



Agroecology

Promoting transition of family farming, its adaptation to climate change, food and nutrition security, and restoration of ecosystems.

Theme factsheet



In GRET's various countries of operation, cultivated ecosystems are being degraded, agriculture is in crisis, and the limitations and negative effects of the green revolution on the environment and populations' health are increasingly visible. In light of this, the principles of agroecology seem those most suitable to contribute to the development of family farming, of its resilience and its adaptation to climate change. Agroecology can be a factor in preserving and restoring ecosystems, and in strengthening food and nutrition security. It is also a means to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions. In order to achieve this, agroecology must be encouraged by an economic and political environment that is favourable to family farming (trade protection policy, legal recognition of local land rights, agrifood value chains, etc.).

For GRET, the various agroecological practices (management and protection of natural resources, restoration and management of soil fertility and plant covers) must be adapted to environmental conditions and to the needs and capacities of farming families. They must be developed, tested, analysed and improved with farmers in a participatory manner, and then promoted via farmers' organisations. Agroecological transition experiences also need to be evaluated and valorised, including examination of the economic, social and political conditions in which they are developed. This will make it possible to contribute to a change of public policies in favour of agroecology.

BENCHMARKS

GRET has been working on this subject area since 2010.

11 countries of operation in 2019: Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea, Haiti, Laos, Madagascar, Mauritania, Myanmar, Senegal, Vietnam.

13 projects and consulting missions conducted by GRET in 2019.

Methods of intervention

In partnership with agricultural producer organisations, NGOs, and agricultural advice and research institutions, GRET conducts projects integrating the promotion of agroecological practices and systems, contributes to development of a methodology for evaluating agroecology, participates in knowledge production, conducts specific consulting missions and studies, issues publications and conducts advocacy actions in favour of agroecology.





GRET's approach

» “Agroecological transition is a condition for meeting current challenges (environmental crisis, development of rural territories, food security, etc.). GRET is working to support this transition with projects in the field and through facilitation of networks, knowledge production, publications and advocacy for public policies in favour of agroecology. The objective, based on numerous successful experiences, is to upscale agroecology and make it widespread”, explains **Dominique Violas**, programmes manager.



Restoration of land degraded by the installation of a mini-pigeon pea forest, Androy, Madagascar

Key stakeholders' views



“In 2007, I decided to create a vegetable garden because income from rice cultivation was insufficient to cover my family's expenditure. At the time, I was growing one single crop and I was using chemical inputs. I began to change my practices after participating in training courses and exchange visits organised by GRET and Cird [Cambodia Institute for Research and Rural Development, a partner of GRET]. Thanks to the Apici project, I carried out experiments, observed the results and progressively switched from traditional practices to agroecological practices.”

Yeng Song, a farmer in Siem Reap province in Cambodia

“The Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Science (VAAS) has a mandate to conduct research and disseminate agroecological practices and knowledge, to contribute to the development of sustainable agriculture. We are very interested in cooperating with the Alisea network [regional network of agroecology stakeholders in South East Asia, facilitated by GRET] because in so doing, we can learn and share experiences that are very useful for agroecology with the various partners. We are very happy to continue coordinating the network in Vietnam so that the agroecological movement can become stronger.”



The Anh Dao, vice-chairperson, Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Science

SOME REFERENCES

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- Levard L., Mathieu B., Masse P. (coord.), *Mémento pour l'évaluation de l'agroécologie : méthodes pour évaluer ses effets et les conditions de son développement*, GTAE-AgroParisTech-Cirad-IRD, 2019.

Focus on three actions

Promotion of agroecological blocks in the Androy region, Madagascar

2014-2020 | **Budget:** 2 M€ | **Funding:** European Union, Catholic Relief Service, Fondation Avril | **Partner:** CTAS.



Since 2014, GRET and its local partner, the Southern agroecological technical centre (CTAS), have been supporting the creation of agroecological blocks in Androy, in the south of Madagascar.

These are collective contiguous physical and biological developments, with an initial surface area of 10 hectares. They have a nutritional, productive and environmental purpose, and feature a high level of biological diversity strata, ranging from creeping plants to large trees. To create an “oasis effect” protecting against wind and rain erosion, contiguous plots farmed by volunteer families were associated with these developments. Currently, 27 blocks cover a surface area of 2,500 hectares.

The Agroecological and agroforestry practices in tropical wet zones Guide



This technical guide is intended as a tool to support technicians and relay-farmers working in actions to promote and develop agroecological know-how. Drawing on capitalisation of experiences in the field, mainly in DRC and Cambodia, it consists mainly of a set of technical factsheets grouped by theme (integrated pest and disease control, management of soil fertility, systems of rice intensification, erosion control, production of quality seeds and plants, natural resource management).

A Handbook to evaluate agroecology



The *Mémento méthodologique pour l'évaluation de l'agroécologie*, whose production was coordinated by GRET, is the result of cooperation between the member organisations of the Agroecological transitions work group (GTAE) – Agrisud International, AVSF, Cari and GRET –, AgroParisTech, Cirad and IRD. It aims to equip development stakeholders with a tool to evaluate conditions for the development of agroecology and the agro-environmental and socio-economic effects of agroecological systems and practices.

2020. Photos: © GRET.



GRET is an international fair development NGO that has been actively fighting poverty and inequalities for more than 40 years in the field and at political level. For more information on GRET's activities in the area of “Agriculture: value chains and agricultural policies”: www.gret.org/themes/agriculture-en/