



AGRIFIRM

Research Project

Characterization of forms of social and economic organizations associated with « firm agriculture »

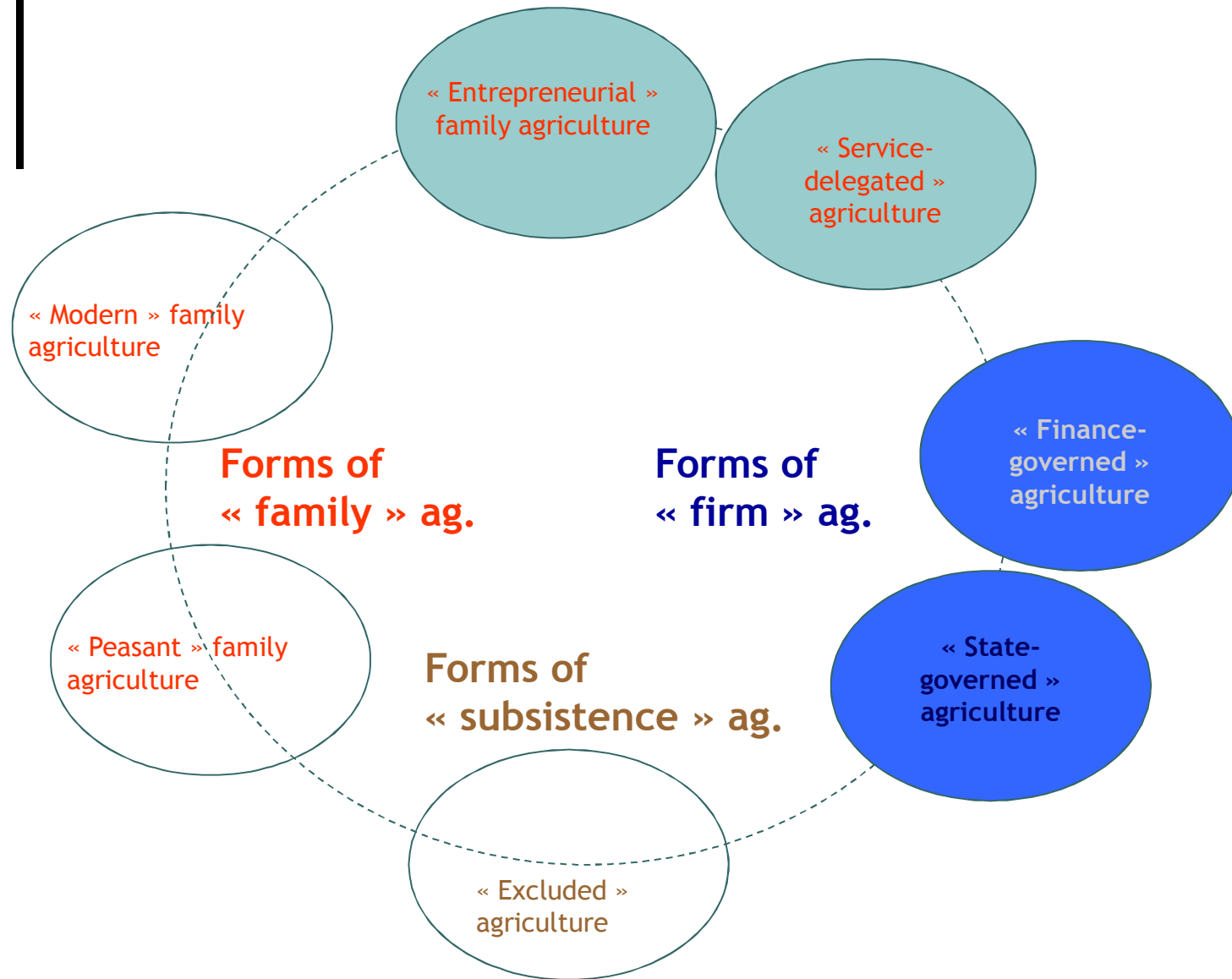


Programme Jeunes chercheurs



1. Context and issue

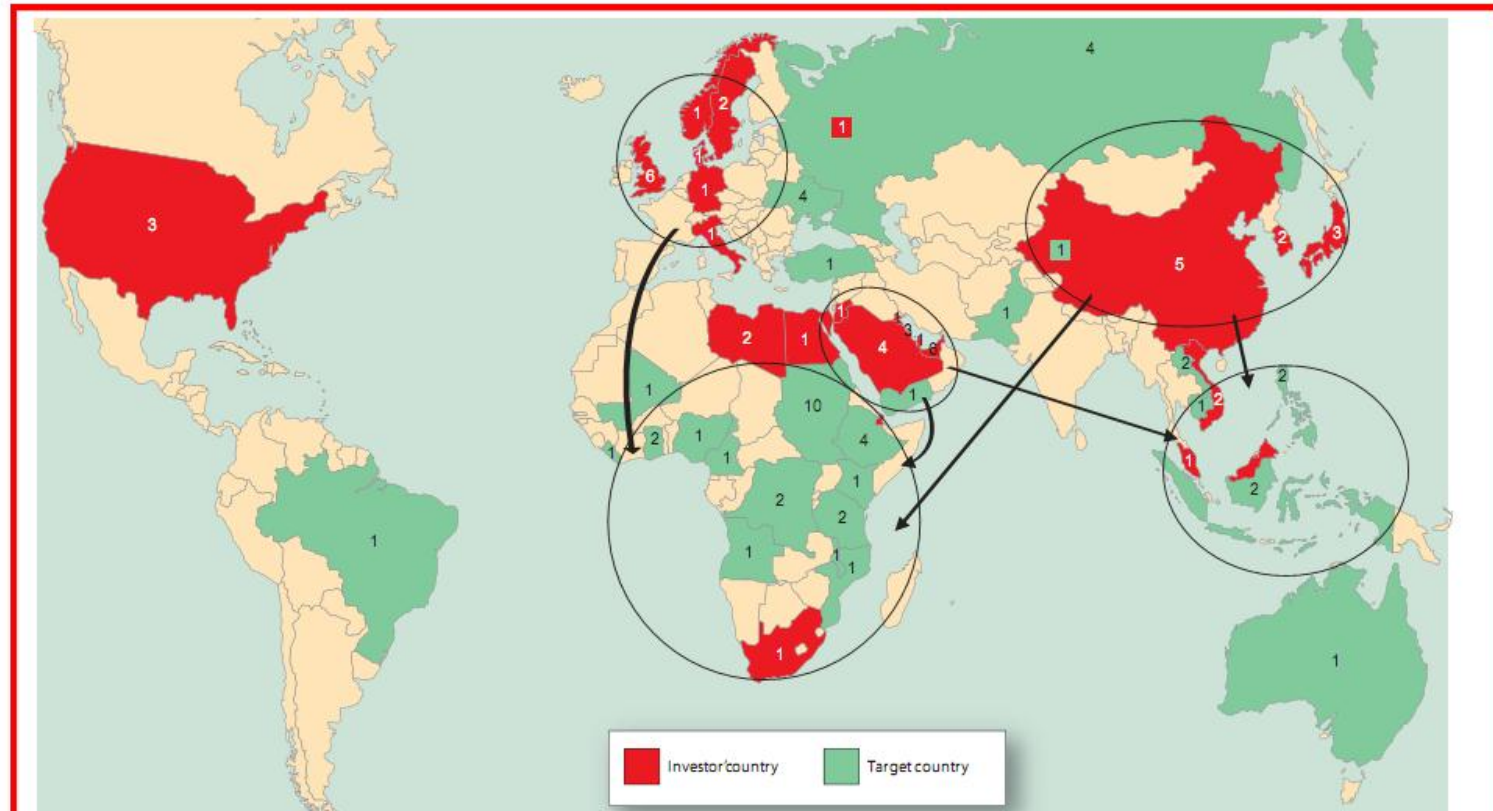
Three forms of labor organization in agriculture



Beyond family types of agriculture, two other types...



Figure III.14. Investor and target regions and countries in overseas land investment for agricultural production, 2006–May 2009
(Number of signed or implemented deals)



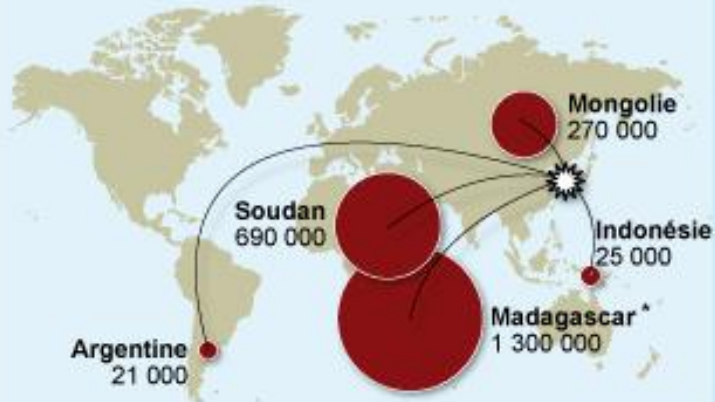
Source: UNCTAD.

Notes: This map covers only confirmed deals that have been signed, some of which have been implemented. However, not all signed deals have been implemented, and all signed deals that were rescinded by one or both parties before the end of May 2009 are excluded. Prospective deals reported in the press, but which have not progressed to the stage of agreement are excluded. The total number of deals was 48, shown by both source and destination countries.

Agricultural land transactions per country (hectares)

ACQUISITION DE TERRES ARABLES PAR PAYS, en hectares

Corée du Sud : 2,3 millions



*projet annulé

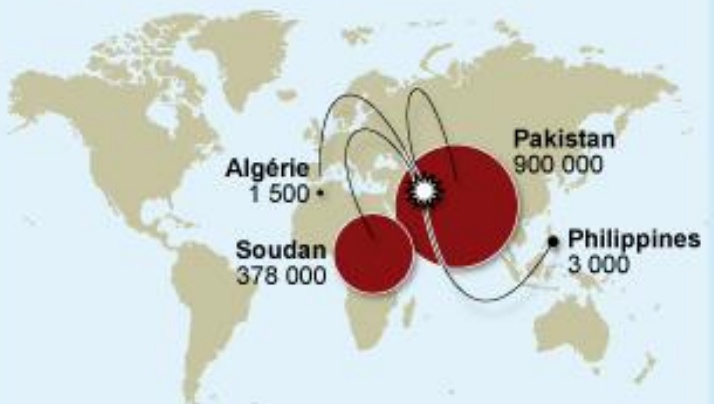
Chine : 2,1 millions



Arabie saoudite : 1,6 million



Emirats arabes unis : 1,3 million

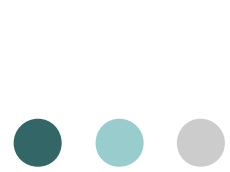


Sources : grain.org, Worldlandgrab, 2009



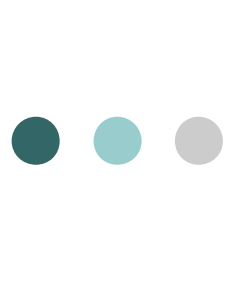
Questioning new forms of labor organization in the agricultural sector and new forms of farming associated with firm agriculture

- How can one define professional organizations or enterprises underlying these new forms ?
- What are the determinants of the development of these new forms in certain areas of the world ?
- To what extent the arrival of new actors and organizations (enterprises, cooperatives, non-agricultural actors operating with a financial logic...) contribute to the emergence of new productive systems ?



2. Scientific and technical description of the project

- Observation and description of the emergence of « new » forms of agriculture (unthinkable until now) by researchers in rural sociology and economics
- Study of the processes of exclusion and of disqualification versus the processes of market integration and of re-qualification
- Study of the evolution processes characterized by the current environmental and risk management issues



Objectives and originality of the project

- To strengthen a young team of researchers within the laboratory « Dynamiques Rurales » in Toulouse, working in collaboration with other young researchers from the University of Paris VIII, the CIRAD and the CIHEAM
- To confront a sociological analysis of agricultural worlds under globalization with other approaches developed by economists, geographers and researchers in business sciences

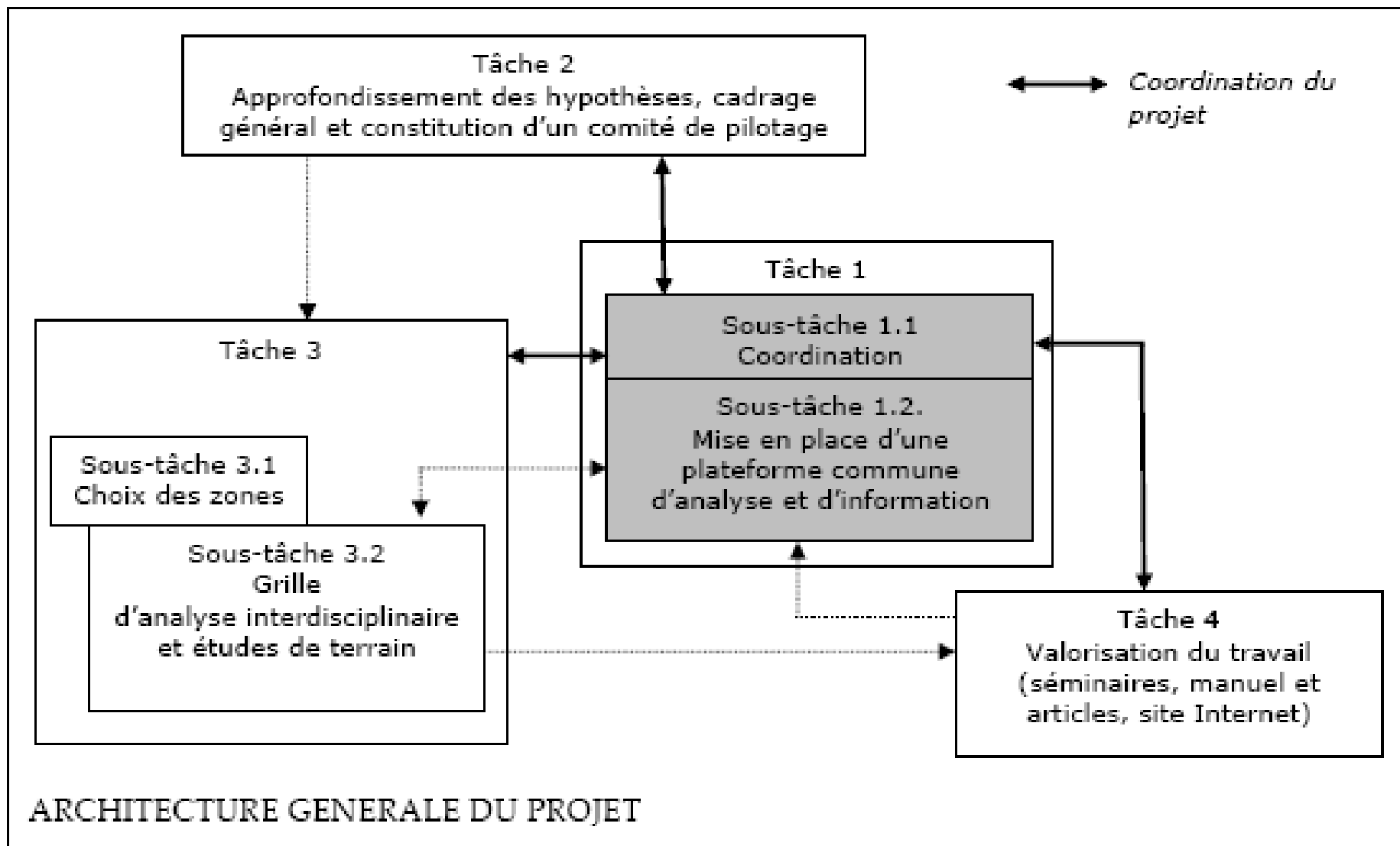


A typology based on 3 criteria

- Forms of action and of engagement with and among the enterprises of the agricultural and agrifood sector
- Processes of spatial localization of activities and of labor migration
- Economic models developed by professional organizations



3. Scientific and technical program, project management





Work-Package 1. Coordination and construction of a common conceptual framework and data base

- In collaboration with professional organizations in the agricultural and agrifood sectors (*Groupe Euralis ; Groupe Champagne-Céréales, Groupe Terreos, Confédération Générale des planteurs de Betteraves*), construction of a common framework based on the articulation of the different categories of analyses and actions
- The action plan handled by the team of researchers will be based on two different tasks associated with three different types of products:
 - Elaboration of a research pole on farmers and their organizations
 - Construction of a common database
 - Creation of an information system and collaborative resource-sharing system



Work-Package 2. Elaboration of hypotheses and of a general exchange framework

- Task 2.1. Bibliography

- Reviewing the state of the arts about the different types of family agriculture and analyzing their consistency in regards with the current context

- Establishing the bases for an interdisciplinary conceptual framework to identify the new forms of agriculture

- Task 2.2. State of the arts about exiting database on the different types of agriculture (FAO, CIRAD...)

- Identifying the stylized facts about the emerging types of agriculture

- Constructing a map of the different types of emerging firm agriculture

- Task 2.3. Confronting “expert” knowledge with our observation of the new types

- Organizing a steering committee composed of “researchers” and “professionals” representing the different existing professional organizations (in particular within the cooperative sector and food industry sector)



Work-Package 3. Choice of the study areas and field work

- Potential study areas

- Romania et Ukraine

- Brazil et Argentina (Basin du Rio de la Plata (Argentina, Brazil), State of Sao Paulo, State of Mato Grosso)

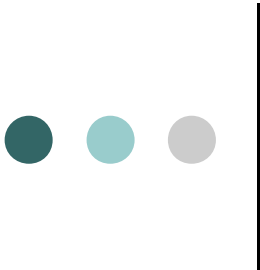
- France (3 regions : Camargue, Hautes Landes and Champagne crayeuse)



Construction of indicators of new forms of productive organizations

Three main areas of analysis will be explored :

- The professional organizations, their functioning and governance systems (research areas 1 and 2)
- The spatial strategies of actors of the agrifood sectors (research area 3)
- The political and geo-strategic dimensions of collective actions (research area 4)



Research area 1. Characterization of organizational forms, their functioning and governance system

- **Identification and characterization of the different organizational forms :**

(i) categories of stakeholders; (ii) objectives and logic of action; (iii) nature, size, origin, property status of resources mobilized; (iv) contractual relationships; (v) governance system

These organizations include not only holdings, private enterprises, cooperatives, public enterprises... but also more innovative “collective actions” which have emerged in response to current economic and environmental issues.

- **Realization of in-depth case studies of organization**

The objective is to understand the process of their emergence and evolution, based on a conceptual framework combining institutional economics and economic sociology (modes of coordination and governance rules).



Research area 2. Analysis of the internal dynamics of the cooperative forms

Context :

-Big cooperatives or international trading enterprises developed strategies in areas far away from their operating center,

-New forms of participation and engagement developed by the farmers

⇒ **What are the determinants which can explain the engagement process in collective action ?**



Research area 3. Characterization of spatial strategies developed by farmers and other actors of the agrifood sectors

Hypothesis : The different organizations of firm agriculture adopt specific spatial strategies, which allow one to make distinctions among the different types of organizations and to characterize their overall strategies.

These different spatial strategies can be defined in terms of their impact on:

- local socio-spatial organizations;
- the agrarian structures;
- the flows of products, capital and workers.



Research area 4. Characterization of their political and geo-strategic dimensions

- What are the logics underlying the relationships between the investors and the firm agriculture organizations ?
- Do these logics hide major geo-strategic issues, such as food security and scarce natural resource management ?
- Do one observe conflicts or any kind of other reactions associated with transactions associated with firm agriculture ?
- How can one characterize the coveted areas and resources ?
- What are the investors' practices in terms of geo-strategic resource management ?



Composition of the French research team

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