

DESIRA LIFT+ INFONOTE #1

10 June 2026

DeSIRA LIFT+ started in January 2026. The first six months were dedicated to both design the DeSIRA LIFT+ working plan for 2026-2028 and launch priority actions. This infonote is aiming at sharing relevant information with DeSIRA+ projects and partners from January to June!

Spring co-design workshop with African partner organizations (FARA, RUFORUM, BvAT) 20-21 April 2026 in Brussels

The workshop aimed at jointly shaping the initial priorities and working modalities of DeSIRA LIFT+ with the three DeSIRA LIFT+ African partners (FARA, RUFORUM, BvAT). Key topics of discussion included:

- Improvement of the draft Theory of Change of the DeSIRA+ initiative (to be further shared to projects) and discussion on the potential added value of DeSIRA LIFT+;
- Priority policy engagement opportunities at continental and regional levels involving the three African partners to address food systems transitions based on agroecological principles;
- Identification of priority topics including two of first transversal studies already planned (scaling of agroecological innovations and biosolutions);
- Knowledge management to valorize DeSIRA and DeSIRA+ knowledge products on agroecology through platforms managed by the partners and other actors;
- Capacity building and especially fostering of curricula on agroecology;
- Governance arrangements, budget issues, and the roadmap for the first phase of the project.

For more information: the report of the workshop is available on request.



Needs assessment of DeSIRA+ projects to design the DeSIRA LIFT+ work plan

DeSIRA LIFT+ is finalizing the needs assessment with all the DeSIRA+ projects. All projects have been launched except ATHAZ and FO4Impact which allowed fruitful exchanges with the project management unit and the DeSIRA+ projects. The full analysis will also include additional inputs from:

- Two additional Agrinatura experts who have been contracted by DeSIRA LIFT+ to collect these additional inputs. The first one (from FiBL) is focusing on policy engagement related to agroecology at DeSIRA+ project level (What is planned by the DeSIRA+ projects? What would be relevant to develop with the support of DeSIRA LIFT+ to add value?). The second one (from KIT) is focusing on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning at DeSIRA+ initiative level by mobilizing existing data at DeSIRA+ project level. The two experts have already contacted or will contact all the DeSIRA+ projects. For more information: see the ToRs.
- The needs of the 3 RMRNs (Regional Multi-actor Research Networks) on Agroecology (see <https://rmrn.faraafrica.org/>) with a specific focus on academic training on agroecology.

Anticipating the final analysis of the needs assessment and based on a demand of three DeSIRA+ projects managing calls for proposals, a first exchange among these three projects is organized the 18th of June 2026 to share experiences regarding the calls for proposals and the methodological supports provided by the projects to the local actors to co-innovate or scale agroecological innovations.

The results of the needs assessment and the DeSIRA LIFT+ work plan will be presented to all partners in September 2026 during a virtual session. A save-the-date will be sent soon!

Priority actions

To answer urgent needs, several actions have already been launched/will be launching soon:

- **Biosolutions:** A first sectoral study on the development of the biosolutions sector in the context of agroecological transitions to facilitate structured exchanges within the DeSIRA+ community and with partners and to identify opportunities, entry points and possible paths for partnerships, private investment facilitation and AU–EU high-level policy dialogue. See ToR.
- **Scaling of agroecological innovations:** A first transversal analytical study on the scaling of agroecological innovations within and beyond DeSIRA+ to facilitate structured exchanges within the DeSIRA+ community and partners and to identify key

complementary topics to be addressed to facilitate the scaling of agroecological innovations.

- **Fertilizers and soil health:** Under the umbrella of the International Research Consortium (IRC) hosted by FARA and Agrinatura, map the EU/AU R&I projects addressing soil health and fertilisers, analyze the main results of these projects, consolidate with the DeSIRA+ bio-inputs works, produce actionable knowledge and provide recommendations for coordinated, scalable investments and policy-relevant interventions.

Participation in specific events

DeSIRA LIFT+ participated/will participate in several events:

- Agrinatura workshop on Research and Innovation to support the EU Global Gateway strategy focusing on private investments (Brussels, 23 April 2026);
- Agrinatura General Assembly and Conference to communicate on DeSIRA LIFT+ (University of Reading, 25-27 April 2026);
- 9th Africa Agriculture Science Week hosted by FARA (Abuja, 27-30 July 2026) to participate as a co-organizer in a parallel session dedicated to agroecology together with FiBL, FARA, RUFORUM, RMRN, KCOA, NOARA, AFRONET, EOA.

About DeSIRA LIFT+

DeSIRA LIFT+ is a service facility supporting the DeSIRA+ initiative funded by DG INTPA (approx. €100M, complemented by EU Member States contributions), that supports agroecological, ecosystem-based and nature-based transitions in agriculture and food systems in Sub-Saharan Africa by boosting innovation at scale, with strong research and knowledge components.

The objective of the DeSIRA LIFT+ facility (€3M) is to strengthen coherence, synergies and collective learning across DeSIRA+ interventions by:

- Fostering structured dialogue among implementers, African partner organizations and policy makers;
- Providing tailored services and expert support upon identified needs;
- Producing actionable and transversal knowledge to support agroecological innovation at scale;
- Strengthening evidence-based policy dialogue at continental, regional, and national levels.

DeSIRA LIFT+ operates as a service facility, which supports and complements DeSIRA+ projects and answers DG INTPA F3 demands through:

- Strategic partnership building;
- Transversal studies and analyses;
- Support to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) and Knowledge Management Systems (KMS);

- Policy dialogue facilitation and capitalization of lessons learned;
- And facilitation of the DeSIRA+ community.

DESIRA LIFT+ is managed by the Project Management Unit (PMU), hosted by Agrinatura EEIG in Brussels. The PMU works in close collaboration with DG INTPA F3, African partner organizations (FARA, RUFORUM, BvaT), and DeSIRA+ implementers (projects).
