

Statement by the heads of research units under the supervision of the IRD
10 July 2026

The French government has decided to merge IRD (French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development) into the CNRS, a move likely to lead to a profound transformation of the Institute and to call into question its unique mandate as a public scientific and technological establishment dedicated to partnership with countries of the Global South and the French overseas territories, its scientific identity, and its missions.

As directors of Joint Research Units (UMRs) and Research Support Units (UARs) with IRD as regulatory authority, we wish to speak out from our laboratories to defend our institution. Because we manage these units on a day-to-day basis, we have a duty to warn of the major risk that an institutional change of this magnitude poses to a scientific model built up over several decades, based on trust.

The signatory units are very diverse. They cover a wide range of disciplines, research topics, organisations and supervisory bodies; some are, in fact, jointly supervised by the CNRS. This diversity is their strength. Yet we all share the same view: IRD makes a unique scientific contribution to our units, based on equitable partnership, the co-construction of knowledge, interculturality, interdisciplinarity and the search for solutions to the major challenges of sustainable development. It is this contribution that we champion, alongside our partners, over the long term, at the intersection of disciplines and in the service of societies. We fully recognise the essential role of the CNRS. The CNRS is an organisation of scientific excellence recognised worldwide. But its mission is not that of IRD.

IRD's contribution is based first and foremost on a unique approach to scientific partnership with institutions in the Global South. Researchers maintain a long-term presence alongside their partners and work with them over the long term, which fosters the co-development of scientific projects with local researchers, institutions and stakeholders, in a spirit of reciprocity, equity and trust. This distinctive approach fosters a nuanced understanding of the social, environmental and cultural realities of these regions and directly enriches the research carried out in our units.

This way of working gives our units a strong intercultural dimension. It shapes the way in which scientific questions are posed, discussed and developed collectively. Whilst many teams now practise interdisciplinarity, the units to which the IRD contributes have, over the decades, developed genuine expertise in interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. This expertise is deeply embedded in the teams' practices and attitudes. It fosters dialogue between disciplines, between scientific cultures and with stakeholders on the ground – an essential prerequisite for understanding the complexity of socio-ecological systems and generating knowledge that can be applied to address the major challenges of sustainable development.

This approach also involves a constant focus on the impact of research. The knowledge generated is not merely intended to advance science: it helps to inform public decision-making, support the practices of stakeholders and jointly develop solutions tailored to the challenges facing local areas. This integration of research, expertise, public policy and international cooperation is one of IRD's key contributions within our units.

This contribution is also strategic for France and Europe. Biodiversity loss, antimicrobial resistance, the emergence of infectious diseases, pressure on water resources, food crises, natural hazards and risks, pollution and extreme weather events are all phenomena whose effects extend far beyond the borders of the countries in which they occur. Understanding these phenomena alongside partners in the countries where we work – right where they arise – and developing solutions together represents a major scientific investment in anticipating the challenges that our own societies are already facing or will face in the future.

In our view, a far-reaching change to IRD – one that is imposed rather than agreed upon – would weaken our units and jeopardise our institution and the diversity of our collaborative research aimed at helping societies achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. IRD provides our units with an approach to scientific partnership based on long-term engagement and co-construction with institutions in the Global South, a strong intercultural focus, recognised expertise in interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity, and research designed to ensure its findings have an impact on practices, public policies and sustainable development pathways. This approach to research, at the heart of sustainability sciences, constitutes a scientific distinctiveness that is the strength of our laboratories and contributes to the global influence of French research. As the heads of these units, we believe it is our responsibility to preserve this scientific ambition, this capacity to build sustainable partnerships, and this way of generating knowledge in the service of societies.

It is this practical experience, gained on a daily basis in our laboratories, that we wish to bring to the attention of decision-makers. At a time when major global challenges demand greater inter- and transdisciplinarity, as well as sustainable international partnerships and trust between scientific communities, the model developed by IRD within our units should be consolidated and strengthened rather than called into question.

On 11 July at 12.00, the directors of 64 Joint Research Units, International Joint Units and Research Support Units endorsed this statement. This represents 1,289 IRD permanent staff members (96 per cent of the institute's total scientific staff), and more than 6,000 staff members across all governing bodies.

Gilles Béna, DR IRD, DUa PHIM
Philippe Solano, DR IRD, DU Intertryp
Laurent Dagorn, DR IRD, DU MARBEC
Philippe Méral, DR IRD, DU SENS
Marine Herrmann, DR IRD, DUa LEGOS
Gaëlle Guéguen, PR UBO, DU UMR AMURE
Emmanuel Corcket, PR Aix Marseille Univ., DU IMBE
Jalil Nordman, DR IRD, DUa LEDa, Directeur DIAL
François Le Loc'h, DR IRD, DUa LEMAR
Sophie Thévenon, cadre CIRAD, DUa INTERTRYP

Vincent Geronimi, PR UVSQ-Université Paris Saclay, DU UMI SOURCE
Guillaume Dezecache, DR IRD, DUa UMI SOURCE
Jacques Gardon, DR IRD, DUa HSM
Raphaël Pélissier, DR IRD, DU UMR AMAP, Montpellier, Cayenne, Nouméa
Boris Marcaillou, PR UniCA, DU Geoazur, Nice
Sylvain Bonvalot, DR IRD, DU Géosciences Environnement Toulouse
Sylvain Coquillat, PR UT, DU LAERO
Cheikh Sokhna DR IRD, DU MINES

Philippe De Vreyer, PR PSL-Université Paris Dauphine, DU LEDa
 Lionel Jarlan, DR IRD, DUa CESBIO
 Yves Vigouroux, DR IRD, DU DIADE
 Olivier Marcy, DR IRD, DU GHIGS
 Frank Wieringa, DR IRD, DUa QualiSud
 Nathalie Cotte, IR CNRS, DU OSUG
 Jean Benoit Morel, DR INRAe, DU PHIM
 Patrick Lachassagne, DR IRD, DU HSM
 Jean-Luc Beuzit, DR CNRS, DU OSU PYTHEAS
 Rodolphe Devillers, DR IRD, DUa Espace-Dev
 Carine Brouat, DR IRD, DUa CBGP
 Maryline Bonnet, DR IRD, DU TransVIHMI
 Mathilde Savy, DR IRD, DUa MoISA
 Jean-Philippe Venot, DR IRD, DUa G-EAU
 Marcel Kuper, cadre CIRAD, DU G-EAU
 Lucilla Benedetti, DR CNRS, DU CEREGE
 Renaud Vitalis, DR INRAE, DU CBGP
 Sabine Schorr-Galindo, PR Université de Montpellier, DU QUALISUD
 Valérie Hocher, DR IRD, DUA PHIM
 Thierry Cariou, IR IRD, DU UAR IMAGO
 Ali Bouhifd, DR CNRS, DU LMV
 Pablo Samaniego, CR IRD, DUA LMV
 Renaud Becquet, DR Inserm, DUA GHIGS
 Frédéric Simard, DR IRD, DU MIVEGEC
 Sylvie Fanchette, DR IRD, Co-DU CESSMA
 Charly Favier, CR CNRS, DUA ISEM
 Annabel Desgrées du Loû, DR IRD, DU CEPED
 Joseph Larmarange, DR IRD, DUA CEPED
 Jean-Christophe Auguet, CR CNRS, DUA MARBEC
 Jean-Marc Fromentin, DR IFREMER, DUA MARBEC
 Patricia Cucchi, MCF UM, DUA MARBEC
 Ahidjo Ayoub, DR IRD, DUA TransVIHMI
 Gilles Spielvogel, MCF Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, DU DEVSOC
 Elodie Martinez, DR IRD, DUA LOPS
 Valérie Jullian, CR IRD, DU Pharmadev
 Karine Reybier-Vuattoux, PR Université de Toulouse, DUa Pharmadev
 Cristele Chevalier, Dr IRD, DUa MIO
 Chantal Crenn, PR Université Montpellier Paul Valéry, DUA UMR SENS
 Valérie Michotey PR Aix Marseille Université, DU du MIO
 Amir Yassin, CR CNRS, DU EGCE
 Florence Boyer, CR IRD, DU URMIS
 Valérie Delaunay, DR IRD, DUA LPED
 Agnès Adjamagbo, CR, IRD, DUA LPED
 Juliette Mignot, DR IRD, DUA LOCEAN

Jean-Benoit Charrassin, PR MNHN, DU LOCEAN
 Renaud Hostache, DR IRD, futur DU Espace-Dev (01/2027)
 Eric Blanchart, DR IRD, DUA Eco&Sols
 Gilles Spielvogel, MCF Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, DU DEVSOC
 Thierry Oberdorff, DR IRD, DUA CRBE
 Fabienne Audebert, PR Sorbonne Université, DUA BOREA
 Jean-Baptiste Meyer, DR, IRD, Ceped, UPC
 Anne Doquet, CR IRD, DUA IMAF
 Violaine Tisseau, CR CNRS, DU IMAF
 David Varillon, IR IRD, DUa UAR IMAGO
 Thomas Condom, DR IRD, DUa UMR IGE
 Cédric Jamet, PR ULCO, DUA UMR LOG
 Isabelle Laffont-Schwob, DU LPED
 Alexis Drogoul, DR IRD, DU UMMISCO
 Jean-Daniel Zucker, DR IRD, DUA UMMISCO
 Mamadou Sy, PR UGB, DUA UMMISCO
 Jihad Zahir, PR UCA, DUA UMMISCO
 Isabelle Légère, DR CNRS, DUA SeDyL
 Stefano Manfredi, CR CNRS, DU SeDyL
 Remi Charrel, PUPH AMU-APHM, DUa UVE
 Pierre-Marie Preux, PUPH, Université de Limoges, DU UMR EpiMaCT
 Richard Cordaux, DR CNRS, DUA EGCE
 Nicaise Ndam, DR IRD, DU MERIT
 Thierry Huck, CR CNRS, DU LOPS
 Géraldine Sarthou, DR CNRS, DU LEMAR
 Jean-Stéphane Bailly, AgroParisTech, DU LISAH
 Christine Raimond, DR CNRS, DU Prodig
 Marie-Gabrielle Piketty, Cirad, DUA UMR SENS
 Patricia Licznar-Fajardo, MCU Université de Montpellier, DUa HSM
 Sarah Benabou, CR IRD, DUa PALOC
 Lorelei Guéry, Cadre de Recherche CIRAD, DUa PHIM
 Frédéric Jacob, DR IRD, DUa LISAH, Montpellier
 Roch Giorgi, PUPH, Univ. Aix-Marseille-APHM, DU SESSTIM
 Gilles Cottrell, DR IRD, DUA MERIT
 Stéphanie Duvail, DR IRD, DU PALOC
 Carole BORCHIELLINI, PR AMU, DUA IMBE
 Brigitte Talon, MCF AMU, DUA IMBE
 Tarik Meziane, PR MNHN, DU BOREA
 Pierre Gautreau, DU adjoint, UMR PRODIG
 Nicolas Spilmont, Ptof Univ Lille, DU LOG
 Nicolas Rabet, PR SU, DUA BOREA
 Claire Waelbroeck, DR CNRS, DUA LOCEAN
 Jean-Claude Gaertner, DR IRD, DUA SECOPOL

Olivier Ribolzi, DR IRD, DUA GET
Carole Kerdelhué, DR INRAE, DUA CBGP
Anne Bousquet-Mélou, PR amU, DUA IMBE
Philippe Guéguen, DR UGE, DU ISTerre
Armin Bischoff, PR Avignon Université, DUA
IMBE
Xavier de Lamballerie PR Aix Marseille
Université, DU UVE
François LACAN, DR CNRS, DU LEGOS,
Toulouse
Marie - Hélène Zérah, DR IRD, co-DU CESSMA
Simone Bertoli, PR Université Clermont
Auvergne, DU CERDI
Marie Mirouze, DR IRD, Directrice EMR
MANGO
Gaël Alory, Ph CNAP, DUA LEGOS
Hervé Etienne, DR CIRAD, DUA DIADE
Claire Mouquet-Rivier, future DUA QUALISUD
(01/2027)
Isabelle BERTRAND, DR INRAE, DU UMR
Eco&Sols
Morgan Mangeas, DR IRD, DU UMR Entropie
Valérie Demarez, PR Univ Toulouse, DU
CESBIO
David Ambrosetti, Dir du Laboratoire Les
Afriques dans le monde UMR992
Marie-Laure Navas, Pr IA, DU CEFE
Hélène Broutin DR CNRS, DUA MIVEGEC
Franck Poupeau, DR CNRS, DU CREDA
Mehrez Zribi, DR CNRS, Dir de l'OMP
Sylvie HURTREZ-BOUSSÈS, PR Université de
Montpellier, DUA Mivegec
Olivier Duron, DR CNRS, Futur DUA BioSEE (ex-
MIVEGEC, 01/01/2027)
Anne-Laure Bañuls, DR IRD, Future DU BIOSEE
(ex-MIVEGEC, 01/01/2027)