



**IOB**

Instituut voor Ontwikkelingsbeleid  
Universiteit Antwerpen

Institute of  
Development  
Policy

## Research Strategy 2017-22

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*Development Processes, Actors and Policies*

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## Introduction

The 2016 research audit assesses IOB as an ‘internationally visible player’ and finds that some of its work can be considered “competitive at the international level within the field of development studies”. According to the audit committee, the changes IOB introduced in its research strategy did have a positive impact “on the overall performance of the research group across all four assessment criteria” (2016, p. 44). The panel also made some more detailed suggestions for improvement (see box 1).

### **Box 1. Suggestions research audit Faculty of Applied Economic Sciences and IOB (May 2016)**

1. Consider developing a platform at the level of the Faculty/Institute that provides **support services** with respect to obtaining research funding;
2. Improve on the current HR policies by enhancing the **diversity and internationalisation** of staff;
3. IOB should make further steps if it wants to increase its international role in the field of development studies:
  - It should **make clear choices when it comes to developing partnerships** with external organisations for projects and data collection.
  - It should critically evaluate its current portfolio of partnerships and projects to see which ones are promising in terms of both societal and academic impact.
4. **Reduction of the number of themes and active promotion of research cooperation** among members of the different research lines could be a more fruitful strategy for increasing recognition as an internationally acknowledged academic research institute.
5. The creation of a communication commission and the involvement of IDS is fine as a first step for defining a **policy on societal impact**. The next step is to develop a clear communication plan and strategy. The committee advises the Institute to benchmark its strategy to other institutes in the field (for instance those institutes that are included in the benchmark analysis in the current self-study).

In its follow-up of the research audit, and after consultation with the spokesperson of the research group of IOB, the Research Council of the University of Antwerp proposed IOB to write a research policy plan to delineate the Institute’s vision on improving its research and societal innovation activities, with the aim to “invest especially in those niches where IOB could make the difference in Flanders (and beyond)”. Such a strategy would also entail a policy of further internationalisation of IOB’s staff and a policy to attract external finance that can lead to better quality academic output.

In this Research Strategy 2017-2022, we also integrate the suggestions made by the audit panel of the Flemish Government to think more strategically about realizing research uptake and impact.

These external suggestions largely reflect our own thinking about ways forward from where we currently are. IOB's research architecture has been undergoing considerable change since 2012, when we decided to function as one research group. This has helped us set common standards of academic quality and work towards a common frame of reference. The current strategy will largely consolidate this process. A better internal articulation may help us row further with basically the same boat. We understand this articulation in three dimensions:

- thematically;
- in terms of a perspective of research *as* development, not just research *for* development;
- in terms of a better articulation of the profiles of new staff members.

This document is the product of a number of informal meetings among staff members, and within IOB's Research Commission (on 27 March, 28 April, 24 May and 15 June 2017). A first version was discussed with the vice-rector and members of the UAntwerp Research Department (27 April 2017). We also had a thorough discussion about it with the members of IOB's Scientific Advisory Board (4 May 2017).

Below, we first describe the **thematic focus** IOB wants to cultivate with its research (section 1) and how we understand the **connections** between research, teaching and outreach (section 2). This vision is then translated into a (slightly) changed **research architecture** and further into the options we see in liaising with **partners** within and outside the University.

## Summary of answers to suggestions by the research audit

Suggestions Audit	Answers in new strategy
<b>1. Additional support services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More AAP (1 or 2)</li> <li>• Administrative support on ‘communication and knowledge development’</li> </ul>
<b>2. Diversity and internationalisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rethink selection criteria for Academic Staff AP</li> <li>• Systematic ‘benefits sharing measures’ and support for partnerships in the South</li> <li>• Contribute to North-South platform on Central Africa</li> </ul>
<b>3. Partnership development</b>	<p>“Critically evaluate in terms of both societal and academic impact.”</p> <p>North:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-branding for North-South Central Africa platform (incl. FED-tWIN)</li> <li>• Further engage in UAntwerp-platforms: USOS, IMDO, CeMIS, Global Minds (GM), and IUS-Burundi.</li> </ul> <p>South:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefit-sharing measures</li> <li>• Limited set of long-term partners – Going Global strategy</li> </ul>
<b>4. Reduction in number of themes (to increase visibility)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common ground: policy-oriented, multilevel governance, mixed methods, relevance &amp; political engagement</li> <li>• Policy of hiring AAP linked to three (renewed) research lines</li> <li>• Central Africa focus</li> </ul>
<b>5. Societal impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasise and cultivate policy-oriented and politically engaged research</li> <li>• Support staff ‘communication &amp; knowledge development’</li> <li>• Match areas of research with teaching</li> <li>• Integrate in individual-level incentives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus on quality, not quantity of papers</li> <li>○ Research and outreach strategy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 1. Thematic focus: the one in the many

In line with IOB's vision of a just and sustainable world, we strive to help build such a world through multidisciplinary academic research in close connection with academic education and political engagement as well as by allying with different types of partners<sup>1</sup>.

### Development as a multi-level and multi-actor process

In our research, we have a strong preference for **policy-oriented research** as well as a desire to contribute to real (policy) change through the generation, dissemination and application of our knowledge. But while gaining more knowledge about *what works, what doesn't and why* is an important part of the development puzzle, it is far from enough to promote justice and sustainability in the complex context of today's *policy arenas*<sup>2</sup>. The space where decisions are made over aspects of the public domain is becoming increasingly complex as it usually has both local and global ramifications and as it is being populated by a wide variety of social groups and actors, both formal and informal, both public and private, and both legitimate and criminal.

We think that, as a development studies institute located in the Global North, we have a comparative advantage in situating development processes in a **multi-level and multi-actor governance perspective**. Drawing on academic networks in the Global South, we can add local-level context analysis to the international and national levels. Conversely, we are well positioned to situate local-level phenomena, policies and interventions in wider (inter-)national contexts. In this respect, it is important not just to point out how globalisation is exerting its effects, or how global governance could have impact on national- and local-level entities, but rather to see local-global encounters as processes potentially transforming both the local and the global (Hart, 2006).

### Different views on justice and sustainability and on how to promote them

In this policy space, there is a priori no guarantee of agreement about the specific meaning of justice and sustainability – quite to the contrary. So it might be more appropriate to speak about *justices* and *sustainabilities*. And there is bound to be even more disagreement about the ways to promote them. These divergent views do not just relate to divergent interests, they may also relate to divergent perspectives on the world and/or to causal understandings of how things work and can be changed<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> IOB (2016) [Strategy Plan 2017-2020](#), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> The concept of *policy arena* also acquired central stage in the World Development Report 2017 on “Governance and the Law”, where it is defined as “the space in which different groups and actors interact and bargain over aspects of the public domain and in which the resulting agreements eventually also lead to changes in the formal rules (law)”. (WDR 2017, p. 7)

<sup>3</sup> Which motivates de Souza Santos to describe policy arenas as ‘ecologies of knowledges’.

This **lack of agreement** is, first of all, something we have to live with. It is the reflection of both the multi-dimensional notion of development that informs current thinking, of gaps in knowing how these dimensions are causally related to each other and to other policy instruments and of the fact that the domain of what is verifiably knowable is inherently limited.

Secondly, such a *durable incompleteness*<sup>4</sup> of our definitions of justice and sustainability and of our understandings how to advance them **should not worry us**. To the extent we are engaged in the practical exercise of promoting justice and sustainability, ‘spotless’ images of a just and sustainable world are less informative than *real* time- and space-specific policy alternatives that concrete coalitions of actors could potentially or provisionally agree on – however diverse their worldviews might be in other respects.

Thirdly, the recognition of durable incompleteness can also be an important ground to take a critical stance vis-à-vis particular local or national consensus views on justice and sustainability. In today’s global village, with unprecedentedly interconnected livelihoods, we should not expect that all relevant interests and concerns related to a particular policy alternative can be confined to the citizens of particular territories<sup>5</sup>. And even if (or in the cases) they could, **‘the eyes of the rest of mankind’**, as Adam Smith put it<sup>6</sup>, remain an important reference point to question or check on parochial views that mistake such a local consensus for the only rightful normative compass or for the absence of possibilities for advancement. In this sense, multi-level governance is not just a complicated form of governance, it is also a necessity in the world as we currently know it. Despite a recent upsurge in counteracting tendencies, this world differs considerably from the 20<sup>th</sup> century world of nation-states. Though the national state remains one of the central actors in the development process, its agency needs to be situated in a network of other, cross-cutting, supra-national and infra-national powers. These powers may or may not be harnessed for the promotion of alternative visions of justice or sustainability, but they remain part and parcel of the policy arena.

### Multi-disciplinarity and mixed methods

It is both the intrinsic complexity of real world policy problems and their politically contested nature that brings us to value the academic pluralism typical of development studies, which embraces different (mainly social) scientific disciplines as well as a diversified ‘mixed-method’ approach.

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<sup>4</sup> The term ‘durable incompleteness’ was coined by Amartya Sen (2006, p. 223).

<sup>5</sup> This is evidently and primordially also true for the (much more influential) territories of the Global North. The danger is that it becomes an excuse to dispossess the vulnerable communities of the South in view of ‘higher’ ‘global’ planetary interests (cf. green grabbing processes).

<sup>6</sup> Cited in Sen (2010, p. 63).

Our research group positions itself indeed in the field of development studies, which aims to cultivate a **multi-disciplinary**<sup>7</sup> and **mixed-methods approach** to the research of particular societal or policy issues<sup>8</sup>. Researchers focus on different levels and actors, refer to other disciplines and use their preferred research methods, while having their fundamental philosophical convictions defining the ontological-epistemological nature of their research as well as their values and normative frameworks. In this sense, IOB mirrors the development (policy) arenas, but by opting for a ‘mixed methods’ multi-disciplinary approach it wants to go beyond simple diversity, **cultivating the articulation of** multi- or inter-disciplinary **theoretical frameworks and** mixed quantitative-qualitative-participative **research designs** in individual or collaborative teaching and research. In this perspective, IOB found its desired approach adequately expressed in Jennifer Greene’s understanding of policy-oriented ‘mixed methods’ research as consisting in inviting “(...) multiple ‘mental models’ into the same inquiry space for purposes of respectful conversation, dialogue, and learning one from the other, towards a collective generation of the phenomena studied. By definition, then, mixed methods social inquiry involves a plurality of philosophical paradigms, theoretical assumptions, methodological traditions, data gathering and analysis techniques, and personalised understandings and value commitments, because these are the stuff of mental models.”<sup>9</sup>

This matches our understanding of the socially negotiated nature of development processes, almost by definition requiring an encounter and mediation of different ‘knowledges’ of relevant stakeholders. As expressed in a Ghanaian (Ewe) proverb: ‘Wisdom is like a baobab tree: no one individual can embrace it.’

### Why (still) focus on the poorest countries?

We are well aware that the global character of justice and sustainable development has become increasingly salient and that issues like migration, global inequality and climate change have major implications for development prospects in the Global North as well as in the Global South. While it is important for a northern-based university to fully engage with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – especially to the extent these define an agenda for development@home – our responsibility *also* extends to research, education and political engagement in the Global South<sup>10</sup>. For one thing, we are geographically well-placed to bring together and compare development experiences from different countries from all over the world. This variety of development experiences may also inform judgment ‘with the eyes of the rest of mankind’ of particular local-level institutional arrangements in the name of justice and/or sustainability, including the development pathways pursued in the Global North itself.

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<sup>7</sup> Multi- and inter-disciplinarity could be used interchangeably, but multi-disciplinarity resonates better with the plurality of perspectives promoted by Greene (see below).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. revised definition of development studies, at EADI directors’ meeting, Olomouc 2015.

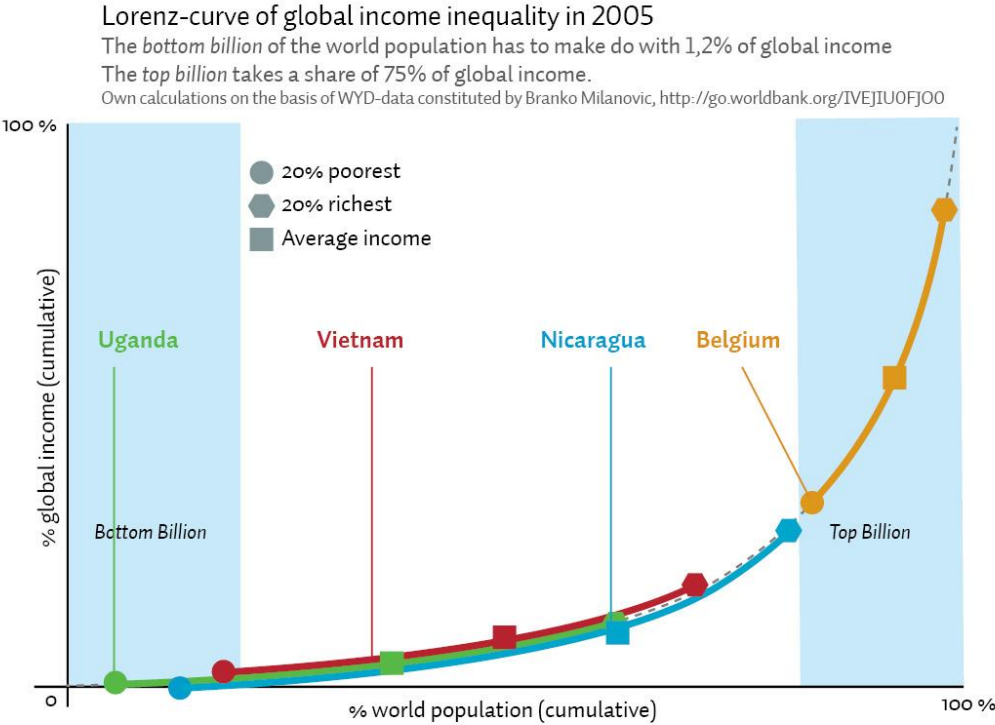
<sup>9</sup> Greene 2007, p. xii.

<sup>10</sup> Even recognizing that the ecological footprint of a development institute located in the northern hemisphere is comparatively high.



We are also aware that, due to the dynamics of economic growth and inequality in some important emerging economies, the majority of poor people now live in middle-income countries (Sumner, 2011). But, at least for the next five to ten years, the **primary focus of IOB remains on the (poorest segments of the) poorest countries**. First of all, a focus on the poorest people remains a valid ethical position. Secondly, the agenda of justice and sustainability poses particular challenges for these countries, and given the expertise that IOB has been developing within this context over the years, we are convinced that we can contribute most in this geographical area. To be sure, such a focus *also* implies an engagement with the debates on global public goods, as the development processes in the poorest countries in the Global South are also intimately connected to the global political economy, and increasingly so.

Figure 1.  
Some IOB-related countries on the global incomescape



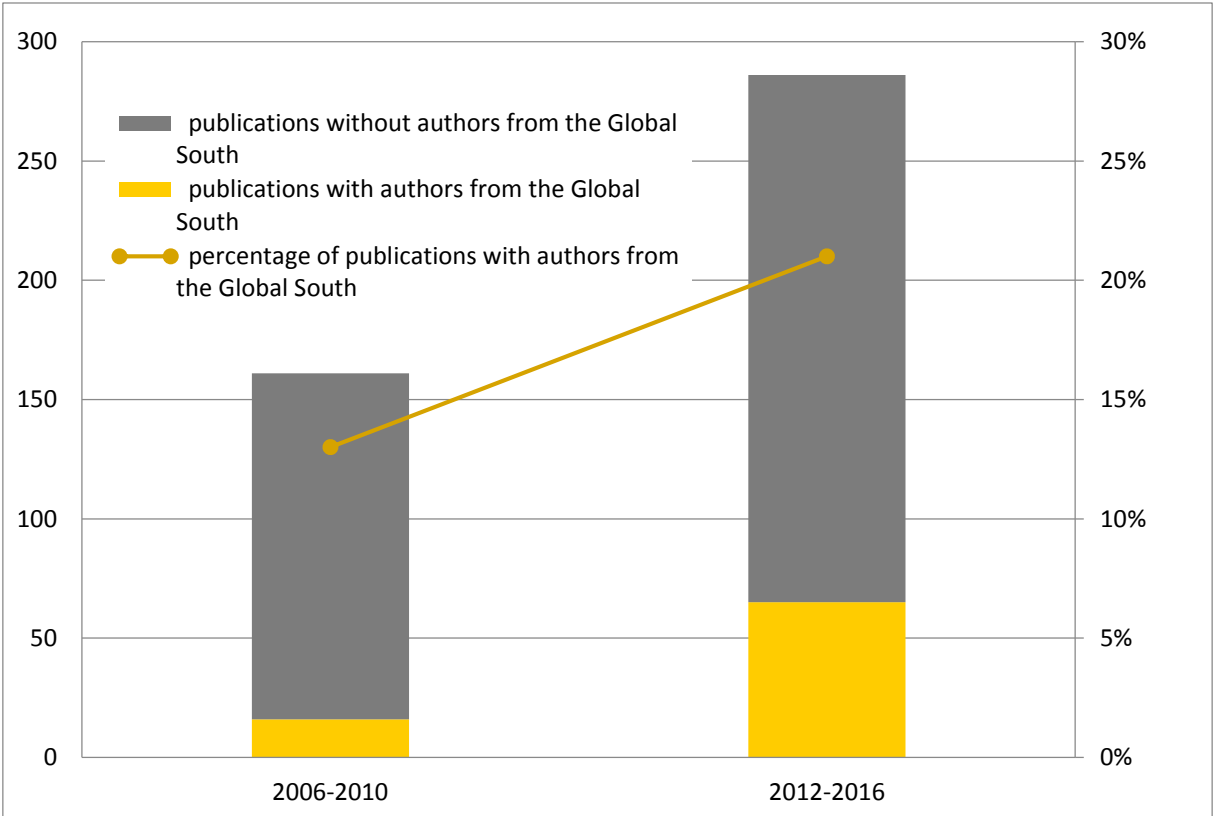
Source: IOB Annual Report 2013.

This choice also has an important **implication** for the way we do research and outreach. A *concern for local academic interests* in all research activities carried out in the South should become part and parcel of standard research – also in response to the standard research question in proposals for external finance that asks “*If your research involves low and/or lower middle income countries, are*

*benefits-sharing measures foreseen?*"<sup>11</sup>. It is of course up to the researchers to define the relevant type of benefits, the relevant groups that benefit and the way in which they would do so. An important reminder in this respect is that we have to take into account that a mere focus on a country is not enough, as also in the so-called least developed countries, income inequality remains important (if it is not already increasing)<sup>12</sup> (see figure 1). Our ambition to focus on the poorest people must therefore remain a permanent concern and allying with local academics in the South is anything but a guarantee that we respond to this concern<sup>13</sup>.

As a development institute we therefore also support **long-term institutional partnerships** with the aim to embed academic cooperation in a more balanced exchange and mutual learning relationship in all the countries of the Global South. We can refer to our general Policy Plan 2017-20 for the most recent formulation of our policy on partnerships in the South.

Figure 2.  
Share of peer-reviewed IOB publications with (co-)authors from the Global South<sup>°</sup>



<sup>°</sup> defined as researchers with a bachelor’s degree from a low- or lower middle income country

Source: based on the UAntwerpen academic bibliography

<sup>11</sup> This formulation has been borrowed from FWO-proposals.  
<sup>12</sup> See also Milanovic (2016).  
<sup>13</sup> For a similar argument, but along different lines, see Dhawan (2017).

Another (and sometimes related) instrument is the possibility to invite **Scholars in Residence (SIR)** to IOB. The number of candidate-SIRs has recently increased, and we consider it as an important means to enhance academic internationalisation from a southern perspective. Every year we would like to host 12 months of Scholars in Residence on our own budget, and we are currently studying how to redefine the modalities of finance and the selection procedure to achieve this.

It is in any case important to note that, at least as judged in terms of the number of peer-reviewed publications co-authored by a researcher from the South, there is anything but evidence of a trade-off between academic performance and the space given to researchers from the South: while, comparing 2012-2016 with 2006-2010, the total number of publications almost doubled, the number of South-co-authored publications even quadrupled (figure 2).

### Central Africa as a transversal research interest

If the research group's ambit extends to the poorest countries in the world, we also want to give a privileged attention to Central Africa<sup>14</sup>. During the last decades, we have built up a critical mass of expertise on the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda which is probably unique in the world<sup>15</sup>. There is an important reason to maintain that particular geographical focus: this valuable research expertise allows us to play an important role in a region that will continue to face major development challenges in the years to come.

A research focus on Central Africa comes however with its own challenges. We see three of them:

*To begin with*, it is important that, at the level of IOB, we strive towards *a healthy mixture of expertise on the three regions of recruitment of most of our students*: Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and South-East Asia. In our previous policy plan, we secured the presence of IOB staff working in/on the Central African region by dedicated vacancies for research and teaching staff. However, colleagues whose main focus is *not* on Central Africa have also at times contributed to the stream of Central Africa focused publications. This has guaranteed a continued research output on Central Africa: comparing 2006-2010 and 2012-2016, one can note a slight decrease in Central Africa publications but a substantial increase too in 'other Africa' publications. Given our emphasis on 'the eyes of the rest of mankind' as an important vantage point to define justice and sustainability, the possibility that IOB

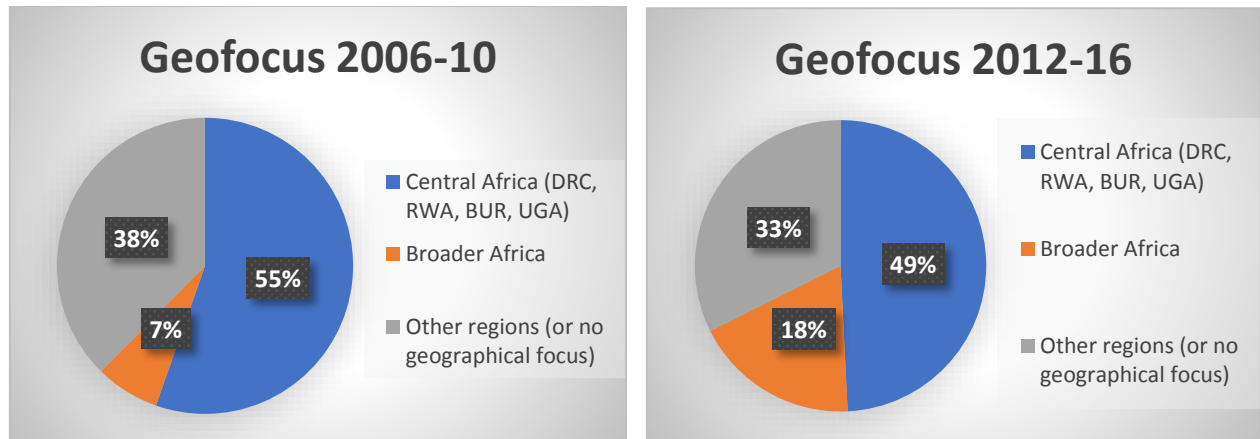
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<sup>14</sup> Defined in IOB's Research Strategy 2012-2017 as comprising Burundi, the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda. We acknowledge that 'Central Africa' means different things to different people, depending, among other things, on the colonial history of the countries or regions they have been working in or on. The alternative term of the 'Great Lakes Region' is less ambiguous, but (therefore perhaps) also less accurate, as the overlap between that region and the four aforementioned countries is only partial. At IOB, we use both terms interchangeably, but the flagship-publication we plan to publish each year will carry Central Africa in its title from 2018 onwards.

<sup>15</sup> The 2011 research audit, chaired by one of the former directors of the African Studies Centre, University of Leiden, put this even stronger: "[t]here are a number of high-quality individual researchers on the GLR elsewhere in Europe and perhaps especially in the United States (...), but Antwerp can justly claim to have the greatest collective impact" (2011, p. 23)

becomes an ‘Africa-institute’ is a risk, not an opportunity, in the first place for academics and students from the Central African region itself (figure 3).

Figure 3.  
Geofocus of peer-reviewed publications (co-)authored by IOB staff members



Source: based on the UAntwerpen academic bibliography

Secondly, the focus on Central Africa is not just a regional focus, it also needs to be **thematically articulated**. We see two main sources of convergence.

- Firstly, our research agenda on the region will connect to the three thematic clusters that will orient research at IOB in the years to come (see below).
- Secondly, all researchers working in or on the region will also articulate their work through the activities of IOB’s Centre for the Study of the African Great Lakes Region (GRALAC).

A *third challenge* is how we engage with the agenda of the **decolonisation of the university**<sup>16</sup>. In other words, how can we harness the expertise available on the Central African region in function of an agenda of internationalisation of academics working *in* (and not just *on*) the Central African Region?

This question extends **beyond the Central African region** as such, as it overlaps with more general questions around research carried out in poor countries (see above). With such an important critical mass of researchers working on the area, we should not just make sure that our own activities are embedded in a win-win logic, we should also play our role in creating more opportunities for the presence of local academics in international workshops and conferences (including in the region itself), in international policy debates, in international research projects and in international publication outlets.

<sup>16</sup> We refer here to a debate, carried on especially among Africanist scholars (e.g. Mbembe, 2016), but not exclusively (e.g. Dhawan, 2017 for a broader perspective).

Up to now, these activities have been taken up under the umbrella of IOB's own **Centre for the Study of the African Great Lakes Region**. The Centre has organised several conferences and seminars in Antwerp and is most well-known for its yearbook, the 'Annuaire des Grands Lacs', which offers a platform for publishing research on contemporary political, economic and social development in the region. The Annuaire provides for substantial space for scholars from the region, which turns it into a quite exceptional instrument of academic internationalisation<sup>17</sup>. We think however that IOB can improve on this role by joining efforts with others for particular activities, so as (1) to connect our academic research and outreach with other institutes (both academic and non-academic) active in and on the region, thereby increasing the leverage of our own actions; (2) to realise more with comparatively less effort, while (3) co-branding will also strengthen IOB's Central Africa profile.

In the current institutional landscape, **CREAC**, the *Belgian Reference Centre for Expertise on Central Africa*, may offer such an opportunity. CREAC is a northern-based centre of expertise that promotes knowledge exchange between academics, policymakers, civil society and the private sector through monthly policy talks in the Belgian Federal Parliament. We have agreed to jointly organise and co-brand some of these policy talks. From 2017 onwards, we will also partner with CRE-AC for a new publication, 'Conjonctures de l'Afrique Centrale', which will capitalise on the strengths of both the 'Annuaire des Grands Lacs' and 'Conjonctures congolaises' while guaranteeing better quality through stricter selection and better guidance for southern-based researchers through a system of scholarships and mentorship.

Another opportunity may be created by the upcoming **FED-twin arrangement** of the Belgian Science Policy. IOB can apply for funding (for a period of 10 years) of a position for a research professor, to be affiliated to both the Royal Museum for Central Africa and IOB<sup>18</sup>.

### A space of research themes

Since 2012 IOB's research agenda (and policy of hiring new junior and senior academic staff) has been shaped along four research lines that were broadly covering different levels of governance, from the **local** (Local Institutions in/for Development) over the **national** (State, Economy and Society) to the **International** level (distinguishing between private flows in International Markets for the Poor and public flows in Conditional Finance for Development). These research lines were to some extent echoing the four thematic groups that had been active at IOB between 2006 and 2011.

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<sup>17</sup> See Briggs & Weather (2016). See also Neajay Pailey (2016).

<sup>18</sup> [www.presscenter.org/nl/pressrelease/20161110/fed-twin-programma-voor-een-duurzame-samenwerking-op-onderzoeksvlak-tussen-de-](http://www.presscenter.org/nl/pressrelease/20161110/fed-twin-programma-voor-een-duurzame-samenwerking-op-onderzoeksvlak-tussen-de-)

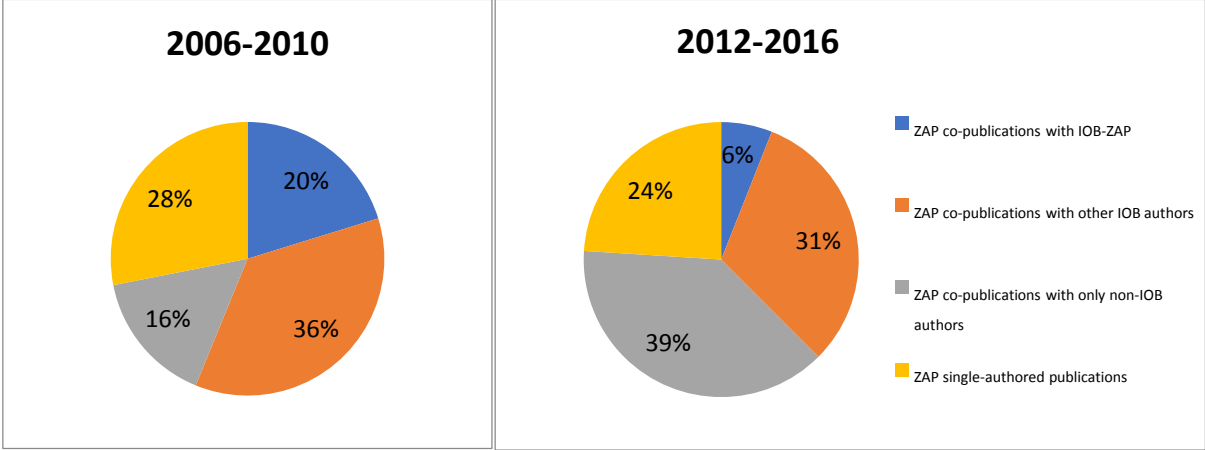
The decision of creating a **single research group** with four research lines has generally produced good results<sup>19</sup>, as acknowledged by the audit committee. However, the committee also argues for a further reduction in the number of themes so as to increase IOB’s international visibility. Our own Scientific Advisory Board shares that opinion. Nevertheless, cooperation among staff members remains an issue. The main objective of the 2012 research reform was to **enhance cooperation among staff members** across different thematic groups.

Figure 4 below reports on the evolution of **co-authored** publications by ZAP staff members in-between 2006-2010 and 2012-2016. The total number of CERES/EADI ABC-papers (co-)authored by ZAP doubled (from 89 to 200) between these two periods. But the percentage of co-authored papers between ZAP-staff members rather declined, from about a fifth of all ABC-papers with a ZAP-author to 6%, and even in absolute terms. The percentage of papers co-authored by ZAP and non-ZAP IOB staff decreased too.

In sharp contrast, the percentage of papers co-authored with non-IOB staff members more than doubled between these two periods. This is in itself good news: it illustrates the **increasing international visibility** of IOB staff, and is also coherent with the increased importance of papers co-authored by researchers from the South (figure 2 above). But at least if judged on the basis of co-authored CERES/EADI ABC-papers between ZAP-staff members, **cooperation among staff members of the institute itself did not increase**.

Figure 4.

Single-authored and co-authored CERES/EADI ABC-papers by IOB-ZAP



Source: based on the UAntwerpen academic bibliography

<sup>19</sup> See different intermediary reports to the Research Council, as well as the self-evaluation report prepared for the research audit.

### Three research lines

There are good reasons to create a space for cultivating a variety in research themes. It allows individual ZAP staff members to respond to particular opportunities and it fundamentally respects academic freedom, within the general bounds of the field of Development Studies as a policy-oriented, mixed-methods, multidisciplinary and multi-level field of enquiry. On the other hand, a thematic delineation of what IOB wants to stand for is warranted, for both internal (we have to count on synergy and critical mass to realise more with the same means) and external reasons (international visibility).

Concretely, we propose to stimulate work, for the coming 6-year period, in function of three research lines. Each of these lines clusters existing research activities carried out by different academic staff members of IOB, while also opening up space for new and innovative research that is at the forefront of major development challenges. For example, as the table illustrates, each of these lines can also be linked to some very concrete Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which indicates how they match with one of the dominant current framings of development. They combine a thematic cluster (environment, global governance and state formation) with our vision of a just (inclusive) and sustainable (resilient) world.

Table 1.  
Research lines for allocating junior staff members, 2017-2022

Name of research line	Core Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) they speak to	ZAP currently involved	AAP currently involved	
			Central Africa	Other
<b>Environment and Sustainable Development</b>	6 Clean water and sanitation 7 Affordable and clean energy 11 Sustainable cities 13 Climate action 15 Life on land	Bastiaensen De Herdt De Weerd Holvoet Molenaers Titeca Van Hecken	Windey	Sonderegger
<b>Global Governance and Inclusive Development</b>	5 Gender equality 8 Decent work and economic growth 10 Reduced inequalities 12 Responsible consumption and production 17 Partnerships for the goals	Calfat Cassimon De Weerd Geenen Holvoet Molenaers	N. Popelier	Abainza Gleiberman
<b>State Formation and Resilient Societies</b>	16 Peace, justice and strong institutions	De Herdt De Weerd Holvoet Ingelaere Molenaers Titeca Vandeginste Verpoorten	N. Vancluysen De Roeck	Alidou

All three research lines give **concrete shape** to the multi-level governance perspective we want to cultivate at IOB, reaching from the global to the local and vice versa. And each of the research lines also combines empirical work with an explicit Central Africa focus with work carried out elsewhere. The research lines are further elaborated in box 2 below.

In terms of instruments, new academic **vacancies** for junior staff members are the most important instrument we have to stimulate the clustering of the academic research at IOB around these three lines. Most academic staff members are already squarely fitting the newly named research lines, but in the coming 6-year period, all 10 AAP-staff members will be renewed.

Other instruments can also be envisaged. It would for instance be interesting to tailor instruments of **science communication** to this structure.

### **Box 2. Three research lines**

#### *Environment and Sustainable Development*

The increasing recognition of the negative social and ecological side effects of different types of 'development' has led to environmental/climate change and poverty/inequality concerns occupying an ever-more central position on the international policy agenda. The urgency of the challenges we face has also provoked heated debates on the appropriate (multi-level) governance structures to secure both poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. While a range of different state-led, community-led and market-led approaches have been proposed and tried over the past decades, we note how sustainable development is increasingly being framed in terms of a 'green economy', and a reliance on market-based conservation mechanisms and conditional finance instruments, such as (voluntary) carbon markets, Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), biodiversity derivatives, and payments for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

This research cluster focuses on actors, policies, and instruments which aim to tackle climate change and ensure the provision of 'global public goods', and the kind of socio-political dynamics and interactions they trigger at and between multiple levels. At the global level it analyses the main trends, actors and factors in the evolving and evermore complex environment and climate governance landscape. At the national level it analyses the dynamics of the policy cycle (identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) surrounding the translation of global commitments into national policies. At the local level it analyses the (non-)implementation of the environmental/climate change agenda and how it interrelates with local dynamics and struggles of (unequal) access to natural resources.

Within this broader framework, topics for research include the examination of climate aid funding; socio-political dynamics triggered by environment and climate change governance instruments, such as carbon and biodiversity markets, Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) and green microfinance; community-based monitoring of natural resources and service delivery; climate change vulnerability and resilience from a gender/intersectionality perspective; 'green criminology' with a focus on ivory poaching and trade; and climate change as a push factor for migration.



### *State Formation and Resilient Societies*

Processes of state formation and the evolving role of states in the post-colony form the background against which this research line examines situations of state under-reach (as in fragile or failed states), state reach (as in developmental states) or state overreach (as in state crime or structural violence). The research activities aim to understand how state attributes such as government, territory, law, nation or power are articulated or not, and how state actions such as legitimation, economic accumulation or security and services take shape or not.

The research activities avoid a unitary conception of the state by taking into account a wide spectrum of actors (formal and informal) and factors (ideational, institutional, structural) at different levels (local, national, international). Such a focus on the processes and dynamics of state formation – the changing patterns of tightening and loosening state reach across space and time – implies attention to societal resilience, namely the ability of societies to resist, adapt to or recover from (the consequences of) a lack of state presence and/or performance, sudden man-made or natural shocks or long term social exclusion and adverse incorporation. Particular attention is paid to these issues in connection with the cycle of violent conflict, peace-making and efforts to achieve state reconstruction and renegotiate the social contract.

Within this broader framework, topics for research include the examination of mechanisms of political and administrative accountability; processes and mechanisms of decentralisation and the governance of public services; the evolution of power-sharing arrangements and their impacts on the nature and experience of political representation and decision-making; the evolution of relations of trust or feelings of security; the role of external actors and aid in strengthening or weakening state formation and regime transformation or consolidation.

### *Global Governance and Inclusive Development*

Facing the apparent limits to (hyper)globalisation, which are revealed in growing inequalities, social exclusion and adverse incorporation, the research aims to study processes of exclusive/inclusive development and the role of governance therein. The global economy is increasingly concentrated at the top and fragmented at the bottom, which justifies IOB's focus on the poorest countries as well as on people who are excluded from global development processes, or who are adversely incorporated in them. Rather than treating them as victims of globalisation, the research activities study small-scale producers and workers as agents navigating local-to-global dynamics. Special attention is paid to women, migrants, children and people with disabilities as the human faces of this globalisation paradox involving simultaneous inclusion and exclusion.

Global governance (both public and private) in such a context should – in theory – be able to solve part of the paradox. It should not only facilitate market transactions, but also regulate negative externalities and compensate for unequal outcomes. Failures to do so warrant a more critical study of the political processes and the normativity underlying the current global governance and aid architecture. Research activities will therefore focus on how policies and programs aimed at reducing poverty and inequalities, at promoting gender equality, equity and decent work, first of all reflect political struggles in the policy arenas they emanate from, and second, interact with socio-political dynamics at the local level.

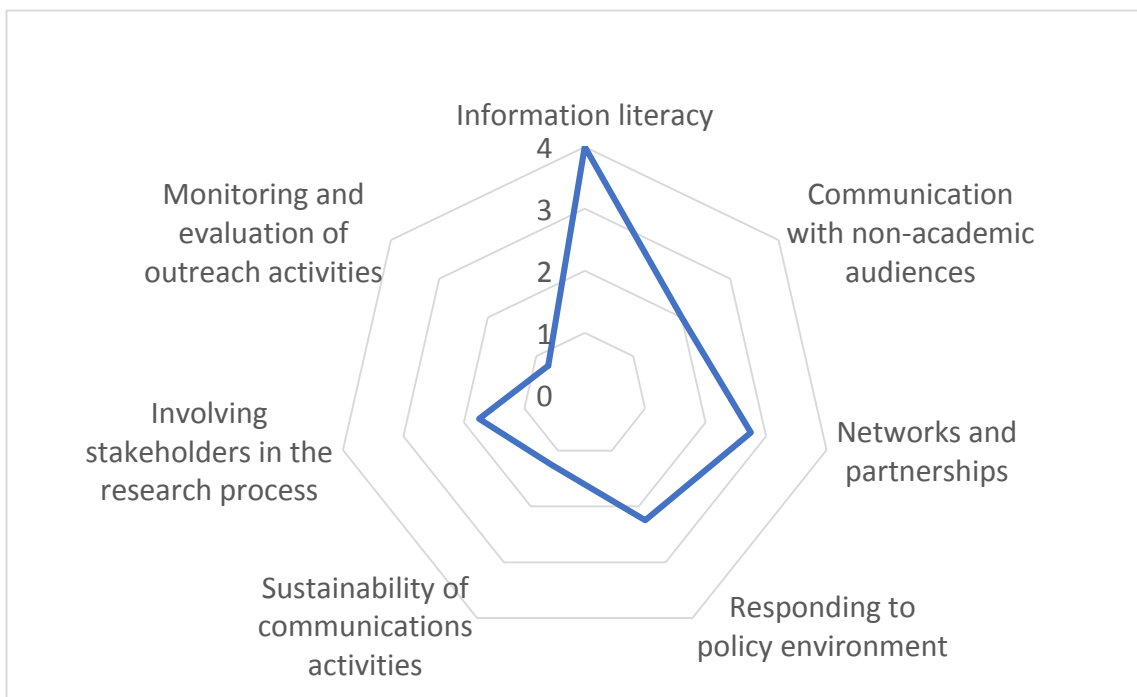
Specific topics for research include the provision and financing of global public goods, the regulation of international trade and finance, Corporate Social Responsibility and Codes of Conduct, gendered labour and labour under natural resource regimes, inclusiveness and impact of evaluation processes, and migration dynamics and impact.

## 2. Research as development

Of all suggestions made to IOB by external advisors over the last years, investment in a better interface with development actors was the most frequent one. We also spent time, internally and through a conference organised jointly with CERES, ASCL Leiden and KIT Amsterdam, to discuss opportunities, alternatives and possible pitfalls. We usually present this topic under the heading of ‘outreach’, using that concept in the broadest possible way: the idea is not just to communicate the results of our activities, but, ultimately, **to realise development impact**. This implies that we are sensitive to the political validation of our research – which also coheres with the emphasis on an analysis of the policy arena in which our work is to be situated (see above).

In June 2016 almost all IOB staff members were present at the policy day we organised on outreach (conceiving of outreach in the broadest sense). The staff present self-evaluated the IOB staff members’ capacity for outreach as follows:

Figure 5.  
Self-evaluation of IOB’s staff members’ capacity for outreach  
(Average score on a scale from 0 to 4)



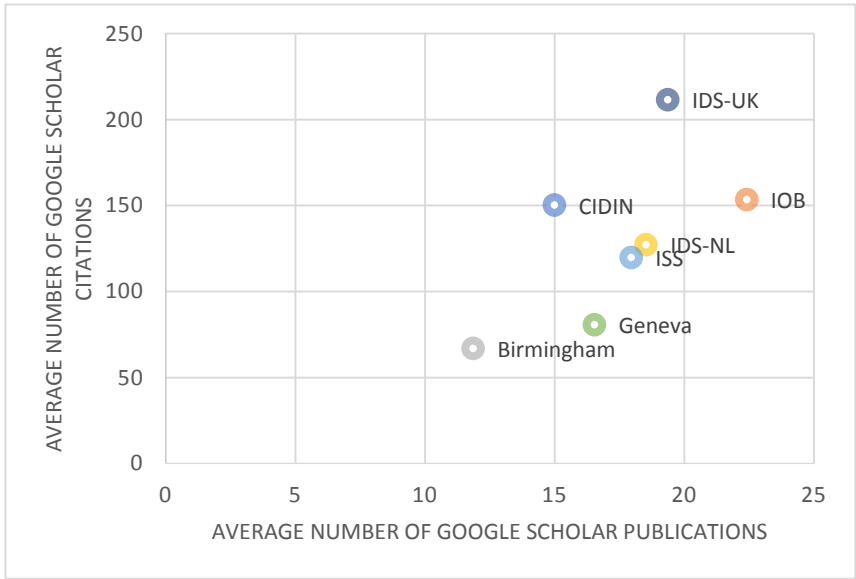
Source: Self-assessment by IOB-staff, policy day June 2016 (Corbett & Georgalakis, 2016, p. 14)

In terms of ‘information literacy’ or what we can call *academic* outreach, and on ‘networks and partnerships’, IOB deems itself quite successful. However, on all other dimensions of outreach, we perform much less well.

We would like to add the following comments to this over-all picture.

Firstly, as testified by the [2015 benchmark study](#), we do indeed perform more than well on **academic outreach**, compared to many of our European peers. On average, during 2010-2014 IOB researchers registered 22 publications in Google Scholar, which is better than all other development studies institutes included in the benchmark study. Our performance is however less impressive if measured by the average quality of our publications, as operationalised by the average number of citations per researcher. Some institutes are realizing more academic impact with significantly less publications per researcher. Less is not necessarily more, but more (papers) is not necessarily more (academic impact) either and the focus should in principle be on the latter. We will take this idea on board at the moment of rethinking the criteria for evaluation of individual academic staff members.

Figure 6.  
Average number of Google Scholar Citations and Publications per researcher for a number of European development studies institutes (2010-14)

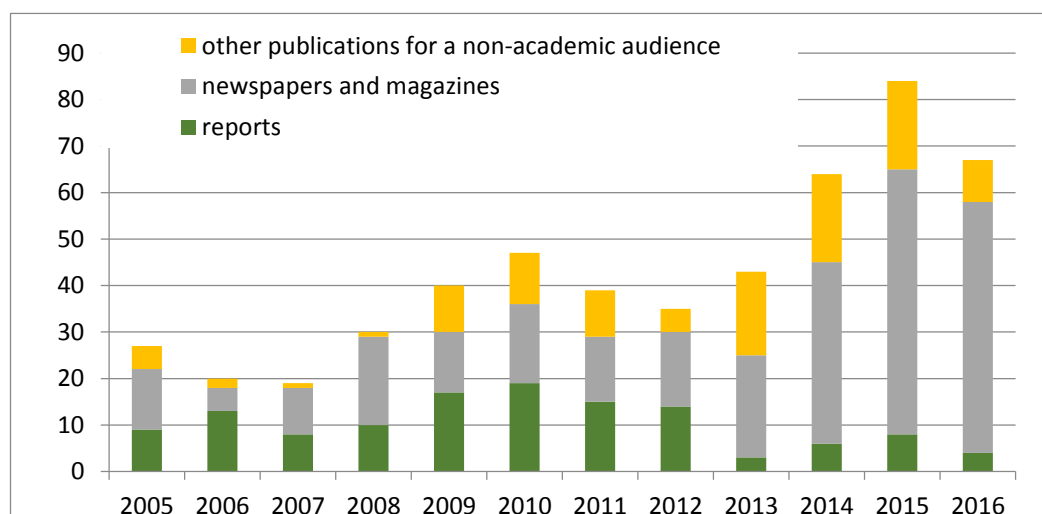


Source: Benchmark Study 2015.

Secondly, at least the quantity of written pieces for a **non-academic audience** has increased, especially since 2014. One also observes a significant decrease in 'reports' (usually written on behalf of particular development actors) and a comparatively more important increase in (electronic) blogposts and op-eds for a broader public, classified under 'newspapers and magazines'. As some of these writings also serve an ongoing conversation among academics, there is also a zone of overlap between academic and non-academic audiences.

Figure 7.

Evolution in the number of publications for a non-academic audience



Source: based on UAntwerp Academic Bibliography, data end of March 2017. Books counted as three publications.

*Thirdly*, we give ourselves quite a good score on ‘**networks and partnerships**’. That is important as this dimension is bound to be strengthened even more, given that we are moving forward with the project of co-organizing parts of our Master programmes with some of our partners in the Global South. On another note, we can also mention our connection with the northern-based organisations as an important way to liaise with development actors in the Central African region (cf. supra). Further, in the near future we would also like to invest more in the other faculties of the University of Antwerp, perhaps our most obvious partners in realizing development impact (see below, chapter 4).

*Fourthly*, the report concludes that, as external pressure for realizing outreach is bound to increase, “IOB may well need to respond by investing in its communications, knowledge exchange and monitoring and evaluation capacity” (Corbett & Georgalakis, 2016, p. 14). This is what we plan to do in the near future. Given the **expertise in communication** already available at IOB, both the capacity for more strategic thinking on communications and knowledge exchange and the search for new instruments in engaging with stakeholders are important bottlenecks that require our priority attention.

*Fifthly*, a dimension that was not mentioned in the exercise is the dimension of **outreach through teaching**. Indeed, as more than 90% of IOB students come from the Global South and as the principal objective of our programmes is to produce ‘better development professionals’, this type of outreach is (at least potentially) quite important<sup>20</sup>. The co-organisation of parts of our Master programmes in

<sup>20</sup> The Global Minds (GM) programme will allow to validate to what extent our teaching programmes indeed produce better development professionals and realise development impact (see section 5).

the Global South will undoubtedly strengthen this dimension of outreach, which will also spill over to other dimensions: students will for instance engage more readily in fieldwork in connection with local development actors within the framework of their dissertation.

This being said, **some research output more readily maps onto the profile of our teaching programmes** than other. For instance, the work on climate change and on global goods more generally could be brought forward, e.g. in the current Master of Globalisation and Development. But much more importantly, the work on the Central African region (and hence half of our research output) does find its way back to local development actors in Uganda only through the channel of our teaching activities, as we currently have a lot of difficulty to attract students from Burundi, the DRC and Rwanda. To be sure, teaching is not the only channel we currently have available for communication and knowledge exchange around the political economy of Central Africa, but it is one obvious way in which we could improve outreach. A more targeted promotion of our programmes to this region should definitely be part of a future outreach strategy.

*Finally*, this exercise focused on the nexus between research and development, not on the national and international **visibility of the institute** as a whole. Though international visibility is a more evident concern for an institute of development studies, it is also important to maintain sufficient national-level visibility, for a variety of reasons. A first element in this respect is our active engagement in **University platforms** within the framework of an agenda of sustainable development at home (see below, section 4.). Secondly, we plan to continue being present in the **Belgian media**, through op-eds and blogposts, inter alia on the MO\*-website. And thirdly, we highly value different means of **policy dialogue**, either with non-governmental or government organisations, either 'on demand' or on our own initiative. All of these elements contribute to the quality of the development debate in Belgium, which should be part of our concern, as an Antwerp-based institute.

### 3. A reformed research architecture

The options made above concerning the (diversity of) expertise we want to cultivate at IOB also translate into changes we would like to introduce in the management structure and instruments of the research group. One important instrument is a standard of **evaluation** of the research performance of individual ZAP-members. Secondly, we discuss the over-all management **structure**. Finally, we discuss some elements of a **human resources** policy.

#### Standards of academic research quality at the individual level

In IOB's research strategy 2012-17 we defined a common standard of performance in research for all academic staff of the research group. In line with the generic profile of ZAP defined at the level of the University of Antwerp as well as with the ZAP-statute at UAntwerp, we differentiated between 'basic criteria' and 'excellence criteria'. The former are used in case of evaluations, but in case of promotions and of evaluation of Tenure Track ZAP, candidates must fulfil, besides the 'basic criteria' of the next grade, at least some 'excellence criteria'.

In general, the experience we have with this new evaluation grid has been positive. Together with the practice of the goal-setting interviews, it makes ex-post evaluations of academic work by peers much more predictable. This increased predictability has also reduced negative stress, a benefit that was far from outweighed by the increased administrative burden that came with it. The newly introduced possibility, at the University-wide level, for ZAP staff members to enter into a non-competitive track for promotions favours a less competitive environment and invites for more cooperative strategies towards research excellence.

Awaiting further changes in a similar direction at the level of the University, we propose to adapt the IOB-criteria for evaluation so as to incorporate the more explicit and systematic attention to activities of outreach.

IOB has defined outreach as a more important aspect of its academic activities compared to academic staff at faculties (30% at IOB instead of 20%), who do comparatively invest more in teaching (40% instead of 30% at IOB). We suppose that 5% of the time is spent on activities of internal service delivery – except for staff members with special mandates, and 5% is spent on activities of academic service delivery (membership of scientific organisations, paper reviewing, editorial work, panel organiser, etc.). This leaves a space of 20% (or one day per week, on average) to invest in outreach in close connection with research activities.

In line with the broad agenda of outreach we defined above, we expect individual researchers to **connect their research to development processes** in a variety of ways, distinguishing between (1)

development processes in the Global North and the Global South<sup>21</sup> and between (2) outreach to particular development actors versus outreach to a wider (non-academic) audience.

Table 2 offers a non-exhaustive list of examples.

Table 2.  
Examples of outreach activities

	<b>Outreach to development actors</b>	<b>Outreach to a non-academic audience</b>
<b>Global North</b>	Short trainings Teaching modules with south partners	Articles for a non-academic audience Policy Briefs
<b>Global South</b>	Policy reports Policy Evaluation & Advisory work Development spin-offs ...	Op-eds Blogposts New Media Interviews ...

It is however important that we also explicitly build in **flexibility** in operationalizing individual researchers’ approaches to realizing outreach, for three reasons. First of all, different research interests may lend themselves more easily to particular types of outreach. It is in any case important that there is positive synergy between research and outreach, so that investment in outreach does not become an additional burden, on top of existing activities in research. Secondly, ability and talent for particular types of outreach differ for different staff members. But most importantly, the interface between research and the policy process is determined by the structure of the policy arena and hence the instruments of outreach need to be tailored accordingly<sup>22</sup>.

We therefore **propose**, first of all, that **researchers define their own strategy** of research and outreach. At the moment of the goal-setting interview with staff, individual members’ research and outreach plans can then be discussed with, and validated by the chairs of the Institute, the Research Commission and the Education Commission. This exercise will be part of the basic criteria for evaluation.

Secondly, we propose to **update the list of excellence criteria in service delivery**. More in particular, we want

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<sup>21</sup> Again, referring here to the ethics question asked in standard FWO-grant formats, see footnote 12.  
<sup>22</sup> De Herdt, T. (2015) *Going public*, presentation at internal IOB-seminar, November 2015.

- to give more weight to the activities of short training programmes and/or initiatives of co-teaching<sup>23</sup>;
- to better specify the category of contribution to university development cooperation.

As regards publications, we refer, for now, to the CERES/EADI system for rating publications (see annex). There is a correspondence between CERES/EADI AB publications and ISI papers, and between CERES/EADI ABC publications and VABB publications, while the system also has the additional advantage of being more transparent for individual researchers. The landscape of publication rating systems is however evolving rapidly. We will study alternative rating systems and eventually redefine the publication criteria specified below if the IOB’s Research Commission judges them to be more appropriate<sup>24</sup>.

The tables below specify the basic and excellence criteria for different types of researchers.

Table 3.

Criteria for evaluation of (senior) lecturers and post-doctoral researchers per 5 year period°

	<b>Basic criteria</b>	<b>Excellence criteria</b>
<b>Scientific publications</b>	10 CERES/EADI publications of which at least 5 A or B <sup>°°</sup>	15 CERES/EADI publications of which at least 8 A or B <sup>°°</sup>
<b>PhDs*</b>	Supervisor of 1 PhD trajectory	Supervisor of 2 PhD trajectories, at least 1 successful PhD defence
<b>External finance*</b>	(co-)promoter of 5 project proposals or 3 if successful >100k € project(s)	(co-)promoter of 5 project proposals, the total value of successful projects >300k € and with at least 1 internationally financed project
<b>Active conference participation</b>	3 active contributions	5 active contributions
<b>Research and Outreach plan</b>	Validated during goal-setting interview	

\* Not applicable to post-doctoral researchers

° fixed in function of 40% research time

°° the CERES/EADI valuation system counts authored books as 3 papers

<sup>23</sup> Currently, the organization of summer schools is now cited as an example in a larger category called “contribution to policies of internationalization”. This example is, in our mind, a misfit.

<sup>24</sup> We refer here, more in particular, to the [scimagojr](#) project, based on the Scopus-dataset of scientific publications.



In the case of **(full) professors**, the excellence criteria for evaluation of (senior) lecturers become basic criteria as concerns PhD-output and external finance. The latter is in line with the policy to achieve a substantial increase in internal and external finance.

Table 4.  
Criteria for evaluation of (full) professors per 5-year period<sup>°</sup>

	<b>Basic criteria</b>	<b>Excellence criteria</b>
<b>Scientific publications</b>	10 CERES/EADI publications of which at least 5 A or B <sup>°°</sup>	15 CERES/EADI publications of which at least 8 A or B <sup>°°</sup>
<b>PhDs</b>	Supervisor of 2 PhD trajectories, at least 1 successful PhD defence	Supervisor of 4 PhD trajectories, at least 2 successful PhD defences
<b>External finance</b>	(co-)promoter of 5 project proposals, the total value of successful projects >300k € and with at least 1 internationally financed project	(co-)promoter of 5 project proposals, the total value of successful projects >1000k € and with at least 2 internationally financed projects
<b>Active conference participation</b>	3 active contributions	5 active contributions
<b>Research and outreach plan</b>	Validated during goal-setting interview	

<sup>°</sup> fixed in function of 40% research time

<sup>°°</sup>the CERES/EADI valuation system counts books as 3 papers

Together with basic and excellence criteria for education and internal and external service delivery, these elements will serve as a basis for evaluation during performance assessments and promotions of Tenure Track and Tenured staff members.

In the past, these criteria have also been used in the selection of new ZAP staff members as well as post-doctoral researchers (cf. infra). We will continue to do this, even though it is important that we can give due attention to issues of diversity (gender, but the issue of internationalisation of staff also needs to be brought to the fore here).

In the case of **pre-doctoral researchers**, basic criteria to evaluate and renew mandates of AAP will be applied. The excellence criteria, duly corrected to take into account periods of academic inactivity (e.g. because of maternal leave) and diversity in study backgrounds, will be used as benchmarks for allocating bridging funds towards post-doctoral positions (cf. infra).

Table 5.

Criteria for evaluation of pre-doctoral researchers per 4-year period

	<b>Basic criteria (to evaluate initial 4-year mandate AAP)</b>	<b>Excellence criteria (to evaluate bridging funds after PhD)</b>
Scientific publications	2 CERES/EADI publications of which 1 A, B or C publication°	6 CERES/EADI publications of which at least 4 A or B°
External finance		Active participation in writing successful project proposal(s) >100k€
Active conference participation	3 active contributions	5 active contributions
Performance on societal outreach		3 significant contributions

°the CERES/EADI valuation system counts authored books as 3 papers

### Optimising the institutional setting: new roles for the Research Commission

The continued functioning of IOB as one research group and the strategic identity focus wrapped around the three research lines as outlined in section 1, call for a **strengthened role** of the IOB Research Commission (RC). Up to now, the RC took up a regulatory role, it set and upheld the standards of academic quality, it defined institutional research outputs like discussion papers etc. and it managed IOB's research fund. The Research Commission also took responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of research activities, and for reporting to the Research Council of the University of Antwerp. In the new architecture, this role will be extended to include the management of the instruments to shape the three research lines. The RC will assume prime responsibility in safeguarding the implementation of the proposed thematic focus in function of a more coherent research agenda.

The enhanced role of the RC renders the function of 'research line coordinator' redundant. Their limited responsibilities are easily transferable. Some, related to their role in quality assurance of **internal publication outputs** (such as WPs and DPs), will be taken over by the chair of the RC. Others, such as their role in assuring the **organisation of internal seminars**, could be taken up by one of the post-doctoral researchers, with back-up by the chair of the RC. The author of the yearly report on the achievements of the research line can be chosen ad hoc.

More importantly, the research line coordinators typically also played an important role as joint members of **AAP vacancy commissions**. In the new research architecture, it is logical to count instead

on ZAP staff members involved in a particular research line to participate in **vacancy commissions** for AAP vacancies related to this research line<sup>25</sup>.

Defining the profiles of vacancies of all staff categories will be done at the level of the RC, with ultimate vetting by the IOB Board. The RC will also play an enhanced role in follow-up, specifically with respect to the identification and the choice of supervisors of the PhD research trajectory for AAP. More in particular, new AAP will present a preliminary research proposal to the RC in the first months of the mandate, to assure good matching of the proposal with the institute's research policy (see above), and to help broker the choice of a supervisor.

## Changes in human resources policy

### 1. ZAP (*senior researchers, tenure track or tenured*)

Whereas in our 2012 strategy document much attention was given to four new ZAP vacancies as replacement for retiring ZAP staff members, this transition period has now ended. As of 1 October 2016, IOB has 13 ZAP staff members. The coming period will therefore largely be a period of **consolidation** of the expertise present at IOB and of how this expertise can be brought together in a way that generates more synergy.

In case new ZAP vacancies will be opened, the vacancy profile will be defined in function of the newly defined research lines.

IOB also commits to participate in **FED-tWIN** (see above), as a strategic opportunity to embed activities of outreach concerning the Great Lakes Region in a wider institutional setup. If such an arrangement were realised, it would imply a contribution by IOB of a 25% ZAP position from year t+5 to t+10 and of 50% thereafter.

### 2. AAP (*research and teaching assistants*)

We already hinted above at the crucial role AAP members in supporting the backbone of our research, outreach and teaching activities.

- During the different stages of selection of new AAP, we try to make sure AAP work on the themes we consider as core themes of IOB:

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<sup>25</sup> Taking into account the *ex officio* presence of the chairs of IOB, of the Education Commission and the Research Commission as well as the presence of a member of one of our sister faculties, it may be prudent to extend the vacancy commission with at least one person.

- A vacancy profile defined by the Research Commission (as concerns the aspects related to research & outreach), which takes into account the allocation of AAP staff members in function of expertise on the three research lines and in function of expertise on Central Africa;
- A selection commission representing the diversity of expertise working on the research line in function of which the vacancy was opened;
- Matching of AAP staff members to a PhD supervisor early in the PhD process during a meeting of the Research Commission.
- As concerns research and outreach<sup>26</sup>, we strive, to the extent possible within the logic of the research lines, to obtain a balanced **distribution** of AAP staff members over different ZAP staff members, who will also be closely involved in all stages of the selection procedure. This implies there is not necessarily an equal distribution of AAP over different research lines.
- We plan to **increase the number of AAP members to a total of 11 or 12**, so as to increase the capacity of AAP staff members to take part in activities (like participation in writing externally financed research projects) that strengthen the articulation of their research line.

### 3. Pre-doctoral BAP and PhD-grant researchers

Table 6 informs about the evolution in the source of finance of all IOB-PhD-students<sup>27</sup>.

Table 6.  
Evolution in number and type of IOB PhD students.

	Bachelor Diploma	2010	2012	2014	2016
AAP (payroll UA)	North	8	8	7	6
	South	1	1	1	2
PhD-grant on payroll UA	North	1	4	8	7
	South	6	8	8	3
PhD-grant not on payroll UA	North	0	0	0	0
	South	2	3	5	5
Self-financed	North	0	4	7	6
	South	5	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>31</b>
% Project funding		39%	52%	57%	48%
% Self-financed		22%	17%	22%	26%
% South PhDs		61%	45%	41%	39%

Source: SISA and PhD-secretariat

Since 2010 the total number of PhDs has increased, while the number of AAP has remained roughly the same. The increase is partly reflected in the percentage of self-financed students, but most of all

<sup>26</sup> Allocation of teaching activities to AAP staff members is discussed at the level of the Education Commission.

<sup>27</sup> I.e. students either pursuing a PhD in Development Studies or a PhD in Applied Economics or in Social Sciences but recognised as an IOB-PhD by the IOB Board.

in an increase in the percentage of students on project funding, from 40% to 50%. About one third of the latter do not appear on the UAntwerp-payroll: they are financed e.g. on VLIRUOS-projects. This channel is especially interesting for students from the South, who saw their overall weight decrease as, with time, IOB increased its share in the 'classical' academic funding channels like FWO or DOCPRO.

These figures point to the strategic importance of externally financed projects with a longer-term perspective, both to consolidate the number of PhD students and to contribute to internationalisation and strengthening of academic capacity in the South.

#### 4. *Post-doctoral researchers*

Since 2013 IOB has been defining a policy to maintain a category of post-doctoral researchers at IOB, with the objectives (1) to attract more external finance and (2) to mobilise a pool of excellent post-doctoral researchers in a context of limited availability of tenure track positions.

We defined three instruments to achieve these objectives:

- a **one-year bridging fund** for PhD students at IOB who graduated before the end of their allotted period and who fulfil the excellence criteria (as specified above); the fund is meant as an investment in a post-doctoral position on an externally financed research project.
- a **two-year<sup>28</sup> bridging fund** for post-doctoral researchers external at IOB and who fulfil the excellence criteria we apply to internal candidates; again, the objective is that the funding leads to an externally financed research project which extends the stay of the researcher at IOB.
- an **extra 50% ZAP position** (indefinitely extendable three-year contract) explicitly targeted to researchers with an extensive experience in attracting external (research) finance and with the objective to attain the excellence criteria for attracting external finance.

In all cases, the way in which the candidate connects to research carried out by existing (senior) IOB staff members played a role in the selection process, though the excellence criteria as displayed in table 5 do of course play the most important role in the phase of shortlisting. These criteria have also been vulnerable to critique from the point of view of diversity (gender, north/south) and also been partly corrected to reflect these concerns.

This policy proved to have **mixed success**:

- None of the *internal* bridging funds effectively secured external project finance to extend their stay at IOB – though most of them are still active in the academic/international development world. The bridging fund did work however as a potential cushion for 'excellent' internal PhDs who

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<sup>28</sup> One year, to be extended after positive evaluation from 2016 onwards.

did eventually not need the bridging fund as they were able to secure external (FWO-postdoctoral grant) finance immediately after completing their PhD.

- Up to now, one out of 4 *external* bridging funds effectively secured external finance to stay at IOB. However, the other three post-docs are still active in the academic world. In part, this record also reflects the usual issues related to staff mobility. For external researchers, one year was deemed too short to establish a connection, i.e. find ways to integrate this expertise in IOB's education activities and find opportunities for common research initiatives. The period was therefore extended to two years from 2016 onwards.

Up to now, IOB has invested the equivalent of 0,5 ZAP and 2 FTE BAP in this policy.

We propose to **maintain this effort**, also because the means to do this have partly been secured for the following 5 years through the Global Minds programme – to be compensated by increased teaching commitment at different UAntwerp faculties.

Besides the above-mentioned objectives, our post-doc policy may also be one of the few instruments we have to improve on **diversity**, internationally and more in particular along the north-south axis, given that the room for hiring new ZAP staff members will be quite limited during the coming years.

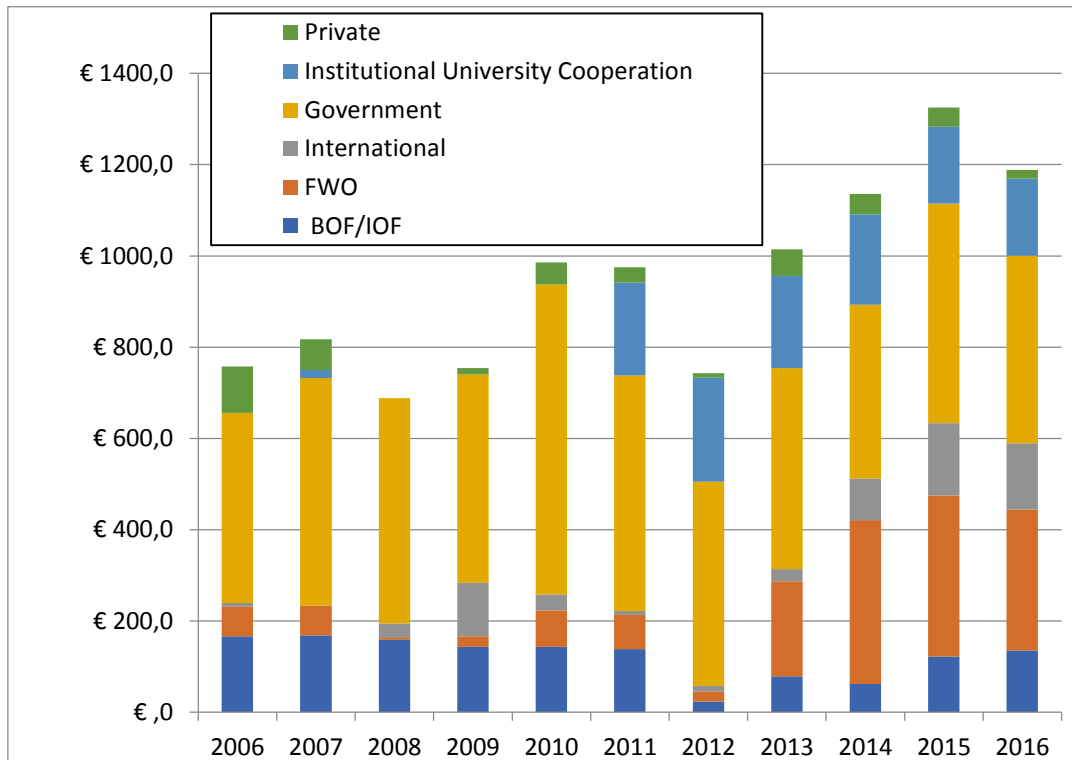
Finally, we intend to explore ways to consolidate the position of successful and excellently performing post-doctoral staff members.

### Changes in policy to attract external research finance

Figure 8 presents the current evolution in research finance (which includes funding of projects carried out by our academic staff members within the framework of VLIR-IUS programmes managed by other Flemish universities). Overall, one can observe a significant increase. This increase is mainly due to a rise in standard academic sources of research finance, while our access to funding specific to the field of (academic) development continued at the same level. Another important evolution is the increase in **international research finance**.

We think that we need to further target this source of funding, as it usually allows to combine high-quality research with considerable means for activities of societal outreach. We expect to stimulate this by hiring an additional administrative support staff member on knowledge development and communication, as well as by the proposed changes in the management of AAP staff (see above).

Figure 8.  
Evolution in externally financed research, 2006-16  
(000 Euro)



Source: based on figures from the Department of Research & Innovation, corrected with data on VIRUOS-IUS-funding managed at other Flemish universities.

## 4. Supporting academic development cooperation in the University of Antwerp

We consider it as an integral part of outreach to participate in, or support activities of academic development cooperation of the University of Antwerp at large. We do a lot already, but a further development of our efforts in this respect may also deepen the interdisciplinary outlook and inspiration of our institute. It is important of course that we find possibilities for cooperation with other UAntwerp faculty on a win-win-win basis (two wins for the UAntwerp, another for the South partner).

- IOB organises its **PhDs partly in cooperation** with its 'sister faculties' of Social Sciences (FSW) and Applied Economics (FTEW).
- We have also taken up **teaching commitments** in both sister faculties and in the inter-university Master programme on Gender & Diversity. We plan to maintain these efforts, and the Global Minds programme (see below) will allow us to extend these efforts to other faculties.
- Staff members of IOB are actively involved in **the University Foundation of Development Cooperation (USOS)**, where they play an active role in brokering institutional partnerships which include a window on exposures and internships of students from all UAntwerp faculties and which often also involve cooperation with staff members from other faculties. We can mention here e.g.
  - a PhD research carried out in cooperation with the Centre de Gestion Minière hosted by our partner university in Bukavu, but taking place at the research group on ecotoxicology, Faculty of Sciences (FWET) UAntwerp;
  - initiatives of cooperation between the Faculty of Design Sciences (FOW) and the Universidad Centroamericana, our partner university in Managua, Nicaragua.

IOB also joins efforts with USOS in setting up the series of Debating Development, which can also be taken as a course by students from all UAntwerp faculties.

- A staff member of IOB (prof. S. Vandeginste) acts as coordinator for the **VLIRUOS** Institutional University Cooperation (IUS) with the University of Burundi. This inter-university project also includes a long-term academic cooperation between the Université du Burundi and the 'Epidemiology for Global Health Institute' (prof. Jean-Pierre Van Geertruyden), Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FGGW).
- Since 2017 a staff member of IOB (prof. D. Cassimon) has been acting as chair of the recently founded **Working Group on University Development Cooperation**. This working group will also be responsible for developing and implementing the strategic development cooperation policy of the University of Antwerp (as a key ingredient of its broader internationalisation policy), and will report to the University's key internationalisation policy committee, that will be renamed 'Steering Committee on Internationalisation and Development Cooperation'. This group also manages the VLIRUOS-Global Minds programme, for which prof. Cassimon acts as coordinator. In the **Global Minds** programme, the University of Antwerp formulates a comprehensive five-year portfolio



(2017-2021) of development-related interventions in the fields of education, research and sensitisation for UAntwerp as a whole. Resources available through the programme will provide all members of UAntwerp with potential access to PhD grants and small research grants with the University's partners in the Global South, and strengthen the University's portfolio of activities in development education and sensitisation. The programme also provides for funding to validate the impact of different International Course Programmes targeted at students from the South and developed by the UAntwerp.

- IOB has been developing intensive links with other faculties through **the Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development (IMDO)** since 2012. This cooperation entailed participation in teaching (inter alia in the preparatory programme of IMDO's Master, organised by the Department of Biology, several IOB staff members acted as promoter of IMDO Master dissertations and contributed to the internationalisation of the programme, among others by facilitating fieldwork in Tanzania and Nicaragua) and in research.

## 5. IOB in the field of Development Studies

The Institute has been active in several organisations and networks, with the following objectives: (1) increased visibility of the institute, (2) taking up our role in structuring the academic field of development studies (3) as an instrument of peer review and quality control.

IOB has been an active member of the **European Association of Development and Training Institutes (EADI)**. The chair regularly participates in EADI's Directors' meetings. IOB is currently also representing Belgium in EADI's Executive Committee and IOB staff members are active in EADI's International Accreditation Committee (IAC) or leading EADI's working groups on Development Cooperation and Gender. EADI provides for a platform to interact with peer institutes in Europe and beyond and plays an important role in structuring the field of development studies.

The **Research School for Resource Studies for Development (CERES)** is another important platform to organise a number of activities jointly with other institutes. CERES organises a PhD training and an annual PhD conference, to facilitate a network of international contacts for PhD students. CERES also organises a publication valuation system that builds on the Web of Knowledge ranking but that also tries to overcome some of the disadvantages of this system. IOB has been asked to play a more active role in CERES, also to make sure the usefulness of this umbrella structure for its member organisations (including IOB) can be enhanced. We also plan to replace IOB's PhD day with support to IOB PhD students who wish to participate in the CERES PhD conference.

Thirdly, IOB wants to cultivate further contacts with the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in the Hague and with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in Sussex, more in particular to cooperate in further benchmarking exercises. A new **benchmarking exercise on academic impact** is planned for the end of 2017 and will involve an increased number of institutes compared to the 2014 study. With regard to **benchmarking on societal impact**, we will follow a more qualitative route, by discussing our strategy and its results with ISS and IDS in preparation of the next audit exercise.

Finally, IOB wants to maintain its Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). It offers a convenient way to have an external perspective in-house, which in most cases closely overlapped with suggestions made by audit panels. The direct interface of the SAB allows for a deeper and more intensive discussion about our strengths, weakness, opportunities and challenges. Current members of our SAB are **Leo de Haan** (International Institute of Social Studies in the Hague), **Geske Dijkstra** (Erasmus University Rotterdam), **Kate Meagher** (London School of Economics and Political Science), **Carl Michiels** (Belgian Technical Cooperation), **Jan Vandemoortele** (Independent researcher, former UN Representative and **Geoff Wood** (University of Bath).

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