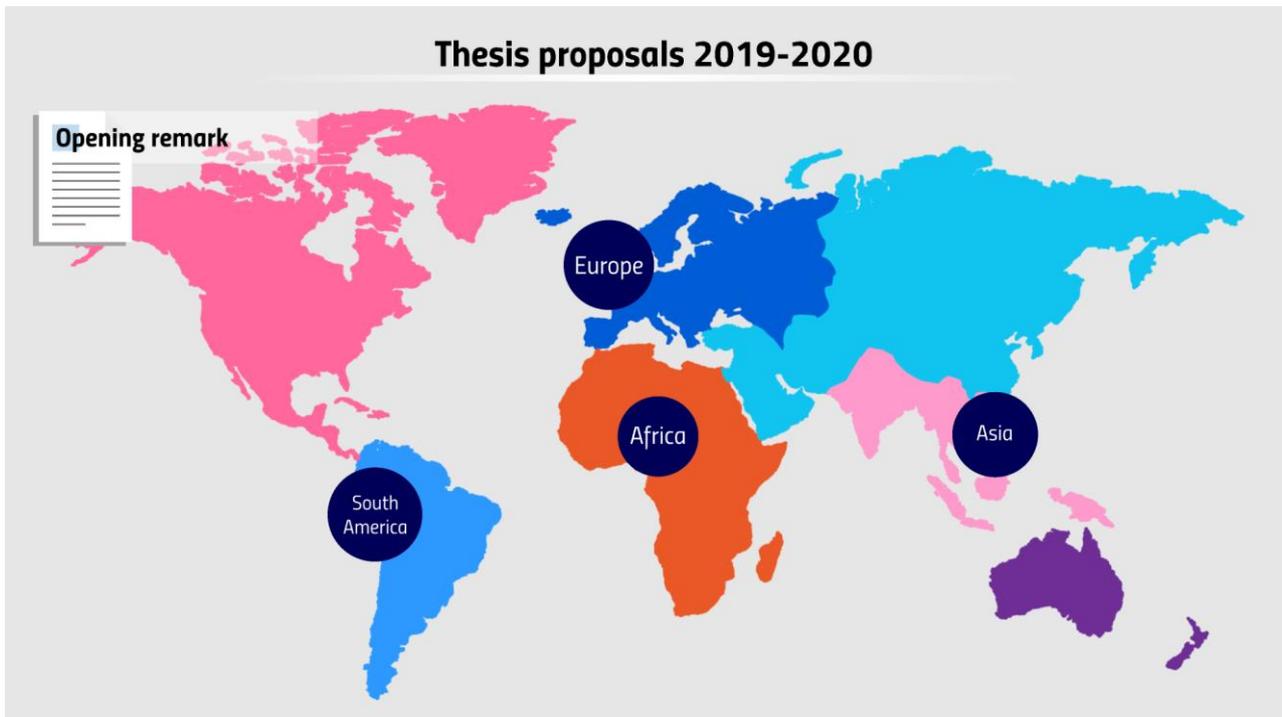


Economie

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Opening remark

- Thesis proposals related to current research projects and research themes
- Developing and developed economies, 4 geographical areas
- This year :
 - many topics related to the production of information on goods traded in local or international markets (standards, certification, labels, etc.)
 - but other topics are possible
- Key aspects : concrete situations, important issues, based on reliable data (quantitative and/or qualitative), clear insertion in economic literature and methodologies
- Collaborations with other Profs. and researchers and co-supervision are encouraged
- Possible active insertion in current research projects, field trip abroad and collaborations (ex: NGOs, firms, industry associations, etc.)
- **Come to discuss your favorite topic(s) and proposition(s) !**



1. Design of digital decision support tools (Goedele Van den Broeck & Pierre Defourny)

Farmers are exposed to an exploding number of commercial tools to support their crop and farm management. Designing effective decision support tools for farmers is crucial for a successful uptake by farmers. *How can the open, free access and public Belcam system be better tailored to farmers' needs and specific requirements?*

2. Beyond Organic Labels (Ignace Adant)

Organic Labels are widely used nowadays to inform consumers about conditions of production in agri-food value chains. But some consumers do not trust organic labels anymore. In response, some distributors are

anticipating a failure of organic labels and modify their 'business models' accordingly, to increase transparency. *How to understand that choice?*

3. Greening of packaging (Ignace Adant)

Despite the growing awareness about plastic waste pollution, plastic waste packaging is increasing. Producers and distributors are innovating to design new packaging to reduce the quantity of plastic waste. *Do consumers care about greener packages and react by favoring products with such packaging? What are the complementary conditions that should prevail to observe an increasing demand for products with greener packaging?*

4. Market gardening in urban areas when soil pollution is uncertain (Ignace Adant)

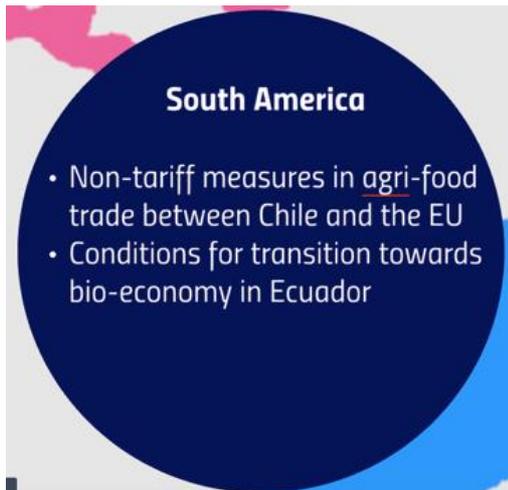
Urban market gardening refers to practices of so-called urban agriculture. It can take place in larger urban areas previously dedicated to industrial activities. In these areas, soil pollution is uncertain or imperfectly known. *How to choose market gardening zones taking into account economic determinants and soil pollution issues?*

5. Greening of Freight Transport (Ignace Adant)

Inland waterways are characterized by low CO₂ emissions. In Belgium they are widely used to transport commodities. But despite road charging targeting heavy load transport by road, shippers are becoming more reluctant to use waterways. Shipper's choice is determined by, a.o., location of clients, transshipment costs and draft of waterways and its evolution. *Does it mean that charterers' choices are sensitive to climate change?*

6. Towards a fairer trade in the Belgian dairy sector? (Goedele Van den Broeck & Philippe Baret)

The principle of 'fair trade' has focused on products from tropical, poor regions, but also farmers in temperate regions are struggling to obtain a fair price for their produce. Fairebel, a Belgian dairy brand, promises that farmers receive a fair price. *Does Fairebel actually lead to better socio-economic outcomes for dairy farmers in Belgium? If so, how do they achieve this and can the system be upscaled to the whole sector?*



1. Non-tariff measures in agri-food trade between Chile and the EU (Goedele Van den Broeck & Bruno Henry de Frahan)

Agri-food trade between poorer countries and the EU is rapidly expanding. The design of trade agreements plays a crucial role in ensuring food safety and quality, and how gains from international trade are distributed between and within countries. *What are the trade effects of non-tariff measures (NTM) in agri-food trade between Chile and the EU?*

2. From extractive-based to knowledge based bio-economy (Ignace Adant)

Ecuador, is considered a biodiversity hotspot for the development of the bio-economy sector. The country has emphasized the need to transit from an extractive-based economy to a knowledge-based bio-economy characterized by a sustainable use of renewable biological resources for the production of food, of energy and of industrial goods. Among key conditions to succeed one finds the funding of R&D and the location decision of innovative firms. *For microbe-based biotechnology what are the conditions that should prevail to support the development of new value chains in Ecuador ?*



1. Seeds certification (Frédéric Gaspard)

Peri-urban agriculture is at the same time a crucial vector of food for the growing town centers like Kinshasa and one of the only income-generating activities available for the poor urban population. Being close to the urban markets, it doesn't face the same constraints as rural agriculture. Productivity and farmers' income are clearly constrained by the quality of seeds (low germination rates, sub-optimal varieties, etc.). We study the demand for certified seeds and the impact of these on heterogeneous producers.

2. Livelihood strategies (Frédéric Gaspard)

The impact of fertilizers (especially in micro-doses) on agricultural productivity is a well-studied, still not well-understood topic in the Sahelian countries. The estimation of a production function shedding light on the phenomenon is made tricky by the poor soil quality and the typically unfavorable pattern of rainfall. Risk management at the household level introduces other activities or livelihood strategies in the household's labor force constraint.

3. Influences of World Markets Prices (Frédéric Gaspard)

Theory is rarely conclusive about the impact of world markets on producers prices (and, through them, on producer behaviors and incomes). Ivory Coast is a privileged field of investigation because of the reliability of data on producer prices. The stakes are especially high in the sector of palm oil trees, where policy must reconcile the fight against poverty and environmental concerns.



1. Vegetable certification (Goedele Van den Broeck)

Food safety is a major issue in Vietnam. External third-party certifications are often too complex for smallholders and too costly for consumers. Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are promoted as alternative certificate. *Under which conditions are traders willing to purchase PGS certified vegetables?*

2. Rice Seeds Certification (Ignace Adant)

In Thailand the drafted Rice Act aims at contributing to food safety. It will rely on state authorized seeds distribution centers. And is expected to reduce risk borne by rice growers. Industry and academics stresses that

mandatory uses of registered seeds will hinder rice variety development and impact the value chain. *What could be the real impacts of the future Rice Acts ?*

3. Rice Straw Recycling (Ignace Adant)

34 Mio tons of rice are produced annually in Thailand (+/-16% of South East Asia's production). Rice straw (+/- 110 Mio tons in ASEAN) is burnt on paddy fields. Burning straw generates air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and is also suspected of creating a significant risk to the Public Health. Yet recycling rice straw is technically simple and feasible at small scale. But it is not yet known if it is replicable at large scale beyond the local conditions where the innovation was designed. *The thesis will focus on the interplay of key conditions to assess the potential of rice straw recycling.*

4. Increasing information about water quality in the Philippines (Ignace Adant)

In the Philippines, water resources are abundant: per capita water availability in the country is twice as much as the rest of Asia. But water needs are not met, particularly the ones of poor households, causing socio-economic losses, malnutrition and public health problems. The quality of water from network is uncertain as perceived by many consumers that tend to favor drinking water from purifying stations and bottled water. *In a controlled experiment, would additional objective tests about water quality change consumers choices in favor of the less costly source of water: tap water coming from the underground through cooperatives' networks?*
