

**CIRAD**

**French Agricultural Research Centre for  
International Development**

**BIOWOOEB**

**Biomass, Wood, Energy, Bioproducts research unit**

**DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE  
ALTERNATIVE CROPS  
FOR THE PRODUCTION OF NATURAL  
RUBBER**



**D.Pioch (France)**

**History of research activities on guayule (*Parthenium argentatum*) at Cirad since the 1980s.**

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Interest for guayule (*Parthenium argentatum*) in France started in the 1950s at the French Rubber institute (IFC), in parallel with research on *Hevea Brasiliensis* in Indochina. With the first oil crisis in the 1980s, the Rubber research Institute in Africa (IRCA) continues the researches on Hevea in Africa for IFC, and also started a programme on guayule in Morocco and in West Africa (JB Serrier). Interest for guayule continued but at a smaller scale with the creation of CIRAD in 1984 and was then abandoned in the 1990s. A new interest started in 2008, when the CIRAD and 17 European partners worked on a KBBE/FP7 European project (EU-based Production and Exploitation of Alternative Rubber and Latex Sources (FP7, P212827) until 2012. The EU-PEARLS project started a growing interest in Europe for alternatives sources of natural rubber based on guayule and Kazakh dandelion (*Taraxacum kok saghtz*). With the collaboration of tyres companies (Continental, Vredestein/Apollo, Bridgestone, CooperTires and Yulex), guayule and dandelion were developed at an industrial scale. In case of a shortage of NR expected in the coming years, both innovative alternative crops could have a large scale development, as NR has been labeled by Europe as a critical raw material.

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