



## CONTEXT

The creation of the Institute of Arid Regions in 1976 was a turning point in the field of research for development in Tunisia to provide scientific and technical responses to the fight against desertification. This event occurred in an international and national context of growing awareness of the importance of actions to combat desertification. Thus, the creation of the IRA followed the recommendations of the first national conference on desertification held in Tozeur in 1975 after the shock of famine in the African Sahel and the organization of the International Conference on the Environment in Stockholm in 1972. The organization of the first United Nations Conference on Desertification in Nairobi in 1977 gave impetus to the launch of the IRA as a national research institution with a regional and international scope specializing in the field of scientific research for the fight against desertification and the development of arid and desert regions.

the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 brought international recognition for this phenomenon, particularly through the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

From the outset, the law establishing the IRA gave the institution 4 main integrated missions: i) the implementation of research and development activities and the fight against desertification in arid and desert regions, ii) the training and development of the capacities of specialized staff, iii) participation in extension and technical supervision programs, and (iv) conducting studies of integrated development projects.

Through its efforts and partnership programmes at national and international level, the IRA has gradually evolved into a truly multidisciplinary research and development structure. This has enabled it to contribute to the consolidation of the influence of the national agricultural research system, to the provision to stakeholders of appropriate technical references and guidelines at the service of society and national policies for agricultural development and the fight against desertification in arid areas.

Despite its solid scientific and technical achievements during its five decades of existence, the IRA is fully aware, in response to the changes in the socio-economic and environmental environment both nationally and internationally, of the challenges and issues of renewal and strategic repositioning in the future.

It is in this context that the IRA will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary in 2026, under the slogan " 50 years of research and innovation serving society and drylands ", which will mark a crucial stage in its history to be prepared for the future.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

- \* To draw up a well-thought-out assessment based on a capitalization of the achievements of the IRA during its 50 years of existence,
- \* To draw lessons from the experience of the establishment in order to define its repositioning in the future,
- \* Define a vision and strategic orientations to reposition the action of the IRA for the coming decades (IRA 2050),
- \* To promote the image of the IRA in society in general and to the institutional actors and partners concerned.



## ORGANIZATION OF FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY ACTIVITIES

The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the IRA will be conducted according to the following organization:

