



Swiss Programme for Research  
on Global Issues for Development

# Management Principles r4d Ecosystems

Information for researchers

June 2017



## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Aims and structure of the r4d programme</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 General aims of the r4d programme	2
2.2 Structure and organisation of the r4d programme	2
2.3 Thematic concept of the r4d module Ecosystems	3
<b>3. Getting started</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Release of funds	4
3.2 Transferring funds to other grantees	4
3.3 Employment of staff	4
<b>4. Responsibilities and instruments for quality control and project support</b>	<b>4</b>
4.1 Responsibilities and project support	5
4.2 Instruments	6
4.2.1 Programme and module meetings	7
4.2.2 Site visits	7
4.2.3 Progress report	8
4.2.4 Mid-term report	8
4.2.5 Final project report	9
4.2.6 Financial reporting	9
<b>5. Communication and application</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1 Programme and module level	10
5.2 Project level	10
<b>6. Time schedule of the module Ecosystems</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>7. Review Panel members and contact details of SNSF staff</b>	<b>12</b>

## **1. Introduction**

This document describes the general guidelines that apply to the r4d programme in addition to those described in the official decision letter and in the SNSF regulations (Funding Regulations; General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations; Regulation on information, valorisation and rights to research results; Guidelines for the lifetime management of research projects). The Management Principles are aimed for researchers in the r4d programme and shall help structuring the interactions with the programme management and the Review Panel.

This document was updated in June 2017 as through the r4d Additional Thematic Call the module gained one new project. Also, the set-up of the Review Panel changed. The updated document considers these changes and provides a new time schedule.

The Management Principles differentiate between grantees (responsible grantee and other grantees) and project coordinators. The responsible grantee is the primary contact person for the SNSF and for all those involved in the r4d programme. S/He is responsible for passing on all information to the research group members. S/He can appoint a project coordinator. This needs to be clearly communicated to the r4d programme coordinator.

## **2. Aims and structure of the r4d programme**

### **2.1 General aims of the r4d programme**

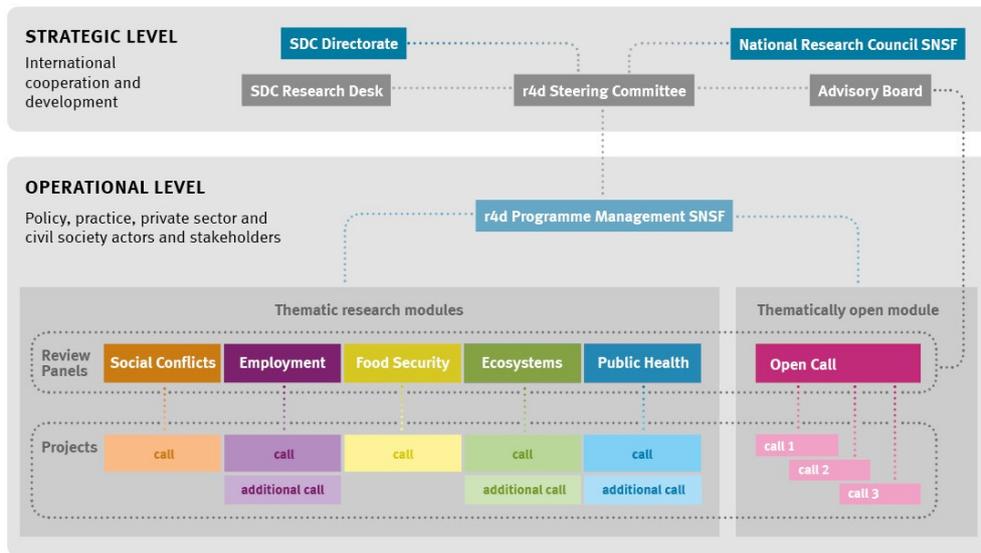
The main goals of the r4d programme are the generation of knowledge and the application of innovative, transnational research results in policy and practice within the normative conceptual framework of global sustainable development. The focus of the programme lies on the reduction of poverty and global risks as well as the provision of public goods and services such as health, biodiversity and water, food security, human security, and market and financial stability.

### **2.2 Structure and organisation of the r4d programme**

The programme consists of six modules. In the thematically open module researchers work on bottom-up projects free of thematic specifications. The other five thematic modules address the following themes:

- Causes of and solutions to social conflicts in the context of weak public institutions or state fragility
- Employment in the context of sustainable development
- Sustainable management of ecosystems for the provision of ecosystem services
- Innovation in agricultural and food systems for food security
- Provision systems and financing mechanisms in the public health sector

The r4d programme is organised as depicted in the following chart.



### 2.3 Thematic concept of the r4d module Ecosystems

Ecosystems encompass all land and water based natural and semi-natural systems, as well as the associated resource use systems. They provide a broad range of ecosystem services on which human well-being is highly dependent. Ecosystems are affected in turn by human-induced indirect and direct drivers. Over the last five decades humans have increasingly changed ecosystems to meet rapidly growing demands. This has resulted in rapid changes in ecosystems, including a substantial and largely irreversible loss and degradation of natural resources and biodiversity. Despite substantial gains in economic development and human well-being, not all groups of people and regions have benefitted from these changes.

The success or failure of any scheme of sustainable ecosystem management will not depend on a single factor but rather on a combination of mutually reinforcing policies, investments, and actions. Understanding the key drivers, their interactions and the policies that can drive and promote good practices will derive from a judicious mix of global, regional, national and local actions. An understanding of optimal policies and actions would provide important information for policy makers, donors and activists. This research module, therefore, seeks to support innovative inter- and transdisciplinary research collaborations that aim to develop methodologies, technologies, approaches or concepts that improve and enhance the sustainable and equitable provision of ecosystem services for human well-being, with a particular focus on the poor in developing and emerging countries.

The four main research areas of the module Ecosystems are:

1. The drivers of ecosystem change
2. Appropriating the economic, social and environmental value of ecosystems and ecosystem services
3. Ecosystems, ecosystem services and climate change
4. Integrated planning and management of ecosystems

### **3. Getting started**

#### **3.1 Release of funds**

The responsible grantee requests the release of funds via mySNF. The project agreement signed by all grantees is a requirement for the release of funds. The funds are paid in annual instalments in accordance with the regulations. The payment can be requested no earlier than one month before the start of the next funding year and requests have to be made via mySNF.

#### **3.2 Transferring funds to other grantees**

Funds may only be transferred to researchers who are listed as other grantees for the respective project. Fund transfers to other grantees are exempt from value-added tax. With regard to the value-added tax legislation, it is important that the funds are not requested via an invoice, but exclusively via a payment request. The responsible grantee needs to make the payment.

In principle there are various methods for transactions. If the transfer of funds from the partner institutes to the relevant research teams is reliable, funds may be transferred to the accounts of the respective partner institutes. Transfers to partners may also be made to the accounts of individuals participating in a project, provided that the legal requirements of the partner country are taken into consideration. It is not advisable to transfer the whole sum in one go, but rather in (3-monthly or 6-monthly) instalments, especially when no prior transfers have been made to the partner country.

#### **3.3 Employment of staff**

Any new appointments, staff turnover or salary adjustments in Switzerland are subject to approval by the SNSF. A corresponding request must be placed with the SNSF in advance in the form of a "change of personnel" notification via mySNF. You will find the web-based forms on mySNF if you select the relevant project and click on the corresponding section. Notifications of personnel changes are the responsibility of the responsible grantee.

Employment relationships must be regulated by the grantees' institution by means of a written contract. The institutions are responsible for compliance with the statutory labour and social insurance provisions. The SNSF specifies binding salary brackets and norms for different staff categories in Switzerland.

It is not necessary to notify personnel changes in the partner countries. They have to be entered into the r4d financial monitoring and reporting tool (r4dIRA), provided by the SNSF, and mentioned in the progress reports.

### **4. Responsibilities and instruments for quality control and project support**

The r4d projects face the challenge to combine scientific excellence and development relevance. This requires support to encourage discussions between researchers and the members of the Review Panel as well as between researchers and representatives from policy and practice. The support for projects focuses particularly on the creation of development-relevant scientific knowledge. The programme encourages innovative approaches and activities related to

communication and application, including experimentation with knowledge sharing formats and tools.

#### 4.1 Responsibilities and project support

The **grantees** (responsible grantee and other grantees) are obliged to use the approved grant in accordance with the terms stipulated in the ruling and to comply with the provisions of the regulations of the SNSF as well as any other rules applicable to the grant. In terms of co-operation within the r4d module the grantees are in charge of the timely submission of the information requested by the Review Panel and the Administrative Offices of the SNSF. They make themselves available for Site visits and actively participate in specific events of the module.

The **responsible grantee** is responsible vis-à-vis the SNSF for each application or grant. S/He is the main contact person of the project. The SNSF addresses all communications concerning the grant to this person and the awarded funds are transferred to this person's institution (in most cases the grant administration office). The entire grant is administered at this institution, from where funds can be transferred to the institutions of the other grantees.

The **project agreement** defines the co-operation and relationship between the grantees, particularly with regard to authorship rights, access to data and research results. If one of the grantees needs to be replaced within a research group, the new and the current grantees must jointly file an application with the SNSF.

The **Review Panel** members are responsible for the scientific support and quality assurance of the module. Two members of each Review Panel act as **supporting experts for a project**. They assume the role as experts and advisors and follow the projects which are assigned to them critically and constructively. They support the research work, are aware of the current state of research, communication and application activities of the project, and are responsible for assessing the progress made in the project (evaluation of progress, mid-term and final reports; conducting Site visits). The assignment of Review Panel members to the projects is non-exclusive and for specific elements of a project specific experts within the Panel can be consulted.

The **president of a Review Panel** prepares together with the programme coordinator the meetings of the Review Panel. S/He chairs the Review Panel meetings and ensures that all Panel members can bring forward their opinions/assessments and arguments in the discussions. The president keeps an overview of the research progress of all projects (focus on scientific quality) and takes part, whenever possible, in the scientific support of all projects. Decisions by the Review Panel are prepared by the president of the Review Panel together with the programme coordinator. The president has the final ballot in all decisions to be made by the Review Panel. S/He serves as spokesperson for the module and may delegate this function to other members of the Review Panel.

The **delegate of the SDC** has the same role as the other experts in the Review Panel, but focuses particularly on the projects' pathways to impact and their respective communication and application strategy.

The **delegate of the SNSF** assures compliance with the SNSF evaluation procedure. S/He does not act as referee or co-referee and has no right to vote in the Review Panel. S/He is responsible

for presenting recommendations and decisions made by the Review Panel to the National Research Council.

The **programme coordinator** is the main contact person for the Review Panel members and the researchers and ensures a smooth management of the module and the r4d programme.

For research-related questions and in order to discuss scientific issues, the researchers are welcome to get in touch with the Review Panel members. These contacts are initially organised by the programme coordinator.

Table 1: Projects within the module Ecosystems and assigned Review Panel members

PI	Title	Countries	Supporting experts
<b>NEW PROJECT</b>			
Christian Kull	Assessing the 'nature' of a 'forest transition' in Vietnam: ecosystem services and social-ecological resilience in locally managed forest landscapes	Vietnam	Claude Martin Peter Verburg
<b>PROJECTS THAT STARTED IN 2015</b>			
Jaboury Ghazoul	Oil Palm Adaptive Landscapes	Cameroon, Colombia, Indonesia	Claude Martin Peter Verburg
Peter Messerli	Managing telecoupled landscapes for the sustainable provision of ecosystem services and poverty alleviation	Laos, Madagascar, Myanmar	Esther Mwangi Jacqueline Schmid
Urs Schaffner	Woody invasive alien species in East Africa: assessing and mitigating their negative impact on ecosystem services and rural livelihood	Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania	Michael Odhiambo Ian Johnson

## 4.2 Instruments

The r4d projects face the challenge to meet high scientific quality standards while being of high development relevance. This requires support to encourage discussions between researchers and the members of the Review Panel as well as between researchers and representatives from the policy and practice realms. The support for projects focuses particularly on the creation of development-relevant scientific knowledge. The programme encourages innovative approaches and activities related to communication and application, including experimentation with knowledge sharing formats and tools.

#### 4.2.1 Programme and module meetings

The r4d programme organises meetings in order to support and enhance exchange among researchers, the Review Panel, stakeholders and funders. They allow for identifying and making use of synergies and emerging topics to be taken up in the programme and module syntheses. The r4d programme offers the three events series called r4d Forum, r4d Conferences, and r4d Skills (see box).

In March 2014 the first Ecosystems Forum was held. The next **Ecosystems event** is planned for 5 September 2017 when the mid-term evaluation of three project is taking place. It will be combined with an exchange session and pre-synthesis workshop.

The **International Conference on Research for Development ICRD 2017** will take place 5-8 September 2017 in Bern. It is co-hosted by the r4d programme and the Centre for Environment and Development, University of Bern. A second **r4d Conference** is foreseen for summer 2021.

Events in the series **r4d Skills** take up issues and concerns of research conducted in the r4d programme. They are offered irregularly and are announced to the r4d research community.

#### 4.2.2 Site visits

The Site visits are project meetings, organised by the respective research team in close collaboration with the programme coordinator. The aim of a Site visit is to enable the grantees, the project staff and the supporting experts of the Review Panel to share information about (i) the status and planning of work, (ii) the experiences acquired to date, and (iii) the activities for communication and application. The Site visits shall allow for identifying and exploring the opportunities for cooperation and need for advice; they also serve as an early warning system in case of any difficulties.

Site visits can take place in Switzerland or in selected country contexts of the projects. Decisions about the venue shall take into account access to site and travel logistics (including time and finances). The research team is fully in charge of Site visit organisation, programme and logistics on site. The entire consortium of grantees shall be present; researchers and PhD students working in the country where the Site visit takes place are expected to attend.

The Site visits in the r4d programme are topic-driven and provide insights into specific moments and selected aspects of the research process of the usually large research consortia. Site visits normally have a duration of 3 to 4 days (including travel) and shall at least feature the following two agenda points:

- Project presentation by the research consortium, including exchange with assigned Panel members (focus on current stage of research and on partnerships for co-creation of knowledge). Pure presentation time shall be limited in favour of enabling interaction of

**r4d Forum** is a series of events to stimulate exchange, discussion and debate among r4d researchers, panel members, stakeholders and funders.

**r4d Conferences** offer platforms to present, discuss and debate research results generated by the projects of the r4d programme with international renowned experts and leaders in their respective fields.

**r4d Skills** is a series of learning events among r4d researchers actively dealing with and being exposed to the challenges of contemporary inter- and transdisciplinary research for development, carried out in transnational research partnerships.

assigned Panel members with the research team as well as among the research team members.

- Stakeholder event or public event (focus on communication and application/pathways to impact).

The assigned Panel members will provide a written feedback on the Site visit for the research team.

The Site visit of the new project will take place in **spring/summer 2019**.

#### 4.2.3 Progress report

Progress reports are required to assess the scientific quality and the progress with regard to communication and application. Progress reports should not be longer than 10 pages and have to follow provided guidelines. The reports focus on the Results Framework of the individual projects and provide an overview of the state of research and completed and planned communication and application. Additionally, project teams are requested to provide systematic Output data on mySNF and to hand in an updated factsheet, which is published on the r4d website.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Progress report of the **new project is due on 15 January 2019**. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Progress report of the **other projects is due on 15 July 2019**. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Progress report of the new project when prolonged is due on **15 January 2022**.

The progress reports are evaluated by the Review Panel. The two supporting experts have the lead in the evaluation of the respective project. Potential recommendations are sent to the research teams.

#### 4.2.4 Mid-term report

After approximately 2.5 years each project submits a mid-term report. This report is a means to evaluate the work progress of the first research phase and the project plan for the second research phase. Mid-term reports will be due at the same time for all projects within the module in order to provide an overview of the state of research at a given point in time.

The mid-term report consists of two parts: 1) a progress report (approx. 10 pages) that has to follow the provided guidelines (Annex 1) and 2) a request for the project prolongation including a short research plan (approx. 5 pages). Additionally, project teams are requested to provide systematic Output data on mySNF and to hand in an updated factsheet, which is published on the r4d website. A reminder will be sent six weeks before the submission deadline of the reports.

The submission deadline for the mid-term report for the three projects that started in 2015 is **15 July 2017** and for the new project **15 January 2020**.

The mid-term report has a maximum of 15 pages. The criteria for the mid-term evaluation are the following:

- Performance of the project against stated objectives, deviations from those, adaptations etc.
- Consideration of recommendations by the Review Panel
- Quality of scientific output
- Quality of communication activities and impact of research results on policy / practice

- Functional and fair research partnerships within the project team (based on KFPE Principles)
- Quality of planned work for years 4 to 6 (only required for mid-term evaluation)

The Review Panel will evaluate whether a prolongation is advisable and may seek external experts' opinion. The final decision will be ratified by the Swiss National Research Council in **November 2017 and March 2020, respectively**. Decisions will be communicated to the responsible grantee in **November 2017 and March 2020, respectively**.

#### 4.2.5 Final project report

The final report is required to assess scientific and practice-oriented output. The procedure for previous progress reports applies also to the final report. The submission deadline is **six weeks after the end of the project**. Additionally, project teams are requested to provide systematic Output data on mySNF and to hand in an updated factsheet, which is published on the r4d website.

The final project reports are examined by the Review Panel (lead by the two supporting experts of the respective project).

#### 4.2.6 Financial reporting

The financial reports have to cover the project parts in Switzerland and the partner countries. The responsible grantee submits annually (first report due 12 months after project start) an interim financial report and a final financial report after the end of the project.

For the large and complex r4d projects the SNSF provides the responsible grantee or the grant administration office with the online financial monitoring and reporting tool r4dIRA (r4d Information Reporting Application). The responsible applicant/the project coordinator and the grant administration staff get training and support by the SNSF.

The responsible grantee must account for the use of the funds transferred to the other grantees. Confirmation that a specific sum has been received is insufficient. The other grantees are responsible for the compilation of a financial report at their institution on the funds allocated to them and for the transmission of this report along with **all receipts** to the responsible grantee or to the latter's grant administration office. They have to complete the provided excel spread sheet and submit it with the relevant receipts. Hence, the responsible grantee solely enters his/her project costs in his/her financial report along with the instalments transferred to the other grantees. If possible, the financial reports and receipts should be submitted exclusively in electronic form via mySNF. For this reason, the other grantees should make their reports available to the responsible grantee in electronic form.

Receipts which are not written in English, German or French should be complemented with a short explanation in one of these languages, either on the official account forms or on the receipts themselves. All receipts for foreign currency transactions should also state the equivalent amount in Swiss Francs.

Financial project supervision is in the responsibility of the SNSF Administrative Offices. The invitations for the financial reports are sent by the Finance unit of the SNSF Programmes Division

**six weeks before the end of the one-year period.** The submission deadline expires six weeks after the end of the one-year period.

## 5. Communication and application

### 5.1 Programme and module level

The communication and application strategies are integral parts of the r4d programme, its modules and the projects. Therefore the modules and the projects should aim to realise as much as possible of the knowledge exchange potential in order to increase awareness and have an impact on the policy and practice realms. The r4d programme differentiates between different types of communication and knowledge exchange activities.

**General public relations work** covers communication with and information to the general public about the programme and its results, primarily through the r4d website, media relations and corporate publishing. This is done under the responsibility of the programme coordinator in close collaboration with the SNSF Communication Office and the research desk at SDC. The r4d website provides a comprehensive overview of the entire r4d programme and its six modules. National media contacts in Switzerland (interviews, press conferences and notifications) will be organised and financed by the SNSF after approval by SDC.

**Knowledge exchange** is the joint responsibility of the r4d programme, the modules and the projects. Knowledge exchange is a two-way process which brings together researchers, users of research and wider groups and communities to share ideas, evidence, experiences and expertise. By creating a dialogue between stakeholders from science, policy and practice, knowledge exchange helps research to co-produce knowledge, and to influence policy and practice. Primary knowledge exchange instruments are r4d fora and conferences, and Site visits.

### 5.2 Project level

Each research project develops its own communication and application strategy. Research projects can set up their own websites. The grantees are obliged to provide the respective information and links to be included in the r4d website.

When planning national media activities regarding research projects or results in the context of the r4d programme, grantees must contact the programme coordinator ahead of time to discuss whether the research institute or the r4d programme will be responsible for the activities. They must facilitate the close coordination of the research institutes' public relations activities with those of the SNSF and the r4d programme.

Grantees are responsible:

1. to suitably represent the project at official events and make a connection to the r4d programme;
2. to inform the programme coordinator of any online and print publication resulting from the project; and
3. to consult the programme coordinator before engaging in media activities and campaigns.

Grantees respect branding rules accordingly:

- In oral presentations, research group members are required to acknowledge the r4d programme as well as its funders SDC and SNSF.
- For all written presentations and publications related to r4d projects (including results) it is required to acknowledge the r4d programme. If possible, the r4d programme logo, the logos of the funders SDC and SNSF, and the link to the website [www.r4d.ch](http://www.r4d.ch) have to be included.

Alternatively the following box can be used as graphic element.



**Swiss Programme for Research  
on Global Issues for Development**

In the light of global challenges the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) launched in 2012 the joint «*Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development*» (r4d programme). The main goal of the r4d programme is the generation of new knowledge and the application of research results that contribute to solving global problems and securing public goods in low- and middle-income countries within the framework of global sustainable development. The r4d programme consists of six modules, five with thematic priorities and one for thematically open calls.  
[www.r4d.ch](http://www.r4d.ch)



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC



**SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

The logos and the png of the box are provided as downloads on the r4d website.

## 6. Time schedule of the module Ecosystems

Date	Milestones
23 May 2013	Call for pre-proposals
13 September 2013	Submission deadline for pre-proposals
11/12 December 2013	Evaluation Meeting, pre-proposals
10 April 2014	Submission deadline for full proposals
25/26 June 2014	Evaluation Meeting, full proposals
26 August 2014	Decision by National Research Council
16 September 2014	Ratification by Presiding Board
18 September 2014	Communication to researchers
October 2014 - March 2015	Start of research
October 2014	Newsletter and media release
19/20 March 2015	r4d Forum Ecosystems and Food Security
15 July 2016	1st Progress report (deadline)
15 July – 15 September 2016	Feedback on progress report

September 2016- January 2017	1st Site visits
15 July 2017	Mid-term reports (deadline)
September 2017	Start of new project (through r4d Additional Thematic Call)
5 September 2017	Mid-Term Evaluation and Pre-Synthesis Workshop
5-8 September 2017	International Conference on Research for Development ICRD 2017
November 2017	Mid-term evaluation: Decision by Research Council / Presiding Board
November 2017	Communication of decision about prolongation to researchers
January 2018	Start second phase of research
15 January 2019	1st Progress report new project
15 January – 15 March 2019	Feedback to 1 <sup>st</sup> progress report by assigned Panel members
Spring / Summer 2019	Site Visits new project
15 January 2020	Mid-term report new projects (deadline)
March 2020	Mid-term Evaluation new project
March 2020	Decision by National Research Council
March 2020	Communication of decision about prolongation to researchers
April - August 2020	Start second phase of research new project
15 July 2019	2nd Progress report (deadline)
15 July – 15 September 2019	Feedback on progress report by assigned Panel members
15 January 2022	2nd progress reports (deadline) new project
15 January – 15 March 2022	Feedback to 2 <sup>nd</sup> progress reports by assigned Panel members

## 7. Review Panel members and contact details of SNSF staff

### Review Panel

Ian Johnson (President of the Review Panel), Cumbria, United Kingdom

Claude Martin, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Geneva, Switzerland

Esther Mwangi, CIFOR, Kenya

Michael Ochieng Odhiambo, People, Land & Rural Development, Kombewa, Kenya

Peter Verburg, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Jacqueline Schmid (Delegate SDC), SDC, Switzerland

Stefanie Hellweg (Delegate SNSF), ETH Zurich, Switzerland

Katherine Homewood stepped back as Review Panel member in October 2016.

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