

Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture

The Bilateral Cooperation Programme of the BMEL

Project Letter 2022



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Dear Readers,



Creating an agricultural sector that meets the requirements of climate protection and the preservation of biodiversity while securing food for more and more people – this is a challenge that we must also meet globally.

With the Bilateral Cooperation Programme (BKP), my Ministry therefore supports international projects, together with our partner countries, that address important priority topics for a sustainable agri-food sector.

One core issue is of particular importance in this context and highly topical: our soil. Millions of hectares of arable land are lost every year due to sealing, erosion, and pollution; unsuitable cultivation methods can lead to soil degradation. It is therefore logical that we have chosen the topic "Sustainable Land Use: Food Security Starts with the Soil" as the focus of the upcoming Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA).

The BKP has committed itself to promoting agricultural production systems that conserve the soil, thus contributing to a globally efficient and sustainable agriculture. In the latest issue of our project letter, we would like to present the achievements of these projects to you.

With best wishes,

Cem Özdemir Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture



EDITORIAL

Promoting Conservation Agriculture Through the Bilateral Cooperation Programme

The agricultural sector is facing enormous challenges worldwide. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), an increase in agricultural production of up to 60 per cent will be necessary by 2050 to feed 10 billion people. In view of the growing world population and changing eating habits, it is estimated that the current demand for calories and protein will even double. How can the agri-food sector meet this enormous demand for food? Even a more intensive use of existing agricultural land in the major producer countries would not be enough to meet the demand for food by 2050 given the foreseeable development of dietary habits. According to FAO forecasts, up to half a billion hectares of additional agricultural land would be needed for food production. Worldwide, agricultural areas are thus nearing their limits, and it would seem obvious to develop natural areas as agricultural land that have so far been scarcely used for agriculture, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. However, this would have catastrophic effects on existing ecosystems and lead to a significant increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

Consequently, yields must be increased on existing agricultural land in countries with under-exploited production potential. The additional demand for land would then be considerably lower, and greenhouse gas emissions from reclaimed land would increase only moderately. In addition, strengthening food production in less developed countries would lead to a better distribution of global food production. However, this requires a comprehensive transfer of knowledge.

In order to take environmental and climate protection into account when expanding food production, it is necessary to use the most important agricultural resource — the soil — more sustainably. Although millions of hectares of forest are still cleared for agricultural use every year, millions of hectares of agricultural land are lost at the same time. The reasons for this are partly the effects of human civilisation such as urbanisation or environmental pollution. Above all, however, unsuitable cultivation methods are leading to the increasing degradation of existing land: improper crop rotation, intensive tillage, fallow land, and salinisation due to poor water management are just some of the causes of a reduction in natural soil fertility. The decreasing fertility and resilience of soil must be compensated for by an increased



use of mineral fertilisers and chemical pesticides – with negative consequences for the environment and climate.

It is therefore essential to meet the increased demand for food production through sustainable intensification in the most environmentally and climate-friendly way possible.

The dissemination of sustainable conservation agriculture production systems in agriculturally relevant partner countries is therefore one of the most important goals of the Bilateral Cooperation Programme (BKP)

> of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). The project approaches used are diverse. In the

following pages, we will present a few

explicitly dedicated to the promotion

of sustainable agricultural production

methods in BMEL partner countries.

examples of BKP projects that are

CHINA

Sino-German Crop Production and Agrotechnology Demonstration Park (DCALDP)

TIMEFRAME 07/2015 - 07/2022

GOALS ACHIEVED

- Crop rotation diversified
- Soil structure and soil health improved
- Use of mineral fertilisers and chemical pesticides reduced



CHINA, ZAMBIA, AND MOROCCO

Sustainable, soil-conserving production practices through optimal use of production technology and production methods

The Sino-German Crop Production and Agrotechnology Demonstration Park (DCALDP) has been operating in the Chinese province of Jiangsu since 2015. Due to the growth of the Chinese population, a crop rotation of wheat and wet rice has been used in this region for more than 20 years. In



the past, this unvaried cereal rotation could only deliver sufficiently high yields through the intensive use of mineral fertilisers, pesticides, and manual labour. Soil structure and quality suffer as a result of the high-input monocultures. In addition, it has a long-term detrimental effect on the environment. One of the main goals of the DCALDP is therefore to achieve a more sustainable use of natural resources, first and foremost the soil.

The introduction of rapeseed and dry rice for more varied crop rotation has already led to a significant increase in the earthworm population and a reduction in anaerobic decomposition processes in the soil. The cultivation of rapeseed is now being increasingly adopted throughout the region. The resulting looser soil structure provides a better seedbed and has led to a 20% reduction in fuel use and a 30% reduction in seed use. Furthermore, trials show that comparable yields can be achieved with a reduction of up to 50% in the use of mineral nitrogen fertiliser. The results of the project are being disseminated in China via social media channels, through which more than 80,000 participants were able Knowledge exchange in Zambia.

to attend the field demonstrations on the project field day in 2020.

While the DCALDP in China disseminates techniques on how to maintain yields in a more environmentally-friendly and soil-conserving way, two other BKP projects in Africa are pursuing the goal of increasing or stabilising crop yields under difficult climatic conditions.

ZAMBIA

German-Zambian Agricultural Knowledge and Training Center (AKTC)

TIMEFRAME 08/2014 - 07/2024

GOALS ACHIEVED

- More than 13,000 agricultural trainees trained
- Cultivation trials on mechanised conservation tillage
- Advice on the development of training content provided to Zambian government agencies



Here, too, the soil plays a central role. By means of conservation tillage, which reduces mechanical tillage to a necessary minimum, the projects try to strengthen the natural structure of the soil, humus formation, and thus protection from erosion.

The German-Zambian Agricultural Knowledge and Training Center (AKTC)

in Zambia has been demonstrating and teaching modern and sustainable agricultural methods, including mechanised conservation tillage, since 2014. The AKTC is conducting a 27-hectare cultivation trial comparing conservation tillage methods with conventional tillage from an ecological and economic perspective. The results show that conservation tillage can achieve equal or even higher yields for soybeans and maize. One reason for this is that the temperatures of most soil layers of land tilled without a plough or disc harrow are lower thanks to a protective mulch layer and the moisture is therefore higher. In addition, labour and fuel costs

for farms can be significantly reduced with conservation tillage. These results are disseminated nationally in the context of training courses, at field days, via social media, and through exchanges with experts and policymakers. The German-Moroccan Excellence Centre for Agriculture (CECAMA) also teaches no-till farming, a technique that is part of conservation tillage and almost entirely dispenses with mechanical tillage. Similar to Zambia, no-till farming in Morocco is a response to the high variability of rainfall and the often low humus content in many arable soils. Good water management is essential to achieving reliable yields even in very dry years.

Since the no-till technique does not turn the soil — as the plough would otherwise do — water evaporation from the soil is reduced. At the same time, the mineralisation of organic matter in the soil slows down. These effects lead to an improved water retention capacity of the soil, which means that more water is available to the plants even in dry periods.

Results of long-term studies show that, compared to soil-turning cultivation methods, no-till farming can not only achieve higher yields, but also more stable yields, which can make an important contribution to food security.

No-till farming is also convincing from an economic point of view, as in some cases only one operation is required on the field and machinery costs can be reduced significantly. One challenge with the no-till method, however, is weed control. What can otherwise be done by the plough sometimes still requires the use of problematic herbicides. It is therefore important to look for alternatives here, too.

MAROKKO

German-Moroccan Excellence Centre for Agriculture (CECAMA)

TIMEFRAME 10/2012 - 12/2021

GOALS ACHIEVED

- Over 11,000 professionals trained in climate-friendly conservation agriculture methods
- Quality of agricultural extension services improved
- Preventive health protection in cattle farming publicised



Moroccan agricultural policymakers have now also recognised the great advantages of no-till farming and, in 2021, a programme was launched to promote no-till farming, with the aim of a no-till cultivation of 1.5 million hectares of arable land by 2024. From a global perspective, however, it must be emphasised that conservation tillage, and in particular no-till, is not the

UKRAINE

German-Ukrainian Agricultural Policy Dialogue (APD), Expert Dialogue on Soil

TIMEFRAME 01/2007 - 12/2024

GOALS ACHIEVED

- Demand-oriented advice to political decision-makers on the creation of suitable legal framework conditions for a functioning land market
- Recommendations regarding modern land management at the municipal level
- Advice on issues of land consolidation, land use planning, soil, nature, and environmental protection



optimal technique in every region and especially not on every site.

For example, there are many locations where the contribution to humus formation and the reduction of emissions are low.

UKRAINE AND SOUTH AFRICA

Promoting ownership by strengthening the legal framework in the land market

Apart from cultivation methods, ownership structures and the associated responsibility are crucial for sustainable management. Unresolved or uncertain land use relationships often mean that soils are not managed sustainably and responsibly. Stronger institutional protection of land use rights is therefore essential to secure food production by 2050. In these areas, the BKP also supports various partner countries around the world.

For example, since 2007, the BMEL has been supporting Ukraine in the **German-Ukrainian Expert Dialogue**



on Soil under the umbrella of the German-Ukrainian Agricultural Policy Dialogue.

Transfer of knowledge in Ukraine.

An important achievement of the project's policy advice is Ukraine's "Law On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Land Use Planning," which was adopted in 2020. The law came into force in the summer of 2021 and gives municipalities planning sovereignty for their municipal territories. In fact, the law reflects the results of the advisory services provided by German land use planning experts in many places. By giving municipalities the responsibility for drawing up their own land use plans, the interests of the local population in terms of access to land and the sustainable development of land as a resource can better be taken into account.

The BMEL also supported South Africa in improving the legal and regulatory framework for land distribution and land management through the **Technical Dia-logue on Agricultural Finance Associated with Land**

SOUTH AFRICA

Technical Dialogue on Agricultural Finance Associated with Land Management

TIMEFRAME

03/2019 - 08/2021

GOALS ACHIEVED

- Strengthening the Land Bank's expertise through needs-based studies and training
- Intensifying the Land Bank's exchange with stakeholders in the field of land management
- Recommendations for more transparent guidelines for land redistribution and beneficiary selection



Management. Progress on land redistribution and land reform has fallen far short of expectations in South Africa since the end of apartheid in 1994. To date, only about nine per cent of commercial agricultural land has been returned or redistributed to previously disadvantaged people. The reasons for this include insufficient education and training measures, as well as a lack of financing opportunities for new farmers.

Based on experiences from Germany from the period after reunification, the project was able to reveal interesting connecting factors to land redistribution and agricultural financing in South Africa, Processes and instruments for land acquisition, sale, leasing, and distribution were presented with the help of several case studies from Germany and sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, the project made recommendations for measures to provide new farmers with adequate support for successful land use. In addition to easily accessible financing solutions, this includes access to technical support and training for new landowners. A central challenge in South Africa continues to be the implementation of new land redis-

tribution systems by the responsible administrations. For this purpose, recommendations were developed together with local partners to achieve transparent and fair guidelines and criteria for land redistribution and beneficiary selection in South Africa.

Soil cultivation in Zambia.

Conclusion

Sustainable use of agricultural land is a prerequisite for meeting the global demand for food in the future without expanding agricultural production to new land. This requires close cooperation between countries with high production intensity and countries that are not yet fully exploiting their agricultural potential. On the one hand, the projects of the BMEL's Bilateral Cooperation Programme enable a transfer of technology and knowledge at the production level, and on the other, an exchange on fair and transparent conditions in the land market. Experience shows that a lot of knowledge and technology for sustainable intensification is already available. However, application on a large scale remains a major challenge for the necessary increase in food production.

Overview of the BKP

Budgetary resources per project country (%), for 2021

The following chart illustrates how the funds of the Bilateral Cooperation Programme were distributed internationally.



*Cooperation with Russia in the framework of the BKP was terminated after the Russian leadership's attack on Ukraine in March 2022, which violated international law.



Understanding

The exchange with the partner countries is intended to strengthen the mutual understanding of all stakeholders.



The BKP supports partner countries in developing their own agri-food industries.



Sustainability

The BKP lays the foundations for the expansion of sustainable agriculture in the partner countries.

Topics



Agricultural Extension



Animal Welfare and Animal Husbandry



Contemporary Issues



Inter-Farm Cooperation and Cooperative Sector Development



Seed Sector Development, Seed Law and Plant Variety Protection



Agricultural Finance



Bioeconomy



Rural Development



Plant Production



Soil & Ressource protection



Agricultural Market



Certification and Food Safety



Digitalisation & Innovation



Land Market



Supply Chains



Agricultural Insurance



Climate Adaptation and Climate Protection



Education and Training in the Agricultural Sector



Organic Farming



Wine Law

Cooperation Projects Worldwide

In addition to the five cooperation projects described in detail, this map provides an overview of all the countries in which the BMEL supports further cooperation projects.

> Western Balkans: Regional Cooperation for a Green Future **26**

> > Morocco*

Côte d'Ivoire

Brazil: A Key Challenge **22**

Argentina: Promoting Innovations – for a Climate and Environmentally-Friendly Agricultural Economy **20**

* This map does not necessarily reflect the official position of the German government in terms of international law. The map should not be taken as indicating any view on the status of disputed territory.



GERMAN-ARGENTINE EXPERT DIALOGUE

Promoting Innovations for a Climate and Environmentally-Friendly Agricultural Economy in Argentina



Argentina has great potential in terms of natural resources and the agricultural sector is the biggest driver of the Argentine economy. The country has the conditions to increase the efficiency of agricultural production while ensuring climate and environmentally-friendly production and processing of agricultural goods.

In recent decades, Argentine agriculture has undergone a remarkable process of structural change and innovation. This development, combined with the expansion of agricultural land, has opened up new opportunities for the sector, but has also significantly increased pressure on the environment. Changes in land use, particularly through the clearing of the Chaco dry forest in northern Argentina for the expansion of arable and pasture land, cause by far the highest greenhouse gas emissions in the country. This has a significant impact on biodiversity.

The country is currently faced with the task of making agricultural production resource-conserving and climate-friendly while also expanding it. The development and application of innovations plays a central role here. A supportive environment in which these can be developed, disseminated, and applied on a large scale is essential. This is where the technical dialogue between public, private, and scientific stakeholders in both countries comes in. The project strengthens the institutional and legal framework for the promotion of innovations and supports their dissemination in the field of climate and environmentally-friendly agricultural technologies. It also promotes knowledge about agricultural technology innovations and facilitates their concrete application. To this end, the project advises on innovative approaches to sustainable agricultural production and land use systems, which are piloted through research partnerships.

The expert dialogue thus lays an essential foundation for common understanding and exchange on this topic, which is central to sustainable agricultural production worldwide.

PROJECT TITLE

German-Argentine Technical Dialogue on Innovations for a Climate and Environment-Friendly Agricultural Sector

TIMEFRAME 11/2021-10/2024

COUNTRY Argentina

BRAZIL: SUSTAINABILITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY DIALOGUE (APD)

A Key Challenge



As a resource-rich country, Brazil plays a decisive role in global agricultural production and has the world's largest tropical and subtropical forests. Brazil therefore has an important part to play in the conservation of biodiversity and in solving global challenges.

The rates of deforestation in the Amazon, which have risen significantly in recent years, are closely related to the illegal appropriation of public land and the dismantling of environmental controls. More than 90% of deforestation in the Amazon violates Brazilian law, and enforcement of environmental legislation by the judiciary and police is insufficient. In this context, a broad alliance of more than 300 organisations and enterprises has come together, who are aware of the sector's responsibility and want to participate in global efforts to combat climate change. These include research institutes, Brazilian agri-food associations, globally recognised environmental NGOs, but also private companies, commercial banks, and global corporations. Independently of this initiative, the Brazilian Central Bank has also laid the foundations to ensure that algorithms will soon prevent agricultural loans from being granted to producers who are in conflict with Brazilian environmental legislation.

The Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture MAPA and the subordinate research institute EMBRAPA provide high-level innovations and create the scientific basis for making environmental services measurable and thus setting effective climate policy incentives.

The aim of the German-Brazilian Agricultural Policy Dialogue is to bring these and other Brazilian stakeholders into a dialogue at eye level with their peers in Germany. Mutual understanding on key agricultural policy issues should be improved, thus contributing to a sustainable and climate-friendly agricultural sector.

PROJECT TITLE German-Brazilian Agricultural Policy Dialogue

TIMEFRAME 04/2021-03/2024

COUNTRY Brazil

INDO-GERMAN COOPERATION Sustainable Development Through Competitive Agricultural Markets



Indian agriculture is undergoing an unprecedented transformation, which can ensure food security in the country. Recently initiated reforms to modernise agricultural markets in India confirm the country's willingness and ambition to align its agricultural value chains even more with international and sustainability standards in the future.

In addition, the Indian government is pursuing its 2014 goal of doubling agricultural incomes by 2022.

Designed as a technical dialogue, the bilateral cooperation project, which began in August 2021, contributes to India's strategy for modernising agricultural markets.



Spices and dried fruit at a food market in New Delhi.

It strengthens public and private sector institutions of the Indian agricultural market system. At the federal state level, the project supports the development of selected agricultural value chains, while involving agricultural producer organisations and taking their marketing facilities into account. In addition to increasing the efficiency of local markets, the technical dialogue also includes capacity development to realise the export potential of selected agricultural products for the EU market, while also taking sustainability standards into account.

The project thus promotes the expansion of marketing opportunities for Indian farmers and the creation of incentives for investment in modern technologies to create a competitive agricultural sector.

PROJECT TITLE Indo-German Cooperation on Agricultural Market Development TIMEFRAME

08/2021-08/2024

country India

AGRICULTURAL POLICY DIALOGUE GERMANY - WESTERN BALKANS

Regional Cooperation for a Green Future



For many years, Germany has maintained close relations with the six Western Balkan states, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, and Serbia. These states are striving to become members of the European Union, but have made varying degrees of progress in the process of legislative approximation, also in the food and agricultural sectors. With the "Green Agenda for the Western Balkans" of 2020, a shared political framework for a sustainable transformation of the agricultural sector is now available for the first time. The Agricultural Policy Dialogue with the Western Balkans supports the Green Agenda's translation into concrete agricultural policy measures. The central partner is the Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development in South Eastern Europe (SWG), which was founded in 2005 by the ministries of agriculture of the Western Balkan states. Among other things, the SWG organises regional working groups that facilitate the targeted exchange of ministries and specialised institutions in specific thematic areas.

As part of the APD, the BMEL is funding four of these working groups on key topics for the future: Knowledge and Innovation Transfer, Organic Farming, Soil Protection, and Sustainability in the Wine Sector. In addition, evidence-based measures are being developed together with German institutions to empower young people, especially young women, as key stakeholders in the transformation.

The working groups receive financial and technical support from experts at the BMEL and other public and private institutions, such as the Bavarian State Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Forestry, the Geisenheim University of Applied Sciences, the IAMO, and IAK Agrar Consulting GmbH.

PROJECT TITLE

Agricultural Policy Dialogue with the Western Balkans

TIMEFRAME 07/2021 – 12/2024

COUNTRY

Western Balkan states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, and Serbia) SOUTHERN AFRICA: EXCHANGE PLATFORMS TO STRENGTHEN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Strong Farmer Organisations — Sustainable Agricultural Sector



Farmer organisations are important stakeholders in the agricultural sector in Southern Africa. International exchange platforms and networks enable direct dialogue and mutual learning.

The agricultural sector in Southern Africa is facing major challenges: it is already strongly affected by the impacts of climate change and many other issues require solutions. As member-based organisations, farmer organisations (FOs) are perfectly suited to identify their members' challenges and offer targeted services. However, insufficient technical and organisational capacities often prevent topics of strategic importance from being developed proactively. Exchange and cooperation within the FOs offer an effective solution.



Drought-affected maize field in the Iringa region, Tanzania.

As part of the project, virtual exchanges and study trips with FO members and experts from research and technology institutions are conducted together with the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) – the umbrella organisation in Southern Africa – the Andreas Hermes Akademie (AHA), and AgrarKontakte International (AKI). One focus is on a transnational expert working group aimed at increasing the climate resilience of the region's agricultural sector. Particular importance is also given to networking with German associations and with the BKP projects in the region. This promotes personal and institutional networks with the objective to initiate joint activities beyond the project.

PROJECT TITLE

Southern Africa: Exchange Platforms to Strengthen Climate Resilience

тімеғкаме 11/2021 – 10/2024

COUNTRY

Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Eswatini, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles

Overview: Every BKP Project

COUNTRY	PROJECT TITLE	TIMEFRAME
Egypt	Technical Dialogue on Quality Assurance in the Primary Agricultural Production of Plant-Based Products	01/2022- 12/2024
Argentina	German-Argentine Technical Dialogue on Innovations for a Climate and Environment-Friendly Agricultural Sector	11/2021- 10/2024
Ethiopia	Supporting Sustainable Agricultural Productivity in Ethiopia (SSAP)	11/2014- 12/2023
Brazil	German-Brazilian Agricultural Policy Dialogue (APD)	04/2021- 03/2024
China	Sino-German Agriculture Centre (DCZ)	02/2015- 03/2022
China	Sino-German Animal Husbandry Cooperation Project	02/2015- 12/2024
China	Sino-German Crop Production and Agrotechnology Demonstration Park (DCALDP)	07/2015- 07/2022
China	Sino-German Exchange Programme for Young Experts in the Agricultural Sector (AEP)	01/2019- 12/2022
Côte d'Ivoire	Professionalising Cocoa Producers and Their Organisati- ons in Sustainable Cocoa Production (PRO-PLANTEURS)	04/2015- 05/2023
India	Indo-German Cooperation on Seed Sector Development	07/2013- 06/2022
India	Indo-German Cooperation on Agricultural Market Development	08/2021- 08/2024
Kazakhstan	Kazakh-German Agricultural Policy Dialogue (APD Kazakhstan)	06/2009- 12/2022
Kazakhstan	German Agricultural Training Centre in Kazakhstan (DAZ)	11/2010- 12/2022
Kazakhstan	Increase of Operational Competencies for the Sustainable Development of Dairy Production in Kazakhstan (Milk Competence Development)	11/2019- 10/2022
Morocco	German-Moroccan Excellence Centre for Agriculture (CECAMA)	10/2012- 12/2021

COUNTRY	PROJECT TITLE	TIMEFRAME
Morocco	German-Moroccan Agriculture and Forestry Dialogue (DIAF) – Component 1 "Organic Farming" and Compo- nent 2 "Inter-Farm Cooperation in the Agriculture and Forestry Sectors"	10/2019- 09/2022
Mongolia	German-Mongolian Cooperation Project on Sustainable Agriculture (DMKNL)	04/2013- 12/2024
Southern Africa	Strengthening Capacities of SACAU Members in Climate Resilience and Further Topics of Strategic Importance Through Peer Learning and Exchanges	11/2021- 10/2024
South Africa	Technical Dialogue on Agricultural Finance Associated with Land Management in South Africa	03/2019- 08/2021*
Thailand	German-Thai Cooperation Project on Sustainable Cluster Farm Development in Thailand	09/2020- 08/2023
Turkey	German-Turkish Association Partnership to Strengthen Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives in Turkey	04/2019- 03/2023
Ukraine	German-Ukrainian Agricultural Policy Dialogue (APD Ukraine)	01/2022- 12/2024
Ukraine	Advising Ukraine on Agricultural Trade Issues (Agritrade) – Within the Framework of the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA)	01/2019- 04/2022
Ukraine	Improvement of Education at Agricultural Colleges in Ukraine (FABU)	12/2021- 11/2024
Ukraine	German-Ukrainian Cooperation in the Field of Organic Agriculture (COA)	09/2020- 08/2023
Western Balkans	Agricultural Policy Dialogue with the Western Balkans	07/2021- 12/2024
Western Balkans	Expert Dialogue on Wine Regulation	01/2019- 12/2021
Zambia	German-Zambian Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre (AKTC)	08/2014- 07/2024

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