

Southern Africa

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Regional Coordinator



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Newcastle Disease vaccination day in a small village

Southern Africa

Key program manager

Dr Debbie Templeton, Livestock Production Systems

GDP per capita (PPP ^a US\$)	11,110	Bilateral actual 2006–07	\$0.5 m
Population (millions)	48	Bilateral estimate 2007–08	\$0.4 m
Projected population (millions) 2015	50	Bilateral budget 2008–09	\$0.5 m
Active bilateral projects	4	Bilateral + multilateral budget 2008–09	\$0.5 m
Active multilateral projects	0		

^aPurchasing power parity (see Appendix 3, Selected world development indicators)



ACIAR Regional Coordinator Dr Simon Hearn examining a small farmer beef improvement project based on indigenous cattle in Limpopo province

Medium-term strategy

ACIAR has a small program in Southern Africa which emphasises income generation in crop and livestock systems for emerging, previously disadvantaged farmers in the Republic of South Africa (RSA). The program is designed to assist farmers to develop as entrepreneurs to capture the benefits of improved technology and then provide leadership to other groups.

An underlying theme is sustainable use of natural resources, particularly with regard to croplands and communal grazing lands. Enhancing the engagement of African farmers into agricultural commodity markets is seen as an important means of increasing their incomes. ACIAR-supported research also aims to build the capacity of provincial agencies and to foster closer relationships between them and national institutions.

Key performance indicators (2008–09)

- new initiative implemented to foster beef market chain through the development of branded beef products based on indigenous cattle
- evidence of adoption of legume crop–livestock technologies by an emerging group of farmers in South Africa's north, to improve the sustainability of farming practices and farm-level profitability

Position

ACIAR has funded research with Southern Africa since 1983, completing over 40 projects. Benefits to date have included the empowerment of individual and farmer groups to market and receive a fair price for their cattle, vaccines for Newcastle disease in chickens in several countries, a tick

resistance diagnostic test and a tick fever vaccine, selection of Australian trees for difficult sites, identification of low-input fertiliser strategies for crops in risky environments, and demonstration that cattle breeds preferred by emerging farmers have equal growth potential to commercial breeds.

ACIAR has supported IARC projects through the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) in a number of African countries.

Currently, RSA is the sole focus of ACIAR's bilateral and multilateral programs. Australian technical knowledge and expertise is highly relevant because similar temperate, Mediterranean and subtropical production environments are found in the two countries. Further, Australia's advanced extension and farming systems capabilities are relevant in building local capacity to assist the development of the South African farming sector.

The program is guided by the following principles:

- Research partnerships must be focused on delivery of benefits to emerging African farmers.
- Projects will only be considered for RSA and will focus in areas where Australian scientists can add significantly to the skill base by filling 'gaps' in existing South African expertise. In doing so, ACIAR will also look for synergies between its program and those of other South African and international funding agencies, and for potential Australian mutual benefits.

Current project portfolio

(Possible new projects commencing in 2008–09 shown as 'proposed')

Priorities for ACIAR–RSA collaboration are developed through visits by senior staff meeting with leading agricultural R&D institutions and government bodies.

Subprogram: Increasing the profitability and sustainability of crop–livestock farming systems

- Integration of legumes and other nutrient management strategies into crop and pasture systems
- Assistance for communities to manage their land and enhance livestock production
- Support for linkages between farmers and the private agribusiness sector
- Crop and landscape management to maximise the use of rainfall

LPS/2002/081	Development of emerging farmer crop–livestock systems in northern South Africa
LPS/2004/022	Pasture development for community wool sheep production in Eastern Cape province of RSA
LPS/2005/128 (proposed)	Developing supply chain partnerships for the emerging beef sector in South Africa

Other

FST/2003/002	Development and evaluation of sterile triploids and polyploid breeding methodologies for commercial species of <i>Acacia</i> in Vietnam, South Africa and Australia
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Project farmers inspect their cattle, which are raised under feedlot conditions at a research station in Irene, Southern Africa