

Land use R&D Policy and Funding by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research

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Global change and its interacting phenomena like globalization of trade and economy, demographic and societal changes and last but not least climate change are effecting the societies in industrialized nations as well as developing or transition countries. They all face enormous challenges in the coming years and investments in R&D-policies of countries and regions are considered to be a crucial factor to overcome negative effects of globalization and to shape the future. One of the future research fields that is not a brand new one, but even so has very high potential in this respect, is the field of land management.

On the one hand land management is at the cross-roads of climate change, energy- and food-demands and human needs and therefore particular capable to deal with the above mentioned problems in a holistic manner. On the other hand land use changes driven by global change phenomena are very directly affecting the life of millions of people around the world. Sustainable land management is of key importance in preserving our natural resources, because Global change will increase competition in the use of limited land resources in Germany and in many other parts of the world. It could be a prime example of research on sustainability.

Therefore 2009 the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) started, in the context of its framework programme "Research for sustainability, a new initiative called "Sustainable Land Management" The main aim of the research initiative is to elaborate and develop the necessary knowledge base for sustainable land use management practices, including strategies, technologies and system solutions.

The program has a modular structure, allowing for the flexible integration of additional issue in the following years, but will focus in its initial phase on "Interaction between land management, climate change and ecosystem services" (module A) and "Innovative system solutions for sustainable land management" (module B). It will concentrate on regions that are classified in particular sensitive or are particular capable to serve as exemplary model regions (national/international).

Main topics of the call include e.g. regional consequences of global change on land management and socio-economy, land management strategies, interaction and feedback mechanisms between land use and ecosystem services (ESS), urban-rural relations and trade-offs and synergies between conflicting land management options. First projects are planned to start in 2010.

Key criteria across all aspects mentioned before will be the active involvement of stakeholders, the integration of different interests and the combination of economical, ecological and social approaches.

In this respect the call could build the basis for level playing field to define "areas of overlapping interest" concerning new Indo-German initiatives.