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"Management of land use systems for enhanced food security: conflicts, controversies and resolutions"

# Humidtropics, a CGIAR Research Program on Integrated Systems for the Humid Tropics

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**Abstract**

HUMIDTROPICS, a CGIAR Research Program led by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) started in July 2012 and seeks to transform the lives of the rural poor in tropical Americas, Asia and Africa. It uses integrated systems research and unique partnership platforms to increase overall agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner for better impact on poverty and ecosystem integrity. Core programme partners are: AVRDC, Bioversity International, CIAT, CIP, FARA, icipe, ICRAF, IITA, ILRI, IWMI, and WUR.

Integrated systems are complex, dynamic and vary from location to location. The main programme entry points are poverty status and ecosystem integrity status to determine social and technical intervention pathways where research is aimed at changes in systems productivity, natural resources management, and institutions and markets. Its multiple intervention pathways display trade-offs and synergies between competing use of resources and benefits based on different entry points and priorities based on area related extrapolation domains. Innovation Platforms and other change coalitions in selected field sites help to identify and prioritise systems problems and opportunities, invest, test and experiment with social and technical interventions and share experiences.

Some characteristics of Humidtropics are:

• Holistic systems approach: research puts smallholder farmers at the centre of a wider integrated system that considers multiple farming system components, institutional and technological environments to develop multiple social and technological interventions at farm and institutional level.

• Blend of biological and social sciences: research includes external environmental, cultural, social, behavioural, political and economic variables.

• Demand-driven: research is driven by people, livelihoods and living environments using multi-stakeholder Research for Development (R4D) and Innovation Platforms as key participatory mechanisms through which challenges, bottlenecks and opportunities are identified and prioritised.

• Sustainable intensification: increase total farm-level productivity, optimise returns, while preserving the natural resource base for future generations.

• Capacity to innovate: the essence of sustainability and resilience lies in the capacity of system actors to innovate and adapt; Humidtropics strives to build innovation capacity.

• Gender and youth empowerment: is an integral part of the Program, its goal is to narrow the inequities between men and women in access to and benefit from the productive resources that are central to rural livelihoods.

• Linking research to development: linkages between research and development are used as an essential mechanism towards attainment of impact at scale.

**Keywords:** Integrated systems research, livelihoods, productivity, sustainability

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