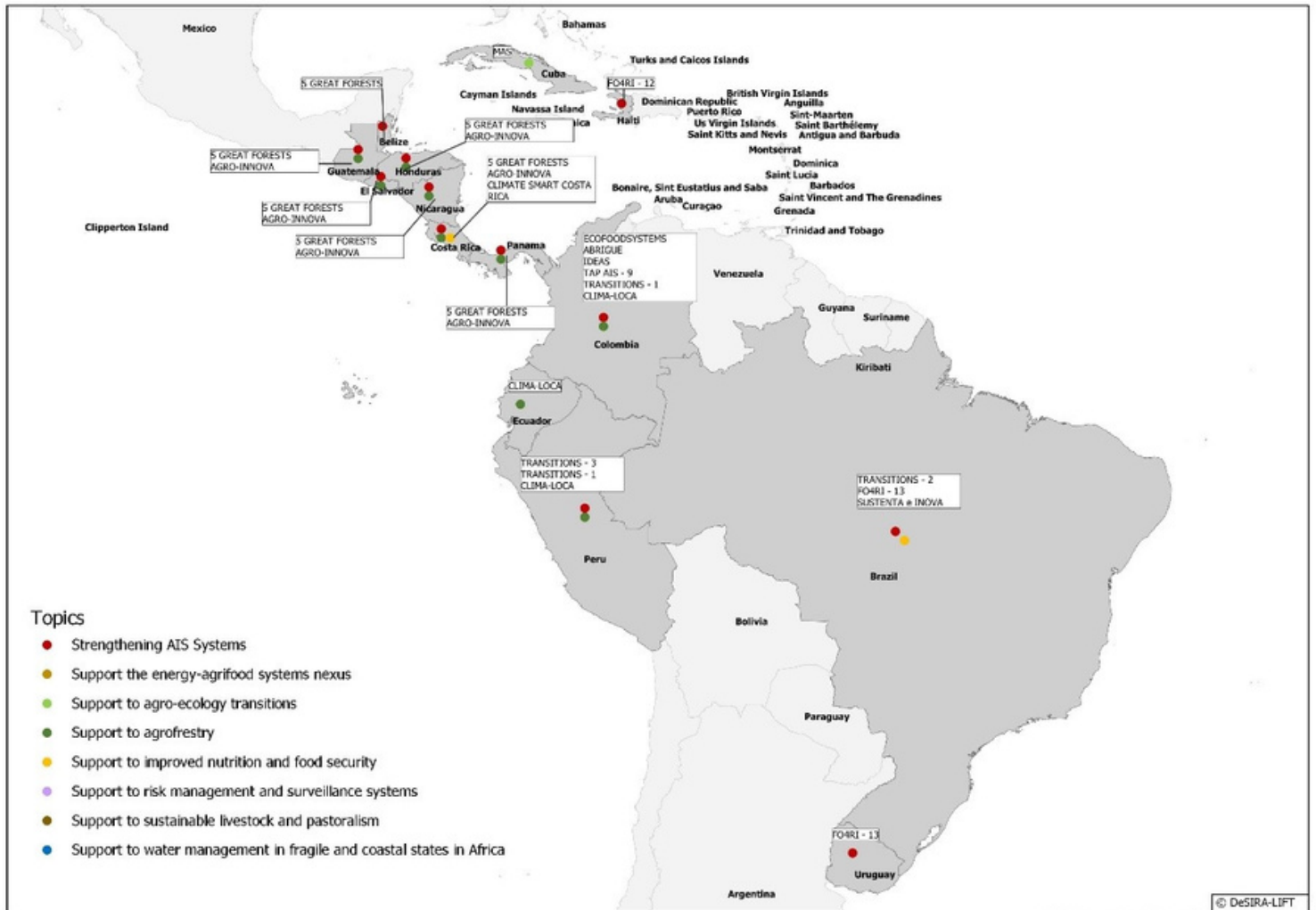


CLUSTER 4

Latin America & The Caribbean



CLUSTER PROFILE

Cluster 4 covers the DeSIRA projects in Central America, South America and the Caribbean*. This Cluster has fifteen projects, some of which are multi-country interventions with four regional (two in Central America by IICA and WCS, one in the lowlands of the Andean Region by CIAT, and one in Brazil and Uruguay by AgriCord), and six national projects: Brazil (SEBRAE), Costa Rica (GIZ), Cuba (INIFAT), Haiti (AgriCord), and two in Colombia (SINCHI and ONF Andina).

The three Transitions projects also have actions in the region: Transitions 1 in Peru (ICRAF), Transitions 2 in Brazil (CIAT), and Transitions 3 in Peru (Bioversity International/WLE). The Ecofoodsystems project (IFAD/University of Galway) and TAP AIS (FAO) are also being carried out in Colombia.

The thematic areas of the projects include agroecological transition, agroforestry, agroecological intensification, farmer-led innovation, action research in AIS, governance, and capacity development for agriculture research and innovation. Some project activities target strengthening governance towards sustainability in post-conflict forest territories by engaging and organizing stakeholders and institutions in the agricultural frontier stabilization.

Most projects are undertaking agricultural research activities operating within the concept of AIS, with multiple stakeholder platforms formed at the country and multi-country levels. During the SA1 inception workshops, most projects were at the early implementation stage.

The constraints identified are due to the multi-stakeholder and multi-complex nature of the projects, which can hinder their implementation. Several projects' representatives indicated difficulties operating in unstable political contexts, with frequent government changes and policy adjustments that result in increased bureaucracy.

** The criteria used to organize the DeSIRA projects in clusters were both geographic and linguistic. In the case of Cluster 4, in Central and Southern America, most countries speak Spanish, except for Brazil (Portuguese); there are only two projects in the Caribbean: Spanish-speaking Cuba and French-speaking Haiti.*

These conditions do not always favour participatory processes, and affect negatively project management.

Also, some researchers are engaged in non-research activities, such as advocacy and policy formulation without having the necessary skills.

As many projects were at a starting phase, they were primarily interested in the ToC and MEL components of the SA1 offer.

They also expressed needs related to the co-design of technical and organizational innovations; strengthening the role of the intermediary organizations; strengthening functional capacities, mainly collaboration, reflection, and mutual learning; implementing and operationalizing monitoring, evaluating, and learning strategies; and managing innovation in unpredictable environments (such as conflicts, insecurity, COVID 19). The challenges mentioned also included strengthening the capacity to navigate complex environments (for example, natural resources constraints at the niche level, social conflict); managerial challenges between actors in platforms; and sustainability and result scaling up.

Several inter-project potential synergies are identified:

1. Sharing lessons learned on implementing technological, organizational, and institutional innovations towards agroecological transition.
2. Low-emissions, climate-smart agriculture.
3. Influencing and enabling institutions supportive of innovation.
4. Promote and guide policy dialog for innovation.
5. Producing decision-support tools for farmers.

In-country synergies can also be developed. For instance, in Colombia, where six DeSIRA projects are being implemented; and in Costa Rica, Peru and Brazil with three projects in execution in each country.

Potential themes for peer learning between projects include

1. Modeling, using and evaluating scenarios.
2. Influencing innovation policy.
3. Innovations in climate-smart agriculture.