

Southern Africa

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Regional Coordinator



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Newcastle Disease vaccination day in a small village

Southern Africa

Key program managers
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GNI per capita (\$US)	n/a	Bilateral actual 2005–06	\$0.63 m
Population	47.2 million	Bilateral estimate 2006–07	\$0.47 m
Population 2015/2050	47.9/48.7 million	Bilateral budget 2007–08	\$0.41 m
Active bilateral projects	4	Bilateral + multilateral budget 2007–08	\$0.44 m
Active multilateral projects	1		



Zimbabwe Zimuto review team discussing resource allocation

Key performance indicators (2007–08)

- Legumes and associated rhizobia of potential commercial value in South Africa and south-west Australia collected in Eastern Cape province
- The Continuous Improvement and Innovation methodology adopted by the extension groups in two South African Provinces
- Promising pasture species identified for regeneration of abandoned cropland in the Eastern Cape province
- 40% of new projects designed to have significant farmer or policy-maker impacts within five years of completion

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 focused on farmers who are able to capture the benefits of improved technology as entrepreneurs and who are well positioned to provide leadership to other groups.

Sustainable use of natural resources, particularly with regard to croplands, communal grazing lands and water resources, is an underlying theme. Likewise, enhancing the engagement of African farmers into agricultural commodity markets is recognised as an important element of increasing their incomes. ACIAR-supported research also aims to build the capacity of the provincial agencies and to foster relationships between these groups and national institutions.

Position

ACIAR has been involved 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 exceptionally 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. The priorities and size of the investment by ACIAR have changed over time.

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. The focus of IARC projects is now also exclusively on southern Africa.

Currently, RSA is the sole focus of ACIAR's bilateral program. 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 African farming sector.

In 2007–08 our program will be guided by the following principles:

- our 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 the existing South African expertise. In doing so, ACIAR will also look at synergies in our program with those of other South African and international funding agencies, and for potential Australian mutual benefits.

Thematic priorities

(Possible new projects commencing in 2007–08 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. In 2007–08 new projects will be considered for the development of crop–livestock systems (involving small and large ruminants) and the efficient use of nutrients and water in cropping systems.

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

- Integrating legumes into crop and pasture systems
- Assisting communities to manage their land and to enhance livestock production
- Supporting linkages between farmers and the private agribusiness sector
- Crop and landscape management to maximise the use of rainfall
- Development of fertiliser use options for a range of farming systems

LPS/1999/036	Developing profitable beef business systems for previously disadvantaged farmers in South Africa
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)	Enhanced market access for beef in RSA
SMCN/2000/173 (Multilateral)	Improved fertiliser recommendations and policy for dry regions of southern Africa (ICRISAT)

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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