



Knowledge transfer and utilization at regional level – at the heart of the PSDR’s genome

The originality of the **PSDR Programmes** lies in their being designed and developed **within the regions** and in direct relation with stakeholders’ concerns. The collaborative research aims to describe and analyze the processes of **regional development**, and provide tools to development actors, whether they be private sector partners (farms, enterprises, cooperatives ...) or public actors (local and regional authorities, decentralized state services, training institutions).



PSDR Method and engineering: Partnership research to respond to regional challenges

In operation since the 90s and constantly being improved, the PSDR programmes differ from other mechanisms in that they use a **method and an engineering approach** that ensure the joint development of partnership, help monitor progress of the research at each stage of the project, and make it possible to develop tools to promote knowledge transfer and utilization.

- 1) **Co-construction** starts prior to project commencement. It is founded in the collected views of field partners and institutional actors such as regional councils, and in exchanges between researchers and professionals during discussion forums. Joint project development rests on the participation of those directly concerned, in the collaborative process.
- 2) The selected projects are **monitored on a regular basis** throughout the four years of work, by a team of permanent partners, who ensure the effectiveness of the partnership, the conformity of the scientific work conducted with the stated goals, budget compliance, etc.
- 3) **The development phase** consists in the production of a set of standardized dissemination tools, preserving the identity and coherence of the programme. Technical data sheets describe the main operational tools designed for use by the professionals in each project. A number of focus groups provide more detailed insights into some methodological aspects or results of the projects, but also offer a large number of technical documents for use by partners in the regions.



Transfer sheets



Focus groups



Technical documents



PSDR 4: An ambition to make research findings more practicable

PSDR 4 aims to strengthen the ambition to better utilize scientific results and convert them into effective tools and mechanisms that help address the concerns of stakeholders, while taking into account the development issues identified across each region. The extension of the projects by one year in order to reinforce the diffusion and practicability of research outputs, symbolizes this commitment. Another goal, relative to the key issues common to different regions, is to better articulate the results so as to consolidate the scientific gains and transform them into operational tools, transferable between regions.

Reinforcing the means of transferring scientific results to territorial actors. The aim is also to **systematize the production of knowledge transfer and conversion tools**. The focus is on strengthening the human resources dedicated to this mission, within the projects and facilitation teams in the regions. Special efforts will be made, with the Regional Councils and projects' partners, to raise financial resources, including EU funds, to endow these initiatives and to allocate specific funds to transfer operations. For the regions already involved in PSDR3, efforts toward the conversion of research findings will combine with the gradual development – based on the results of the PSDR 4 projects - of operational and training tools.

Improve the co-construction of projects and of conversion tools. Taking into account – as soon as the project construction phase begins – **the objective to improve scientific transfer toward territorial stakeholders**, is intended to help identify the needs, and necessary steps and forms of transfer. The approach of project co-development between research teams and local partners, under the aegis of the local units, will enable them to jointly think of operational tools and of means of knowledge appropriation by the actors involved in the projects, as well as the Regional Councils and other local actors.

Articulate the PSDR projects and other research mechanisms. In a context of reduced public funding to scientific research, the need **to better articulate the different mechanisms** is growing stronger. The challenge is to find ways of enhancing the complementarity of the PSDR programme with regional research schemes and within research institutes, but also to raise the consistency of its positioning and of its work in relation to other research partnership mechanisms (CASDAR¹, GIS², UMT³ and RMT⁴, etc.) to better identify its characteristics and added value.

Raise the awareness of the research teams and partners about the challenges of knowledge transfer and innovation. The transfer of research results requires specific skills and sustained investment, which is not always central to researchers' work. Raising the awareness of the teams about the role of these specific phases and making the partners participate in the **co-development of tools tailored to the needs of the territories** is expected to improve the relevance of the work conducted in the framework of PSDR4.

¹ Compte d'affectation spéciale développement agricole et rural (Special Allocation Funds for agricultural and rural development)

² Groupement d'intérêt scientifique (Scientific Interest Group)

³ Unités Mixtes Technologiques (Mixed Technological Units)

⁴ Réseaux Mixtes Technologiques (Mixed Technological Networks)



PSDR 3 partnership – an assessment

Knowledge, tools and training programmes for reinforcing collective actions at local level

Approximately **295 partners** were involved in 36 research projects conducted in **10 regions**. They participated in over **650 innovation partnership operations**, such as themed seminars, the production of technical manuals as well as **216 teaching operations** (development of training programmes and publishable educational materials, contribution to the development of training modules).

Production of regional development tools. A wide range of operational tools for use by the various stakeholders (elected representatives, technicians, farmers ...) in rural and peri-urban areas, were developed and disseminated in the framework of the projects, along with tools for local situation analysis and for supporting decision making. E.g. Mechanisms of analysis of environmental amenities combining cognitive, ecological and economic approaches, a database on firms' innovation strategies and ties to the local community, methods for understanding the dynamics between local actors and for supporting their action in local land management; environmental assessment tools for use by actors in the marine by-product industry, etc.

Contribution to the structuring and organization of groups of actors, and stimulation of exchanges between local actors. The projects have served to build and establish **networks of actors at local and regional level** and have promoted **exchange and cooperation initiatives**. E.g. setting up foresight seminars in order to raise local producers and actors' awareness concerning the future of arable farming; development of participation tools for assisting farmers in the selection of local breeds; organisation of an epidemiological monitoring network for combating the risk of pest contamination.

An effort towards training and educating local actors. One of PSDR3's main innovations has been the teams' commitment to **converting research result into educational material**. Many initiatives have been undertaken not only to raise territorial actors' awareness of new development challenges, but also to design and reinforce training courses and modules in Universities and Engineering schools, by making use of the Programme's findings.

Direct contribution to regional policy making. Some of the studies resonate directly with the Regions. Several initiatives directly contributed to **designing or changing regional policies** in fields as diverse as support to people with multiple activities, or the definition and improvement of regional tourism policy. A number of projects have helped to develop public policies and to evaluate their impact on rural areas.



All documents generated through PSDR 3 are available on the regional and national PSDR websites (www.psd.fr) sites. Included in the project's major achievements, the "Tools for steering the development of rural and peri-urban areas" manual, produced with the French Rural Network following the 2012 Symposium, symbolizes the research and facilitation teams' investment in producing transfer tools



PSDR 3: Some examples of the tools developed and operations conducted

Contribution to regional and territorial development. **A guide intended to help players in action situations to develop territorial engineering systems for supporting projects such as the development of an Urban Planning program:** produced through the Gouvinov project (Languedoc-Roussillon), this guide combines reflective syntheses, concrete examples and tools for monitoring the actions engaged at territorial level, to facilitate initiatives in situations of multi-level and multi-actor governance.

Territory – environment – society linkages. A practical guide on the construction of multi-partner bio-methanization projects at territory level: produced in the framework of the Biodecol2 project (Greater Western region), this guide for farmers and agricultural technicians (CUMA, cooperatives, chambers) is also a useful tool for elected officials and local communities representatives or planning consultants. It provides territorialized repositories of information on management of organic waste and residues, and the evaluation of the environmental impacts of bio-methanization. It also proposes adaptive methodologies for each stage and operation involved in the implementation of the project.

A patented tool for adapting farming and forage systems to climate change and hazards: The "Rami fourrager" (or "fodder board game") , created in the framework of Climfourrel project (Midi-Pyrénées, Languedoc-Roussillon and Rhone-Alpes), combines a board game and an Excel interface. This group facilitation tool for use by farmers, agricultural technicians and teachers, helps initiate reflection on how to reduce sensitivity to climate variability and achieve fodder or protein self sufficiency.

Sustainability and organic farming. A model for evaluating organic cropping: developed in a partnership between researchers (management and agronomy) and advisors from Chambers, this model was developed in the framework of the Citodab project (Midi-Pyrenees). Constructed using 49 indicators, it helps to consider all components of farming systems' sustainability, including social acceptability and health risks for farmers. In particular, it provides knowledge to help lift barriers to the development of more environmentally friendly systems.

Agriculture in the territories: the question of short producer-to-consumer food chains. Central to the preoccupations of many regional and local authorities, and a means towards optimizing agricultural productions, short producer-to-consumer food chains are the main focus of two projects. The Liproco project (Greater Western region and Rhône-Alpes) has served to create a diagnostic tool for testing relations between the actors of the short producer-to-consumer food chains on the one hand and consumers on the other. Coxinel (Languedoc-Roussillon) served to implement - in Grabels (*département* of Hérault) - a system for governing short food supply chains, in



consultation with an tripartite advisory committee (elected representatives, traders, consumers), **as well as a simple labelling system for indicating the geographical and social origins of the products offered.**

