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COUNCIL OF THE UNITED  
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Twenty-Ninth Session  
Helsinki, Finland

6 - 10 July 1987

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro  
PROGRESS REPORT ON THE INSTITUTE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES  
IN AFRICA (INRA)

(For Council discussion)

Background

Council decision:

Twenty-eighth session - Decided on the formal establishment of the Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (INRA) as a research and training centre of the United Nations University; .... (CD/28/9)



1. Since the Council's decision, at its twenty-eighth session in December 1986, on the formal establishment of INRA as a research and training centre under the Charter of the UN University (see attached copy of the Council's resolution), the University has taken the necessary steps to identify potential candidates for the directorship of INRA and members of the Board, and has continued its efforts regarding the funding of the Institute.

2. To assist with the search for the Director and members of the Board of INRA, the Rector appointed a Committee consisting of Professor Ampah Johnson, President of the Africa Club and former Rector of the University of Benin, Togo; Professor Eugene Seibold, President of the European Science Foundation; Dr. Bukar Shaib, former Federal Minister of Agriculture, Nigeria; and Mr. Maurice Strong, former Executive Co-ordinator, UN Office for Emergency Operations in Africa. The members elected Mr. Strong as Chairman. The Committee met in London in late January and, after extensive explorations and consultations, met again in late April to complete its work. The Committee has recommended three candidates for the directorship, as well as a number of potential members of the Board. The Rector has accepted the recommendations of the Committee, and has begun consultations with the Chairman of the Council and the Rector-designate concerning the appointment of the Director.

3. In early February, the Vice-Rector for Institutional Planning and Resource Development (IPRD), called on His Excellency Mr. Felix Houphouët-Boigny, President of Côte d'Ivoire, and His Excellency Mr. Kenneth D. Kaunda, President of Zambia, and stressed the need for an early payment of the pledges from their Governments. The President of Côte d'Ivoire assured the Vice-Rector that his Government's pledge of US\$5 million would be paid as soon as possible, and that the necessary physical facilities are available for INRA at Yamoussoukro. The Minister of Scientific Research confirmed the President's assurances in his letter of 10 February 1987 which he personally gave to the Vice-Rector at the time of his departure from Côte d'Ivoire (see attached copy of the letter). The President of Zambia assured the Vice-Rector that his Government would make every effort to pay its pledge of US\$2 million. It should be stressed here that the contributions from Africa are of utmost importance for the early commencement of INRA's work and the mobilization of additional funds.

4. Following his mission to Africa, the Vice-Rector proceeded to France to meet with Government officials at the Ministry of Co-operation to report on the Council's decision on the establishment of INRA and to request an early payment of the first instalment of the Government's pledge. The Rector had written to the French Minister of Co-operation on 10 December 1986 to inform him of the Council's decision on INRA, including the question of a scientific advisory committee. In the reply of 9 February 1987, the Ministry of Co-operation re-confirmed the pledge of FF20 million over three years while reiterating the need for a scientific advisory committee as well as sufficient funds from other donors before the Government of France could implement its financial commitment. These

points were stressed further during the Vice-Rector's meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Co-operation. The Rector subsequently wrote a detailed letter on 19 March to the Ministry setting out the position of the University concerning the various matters raised by the Government of France. Furthermore, the Council Member from France, and other influential personalities in France have made personal representations with the Government of France.

5. In early June, the Vice-Rector met with officials of the Government of Italy at the Department of Development Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The consultations were very positive and the Government has promised to inform the University of a possible contribution by early July. The Council Member from Italy has given strong support in the consultations with the Government of Italy. The Government of Belgium has reassured the University of its intent to consider a contribution for INRA in its 1988 budget. The Minister of Overseas Development, United Kingdom, has written to the University that his Ministry should consider very carefully the possibility of providing support for INRA within the context of British bilateral aid to African countries.

6. The University has also made progress with other agencies and funding sources. The Senior Adviser for INRA has undertaken the groundwork for a contribution from "USA for Africa," and the University's application for a grant of US\$2 million is now under active consideration. These and other efforts to raise funding support in the US for INRA have been supported by the Council Member from the US who is also undertaking consultations in the US Congress to this end. Of special encouragement is a generous donation of US\$100,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Daniel L. Schlafly of St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A for an endowment fund for research associates of INRA. Mrs. Schlafly is a member of the American Council for the UN University.

7. At the recent annual meeting of the African Development Bank in Cairo, Egypt, in early June 1987, to which the Senior Adviser for INRA was invited as an expert on Africa's environmental crisis, it was agreed that the Bank would present a request for a substantial endowment fund for INRA to the third consultative meeting of the fifth General Replenishment of the African Development Fund. The University has also continued its efforts with the Commission of the European Communities in Brussels to obtain funds from the European Development Fund with the active support of African member states of the Lomé Convention and their secretariat in Brussels. The University has also submitted an application for an initial grant of US\$1 million from the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) following the Vice-Rector's meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 21 February 1987 with His Royal Highness Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, President of AGFUND.

8. The University has continued its consultations with UNDP and has submitted the draft project document in accordance with UNDP's procedures concerning INRA's advanced training programme for which UNDP will provide

US\$5.6 million during the fourth budget cycle 1987-1991. As the Council will recall, this important commitment from UNDP will enable INRA to commence the implementation of its programme of work as soon as the basic endowment contributions from the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Zambia have been paid, together with the initial operating contribution from the Government of France.

9. It is evident that the University will be able to proceed further with the operations of INRA after the basic funds, committed by the various governments and agencies, are available in terms of assured income. The timing of the appointment of the Director and of the Board, and the commencement of operations could then be phased in the light of the fulfilment of these commitments. INRA should then be operational in early 1988.

10. In the circumstances, the Rector believes that the University should now appoint the members of the Board of INRA and convene the first meeting of the Board early 1988.

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