

# GLOBAL PROGRAMME on the PROMOTION OF LOCAL INNOVATIONS

## A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

### 1. Title

Full Title: **PROMoting Local INNOVAtion in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management**

Short Title: PROLINNOVA

### 2. Objectives

#### Overall Objective:

The GP-PROLINNOVA is designed to strengthen research and development partnerships and methodology *to promote processes of local innovation in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management* (EA/NRM). The long-term aim is to institutionalise PROLINNOVA approaches within national programmes of research, development and education.

#### Specific Objectives:

More specific objectives over the next five years are:

- a) To establish effective PROLINNOVA research and development partnership programmes in at least five countries or sub-regions
- b) To synthesise lessons learned by/from these new initiatives, as well as from past and existing experiences with PROLINNOVA approaches, and to document and spread these
- c) To establish sustainable mechanisms for linkages between these various initiatives, particularly for continued analysis of and learning from experiences with PROLINNOVA approaches
- d) To provide support and feedback to such initiatives
- e) To encourage the wider application and institutionalisation of PROLINNOVA approaches.

3. Thematic Area		4. Geographical coverage	
GRM		Global	x
Biotechnology		Asia-Pacific Region	
NRM	x	Central Asia & Caucasus Region	
Agro-ecology	x	Latin America & Caribbean Region	
Commodity Chain: Market/Cash agricultural products		Sub-Saharan Africa Region	
Commodity Chain: Underutilized agricultural products		West Asia & North Africa Region	
Policy Management		European Region	
Institutional Development		Eastern & Central European Region	
Information & Communication		North America	

*N.B. Tick one or several boxes*

**B. STAKEHOLDERS**

**1. Proposing Stakeholder(s) with name and address of a contact person**

Proposing Stakeholder		Name of contact person	e-mail address
Category	Corporate Name		
NGO	Rambouillet Steering Group ETC-Ecoculture (lead) PELUM, Zimbabwe CEDAC, Cambodia CIED, Peru ASPTA, Brazil GRET, France IAC, Netherlands IIED, UK	Ann Waters-Bayer	<a href="mailto:wb.waters@link-goe.de">wb.waters@link-goe.de</a> <a href="mailto:ann.waters-bayer@etc.nl">ann.waters-bayer@etc.nl</a>

*N.B.: Category: NARS, ARI, IARC, NGO, FO, PS, Donor, CB (Commodity Body)*

**2. Other partners involved with name and address of a contact person**

Other Stakeholders		Name of contact person	e-mail address
Category	Corporate Name		
	FAO-SDRE (?)		
	CGIAR-PNRM (?)		
	Agromisa, Netherlands CIRAD, France GOAN, Ghana MA'AN, Palestine League for Pastoral Peoples, Germany / India; ITDG, UK DAWN, Philippines Rodale Institute, USA RODI, Kenya Agrecol-Andes, Bolivia ETC Ecoculture, Netherlands		

*N.B.: Category: NARS, ARI, IARC, NGO, FO, PS, Donor, CB (Commodity Body)*

**3. Main objective(s) of the proposed partnership**

The GP- PROLINNOVA is envisioned to become a learning network that includes not only farmer groups/organisations, NGOs and research and development organisations, but also facilitating and funding agencies. Through this proposed GP, it is aimed that an autonomous network of innovators will be established, in which each member plays its

own role and has a interest to continue it, with strong South-South, North-South and North-North interactions.

**4. Expected added value of the partnership (in terms of research results, dissemination of results and impact)**

PROLINNOVA is a farmer-led initiative. Its focus is to encourage and support innovation in AE/NRM developed by farmers and their communities. Therefore, farmer groups and organisations will play a central role in both the further planning of the programme and its activities and in its subsequent implementation.

Another value-added of PROLINNOVA is that it designed to be a learning network. Set up in a very decentralised way, most of the activities will be implemented through national and regional sub-programmes, which may be defined semi-autonomously and directly funded by a variety of donors. It will build on existing related initiatives and on-going programmes which are working along these lines. Involvement of the prime-movers of these initiatives will encouraged to get involved in this learning network. The experiences that have already been made with respect to promoting local innovation will offer valuable examples for others interested in this approach, serving as sources of inspiration and learning. Moreover, these often isolated initiatives can learn a great deal from each other, and can join forces in lobbying for institutional and policy change in mainstream research, extension and education.

**C. PROPOSED GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION**

**1. Mechanism(s) put in place or envisaged for:**

<p><b>a) The design of the GP</b></p>	<p>The proposed GP-PROLINNOVA will be based on partnerships in the various regions for developing and implementing activities to promote local innovation. The composition and dynamics of these partnerships will vary, but they will include innovative and interested farmers / rural communities, national or local NGOs and community-based/farmer organisations, international development-support NGOs, NARES (National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems), regional networks, and international research centres dealing with agroecosystems and related policy research. Those of the above partners with a global presence or mandate will collaborate in drawing out the lessons from the experiences in the countries and regions and spreading these to various target groups.</p> <p>The proposed GP-PROLINNOVA covers a period of five (5) years, with a 9-month Inception Phase. It is meant to be a partnership of many organisations and should operate, by definition, in a very decentralised way. The <i>9-month Inception</i></p>
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## GFAR Global Programmes

	<p><i>Phase</i> will allow for a process of consultation among potential partners and the design of a truly joint programme.</p> <p>It should be noted that the outcome of the <i>Inception Phase</i> will serve as the basis in designing the 5-Year Programme. This notwithstanding, several possible components of the latter has been identified and are presented in item (E).</p>
<p><b>b) The launching of the GP</b></p>	<p>By design, the launching phase of the GP-PROLINNOVA covers a period of 9 months (Inception Phase). This phase includes various activities such as conduct of inventory of existing programmes and databases on local innovation in agro-ecology and natural resources management (AE/NRM), regional consultation workshops and website development, among others. (See item E)</p> <p>The major outcome of this phase will be an operational plan for PROLINNOVA, defined and supported by its partners globally. As some of the stakeholder groups will be farmer- and field-based organisations with little experience in international consultation and negotiation of collaboration, an inception phase of sufficient length and with adequate input of personal support is deemed necessary.</p>
<p><b>c) The Implementation of the GP</b></p>	<p>On behalf of the Rambouillet Group<sup>1</sup> which is composed of people from several northern- and southern-based organisations, mainly non-governmental, engaged in rural development , ETC<sup>2</sup> Ecoculture will act as “facilitating unit” for the inception phase. This unit will be guided by a Working Group which will be established early in the inception phase and will involve persons from northern and southern organisations, mainly but not exclusively from the Rambouillet Group.</p>
<p><b>d) The Monitoring and Evaluation of the GP</b></p>	<p>The facilitating unit will play the role of catalyst: bringing potential partners together, helping them define programmes and activities, and exploring and testing the networking mechanisms. At the end of the inception phase, the participating organisations will decide whether such a facilitating unit is needed also during the main implementation phase, and will decide on the</p>

<sup>1</sup> Please see “*New Mechanisms For Reinforcing Partnerships In Agro-Ecology/Natural Resources Management Research And Development,*” by Rambouillet Steering Group, May 2000.

<sup>2</sup> ETC is one of the international NGOs which has played a pioneering role in developing methods of promoting farmer innovation and experimentation. Through the nature of its existing activities in networking, research, training, advisory services and publications related to this theme, it has a very extensive network of like-minded organisations and programmes.

	composition and mandate of this unit.
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**2. Information and Communication tools**

	Within GP members	Between GP members & the “Outside world”
Existing I & C Tools		
Envisaged I & C Tools		

**D. MAIN ON-GOING AND RELATED ACTIVITIES**

With the encouragement of the GFAR-Secretariat over the past year, the PROLINNOVA initiative has been developed together with two other initiatives, namely:

- INTERDEV, which aims at developing an internet-based system for documenting and sharing local innovations, initiatives and practice-proven techniques of ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management; and
- POLICYNET, which aims at addressing policy and institutional issues to support local innovation processes, by way of relevant research and information dissemination.

A step-wise development and implementation of these three initiatives is foreseen. INTERDEV has already been launched by organisations with strong experience and/or interest in managing information in electronic form. Now, PROLINNOVA is being proposed by organisations with strong experience and/or interest in supporting agricultural development building on local knowledge. Finally, a proposal for POLICYNET will be worked out by organisations with strong experience and/or interest in practically-oriented policy research and dialogue. These three sister programmes will have different foci and activities, but will be closely interlinked in a global mechanism of “Knowledge Management for Local Innovation”.

*N.B. When the initiative is endorsed by the GFAR-SC, a logframe will have to be developed*

**E. PROPOSED NEXT STEPS TO BUILD A GP**

***Inception Phase***

During the Inception Phase, the following activities are planned:

1. Making an inventory of existing programmes and databases on local innovation in EA/NRM, with a view to establishing/strengthening links and collaborating in the future, depending on their willingness, issues of intellectual property rights, etc.
2. Carrying out a consultation process with stakeholders and potential partners, to review relevant experiences as identified under Point 1, analyse these jointly and

identify gaps where supportive mechanisms can be introduced or strengthened. This will be done by long-distance communication supported by three visits for face-to-face consultation with key partners.

3. Planning, implementing and following-up on a 2–3 day planning workshop involving a wider group of people/organisations interested in PROLINNOVA to determine details for appropriate networking and support mechanisms (types of activities, division of tasks, etc) and to prepare proposal(s) for potential funders; international agricultural research centres and regional research networks will be included in the planning activities, as will be at least one organisation each representing the INTERDEV and POLICYNET initiatives.
4. Providing support to partners in the regions – e.g. the PELUM (Participatory Ecological Land Use Management) network in Southern and Eastern Africa, the Campesino a Campesino movement in Central America – in drafting PROLINNOVA proposals for their regions to submit to donors for funding.
5. Exploring the interest of potential funding agencies in PROLINNOVA; this will include three mini-workshops (half-day each) with donor representatives in different major centres to expose them to successful experiences in promoting local innovation and experimentation in AE/NRM.
6. Setting up a PROLINNOVA homepage as electronic platform for the consultation and planning process, this is close linkage with, or integrated into, existing websites.

***Five-Year Partnership Programme***

This portion presents a tentative outline of the PROLINNOVA Five-Year Partnership Programme. It should be noted that while the specific activities of PROLINNOVA will be planned during an inception phase, the overall programme will be set up on the basis of key principles and mechanisms and a series of components that have already been identified by the Rambouillet Group, i.e., PROLINNOVA as farmer-led programme development, and as a learning network

In general terms, the PROLINNOVA programme is envisaged to include the following six components:

Step	Components	Timeframe
1	Identifying and documenting local innovations and innovation processes related to both agroecological techniques at field/farm level and institutional innovation in collective management of natural resources at landscape level	
2	Establishing farmer-extensionist-scientist partnerships to further develop local innovations, to	

	encourage other farmers to experiment with these innovations and to scale up innovation processes	
3	Training potential collaborators in these participatory approaches and methods: researchers, research and extension administrators, policymakers, extensionists and farmer promoters	
4	Promoting incorporation of PROLINNOVA into regular research, extension and education programmes, supported by mechanisms that give farmers greater governance over these programmes	
5	Jointly analysing the research and development approaches and methods used in PROLINNOVA activities, and the training and education approaches, methods, curricula for PROLINNOVA, as sources of mutual learning	
6	Promoting regional and global R&D networks (multi-stakeholder learning groups) on EA/NRM based on stimulating local innovation either in similar agroecological zones or on similar types of techniques or institutions; here there will be an important role for information and communication technology (ICT), which may lead to the establishment of internet marketplaces where farmer organisations can shop for information, facilitation support, etc.	

*N.B: The first four components will often be jointly implemented in specific national or sub-regional sub-programmes, while Components 5 and 6 refer to learning and sharing at regional or global level.*

**F. EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED GP**

**1. Main expected results (in terms of technological packages, and/or socio-economic and/or environmental improvements)**

**Inception Phase**

By the end of the nine-month inception phase, the following outputs will have been achieved:

- Inventory of existing organisations involved in PROLINNOVA-type work and/or interested in pursuing it: i.e. the emerging learning network
- Formation of a PROLINNOVA Working Group of 5–10 people from among the network

- to guide development of the programme
- Inventory of existing databases on local innovation and identification of most feasible linkage mechanisms
- Overview of current PROLINNOVA-type activities, and identification of gaps to be filled and support needed
- Shared vision among PROLINNOVA partners and a jointly formulated action plan, including specification of concrete activities to be undertaken, mechanisms for communication, and clarification of roles, also for global facilitation and networking
- Wide acceptance and understanding of the approach within the donor community
- Five well-formulated proposals for national or (sub)regional programmes forwarded to donors
- A PROLINNOVA homepage operating as a platform for networking and exchange, with well-functioning links to related websites
- Operational Plan for PROLINNOVA

### **Five-Year Programme**

The PROLINNOVA proposal is expected to catalyze a process through which farmers can influence the way by which R&D funds are being managed. The project will endeavour to propose and develop new funding mechanisms that are built on equal partnerships in decision-making about the use of R&D funds.

These mechanisms are likely to take the form of competitive endowment / trust funds, governed not just by scientists but by all stakeholder groups, at regional or sub-regional level. The stakeholders will draw up the guidelines, criteria and procedures for using these funds.

In addition, new programmes to promote farmer innovation in various countries and regions will be launched. Through the PROLINNOVA programme, collaboration with existing programmes working along these lines will be sought, and their active involvement in the PROLINNOVA learning network will be encouraged and solicited. The experiences that have already been made with respect to promoting local innovation will offer valuable examples for others interested in this approach, serving as sources of inspiration and learning. Moreover, these often isolated initiatives can learn a great deal from each other, and can join forces in lobbying for institutional and policy change in mainstream research, extension and education.

## **2. Dissemination of the results (different modes and how the results will reach the different beneficiaries)**

Since the proposed GP will tap organisations involved in PROLINNOVA-type of work, a learning network can eventually emerge. The PROLINNOVA programme will be set up in a very decentralised way. Most activities will be implemented through national and regional sub-programmes, which may be defined semi-autonomously and directly funded by a variety of donors.

These sub-programmes will, however, be linked at a higher level, using (global)



mechanisms for sharing and mutual learning, e.g. interactive databases (such as INTERDEV), electronic conferences, workshops and publications. A small unit will “animate” the network, facilitate exchange, systematise and circulate information, and stimulate formulation of national and regional activities/programmes. Moreover, a PROLINNOVA homepage will be created. It will operate as a platform for networking and exchange, with well-functioning links to related websites.

Wherever possible, PROLINNOVA will mobilise and make use of existing channels for communication and publication (e.g. *PLA Notes*, *ILEIA Newsletter*, *Honeybee*, *PTD Circular*, *Practical Farm Ideas*). A separate webpage will be set up, linked to EGFAR and other websites, for continued documentation on methods, approaches and processes of promoting farmer innovation and experimentation.

As cited above, INTERDEV will be an important platform for documenting and making available the lessons from PROLINNOVA in electronic form. INTERDEV may commence a new theme on the PROLINNOVA approach, focused on the methods and tools used in documenting local innovation and in joint experimentation and learning. To ensure the linkage with INTERDEV, at least one of the relevant leading organisations in this initiative will be asked to become part of the PROLINNOVA Working Group. A similar linkage will be established with the POLICYNET initiative, which has still to be formulated in more detail.

Links will also be made with the FIA (Farmer Innovation in Africa) programme funded by UNDP, the PRGA (Participatory Research and Gender Analysis) system-wide programme of the CGIAR coordinated by CIAT, and the DMC (Direct sowing, Mulch-based systems and Conservation tillage) proposal and other proposals growing out of the GFAR consultations related to AE/NRM.

**3. Proposed impact assessment methodology (quantitative and qualitative criteria)**

**G. EXPECTED ROLE(S) OF THE GFAR SECRETARIAT**