



**GFAR**

GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
FORUM MONDIAL DE LA RECHERCHE AGRICOLE  
FORO GLOBAL DE INVESTIGACION AGROPECUARIA

Document No: GFAR/00/18-04  
Distribution: SUB-PLenary 2  
Date: 15 May 2000

**GFAR – 2000**  
**May 21 - 23**  
**Dresden, Germany**

***Strengthening Partnership in Agricultural Research  
for Development in the Context of Globalization***

**NEW MECHANISMS FOR REINFORCING PARTNERSHIPS IN AGRO-  
ECOLOGY/  
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT  
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT\***

\* This paper has been prepared at the request of the GFAR Secretariat as a technical background document. It is solely the responsibility of the author (s), and does not necessarily represent the views of GFAR, nor of any of its stakeholders.

NARS Secretariat of GFAR • Mailing Address: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Roma, Italy  
Tel: (39-06) 5705-3413 • Web: <http://www.egfar.org> • Fax: (39-06) 5705-3898 • E-mail: [NARS-Secretariat@fao.org](mailto:NARS-Secretariat@fao.org)



**GFAR**

GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
FORUM MONDIAL DE LA RECHERCHE AGRICOLE  
FORO GLOBAL DE INVESTIGACION A GROPECUARIA

# **New mechanisms for strengthening partnerships in research and development of ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management**

*Concept paper for the Global Forum on Agricultural Research in Dresden  
by the Rambouillet Steering Group<sup>1</sup>*

*12 May 2000*

---

## **1. Rationale: EA/NRM research starts from the local scale**

Mainstream agricultural research has focused primarily on technical and biophysical aspects and is aimed at controlling or manipulating nature through the use of external inputs, such as agricultural chemicals, or through genetic improvement of crops and livestock. The results of this research have benefited some resource-rich farmers on well-endowed land, but not the large proportion of small-scale farmers in resource-poor areas. Moreover, the negative environmental effects of “modern” agriculture are now becoming increasingly evident, while problems of resource degradation are being faced by the farmers confined to the marginal land. There is a need to strengthen research and development (R&D) aimed at ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management (EA/NRM), especially by the poorer farmers who did not benefit from the “Green Revolution”.

In EA/NRM, the most important ingredients for success are not external production inputs but rather labour, knowledge and local management capacities. Scientific research for development in this sphere must seek not to develop perfected technologies (which, in any case, are likely to be of limited applicability over time) but rather to develop local capacities to manage resources flexibly, to access useful information, to test new ideas, to assess the results and, thus, to adapt to changing conditions. Most “success stories” in the development of EA/NRM by smallholders on family farms are derived from local knowledge and experimentation, and are based primarily on the use of local inputs. The innovations are usually site-specific, given the complexity and diversity of agroecosystems in space and time.

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on the discussions of the GFAR-NRM workshop held in Rambouillet in December 1999, produced by the Rambouillet Steering Group (Mutizwa Mukute, PELUM, Zimbabwe; Yang Saing Koma, CEDAC, Cambodia; Luis Guerrero, CIED, Peru; Jean Marc von der Weid, ASPTA, Brazil; Didier Pillot, GRET, France; Ann Waters-Bayer, Agrecol, Germany / ETC Ecoculture, Netherlands; John Farrington, ODI, UK; Frans Neuman, IAC, Netherlands), with additional comments from Christian Castellonet, GRET, France; Marijke Kuipers, Agromisa, Netherlands; and Fernando Chaparro and Oliver Oliveros, NARS Secretariat, Italy; revised by Ann Waters-Bayer on the basis of comments from Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil, CIRAD, France (with thanks for the original diagram); Rob Witte, Agromisa, Netherlands; Lawrence Tsimese, GOAN, Ghana; Michel Pimbert, IIED, UK; George Kurzom, MA'AN, Palestina; Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, League for Pastoral Peoples, Germany / India; Kate Gold, ITDG, UK; Gigi Francisco, DAWN, Philippines; Amadou Diop, Rodale Institute, USA; Eliud Ngunjiri, RODI, Kenya; Claudia Heid, Agrecol-Andes, Bolivia; and further comments by members of the Rambouillet Steering Group.

The ideas and principles behind them can, however, inspire farmers and development agents in other areas and can provide starting points for their own local experimentation. Spreading these innovations can accelerate learning by other people trying to improve their systems of agriculture and NRM.

Research in EA/NRM is must be oriented to action in developing more sustainable forms of natural resource use. The action for improvement will ultimately be taken by the resource users themselves. These people – and the farmer organisations, NGOs and private bodies working with them – have a particularly important contribution to make in recognising, critically analysing and further developing promising innovations, together with other partners in R&D.

### **Individual practices and collective management of resources**

The primary objective of the R&D should be to promote processes of local innovation in improving EA/NRM. This can be achieved by:

- 1) identifying and diffusing concrete innovations by individual or groups of farmers, with emphasis on the ecological principles behind these innovations;
- 2) encouraging R&D partnerships to assist farmers who are trying to develop their innovations further, and
- 3) encouraging farmer experimentation, farmer-to-farmer extension and networking.

Most local innovations in EA/NRM fall into two broad categories:

- **technical agroecological<sup>2</sup> innovations at the farm-family level or below** in the areas of crop farming, forestry, animal husbandry, fishery etc.; these integrate various components in a farming system, optimise the use of internal inputs and minimise the use of external inputs within the agroecosystem<sup>2</sup>;
- **institutional measures for resource management at the landscape level**, such as collective mechanisms for managing common property resources within ecosystems. Watershed management, community forestry and common management of grazing and fishing grounds belong in this category, as does soil and water conservation beyond farm boundaries.

The work of most international agricultural research centres (IARCs), especially the commodity-based ones, is focused on the field or farm level. However, the landscape level is now being given increased attention, especially by IARCs working on agroecosystem approaches or policy issues, such as CIFOR, ICRAF or ILRI.

Innovation processes at both levels are influenced by public policies, such as legislation on land tenure and rights of access to natural resources, and very strongly so at the landscape level. Research is needed to identify the most efficient mechanisms for sustainable management of common property resources at the most appropriate decentralised level and to understand how public policies support or constrain local arrangements. It also involves stakeholder analysis, an understanding of how conflicts arise or are solved, and the identification of favourable conditions for concerted multi-stakeholder action.

---

<sup>2</sup> Agroecology is an integrating science which makes it possible to master flows of energy, information and matter within agroecosystems and to optimise the outputs, while minimising the use of external inputs and the mining of the natural resource capital. An agroecological approach involves integration of various biophysical disciplines, such as agronomy, forestry, livestock husbandry and soil science, which are compartmentalised in conventional research.

- *The boundary between agroecological innovation at field/farm level and institutional innovation at landscape level is not always clear cut. These categories may overlap, for example, in:*
- *Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Depending on the type of pest, some aspects of IPM can be practised at the farm level, whereas others need to involve some degree of collective organisation at a larger geographic and social scale;*
- *Soil fertility management and agroforestry. The innovations are generally rooted at the farm level, but their continuation often depends on institutional measures concerning grazing rules and fire control at the community level, and also depend on access and usufruct rights to land and trees;*
- *Close integration of fields crops, livestock and trees. This can be sought, in some cases, at farm level, but often involves agreements between more specialised producers (e.g. arable farmers and transhumant pastoralists) and a mixture of new techniques and rules for managing collective goods;*
- *Generating economic value from natural produce (e.g. medicinal plants in forests, resins, wildlife). This important activity which helps to maintain biodiversity can be sought at the individual or farm-family level, but generally involves the use of common lands and forests and some form of collective action in marketing.*

In view of the variability of marginal environments and the local-action orientation of EA/NRM, R&D in this field must be much more "bottom-up" than "top-down". It needs to be based on the dynamics of innovation by local resource users, i.e. on promising local experiments, initiatives and practices. R&D efforts should aim to document, analyse and validate the locally-generated techniques as well as on techniques originating from formal R&D but being applied and adapted by farmers. Not only the biophysical context but also the sociocultural, economic and political-institutional context of an innovation need to be made clear. Particular attention must be given to questions of gender, age, wealth class and social standing. Research should also contribute to defining how widely applicable a given innovation could be ("recommendation domains"), encouraging its adaptation to different contexts, and promoting further innovation and experimentation where this is appropriate.

Land users and support organisations also need to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of a given innovation and its impact on the natural resources and on social equity. Analysis of the conditions under which a change has taken place<sup>3</sup> and the foreseeable consequences helps to assess the extension potential of an innovation in a given micro-region, as well as in the larger agroecological zone to which this micro-region belongs and within which such an innovation could be tested and adapted. This will contribute to a process of "scaling up" in the sense of extending the application of the innovation in one form or another.

In all of these experiences, it will be important to analyse the complex interplay of actors: farmers, farmer organisations, fieldworkers, supporting development organisations, formal extension agents, formal researchers, inputs suppliers, tool manufacturers, traders etc. Even more important than the diffusion of specific innovations is the spreading of an attitude among researchers and development workers that:

- 1) acknowledges farmers as sources of innovation and as equal partners in efforts to improve productivity and resource management, and
- 2) opens the minds of researchers and development workers to learning from farmers instead of only instructing or demonstrating to them.

This will require institutional innovation within the organisations of formal research, extension and education.

## 2. Proposal of concrete mechanisms for launching an international programme

In view of the urgent need for action to support and spread successful local-level initiatives in EA/NRM, some concrete mechanisms are proposed that could help to launch an international programme of cooperation between various stakeholders in R&D. The overall aim is to stimulate **the identification, validation, strengthening and scaling up of local initiatives** which lead to innovation and concrete positive changes in the field of EA/NRM, with a view to sustainable development<sup>4</sup>.

Three sub-programmes are proposed to reach this objective:

- PROLINNOVA, to identify and promote local innovations and innovation processes involving farmers' experimentation with both local and introduced ideas;
- INTERDEV, to manage the information resulting from the first, and
- POLICYNET, to address the issues of policy and institutional development that are raised by such innovations and innovation processes.

### 2.1 PROLINNOVA: Identifying and promoting local innovation in EA/NRM

The objective of PROLINNOVA is *to strengthen research designed to promote local innovation in EA/NRM* through partnerships of farmers, NGOs and research organisations at various levels (local, national, regional and global).

PROLINNOVA will involve four main types of activities with various types/levels of partnerships (each of the four being referred to here as a component):

#### ***i) Identifying, supporting and scaling up local innovations at local, national and regional levels***

Greater cooperation between NGOs, farmer organisations, research organisations and both governmental and nongovernmental development agencies will be facilitated in order:

- 1) to encourage the recognition and validation of promising local innovations and innovation processes;
- 2) to evaluate the potential and limitations of these innovations, e.g. according to the category of farmers involved and the biophysical, socioeconomic, cultural and political-institutional environment;
- 3) to coordinate mechanisms for disseminating these innovations among a wider array of farmers, for them to test and possibly adapt; and
- 4) to launch programmes for "scaling up" processes of local innovation.

Spreading the innovations in areas with similar conditions (horizontal "scaling out") will be the aim of revised "ecoregional approaches". "Farmer-to-farmer" extension<sup>5</sup> – also across national and regional boundaries – will play an important role in achieving wide diffusion. Attention will be given to questions of intellectual property rights with respect to local innovation, and agreements will have to be reached with innovative individuals and communities to give them due recognition for their achievements.

Deliberate actions will be undertaken to expose policymakers (including funding agencies) and government services to the process and results of this approach to R&D, with the purposes of 1) creating a conducive institutional and policy environment for wider application

of the innovations and for promoting processes of local innovation, and 2) gaining long-term continuity in supporting this approach.

### ***ii) Strengthening global exchange and analysis of approaches and methods of participatory R&D in EA/NRM to promote local innovation processes***

Conventional analytical, disciplinary and determinist approaches in agricultural research are not adapted to the questions raised and addressed by innovation in EA/NRM. Participatory methods and integrated approaches are needed. Scientists must learn to deal with research under complex real-life conditions, with a high level of uncertainty. Therefore, there is a need for systematic documentation of the processes and methods used in:

- 1) investigating local innovation in EA/NRM
- 2) collaborating with local resource users in adaptation and further development of innovations
- 3) participatory monitoring and evaluation of innovations and their impact
- 4) scaling up innovations and innovation processes.

Comparative analysis will be made at regional and global level, so that the scientific community can learn from experiences in applying participatory methods and integrated approaches.

### ***iii) Training potential collaborators in these new approaches***

As the vast majority of present agricultural researchers have been trained according to the conventional disciplinary and top-down paradigm, it will be extremely difficult for them to adjust themselves to recognising local innovations and initiatives and to accepting these as starting points for their research planning. They will therefore need access to continuous programmes of training and coaching in integrated approaches to EA/NRM, including participatory methods of research and communication, and exposure to recent work on common property resource management, stakeholder analysis, conflict resolution, environmental negotiation, etc.

Not only researchers but also the administrators and policymakers in research and extension organisations will need relevant training. Extension agents and development workers in both governmental and nongovernmental organisations will also benefit from such programmes, as the training and coaching will involve interaction with them as well as with farmers. In this process, an important role will be played by learning groups which involve a mix of stakeholders. The formation of such groups will be encouraged mainly at subnational and national levels, but comparative analysis of methods and experiences in this learning approach will be made at regional and global levels.

It will be particularly important to incorporate training in these new approaches into the curricula of universities, colleges and vocational schools that prepare future research and extension workers in agriculture and NRM. Regional and global exchange on related curriculum development and teaching methods will speed up the process of adjustment.

### ***iv) Promoting regional and global research networks on EA/NRM based on local innovation***

This will, in part, grow out of components ii and iii. It will include electronic discussions and face-to-face workshops to exchange information and analyse experiences related to local innovation and supportive research in similar agroecological zones or on similar types of technical or institutional innovations. This will also be a means to bring potential partners together to draw up new joint research proposals. The classification of data in INTERDEV

according to zones and types of innovation will help to identify potential partners in such networks and joint research.

### ***Challenges in identifying and classifying successful local innovations***

The main problem will be the selection and analysis of genuine “success stories”. The grey literature is full of promising initiatives and projects in the field of EA/NRM with resource-poor farmers – perhaps not so many based on farmer innovation, but certainly many involving small-scale testing by farmers of introduced innovations. In most cases, the conditions under which these “successes” were achieved, particularly in terms of technical and financial assistance to the farmers, are not described. This “postcard syndrome” is quite common among NGOs and research organisations alike. It is therefore essential to verify the innovations that have been identified. An important (but not unique) criterion for the potential success of an innovation is the fact that at least some farmers are adopting or adapting it without external assistance, as a result of farmer-to-farmer contact.

It is also proposed to document and analyse the circumstances in cases where innovations, whether local or introduced, did not spread or did not have the positive effects envisioned. These would be complementary to “success stories”, as they can yield important information about the necessary conditions for and constraints to scaling up. Agricultural development is largely based on trial and error; it is healthy to recognise the errors in order to avoid excessive optimism and to counteract the “postcard syndrome”. If these non-successful cases are regarded as sources of learning, this could help to overcome the institutional censorship of such R&D experiences and to avoid the repetition of mistakes.

As a tool for scaling up, all the local innovations identified will be classified in agroecological, sociocultural and technical terms, and will be fed into a database by local and regional partners. The information will be entered according to a given format and checked for quality (see INTERDEV, below). Each innovation will be characterised according to locality, farmer group(s) involved, institutional context (support organisations, research and extension services, farmer organisations, legal framework) and sociopolitical context (infrastructure, markets, agricultural policy, land tenure and NR policy).

The classification, e.g. the descriptions of relevant agroecological zones and of relevant types of AE/NRM innovations, will remain flexible, so that it can be adapted to accommodate concrete innovations and scaling-up processes as they are documented, and not vice versa. Therefore, PROLINNOVA will start with a preliminary classification, which will be periodically revised, based on the information received on actual innovations.

This information generated through PROLINNOVA and systematised in INTERDEV will be available also to communicators using different means to disseminate the ideas more directly to farmers by way of radio, film, posters, booklets, farmer workshops, etc.

### ***Research-related “scaling up” within agroecological zones***

“Scaling up” in the sense of expanding research partnerships and exchange will take place among stakeholder groups involved in research related to EA/NRM innovation within a given agroecological zone<sup>3</sup>. Conditions of transition<sup>4</sup> of the characteristic agrarian and forestry systems will be studied, and especially the combination of technologies and policies which can favour these changes (see also POLICYNET, below). Concrete exchanges between

---

<sup>3</sup> This will allow comparisons *between* various innovations *within* a specific agroecological zone. It will highlight the reasons why a specific innovation is adapted to local circumstances within that zone (i.e. type of farming system, socio-political constraints, etc.).

<sup>4</sup> Changes in the systems allowing them to overcome their limitations and crises as regards NRM.

similar or different stakeholders (farmers-to-farmers, policymakers-to-policymakers, farmers-to-policymakers) will be promoted between areas linked by common conditions, questions and/or solutions (for example, integration of successful silvopastoral initiatives from a specific micro-region in the Sahel into another Sahelian micro-region where advances in rangeland management are being made by the local people).

### **Research-related “scaling up” within thematic areas**

“Scaling up” in the sense of expanding research partnerships and exchange will also take place in relationship to particular topics (e.g. IPM, soil fertility management, communal pasture management). The methods and results of innovation and of efforts to promote innovation will be compared between different agroecosystems<sup>5</sup>. This would involve also the fields of commodity-based technical research and methodological debate<sup>6</sup>.

Both of these forms of research-related “scaling up” will be sought mainly through the components ii and iv mentioned above: strengthening exchange and analysis of methods of EA/NRM participatory approach, and promoting regional and global research networks.

### **Sustainability of the initiative**

PROLINNOVA is meant to provide an initial stimulus and create multi-layer platforms that bring various stakeholders together behind the idea of promoting local innovation and participatory research in EA/NRM. It will serve as a mechanism for identifying and linking existing relevant programmes – many of which are currently considered to be marginal to scientific agricultural research – and promoting their integration into the mainstream of research, development and teaching institutions. The extent to which the exchange about innovations and methods in participatory R&D brings benefits to the stakeholders, ranging from the farmers to the development funding agencies, will determine their willingness to devote their own resources, or self-generated sources of support, to a continuation of PROLINNOVA.

## **2.2 INTERDEV: Global information system linking local and scientific knowledge**

The success of scaling up depends on appropriate mechanisms for describing, validating, classifying and exchanging information, and should involve networks of organisations (with critical mutual control) rather than a centralised system.

This is the proposed general objective of the INTERDEV information system, a mutual and cooperative service now being tested by a network of currently thirteen organisations from Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, all of which themselves provide expertise in research and development projects and NRM-related activities.

These organisations are developing an information system in which they themselves enter information, in order to share their experiences and knowledge, and make this accessible through the Web to any organisation working in the same domain: the sustainable management of natural resources.

*Questions to be considered include: How to define a project on NRM at the local level? Who has already tried this and how can I get in touch with him/her? What were the results*

---

<sup>5</sup> This will allow comparisons *between* various agroecological zones *within* the frame of a specific type of innovation. It will highlight the agroecological criteria to which a specific innovation is adapted.

<sup>6</sup> An initiative of this type is presently being developed by a set of partners including CIMMYT, CIRAD, local NGOs and NARS on the issue of “permanent cover/no-tillage cropping systems”. Similar initiatives on other topics could be organised on matters of shared interest between several organisations.

| and the main problems faced? Where can I find the necessary equipment? Who can provide technical support?

INTERDEV is designed so that the central database can be downloaded by any participating organisation, *enriched by its own experience and automatically updated* every time the participating organisation makes a new connection. Thus, the users of the information are, at the same time, the main suppliers.

### ***Rationale for the initiative***

Although there are today numerous services providing access to scientific databases, and even more numerous services at field level working with practically-oriented information and comparable databases, there is hardly any cooperation between the different network levels. The scientific database services rarely provide answers for practical and operational problems that development-support organisations, not-for-profit groups or small-scale entrepreneurs meet in the field. The knowledge gathered on the operational level is rarely used as a basis for scientific research.

The Interdev information service can help overcome such *lack of communication and mutual ignorance* between “*global and universal*” knowledge, which is based on science and world-wide valid knowledge, and “*operational*” knowledge, which is demand-driven, action-oriented, with bottom-up information on innovations, validated by their effective use, and based on local wisdom and farmers’ own experimentation and practical experience.

### ***Experimental phase up to mid-2001***

After an initial experimental phase (up to June 2001), the service will be run by *a much larger number of participating organisations*, equally committed to filling in and using the database. Studies are now underway for the future expansion of the information service in terms of both the number of organisations participating and the themes covered.

From the time of its launching in 1999, the development of the service has required the definition of norms and procedures for managing the information on a cooperative basis, which fully meets the criteria described for the PROLINNOVA initiative. This having been done, the system is now being tested while concentrating on three specific themes particularly relevant to NRM:

- ecological farming systems,
- generating economic value from natural products, agroprocessing and quality control,
- urban and periurban agriculture.

These issues have been selected after consultation with a large number of organisations throughout the world. They are among the 12 topics listed as priority fields of interest by the Natural Resource Management Workshop held during the European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development held in April 1999 in Wageningen, The Netherlands.

Strategies for the extension of partnerships and themes to larger partnerships and issues will be assessed by the current Interdev Steering Committee before June 2001.

### ***Institutional and financial sustainability***

For the experimental phase up to June 2001, INTERDEV will rely on the responsibility of the consortium of its initial promoters, so that flexibility and openness can be ensured. The initial Steering Committee has been enlarged following the recommendations of the Rambouillet GFAR-NRM workshop held in December 1999, which brought together organisations from

various countries in the North and South. The Global Forum venue itself will give an opportunity to launch a call for additional partnerships, which may involve NGOs, regional constituencies or international agricultural research centres. Training sessions will be organised for the participating organisations in the second half of 2000.

After 2001, the question of the long-term institutional basis for the service will be raised. A proposal currently being considered is to connect the service to the "*knowledge market places*" proposed by the NARS Secretariat under the general umbrella of the Electronic Global Forum (EGFAR), provided that decentralised management and responsibilities can be sustained, if experimentation during the initial phase proves successful.

### **2.3 POLICYNET: Network for policy research related to EA/NRM**

An important factor for the success of the scaling up of AE/NRM innovations and the process of local innovation is the design of appropriate policies which will encourage and support these local initiatives. These policies may address, for example, the legal framework (e.g. legislation on common property resources); the provision of credit, inputs and marketing infrastructure; the organisation of research, extension and education; or opportunities for farmer-level training and exchange. Policy research should also look into the role of small farmers and farmer/community organisation in equitable socioeconomic development and sustainable management of natural resources.

The underlying principle of POLICYNET is that agriculture is "multifunctional", in the sense that its benefits cannot be summarised in a single financial or economic equation. In addition to the economic dimensions, small producers will, for instance, benefit more (or less) from the management of agricultural resources according to whether their access to resources is made more (or less) secure, and according to whether they are able to reduce the risks associated with agriculture (or face increasing risks). There are also strong cultural values associated with many aspects of agriculture.

POLICYNET has three broad objectives :

1. To conduct research in order to develop options for policy improvement at local, national and international levels. It will make these findings available in appropriate form both to those responsible for policy at these various levels and to other partners or organisations with an interest in policy reform;
2. To conduct such research in collaboration with partners in ways that reinforce the skills of all partners involved. The identification of research topics and methods will be strongly influenced by priorities perceived by South-based partners.
3. Where appropriate, to put South-based interest groups in contact with policy research organisations not collaborating directly within POLICYNET, but capable of responding to their request in a manner consistent with the objectives of the network.

Initially, POLICYNET will focus on the *institutional and political conditions of emergence and dissemination of innovations and innovation processes related to NRM*.

It will adopt an iterative approach to designing policy options, starting from field-based information on the innovations and their context and limitations in terms of policies, towards debate with policymakers, and back to local actors. Its research would therefore be built progressively to address demand-driven issues. It should contribute, ultimately, to creating the necessary space for successful local initiatives. It will indicate ways in which organisations for research, extension and education in agriculture and NRM can be restructured and re-oriented, and will document "success stories" of such institutional transformation.

A call for partnerships on the issue of *Political and institutional conditions for innovation in NRM*, will be launched in Dresden in May 2000.

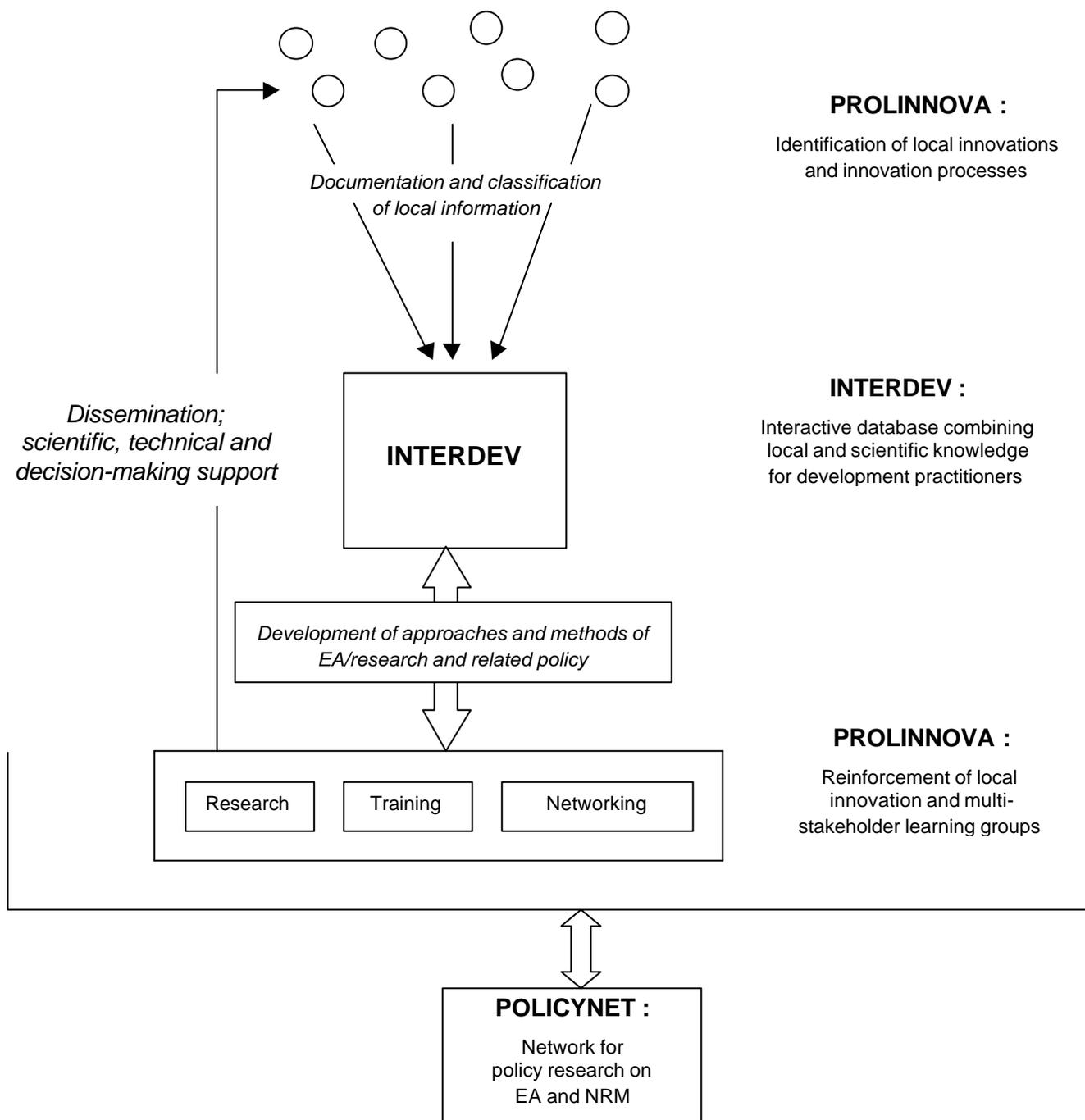
### **3. Linkages between the three initiatives**

INTERDEV is seen as pivotal in the links between the three initiatives. It is here that practice-proven information on local initiatives and innovations in EA/NRM, including the application and adaptation of technologies introduced from formal science, will flow together and be made accessible worldwide to all interested stakeholders. INTERDEV will mobilise resources to keep the entire system fed with relevant information and will classify, select and organise this information with a view to the needs of both PROLINNOVA and POLICYNET. The information will be made available in a form relevant primarily for development practitioners, but can be processed for the purpose of research on EA/NRM, training of researchers and other stakeholders, and research on policies affecting EA/NRM.

PROLINNOVA includes mechanisms to identify and document innovations for INTERDEV, and to promote use of the information in scaling up the innovations and innovation processes through participatory research and extension approaches. It will thus be both a provider (through its first component at the local level) and a user (through its three other components on research methodologies, training and research networks at various levels) of INTERDEV information. INTERDEV will provide POLICYNET with data for comparative analyses and cases for studying the conditions that influence innovation and scaling-up processes. The results of PROLINNOVA-inspired innovation and scaling up and the results of the policy research will be fed back into INTERDEV for dissemination to end-users.

These three combined initiatives – INTERDEV, PROLINNOVA and POLICYNET – are designed to facilitate mutual learning by stakeholders in R&D of sustainable systems of natural resource management, and seek linkages with relevant existing initiatives. Thus far, InterDev has been planned most concretely and is now in a test phase. The concepts for PROLINNOVA and POLICYNET have been developed by the Rambouillet Steering Group, but the methods and means for making them operational will be developed by the organisations that agree to join these initiatives.

**Mechanisms for strengthening partnerships in research and development for ecologically-oriented agriculture (EA) and natural resource management (NRM)**



## Acronyms

EA/NRM	ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management
ASPTA	Assessoria e Servicos a Projetos em Agricultura Alternativa
CIED	Centro de Investigacion, Educacion y Desarrollo
GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research
GOAN	Ghana Organic Agriculture Network
GRET	Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques
IAC	International Agricultural Centre
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
ITDG	International Technology Development Group
NARS	National Agricultural Research Systems
NRM	natural resource management
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
R&D	research and development
RODI	Resources-Oriented Development Initiatives
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management

---

### **More information:**

*INTERDEV Secretariat c/o GRET, 211-213 rue Lafayette, F-75010 Paris, France*

*Tel. +33-1-40056161*

*Fax +33-1-40056110*

*Email: [ruault@gret.org](mailto:ruault@gret.org)*

---