PROGRAM AREAS

UNU-INRA has identified three program areas (PA) in which it will concentrate its research, training and capacity development, and its policy work during the implementation period of this Strategic Plan. These are:

Farmers sowing vegetables, Benin

PA 1. Harnessing land and water resources for efficient and sustainable use;

The themes in this program area include:

- Evaluating and monitoring the state of land and water resources in Africa
- Introducing technologies for improved on- and off-farm water use and management, including recycling and water harvesting;
- Understanding access and equity in distribution of and access to secure land and water resources;
- Improving and encouraging innovation through appropriate technologies for effective management of small reservoirs;
- Analysing the connections between climate change and the human activities that affect land use as agents contributing to pollution, carbon emissions and global warming;
- Increasing soil nutrients and efficient use of water;
- Assessing the sustainability of the creation of long-term carbon sinks on agricultural lands;
- Understanding the potential and challenges of payment on ecosystem services (PES), and;
- Exploring climate change adaptation through forecasting, early warning and adaptive capacity development for sustainable livelihoods.

Elephants taking a bath, Mole National Park, Ghana

PA 2. Promoting conservation and developing a green economy;

The main themes for this program area are:

- Training stakeholders on payment for ecosystem service (PES) as a potential means of lifting poor rural households out of poverty and ensuring future environmental security and sustainability;
- Catalysing capacity development in Africa's universities to supply much-needed talents in Plant and Animal Taxonomy and Systematics;
- Designing strategies to develop and sustainably exploit the potential of biodiversity-based industries;
- Determining the environmental and economic impacts and relevance of invasive species on biodiversity and food security;
- Promoting the conservation, development and commercialization of underutilized and under-valued crops and species with emphasis on medicinal and other useful plants, and;
- Understanding the approaches that can be effectively employed to close the complex and "leaky" nitrogen and phosphorous nutrient cycles.

PA 3. Governing and managing the extractive industries

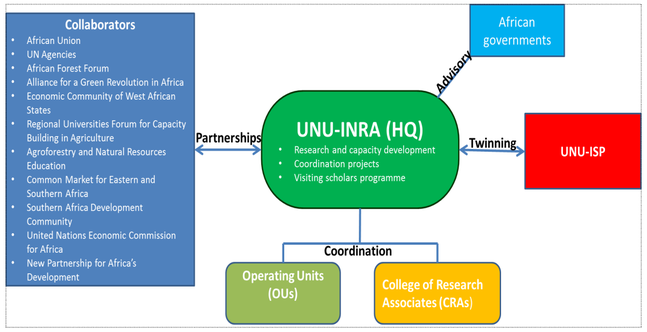
The Atwood Hunter a semi submersible oil rig, Ghana

The priority themes include:

- Understanding and managing mineral extraction and conflicts;
- Conducting needs assessment and capacity development for negotiations and implementation of natural resources-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs);
- Encouraging large and sustained private sector investment in the extraction and value addition to Africa's agro-minerals such as local phosphate rocks and rare elements, and;
- Examining policy options to create incentives for investments in alternatives energy production (bio/hydro energy, solar, wind)

OPERATIONAL MODALITIES

UNU-INRA has a lean administrative structure at its headquarters in Accra headed by director with a critical mass of scientist. The institute operates through a network of Operating Units (OUs) and College of Research Associates (CRAs) from universities and research institutions cross the African continent .The institute also collaborates with other UN agencies, multilaterals and bilateral institutions to deal with natural resources challenges facing Africa.



Structural framework of UNU-INRA

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

UNU-INRA's resource mobilization effort is segmented into:

(1) Endowments
(2) Special Project/Program Contributions (SPCs);
(3) Consultancy, and;
(4) Equipment and event funding.

UNU-INRA will pursue a clear strategy for each of these segments. It is expected that all senior staff, unit coordinators and the Board members will play an active role in resource mobilization.

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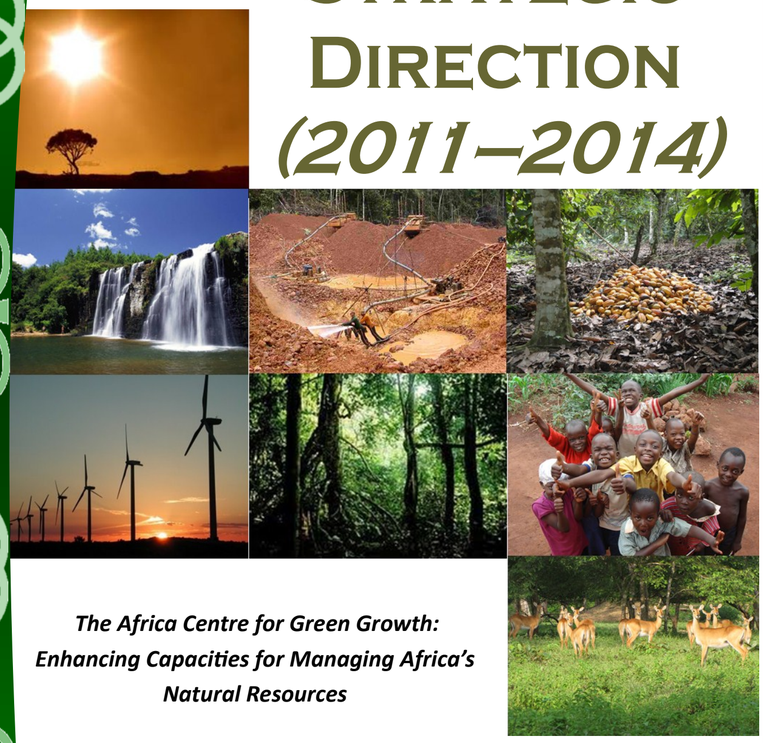
Designed by: UNU-INRA

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA (UNU-INRA)

STRATEGIC DIRECTION (2011–2014)



The Africa Centre for Green Growth: Enhancing Capacities for Managing Africa's Natural Resources

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY
UNU-INRA
Institute for Natural Resources in Africa

www.inra.unu.edu

THE CHALLENGES

⇒ Africa's macroeconomic performance has done relatively well in recent years, but the number of people living on less than a $ 1.00 a day has actually increased. Its economy remains mainly a supplier of inexpensive labour force and raw materials. According to United Nations Human Development Index, , Africa contained 46.6%and 93.3% of least developed countries in the world 1980 and 2010 respectively.

Dry degraded land, Niger River Basin

⇒ Food insecurity is high; more than 40% of the people in sub-Saharan Africa are food insecure. The continent remains the only part of the world where the percentage of the population that is chronically malnourished have continued to increase. Political conflicts and civil wars in many African countries are not only diverting human and material resources needed for development but are also exacerbating the depletion of Africa's natural resource base.

⇒ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates annual forest loss to be3.4 million hectares between 2000-2010.Poor and unsustainable management, including over-exploitation and the lack of transparency in the use of Africa's natural resources by key actors, has resulted in rapid degradation or loss of genetic resources of indigenous food crops, useful plants and animals, and of soil, water and land resources

OPPORTUNITIES

Sui Forest Reserve, Ghana

⇒ Africa is richly endowed with human and diverse natural resources. This combination provides ample opportunities for addressing the multifaceted development challenges facing the continent

⇒ Africa's one billion people are its greatest asset. Its researchers are also working in some of the world's best research centres and universities.

⇒ Africa's forests host a very significant proportion of the world's reservoir of diverse genetic resources.

⇒ Africa's mineral wealth is legendary: the continent has 97 per cent of world reserves of chrome, 85 per cent of world reserves of platinum, and 64 per cent of world reserves of manganese. Africa is also one of the world's major sources of crude oil, gold, diamonds, copper, tin, titanium dioxide, coltan (columbite–tantalite), bauxite and uranium.

BIRTH OF UNU-INRA AND MISSION

UNU-INRA was established in 1985, to bridge science and policy for addressing the development and natural resource challenges in Africa .Later that year, the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) at its 21st ordinary session in Addis Ababa approved a draft resolution establishing cooperation between UNU-INRA and the OAU and the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA). The statutes of UNU-INRA were approved at the 28th session of UNU Council in 1986.

VISION

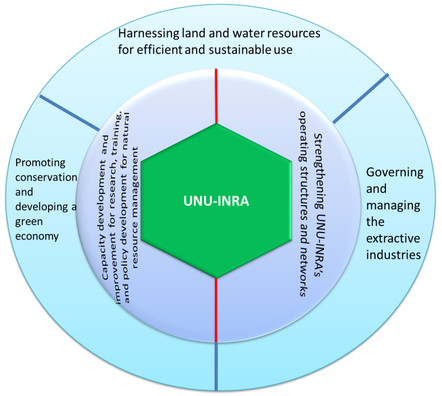
UNU-INRA's vision is to be the leading institution in Africa for capacity building for research in natural resource management (NRM). The main targets are African universities and other national and regional organisations. UNU-INRA's goal is to be a catalyst in knowledge creation for efficient use of the continent's natural resources, thus leading to the improvement of livelihoods on the continent

MISSION

The mission of UNU-INRA is to empower African universities and research institutions through capacity strengthening. This will enable them to conduct high-quality research and produce a cadre of well-trained, well-equipped and highly motivated individuals. The knowledge created and the increased capacity should be useful in developing, adapting and disseminating technologies that promote efficient and sustainable use of the continent's natural resources

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Nearly 25 years since its inception, UNU-INRA has still to fulfill its potential as an institution that plays an important leadership role and also exerts considerable influence in setting the direction, pace and content of research, training and capacity building for natural resources management in Africa**.** Africa urgently needs just such an institution to fill this crucial niche, and UNU-INRA is well placed to facilitate the development, accumulate and deliver knowledge base for sustainable natural resource development and management in Africa. The strategic focus draws on UNU-INRA original mission and objectives and the overall Strategic Plan of the UNU for the period 2011–2014.



UNU-INRA's strategic framework

UNU-INRA will strategically focus on:

FOCUS 1: Developing and improving capacity for research, training, and policy development for natural resource management in Africa

Goal 1.1: Strengthen research and training capacity

- Conduct and support cutting edge research at African universities and research institutions;
- Survey and access the training needs of researchers at the Operating Units (OUs) and within the College of Research Associates (CRAs) membership;
- Develop training materials, taking into consideration the information from the needs assessment surveys and;
- Train the OUs to undertake high-quality research on NRM

Goal 1.2: Facilitate and support knowledge development

- Establish and administer competitive grant programs for pre-doctoral dissertation, doctoral dissertation, post-doctoral and visiting scholar research, and;
- Support and coordinate internship programs by encouraging partner institutions abroad to outsource literature reviews, data gathering, preliminary analysis and other research assistantship duties for their research work focusing on Africa to recent graduates. This aims to develop skills, offer employment opportunities and encourage their interest for future career in NR and NRM research.

Goal 1.3: Enhance the collaboration and coordination of research funding for NR management in Africa

- Forge links and strengthen collaboration with foundations and organizations within the framework of their work, for example, that of the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA), which comprises foundations such as Rockefeller, MacArthur, and others. Joint activities can also be initiated with programs such as the Commonwealth Fellowship and Scholarship Plan and the International Foundation for Science to help exchange information and ideas. Collaboration with the Third World Academy of Science, which already exists, will be strengthened.
- Work with partners to coordinate the allocation of resources for NRM, increasing benefits from the synergy generated by joint programs, and forge consensus on the right direction for funding research and capacity training, all of which will help establish best practices for research, including the most efficient and effective use of research funds.

Goal 1.4: Develop and manage knowledge delivery systems for natural resource policy- and decision-making

- Collate current and relevant research information, package existing knowledge into accessible form for widespread dissemination and application.
- Update and contextualize existing knowledge and facilitate the generation of new knowledge.
- Develop a knowledge management system that links collated information on the current and updated relevant research at UNU-INRA OUs, CRA and affiliated institutions with the knowledge needs of policy- and decision-makers.
- Coordinate a knowledge delivery system for disseminating and applying the relevant information in policy - and decision-making, tapping into existing and emerging communications opportunities in Africa, particularly the burgeoning use of mobile telephones, social media and Internet opportunities.
- Reinstate the UNU-INRA annual lectures and organize national and regional public lectures and fora to create a dynamic and powerful platform for dialogue and exchange of ideas among scientists, civil society, and policy- and decision-makers.

Goal 1.5: Strengthen collaboration with governments, other UN organizations, private sector and civil society organisations for policy advocacy.

- Support governments through research, capacity building and policy analysis to implement multilateral agreements and national regulatory frameworks that stimulate and advance the benefits of the green economy in Africa;
- Take the leadership role in mobilizing the perspectives and positions of African scientists, policy- and decision makers for the Rio+20 Conference scheduled for 2012 in Brazil;
- Engage companies (including multinationals) whose productive activities rely on natural resources in Africa as partners to help sponsor UNU-INRA events, help fund policy research and collaborate in moving forward with the implementation of some of the research results for corporate policy- and decision-making, thereby making their operations sustainable, more secure and thus potentially more profitable, and;
- Create the platform for dialogue and stimulate discussion on collaborative governance of the extractive industries to help improve sustainable management and improve the living conditions, particularly those of the communities where those natural resources are located.

Focus 2:Strengthening UNU-INRA's operating structures and networks

Goal 2.1: Enhance UNU-INRA image and operational structures

- Set up a systematic internal management process.
- Use the provisions enshrined in the UNU personnel policies to pursue longer-term appointments for senior research and teaching staff, as recommended in the UNU Strategic Plan 2011–2014, to ensure stability and continuity in UNU-INRA programs.
- Utilize UNU training and human resources management programs to improve the quality of work of both the administrative and academic staff.
- Conduct periodic brown-bag seminars and lectures to encourage the sharing of knowledge and information.

Goal 2.2: Strengthen the links between UNU-INRA and the OUs and within OUs

- Develop and implement Rules of Procedures and Standards of Operation for UNU-INRA and OUs consistent with Article VII Section 2 of the UNU-INRA Statutes.
- Enhance the coordination between UNU-INRA and OUs to harmonize research and training activities, resource mobilization, evaluation, performance monitoring and reporting, and research publications.
- Encourage and support collaboration between OUs for effective allocation of research resources and to maximize synergy between and among OUs

Goal 2.3: Revive and Enhance the College of Research Associates (CRA)Network

- Structure researchers into a two-tier network consisting of a Registry of Researchers (ROR) and a College of Research Associates (CRA). Members of the CRA will be selected from the ROR using criteria for recognition and value process similar to that of the UNESCO Professorship. Current CRA members would be grandfathered in the process of selecting and evaluating CRA recognition.
- Make provisions for online membership registration and database management of ROR and CRA members.
- Use the ROR and CRA framework and collaboration with the OUs to organize training and research capacity development for African scientific and policy researchers.

UNU-INRA/UNU-ISP Board meeting, Accra, Ghana

Goal 2.4: Strengthen the Twinning partnership with UNU-ISP

- Expand and improve UNU-INRA's role in the implementation of UNU-ISP projects.
- Formalize arrangements for allocating assignments, funding and general governance of the twinning partnership with UNU -ISP.
- Pursue the development of joint research and training proposals for funding and implementation.