and 5 October 2004.

Project activities should:

- have a **participatory dimension** (potential for dialogue and be demand-driven);
- have a **territorial and multisectoral dimension** (concentration on policy actions in SARD and on synergies between highlands and lowlands, and rural and urban areas);
- be **concrete, applicable and replicable**, and must include sustainability components.

2. Priority activities for 2005

Preparatory activities, funded by the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture, have been implemented in the second half of 2004 to pave the way for a smooth and rapid start-up of 2005 priority activities (e.g. contacts and discussions for mobilisation of potential donors and partners, design and implementation of a communication strategy, etc.). Building on these preparatory activities, a **limited number of priority activities** will constitute the basic work plan of 2005. Prioritization takes into account the recommendations of the Second Meeting of the Adelboden Group as well as financial support¹ and in-kind potential commitments.

Priorities are to:

1. **Assess the strengths and weaknesses of mountain policies, including social, economic, institutional and environmental aspects, in relation to Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development principles.**
2. **Strengthen local institutions, by developing training materials and sessions, in close collaboration with NGOs, producers' associations, cooperatives, etc.**
3. **Analyze positive and negative externalities of mountain regions through a comparative review of existing methods and tools.**

Synergies and co-funding with SARD or Mountain related projects and programmes, either completed or being implemented, will be a driving force to avoid duplication, enrich activities and outputs, and to increase funding efficiency.

2.1 Establishment of regional focal points and pivotal partners

Regional focal points will facilitate sharing of information, communication, and coordination and networking with other partners, while supporting the design and implementation of priority activities.

In 2005, the project will focus its activities in **5 sub-regions/mountain ranges or regions, involving 5 focal points**: CIHEAM – IAM Bari in collaboration with Plan Bleu for the Mediterranean region; CIP in collaboration with CONDESAN for Latin America; EUROMONTANA for Europe; ICIMOD for Hindu Kush Himalaya/Asia; and PASOLAC for Central America. At the same time, the project team will also contact institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia (except Hindu Kush Himalaya) and Middle East regions in order to cover additional mountain ranges for 2006.

Regional Focal Points will participate in a meeting organised by the FAO SARD-M Team to facilitate coordination and synergy-building (tentatively scheduled for early May).

¹ As of 6 January 2005, US\$ 350,000 were secured for 2005 from the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture, and French and Japanese Governments have seconded the Coordinator and an Associate Professional Officer, respectively.

2.2 Capitalizing on and development of methods and tools

2.2.1 Analysis of strengths / weaknesses of existing mountain policies

Relevant documentation (policy studies, partners' experiences, case studies, etc.) concerning social, economic, environmental and institutional policies for SARD in mountain regions is being collected, since the end of 2004, by the FAO SARD-M Team notably from participants of the Second Adelboden Group meeting and members of the Mountain Partnership and of the Mountain Forum.

In 2005, the documents collected will allow for the design and development of a database and the **analysis** by the FAO SARD-M Team **of the different status and advancement of diverse SARD-oriented mountain policies** and related instruments and incentive schemes, in terms of design, implementation and impact at the grassroots and territorial levels.

a. Country assessment and regional workshops at regional level

In **Europe**, a consultation on SARD policy issues under the **Carpathian Convention**² will be conducted by the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP) in partnership with Euromontana³. An assessment of regional policy strengths / weaknesses will be conducted in three countries and a **workshop**, tentatively scheduled for October, will convene representatives from Ministries of Agriculture / Environment, Agriculture/Rural Development centres, associations, territorial authorities, research institutes, etc. Main themes to be addressed should include:

- Regional policy assessment and baseline survey, as well as current socio-economic driving forces;
- Exchange of experience and coordinated approaches towards CAP, pre-accession programmes and policies directed towards less-favoured-areas;
- Regional approaches towards coordinated sustainable regional development schemes, including agro-environmental programmes and agro-tourism.

In **Central America**, an analysis on existing literature, partners' experiences and case-studies will be implemented by **PASOLAC**⁴ in **Costa Rica, El Salvador** and **Nicaragua**. To accomplish this activity:

- A regional consultant will assess current policies with regards to mountain regions or hillsides by visiting relevant Ministries. Additionally, the consultant will document policies at the local level based on a selection of municipalities to be visited;
- A one-day workshop gathering Government's and civil society's representatives will be convened in each country to review the results and conclusions of the analysis;
- A three-day regional workshop will be implemented upon completion of this analysis. Participants of this workshop will be stakeholders involved in policymaking at the local, national and regional levels.

In the **Hindu Kush Himalaya**, an analysis of existing literature, partners' experiences and case-studies could be implemented by ICIMOD⁵ in partnership with IFAD possibly in **Nepal** and in another **South East Asia country** (i.e.Vietnam). A two-day regional workshop could be implemented upon completion of this analysis (to be confirmed).

In the **Andes**, an analysis of the existing literature, partners' experiences and case-studies could be implemented by CIP/CONDESAN⁶ (to be confirmed).

² Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic, Ukraine.

³ Regional Focal Point for Europe.

⁴ Regional Focal Point for Central America.

⁵ Regional Focal Point for Hindu Kush Himalaya.

⁶ Regional Focal Point for the Andes.

In the **Mediterranean region**, an analysis of existing literature, partners' experiences and case-studies could be implemented by CIHEAM/Plan bleu⁷ (to be confirmed).

b. Case studies at the national level

The experience developed by various Adelboden Group stakeholders will also be capitalized upon in the **implementation of country case studies**. One to three case studies, depending on the availability of additional funding and in-kind contributions, will be developed in order to a) build on and further refine existing methods and tools related to the design or implementation of policies for SARD in mountain regions, including their testing in the field, or b) analyse the strengths / weaknesses of current mountain policies in relation to SARD principles. These case-studies will also contribute to assessing diversified examples of SARD-oriented mountain policies, with particular emphasis on issues related to their implementation, effectiveness and impact. Special attention will be given to the multi-stakeholder dimensions and processes.

Possible partnerships and co-funding of case studies will enable the implementation and fine tuning of existing approaches and tools:

- in **Peru**, Latin America, in collaboration with CEPES (Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales) and FAO/SDAA; in a **Sub-Saharan Africa country** (e.g. Burundi, Ethiopia or Kenya), depending on availability of additional funding, based on the **Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD) approach**;
- possibly in an Eastern Europe country, for example, in the Balkan or Carpathian Regions, and/or in a Maghreb country based on the **SARD-FSE⁸ approach**, depending on availability of additional funding.

These countries are proposed both in terms of priority and interest shown by national and/or local institutions. There is also an important synergy to be developed with ongoing FAO and partner activities in mountain areas of these countries.

Expected products in 2005:

1. A review of existing policies for SARD in mountain regions and a database on related documents;
2. Identification of strengths and weaknesses of existing policies for SARD in the Carpathian Convention countries and preparation of follow-up proposals;
3. Identification of strengths and weaknesses of existing policies for SARD in Central America countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua) and a three-day regional workshop, and publication of country analysis and regional workshop proceedings;
4. Identification of strengths and weaknesses of existing policies for SARD in an Hindu Kush Himalaya country, possibly in Nepal, and in Vietnam, organisation of a two-day regional workshop (to be confirmed);
5. Identification of strengths and weaknesses of existing policies for SARD in the Mediterranean region and in the Andes (to be confirmed);
6. PNTD case studies in Peru contributing to the identification of strengths and weaknesses of existing policies for SARD in mountain regions;
7. SARD-FSE case studies (2), depending on additional funding, contributing to the identification of strengths and weaknesses of existing policies for SARD in mountain regions;
8. A review of SARD-FSE and PNTD methods and tools.

2.2.2 Strengthening of local institutions

The pursuing of SARD and of local development strategies requires that institutions, both private and public, need to acquire new knowledge and skills in order to develop their capacities for the new roles they will need to play.

⁷ Regional Focal Point for the Mediterranean region.

⁸ Evolution of Farming Systems for SARD Project.

The SARD CIHEAM-IAM Bari Project (2006 – 2008) is a first step towards the activation of co-ordinated efforts for promoting SARD within the Mediterranean Region. The overall aim of the project, strongly connected to the overall objective of the SARD-M Project, is to “facilitate the process towards the formulation, implementation and evaluation of SARD policies in Mediterranean Countries, in order to sustain sustainable local development schemes”.

The project aims at creating local capacities in the public and private sectors and civil society, creating knowledge, skills and attitudes and establishing multi-stakeholder mechanisms of dialogue and action to foster the necessary development of changes.

The project will foster **constructive synergies** among International Organizations (FAO, ILO and CIHEAM) and local Governments (Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development).

Expected products in 2006:

1. A review of existing relevant training tools and courses;
2. Training tools.

2.2.3 Analysis of mountain positive and negative externalities

Further thinking will be envisaged prior to designing project activities in order to identify the comparative and specific advantage of the SARD-M project on this issue.

The following activities will nevertheless be implemented:

- a comparative review of existing case studies in Europe through a seminar to be organised by EUROMONTANA (Great Britain, November 2005).
- a study carried out by the Roles of Agriculture project (RoA) in Morocco on environmental services.

Expected products in 2005:

1. Awareness raising, the EUROMONTANA seminar proceedings and identification of possible follow up activities;
2. A review of existing policies, methods and tools (to be confirmed, subject to funding availability).

2.2.4 Support in the promotion of mountain quality products

The SARD-M project will collaborate with the project “promoting and protecting local products as a means for sustainable development in mountain regions” implemented by the FAO Mountain Group (FORC) as a contribution to the Mountain Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Livelihoods.

Phase 3 of this project aims at building institutional capacity at the regional, national and local levels in supporting the development of mountain quality products through the finalisation and implementation of training of trainers courses based on an action/learning approach. The Mediterranean Region will be targeted first.

The SARD-M project will participate in the design and implementation of phase 3 by contributing to the analysis of the policy and institutional environment affecting the promotion of quality mountain products in pilot countries selected for phase 3.

Expected products:

1. Methods/tools for the identification of policy and institutional constraints to the development of mountain quality products in a SARD perspective;
2. Identification of policy and institutional constraints to the development of mountain quality products in the case study countries.

2.3 Generic support activities

2.3.1 Maintenance of the database on organisations, programmes and projects

A critical inventory of organisations, programmes and projects dealing with SARD inspired policies for mountain regions started in late 2004 will need to be regularly updated.

2.3.2 On-going mobilisation of donors

The participants of the Second Meeting of the Adelboden Group insisted that further discussion and action for resource mobilization (e.g. European Union, Global Environment Fund, IFAD and World Bank) is required. The project team will thus continue discussions with potential donors, i.e. governments of developed countries and international organisations.

A meeting with European Local Authorities on FAO mountain related projects and programmes, namely the Mountain Partnership and the SARD-M Project, could be convened in June, in collaboration with FAO/TCDS and the Mountain Partnership.

The team will also prepare submissions to the Global Environment Fund (GEF), in collaboration with FAO/TCAP, and to the European Union (EU) funds.

Expected products: at least,

1. Submissions to Global Environment fund and to European Union funds;
2. A meeting with European Local Authorities.

2.3.3 Communication

A communication strategy was designed in June 2004. The first steps of this strategy were implemented in 2004: development of a visual identity, design and establishment of an electronic mailing list and a SARD-M Project website (<http://www.fao.org/sard/sard-m>), preparation of a communication kit (banners, power-point template, etc.).

Communication activities for 2005 will target governments, international organizations, Major Groups of the civil society, the private sector, and other key stakeholders involved in SARD-M policies. The **existing materials** will be mobilised, through maintenance and updating of the website⁹, the electronic mailing list and possibly e-consultations. The SARD-M project will be involved in key meetings and conferences (e.g. FAO Committee on Agriculture on 13-16 April, IFSA Conference¹⁰ in mid September, International Mountain Day, etc.).

Expected products:

1. Updating and completion of the SARD-M website, including databases on SARD-M organisations, programmes and projects and policy publications;
2. At least 5 messages addressed to the e-mail list.

2.3.4 Coordination and Networking

a. Provision of assistance for the establishment/consolidation of coordination mechanisms on SARD within FAO and with other partners

The Project Team will continue to consolidate coordination with other SARD projects/partners at the national and international level (SARD-Initiative, SARD-FSE Project, etc.) and provide a contribution to the SARD website to be launched in spring 2005.

⁹ Including links and synergies to be developed with the overall SARD website (to be launched in April 2005).

¹⁰ The International Farming System Association will organise an International Conference supported by FAO and IFAD in mid-September 2005 focussing notably on SARD.

The same applies to other non FAO projects/partners at national and international levels, such as the SARD in Mountain Regions Initiative of the Mountain Partnership and others.

b. Networking

To complement the networking activities of regional focal points, direct links established by the Project Team with the UN System Network on Rural Development and Food Security, the Mountain Partnership, the Mountain Forum and CSO/NGO networks, as well as with other institutions and networks will be strengthened. Close collaboration will be pursued with Major Groups which have been engaged in the Adelboden process. Direct collaboration will also be established, as much as possible, with the activities of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS).

c. Organization of a meeting of the Adelboden Group Board

In 2005, due to the starting up of project activities, it does not appear necessary to organise a meeting of the entire Adelboden Group. The Third Meeting of the Adelboden Group would thus be postponed to mid-2006 and replaced by a meeting of the **Adelboden Group Board** in end November/early December. This Board meeting would be preceded by **e-consultations** at sub-regional level through the focal points and at global levels in accordance with the "Adelboden Spirit".