

# APIICC

A CIRAD project, funded by the French National Research Agency (ANR)

## Project Summary

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*Climate plans and policies exist almost everywhere; consistent, timely implementation does not. APIICC investigates the governance side of the climate crisis — why plans and policies stall, and how institutional innovation in procedural instruments can help close the gap between commitments and action — through a large-scale comparative study of agricultural adaptation.*

## CONTEXT & PROBLEM

- IPCC assessments and UN SDG 13 stress the urgency of climate action; states rely mainly on climate plans and policies to respond.
- Climate risk is compounded by a governance risk: incremental policy implementation leads to repeated failures and “myopia,” turning the climate “super wicked problem” into a “tragedy” as time runs out.
- Two core governance challenges: (1) integrating long-term climate impacts into present-day policy, and (2) accelerating implementation of existing climate plans and policies.

## TWO PATHWAYS IN THE LITERATURE & CORE HYPOTHESIS

The literature offers two contrasting responses to this governance failure: institutional innovation, or reinforcement of authority (some scholars argue authoritarian environmentalism outperforms democratic approaches and open governance). Through the study of agricultural adaptation, APIICC's core hypothesis is that institutional innovation in the procedural instruments of climate governance is key to resolving the “tragedy.”

## SCIENTIFIC GAPS ADDRESSED

- Scarce literature on institutional innovation in climate governance.
- Existing work states broad principles but lacks empirical grounding.
- Procedural instruments specifically are rarely studied empirically.
- The dichotomy between authority and open governance is an obstacle to thinking about and solving the “super wicked” climate problem.
- Key themes — innovation, procedural instruments, political/policy temporalities — remain disconnected in research.

## OBJECTIVES

- Produce first-hand empirical knowledge on innovative procedural instruments — and their links to temporalities and authority — via a large comparative study (9 countries, several national and local climate plans and policies).
- Build a model for assessing institutional innovation.
- Develop governance recommendations collaboratively with stakeholders (policy makers, innovators, representatives of the agricultural sector, etc.).

## WORK PACKAGES (WPs)

|     |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WP0 | Project management and harmonizing the research protocol / data collection across 9 countries.                                                                  |
| WP1 | Refines the key variables, builds an analysis grid and a research protocol, and selects at least 4 innovative procedural instruments per country to be studied. |
| WP2 | Fieldwork: at least 2 innovative national procedural instruments and their innovation process per country.                                                      |
| WP3 | Fieldwork: at least 2 innovative local procedural instruments and their innovation process per country.                                                         |
| WP4 | Recommendations and guidelines for transformational adaptation governance.                                                                                      |

## TEAM

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More than 17 senior researchers supervising a team of early-career researchers across the 9 participating countries.

## PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

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Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Gabon, Georgia, Mexico, Senegal, United Kingdom, United States.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### **Why these 9 countries?**

They were selected to capture meaningful contrasts in governance systems, development contexts, and exposure to climate risk — the range needed for a credible North–South comparison.

### **Is this only relevant to agriculture?**

Agricultural adaptation is the empirical case study; the model and findings on procedural instruments are designed to generalize to climate governance more broadly.

### **How many procedural instruments will be studied in total?**

At least 4 per country — at least 2 national (WP2) and 2 local (WP3) — across all 9 countries, giving a base of 36 or more cases for the comparative analysis. More info: <https://gouvernance-climatique-apiicc-projet.fr/le-projet/instruments-apiicc/>

### **Why focus on procedural instruments rather than the content of climate policies?**

Plan content already gets attention; the procedures used to design, decide, and adjust policy over time are where implementation typically stalls, and they remain rarely studied empirically.

### **What is the “model for assessing institutional innovation” (Objective 2)?**

A structured framework, built on the analysis grid and research protocol from WP1, for comparing procedural instruments across countries on a common basis.

### **Why paying attention to governance is so important for the climate “super wicked” problem?**

Climate change is a “super wicked problem”: time is running out, those causing it also need to solve it, no central authority can impose a solution, and short-term thinking undercuts long-term action. Under these conditions, incremental, myopic implementation of climate plans and policies repeatedly fails, turning risk into “tragedy” as delays compound. Because states already rely on climate plans and policies, the missing piece is not more content but the governance capacity to design, decide, and adjust those plans and policies fast and reliably enough — which is why APIICC focuses on governance itself, and specifically on the procedural instruments that determine whether implementation moves or stalls.

### **Why is paying attention to innovation “niches” for climate governance through innovative procedural instruments relevant?**

Rather than waiting for a single, system-wide governance overhaul, institutional innovation in climate governance tends to emerge first in bounded “niches” — specific national or local procedural instruments where new ways of designing, deciding, or adjusting policy are tested. These niches matter because they are where the dichotomy between reinforcing authority and opening up governance can actually be tested and moved past in practice, and because innovations that work at this scale are what can eventually be scaled up or replicated elsewhere. Since procedural instruments remain rarely studied empirically, examining these niches closely — as APIICC does across 36+ national and local cases — is how the project builds the empirical grounding needed to understand what makes institutional innovation succeed, and to turn those lessons into governance recommendations.