



May 6, 2020

Dear colleagues,

The date of 11 May, announced by the government as the beginning of deconfinement, is nearing. We all know that many uncertainties still surround public transportation, the reopening of primary and secondary schools and more generally, the resumption of our country's economic activity. We must nonetheless be prepared to gradually return to life as usual, even if remote working, at least partially, will remain the norm for several weeks to come.

As I wrote to you last week, absolute priority will be given to the health and wellbeing of CNRS staff members when organising the resumption of physical presence at work.

Regional representatives and the management teams of all CNRS entities (institutes, regional offices, services, units etc.) are striving to organise plans to enable physical attendance at the workplace, and I wish to thank them wholeheartedly once again.

At most sites, this effort is being made in close collaboration with our academic partners, with whom we share responsibility for our joint units. It is up to each host establishment to decide on the conditions for the reopening of its premises, as well as how these premises will be accessed and used. Without shirking our responsibilities as employers, we have agreed that, generally speaking, the host organisation would be in charge of the health and safety of all of the staff working on its site, regardless of their respective employers. We will of course support one another if the situation so requires.

As far as the CNRS is concerned, we are home to more than 20,000 people. We are preparing our premises so that we are able to welcome them back in the best possible conditions, in particular by giving surgical masks to each and everyone of them, and by putting in place procedures to ensure that protective measures are observed.

Additional information will be issued on these various points, and on many others concerning the lifting of the lockdown, through the Frequently Asked Questions section accessible on the [CNRS Intranet system](#). This section is updated nearly every day by the national crisis management cell which, behind the scenes, has been playing an essential role ever since 3 March.

May I insist on the fact that, at least until 2 June and while awaiting new governmental instructions, remote working must continue to be preferred whenever possible. We will pay particular attention to the legitimate expectations of those agents who have been granted special leave authorisation (ASA) since the beginning of confinement. We will do our utmost to enable part-time or rotating physical presence, for those who so wish. This progressive return to the workplace will apply on a voluntary basis to all personnel, regardless of their legal status (civil servants, permanent or temporary contract holders, PhD students, trainees, etc.) It will primarily cover the following scientific activities:

- experimental (subject to all verifications necessary to the orderly conduct of such activities)
- important for making progress on a PhD thesis
- linked to significant contractual resources, or that use costly consumables that would soon become out of date





Concerning administrative activities, those that will be given priority include work that requires access to IT or technological applications or resources that cannot be obtained remotely; access to physical files or supporting material; or interaction with users or service providers that cannot take place at a distance. The same goes for logistical activities, or activities by contractors that involve interventions on equipment or facilities, or supervision of service providers.

May I end this message by thanking all social partners for the quality of our regular exchanges, whether at the general management or regional office level. Each of us, in our respective roles, is committed to running our establishment and maintaining its influence to the best of our capabilities, with a common concern for working conditions as well as for the health and safety of the entire CNRS workforce.

Together, and with the collective power that is our strength, we will endeavour to come out of this crisis successfully. We have all hoped for a return to normality. This gradual return is now approaching. Let us rejoice, while continuing to be patient and remaining vigilant – but also being determined to make the most of it.

Sincerely,

**Antoine Petit,**  
Président-directeur général du CNRS  
CNRS Chairman and CEO

