

PROCISUR

*Cooperative Program for the Agrifood
and Agroindustrial Technological
Development of the Southern Cone*

40 YEARS

*cooperating in research and
technological*

WE ARE PROCISUR

An integration program on agrifood and agroindustrial research, development, and innovation that includes Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, through their national agricultural research institutes and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).*

PROCISUR brings together over 5,000 researchers, over 500 centers, experimental stations, units, and laboratories in the region, 3 laboratories abroad, and 165 germplasm banks distributed throughout the region.

5000 RESEARCHERS

CENTERS,
EXPERIMENTAL
STATIONS AND
LABORATORIES

500

165 GERmplasm
BANKS

**Bolivia participated in the Program until 2018.*



Feeding the world

OUR COUNTRIES

PROCISUR member countries are key players in global agrifood markets, with the **potential to produce food for approximately 2,025 million people** a year, thus contributing to global food security.

Our region has specific dynamics of production and exports and is endowed with quality natural resources

Our region has specific dynamics of production and exports and is endowed with quality natural resources and rich biodiversity. This allows us to meet the growing demand for food in global markets.

The new global crisis context caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has led us to redefine the importance of regional cooperation. We are now working to adapt and continue promoting the sustainable production of healthy food, ensuring that health protocols are in place and identifying more urgent demands: climate change, sustainable agriculture/livestock farming, digital agriculture, bioeconomics, and gender.

Our history



"PROCISUR was created to institutionalize technical cooperation among countries by establishing a mechanism to ensure continuity over time through an organic and operational structure seeking to foster, develop and complement capacities."

Edmundo Gastal († 1989) PROCISUR Director 1980–1989



The Cooperative Program for Agricultural Research in the Southern Cone Countries was launched in 1980 with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The program was managed by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and executed by the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) in each country. The Program has been co-funded by the NARIs and IICA since 1990 and has constantly evolved in its organization and strategy to adapt to political, economic, social and scientific-technological regional and global changes.



Denise Chifflet

She was the secretary at PROCISUR between March 1979 and October 1986. She held technical positions in programming, management, and administration of the PROCISUR Program from then until May 2002.

Denise recalls PROCISUR's emerging productive stage, the early years, and its creation during challenging political and institutional times in the region. She remembers the enthusiasm and commitment when creating this Program, which now celebrates its 40th anniversary.

"At first, written materials (publications) were essential because it allowed us to have a level playing field and provide equal opportunities to all our countries. The Program's philosophy stated that some countries were better positioned to provide, such as Argentina and Brazil, and others were in a better position to receive, such as Bolivia and Paraguay. Chile and Uruguay fell somewhere in the middle."

At first, we had to overcome several obstacles: "getting people to join, disseminating contents, promoting events, publications, getting funded, which was the hardest: having the countries

provide financial support. But we kept looking for ways to move forward."

The Program stands out because it provides a wealth of experience and yields results, "such as a study that measures the rate of return of corn, wheat, and soybean. There is also the qualitative work done by Inés Cabral and the various Program evaluations conducted every four years."

Chifflet particularly emphasizes the capacity for innovation, "open-mindedness," and the creation of new areas of knowledge. She remembers this as the time when significant technical connections were made, given the horizontal exchanges taking place.

"PROCISUR was really important. So much so that other 'Procis' were created in the region following the same mechanism."



PROCISUR was acknowledged as a mechanism; it was replicated in other regions, leading to the creation of other Procis



The beginning

In the first stage, the Program implemented the regional scale to solve common demands of national economies.

The final phase of the import substitution industrialization process occurred between 1980 and 1992 in the region. PROCISUR facilitated the process by promoting horizontal technical exchange and mutual support between institutions to homogenize technological knowledge levels.

This period consolidated research work on the main lines of cereal, oilseed, and cattle.

The Program helped to significantly increase the productivity of the top agricultural categories, creating high rates of return on agricultural research, with estimated values of 110, 190, and 180 percent for wheat, corn, and soybean.



1980

We promoted the exchange and mutual support of institutions and experts in closed economies.

We helped significantly increase the productivity of the main agricultural categories (wheat, corn, and soybean), creating high rates of return on agricultural research.

1992

We published 56 issues of the Dialogues series including institutional and technical information. We facilitated regional communication through our newsletter *Procisur Informa*.



José A. Silva

Executive Secretary (interim) of PROCISUR between 1990 and 1991. A specialist in institutional development between 1991 and 1992, consultant and researcher from NARI Uruguay.

Silva talks about the beginnings of the Program, which was based on "research exchange. There were four programs: wheat, corn, soybean, and cattle. We also had support units in the areas of production systems, training, and information and documentation."

"PROCISUR did not appear spontaneously: there was an intense exchange of researchers from the region, especially in genetic improvement, where germplasm was circulating profusely to find the resistance to some diseases that were common problems in the region."

"At the beginning, INTA and EMBRAPA's high level of specialization and professional training contributed significantly to the technical-scientific knowledge of professionals from the countries that were lagging in terms of professional development, in their

postgraduate studies, etc. At that time, you were lucky if you someone with a Ph.D."

"Cooperation contributed significantly towards change in these initial stages because the technical capacities based in Argentina or Brazil circulated in the region and created platforms for technology transfer that enabled several countries to develop major agricultural areas."

Silva recalls examples of PROCISUR's contribution to the region's agriculture: "We had high-level consultancies. We conducted a major study with the University of Yale on changes in the regional productivity of the crops addressed by the Program, which yielded excellent rates of return."



The technical capacities based in Argentina or Brazil circulated in the region and created platforms for technology transfer that enabled several countries to develop major agricultural areas





Activities undertaken during this stage:

over 160 technical meetings and seminars

over 380 national and international

technical consultancies

over 700 observation exchanges

*over 200 courses and training sessions, including
over 8,000 professionals from the Southern Cone*



Capacity building

The trade and economic openness that started in the 1990s in the region modified the Program's strategy: it started to focus on developing and strengthening the minimum scientific-technological capacities to help all countries access technical progress and innovation sources that would allow them to compete in the regional and global markets.

It organized its activities into five strategic areas or subprograms:

- Genetic resources
- Biotechnology
- Natural resources and agricultural sustainability
- Agroindustry, and
- Institutional development

These subprograms helped the countries build their capacities, among others, in the following areas: in vitro culture of plant cells and tissues, genomic genetics, genetic engineering, animal biotechnology, inventory, conservation and preservation of genetic resources, germplasm characterization and evaluation, genetic variability enrichment, soil management, management of fragile ecosystems, integrated pest and crop management, environmental monitoring and land use, environmental pollution, including agroindustrial demands in research, mapping and technological requirements of agrifood chains, applied research in food technology, environment, agroindustry, and small-scale rural production, agricultural research and intellectual property rights, demand prospecting and research prioritization, human resources policies and incentives, new forms of organization and institutional funding.

1993

We promoted the development and strengthening of the scientific-technological capacities.

We legitimated the introduction of PROCISUR in the economic and technological paradigm by creating the Strategic Forum.

We broadened the issues addressed by creating subprograms.

We synthesized the knowledge created in the Dialogues, Papers and Document series.

1997



Amélio Dall'Agnol

As a researcher at Embrapa between 1984 and 1990, he held the position of International Coordinator of the Oilseeds Project of PROCISUR.

Between 1991 and 1994, he served as Executive Secretary of PROCISUR.

Dall' Agnol emphasizes how countries benefit as PROCISUR members: "Less technologically developed countries benefited the most because more technologically advanced countries were able to share essential information on agrotechnology."

"The Program did not consider that these less developed countries could compete with more developed ones, mainly in soybean production. Therefore, we aimed to train all countries consistently without considering that the technological progress of the less developed countries would create harmful competition for more developed countries."

We work towards benefiting all institutions. The use of technologies improved by leaps and bounds."

"Research institutions in each country stated which were the topics of greatest interest in their country through project participants. At that time, the use of biotechnologies grew in importance."

"PROCISUR was the first agrotechnology integration program in the hemisphere. As the program developed substantially, similar programs appeared in the region, such as Prociandino and Procitropicos. This shows how PROCISUR has encouraged other countries to develop similar programs."

We asked Dall'Agnol about the future of this tool. He said: "I really hope that the Program continues to operate and improve its strategy to foster agricultural development in the region since agriculture is one of the main assets of the Mercosur countries."



PROCISUR has encouraged countries in other regions to develop similar programs





Capacity building

*During this stage, PROCISUR involved 3,025 professionals
from the Southern Cone.*

*Most of the knowledge produced is summarized in
documents No. XLII to LVI of the "Dialogues" series, as
well as in the "Papers" and "Documents" series.*



From the region to the world

In 1998, PROCISUR began a second phase focused on the region as its object of intervention from an economic, political, and social perspective. It sought to promote the technological integration of the agrifood and agroindustrial system of the larger Mercosur area.

It became necessary to rescale the vision, priorities, and ways of articulating the innovation process with the advance of Mercosur, as economic agents began to regionalize their productive and commercial strategies.

At this stage, PROCISUR used the IDB-funded project *Organization and Management of Agricultural and Agroindustrial Technological Integration in the Southern Cone-Global Project (1998-2001)* as an instrument of change. This strengthened the possibility of looking at agrifood chains, agroecosystems, and the social strata of production through a regional lens and scope.

At the same time, it redirected the intervention strategy towards the organization of consortiums that integrate capacities/competencies to agree on problems and regional cooperation projects according to the international system.

This perspective involved creating new platforms: regional technology platforms (PTR) on the quality of agrifood chains, leaps in competitiveness (with an emphasis on biotechnology), environmental sustainability, family farming, organic agriculture, and the Plant Genetic Resources Network for the Southern Cone (Regensur). These platforms helped build cooperation projects that guarantee public-private partnerships and alliances between stakeholders with specific innovation capacities in the subregion and the world.



1998

2006

We redesigned PROCISUR by creating the Regional Technology Platforms, networks, and cooperation projects.

We facilitated the necessary coordination with new partners in the productive and scientific-technological system by pushing the boundaries of the Southern Cone.

We executed the Global Project.

We used our website to enhance the Program's visibility.



Roberto Bocchetto

He was the Executive Secretary of PROCISUR between 1995 and 2003. As a professional from the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA), he served as regional leader at the Regional Platform Institutional Innovations for Development (2009–2013).

Bocchetto clearly explains this link between the region and the world and the role of PROCISUR: "Countries want to integrate their capacities in regional blocs; we have the European Union, Mercosur and others. Hence the need to have institutions like PROCISUR to support this process."

"But at the same time, to the extent that there is a regional economic, political and social bloc, there are demands and needs to create products for the bloc itself. Every bloc needs a science and technology pillar; PROCISUR has sought to be this pillar within Mercosur, in some way."

"If we have a strong Mercosur and we are its technological branch, the region's mandate can be stronger than country mandates. However, Mercosur has its weaknesses, so our partnership is precious because of what each country contributes and obtains."

"In 1998, we tried to promote a significant change: we wanted to truly interact as PROCISUR but within the Mercosur region to implement a project for the technological integration of Mercosur called Proyecto Global (Global Project), which I considered an amazing project."

"We studied the main chains that had a leading role as a regional chain. We studied the entire regional science and technology system and we developed 16 or 17 documents and one main document stating the technological integration of the Southern Cone within the scope of Mercosur and PROCISUR. It was a golden age for international cooperation in science and technology."

"If you were created first and started building and transforming yourself, in a way you are the leader. PROCISUR has its strengths, weaknesses, and its timing, like any other organization. It has evolved and shown continuity, and that is why it is still alive today".



When Mercosur was created, there was a lot of talk about PROCISUR becoming its technological branch





From the region to the world

At this stage, PROCISUR consolidated its open institutional model and joined the regional bloc in facing up to the challenge of the agricultural sector accessing world markets.



Some of the achievements during this time

- 30% increase in the capacity to grow micropropagated plants in the region
- training 1,200 professionals and knowledge transfer/exchange among over 400 experts and specialists in no-till farming for soil conservation
- developing germplasm for wheat quality improvement
- using biotechnology for product improvement
- Introducing natural enemies and selecting biological control agents
- developing primary productivity forecasting systems
- encouraging the creation of public-private partnerships for research
- advances in food safety (fusariosis, pyricularia, mycotoxins), nitrogen fixation, environmental impact assessment and climate change

International project

From 2007 to 2014, the Program integrated a systemic and integrative view of agriculture with the rest of the economy and a broader set of private-sector stakeholders to define and implement cooperation projects and activities.

During this period, the PTR concept was broadened, and they became Regional Platforms (PRs).

The following activities were implemented and reformulated:

- quality of the meat chain
- integral quality of agrifood systems
- sustainable use of natural resources
- water resources and irrigation technologies
- family farming
- emerging technologies (precision agriculture, biotechnology, nanotechnology; ICTs)
- institutional innovations for development
- genetic resources (animal and plant, and microbial).



2007

We participated in GCARD's Transforming Agricultural Research for Development process.

We broadened the concept to Regional Platforms and included emerging topics: precision agriculture, nanotechnology, ICTs.

2014

We prospected for scenarios considering the role of the Southern Cone as the world's food reserve.

We consolidated international relations.



Emilio Ruz

He was the Executive Secretary of PROCISUR between 2004 and 2015. Before that, he worked as an NARI Chile expert as international coordinator of the natural resources and agricultural sustainability subprogram (1998–2000) and as a member of the Technical and Institutional Coordination Committee (CATI) from 2001 to 2003.

Ruz believes that "PROCISUR is highly beneficial for all countries and institutes, first because it has created a one-of-a-kind institutional cooperation network in the Southern Cone. This allows member institutes to enhance their own capacities significantly and acquire international experience. Countries have their problems and characteristics but being PROCISUR members enables them to access a higher decision-making level. They can work cooperatively with institutions that have some similarities but that are essentially different, which is very valuable."

"Agriculture and livestock farming as an economic and commercial activity started a significant globalization process several ago. Therefore, research institutes need to have a more globalized mindset, as they cannot limit their operations to their location."

"PROCISUR allows institutes to operate globally by supporting agricultural productive and commercial processes. As the years have gone by, the processes related to climate change—which go far beyond physical or geographical borders—have led countries to act in a much more interconnected manner. Cooperation blocs allow us to interact with other regions of the world as a bloc, for example, with the European Union."

When asked about the challenges facing PROCISUR, Ruz states that "the major changes and challenges that countries—and ministries of agriculture—have faced and will continue to face are actually opportunities for PROCISUR to modernize its work and focus on issues that countries find valuable. This program has remained valid because it has been useful; if it were not useful, these issues would quickly disappear."



Production must continue to increase but in a sustainable manner





International project

Agriculture is integrated with the rest of the economy and a broader group of private stakeholders in defining and implementing cooperation projects and activities.



During this stage:

We funded the participation of over 3,500 professionals in various events.

We consolidated our support for institutional strengthening:

- The Institutional Innovations for Development regional platform was created.

- We supported the creation of the Paraguayan Institute of Agrarian Technology (IPTA) and the Bolivian National Institute of Agricultural and Forestry Innovation (INIAF).

Guiding pillars

In 2014, PROCISUR decided to restate its strategy to increase the Program's regional scope and impact and the NARIs' country-level scope and impact. This would allow the institution to adapt to an increasingly complex and dynamic national, hemispheric, and global context.

The strategy was implemented through the following institutional innovations:

- a. including three guiding pillars for the Program's actions; one of them should support public policy making;
- b. implementing a broader and more dynamic set of management tools to implement activities, making it easier to meet short, medium and long-term demands and to coordinate actions with the three pillars and the prioritized strategic lines;
- c. strengthening country-level processes for internalizing regional strategies, coordinating and providing more effective feedback on the institutional agendas of the NARIs, IICA, and PROCISUR.



2015

Planning was a participatory activity. We expanded our management tools.

Increased participation of specialists from member institutions and coordination with stakeholders. We built a forward-looking regional approach.

2018

We worked so that certain issues would be included in the political and research agenda.



Waldyr Stumpf

An Embrapa representative, he was a member of the Steering Committee between 2011 and 2017 and chaired the committee in the 2014–2015 period.

As chair, he promoted the changes implemented in PROCISUR as of 2015. Stumpf believes that the value of Procisur lies in that it "allowed us to envision and develop strategies to bring together the research, science and technology institutions of the Southern Cone, focusing on managing strategies so that agricultural research could ensure the sustainability of public policies related to the region's agricultural production.

"The Program was strongly committed to cooperation so it could address strategic issues such as water management, soil management, climate impact, or projects with fodder crops."

"We made significant contributions to family farming, which we shared with other countries in South America through strategies related to managing production chains and creating value for these products. This helped reposition the work of family farmers who are virtually invisible in these production processes."

Stumpf highlighted that the interaction with the ministers of agriculture of the bloc, grouped under the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), improved significantly during that time. "This was essential because it was possible to understand that quality public policies require a solid scientific, technological, and information foundation."

"In 2014, we started changing PROCISUR's strategies. We changed the way we worked, the groups, created a lighter and more dynamic structure, and rebuilt political relations. This brought us closer to other institutions in the region, including some Ibero-American organizations. From this point on, we addressed new debates through a group, Southern Cone lens, and non-competitive corporate logics."

"We aim to minimize the differences between the Program's research institutes by exchanging ideas, software, and knowledge to increase regional competitiveness."



The changes were very profound; we addressed new debates through a Southern Cone lens and through non-competitive corporate logics





Guiding pillars

Increase the Program's regional scope and impact and the NARIs' country-level scope and impact. This would allow the institution to adapt to an increasingly complex and dynamic national, hemispheric and global context.





A participatory planning process was set up to develop the medium-term plan. The process included 160 professionals from the 7 institutions participating in the Program.

The coordination network was expanded with national and regional stakeholders from the political, academic, and productive sector arenas (439).

PROCISUR highlighted strategic issues that supported national agendas and political decision making (sustainable intensification, family farming innovation, gender editing, health and safety, and youth).

We created a portfolio of projects according to the region's priorities and to produce regional public goods, leveraging funds from international sources (Fontagro, EU, IICA).



Our current strategy

Between 2015 and 2019, PROCISUR aimed to harness the opportunities offered by the growing global demand for food. The Southern Cone has the (natural and human) resources to produce this food and obtain regional food security and sovereignty. It can also make more efficient use of regional institutions, strengthening ties with existing political and technical organizations.

Our strategic, tactical and operational guidelines have consolidated since 2019, and the Program has repositioned and redefined itself in the Southern Cone. Strengthening the integration and cooperation of the region's NARIs and the IICA covers the opportunities for agricultural and agrifood innovation, and sustainable and inclusive production intensification. This helps provide technological and knowledge support for public policy making and a regional innovation system.

The COVID-19 pandemic has faced every country in the world with a serious health, economic, political, and social crisis; agriculture and cooperation seem to be part of the solution.



2019

2020

We increased the value of regional cooperation

We enhance work through cooperative projects

We facilitate virtual work in times of pandemic.

WE CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO
POVERTY



2 ZERO
HUNGER



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE
ACTION



15 LIFE
ON LAND



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS





Cecilia Gianoni

She has been the Executive Secretary of PROCISUR since 2015. Between 2002 and 2008, she was the technical assistant and technical coordinator of the Program.

Gianoni points out that PROCISUR has grown and evolved because "all the member institutes, through their directors and experts, value the platform it provides to expand their network of researchers and knowledge with other countries, strengthening the research, development, and impact of their institutions in a space where they are responsible for setting the agenda following common interests."

The current situation, aggravated by the pandemic, is that "science and technology have been recognized and valued and are increasingly necessary for public policy decisions and to argue certain positions that question the role of agriculture in climate change."

Gianoni believes that "PROCISUR faces the challenge of strengthening and rethinking cooperation on novel issues, challenges, and opportunities, certain of the strategic importance of cooperation and the Program's role."

PROCISUR has allowed us to include topics on the regional agenda that permeate the member institutions. "Just as in the past it was family farming, climate change, precision agriculture, nanotechnology, gene editing or institutional innovations, today we address issues such as youth, gender, and agriculture 4.0 by implementing joint approaches."

The Executive Secretary of PROCISUR also mentions "the great opportunities offered by the current scientific and technological context and the development of modern technologies such as digital technology, robotics, artificial intelligence, the internet of things, biotechnology, as well as new holistic and agroecological approaches. Now it is up to collective work to take advantage of these opportunities." And she adds that "it is essential to have a regional cooperation program like PROCISUR in the context of the financial and mobility restrictions currently faced in every country."



We need to rethink the way we cooperate and include new strategic topics.





Vision

The three guiding pillars of the Program's actions are ratified at the strategic level: science, technology and innovation, inputs for public policies, and human capital and knowledge management.





In this new context of the global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have redefined the importance of regional work. We are now working to adapt and continue promoting the sustainable production of healthy food, ensuring that health protocols are in place, and identifying demands that are now more urgent: climate change, sustainable agriculture/livestock farming, digital agriculture, bioeconomics, and gender.





Susana Mirassou

She is currently a member of the Steering Committee in her capacity as President of INTA Argentina (the first female president in the history of this institution).

Mirassou praised PROCISUR as a multilateral forum for regional debate "that is a large platform that nurtures an ecosystem for innovation and intra- and extra-regional cooperation. At INTA Argentina, we value the cooperation that has resulted from this 40-year journey. We now have social, scientific, and technical capital and are widely present in the Southern Cone. Our activities have strengthened the technical skills training of the professional teams. The region needs to have common goals, even more so during a pandemic, which entails new challenges and opportunities. Above all, we can now anticipate potential problems in the sector, where food and poverty issues mark a path of shared work and of results that PROCISUR can provide."

"PROCISUR has several lines of action, and we must have a shared focus on the agenda in all of them. In this regard, there are several strategic approaches that include topics such as sustainable intensification, climate change, risk management, family, peasant, and indigenous

farming, rural women, institutional strengthening and development, plant and animal health, natural resources and gene editing. They show us the path to follow, and we must continue to decide where to focus our efforts.

INTA's president believes that "processes must be developed with the people who actually have the problems from the start: they live in the territory. Therefore, we must collaborate with the producers from the start with our federal perspective: from detecting problems and opportunities to finding solutions. Collective innovation needs this perspective to harness the contributions made by science and technology. As PROCISUR members have a strong presence in the region, needs diagnoses and cooperation mechanisms must be conducted jointly with the territories' stakeholders to address the challenges. Otherwise, solutions will not be found. We need more communication and shared tools. Communication is key."



PROCISUR is reconciling agendas and setting new challenges, adapting to new situations, and anticipating changes.





Celso Luiz Moretti

He is currently the President of Embrapa Brazil and a member of our Steering Committee.

PROCISUR benefits countries and institutes in several ways. In particular, Moretti points out that "it contributes to the development of the technological, agrifood and agroindustrial areas in Southern Cone countries. It is of great relevance in identifying current and future opportunities for the sector."

"The program is based on cooperation among countries, exchange of researchers, and networking, which I believe is the basis for scientific success in the member countries. It is a platform where our countries can coordinate and agree on the work they do to solve shared problems."

"Countries may, at some point, compete for international markets, but the spirit of cooperation shared by research institutions is essential for them to join efforts to solve problems they have in common."

"We see a region with great potential for the

production of food, fiber, and bioenergy, not only to supply the population of the Southern Cone but also to ensure food security in other regions of the world. These are vastly different countries. However, our Program's vision seeks to strengthen the region's food security."

"We have several topics of common interest to all countries in the areas of research, development, and innovation production. It is not about doing research for research's sake but focusing on finding a solution that helps farmers and the production chain."

Moretti highlights the relevance of internationalization. "Embrapa has invested significantly in communication targeting companies, Brazilian agriculture, and also institutions abroad. We know the importance of being known and recognized in other countries and regions. PROCISUR should invest more in internationalizing its Program."



It is not about doing research for research's sake but focusing on finding a solution that helps farmers and the production chain





Pedro Bustos

He is currently the National Director of NARI Chile and a member of our Steering Committee.

Pedro Bustos highlights the relevance of programs such as PROCISUR "because they promote cooperation among countries with complementary experience. This entails countries helping each other provide solutions, innovation and generally improve the agrifood system in the Southern Cone. We believe that cooperation is truly the way forward, as this pandemic has shown us."

Regarding the challenges facing agriculture in our region, he stressed that "the world is dynamic, and it is clear that population will increase sharply. This will require sustainable production intensification. In what sense? We will have to increase production with fewer resources, less water, less land. It must be sustainable; we must return to local genetic products, recovering ancestral technologies or ancestral genetic value. There lie essential values that will help us develop the future. We face a huge challenge. How will we feed the world by 2050? Through productivity but leaving the world in better conditions, with lower GHG

emissions and less destruction of flora and fauna."

"Today, we talk a lot about agriculture 4.0, digital technology, smart systems, which is beneficial for us all. But we cannot forget social development. We cannot make the gap even wider because these technologies are not always within reach of small farmers. Agriculture cannot be separated from social development."

"Therefore, our NARIs and ministries of agriculture have to work together with other ministries. How do we make communication, roads, hospitals more accessible in rural areas? How do we improve? How do we get farmers' children interested in farming? How do we keep the farming population from aging? Young people should work the land because they enjoy doing it and not because they have to. We have a fundamental advisory role in public policy making."



Creemos y se ha demostrado con esta pandemia, que el modo de seguir adelante es cooperando





Edgar Esteche

He is currently the President of IPTA Paraguay and a member of our Steering Committee.

Esteche believes that "cooperation programs like PROCISUR help us meet people from other countries, people who speak the same language. Our countries might have sociocultural or budgetary differences or simply different problems. However, they share a single vision: research, technology development, cooperation and articulation in research."

He also emphasizes the role of the agricultural sector today: "The whole society is looking at us. We have the opportunity to feed our country, to maintain steady economic development, and above all, we can help the economy recover through access to technologies." In this sense, Esteche values "being able to have timely information, to share this information, to create knowledge and ensure that the agricultural sector is increasingly closer to the needs of the region and the world."

"The private sector accesses, buys, and applies technologies, but governments must reduce the gap between small and medium rural producers and large rural producers. If we function as a bloc, our region can feed a large part of the world: this must be our objective."

"Our countries must take on the huge challenge of alleviating poverty, of giving people access to food. We should cooperate with the world so that there is no food scarcity and production is sustainable."

Esteche believes that research equals sovereignty: "If our countries work towards this goal, they and the region will be sovereign, and the world will look at us differently. The budget issue can be an obstacle, but if countries realize that we are not an expense, but an investment, we can overcome these obstacles."



Society will increasingly demand the traceability and safety of food production processes





José Bonica

He is currently a member of the Steering Committee in his capacity as President of the Board of Directors of NARI Uruguay.

Bonica highlights an element that unites our countries: "Agricultural production plays a significant role. In this context, our own experience can be useful to other countries, especially in times of hardship. Therefore, these joint initiatives are positive for all countries, regardless of our differences and asymmetries."

"Joint work is now encouraged and rewarded. When we look for resources, which are scarce in these pandemic times, collaboration creates a win-win situation. Collaboration is useful and highly recommended. Those are the benefits of being a PROCISUR member: having access to other research centers and researchers worldwide. It helps us move faster than if we were alone. It is better to be in a team than to be alone."

"The regional cooperation of our countries' researchers and institutions improves the region's vision concerning its research processes."

He also points out that "relations with political power and agricultural producers entail a double challenge since they speak different languages. As research institutes, our challenge is to build these messages for the relevant recipients."

"In terms of resources, when going through uncertain times like these, when we do not know what will happen, and everyone takes protective actions, it is necessary to have a leader such as IICA, which plays a fundamental role in the short term to keep PROCISUR running. Current challenges are resource related. Every country is experiencing a social emergency that is more important in the short term than research, which has a long-term timeframe."

"In this context, resources for agricultural research have been delayed, and there is a double situation to consider: we have fewer resources, but we are not alone, and if we share our work with others, we will achieve more significant impact."



Current challenges are resource related. If we share our work with others, we will achieve more significant impact





Manuel Otero

Director General IICA. Como vicepresidente del INTA participó de la Comisión Directiva 2000 - 2001 y desde 2018 a la actualidad. Desde IICA participó del Comité de Articulación Técnico e Institucional entre el 2002 al 2016.

Otero highlights PROCISUR as "a subregional or supranational platform for promoting innovation and technology for development."

The IICA representative states that he knows no other mechanism like PROCISUR: "I have seen it grow, its history, its difficulties, but it has come out stronger. This is a fundamental element that defines us. Agriculture is the Mercosur engine that explains why the entire continent is the largest net food exporter globally, producing food to provide for some 650 million people. It has been a fruitful mechanism that has so much more to give."

"IICA is strongly committed to supporting science and technology issues in its DNA, in its constitution and in its mandate." He mentions that as director general he has supported technical connections (beyond political-administrative issues), as he considers that agendas fully converge because they address shared issues. This is done to produce regional public goods and to improve how we present ourselves to donors.

"PROCISUR works closely with the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) to whom it submits reports and from whom it collects concerns and needs. This creates a symbiotic relationship between the political and the strategicttechnical areas, which explains what has been achieved over the years."

He emphasizes the fact that the Program members are convinced that unity is strength. "Our years of working together have allowed us to build trust and a kinship without being concerned about issues to share."

He believes that PROCISUR is successful because it works as a system of communicating vessels, seeking to strengthen the science and technology research system around a series of priority topics to build and strengthen Mercosur's agrifood systems and global projection.

Regarding his vision for the future of PROCISUR, Otero states that "a long-term view must prevail. There are always difficulties that can be overcome with political will, joining efforts and identifying priorities."



Without science and technology, there is no future for our countries, but above all, there is no future linke



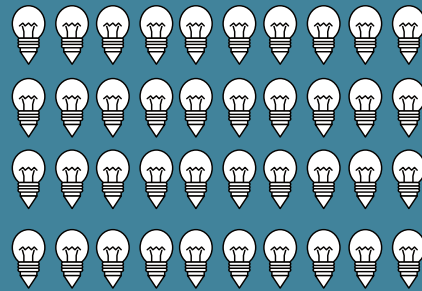
PROCISUR prioritizes strategic and innovative issues to support national agendas and political decision making.

We created a portfolio of projects defined according to the region's priorities and to produce regional public goods, leveraging funds from international sources like Fontagro, EU, IICA

WE RESEARCH BY IMPLEMENTING

40

COLLABORATIVE
PROJECTS



125

STRATEGIC
PARTNERS

25

COUNTRIES

An investment of
41 million dollars
from 15 funding
agencies



↑ **CRITICAL
MASS**



They emphasize the role of PROCISUR in promoting peertopeer coordination, both at the intra and inter-institutional level, creating high scientific level networks.

They emphasize and positively value the exchange of experiences.



They value the creation of inputs that allow them to make science-based decisions.

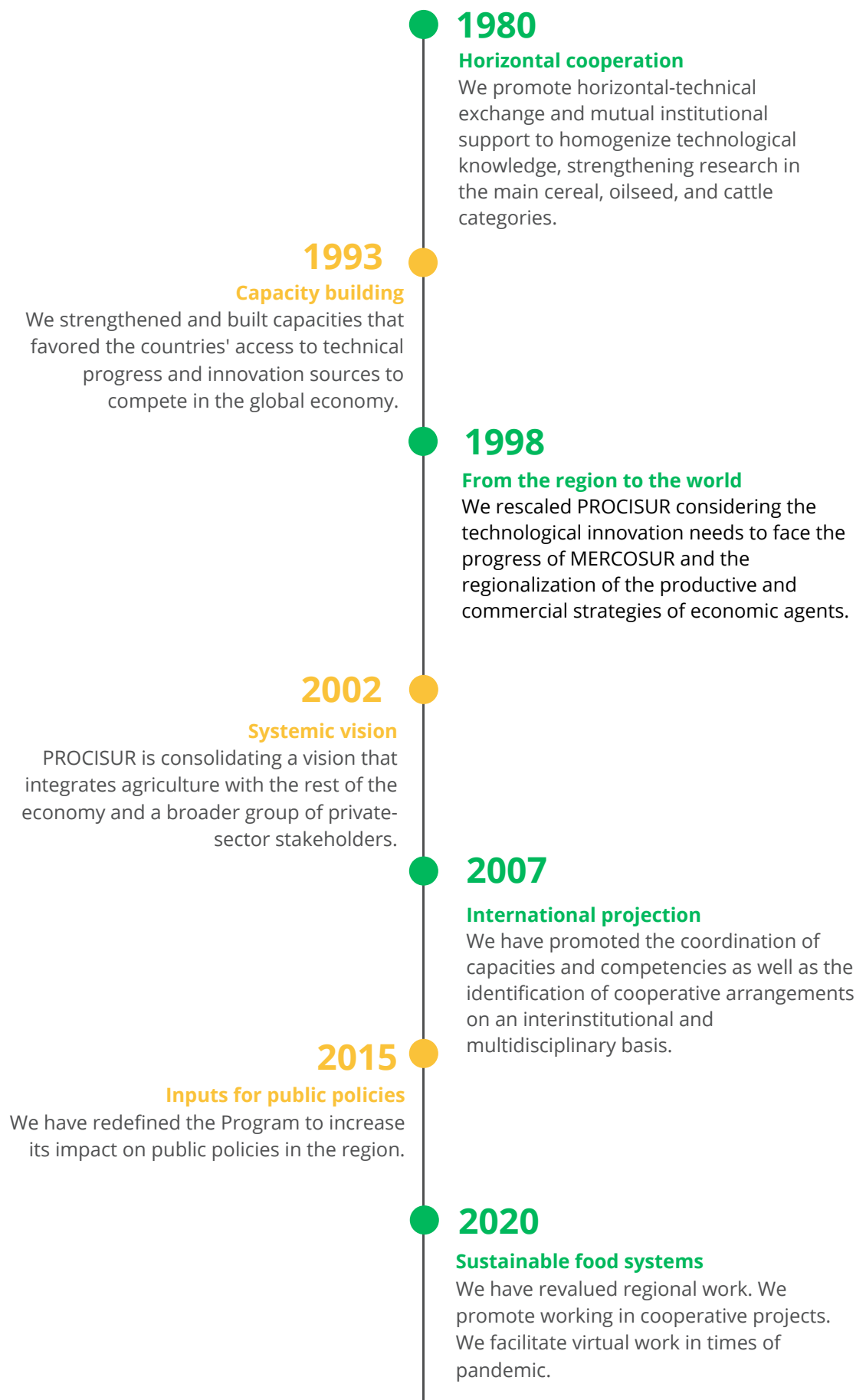
WORKING ACROSS BORDERS



These 40 years of existence and regional cooperation have led to international recognition and the opportunity to work with regional and global high-level institutions.

Procisur's main stages

in its 40 years of life



PROCISUR | 40 YEARS

