

International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development



By questioning the evolution of the dynamics of farming and poverty in the last 50 years, by analysing the current situation and exploring the options of evolution for the next decades, UNESCO engaged itself, along with other specialised UN agencies, like the FAO, the WHO, as well as UN programmes like UNEP, UNDP, and along with the GEF and the World Bank in the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (or IAASTD). The objective of this assessment is to imagine the evolution of tomorrow's rural world, provide guidance for political, economical and institutional choices, in order to reach sustainable agricultural economies.

The overarching Question of the IAASTD is :

How can we reduce hunger and poverty, improve rural livelihoods, and facilitate equitable, environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development through the generation, access to, and use of agricultural knowledge, science and technology?

The project is a major global initiative, developed out of a consultative process which involved 900 participants and 110 countries from all regions of the world. Its objective: to advise the public and private decision-making so that research can efficiently contribute to tackle the challenges farmers and the whole agricultural sector will have to face by 2050.

It comprises 5 regional evaluations and a global evaluation, and consists in a critical evaluation of the existing literature concerning fundamental issues, which will structure tomorrow's rural world.

The process brought together governments; Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs); the private sector; producers; consumers; the scientific community; Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) as well as multiple international agencies involved in the agricultural and rural development sectors.

Through the active involvement of the Division for Ecological and Earth Sciences, UNESCO was a member of the IAASTD secretariat, jointly with FAO, UNEP and the World Bank. Furthermore, UNESCO has coordinated, jointly with the Instituto Interamericano de Cooperacion para la Agricultura (IICA) the IAASTD sub-global assessment for Latin America and the Caribbean.

All IAASTD reports and information regarding this process can be found at the following address: www.agassessment.org .