

## Operationalization of the AARINENA Framework for Action -- Report of the Working Group --

### A - Next Steps

One of the components of the Framework for Action (see section 5.4 of the Framework for Action document) is that of the regional and sub-regional projects, constituted by a dynamic portfolio of projects to be carried out either through:

- intra-regional cooperation (cooperation among countries in the region, at a regional or sub-regional level;
- inter-regional cooperation (in partnership with research centers in other regions).

In terms of the funding requirements of the various pre-project proposals, or project profiles, that have been identified, it may be important to distinguish two types of projects:

- projects that can be carried out through *cost-sharing* among the countries of the region, or that may be funded through national or regional donors; and
- projects for which external donor support will be sought.

In the Beirut General Conference of AARINENA the potential portfolio of projects was increased from 12 to 15 in order to reflect the three new topics that were identified and recognized as high priority (see Annex I of this document). For the further development of this portfolio of projects three steps are considered essential, that are complementary to each other:

- 1) *Identify those projects that are more advanced in their formulation and concentrate on furthering this process.* In order to facilitate this process, it was suggested that a lead institution, or focal point, be chosen in the region to push and operationalize each proposal. Since it may not be realistic to carry out this effort for all the 15 pre-project proposals (given costs involved), it may be necessary here to concentrate the efforts of AARINENA in operationalizing a smaller number of projects, based on two criteria: (a) relative priority of projects, and (b) degree of relative development of projects and of commitment of institutions.
- 2) *A funding strategy be developed,* seeking to mobilize funding from various sources, both from within and from outside the region.
- 3) *A pilot effort be carried out,* taking advantage of the present *Inco-Dev Project Call* of the European Commission (from March to September 15). This is part of the *Region-to-Region collaborative effort between AARINENA and EFARD* (the European Forum on Agricultural Research) that is being carried out within the context of the Global Forum – GFAR.

The remainder of these notes will concentrate on how to operationalize the special effort that will be made to facilitate the formulation of projects for the Inco-Dev Project Call. In doing so, these notes will concentrate on the four research areas in which the AARINENA priorities and the Inco-Dev priorities (for this year's project call) coincide. But it should be emphasized that the priorities identified in the AARINENA Framework for Action cover other research areas where potential projects are well advanced in their process of formulation. Other avenues of collaboration will be explored in order to implement collaborative projects in those other priority areas (see Annex I for a list of regional/sub-regional projects that are already partly formulated in

the five priority areas of AARINENA). This already constitutes a portfolio of potential collaborative research projects.

## **B - Pilot Effort with Inco-Dev**

Since ICW-99 (October 1999) AARINENA and EFARD (European Forum on Agricultural Research) started a process of developing a *Region-to-Region collaborative program in ARD*, in the context of the Global Forum. Two meetings have been held between the two Regional Fora: one in Washington (October of 1999), and the second one in Lisbon (February of 2000). In further continuing the development of this region-to-region effort of cooperation, and specially in exploring different funding strategies for this program, it is recommended that two actions be undertaken:

- In the next six months carry out a joint pilot effort between AARINENA and European researchers, aimed at formulating and presenting several collaborative research projects to the *Incodev Project Call*, that will be jointly undertaken between research institutions of the WANA region and European research groups.
- After GFAR-2000, and on the basis of the possibilities or opportunities that may be discussed in the Global Forum meeting, a second option will be explored: that of presenting to the EC a funding request for the support of research networks (or research programs) that bring together research groups from both regions. This modality does not presently exist, but its feasibility may be explored in Dresden, or in the post-Dresden process, as part of the process for looking at new forms and modalities of cooperation in ARD.

For the development of the pilot effort, the topics chosen for the Project Call of INCO-DEV for the Mediterranean Region (EC) and the research priorities that have been identified in the AARINENA Framework for Action (see section 5.4), coincide in four topics, all related to the area of “*commodity chains*” (in the AARINENA program) or “*market crops*” (as referred to in the Project Call). These topics or research areas are:

- a) Fruits and vegetables:
  - *Date Palm*
  - *Citrus*
- b) Oil seeds:
  - *Olives*
- c) Cotton:
  - *Cotton*

In these four market crops the following steps are suggested, as part of the process of *informing, identifying, formulating and presenting* joint research projects between two or more research groups in the AARINENA region, and two or more groups in Europe (these steps are summarized in Table No. 1 below):

### **1. On the part of AARINENA:**

- 1.1 Identify research institutes/groups that are working in each crop. If possible, identify a lead institute/group that can promote the development of collaborative projects on each topic to be carried out with potential partners, both within the region and outside the region.

- 1.2 In order to take advantage of one of the funding mechanisms that can facilitate cooperation with European research institutions, information will be distributed widely on the opportunities in the INCO-DEV project call, and on possibilities to get further support in finding possible partners in Europe.
- 1.3 Identify development issues or production constraints in that particular crop that are considered to be of priority for the region (see column 4 in Table No. 1), in order to facilitate the concentration of research efforts in addressing the most pressing development needs of the region.
- 1.4 The AARINENA Secretariat and the lead institution in each crop or topic will follow the process to make sure that concrete projects are presented to the INCO-DEV project call.

## **2. On the part of EFARD:**

- 2.1 The EFARD Secretariat will facilitate general information on potential partners in Europe that could collaborate with the WANA research groups in the formulation of joint projects in the areas of priority that AARINENA has identified. For further support in identifying potential partners the WANA researchers can make use of the information facilities existing in EIARD-InfoSys where documents related to this initiative will be posted at the European Forum sites. Information on the INCO-DEV call is available at: <http://www.cordis.lu/inco2/calls/calls.htm>. It is the responsibility of the emerging project consortia to draft and submit convincing proposals that fulfil the criteria of the INCO-DEV call. The competitive nature of the INCO-DEV call does not allow for any preferential position of certain projects.
- 2.2 This document will be circulated to the national fora in Europe, in order to facilitate participation by European research groups interested in the priority areas of research identified by AARINENA. Expressions of interest received will be posted on the European Forum pages of EIARD-InfoSys.

## **3. Formulation of the research projects jointly carried out between researchers of AARINENA and of EFARD:**

- 3.1 Researchers from the participating research groups in the two regions will interact with each other in jointly formulating the project. The project should have identifiable components (or modules) of it that will be carried out in each of the participating centers.
- 3.2 Each project is jointly presented by the participating research groups to the EC in the context of the IncoDev Project Call.

The main elements of the information required are presented in a Summary Table, in Table No. 1. A preliminary list of possible institutions to contact in Europe in the four crops mentioned above appears in Annex II. In order to facilitate identifying additional potential partners, the EC is making a special announcement calling for research groups or centres who may be interested in Partnerships with WANA research groups and institutions. This is being done through the European National Fora (see sections 2.1 and 2.2 above).

The other option that will be explored after Dresden, which is that of network or program funding, will most likely take a totally different approach.

**C - Seeking funding for the Regional Agricultural information System (AARINENA/RAIS)**

Parallel to the above, financial support will be sought for the AARINENA/RAIS. The NARS Secretariat of GFAR will assist in this process. In the case of the VERCON project support from FAO is already being negotiated. It is considered very important to develop these two projects in very close co-ordination, since the improvement of research-extension linkages is one of the main concerns of the Regional Agricultural Information System.

**D - Seeking funding for water related AARINENA priority areas**

The European Commission "Short and Medium-term Priority Environmental Action Programme (SMAP)" could be an opportunity to fund water related AARINENA priorities (see priorities 5 and 6 in Annex I). Participation is limited to the 11 Mediterranean countries, which are part of the European Mediterranean Partnership process. The call for proposals for regional Mediterranean projects will most likely include fields such as Integrated Water Management, Waste Management, Hot Spots (covering both polluted areas and threatened biodiversity elements), Integrated Coastal Zone Management, and Combating Desertification.

The call will most likely be published in May 2000 with a deadline 3 months later. Details can be found at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/smap/home.htm>

**Table No. 1 - Summary Table: AARINENA/EFARD Collaborative Program**

<b>Topic or Research Area (1)</b>	<b>Lead institution or Focal Point and Contact Person (2)</b>	<b>Other participating countries: (3)</b>	<b>Development Issue or Production Constraint (4)</b>	<b>Research Groups in European countries (5)</b>
1. - Citrus		Syria, Cyprus, Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, Iran, Pakistan, Malta		
2. - Olives		Syria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Cyprus, Morocco, Algeria		
3. - Cotton		Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Iran, Pakistan		
4. - Date Palm.*				
4.1 DP Production & Protection			a) Improving current varieties b) IPM c) Safety in germplasm transfer	
4.2 DP Post Harvest			a) Post-Harvest losses b) Use of byproducts c) Product development d) Machinery efficiency	
4.3 DP Marketing & Socio-economic			a) Quality & Standards b) Marketing	

\* A validation Workshop of experts will be held in the last week of April or the first week of May.

## **Annex I – Regional/Sub-regional Collaborative Projects**

### **A - Genetic Resources Management:**

1. Genetic Engineering for Stress Tolerance in Agronomic Plants in the Arabian Peninsula Sub-region
2. Development of Wheat Cultivars for Durable Resistance to Leaf and Stem Rusts in the Nile Valley and Red Sea Region.
3. Dairy Sheep Breeding for Small Flocks Based on Simple Recording
4. Central and West Asia Yellow Rusts Network

### **B - Natural Resources Management**

5. Use of GIS and Modelling Techniques for Hydrological Research and Management of Water Resources
6. Water Management and Increasing Water Use Efficiency for Sustainable Agricultural Systems
7. Integrated Feed/Livestock Production Systems using Non-conventional Feed Resources in the Al-Mashreq Region

### **C - Commodity Chain / Market Crops**

8. Regional Network for Date Palm in the Near East and North Africa
9. Regional Network on Citrus Research
10. Regional Network on Cotton Research
11. Regional Network on Olives Research

### **D - Policy Management and Institutional Development**

12. Regionalizing Agricultural Research within Countries in the Maghreb Region
13. Strengthening National Seed Policy and Production Systems

### **E - Information Management for Agricultural Research and Development**

14. Development of an Agricultural Information System for West Asia and North Africa
15. VERCON - Using the Internet to Improve Research-Extension Linkages

## Annex II – Preliminary List of Potential Partners in Europe

### 1. Citrus

- ✓ CIRAD – INRA (France)  
Both institutions are members of Agropolis. They have a common research station in Corsica on citrus and are willing to be proactive in the preparation of INCO-DEV projects.

Contact person : Jean-Pierre GAILLARD  
CIRAD-flhor  
Tel. +33 (0)4 67 61 58 59  
Fax +33 (0)4 67 61 58 71  
Email : [jean-pierre.gaillard@cirad.fr](mailto:jean-pierre.gaillard@cirad.fr)

- ✓ European partners of CIRAD-INRA:

- ❖ Greece : Institute of subtropical plants  
235 Irinis Str  
73100 Chania
- ❖ Italy : Mediterranean Agronomic Institute  
Via Ceglie 23  
Valenzano (BA)
- ❖ Spain : IVIA  
Apartado Oficial 46113  
Moncada Valencia

### 2. Olive

- ✓ AGRO Montpellier-INRA and Agropolis (Montpellier - France)

Contact persons:  
Prof Françoise DOSBA  
AGRO Montpellier  
Tel. +33 (0)4 99 61 27 81  
Fax +33 (0)4 99 61 26 16  
Email : [dosba@ensam.inra.fr](mailto:dosba@ensam.inra.fr)

Dr Marc PUYGRENIER  
Agropolis  
Tel. +33 (0)4 67 04 75 57  
Fax +33 (0)4 67 04 75 99  
Email : [puygrenier@agropolis.fr](mailto:puygrenier@agropolis.fr)

- ✓ European partners of AGRO Montpellier/Agropolis:

- ❖ Spain: University of Cordoba  
Contact person :  
Prof Luis RALLO ROMERO  
Departamento de Agronomia  
Apartado 3048

14080 Cordoba  
Tel. +34-957-218496  
Email: [ag1ralro@uco.es](mailto:ag1ralro@uco.es)

❖ Italy: University of Florence  
Contact person:  
Prof Pierro Fiorino  
Email: [pfiorino@cesit1.unifi.it](mailto:pfiorino@cesit1.unifi.it)

### 3. *Date palm*

✓ CIRAD (Montpellier)

Contact person: Jean-Pierre GAILLARD  
CIRAD-flhor  
Tel. +33 (0)4 67 61 58 59  
Fax +33 (0)4 67 61 58 71  
Email : [jean-pierre.gaillard@cirad.fr](mailto:jean-pierre.gaillard@cirad.fr)

Contact person: Vincent DOLLE  
CIRAD-amis  
Tel. +33 (0)4 67 61 59 06  
Fax +33 (0)4 67 61 44 55  
Email : [vincent.dolle@cirad.fr](mailto:vincent.dolle@cirad.fr)

❖ Spain : Date palm research station  
Contact person:  
Dr Michel FERRY  
Apartado 996  
03201 Elche  
Tel. +34 965421551  
+34 965457495  
Fax +34965423706  
Email : [ferry@absver.es](mailto:ferry@absver.es)

### 4. *Cotton*

✓ CIRAD (Montpellier)

Contact person: Dr Jean-Philippe DEGUINE  
CIRAD-ca  
Tel. +33 (0)4 67 61 58 76  
Fax +33 (0)4 67 61 56 66  
Email : [jean-philippe.deguine@cirad.fr](mailto:jean-philippe.deguine@cirad.fr)

✓ European partner of CIRAD

❖ Greece: Contact person: Dr Urania KECHAGIA  
National Agricultural Research Foundation  
Cotton and Industrial Plants Institute  
57400 SINDOS  
THESSALONIKI  
Tel. +3031 79 94 44 & 79 65 12  
Fax +3031 79 65 13  
Email : [ok31944@compulink.gr](mailto:ok31944@compulink.gr)