



**REPORT OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

San Jose, Costa Rica

27 – 28 September, 2006

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Printing: IICA Print Shop

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
Report of the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the
Executive Committee / IICA. –San Jose, CR : IICA, 2006.
135 p. 21 x 16 cm. – (Official Documents Series /
IICA , ISSN 1018-5712 ; no. 78

ISBN 92-90-39-753-5

Published also in Spanish, French and Portuguese

1. International Cooperation 2. International
Organizations 3. Technical Assistance I. IICA II Title
III Series

AGRIS
E14

DEWEY
338.181

San Jose, Costa Rica
2006

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH REGULAR MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN
INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE**

The Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was held in accordance with the provisions contained in the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee and in that Committee's Resolution IICA/CE/Res. 442(XXV-0/05).

The 2006 Executive Committee was made up of the following countries: Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Grenada, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

PREPARATORY SESSION

0.1 *Opening of the Session*

0.1.1 The Preparatory Session of the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was called to order at 08:50 on September 27 in the United States/Canada Room at IICA Headquarters. It was chaired by Mr. Victor Villalobos, Delegate of Mexico, the country that chaired the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, held in Ribeirao Preto, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, from May 13-14, 2005.

0.2 *Agreements*

0.2.1 Election of the Chair and Rapporteur of the Meeting

The Committee unanimously elected Mr. Roman Solera, Director of the Mixed Farming and Sector Planning Executive Secretariat (SEPSA) and Chief Administrative Officer of the Ministry of Production of Costa Rica (MIPRO), as Chair of the Meeting. Next, the Committee nominated Mr. Erick Fidel

Santamaría, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Panama, to serve as Rapporteur. The motion was approved.

The officers of the Meeting were elected as follows:

Chair:	Román Solera
Rapporteur:	Erick Fidel Santamaría
<i>Ex officio</i> Secretary:	Chelston W. D. Brathwaite

The Director General welcomed the Delegates of the Member States of IICA on the Executive Committee. He congratulated the Delegate of Costa Rica on being elected to chair the meeting as well as the Delegate of Panama on being elected as Rapporteur.

0.2.2 Agenda for the Meeting

The Technical Secretary reported that the working and background documents for the meeting had been placed in the Delegates' folders. They had also been posted on IICA's website, in the Executive Committee section, 45 days prior to the meeting, pursuant to Article 29 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee, except for the Twelfth Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC), which was delivered on September 22.

The Delegate of Mexico thanked the Technical Secretariat for the timely presentation of the working documents. Next, he submitted to the Executive Committee for its consideration a proposal to amend the agenda so that the item on the Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program and the item on the assessment of technical expertise at IICA would be considered in the afternoon on the first day, and the budgetary and financial matters would be transferred to the second day. The idea here was to give the Delegates more time to discuss certain major items. The Observer Delegate from Ecuador seconded the motion from the Delegate of Mexico.

The Technical Secretary made some observations on how the proposal from the Delegate of Mexico would affect the agenda for the meeting. He proposed maintaining the items on the 2007 Program Budget, the financing of the 2008-2009 Program Budget, the new quota scale of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the current status of quota payments and progress with the collection of quotas owed to the Institute, on the order of business for the first day and transferring the items on the financial statements of the Institute, the Report of the External Auditors and the Twelfth Annual Report of the Audit Review Committee to the second day.

The Director General reported that the Technical Secretariat would make the appropriate changes in the agenda for the meeting, which would be distributed to the Delegates.

The Committee approved the agenda presented in document IICA/CE/Doc.475(06) rev. with the changes referred to above.

0.2.3 Working Committees

The Committee decided that, should it be necessary, working communities would be set up in the course of the meeting.

0.2.4 Deadline for Submitting Proposals

Thursday, September 28, at 12:00 mid-day was set as the deadline for the submission of new proposed draft resolutions.

0.2.5 Duration of the meeting

The plenary agreed to hold the closing session for the meeting at 17:00 on September 28, 2006, as proposed by the Technical Secretariat for the meeting.

0.2.6 Order of precedence of Member States

Pursuant to Article 41 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee, the order of precedence was established, following the alphabetical order in Spanish, and starting with Costa Rica, the Member State whose Delegate would chair the meeting.

0.2.7 Countries' Right to Vote

The Director General asked the Legal Advisor for an opinion regarding application of Article 24 of the Convention on the Institute and its Regulations concerning the right to vote of those Member States that were more than two years behind in the payment of their quotas.

The Legal Advisor explained the scope of that article and its regulations. He noted that at its Thirteenth Meeting, held in Guayaquil, Ecuador, the Inter-American Board had adopted resolution IICA/JIA/Res.414 (XIII-O/05) with the rules governing the application of the aforementioned Article 24. In accordance

with the rules in effect, the IABA and the Executive Committee could allow those countries that were in arrears to exercise their right to vote, provided the failure to pay was beyond the control of the Member State.

The Chair recognized the Delegate of Paraguay, the only Member State sitting on the Executive Committee that was in arrears, so that he could present his explanation to the plenary. The Delegate of Paraguay explained the reasons why his country had not been able to honor its commitments to the Institute and explained measures under way to meet its outstanding financial obligations.

The Delegates of Costa Rica, Mexico, Bolivia and Brazil acknowledged the difficult situation Paraguay was passing through and expressed their solidarity and support, requesting that the Delegate of that Member State be allowed to participate in the Executive Committee and exercise all rights.

The decision was that all Member States sitting on the Executive Committee could exercise their right to vote.

The Director General recognized the efforts made by Paraguay to resolve its in arrears status and comply with the payment plans agreed upon. He then thanked that country for its commitment to continue to support the Institute. He also thanked the Executive Committee for allowing Paraguay to participate fully in the meeting.

0.3 Close of the Session

The session was adjourned at 09:37.

INAUGURAL SESSION

0.4 Opening of the Session

0.4.1 The Inaugural Session was called to order at 10:00 on September 27, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Roman Solera, Delegate of Costa Rica.

0.5 Inaugural Address by the Director General

0.5.1 Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, Director General of IICA, extended to the Delegates and Observer Delegates of Member States a most cordial welcome to

the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee. The Director General then noted that during the first four years of his administration, the Institute had been repositioned as a key component in the institutional framework of the Americas that was contributing to the promotion of the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and rural prosperity.

0.5.2 He then went on to give a brief overview of future trends in the global economy and in the agrifood sector of the Americas. Next, he described the main achievements of IICA in the areas of the development of agribusiness, trade policy and negotiations, technology and innovation, agricultural health and food safety, sustainable rural development, education and training, and the preparation of investment projects. He also explained the main results achieved in the five regions and the 34 Member States and reported on some relationships with more successful strategic partners.

0.5.3 The Director General referred to the future role for the Institute, which should, he said, continue to cooperate with its Member States to enable them to successfully face up to the challenges of eliminating poverty and hunger, ensuring environmental sustainability, combating transboundary diseases, improving the competitiveness of their economies and solving problems associated with the high cost of energy and the availability of water.

0.5.4 He ended his address by saying that the Institute had accordingly prepared the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan which, he hoped, would be approved at this Executive Committee meeting.

0.6 *Close of the Session*

0.6.1 The session was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

FIRST PLENARY SESSION

- 1.1 *Opening of the Session*
- 1.1.1 The First Plenary Session was called to order at 11:30 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Román Solera, Delegate of Costa Rica.
- 1.2 *Status of the resolutions of the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee and the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture*
- 1.2.1 Mr. Fernando del Risco, Technical Secretary for the meeting, presented both reports on the status of the resolutions adopted by the Institute's Governing Bodies and describing action taken by the General Directorate in fulfillment of those mandates. With regard to the decisions of the aforementioned meeting of the Executive Committee, he reported that all resolutions had been implemented. With regard to the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, he reported that the only resolutions that had yet to be implemented were those on the 2006-2010 Medium-term Plan (MTP) and on the 2007 Program-Budget. Both these issues, he said, had been included as items on the agenda for that meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 1.3 *Proposed 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan*
- 1.3.1 The Director General said that the MTP was the product of a joint effort by the Institute's administration and Member States to define IICA's strategic orientation for the future.
- 1.3.2 Mr. James French, Director of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management, described the participatory process for formulating the Medium-Term Plan which had started one year ago with broad consultation in both Member States and at IICA. He spoke specifically about the adjustments that had been made in response to the observations of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) on a preliminary version during its regular meeting from July 26-27, 2006.

- 1.3.3 He explained that the Plan had been based on diagnostic assessments conducted in each country from the standpoint of expanded agriculture. The idea was to consolidate IICA's management model and its achievements as a technically oriented organization of excellence in order to position the Institute as the strategic partner of choice. The MP considered world trends and initiatives, consolidated national and regional agendas and took into account regional differences and priorities.
- 1.3.4 Next, Mr. Rafael Trejos, Specialist in the Institutional Modernization Unit, explained in detail the contents of the proposal. He cited the vision and mission, explained the reasons why the Institute should focus on certain thematic areas in coming years and indicated the priorities for hemispheric action proposed in each of the following five areas: (i) promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness; (ii) strengthening rural communities based on the territorial approach; (iii) promoting agricultural health and food safety; (iv) promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment; (v) incorporating technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development.
- 1.3.5 The Delegate from Mexico felt that IICA's role in the MTP should be defined in more precise terms and concrete actions and expected results should also be included. He voiced his concern that the subject of the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment was being included, since it was not clear how IICA would become involved in this topic and what the budgetary impact would be. He further suggested that IICA focus on certain thematic areas, such as agribusiness, rural development, agricultural health and food safety, and technology and innovation. Finally, he signaled the importance of defining more clearly IICA's role in areas in which other international organizations were heavily involved.
- 1.3.6 The Delegate from Brazil applauded the quality of the MTP and referred to the topics he considered to be of special interest. Among the major topics he mentioned were agro-energy and biofuels, topics in which Brazil had experience that could be useful to other countries. He said that in the area of biotechnology, governments should explain their positions vis-à-vis living modified organisms from the technical standpoint. Two other topics that had not been sufficiently addressed in the MTP were transboundary pest control and diseases and rural insurance.
- 1.3.7 The Director General thanked the Delegates from Brazil and Mexico for their comments. He explained that representing the interests of the 34 Member States during the process of preparing the 2006-2010 MTP, had been a

complex task. The MTP, he clarified, was a strategic document that served as a guide. It was not a program for implementation. The national and regional agendas, he said, were instruments through which specific goals were described in greater detail in response to the actual circumstances of each Member State and region and which were reported on each year. He also said that these agendas and the Program Budget were operational instruments. The MTP, he added, had six strategic priorities. However, actions could focus on a lesser number of priorities in Member States or regions.

- 1.3.8 With respect to the subject of the environment, he clarified that this was not a new item on the Institute's agenda. He recalled that at the last regular meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues, it had been established that "this was not a new area for IICA, given that cooperation actions and projects had always existed in that field". Indeed, historically, the Institute had provided support to Member States to overcome situations brought about by natural disasters, such as floods and hurricanes. It has also been involved in water resource management, policy development in relation to environmental services and matters related to the greenhouse effect and climate change, which would affect agriculture. There were commitments to support Member States in improving their grasp of environmental issues and, ultimately, agriculture was a way of making use of natural resources in a specific environment. By proposing this area of work, the Institute was recognizing its importance as an essential component in the sustainable development of agriculture, which had been underscored in the proposed 2006-2010 MTP.
- 1.3.9 The Chair agreed that the 2006-2010 MTP was a guiding framework and that the challenge for Member States was to have the national agendas reflect the needs of the countries. These agendas should therefore be prepared in close cooperation with the respective IICA Offices.
- 1.3.10 The Delegates from Canada and the Observer Delegates from Argentina and the United States highlighted the fact that the General Directorate had endeavored to incorporate in the 2006-2010 MTP proposals that had been forthcoming at the Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues, and thanked the General Directorate for its efforts in this regard.
- 1.3.11 On behalf of the countries in the Caribbean Region, the Delegate from Jamaica congratulated the Director General and his team on the preparation of the MTP. He supported the inclusion of environmental topics in the MTP, noting that threats of natural disaster and the need to establish adequate agricultural

and financially sustainable insurance were extremely important issues for the Caribbean.

- 1.3.12 The Observer Delegate from the United States said he was pleased that agricultural health and food safety, trade and biotechnology had been given sharper focus at IICA. He said that with respect to the subject of agroenergy and biofuels, horizontal cooperation activities should be promoted. He reiterated support for the proposal to conduct an assessment of technical expertise at IICA.
- 1.3.13 The Observer Delegate from Argentina noted that what was most important was assessing IICA's role rather than its expertise and insisted on the advisability of including goals and performance indicators in the MTP. That opinion was shared by the Delegate from Mexico and the Observer Delegate from Haiti, who made a point of noting that the MTP should serve as an evaluation instrument at the end of the period. The Delegate from Mexico also felt that it should be explained in greater detail in the MTP whether IICA's role in each of the actions would be as a protagonist or as a catalyst. The Delegate from Uruguay, for his part, insisted that the core issue was IICA's role in assisting Member States to achieve results as promoter and facilitator, rather than any results finally achieved. He added that in many instances those results ended up being achieved by the private sector. The topic of the environment, he went on to say, was a cross-cutting subject which he related to other similar topics, such as the gender approach. Finally, he recognized that horizontal cooperation was another major instrument in the Institute's cooperation model.
- 1.3.14 The Observer Delegate from Argentina agreed on the importance of the topic of agricultural insurance and suggested approaching it from a broader perspective so as to consider all risks facing the agricultural sector..
- 1.3.15 The Delegate from Canada and the Observer Delegate from Argentina asked if the activities proposed in the 2006-2010 MTP were financed with regular funds or whether they also included activities funded with external resources administered by IICA.
- 1.3.16 The Delegates from Jamaica and Grenada supported including environmental topics in the 2006-2010 MTP, especially in light of the need for IICA to support governments in response to natural disasters. The Delegates from Mexico and Canada as well as the Observer Delegate from the United States expressed concern about IICA's role with regard to those topics and, especially, its ability to assume the leadership role proposed. The Delegate from Canada suggested that instead of proposing activities to reduce the

impact of climate change, the MTP should identify and promote activities to mitigate its effects. For his part, the Delegate from Uruguay noted that the issue of the environment was a cross-cutting topic included in all lines of action. Finally, the Delegate from Paraguay and the Observer Delegate from Haiti agreed that IICA should have a leader who could strike a balance between production and environmental concerns, for which good practices would have to be promoted.

- 1.3.17 The Delegate from Bolivia acknowledged that the version of the 2006-2010 MTP presented reflected the observations of the SACMI. He noted that there was still lingering concern about the Institute's role in environment-related topics. He then reflected on the implications of IICA assuming a leadership role in topics where Member States had divergent interests. He suggested that the Institute take a stand on agricultural protectionism and pointed to the problems stemming from international price distortions. He noted the relationship between the demand for healthy foods and agricultural health and suggested that IICA play a leading role in this field. Finally, he spoke to the need to strengthen coordination with other cooperation agencies involved in topics related to those on the Institute's agenda.
- 1.3.18 The Delegate from Paraguay was concerned that developing environmental legislation might have a detrimental effect on the production sector, noting the conflict of interests that often came into play between forestry and agricultural production activities. He also raised the issue of the difficulties faced by those countries where the State's role in enforcing environmental controls was minimal. Finally, he felt that topics such as good environmental practices, carbon sequestration, biodiversity and genetically modified organisms, *inter alia*, were extremely important topics within the context of environmental issues, which his country supported.
- 1.3.19 The Director General summarized the comments and enquiries made, thanked the Observer Delegate from the United States for his proposal to have a technical assessment conducted, a proposal which he supported, and recalled that this was an item on the agenda for the meeting. He responded to the enquiries, noting that the MTP was financed with regular funds. Other resources such as CATIs and INR resources made it possible to reinforce activities or meet emerging situations.
- 1.3.20 With regard to IICA's role, he said that at times IICA assumed a leadership role, and at other times, it served as a catalyst, which made it a strategic partner. With regard to coordination with other cooperation agencies, he

pointed to the agreement with the FAO and the renewal of the agreement with PAHO.

- 1.3.21 The Director General noted, with respect to the evaluation of the MTP, that there was no mandate requiring such an evaluation, although this could be so decided by either one of the two governing bodies of IICA. He explained that the main source of financing of the MTP was the regular budget, which could be supplemented with INR resources. External funds were administered through contracts with Member States and were not used to finance that Plan.
 - 1.3.22 With regard to the comments about IICA's role in environmental topics, he agreed that this was a cross-cutting issue, explaining the background to IICA's participation in this area and citing as examples the Institute's support to Member States affected by natural events, such as hurricanes. He referred to activities of environmental and agricultural interest, such as agroenergy, biotechnology and agrotourism. Finally, he suggested that given the concerns about IICA's role in these topics, IICA form a committee, to be made up of Delegates from Member States and members of IICA personnel, to analyze the proposal in the MTP and recommend any adjustments that might be needed in response to the observations raised.
 - 1.3.23 The Delegates from Brazil, Mexico, Jamaica and Paraguay and the Observer Delegates from the United States, Argentina, Ecuador and Haiti supported the proposal and decided to form that committee. The Technical Secretary announced that Messrs. James French, Director of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management; Rafael Trejos, Specialist in the Institutional Modernization Unit; and Francisco Barea, Director of Administration and Finance and of Programming would sit on that Committee on behalf of IICA.
- 1.4 *Closing of the Session*
- 1.4.1 The First Plenary Session was adjourned at 13:50.

SECOND PLENARY SESSION

2.1 *Opening of the Session*

- 2.1.1 The Second Plenary Session of the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was called to order at 15:00 on Wednesday, 27 September 2006, under the chairmanship of Mr. Roman Solera, the Delegate from Costa Rica.

2.2 *Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program*

- 2.2.1 The Director of Biotechnology and Biosafety, Mr. Assefaw Tewolde, thanked the group of experts from the Member States for the valuable contributions they had made to the formulation of the proposed Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program. He explained that the team comprised representatives of 15 Member States. The proposal incorporated the recommendations of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI), in particular, the suggestion that it should include the estimated budget required to finance the program's activities during the period 2007-2009. The proposal was divided into the following sections: (i) the background to, and justification for, the program; (ii) IICA's contribution and how it related to the mandates of the Executive Committee and the IABA; and, (iii) the program's content, including its purpose, objectives, results, activities and implementation strategy.
- 2.2.2 Mr. Tewolde explained that the proposal outlined the expected results and the activities to be implemented, keyed to the program's objectives. The actions were related to the areas of information, the assessment of needs, support for the development and implementation of policies and regulatory frameworks, communication with the community to promote a correct understanding of the risks and benefits of agro-biotechnologies, support for the development of scientific and technological capabilities, the promotion of debate and the analysis of national and international standards and regulations.
- 2.2.3 The Delegate of Mexico explained the thinking behind Resolution 409 of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), on which the proposed hemispheric program was based. Among other things, the IABA realized how

important it was for the Member States to establish national policies on this issue, regardless of whether they were signatories to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Delegate said the issue was very important because of its implications for trade flows and the trade negotiations. He also mentioned the risks involved in the use of biotechnology. He reiterated Mexico's support for the proposal that had been presented and said his country was ready to cooperate in efforts to analyze the impact of biotechnology and gradually develop the regulatory frameworks for biosafety. Finally, he urged the Delegates of the Member States to approve the proposed program.

- 2.2.4 The Delegate of Canada reiterated his country's support for the proposal and congratulated those involved in preparing the program on the progress they had made. He believed the program to be very important if agriculture was to become more competitive. It was essential that the countries of the Americas be encouraged to share information and experiences regarding biotechnology. He also highlighted the need to link specific results with the financial resources that would be used, and recommended that actions be prioritized and accountability practices designed. He reiterated Canada's readiness and desire to participate in the execution of the program.
- 2.2.5 The Delegate of Uruguay acknowledged that the proposal marked an important step forward. He suggested that, pursuant to the provisions of the 2006-2010 MTP, the program's actions be tailored to the specific characteristics of each country. He hoped the actions proposed would be carried out in line with the conditions in each country and take into account the regulations adopted by the Member States to protect their strategic interests, the regulatory frameworks that are established, risk analysis and other measures.
- 2.2.6 The Observer Delegate of the United States thanked Mr. Tewolde for his presentation and underscored the useful contribution made by the group of experts. Biotechnology could contribute to food security, agricultural productivity and rural development in the Americas. He emphasized the importance of the countries of the hemisphere sharing information. He urged the Member States to continue to support the program and, commenting on the budget, acknowledged that the Administration had made an effort to allocate more resources to the program.
- 2.2.7 The Delegate of Panama expressed support for the program and noted that the issue had generated an interesting increase in cooperation between countries, in aid of those that lacked resources for initiatives of this kind. The Institute

and the Member States should keep on contributing technical capabilities and resources to give continuity to work in this area.

- 2.2.8 The Delegate of Bolivia mentioned the support for the initiative that the CAS countries had provided. After suggesting that the indicators used to measure the program's impact needed to be specified, he asked for further details of: (i) how the budget had been worked out, and (ii) how long the program would last.
- 2.2.9 The Delegate of Paraguay acknowledged the impact of biotechnology on the environment. He seconded the comments of the Delegate of Canada and mentioned Paraguay's experience with transgenic cotton, underscoring the importance of having regulatory frameworks in place.
- 2.2.10 The Director of Biotechnology and Biosafety said that the working group of experts would hold regular meetings to ensure the transparent use of resources and the accountability of the program. Part of the resources needed had been estimated and agreed upon by the group of experts; the rest had been calculated based on the activities required to formulate and design projects. He explained that the working group had provided guidelines for identifying needs and preparing initiatives and projects, so that public and private institutions and academics could participate in each region. He pointed out that the resources budgeted for the period 2007-2010 were estimated amounts.
- 2.2.11 The Observer Delegate of Argentina asked whether the funds that appeared in the budget (US\$525,000) were included in the regular budget that would be submitted to the consideration of the SACMI meeting, since Resolution 428 of the Executive Committee (IICA/CE/Res.428 (XXV-O/05)) had established that the program was to be financed with resources obtained from the payment of quota arrearages.
- 2.2.12 The Director General said that the details of the amount budgeted would be discussed during another session of the meeting. He explained that quota resources had been allocated and a special budget, financed with quotas owed to the Institute from earlier years, would be proposed to provide further resources for the Biotechnology and Biosafety Program. The special budget would be drawn up as soon as the Administration knew the exact amount of funds that would be available following the payment of outstanding quotas, above and beyond the amount of the regular budget programmed for 2006 (US\$27.1 million).

- 2.2.13 The Delegate of Canada expressed satisfaction with the solution proposed by the Director General and recommended that the working group in charge of budgetary matters study it.
- 2.2.14 The Director General pointed out that in programs of this kind the Institute's resources were used as seed capital, supplemented with additional resources contributed by the Member States. He viewed this type of program as an alliance or partnership, in which IICA acted mainly as a catalyst and facilitator.
- 2.2.15 The Director of Administration and Finance noted that, following the SACMI's recommendations, US\$180,000 of regular funds had been allocated to the Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program in the 2007 Program Budget.
- 2.2.16 The Observer Delegate of Argentina proposed that, pursuant to the aforementioned Resolution 428 of the Executive Committee, resources be allocated to the program from the outstanding quotas collected, i.e., when the amount collected exceeded US\$27.1 million. Consequently, the financing of the program should not be included in the regular budget, so that it did not have negative effects on the allocation of resources for other areas.
- 2.2.17 The Director General explained that, as soon as the amount available from the payment of quota arrearages was known, a special budget would be submitted to the Executive Committee or the IABA for the Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program.
- 2.3 *Assessment of IICA's technical capabilities*
- 2.3.1 The Director General said that at the meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues, held from July 26-27, 2006 at IICA Headquarters, the delegate of the United States had proposed undertaking an analysis of IICA's technical capabilities and evaluating how the Institute was coping with the demand for technical cooperation from the Member States. The Director General gave an overview of the evolution of the coverage of the Institute's activities. IICA was being asked to provide assistance in more areas, while its budget had been frozen since 1995. He explained how new issues had been incorporated into the Institute's agenda over the last four decades. Changes had been introduced in response to the sweeping changes taking place in the agricultural sector and the environment in which it operated during periods marked by developments such as the Green Revolution, the debt crisis,

structural adjustments processes, sustainable development priorities and trade liberalization and globalization.

- 2.3.2 The Director General then went on to say that in recent years the Institute had received requests for cooperation in new fields, such as institutional reform, biotechnology and biosafety, and agro-energy and bio-fuels, all of which were strategically important for promoting the sustainability of agriculture, rural prosperity and food security in the Americas.
- 2.3.3 With respect to the proposal made by the delegate of the United States at the SACMI, the Director General asked for recommendations and suggestions from the Delegates of the Member States regarding the scope of the assessment of IICA's capabilities and how it should be carried out.
- 2.3.4 The Delegate of Mexico acknowledged the fact that, in carrying out the mandates of the IABA, IICA had had to expand its services in support of agricultural and rural development. As a result, the Institute's agenda now included issues such as agricultural health and food safety, agribusiness, and biotechnology and biosafety. IICA also needed to assume a position of leadership in regard to environmental issues such as climate change and agro-energy. However, constraints in terms of both human capabilities and financial resources were an obstacle to the Institute's efforts to carry out all these mandates satisfactorily.
- 2.3.5 In view of the above, the assessment of capabilities proposed by the United States of America needed to be carried out as a matter of urgency. It was important to know not only IICA's current capabilities, but also its ability to incorporate new issues, as the budget remained frozen. He proposed that a working commission be set up to prepare a first draft of the terms of reference for the assessment during the meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 2.3.6 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America agreed with the Director General's comments but did not believe that the proposed assessment should include CATIE. He seconded the proposal of the Delegate of Mexico that a working commission be set up to define the terms of reference of the assessment and offered a special contribution of US\$10,000 to support the initiative.
- 2.3.7 The Observer Delegate of Argentina proposed that the opportunity offered by the assessment be used to consider both the supply (IICA's technical capabilities) and the demand and national priorities. He reminded the meeting that at the Regular Meeting of the IABA held in 2005 in Guayaquil, Ecuador,

the CAS had proposed promoting a process of interaction between the supply and the demand for technical cooperation. He felt that the 2006-2010 MTP should be used as a framework for analyzing IICA's capabilities with regard to the demand from the countries, and their expectations, which would help identify unsatisfied needs.

- 2.3.8 The Chair proposed that, in view of the Delegates' comments, the terms of reference be expanded to include an assessment from the demand perspective.
- 2.3.9 The Delegate of Mexico suggested that a high-level group be set up to carry out the assessment. He joined the Observer Delegate of the United States of America in offering his country's support, and announced that his country would be supplying one of the members of the assessment team and meeting the costs of his/her participation. The Delegate of Mexico said there were important aspects to consider: first, the matter of the high-level group to be hired to carry out the assessment and, second, the drafting of the terms of reference for the team. He repeated his suggestion that a working group draft the terms of reference during the meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 2.3.10 The Director General thanked the Delegates for their offers of support and urged other Member States to follow suit. He reiterated that the study was vital for the Institute and the resources would be sought for carrying it out. He suggested that the SACMI could be used to obtain information from the countries and reach agreement on the terms of reference at the advisory body's next meeting, in 2007. He said that having a frozen budget made it difficult for IICA to attract highly qualified personnel, since the salaries that the Institute offered were, in many instances, not competitive. He suggested that this aspect also be considered in the assessment.
- 2.3.11 The Delegate of Brazil felt more thought needed to be given to the terms of reference and offered his country's support for the assessment of the Institute's capabilities. He said that an assessment of EMBRAPA had been carried out quite recently, and the methodology employed could be useful as a background document for the initiative.
- 2.3.12 The Delegates of Brazil and Canada and the Observer Delegates of the United States of America and Argentina announced their intention of forming part of the working group. As there were no other suggestions, the Chair declared the proposal approved and promised to announce the composition of the working group during the course of the meeting. The Delegate of Mexico said he would like to form part of the commission but would not be able to because his country's delegation would be smaller on the second day of the meeting. He

offered to submit a draft document the next day to provide input for the proposed terms of reference.

2.3.13 The Delegate of Canada asked the Deputy Director General of IICA, Dr. James Butler, to form part of the commission that would be drafting the terms of reference for the assessment of the Institute's technical capabilities. The Director General said that the Institute's specialists would be at the Executive Committee's disposal and asked that Mr. James French, Director of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management, be included in the group.

2.4 *Current status of the payment of quotas and progress made in collecting quota arrearages*

2.4.1 The Director General asked the Director of Finance, Ms. Karen Kleinheinz, to present a report on the subject. The Director referred to resolutions 392 of the Twelfth Meeting of the IABA (Panama, 2003), 417 of the Twenty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee (Costa Rica, 2004), 435 of the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee (Brazil, 2005) and 414 of the Thirteenth Meeting of the IABA (Ecuador, 2005). She said that, thanks to these resolutions, the countries had gradually brought their quota payments up to date and that IICA's financial situation had improved substantially since 2004.

2.4.2 The Director of Finance then explained the situation of the countries with regard to the payment of their quota contributions. She said that 16 Member States were up to date with the payment of their quotas; 12 Member States owed two or less annual quota contributions, or part of their last quota, which meant that they enjoyed "regular status;" three Member States fell into the "special status" category; and three others were "in arrears status," as they owed more than two quotas. She then referred to some Member States that owed quotas to the Institute and with which IICA had entered into formal arrangements for payment, such as Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Peru and Uruguay. The progress made in collecting quota arrearages was reflected in the reduction of the number of years for which quotas were owed by the vast majority of countries that were in arrears. She added that the amount of overdue quotas collected in 2004 had made it possible to pay off loans that IICA had received to maintain its operations. The remainder was earmarked for a special budget, to increase the allocation of resources for the area of agricultural health and food safety, and to support the modernization of the Institute's financial information system.

- 2.4.3 The Director of Finance reported that at the start of the year the total amount of quotas to be collected had stood at US\$39.1 million. Thanks to the efforts of the Member States to pay their current quotas and those for previous years, the Institute had managed to collect US\$26.6 million, leaving an outstanding balance of only US\$12.5 million. She estimated that 2006 could be the third consecutive year in which the amount collected was more than the total budgeted. The Director of Finance expressed satisfaction with the situation and commended the countries on their efforts, since the amount collected so far was equivalent to almost the entire budget for 2006. This would enable IICA to implement its programs and work plans as scheduled.
- 2.4.4 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America emphasized the importance of Member States paying their quota contributions on time and urged IICA to continue its efforts to collect them, to give the Institute greater financial stability and thereby make it easier for it to implement its programs in the hemisphere.
- 2.4.5 The Director General thanked the countries for demonstrating their interest in the institution, which was reflected in the payment of outstanding quotas. He regarded it basically as recognition by the Member States of IICA's efforts to meet their needs and priorities. It was also a good indicator of the fact that the Institute's technical cooperation services were pertinent, useful and timely.
- 2.5 *Draft resolutions: "2005 IICA Annual Report;" "Status of the resolutions of the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA and the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee;" "2005 Report of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues;" and "Progress in collecting quotas owed to IICA as of 31 August 2006"*
- 2.5.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolutions, which were approved without changes.
- 2.6 *Proposed 2007 Program Budget*
- 2.6.1 Mr. Francisco Barea, Director of Administration and Finance, explained that the IABA, through Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.416(XIII-O/05), adopted at its Thirteenth Regular Meeting, held in Guayaquil, Ecuador, had approved the Institute's proposed Program Budget for 2006 and a global allocation for 2007. It had also instructed the Administration to submit to the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee the proposed detailed allocation of resources for 2007, for the total amount approved, namely, US\$30 million in regular resources.

- 2.6.2 He then described the basic elements of the proposal, which were as follows: i) the priorities for strategic action; ii) the allocation of the Regular Fund under the three chapters of the Institute's Program Budget (direct cooperation services, management costs, and general costs and provisions); and, iii) the allocation by major object of expenditure. He observed that the purchasing power of IICA's quota resources had decreased significantly between 1995 and 2006. He pointed out that the lion's share of the resources allocated went to the Institute's Offices in the Member States.
- 2.6.3 The Observer Delegate of the United States asked for clarification of the increase in the amount allocated for publications and office materials for 2007, which seemed high.
- 2.6.4 The Observer Delegate of Argentina raised the following concerns: i) he wished to know why the Program Budget did not contain a more detailed description of the goals for the period concerned and the results that were expected to be achieved, which was important for evaluation purposes; ii) he requested clarification of the amount allocated to the Offices in the Member States, which remained constant; and, iii) he asked why the Consumer Price Index of the United States of America was used as a deflector to analyze the trend in the budget in real terms, instead of using a basket of currencies that would reflect the situation more accurately, since many of the Institute's expenditures were made in other currencies.
- 2.6.5 The Delegate of Canada thanked the Administration for including the priorities of trade and agribusiness in the Program Budget and was pleased that additional resources had been allocated to the Biotechnology and Biosafety Program. He requested more information about the increase in the resources earmarked for publications and office materials. He also wished to know the reason for the increase in resources under the heading of "general services."
- 2.6.6 The Director of Administration and Finance addressed the delegates' concerns and the points regarding which they had requested clarification. He explained that the MTP and the 2007 Program Budget were used to establish global priorities. For its planning process, IICA also used the Annual Action Plan, which contained the results and indicators for each fiscal year. In addition, the process included an individual contribution plan, which every Institute staff member was required to complete. Each plan had to dovetail with the annual action plan of the respective Unit and this, in turn, with the Program Budget and the Medium-Term Plan in effect at the time.

- 2.6.7 The Director then explained that, through the planning process, funds were allocated to the Offices in the Member States based on the size of the country and the Office concerned. The amounts allocated also served as a budget ceiling, in line with the Institute's actual financial situation. Finally, he said that the evolution of the CPI of the United States of America was used to calculate variations in the purchasing power of quota resources because IICA worked with United States dollars.
- 2.6.8 The Head of Budget and Control, Mr. Yanko Goic, gave further information about the budget in general and publications and office materials, in particular. He said that the maximum relative fluctuation by line item between the 2006 and 2007 budgets was no greater than 2.5%. The change in the amount allocated for publications and office materials and general services was due to the improvement in the Institute's finances. In 2004 and 2005, when fewer quota resources were collected and a policy of financial austerity had been in effect, the full budget allocations for the two objects of expenditure concerned were not executed. This created significant relative changes when the amounts budgeted were compared with actual expenditures in previous years. He then explained that "general services" included office rents, communications, the payment of public utilities and building maintenance. The increases in the 2007 budget were also due to the need to carry out repairs to both IICA Offices in the Member States and at Headquarters.
- 2.6.9 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America asked for a corrected version of the data before the vote on the Program Budget. The Delegates of Mexico, Canada and Bolivia made similar requests. The Delegate of Uruguay said that the way the budget was prepared, based on ceilings and historical allocations, left little room for resources for new issues. He cited examples of alternative methods of allocating resources, including so-called "zero-base budgeting," according to which everything had to be justified with objectives and goals.
- 2.6.10 The Observer Delegate of Argentina pointed out that, based on Resolution IICA/CE/Res.428(XXV-O/05) of the Executive Committee, the budget for the Biotechnology Program was to be financed with overdue quotas, and not with other funds already allocated by the IABA. He thanked the Director of Administration and Finance for the points he had clarified. However, he wished to point out that the budget should be the monetary expression of the actions to be carried out. The Annual Action Plan should be as detailed as possible and was essential to verify the matching of resources to activities. He noted that the Institute's governing bodies did not formally study the plan.

- 2.6.11 The Delegate of Mexico emphasized the importance of having clear, accurate information, as it was used in the Member States to explain and justify the payment of quotas to senior Ministry of Finance officials. He reminded the meeting that the SACMI had requested more detailed information about the cost of international professionals.
- 2.6.12 The Observer Delegate of Haiti asked for clarification of the table related to the distribution of the budget by geographical level (national, regional and hemispheric). He wondered whether sufficient outstanding quotas would be collected to finance the Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program.
- 2.6.13 The Director General stressed that transparency was the keystone of his Administration and said he had issued instructions for the Delegates to be given whatever information they required during the meeting, so they could clear up all their doubts. He said the 2007 budget was real and adjusted to the actual financial situation of the Member States. The cost of services had increased considerably over the last thirteen years. Moreover, the salaries of local personnel had been increased to meet the legal requirements in each country, and new staff had been hired. In the circumstances, and since the quota budget was frozen, the number of international professional personnel had had to be reduced. He mentioned some of the factors that affected the increase in the cost of publications and office materials, including publications in more than one language; the preparation of national reports that contribute to transparency and accountability, aspects that the current Administration had made a high priority; and the publication of highly useful practical material, such as the recent compendium of all the Institute's rules and regulations.
- 2.6.14 The Director of Administration and Finance said that the information related to the salaries of international personnel, mentioned by the Delegate of Mexico, had been posted on IICA's website. He added that the current technical literature on administration suggested that the fixed, large structure directly affected the implementation strategy of institutions like IICA. Hence, the use of zero-base budgeting was not deemed appropriate.
- 2.7 Closing of the Session
- 2.7.1 The Chair thanked the Delegates for their collaboration and adjourned the session at 19:50 on September 27, 2006.

THIRD PLENARY SESSION

3.1 *Opening of the Session*

3.1.1 The Third Plenary Session was called to order at 08:10 on September 28, 2006, under the chairmanship of Mr. Roman Solera, the Delegate of Costa Rica.

3.2 *Report of the working group on the adjustments to the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan*

3.2.1 The Delegate of Paraguay presented the report containing the recommendations made by the group set up to consider possible changes to the 2006-2010 MTP. The group suggested replacing the term “climate change” with “global environmental changes” throughout the text of the MTP. It emphasized especially Area of Concentration 3, the text of which should be changed to read “impact of environmental changes on agrifood systems.”

3.2.2 He then mentioned the following specific adjustments. The group proposed that the text of the first bullet read, “To identify and encourage activities intended to mitigate and adapt to global environmental changes relative to agrifood systems and rural life.” In the third bullet, the group proposed changing the second word of the English version to “stimulate.” In the fourth bullet, it recommended adding after “social relations” the phrase “as well as providing support for rapid assessment after a natural disaster.”

3.2.3 He then said the group recommended eliminating the phrase “designation of origin” in the lines of action of Area of Concentration 4 and in the section of the text dealing with the achievement indicators.

3.2.4 The Delegates approved all the recommended changes. The Director General expressed his satisfaction with the work carried out and said that the changes would be incorporated into the final version of the 2006-2010 MTP. He asked the Director of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management to see that the changes were made.

3.3 2007 Program Budget (continuation)

- 3.3.1 The Chair announced that the meeting would continue to discuss the proposed 2007 Program Budget, carrying on from where it had left off the previous day. He gave the floor to the Director of Administration and Finance, who announced that the information on previous financial years requested by the Delegates of the Member States had been distributed. He explained that the information contained revised data and was consistent with the data presented for the 2007 Program Budget. He pointed out that the material consisted of two sections: the first provided details of actual expenditures between 2002 and 2005, according to the audited financial statements, while the second presented the budget for 2006 and the proposed budget for 2007. The figures in the last line of the table showed the extent of the under-execution of the budgets that the IABA approved for the period 2002-2005.
- 3.3.2 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America asked for a copy of the budget information discussed the day before, in order to make the pertinent comparisons.
- 3.3.3 The Delegate of Bolivia reminded the meeting that the previous afternoon the Director of Finance had stated that the amount of quotas collected so far in 2006 was nearly equivalent to the total annual budget. The meeting had also been informed that some Member States were behind with the payment of their quotas, a situation that needed to be explained. He requested information about the use to which the resources not executed between 2002 and 2005 had been put.
- 3.3.4 The Director of Administration and Finance explained that any balance left over at the end of the financial year was transferred to the General Subfund and could not be used, unless the IABA expressly authorized otherwise. The latter course of action required the preparation and approval of a special budget.
- 3.3.5 The Delegate of Canada said that the amount allocated for publications and materials in 2006 was nearly double the figure for 2002, and almost US\$600,000 more than the sum budgeted in 2005. He understood the austerity measures that had been applied in previous years but felt it was worth looking more closely at the reasons for the difference. He was concerned about the large amount allocated for publications and the nature of the publications involved.

- 3.3.6 The Director General said that IICA's activities required flexibility and control. He explained that the Institute began the financial year with zero resources. This called for financial prudence, making expenditures based on the flow of resources. The flow varied over the course of the year and it was not easy to predict how much would be collected in quota resources. Under the Institute's current rules, the Director General could transfer up to 10% of the resources allocated from one line item to another. He explained that the increase in the spending on publications was consistent with the Administration's desire to keep the Member States properly informed, which had led to the production of reports in the countries. Another factor that had an effect on spending under this heading was the publication of materials in more than one language, because IICA had four official languages. He reiterated the Administration's readiness to provide whatever information the Delegates required.
- 3.3.7 In response to a question from the Observer Delegate of Argentina concerning the consistency of the figures presented, the Director of Finance said that in the data provided quota resources had been distributed by object of expenditure. The information also included the execution of special budgets financed with resources obtained from the collection of quota arrearages. She explained that the Regular Fund consisted of quotas and miscellaneous income; the regular budget was the sum of the two but did not include special budgets.
- 3.3.8 The Observer Delegate of Argentina felt that the way in which the figures were presented in the budget created certain difficulties. He suggested focusing on the presentation of the data for income and expenditure and balances. He would have preferred a breakdown of expenditure by line item.
- 3.3.9 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America felt that the increase in the budget for publications was large and had not necessarily resulted in an increase in the number of publications produced by the Institute. It could have the effect of limiting the resources available for high-priority activities.
- 3.3.10 The Director General repeated his invitation to the Delegates to air all their concerns and be clear about how their contributions were being invested, in line with the principle of transparency that his administration promoted. He urged any Delegates who were aware, or became aware, of any hint of institutional resources being used improperly to inform him of the situation and, if possible, provide evidence so that the pertinent measures could be taken.

- 3.3.11 He then stressed the importance of publications, citing examples of the recognition that IICA had received for its publications from other organizations and in international forums. He suggested that the working group that studied budgetary matters with the Directorate of Administration and Finance look carefully at the Delegates' concerns regarding the figures and the process used to prepare and execute the budget.
- 3.3.12 The Delegate of Paraguay pointed up the role of IICA's publications in his country. Publications were particularly important for lower-income countries whose capacity to respond to new situations was limited. He felt that the explanations offered by Institute officials were satisfactory and consistent with the principle of transparency.
- 3.3.13 The Observer Delegate of Haiti said that the increase in spending on publications was indeed substantial. He did not doubt the importance of the expenditures included in the budget and was aware that his country had been receiving more publications from IICA. Finally, he supported the idea of setting up a working group to study the figures.
- 3.3.14 The Delegate of Mexico proposed that Mr. Luis Carlos Gutierrez, of the ARC, form part of the group.
- 3.3.15 The Delegate of Jamaica was interested in the budget preparation process but not in specific matters related to the administration of IICA. He was satisfied with the explanations offered and with the Institute's accountability process. He reiterated the importance of publications in English for the English-speaking countries and endorsed the idea of setting up a working group.
- 3.3.16 The Delegate of Bolivia said that, in raising doubts and concerns about the budget, the Member States were not questioning the way IICA was run but rather demonstrating their sense of ownership of, and interest in, the institution. He suggested that the budget should be linked more closely to the expected results of the actions being funded. Although publications were important, he felt the amount allocated was large and suggested seeking technology-based alternatives with an eye to reducing the cost of disseminating information.
- 3.3.17 The Observer Delegate of Ecuador supported the idea of setting up a working group. He stressed the importance of publications and cited a recent case in which, thanks to IICA's support, his country had been able to produce a

document on pests and practical quarantine measures, which agricultural exporters urgently needed.

- 3.3.18 The Delegate of Canada was satisfied with the answers given, had no issues to raise and had not considered the possibility of participating in the proposed working group.
- 3.3.19 The Delegate of Brazil said it was hard to tell whether the publications programmed were the ones needed. Nevertheless, the amount earmarked for this item constituted around 5% of total expenditures, which he felt was high. It would be wise to establish criteria for orienting the decisions regarding publications.
- 3.3.20 In winding up the discussion, the Director General said that presenting the budget by major object of expenditure might not be the solution. Some of the objections raised could be solved by breaking down the amount allocated for the production of publications by area of thematic concentration.
- 3.3.21 The delegates were consulted and it was decided that the working group would comprise members of the delegations of the following Member States: Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago and Argentina. The Observer Delegate of the United States of America declined an invitation to form part of the working group.
- 3.4 *Financing of the 2008-2009 Program Budget and the new quota scale of the OAS*
- 3.4.1 The Director General explained the link between the budget and the quota scale, and how the Institute's quota scale depended on the OAS scale. He said the issue needed to be addressed because the OAS had reviewed its scale and adopted a transitory one. It would be approving a definitive scale by the middle of 2007. IICA had an obligation to establish a payment structure for its Member States that replicated the percentage distribution used by the OAS. He asked the Legal Adviser of IICA and the OAS, William Berenson, to explain the nature of the changes that were being instituted. It was important to understand this matter, because a decision had to be taken with respect to the quota scale to be used to prepare the 2008-2009 Program Budget.
- 3.4.2 The Legal Adviser reported that the OAS had decided to change its quota scale. A provisional scale had been established and a definitive scale was expected to be adopted in June 2007. He explained that whatever the OAS did

in regard to this matter was important for IICA, among other reasons because: i) IICA was a specialized agency of the OAS, according to Chapter 18 of the OAS Charter; and, ii) Article 23 of the Convention on the Institute established that the Member States were to contribute to the maintenance of the Institute through annual quotas established by the Board, in accordance with the system for calculating quotas of the OAS. Thus, it was clear that the IABA should base the preparation of the 2008-2009 Program Budget on the new scale, which the OAS was expected to adopt around the middle of next year. Furthermore, it was a given that the change would not apply to 2007, since the IABA had approved the budget for that year, unless the governing body decided otherwise. He then mentioned the adjustments to the OAS quota agreed in January 2005. Under the provisional scale, 18 Member States paid less and 12 countries paid more.

- 3.4.3 The Delegate of Uruguay reminded the meeting that the CAS had presented a proposal aimed at implementing the new quota scale as soon as possible. It had proposed applying the transitory scale for the 2007 budget and taking into account the definitive quota scale established by the OAS and the countries' actual capacity to pay in preparing the 2008-2009 budget.
- 3.4.4 The Delegate of Canada thanked the Legal Adviser for his explanation and said his country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had already been consulted, since the quota payment was that ministry's responsibility. The position of his delegation was that the Institute should wait until the OAS approved its definitive quota scale in June 2007.
- 3.4.5 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America thanked the Legal Adviser for his observations and asked for a copy of the agreement and the OAS quota scale. He also asked how long it would take to prepare the 2008-2009 budget, because the Administration could consult the SACMI and the Executive Committee, if necessary.
- 3.4.6 The Delegate of Brazil felt that the new quota scale approved by the OAS should be applied. He proposed that the IABA be asked immediately to apply the change in the quota scale beginning in 2007, which would mean using the provisional quota scale for that year. If necessary, a special meeting of the IABA could be convened.
- 3.4.7 The Delegate of Mexico said she would have to consult her country's Ministry of Finance, which was responsible for making the quota payment. She felt it

would be best to wait for the outcome of the discussions at the OAS in June 2007 before giving an opinion.

- 3.4.8 The Observer Delegate of Haiti and the Observer Delegate of the United States of America seconded the position of the Delegate of Canada.
- 3.4.9 The Delegate of Bolivia requested more information about the OAS resolution and expressed support for Brazil's proposal. He also asked that the proposal presented by the CAS be circulated and included on the agenda of the meeting.
- 3.4.10 The Observer Delegate of Argentina said that the IABA was authorized to make a decision based on the OAS quota scale. He asked the Legal Adviser for his opinion regarding the scope of Article 10 of the Convention on IICA with respect to the convening of special meetings.
- 3.4.11 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America said that the OAS would be meeting in June and the meeting of the IABA was programmed for one month later. Thus, the IABA could study the new quota scale at its regular meeting programmed for July 2007. He thanked the CAS for its proposal but said that the hemispheric nature of the institution had to be taken into consideration.
- 3.4.12 The Observer Delegate of Argentina endorsed Brazil's proposal and suggested that a vote be taken.
- 3.4.13 The Legal Adviser pointed out that the procedures for convening a special meeting of the IABA were set out in Article 10 of the Convention and in Article 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the IABA. In special circumstances, and at the request of one or more Member States or of the Committee, the Board could hold special meetings. The votes of two-thirds of the Institute's Member States were required to convene a meeting of that kind. When the Board was not in session, the Director General had the authority to consult the Member States about such a meeting by correspondence.
- 3.4.14 The Delegate of Brazil said that his proposal did not necessarily entail convening a special meeting, adding that the Member States could be consulted electronically.
- 3.4.15 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America asked for information about the approximate cost of holding an onsite meeting and the cost of an electronic vote.

- 3.4.16 The Technical Secretary estimated that it would cost between US\$120,000 and US\$140,000 to convene a special meeting, while the cost of a vote by correspondence was minimal.
- 3.4.17 The Director General felt the proposals were not mutually exclusive. As the definitive quota scale was due to be approved during the month before the IABA, the Board could discuss the matter at its regular meeting.
- 3.4.18 The Observer Delegate of Argentina asked whether the IABA's decision would affect the 2007 budget, since the CAS proposal called for adjustments in the scale to be applied to that budget.
- 3.4.19 The Legal Adviser explained that, under the current rules, the decision to hold a vote by correspondence required the approval of two thirds of the Delegates sitting on the Executive Committee. If the vote was to change the decision that the IABA had taken in 2005 concerning the quota scale and the 2007 Program Budget, two thirds of the 34 Member States who make up the Institute's highest governing body would have to vote in favor of such a change.
- 3.4.20 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America asked that the proposals presented regarding the application of the quota scale of the OAS be submitted in writing. The Delegates of Panama and Canada seconded the procedural motion.

3.5 Agro-energy and Bio-fuels Program

- 3.5.1 Mr. Mario Seixas, Assistant Deputy Director General, presented the proposal concerning the Agro-energy and Bio-fuels Program. He said the initiative focused on the following points: agro-energy as a viable alternative for reducing the hemisphere's dependence on fossil fuels, the technical potential of agro-energy and bio-fuels, new technologies under development, how long it was likely to take before bio-fuels were available in sufficient volume to be commercially viable, and environmental considerations.
- 3.5.2 He added that the program was designed to help the countries plan and develop their agro-energy sectors. The aim was to provide knowledge and information about the development of emerging technologies, best practices used in the industry and business opportunities in the agro-energy sector. He presented two optional budgets, the first involving US\$250,000 per year for a five-year period, and the second, entitled the "expanded budget," which

included a hemisphere-wide structure with regional specialists, totaling US\$975,000 per year and also programmed for a five-year period.

- 3.5.3 The Observer Delegate of Chile asked whether there was any connection between the program presented and the FAO program on the same subject.
- 3.5.4 The Assistant Deputy Director General explained that the Director General of IICA and the Deputy Director of FAO had recently signed a cooperation agreement. Since agro-energy was one of the topics mentioned in the joint work program of the agreement, the two initiatives were obviously going to be connected.
- 3.5.5 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America thanked Mr. Seixas for his presentation. He acknowledged the importance of the issue and supported the efforts to disseminate information about it. His country was interested in forming part of the working group called for in IABA Resolution 410 (IICA/JIA/Res.410(XIII-O/05)), on which the program was based. He asked whether the expenditures involved in implementing the initiative were included in the 2007 Program Budget.
- 3.5.6 The Delegate of Canada also thanked the official for his presentation and regarded it as an ambitious strategy. He was concerned about topics such as natural resource management, research and the use of technology, which were of key importance. Although the program was based on the use of sugarcane and oilseeds, other types of biomass produced from plant and animal waste should be included. He felt that education and sensitization activities should not be the responsibility of IICA, but rather of the national and local governments. He stressed the importance of considering the implications of developing the industry for the land available for food production. This was a key aspect that needed to be considered for the development of the agricultural sector.
- 3.5.7 The Delegate of Uruguay and the Observer Delegate of Argentina both suggested hiring national experts, which would free up resources to facilitate the mobilization of technical or associate personnel in support of the program.
- 3.5.8 The Delegates of Guatemala and Costa Rica both reiterated their support for the program presented and stressed its strategic importance for the Central American region.

- 3.5.9 The Delegate of Brazil congratulated the team of specialists who had prepared the proposal. After commenting that his country supported the initiatives of both FAO and IICA, he gave an overview of Brazil's policy on the issue and reiterated his country's willingness to share its experience in the area of agro-energy and bio-fuels with other Member States interested in the subject.
- 3.5.10 The Assistant Deputy Director General announced that the suggestions regarding budgetary matters would be incorporated into a revised version, if the Executive Committee approved the program. He mentioned the importance of seeking alternative ways of using the land and of the contributions of science and technology in this stage of the development of agro-energy. The program was open to national professionals and higher education centers; and, in line with several of the observations made, the proposal made provision for a wide range of sources of biomass that could potentially be used to generate renewable energy.
- 3.5.11 The Observer Delegate of Ecuador and the Delegate of Paraguay expressed agreement with the proposal and placed their countries technical expertise and experience at the service of the program.
- 3.5.12 The Delegate of Bolivia congratulated the Delegate of Brazil for his country's valuable contribution and thanked him for offering to share his country's experience in the field of agro-energy.
- 3.5.13 The Observer Delegate of Haiti felt that the budget was small, given the potential demand for technical cooperation that the implementation of the program could generate for the Institute.
- 3.5.14 The Director General thanked the Member States for their endorsement of the first proposal and emphasized the importance of the countries getting involved in the working group that would draft the final proposal. He believed the program would be successful if it resulted in important benefits for the rural milieu and managed to strike the necessary balance between food production and the generation of energy. Finally, he stressed the importance of tapping alternative energy sources as the reserves of fossil fuels ran out.
- 3.6 *Twelfth Annual Report of the Audit Review Committee*
- 3.6.1 Mr. Carlos Gutierrez, Chairman of the Audit review Committee (ARC), explained that the committee comprised Delegates of the United States, Trinidad and Tobago and Mexico. The external audit of the Institute had been

carried out pursuant to international regulations and confirmed that IICA had not infringed any internal rules in its administrative and financial management.

- 3.6.2 The austerity policies implemented by the Administration had yielded positive results and the collection of quota arrearages had had a significant effect. The amount owed had decreased in 2006 from US\$16.1 million to US\$11.9 million.
- 3.6.3 He recommended that IICA acquire the new computerized administrative system, which would improve the quality of the Institute's financial information and afford greater protection. The ARC suggested that the functions of the Internal Audit Unit be reviewed. The unit should place greater emphasis on the analysis of processes and functions rather than financial and accounting operations.
- 3.7 *2005 financial statements of the Institute and report of the external auditors*
- 3.7.1 Ms. Karen Kleinheinz, Director of Finance, presented the Institute's financial statements for 2005 and the report of the external auditors. She explained that IICA's financial rules and regulations called for an annual external audit and the firm of Deloitte & Touche had been chosen to perform the audits for the 2004-2005 biennium. She emphasized that the audits had been carried out in accordance with international standards. The auditors had found that the financial statements presented reasonably, in all its significant aspects, the financial situation of IICA as of 31 December 2004 and 2005, and the changes in net worth and the cash flows for both years, in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles.
- 3.7.2 She also mentioned the efforts to collect quota arrearages and expenditures by chapter, pointing out that Chapter I (Direct cooperation services) contained the biggest percentage of expenditures. She illustrated her presentation with a figure on the execution of the budget by fund. She then referred to the special budget approved by the IABA in 2003 for modernizing IICA and its operations (IICA/JIA/Res.391(XII-O/03)). The amount approved had been invested in the financial information system, for which a bidding process had been held, with support and advice from Price Waterhouse Cooper. SAP/Nasoft had been selected to implement the system.

- 3.8 Approval of draft resolutions: "Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program," "2005 financial statements of the Institute and report of the external auditors," and "Annual Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)"
- 3.8.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolutions in question, which were approved without modifications.
- 3.9 Proposed amendments to the Staff Rules
- 3.9.1 Ms. Linda Landry, Director of Human Resources, presented the proposed amendments to the Staff Rules, which were intended to continue modernizing the management of IICA's human resources. The proposed changes had to do with the disclosure statement that international personnel in positions of trust were required to submit (Article 3.5.8) and the granting of special leaves of absence for professional training (Article 6.5).
- 3.9.2 The Observer Delegate of Argentina asked whether all members of the Institute's personnel were entitled to leave of this kind. He felt that the 50% subsidy could discourage people from requesting leave. He suggested that, instead of establishing a 50% limit, the amount of the subsidy be left to the discretion of the Director General, who would make a decision based on the institution's interest in the object of the training.
- 3.9.3 Finally, the Director of Human Resources said that, with regard to the length of time that staff members would be required to remain with the Institute after they had received the training, IICA should reserve the right to reassign personnel to perform the tasks for which they were trained. She clarified the fact that the proposed granting of leave would be open to all Institute personnel. She thanked the Observer Delegate of Argentina for his suggestions and said they would be taken into consideration for the final proposal.
- 3.10 Proposed amendments to the Staff Rules and to the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate
- 3.10.1 The Technical Secretary described the proposed modifications to the rules concerning the drafting of the minutes of plenary sessions and the final report of the meetings of both the Executive Committee and the IABA. He said the proposed changes reflected the procedures that were already being used and were consistent with the use of the latest information and communication

technologies. The improvements had resulted in greater efficiency and reduced the cost of meetings.

3.10.2 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America thanked the Administration for its efforts to update the Institute's information mechanisms and suggested that information continue to be provided in the official languages, to facilitate the communication, analysis and discussion of documents.

3.11 *Proposed term of the chairperson of the IABA*

3.11.1 The Observer Delegate of Ecuador, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the IABA, referred to the proposed amendment to articles 32 and 33 of the Rules of Procedure of the IABA, regarding the procedure for electing the chairperson. He said the proposal was intended to ensure that the chairperson of the IABA was the Minister of Agriculture of the country that would be hosting the next regular meeting. As a result, the chairperson would be able to support the General Directorate directly throughout the process of preparing and organizing the meeting. In this way, a high-level intermediary would be available to facilitate the preparations for the meeting. He asked the Legal Adviser whether the Executive Committee could make such modifications to the Rules of Procedure of the IABA.

3.11.2 The Legal Adviser explained that the Executive Committee was not authorized to approve modifications to the Rules of Procedure of the IABA. He recommended raising the matter at the next regular meeting of the IABA.

3.11.3 The Observer Delegate of Guatemala thanked the Delegate of Ecuador for presenting the proposal, which was designed to facilitate the process of organizing the regular meeting of the IABA.

3.11.4 The Observer Delegate of Haiti asked for an explanation of the difficulties that the Ecuadorian authorities had encountered in making the preparations for the meeting of the IABA and the ministerial meeting stemming from the fact that they did not hold the chair during the preparatory process.

3.11.5 The Observer Delegate of Ecuador said no particular problems had been encountered in organizing the meeting. Nevertheless, holding the chair in the run up to the meeting would have made the logistical and financial arrangements easier.

- 3.11.6 The Observer Delegate of the United States of America asked whether articles 32 and 33 would be modified at the same time. He accepted that the most appropriate leadership should be available to organize the IABA. Nonetheless, his delegation needed further clarification of the proposed modification. In particular, the wording of Article 33 was not clear.
- 3.11.7 The Director General said that the proposal presented was important for the organization of IABA meetings. However, since the Executive Committee did not have the authority to approve it, he recommended that that proposal be discussed again at a later date.
- 3.11.8 The Delegate of Canada said that an analysis of the legal implications was needed, and of the consequences with respect to the powers of the chairperson.
- 3.11.9 The Director General suggested that the matter be placed on the agenda of the meetings of the SACMI and the Executive Committee that would be held prior to the Fourteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, in 2007.
- 3.12 *Closing of the Session*
- 3.12.1 The Third Plenary Session was adjourned at 13:00.

FOURTH PLENARY SESSION

4.1 *Opening of the Session*

- 4.1.1 The Fourth Plenary Session was called to order at 15:58 on Thursday, September 28, 2006 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Román Solera, Delegate of Costa Rica.

4.2 *Strengthening of relations between IICA and CATIE*

- 4.2.1 The Director General reported that the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), based in Turrialba, had been established under an agreement signed between IICA and the Government of Costa Rica. One of the conditions of that agreement was that IICA and CATIE would work jointly. While they had engaged in joint efforts in certain instances, he said, consolidating and building further on those efforts would always depend on individuals as long as there was no structure in place to facilitate joint work. He acknowledged that some headway had been made. Indeed, the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan of IICA included a section on cooperation between IICA and CATIE. In practice, there was an overlapping of functions between the two institutions, but there were no formal mechanisms to ensure that the complementarities and synergies that existed were used to advantage. Under the existing agreement, IICA transferred US\$ 1 million to IICA each year which *per se* was justification for the need for a closer technical and administrative relationship than that which currently existed so as to make strategic use of the resources of the two institutions for the benefit of Member States. He added that IICA provided a number of administrative services for IICA and, by virtue of its legal status, even provided it coverage for its operations outside of Costa Rica. He noted, finally that not all member countries of IICA were members of CATIE.

- 4.2.2 Given this situation, he said that the Administration of the Institute felt the time had come to strengthen ties between IICA and CATIE by establishing a workable mechanism to ensure that it continued and developed over time in aid of Member States. The option being proposed was to assign the future Director of CATIE to a post in the Institute's Cabinet, that of Assistant Deputy Director General, to enable him/her to participate in decision-making

processes and in the establishment of mechanisms to ensure joint action. He added that such a mechanism would ensure the transparent management of resources and would enable the Director General of CATIE to report directly to the IABA.

- 4.2.3 The Delegates of Panama and Canada, as well as the Observer Delegate from the United States said they needed additional information on which to base a decision. They also wished to have CATIE'S opinion and that of its member countries before considering the proposal.
- 4.2.4 The Director General reported that he had made an initial consultation with CATIE whose response had been positive. However, it was not IICA'S intention to rely solely on that consultation. He clarified that he was submitting this matter to the Executive Committee to enlist their support so that it might be studied and discussed in further detail. Following study of that issue, a proposal would be submitted to a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee for the observations of Member States which would comment on the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal.
- 4.2.5 The Observer Delegate from Guatemala noted that cooperation between IICA and CATIE was positive for agricultural and rural development in the region. He felt that ties could be strengthened without creating new structures. The Observer Delegate from Haiti said that a good relationship between IICA and CATIE would help his country'S relationship with CATIE, since Haiti was not a member of that organization.
- 4.2.6 The Delegate from Panama and the Observer Delegates from Guatemala and Haiti expressed reservations on the advisability of creating a new structure that could have a negative impact on the budget and on the expeditious running of the Institute. The Observer Delegate from Haiti said that if CATIE was created by IICA with administrative autonomy and a Director General, the proposal to assign him to a post at IICA could create a situation of subordination. The Delegate from Canada also shared this view. He added that a relationship such as the one proposed could only be justified if IICA were a major contributor. He therefore recommended a thorough analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal. The Delegate from Panama was of the opinion that funding from IICA was not a determining factor for action by CATIE.
- 4.2.7 The Delegate from Uruguay said that the countries faced similar problems with the way public institutions related to one another. Decentralization was

good and if the main idea was to boost the capability of the two organizations, the General Directorate would be well advised to analyze other options to strengthen the relationship between the two organizations. He felt that other ways of working together should be explored, such as exchanging professionals or establishing advisory committees which would be charged with analyzing strategic topics based on a joint review of strategic and annual plans, so as to identify complementarities and propose decisions to boost capability and reinforce joint action.

- 4.2.8 The Director General said that the proposal would be improved, taking into account new ways in which the two institutions might work together as well as the invaluable contributions of the Delegates of Member States, whom he thanked for their observations.

4.3 System for determining and reviewing the salary of the Director General

- 4.3.1 In a closed session, the Executive Committee discussed the “System for determining and reviewing the salary of the Director General” pursuant to the mandate issued by the IABA at its Thirteenth Regular Meeting, held in Guayaquil. A draft resolution ensued from that meeting which defined how to proceed with the mandate from that Governing Body of IICA. That draft would be later submitted to the plenary for consideration.

4.4 Draft resolutions: “Amendments to the Staff Rules Concerning the Annual Disclosure Statement and Leaves of Absence for Training” and “Amendments to Articles 73, 96 and 97 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee and Articles 65, 87 and 88 of the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)”

- 4.4.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolutions which were approved without amendment.

4.5 General conclusions of the Special Commission to assess technical expertise at IICA

- 4.5.1 Mr. James French, Director of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management, addressed the meeting to report on decisions reached by the Special Commission established by the Executive Committee to prepare a proposal with terms of reference for the assessment of technical expertise at IICA. That committee was made up of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the United States and Mexico. He reported that the document with the terms of reference

prepared by the Delegate from Mexico would be the basis for assessing technical expertise at IICA. The analysis would include a determination concerning IICA's ability to meet the needs of Member States, as specified in the MTP and in national and regional agendas, and would identify strengths and weaknesses with regard to technical expertise according to region and technical area. It would further indicate unmet needs and areas in which technical expertise existed but where there was no demand. The analysis would also include an assessment of the Institute's ability to attract and retain highly qualified technical personnel. He said that the process that the Special Commission recommended should be followed included: (i) the establishment of a steering committee made up of five members, one of which would represent each region; (ii) an initial internal evaluation by IICA which would last approximately 60 days and would consist of an internal analysis of what IICA's staff does, their technical expertise, the areas being addressed appropriately and those that were not being addressed appropriately; (iii) a review and analysis of the internal evaluation by the steering committee; (iv) the selection of an external evaluation team made up of three or more experts contributed by the countries, who should have the necessary technical qualifications; and (v) the actual evaluation and the presentation of that evaluation by March 2007. IICA would serve as Technical Secretariat, would provide any necessary information for conducting the study and would provide the required support for the meetings of the Steering Committee. Finally, he reported that the working group would prepare a draft resolution that would subsequently be submitted to the members of the Executive Committee in the course of that meeting for consideration.

- 4.5.2 The Observer Delegate from the United States thanked the working group and IICA staff for their efforts to establish a solid basis for the evaluation proposed by his government.
- 4.5.3 The Director General thanked the Special Commission and said that the Institute's technical capabilities depended not only on the high caliber of its professionals but also on the availability of adequate operating resources and of proper logistic support. He suggested including these factors in the terms of reference for conducting the analysis.
- 4.5.4 In response to an observation from the Delegate of Bolivia regarding the desirability of experts from the relatively lesser developed countries participating, the Director of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management clarified that the selection of experts was the responsibility of the

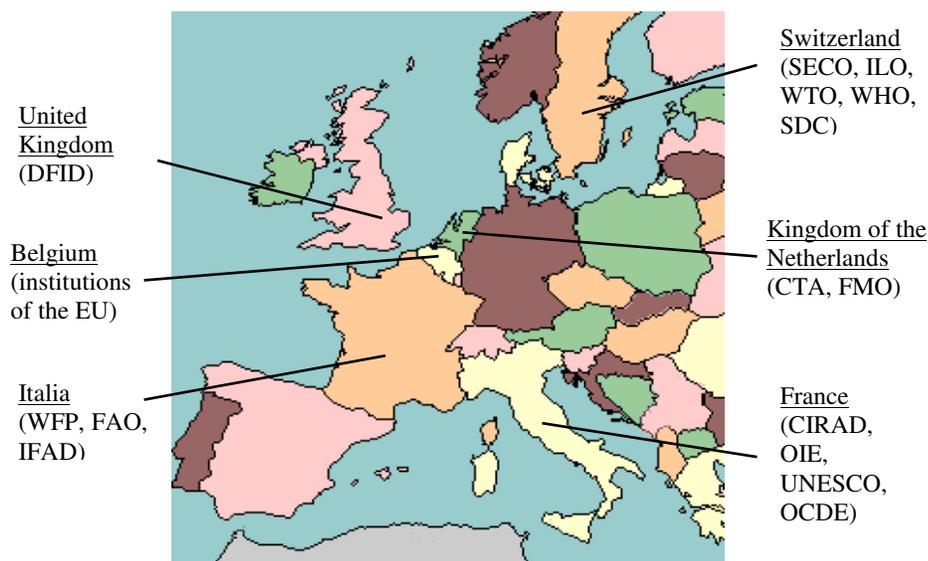
steering committee whose purpose it was to ensure an open process that ensured that all regions were represented.

4.6 *The institutional dimension: the future of the IICA Office in Spain*

4.6.1 Mr. Christopher Hansen, Assistant Deputy Director General and Director of Strategic Partnership, gave a presentation on the role of the IICA Office in Spain and its importance to the Institute's relations with strategic partners in Europe. He noted that that Office would facilitate Member States' access to information, markets, technologies and investment resources from countries outside the hemisphere. He gave data on the operating cost of the Office over the last four years, a cost that was shared with the Government of Spain. He also addressed the issue of the benefits derived during that period and signaled the importance for IICA of the strategic partners based in Europe. He further gave an overall view of the responsibilities of the Directorate of Strategic Partnerships and justified the importance of maintaining an Office outside the hemisphere. He said it was important to identify challenges and opportunities based on overall trends in the areas of information, integration, communication and the increase in trade in a setting where the countries of the Americas were increasingly joining the "global village" and where new topics would have an impact on agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

4.6.2 In his intervention, Mr. Christopher Hansen first addressed the issue of the functions of the Directorate of Strategic Partnerships, based in Washington, D.C., under which the IICA Office in Spain falls. He went on to explain the role of that office and gave details of its operating costs. He also made reference to IICA's strategic partners that have their main headquarters in Europe, namely CIRAD (French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development); CTA (Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP (African Caribbean and Pacific Countries)-EU); the DFID (Department for International Development); the FAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization); FMO (Netherlands Development Finance Company), IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development); the ILO (International Labour Organization); the GTZ (German Technical Cooperation); the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development); the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health); the SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation); the WFP (World Food Program); the WHO (World Health Organization); the WTO (World Trade Organization); the SECO (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs); UNESCO (United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture), and the EU (European Union).

Location of IICA's strategic partners in Europe



- 4.6.3 This was followed by a description of possible future scenarios for the Office in Spain as well as the implications in terms of operating costs for each option. The three scenarios were: 1) closing the office; 2) keeping it at the same size and with the same functions; and 3) reinforcing the office by boosting its capabilities and placing the emphasis on promoting relations with IICA's strategic partners in Europe.
- 4.6.4 He recalled that during the last Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (July 2006), some members of that advisory body had expressed their concern regarding the costs incurred for operating that office, the functions it could develop and the potential benefits. He said that the members of the SACMI from Jamaica, Bolivia, Brazil, Dominican Republic and Argentina had, on that occasion, proposed that the Office in Spain be given appropriate resources to ensure that it accomplished its objectives and that the Institute thank the Government of Spain for the support provided for operation of that Office.

- 4.6.5 After hearing the three options presented on the future role of the IICA Office in Spain, the Director General asked the Delegates for their recommendations so that the administration could act accordingly.
- 4.6.6 The Observer Delegate from the United States and the Delegate from Canada expressed concern about IICA's financial situation and the impact that any increase in expenditure to reinforce the Office in Spain could have on the Institute's budget. They said that the benefits described were unclear and that the information did not allow them to analyze the cost/benefit ratio of each of the alternatives presented.
- 4.6.7 The Delegates from Bolivia, Jamaica, Costa Rica and Paraguay, and the Observer Delegates from Ecuador, Argentina and Guatemala, came out in favor of reinforcing the IICA Office in Spain. The reasons justifying their support were: (i) the possibility of accessing European technical and financial resources for ecological or sustainable agriculture; (ii) the advisability of having a representation for Member States in Europe to support the efforts of countries to position clean products on those markets; (iii) the importance of Europe as a trading partner for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean; and (iv) the low cost of reinforcing the IICA Office to allow it to carry out the responsibilities assigned to it.
- 4.6.8 The Observer Delegate from Argentina mentioned that IICA had the resources to finance upgrading the Office. Indeed, it had carryover funds from 2005. He reported that the Spanish Cooperation Agency had said it was willing to invest US\$5,000,000,000 in the development of Latin America and the Caribbean and bring its contribution in line with contributions to other continents.
- 4.6.9 The Delegates from Canada, Bolivia, Jamaica and Mexico and the Observer Delegate from the United States said they needed further information on the potential benefits to be derived from upgrading that Office and called for a more factual study on the cost/benefit ratio. The Delegate from Paraguay suggested reinforcing the Office and then allotting a specific period of time for following up on and estimating with more precision the question of the cost/benefit ratio.
- 4.6.10 The Delegate from Canada said that, given the perceptible support for the proposal, he wished to have the opportunity to express his view by voting on the issue.

- 4.6.11 Mr. Christopher Hansen, Assistant Deputy Director General and Director of Strategic Partnerships, said that finding appropriate ways of estimating the potential benefits of the office posed a problem but that he would continue to work on gathering additional information as a basis for the options proposed.
- 4.7 *Fourth Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Context of the Summit of the Americas Process and the Fourteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture*
- 4.7.1 Mr. Lizardo de las Casas, Director of the Office of Follow-up to the Summit of the Americas Process signaled the importance of positioning agriculture in the Summit of the Americas process. He said that in the new political framework for agriculture, it had been established that improving agriculture and rural life were a *sine qua non* for alleviating poverty and achieving integral development. Agriculture, he said, played an important role in creating prosperity as a strategic sector in our economic system and as a way of life for millions of rural families. The basis for building a new institutional framework for agriculture involved the following: i) promoting a state policy for agriculture and rural life; ii) adjusting regional strategies in light of the hemispheric framework; and iii) developing information systems for follow-up and evaluation. Finally, he said that the joint effort on the part of Member States to achieve prosperity for rural communities in the Americas was crucial in improving agriculture and rural life by 2015 .
- 4.7.2 The Deputy Ministry of Agriculture of Guatemala gave his country's commitment to the 2006-2007 Ministerial Process and made an introductory presentation on the report on progress with preparations for the Fourth Ministerial Meeting in the context of the Summit of the Americas Process and the Fourteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, the slogan for which is "Working together for agriculture in the Americas". He then invited Mrs. Ana Isabel Osorio, Advisor in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala, to present that report.
- 4.7.3 Mrs. Osorio reported that the expected results of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting were: i) a broader and deeper understanding of strategic issues in agriculture and the rural milieu which would be useful in adopting new decisions regarding implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan; ii) adoption of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agenda for the 2008-2009 biennium; iii) a commitment from Member States to complete development of the Information System for Follow-up and Evaluation of the AGRO 2003-2015

Plan and its regional strategies; and iv) the strengthening of international cooperation in support of implementation of the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan.

4.7.4 The Director General thanked the Government of Guatemala, and the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, in particular, for the support they had been giving. He noted the progress achieved to date with the organization of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life in the context of the Summit of the Americas process and the Fourteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, to take place in Antigua, Guatemala, during the last week of July 2007.

4.8 Report of the Working Group to Discuss the 2007 Program Budget

4.8.1 The Delegate from Trinidad and Tobago presented the report of the working group established to analyze the figures in the 2007 Program Budget. It recommended that the Executive Committee approve the proposed 2007 Program Budget and that that Committee instruct the Director General to provide Member States with an annex containing additional information on the objectives, results and indicators in January 2007. The group also recommended that any tables containing information on objects of expenditure, such as the one on publications, should also be accompanied, where necessary, by explanatory texts on the various objects of expenditure. Finally, the group recommended that that additional information should be a component in future proposed Program Budgets.

4.8.2 The Director General thanked the working group for its report and recommendations. He committed himself to implementing the recommendations once the 2007 Program Budget was approved.

4.9 Draft Resolution "Hemispheric Program on Agro-energy and Bio-fuels"

4.9.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution "Hemispheric Program on Agro-energy and Bio-fuels".

4.9.2 The Observer Delegate from the United States requested that a provision be included in the second paragraph concerning the establishment of a working group, and also asked that in the third paragraph, the words "based on the recommendations of the working group and Member States" be added after the word "implement". Finally, he requested that paragraph no. 3 be eliminated.

- 4.9.3 The draft resolution “Hemispheric Program on Agro-energy and Bio-fuels” was approved with the above amendments.
- 4.10 *Draft resolution “2006-2010 IICA Medium-Term Plan”*
- 4.10.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution “2006-2010 IICA Medium-Term Plan”.
- 4.10.2 The Observer Delegate from the United States asked for clarification with respect to the provisions of paragraph 2 which makes mention of the concept of “third countries” and “special funds”.
- 4.10.3 The Technical Secretary of the meeting clarified that “third countries” referred to those countries that did not have permanent observer status but that had a cooperation linkage with IICA by virtue of some agreement, program or project. He added, moreover, that based on the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate of the Institute, special funds could be established for the specific purpose of financing activities of interest to Member States that have been approved by the Executive Committee.¹
- 4.10.4 The draft resolution "2006-2010 IICA Medium-Term Plan was approved".
- 4.11 *Draft resolution “Assessment of IICA’s Technical Capabilities”*
- 4.11.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution “Assessment of IICA’s Technical Capabilities”.
- 4.11.2 The Observer Delegate from the United States requested that the first operative paragraph should stipulate that the Director General should “support and coordinate”, and the word “supervise” should, therefore, be eliminated, since the assessment would be an external activity. He also requested that in Annex B, at the end of the first line mentioning the terms of reference prepared by Mexico, the words “would be the basis for the assessment of IICA’s technical capabilities” be added.
- 4.11.3 The Director General suggested that the assessment should be submitted to the Executive Committee at its next meeting. The Observer Delegate from Argentina suggested retaining the current wording to the effect that the report

¹ Article 88, paragraph b, of Chapter V, on the financial resources of IICA.

should be submitted to Member States and considered by the Executive Committee at its next regular meeting.

4.11.4 The draft resolution “Assessment of IICA’s Technical Capabilities” was approved with the changes indicated above.

4.12 *Draft resolution “Allocation of the resources of the 2007 Program Budget”*

4.12.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution “Allocation of the 2007 Program Budget”.

4.12.2 The Observer Delegate from the United States asked the Legal Advisor to clarify whether in the Institute’s rules and regulations, the Director General was authorized to transfer among chapters funds that did not exceed 10%. He further requested that the fourth paragraph should specify that the additional information would be sent to Member States in January of 2007 and that the mechanism for sending that additional information should be included.

4.12.3 The Legal Advisor clarified that the text included in the second paragraph to which the Observer Delegate had referred had always been included in the resolutions approving the Program Budget and that, in his opinion, it was a healthy practice for the Institute.

4.12.4 The Technical Secretary said that the additional information referred to in the resolution would be sent electronically to Member States in January of 2007.

4.12.5 The Committee approved the draft resolution “Allocation of the resources of the 2007 Program Budget” with the changes indicated.

4.13 *Draft resolutions “Date and site of the Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee” and “System for determining and reviewing the salary of the Director General”*

4.13.1 The Rapporteur read out the aforementioned draft resolutions, which were approved without amendment.

4.14 *Draft resolution “The IICA Office in Spain”*

4.14.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution “The IICA Office in Spain”.

- 4.14.2 The resolution was discussed at length in the plenary and, because no consensus was reached, the Delegate from Canada suggested putting the resolution to the vote.
- 4.14.3 With eight votes in favor, the resolution was approved.
- 4.15 Proposed draft resolution "Quota scale for 2007"
- 4.15.1 The Delegate from Brazil submitted a proposed resolution whereby, under the provisions of Article 85 of the Executive Committee's Rules of Procedure, the Executive Committee would agree to submit the proposed resolution on the quota scale to the IABA for approval, using the voting mechanism by correspondence. The Rapporteur read out the proposal.
- 4.15.2 The Chair asked the Legal Advisor to clarify the voting procedure for him. The Legal Advisor reported that passage of the resolution required a two-thirds majority vote in favor by the members of the Executive Committee. The Chair then put the proposal to the vote.
- 4.15.3 With four votes in favor, four against and four abstentions, the resolution was not approved.
- 4.15.4 The Delegate from Brazil said that he agreed with the democratic manner in which the discussion had been handled.
- 4.16 Close
- 4.16.1 The Fourth Plenary Session was adjourned at 22:25.

CLOSING SESSION

5.1 *Inauguration*

- 5.1.1 The Closing Session was called to order at 22:25 on September 28, 2006, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Roman Solera, the Delegate of Costa Rica.

5.2 *Remarks of the Director General*

- 5.2.1 Mr. Chelston W. D. Brathwaite, Director General of IICA, mentioned the items on the agenda of the meeting and concluded that it had been a very successful event, not only because the participants had completed their heavy workload but also because the Member States had made important contributions on issues that were essential for the Institute's activities and future development.
- 5.2.2 The Director General cited as important achievements of the meeting the approval of the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan, the 2007 Program Budget and the Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program, plus the progress made in establishing a hemispheric platform for the Hemispheric Program on Agro-energy and Bio-fuels.
- 5.2.3 He said the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan marked the beginning of a process aimed at making the Institute an organization geared more toward promoting development, an effort that had been strengthened by the active participation of the Delegates of the Member States. He acknowledged the commitment of the Member States to building together a modern agricultural sector capable of tackling the challenges facing the Americas at the beginning of the seventh year of the millennium.
- 5.2.4 He stressed that cooperation among countries was critical to solve problems that had a multinational dimension, such as transboundary diseases, migration, poverty and trade. He said IICA had the opportunity and the instruments required to strengthen hemispheric and multilateral cooperation and thus solve those problems. It must make the founders of the Institute very happy to see the progress made. Sixty-four years after they founded the organization, in

1942, it had become the bedrock for the delivery of cooperation for agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere.

5.2.5 The ministers of agriculture of the Americas would be meeting again in Guatemala in 2007 to renew that commitment to hemispheric cooperation, which was vital to strengthen the communities of the Americas. He thanked the Government of Guatemala for its support in organizing the Fourth Ministerial Meeting in the context of the Summit of the Americas process and the Fourteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA. He was certain that, with the support of Guatemala and the other Member States, the meeting would be a success. The participants would continue efforts to consolidate the Institute as the main platform for providing hemispheric cooperation for agricultural and rural development.

5.3 Acknowledgements

5.3.1 The Director General said that, thanks to the work, talent and patience of the Chairman and the Rapporteur, it had been possible to achieve the objectives set and complete the full agenda of the meeting. He thanked the Delegates of the Member States for their involvement, contributions, continued interest in the Institute and intense work. He then mentioned the work of Mr. Fernando Del Risco, the Technical Secretary of the meeting; Dr. William Berenson, the Legal Adviser of the OAS and IICA; and Ms. Leda Avila and her team from the Official Events Unit. He also thanked the conference room attendants, the translators, the précis writers and all the Institute's officials at Headquarters who had participated in the meeting.

5.3.2 Finally, he congratulated Ms. Phillipa Forde, the Delegate of Trinidad and Tobago, and Ms. Linda Landry, IICA's Director of Human Resources Management, who were celebrating their birthdays that day.

5.4 Remarks of the Chairman of the Executive Committee

5.4.1 The Chairman of the Executive Committee thanked the delegations for their support and talked about what had been achieved at the meeting. He thanked the Director General and other Institute officials for their support for the work of the chair. He reiterated his satisfaction at the fact that the agenda had been completed, despite the long days the Committee had had to work. Finally, he declared the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee adjourned.

60 Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

5.5 *Closing of the Session and signing of the final report of the meeting*

- 5.5.1 Mr. Roman Solera, in his capacity as Chairman of the meeting, and Dr. Chelston W. D. Brathwaite, the Director General of the Institute, signed the report of the meeting.
- 5.5.2 The Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned at 22:40 on September 28, 2006.

RESOLUTIONS

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IICA/CE/Res.443(XXVI-O/06)

27 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.443

2005 IICA ANNUAL REPORT

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc. 478(06) “2005 IICA Annual Report,”

CONSIDERING:

That Article 4.f of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee establishes that the Committee is to receive, analyze and approve the Annual Report on the activities of the General Directorate, and take appropriate action;

That the General Directorate prepared, published and distributed the 2005 IICA Annual Report, pursuant to the recommendations of the Sixth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and Resolution IICA/CE/Res.307(XVIII-O/98) of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee regarding the content and format of the report;

That the report focuses on the cooperation activities carried out by the Institute in 2005 and highlights important technical, programmatic, budgetary and financial aspects of institutional life, while the detailed information on projects and agreements, extra-quota agreements and contracts is provided on the Institute’s web site (www.iica.int),

RESOLVES:

To approve the 2005 IICA Annual Report.

IICA/CE/Res.444(XXVI-O/06)

28 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 444

2006-2010 IICA MEDIUM-TERM PLAN

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.479 (06) "2006-2010 IICA Medium-Term Plan,"

CONSIDERING:

That, at its Thirteenth Regular Meeting, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), in Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.421 (XIII-O/05), asked the Director General to prepare the Medium-Term Plan (MTP) of the Institute for the 2006-2010 period;

That the IABA, in that same resolution, authorized the Executive Committee to approve the Plan at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting;

That, in preparing the 2006-2010 MTP, the Director General used as basic guidelines: the mandates of the Summit of the Americas process; the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro and the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan; and the priorities defined by the Member States for the Institute's action;

That, in accordance with the recommendations of the Member States, in the process of preparing the MTP, the Director General facilitated a broad process of consultation in the Member States that also made it possible to incorporate the proposals of the Regional Forums of Ministers of Agriculture and the recommendations of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues;

That Article 88 (b) of the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate establishes the Special Funds, made up of voluntary contributions from the Member States or received from other sources to finance special programs or projects approved by the Executive Committee of the Institute;

That the strategic priorities established in the 2006-2010 MTP are as follows: (i) promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses; (ii) promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach; (iii) promoting agricultural health and food safety; (iv) promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment; (v) promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development; and (vi) contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life and the renewal of their institutional framework;

That the Executive Committee set up a special working group and tasked it with incorporating the suggestions of the Member States into the proposed MTP presented in IICA/CE/Doc.479, which has since been modified and includes the recommendations made by the aforementioned working group,

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the version of the 2006-2010 IICA Medium-Term Plan which contains the recommendations made by the Special Working Group as the guiding framework for the Institute's actions during the period under reference.
2. To instruct the Director General to take an active role in encouraging the permanent observers, third countries, enterprises, foundations, funding agencies, associate countries with which IICA has signed cooperation agreements, and other donors to make contributions to strengthen the Special Funds and thereby support the execution of the strategic priorities included in the 2006-2010 MTP.
3. To urge Member States to make voluntary contributions, above and beyond their quota contributions to the Institute, to strengthen those Special Funds.
4. To express its satisfaction with the broad participation promoted in Member States during the process of preparing the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan.

IICA/CE/Res.445(XXVI-O/06)

28 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.445

**APPROVAL OF THE HEMISPHERIC BIOTECHNOLOGY
AND BIOSAFETY PROGRAM**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.480(06) "Proposed Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program" (final proposal),

CONSIDERING:

That, by Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.409(XIII-O/05), the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) instructed the Director General to present the final proposal to the next meetings of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) and of the Executive Committee for consideration and final approval by Member States;

That, in accordance with the recommendations of the SACMI, the final proposal presented to the Executive Committee for consideration should: (i) be the nucleus of the Program IICA must promote with available resources; (ii) institute the category of associate professionals, which would enable experts from national institutions to take part in implementing the program; (iii) promote the program at the regional level by linking one specialist in biotechnology and biosafety in each region to the program (associate experts and/or experts hired with external resources to be obtained); (iv) contain strategic projects that respond to regional priorities; and, (v) promote and encourage, in the Member States, regional inter-agency work, as well as a concerted effort among public agencies, universities and the private sector;

That resources allocated in the 2007 Program Budget are not adequate to fund the activities in the final proposal;

That possible sources of funding for the final proposal are resources from quotas owed from previous years that are collected in the 2007-2008 period; programmed resources in the 2007 Program Budget that have not been used and that are reallocated; and contributions from strategic partners, such as international financial institutions and other cooperation agencies;

That the SACMI recommended that a proposal for mobilizing additional contributions from Member States to implement the final proposal, both qualified personnel and financial resources, and for seeking additional financing from strategic partners and other donors, be submitted to the Executive Committee at its next regular meeting,

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the proposed Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program (final proposal) and instruct the Director General to implement the version of the Program contained in document IICA/CE/Doc.480(06) "Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program."
2. To accept the recommendations made by the SACMI at its 2006 Regular Meeting and instruct the Director General to consider them an integral part of the strategy for implementation of the final proposal.
3. To instruct the Director General to include in the proposed 2008-2009 Program Budget, and in the proposal for the use of the resources generated through the collection of quota arrearages, the resources required for implementation of the final proposal.

IICA/CE/Res.446(XXVI-O/06)
28 September 2006
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.446

HEMISPHERIC PROGRAM ON AGRO-ENERGY AND BIO-FUELS

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.481(06) "Hemispheric Program on Agro-energy and Bio-fuels,"

CONSIDERING:

That the current worldwide energy crisis has led to ever-increasing prices for fossil fuels and has had a negative impact on the finances of nations, which must spend huge sums of money to acquire petroleum and petroleum-based products;

That bio-fuels offer a viable alternative for partially replacing imports of oil and natural gas, which would have a favorable impact on foreign exchange savings;

That agro-energy and the production of bio-fuels constitute a technologically proven alternative that would enable many countries in the Americas to promote the modernization of agriculture, offering producers new options with a guaranteed market;

That technological innovation, a key factor in modernizing agriculture and making it more competitive in a context of globalization and the creation of free trade areas in the Americas, can be strengthened through horizontal cooperation, which will enable countries that are more advanced in the field of bio-fuel production to cooperate with those that have entered this field only recently,

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the bases of the Hemispheric Program on Agro-energy and Bio-fuels as set forth in document IICA/CE/Doc.481(06).
2. To instruct the Director General to form a working group, to include Delegates from Member States, and to charge it with presenting recommendations for implementing the Hemispheric Program on Agro-energy and Bio-fuels.
3. To instruct the Director General to present to the Executive Committee at its next Regular Meeting, based on the recommendations of the working group, a proposal for funding the Program from 2008-2010 with resources from the Program-Budget and from the collection of quota arrearages, as well as a plan for implementing the Program.
4. To urge Member States to make voluntary contributions of financial resources and qualified human resources as support for implementation of the Program.

IICA/CE/Res.447(XXVI-O/06)

28 September 2006
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 447

ASSESSMENT OF IICA'S TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

CONSIDERING:

That, in light of the decision to adopt the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan, it is both advisable and timely to request an assessment of the technical capabilities of IICA's personnel;

That the United States of America and Mexico have offered to make special contributions as support for said assessment;

That the Executive Committee set up a Special Commission and tasked it with recommending terms of reference for the assessment, and that said Special Commission has delivered its recommendations to the Executive Committee, which include the terms of reference (Annex A) and other guidelines for conducting the assessment (Annex B),

RESOLVES:

1. To instruct the Director General to support and coordinate the assessment of the technical capabilities of IICA's personnel, with the assistance of external experts, pursuant to the terms of reference contained in Annex A of the present Resolution, and the additional guidelines contained in Annex B. The assessment is to be presented to the Member States and considered by the Executive Committee before the end of the first half of 2007.
2. To thank the United States of America and Mexico for their special contributions as support in conducting the assessment.

3. To encourage the other Member States, the Associate States and the Permanent Observers to contribute financial and other resources with which to conduct the assessment.

ANNEX A**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ASSESSING TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES****1. Background**

To date, IICA has been responding, to the extent it can, to the mandates of the IABA and to the challenges posed by agriculture and the new rurality. Thus, the Institute has responded to the concerns and demands of its Member States and to important issues related to:

1. The promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses
2. The promotion of agricultural health and food safety
3. The promotion of biotechnology and biosafety.

The development of these specialized issues and others considered for inclusion on the agenda for 2007, such as the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment, as well as the generation of bio-energy from raw agricultural materials, are of concern to the members of the Executive Committee and the Ministers of Agriculture themselves.

Consequently, an external assessment of the Institute's technical capacity will be conducted, especially as concerns its human resources, to determine whether or not IICA is efficiently addressing the emerging issues and has the financial and budgetary resources needed to address the technical issues and priorities approved by IICA.

Furthermore, it will be necessary to determine the actual capacity of the Institute to take on other technical issues that are of importance and concern to the member countries.

2. Requirements of the assessment

In addition to meeting the demands described above, in conducting the assessment, the following must be taken into consideration:

- A group of three experts with broad experience in activities related to the development of scientific and technological capabilities, and their transfer;
- Knowledge of IICA's programs and of international organizations;

- Fluency in English and Spanish;
- Ability to work as part of a team and availability to devote approximately 15 days to preparing and conducting interviews with staff members at Headquarters and in selected IICA Offices in the Member States;
- Evaluation and presentation of results related to:
 - Topics of current interest and how they are being addressed;
 - Availability of the high-level experts (person hours available and how many hours for bureaucratic or administrative tasks);
 - Capacity to offer comprehensive technological solutions;
 - Levels of specialization/capability of the experts to address the issues;
 - Salary levels and ages of the technical personnel.

It will be necessary to present properly documented scientific, technical and socioeconomic knowledge that is essential for the execution of the projects.

3. Assessment

The pertinent observations will be made based on the assessments, and recommendations will be prepared for presentation to the Executive Committee and the IABA.

Date of preparation: September 2006

ANNEX B

**GENERAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION FOR THE
ASSESSMENT OF IICA'S TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES**

- Terms of Reference (guidelines) document developed by Mexico would be the basis for the assessment of IICA's technical capabilities.
- Evaluation of technical capacity with respect to country demand as laid out in the MTP and in the national, regional and hemispheric agendas and IICA's technical capacity to respond to demands. In addition to the strategic areas mentioned in the Terms of Reference document, it will also include others found in the MTP, as well as agricultural insurance, as requested by the IABA.
- Identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, gaps and surpluses.
- Analyze unsatisfied demand.
- Assess quality and distribution of professional staff among regions and technical areas.
- The analysis will also consider the availability of sufficient funds needed for the technical professionals to carry out their functions, as well as the availability of support staff.
- Evaluate capability of IICA to compete for and attract quality technical staff.

Process to be followed:

- There will be a steering committee: one country from each region (5). Members to be decided by the regions. IICA will act as Technical Secretariat.
- IICA will carry out an internal review process first (60 days).
- Internal review will be submitted to Steering Committee for review and analysis. Members will then submit additional questions for external review team to look at (30 days).

- External review team (3 or more members). Countries may provide members for team. Members must have the characteristics defined in document provided by Mexico.
- External evaluation (60 days).
- Goal is to have final evaluation provided to steering committee by March, 2007.

IICA/CE/Res.448 (XXVI-O/06)

28 September 2006
Original: English

RESOLUTION No.448

THE IICA OFFICE IN SPAIN

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN,

Document IICA/EC/Doc. 482(06) "The International Dimension: The Future of the IICA Office in Spain," and Document IICA/EC/Doc. 477(06) "Report of the 2006 Regular Meeting Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues,"

CONSIDERING:

That at its last meeting, the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues considered the future of IICA's Office in Spain and recommended that the General Directorate maintain the current level of the operations, duties, and size of that Office for the time being, and that it present a study to the next meeting of the Executive Committee containing a cost/benefit analysis of the several options discussed for the future of the Office, identifying possible sources of funding for expanded operations of the Office, and providing other information which the Executive Committee would require to make the corresponding decision;

That options so far presented for the future of the Office include closing the Office, maintaining its current size, duties, and level of operations, or expanding its operations to develop and enrich the Institute's relations with its European strategic partners;

That additional resources required for expanding the operations of the Office are not contained in the 2007 Program Budget proposed by the Director General;

RESOLVES:

1. To instruct the Director General to expand the operations of the Office in Spain to develop more beneficial relations between IICA and its strategic partners and to assign an additional US\$75,000 from available sources, including collections of quotas from prior years, for that purpose.
2. To request that the Director General present to the next Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, for review and eventual presentation to the next Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, a more detailed report on the options for the future of the Office, which shall include, *inter alia*, a more detailed evaluation of the possibilities of developing closer and more productive relations with its European strategic partners, an analysis of the additional benefits which may be obtained as a result of expansion of the operations of the Office, and the identification of likely sources of financing for Office maintenance and expansion, other than the Regular Program Budget of the Institute.

IICA/CE/Res.449(XXVI-O/06)
28 September 2006
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.449

**2005 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE INSTITUTE
AND REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.483(06) "2005 Financial Statements of the Institute and Report of the External Auditors,"

CONSIDERING:

That Article 4(d) of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee establishes that the Executive Committee is to study the Institute's financial statements and forward the corresponding report to the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA);

That the External Auditors have attested to the sound management of the Institute's financial resources during 2005, and that the administration of IICA has acted in conformity with the regulations of the Institute;

That, in its Twelfth Annual Report, the Audit Review Committee (ARC) states that it has studied the report of the External Auditors on IICA's 2005 Financial Statements and found the work performed to be thorough and in accordance with IICA's rules and generally accepted auditing standards,

RESOLVES:

To approve the 2005 Financial Statements of the Institute and the Report of the External Auditors on said Financial Statements.

IICA/CE/Res.450(XXVI-O/06)

28 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.450**TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT REVIEW COMMITTEE (ARC)**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.484(06), "Twelfth Annual Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC),"

CONSIDERING:

That at its Seventh Regular Meeting, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), by Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.231(VII-O/93), created the ARC and approved its Statute;

That Article 3(k) of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee establishes that the Committee is "to appoint the members of the Audit Review Committee ("ARC") and to receive and approve the ARC's reports and recommendations,"

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the Twelfth Annual Report of the ARC.
2. To instruct the Director General to implement the recommendations set forth in said report.
3. To thank the members of the ARC for the effective work accomplished.

IICA/CE/Res. 451(XXVI-O/06)
27 September 2006
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.451

**PROGRESS IN COLLECTING QUOTAS
OWED TO IICA AS OF AUGUST 31, 2006**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The report from the Director General on progress in collecting quotas owed to the Institute (Document IICA/CE/Doc.485(06)),

CONSIDERING:

That by IICA/JIA/Res.414(XIII-O/05), the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) adopted the document "Revised Measures for Collecting Quotas owed to the Institute;"

That the aforementioned document draws and improves on the provisions of Resolutions IICA/CE/Res.417(XXIV-O/04) of the Executive Committee, and IICA/JIA/Res.392 (XII-O/03) of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, with the aim of establishing a set of measures intended to encourage Member States to make current their financial obligations to the Institute;

That in 2005 and 2006, thanks to the effectiveness of the measures adopted, the goodwill and support of the Ministers of Agriculture and other authorities in the Member States, and the efforts of the General Directorate, it has been possible to decrease considerably the total amount of quotas owed to the Institute;

That the above has enabled the Administration to fund the Program Budget approved for 2005 and 2006, and to fund the special budgets approved by the governing bodies of the Institute for the execution of high-priority programs in those years;

That the financial strengthening of the Institute can only be possible if Member States bring themselves up to date with payments of quotas owed to the Institute,

RESOLVES:

1. To thank the Ministers of Agriculture and other high-level officials in the Member States for their efforts to ensure that their countries are up to date in the payment of quotas owed to IICA.
2. To acknowledge the importance of maintaining in effect the measures adopted by the Executive Committee and the IABA to encourage the Member States to pay their quotas to the Institute.
3. To instruct the Director General to continue efforts to collect overdue quotas and to keep the Member States informed of progress in this area.

IICA/CE/Res.452(XXVI-O/06)
28 September 2006
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 452

**ALLOCATION OF THE RESOURCES OF THE
2007 PROGRAM BUDGET**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.486(06), "Proposed 2007 Program Budget,"

CONSIDERING:

That the Convention on the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) establishes, in Article, 8.b, that a function of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) is to approve the biennial Program Budget of the Institute;

That at its Thirteenth Regular Meeting, by Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.416(XIII-O/05), the IABA approved the detailed Program Budget for 2006, and the total amount of US\$30 million (thirty million United States dollars) for the Regular Fund for 2007;

That at its Thirteenth Regular Meeting, the IABA, by Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.416(XIII-O/05), instructed the Director General to submit to the consideration of the Executive Committee, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting, a proposal for the detailed allocation of the funds approved for the 2007 Program Budget, consistent with the priorities set forth in the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan of the Institute;

That the Director General submitted the proposed 2007 Program Budget to the consideration of the Executive Committee, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting, in a format consistent with the structure and content established in the rules currently in effect,

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the detailed allocation to the Regular Fund of the 2007 Program Budget of the Institute, in accordance with the allocations for each of the Chapters, strategic priorities, scopes of action and Major Objects of Expenditure detailed in document IICA/CE/Doc.486(06) "Proposed 2007 Program Budget," which is summarized by Chapter in the "Single Annex" attached to the present resolution.
2. To authorize the Director General to make transfers between the Chapters of the 2007 Program Budget, provided that the total transfers neither increase nor reduce the affected Chapter by more than 10%, and do not substantially affect the priorities approved.
3. To authorize the Director General to make the necessary adjustments in the allocation of resources approved in this Resolution, in the event that the combined income for fiscal year 2007 falls below estimated levels for that year. The Director General shall inform the Executive Committee and the IABA of this situation.
4. To instruct the Director General to provide Member States with the following information during the month of January 2007:
 - a. An annex with additional information on objectives, results and indicators;
 - b. Brief texts explaining objects of expenditure, such as publications, contained in tables included in the Program Budget.
 - c. To include this additional information in future Program Budgets.

SINGLE ANNEX 2007 PROGRAM BUDGET SUMMARY BY CHAPTER REGULAR FUND (US\$ x 000)			
CHAPTER	QUOTAS	MISCELLANEOUS	TOTAL
CHAPTER I: DIRECT TECHNICAL COOPERATION SERVICES	24.693,4	2.789,6	27.483,1
Strategic Priority			
Promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses	6.182,7	644,2	6.827,0
Promotion of the incorporation of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development	5.505,8	441,7	5.947,5
Promotion of agricultural health and food safety	5.329,3	626,6	5.955,9
Strengthening of rural communities adopting a territorial approach	4.748,2	684,4	5.432,7
Promotion of the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment	2.927,4	392,7	3.320,1
CHAPTER II: MANAGEMENT COSTS	1.378,6	42,8	1.421,4
Office of the Director General	643,0	0,0	643,0
Directorate of Administration and Finance	735,6	42,8	778,4
CHAPTER III: GENERAL COSTS AND PROVISIONS ⁽¹⁾	1.095,5	0,0	1.095,5
Governing Bodies	400,0	0,0	400,0
Insurance	320,0	0,0	320,0
Pensions	255,0	0,0	255,0
OAS Administrative Tribunal	25,0	0,0	25,0
External Audit	95,5	0,0	95,5
TOTAL	27.167,6	2.832,4	30.000,0
(1) Does not include the Cuban quota.			

IICA/CE/Res. 453(XXVI-O/06)

27 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.453**REPORT OF THE 2006 MEETING OF THE SPECIAL
ADVISORY COMMISSION ON MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.477(06), "Report of the 2006 Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues,"

CONSIDERING:

That by Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.341(X-O/99), the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) created the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) "to facilitate more regular discussion between the Director General and the Member States on administrative and financial initiatives and issues in order to facilitate the process of reaching consensus on those issues and initiatives in the Executive Committee and in the IABA;"

That by Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.394(XII-O/03), the IABA extended the term of the SACMI until the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA;

That the SACMI held its 2006 regular meeting at IICA Headquarters on July 26-27, 2006, and presented its report and recommendations to the Director General of IICA.

RESOLVES;

To accept the Report of the 2006 Regular Meeting of the SACMI.

IICA/CE/Res.454(XXVI-O/06)
28 September 2006
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.454

**AMENDMENTS TO THE STAFF RULES CONCERNING THE ANNUAL
DISCLOSURE STATEMENT AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR TRAINING**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.487(06), "Proposed Amendments to the Staff Rules and the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate,"

CONSIDERING:

That some provisions of the Staff Rules need to be amended so that they reflect better practice, clear up ambiguities and facilitate improvements to enable the Institute to move forward with the modernization of the regulatory framework for the management of its human resources;

That, at its most recent meeting, the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) considered and discussed proposed amendments to the Staff Rules, presented by the Director General, dealing with the Annual Disclosure Statement and leaves of absence for training;

That, based on the observations made by the SACMI, the Director General amended the original proposal and submitted it to the Executive Committee for consideration at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting;

That, in keeping with Article 3(h) of its Rules of Procedure, the Executive Committee is empowered to modify the Staff Rules, provided that such modification is consistent with the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate,

RESOLVES:

To adopt the amendments to the Staff Rules contained in Annex A.

ANNEX A

STAFF RULES

Chapter III

Current text	Proposed text
<p>Rule 3.5 Outside Activities and Interests</p>	<p>Rule 3.5 Outside Activities and Interests</p>
<p>3.5.8 On or before March 31 of each year, the Director General and any other IICA staff member who occupies a position of trust or serves as Delegate in a country shall submit a fully completed Annual Disclosure Statement (ADS) to the Director of Human Resources. The ADS shall be dated and signed by the staff member under oath before a public notary provided by the Institute, and shall at a minimum, contain the following:</p> <p>a. A statement by the staff member that the information set out in the ADS is true and accurate to the best of his knowledge and belief.</p> <p>b. A list of all associations, enterprises, or companies with which the staff member is connected,</p>	<p>3.5.8 On or before March 31 of each year, the Director General and any other IICA staff member who occupies occupies <i>appointed to</i> a position of trust, <i>as well as any staff member appointed to the position of Delegate of the Institute in a Member State,</i> or serves as Delegate in a country shall submit a fully completed Annual Disclosure Statement (ADS) to the Director of Human Resources. The ADS <i>All Annual Disclosure Statements</i> shall be dated and signed by the staff member under oath before a public notary <i>witness</i> provided by the Institute, and shall, at a minimum, contain the following:</p> <p>a. A statement by the staff member that the information set out in the ADS <i>A certification</i> Annual Disclosure Statement is true and accurate to the best of his <i>the staff member's</i> knowledge.</p> <p>b. A list of all associations, enterprises, or companies with which the staff member is connected, directly or</p>

<p>directly or indirectly, with an indication of the nature of the connection, including the staff member's position, if any, within said association, enterprise, or company.</p> <p>c. A list of the staff member's creditors, except those to whom he is indebted for a mortgage on his personal residence or for ordinary living expenses such as household furnishing, automobiles, education or vacations.</p> <p>d. Such other information which the Director General considers necessary and reasonable for avoiding conflicts of interest within the Institute.</p>	<p>indirectly, with an indication of the nature of the connection, including the staff member's position, if any, within said association, enterprise, or company.</p> <p>c. A list of the staff member's creditors, except those to whom he the staff member is indebted for a mortgage on his/her personal residence or for ordinary living expenses such as household furnishings, automobiles, education or vacation.</p> <p>d. Such other information which the Director General considers necessary and reasonable for avoiding conflicts of interest within the Institute.</p>
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Duties, Obligations and Privileges

STAFF RULES

**Chapter VI
Annual Vacation and Leave**

Current Text	Proposed Text
Rule 6.5 Leave for Further Professional Training	Rule 6.5 Leave for Further Professional Training
Staff members may be granted by the Director General, leave to obtain further professional training, when this will better the staff member's performance and increase his capability, to IICA's benefit. This type of leave is granted in accordance with the provisions of Rule 6.4 above. (Article 49).	Staff members may be granted by the Director General, leave to obtain further professional training, when this will better the staff member's performance and increase his capability, to HCA's benefit. The Director General may grant special leave to staff members for the purpose of pursuing professional training to improve their skills and capacity to serve the Institute in accordance with its needs. This type of leave is granted in accordance with the provisions of Rule 6.4 above. Special Leave for Professional Training shall normally be without pay; however, in lieu of pay, the Director General may grant the staff member an allowance of up to 50% of his/her basic salary if he determines, pursuant to published guidelines, that it is in the Institute's interest. (Article 49).

IICA/CE/Res.455(XXVI-O/06)
27 September 2006
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.455

**AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLES 73, 96 AND 97 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND ARTICLES 65, 87 AND 88
OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN
BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA)**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.492(06) "Proposed Amendments to Articles 73, 96 and 97 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee and Articles 65, 87 and 88 of the Rules of Procedure of the IABA," concerning the minutes of the meetings of the Institute's governing bodies,

CONSIDERING:

That the General Directorate of the Institute has invested effort and made strides in modernizing support services involved in preparing for and holding the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA);

That the adoption of new information and communication technologies has been crucial in this modernization process and has made it possible to introduce major improvements in the procedures for sending documents in electronic format rather than as printed copies, and to expedite the process for responding to enquiries, registering on line and making changes in documents;

That the procedures established in the rules of the Institute regarding working documents and the preparation of minutes and the final reports of meetings must be reviewed and updated to reflect the improvements made in such procedures;

That at its regular meeting held on July 26-27, 2006, the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) recommended that the Director General

submit such adjustments to the consideration of the Executive Committee at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

RESOLVES:

1. To amend Articles 73, 96 and 97 of the Rules of Procedures of the Executive Committee, adopting the following texts:

Article 73. The working documents, informational documents and visual aids for presentations for meetings of the Committee shall be prepared in Spanish and English. Draft resolutions, recommendations, agreements and other documents shall be distributed in the official languages of the Member States sitting on the Committee. Only in exceptional cases may they be distributed in only one of the languages of the meeting. The Final Report of the Committee shall be prepared in the four official languages.

Article 96. The Technical Secretary shall record each session and prepare the draft summary minutes based on the respective recordings. The summary minutes shall include only the main items discussed, as well as the resolutions and other decisions adopted. After the meeting, the Technical Secretary shall review in detail the contents of the summary minutes, based on the recordings and the observations received in due course from the members of the Committee. The Technical Secretary shall deliver to the Delegates of the Member States of the Institute a compact disc with the recordings in standard digital format.

Article 97. The Final Report shall contain all the resolutions, recommendations and agreements adopted by the Committee, the summary minutes, speeches and annexes. Prior to its publication, the document shall be edited and translated into the other official languages of the Institute. The Technical Secretariat shall ensure that the text of the Final Report is stylistically correct, is consistent in the four official languages of the Institute and is delivered to the Member States of the Institute. The Chairperson of the Committee and the *ex-officio* Secretary shall sign the approved Final Report.

2. To amend Articles 65, 87 and 88 of the Rules of Procedures of the IABA, adopting the following texts:

Article 65. The working documents, informational documents and visual aids for presentations for meetings of the Board shall be prepared in Spanish and English. Draft resolutions, recommendations, agreements and other

documents shall be distributed in the four official languages. Only in exceptional cases may they be distributed in only one of those languages. The Final Report of the IABA shall be prepared in the four official languages.

Article 87. The Technical Secretary, designated by the Director General, shall record each session and shall deliver to the Delegates of the Member States the recordings in standard digital format. The summary minutes of the plenary sessions and the sessions of the committees shall be prepared by the Director General in his capacity as *ex-officio* Secretary of the Board, or by the Technical Secretary, and shall include the main items discussed in each session, for incorporation into the Final Report of the meeting.

Article 88. The Final Report shall contain all the resolutions, recommendations and agreements adopted by the Board, the summary minutes, the speeches and annexes. Prior to its publication, the document shall be edited and translated into the other official languages of the Institute. The Technical Secretariat shall ensure that the text of the Final Report is stylistically correct, is consistent in the four official languages of the Institute, and is delivered to the Member States of the Institute. The Chairperson of the Board and the *ex-officio* Secretary shall sign the approved Final Report.

IICA/CE/Res.456(XXVI-O/06)

28 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 456**SYSTEM FOR DETERMINING AND REVIEWING
THE SALARY OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

CONSIDERING:

That IICA lacks a system and procedures authorized by the IABA and/or the Executive Committee for setting the comprehensive salary of the Director General, since the internal rules are not clear on this matter;

That in the absence of policies, the current comprehensive salary of the Director General has not been updated on the basis of competitive market conditions in other similar international organizations and taking into account all of the relevant factors that need to be considered,

RESOLVES:

1. That the Director of Human Resources should engage the services of an External Auditor to conduct an analysis as to whether the current compensation package for the position of Director General is sufficiently competitive to attract high-quality candidates for the next election for the position and, if not, what adjustments to the package should be made to make it so. This analysis is to be completed by April 2007.
2. That the analysis of the External Auditor should, first, be reviewed by the Audit Review Committee (ARC) and, following that review, submitted to the Executive Committee at its meeting in 2007.
3. That, based on its review of the analysis of the External Auditor and the comments of the ARC, the Executive Committee should make a recommendation to the IABA for consideration at its meeting in 2007, as to what, if any, adjustments to the compensation package for the position of Director General should be made, retroactive to December 31, 2006.

IICA/CE/Res. 457(XXVI-O/06)

27 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.457

**STATUS OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE THIRTEENTH REGULAR
MEETING OF THE IABA AND THE TWENTY-FIFTH REGULAR
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.489(06) "Status of the Resolutions of the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture" and document IICA/CE/Doc.490(06) "Status of the Resolutions of the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee,"

CONSIDERING:

That the above-mentioned reports demonstrate that the General Directorate has complied with the resolutions adopted at the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, and satisfactorily carried out the tasks required to comply with the resolutions adopted at the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee,

RESOLVES:

1. To accept the reports: (i) "Status of the Resolutions of the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture;" and (ii) "Status of the Resolutions of the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee."
2. To express satisfaction with the progress reported in complying with the resolutions issued by IICA's governing bodies referred to in point 1 above.

IICA/CE/Res.458(XXVI-O/06)

28 September 2006

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No.458**DATE AND SITE OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH REGULAR
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc.493(06), "Date and Site of the Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee,"

CONSIDERING:

That it is necessary to set the date and site of the Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee;

That, pursuant to Article 22 of its Rules of Procedure, the Executive Committee must hold one regular meeting each year;

That, in accordance with Article 25 of these Rules, if no site is offered by one of the Member States to hold the meeting in another country, the meeting will be held at IICA Headquarters,

RESOLVES:

1. To hold the Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee at IICA Headquarters, in San Jose, Costa Rica.
2. To instruct the Director General to issue the convocation to the Member States to participate in the Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, in accordance with the rules currently in effect.

SIGNING OF THE REPORT

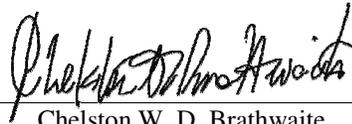
**SIGNING OF THE REPORT
OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH REGULAR MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 97 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee, the Report of the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee is hereby signed at 22:30 hours on the twenty-eighth day of September of the year two thousand six, at IICA Headquarters, Coronado, Costa Rica.

This report will be edited by the Secretariat and the changes approved during the Closing Session will be included before it is published in the four official languages of the Institute, in the Official Documents Series, all versions being equally authentic and valid.

The Secretariat shall file the original texts in the archives of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, shall post electronic files of same on the Institute's Web page and send copies of the final version of this report to the governments of the Member States, the Associate State, the Permanent Observers of the Institute and other participants in the meeting.

Coronado, Costa Rica



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite
Director General of IICA and
Ex-officio Secretary of the Executive
Committee



Román Solera
Chief Administrative Officer of
the Ministry of Production of
Costa Rica and Chair of the
2006 Executive Committee

ADDRESSES

**OPENING REMARKS BY DR. CHELSTON W. D. BRATHWAITE,
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF IICA, AT THE INAUGURAL SESSION**

I would like to welcome all of you today to this inauguration of the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of our Institute.

Last year, 2005, the Administration completed its first four years and I am pleased to share with the Member States of the Executive Committee a document which summarizes the achievements of the administration.

The fundamental achievement of the past four years is that we were able to reposition our institution and refocus it so that today it is recognized as an important component of the institutional framework of the Americas; one which can contribute to the promotion of sustainable agricultural development, food security, and the promotion of rural prosperity in our hemisphere.

This was achieved through the implementation of a new model of technical cooperation which resulted in:

- (i) The development of a new relationship with Member States based on participation, transparency and accountability, with the national and regional cooperation agendas serving as instruments for prioritizing IICA's activities and tailoring them to the needs of Member States.
- (ii) The development of a common agenda for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas, fashioned in cooperation with Member States (AGRO Plan 2003-2015).
- (iii) Promotion of increased operational efficiency which enabled the institution to do more with limited resources; thanks to prudent and responsible financial management.
- (iv) The promotion of a culture of excellence in performance and respect for ethical principles and values, with an emphasis on recognition of the contribution made by individuals and groups to the goals of the Institute.
- (v) The development of expanded relations with strategic partners as a means of providing a more holistic approach to agricultural and rural development.

- (vi) Strengthening of the Institute's financial base and collection of quota arrears thus reducing arrears from \$17.4 million at the beginning of the administration to \$8.2 million in 2006.
- (vii) The establishment of a new individual results-based performance evaluation system for employees, geared towards excellence, and linked to institutional objectives.
- (viii) The establishment of an office in Miami, U.S.A. to support the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety.
- (ix) The elimination of the Regional Centres, the implementation of a flatter institutional structure and the assignment of US\$1.2 million in savings to technical cooperation in our Member States.
- (x) The definition of the true contribution of agriculture to the economic development in 17 countries of the Hemisphere.

The re-election of the Director General for an additional four year period is interpreted as a vote of satisfaction with the achievements of the past and a commitment to continue the process of institutional modernization and reform which we initiated in January of 2002.

Our Annual Report for 2005 which is also available to you today shows, in our view, considerable progress in strengthening the agricultural development plans of our Member States and the implementation of actions which promote sustainable agricultural development, food security and rural prosperity in the hemisphere.

During 2005, we placed special emphasis on implementing the mandates issued by the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life, particularly with respect to the implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, focusing our technical cooperation on issues that are a priority for the countries.

In agribusiness and the development of rural enterprises

In the area of Agribusiness Development, IICA consolidated its "Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety," which has four basic components:

- Market development
- The strengthening of agri-business

- Food safety, and
- Trade information

Based at the IICA Office in Miami, this program provided technical cooperation aimed at promoting and operating market instruments, such as the technical assistance provided to the commodity exchanges of El Salvador, Chile, Peru and Venezuela.

The Institute continued to promote the development of small-scale rural agroindustry through the **PRODAR** project, consolidating a network of specialists on the subject and promoted export platforms to Montreal, Canada and Miami, U.S.A.

Through INFOAGRO – Agronegocios programs, agribusinesses received timely information on the import requirements of markets in the United States, Canada and the European Union.

In policies and trade negotiations

In the field of Policies and Trade Negotiations, IICA has adapted its cooperation activities to the new conditions created by the agricultural trade negotiations, and supported Member States in the evaluation of the effects of ongoing trade negotiations on the agricultural sector.

During the recently concluded Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held in Hong Kong last December, the Ministers signed a Ministerial Declaration incorporating concrete agreements that will benefit our economies in the near future.

Noteworthy among these are:

- *Targeting 2013 for the elimination of all forms of export subsidies on agricultural exports;*
- *The granting of access to the markets of developed countries – duty and quota free – for some 87% of products from the least developed countries.*

Prior to this Ministerial Conference, IICA submitted the document “The Agriculture of the Americas in the Context of the DOHA Development Agenda”. This document reinforced the need for coordination among international organizations regarding the trade needs of developing countries.

In concrete terms, our document suggests that any future Agreement on Agriculture that might emerge from current negotiations should take fully into account

the specific needs, problems and conditions of the developing countries to enable them to develop a competitive agriculture sector and participate increasingly in international trade in cooperation with international organizations.

To enhance the countries' ability to administer and implement free trade agreements, the Institute created and implemented a technical cooperation program entitled "Policy and Trade Node: Focal Point Mexico". This program disseminated the results of Mexico's experience in the areas of policy and trade. The program was launched with the participation of technical personnel from the private and public sectors of Central America, Mexico and the countries of the Andean Region.

In technology and innovation

In the area of Technology and Innovation, IICA supported institutional rebuilding at national research and development organizations, such as the National Science and Technology Council of the Dominican Republic and the Agricultural Technology Innovation and Transfer Institute of Costa Rica, to promote adoption of a new paradigm for technological innovation.

In accordance with IABA Resolution 386, the Institute began to formulate a hemispheric agrobiotechnology and biosafety program. Experts from the countries and IICA personnel defined its priority lines of action.

The Institute assisted the countries in sharing information about the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety and its implementation, particularly with regard to the minimum documentation required for the transboundary movement of products containing living genetically modified organisms. It also promoted technical meetings in Argentina and Canada on the implementation of the Protocol.

Regional workshops were held in Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago to identify and evaluate needs in the area of agrobiotechnology and biosafety. Progress was made in collecting and disseminating scientific information about biotechnology and in monitoring scientific advances worldwide in an effort to support the development of national policies on the subject.

The Ministerial Conference on "Science and Technology to Increase Agricultural Productivity", held in conjunction with the governments of the United States and Costa Rica and attended by Delegates from Central America, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and the Dominican Republic, generated important inputs for the design of national and regional technological innovation policies.

In agricultural health and food safety

The recent outbreaks of transboundary diseases, such as Avian Influenza, Bovine Spongiforme Encephalopathy and Foot and Mouth Disease, have pointed to the need for coordinated actions in disease prevention and control at the national, regional, hemispheric and global levels. We disseminated information on these transboundary diseases to help the countries address emergencies that arose during the year. In doing so, we received valuable support from our Member States especially from Canada and the USA.

IICA, in cooperation with PAHO, OIE and other agencies, held the Hemispheric Conference on Surveillance and Prevention of Avian Influenza in Brazil. The participating countries adopted the Declaration of Brasilia and made political, technical and financial commitments to undertake national, regional and hemispheric actions to address the threat currently posed by this disease.

IICA's technical cooperation actions in agricultural health and food safety focused on promoting the institutional modernization of national AHFS services to facilitate compliance with international standards, based on a common vision shared by the public and private sectors, to enable the countries to meet the challenges posed by an increasingly globalized environment. The new AHFS services are building on what already exists, but at the same time they are forging closer ties and implementing joint actions with the ministries of health, trade and foreign affairs.

IICA's "Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS)" diagnostic instrument was used by national veterinary services and plant health protection organizations of Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru to evaluate the preparedness of their veterinary and public health services.

The Institute continues to promote the SPS Initiative for the countries of the Americas in cooperation with the WTO and with support from USDA and Canada.

The Institute also produced the study: "Making agricultural exports more competitive and improving market access by developing and implementing safety and quality standards: The example of asparagus in Peru," which describes a successful example of the application of Codex norms in the Americas.

IICA and several international organizations joined forces to implement the Executive Series on Leadership in Food Safety. Specialists from 18 countries in the hemisphere designed and implemented individual and group projects related to leadership and food safety.

In sustainable rural development

In the area of Sustainable Rural Development, IICA focused its cooperation activities on the formulation of rural development strategies, policies and programs based on the territorial approach and provided technical assistance and training in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay, Guatemala and Panama on the formulation and implementation of rural development strategies.

In consultation with the International Program of Global Dialogues, workshops were held on the importance of gender in promoting micro and small rural enterprises, and the need for sustainable credit. Public and private organizations in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Peru participated.

In education and training

In the area of Education and Training, IICA supported forums on higher agricultural education in the Andean, Caribbean, Southern and Central regions, to promote curriculum modernization in public and private agricultural and rural educational institutions.

In the Caribbean, efforts were made to strengthen student and teacher exchange programs involving agricultural education institutions; promote the establishment of the distance education network for agricultural education; and, foster the organization of forums for dialogue on agricultural and rural education.

The joint efforts of IICA and the World Bank to consolidate a digital distance education system led to the creation of “Ed.rural,” a mechanism for connecting and training different stakeholders in agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere.

In the preparation of investment projects

In 2005, the Institute continued to help the countries prepare and evaluate investment project profiles consistent with an integrated approach to agricultural and rural development.

IICA also assisted countries in: 1) negotiations with donor agencies; 2) enhancing the capabilities of local specialists of counterpart institutions participating in pre-investment processes; 3) providing direct support in bidding processes; and 4) monitoring and managing a portfolio of selected projects.

In this regard, IICA worked together with national partners from the public, private, and civil society sector in Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay and Venezuela in the preparation and negotiation of investment projects for over US\$ 210 million.

I shall now turn to the principal achievements concerning the Regional Agendas.

Regional and national actions

Andean Region

The technical cooperation agenda for the Andean Region, presented to the Council of Ministers of Agriculture of the Andean Community, was agreed upon with the appropriate regional agencies.

A work program was then drawn up with the General Secretariat of the Andean Community that now forms the basis of IICA's activities at the regional level.

With regard to the strengthening of rural communities, IICA supported the formulation of the Andean Rural Development Plan, which the presidents approved at the meeting of the Andean Council of Presidents.

Through the Working Group for Integration and Border Development, IICA presented two projects to the ministries of foreign affairs of the Andean countries:

- "Development of territorial competitiveness in the border areas of the Andean countries"
- "Strengthening of rural agroindustrial clusters in the border areas of the Andean countries"

Once the ministries of foreign affairs approve the projects, IICA will provide follow-up to the processes of negotiating external funds.

In **Ecuador**, the Institute consolidated the program for the inspection of export bananas to ensure plant health quality. The results of this program can be seen in the quality of fruits that are exported to major world markets.

In **Bolivia**, IICA supported the successful implementation of two IDB-funded projects aimed at technological training, job creation and income generation for rural women (alpaca wool graders) in La Paz.

In **Colombia**, the Center for Plant Health Excellence began operations with support from the ICA, APHIS and USAID. It conducted six risk analysis studies, shared experiences with Brazil and Canada and obtained approval for imports of new Colombian products into the United States.

In **Peru**, the Institute stepped up its activities under the “Network of Peoples” project, financed by the CAF. The project is aimed at strengthening financial and production capabilities in the Province of Huaura.

In **Venezuela**, IICA is cooperating in projects such as the one aimed at the integral development of coffee growing in the district of Andres Eloy Blanco, sustainable development in the Valle de Quibor, and a series of production projects in the Yacambu area. The Institute worked on the creation of a “new institutional fabric” based on the territorial approach in the service area of the Yacambu-Quibor Water System; it also consolidated the INFOAGRO Zulia information system.

Caribbean Region

The technical cooperation agenda for the Caribbean Region has permitted IICA to play a leadership role, contributing to efforts to reposition agriculture and improve rural life in the region.

IICA has been actively involved in the development of programs linking agriculture and tourism. This work resulted from the creation of the region’s “Agro-tourism Linkages Center”, in Barbados.

This center has promoted and facilitated mutually beneficial relations between the agricultural community and the tourist industry in Barbados, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Saint Kitts and Nevis, promoting the concepts of quality and reliability in local food production.

To help build consensus through dialogue, IICA spearheaded the preparation of the report “State of and outlook for agriculture and rural life in the Caribbean.” It was approved by the forum of ministers of agriculture and the alliance for the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas in the Caribbean.

This document served as the basis for the presentation that President Jagdeo gave to the regional conference of heads of government in 2004, entitled “A framework for repositioning agriculture in the Caribbean.” This is now called the Jagdeo Initiative.

In cooperation with FAO, and the CARICOM and OECS secretariats, IICA sponsored meetings and workshops to identify the chief barriers to the repositioning of agriculture in the region and ways of overcoming them.

The frequency of natural disasters in the Caribbean has resulted, unfortunately, in the loss of human lives and property, and has become an important constraint to the sustainability of agriculture in the region.

The Institute provided emergency assistance to mitigate the effects of such disasters and permit the immediate production of food in the affected areas. IICA also helped assess the damage and prepare plans for restructuring and modernizing the agricultural sector in Grenada and Guyana.

In the Caribbean, IICA helped the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States establish a local chapter of the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association. This has improved access to the closest markets. With UNESCO, IICA is spearheading a project to enhance the participation of marginalized youth in the development process.

In **Antigua and Barbuda**, IICA supported the implementation of a plan to deal with phytosanitary emergencies, established the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee and organized training workshops on the technical barriers to trade. Special attention was given also to rural development projects with an emphasis on training rural women.

In **Dominica**, IICA is managing a system of targeted revolving credit aimed at small-scale producers, who have also received training in the area of production and management. IICA also supported the establishment of the National Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee, and facilitated the implementation of the national agenda on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

In **Grenada**, the Institute gave courses on organic agriculture, E-commerce, farm management, good agricultural practices, planning and trade management. IICA also assisted in strengthening the agribusiness capacity for planning and commercial management, and reinforced the agricultural quarantine services.

In **Saint Lucia**, IICA promoted the adoption of policies and measures to facilitate the trade opportunities of producers, in particular, those related to the tourist industry. IICA also strengthened local capacity to tackle emergency situations in agricultural health and food safety.

In **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**, producers were trained in the impact of the Bioterrorism Law of the United States and in agribusiness administration, improving its

efficiency and competitiveness. IICA also trained personnel in the control and eradication of pests and diseases.

In **St. Kitts and Nevis**, activities focused on promoting a better understanding of world market tendencies and improving the local capacity to comply with the Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement. In addition, we collaborated with the government in the diversification of sugar cane, and the implementation of various rural development projects.

In the **Commonwealth of The Bahamas**, IICA developed and implemented a framework for a food safety system, and assisted in the establishment of a National Board on this theme. Action plans were developed to tackle sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies, and assistance was provided for the rehabilitation of rural areas affected by the hurricanes.

In **Guyana**, IICA provided technical support to the local dairy development program and the program for the economic development of Linden. New technologies were introduced in two indigenous communities in the Essequibo region, and the Institute spearheaded the process of developing a plan for the rehabilitation of the agricultural and rural sectors in the wake of the devastation caused by Hurricane Ivan.

In **Jamaica**, in cooperation with the Jamaica Bauxite Institute, IICA is rehabilitating mined-out bauxite lands for goat production in the Mocho region. With resources from the Canadian International Development Agency, a project got under way in Clarendon to strengthen the competitive advantage of primary producers, with an emphasis on rural women in agriculture.

In **Suriname**, IICA supported the management of carambola fruit fly control and strengthened the quarantine and certification infrastructure, thanks to financing from USDA, IFAD and the Dutch Treaty Fund. It also helped set up the National Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Committee, financed by the IDB. Working with the University of Suriname, IICA set up the country's first virtual library. The effort has made available all the agricultural data of six partner institutions.

In **Barbados**, in addition to the Regional Agro-tourism Centre already mentioned, IICA promoted the production of organic products and direct ties between producers and the tourist industry; supported the commercial production of black belly sheep; and provided training in hydroponics and the sustainable management of soils.

In the **Dominican Republic**, the Institute gave particular importance to the development of capacities for the agricultural trade negotiations, analysis of competitiveness and programs for the promotion of agricultural exports. Moreover, it

assisted in consolidating cooperation between the public and private sectors to comply with the sanitary and phytosanitary measures of the WTO. It is important to highlight also the continued support to the “Milk Bank” project and the development of agro-tourism and organic agriculture programs.

In **Haiti**, the Institute executed the program for the control of classical swine fever and, in an alliance with the EARTH University, supported student exchanges, and reengineered the study programs of Haitian universities. Also worthy of mention is the continued support to the “PWOTOKOL” project, particularly in relation to the “Kredifanm” credit program for rural women.

In **Trinidad and Tobago**, efforts were made to sensitize the authorities and entrepreneurs regarding the implications of trade liberalization processes and current issues related to agricultural health and food safety. In addition, IICA coordinated work aimed at establishing the real contribution of agriculture to the Trinidadian economy and to the development of an agro-biotechnology strategy.

Central Region

The technical cooperation agenda for the Central Region has focused on the analysis and systematization of information and training in how to negotiate and manage trade agreements in the context of the CAFTA negotiations.

IICA assisted the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) and the private sector in analyzing and defining positions during the process of negotiating the free trade agreement with the United States.

Agricultural exports were promoted through “**Export Platforms**” and the Institute formulated a project to strengthen agribusiness management, to enable Central American firms to gain access to markets. The project was selected to compete for non-reimbursable funds from the Spanish International Cooperation Agency.

In collaboration with OIRSA, CATIE, SAGARPA and the CAC, IICA directly supported the design of a regulatory framework for living modified organisms used in agriculture and a regional strategy on agro-biotechnology, and has since monitored their application.

In **Costa Rica** the Institute provided direct technical support for the formulation of a program for integrated water resource management and strategic services for conservation and production, designed to achieve economic efficiency, social development with equity and environmental sustainability. It is also important to

mention IICA's joint participation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in the planning and implementation of the Sustainable Rural Development Program.

In **El Salvador**, IICA and its partners continued to implement the National Fruits Program (MAG-Frutales), which has generated nearly 6,000 jobs and a market potentially worth US\$50 million per year. As a member of a consortium with CATIE, the Central American University and the Catholic Aid Service, IICA carried out the first phase of the Environmental Program for El Salvador (PAES). The second phase is under way in the departments of Santa Ana and Chalatenango.

In **Guatemala**, the Institute prepared an investment strategy for agro-rural development and took part in the creation of both a fund to encourage private investment in agribusinesses and a rural financial system, based on shared social responsibility. With the National Coffee Association and CATIE, and under the aegis of PROMECAFE, IICA improved productivity by producing the improved seed varieties, releasing parasitoids, creating and disseminating traps and setting up a plant breeding database.

In **Nicaragua**, the large portfolio of projects includes an improved seed program called "Pound for Pound," aimed at increasing the production and yields of staple grains. This project was carried out jointly with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), MAGFOR and the private sector, and made it possible to replace agricultural imports and increase the country's export capacity.

In **Honduras**, IICA has successfully implemented the Second Export Platform and has facilitated the participation of agro-exporters in the SIAL and ANUGA market fairs in Canada and Germany, respectively. The institute also has supported the modernization of the country's sanitary and zoo sanitary regulations, which was harmonized with WTO agreements.

In **Belize**, IICA improved the competitiveness of the sugar sector and conducted research on tropical fruits and roots.

In **Panama**, IICA supported the strengthening of capacities in trade negotiations, in general, and the FTA with United States, in particular. IICA assisted in preparing analyses of the competitiveness of sensitive products, and supported the modernization of the program for agricultural services. Moreover, IICA participated in the improvement of the educational program in the INA and the National University, as well as the implementation in the rural development project called "Triple C" in three provinces of the country.

Northern Region

For the Northern Region, IICA supported the market integration initiatives aimed at strengthening the regional integration process by playing an active role in the informal group on integration set up under NAFTA.

IICA worked with the Food Safety Institute of the Americas to assist Member States to improve agricultural health and food safety in the region and throughout the Americas.

In this region, several horizontal cooperation activities were implemented with the support of the **United States, Mexico and Canada**. Among them, I would like to mention the Canada-CARICOM alliance to enhance food safety capabilities, targeting specialists in the Caribbean.

With support from USDA, IICA helped the victims of the torrential rains in Haiti by means of job creation programs, watershed management and disaster prevention.

In **Mexico**, one of the most important actions was the implementation of Zocalo Rural, an initiative designed to coordinate technical cooperation that provides direct support to the Government of Mexico in implementing the Sustainable Rural Development Act.

Another major contribution was the preparation of a study on the impact of the U.S. Farm Bill on Mexico's agricultural sector, at the request of the Secretariat of Agriculture.

Southern Region

In the **Southern Region**, the Institute provided support to the Technical Secretariat of the South Agricultural Council (**CAS**) and other forums for analysis and dialogue, such as the Agricultural Policy Coordination Network of the Southern Region (REDPA), the Informal Group of Agricultural Negotiators and PROCISUR.

In the area of food safety and agricultural health, IICA helped strengthen the Plant Health Committee (COSAVE), including its technical management and the operation of the Standing Veterinary Committee.

New technological platforms were set up through PROCISUR to coordinate the work of the region's national agricultural research institutes; and an environmental sustainability program was implemented to strengthen technological innovation in the region.

In **Argentina**, the Institute supported forums on the “Agroindustrial Outlook: the countryside as a linchpin of Argentine society;” and on “China in the world agrifood market”, in collaboration with the Secretariat of Agriculture and the Commodity Exchange of Buenos Aires, respectively.

Another important activity was the organization of seminars for agricultural producers and entrepreneurs entitled “How to export agrifood products,” “New forms of financing-trusts” and “Competitiveness of the production chain for rabbits.”

The last of these seminars led to the creation of the Argentina Chamber of Rabbit Breeders.

In **Brazil**, the Institute’s supported the preparation and management of projects to combat rural poverty in several States, financed by the IDB. The creation of the “Agribusiness node: Focal Point Brazil” marks the start of an important project that will make Brazil’s experiences in the agribusiness field available to other IICA member countries.

In **Chile**, with the creation of the “Horizontal Cooperation Node: Focal Point Chile” we are initiating an important project whose objective is to provide IICA’s Member States with information on the Chilean experience in the development of agricultural exports.

IICA and FAO organized the First Hemispheric Meeting on the Control of Animal and Plant Diseases at International Borders. The IV Region of Chile also benefited from the creation of a technical group comprising farmers and professionals from public institutions, under the program “Generation of capabilities for small-scale agricultural producers in Convento Viejo,” and the characterization of women producers in the area.

In **Paraguay**, IICA provided technical and administrative assistance in the execution of agricultural projects with financial resources from IDB. Among the most important initiatives, are the Support to the Development of Small Cotton Farms; the Technical Improvement and Diversification of Rural Production; the Support to the Environmental National System; the Strengthening of the Indigenous Paraguayan Institute; and the Health Education Program for the Protection of Public Health and Zoonosis.

In **Uruguay**, working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries, IICA produced the Directory of Experts on Agricultural and Rural Topics, an important contribution to the projection of the

country's image and the implementation of an aggressive international cooperation policy.

The Institute also implemented a major lecture series entitled "State policies: the agricultural sector in the years ahead," related to the facilitation of competitiveness and trade.

In this area, the Office continued to provide advisory services and training to Uruguay's agricultural export sector, with support from the IDB.

Relations with strategic partners

By continuing to strengthen its relations with strategic partners, IICA was able to leverage resources for the implementation of agricultural and rural development activities and provide information about investment portfolios and priorities. The Committee to Coordinate Work with Strategic Partners was set up and given the task of defining an institutional approach for forging effective strategic partnerships and facilitating internal coordination.

The Institute continued to strengthen its alliances and ties with organizations involved in aspects of the agricultural trade negotiations, such as the WTO, FAO, the IDB/INTAL, ECLAC, ALADI, SIECA and CARICOM.

During 2005, IICA focused on the creation of alliances with new partners, such as Croplife, Starbucks, the World Food Prize Foundation and ECOSOC. It also made preliminary contacts with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and, working with USAID, made IICA Offices more efficient by instituting new institutional arrangements that take maximum advantage of the technical, financial and political resources available.

Efforts were made to increase the capabilities and opportunities offered by U.S. public institutions, companies and education centers involved in the improvement of agriculture and rural communities in the Americas. The Institute also continued to strengthen relations with PAHO and the OAS in complementary areas of work.

IICA stepped up its joint activities with the IDB; reached agreement on a joint work plan with the OAS Rural Development Unit; negotiated a cooperative agreement with the University of Florida and the FAVA/Central America; and established strong ties with the MIGA, a key entity of the World Bank group with which a cooperation agreement is being drawn up.

Through its Office in Spain, the Institute developed and strengthened new partnerships with the European Commission and the bilateral agencies of the EU. It prepared and negotiated several EU-sponsored programs involving small business development, education, training and rural poverty alleviation, as well as projects designed to increase the use of science and technology in agriculture. Finally, a new cooperation agreement was signed with the Government of Spain, paving the way for continued IICA operations in Europe.

In the area of hemispheric integration, the Institute stepped up its work with the Inter-agency Group for Rural Development and the GECAFS, and negotiated initiatives for joint work with the RUPRI (the United States) involving the comparative evaluation of rural development policies.

Future economic trends

What then are the future economic trends and how will these affect the food and agricultural sectors of the Member States?

The global economy is expected to grow strongly in the next decade as a result of the recovery of the world's leading economies. Latin America and the Caribbean are expected to grow by an average of four percent per year.

The agricultural sector in the United States of America and the European Union will undergo major changes in terms of domestic policies in support of the sector and export subsidies, which will have a negative impact on their agricultural trade balances.

China is a market of great interest. As a result of increased purchasing power and more open trade, China will have to consume part of its production of grains, and to import greater amounts of soybeans, wheat, corn, barley, fruits and meat, which could represent trading opportunities for producers from the hemisphere.

Agricultural production worldwide is expected to continue growing as a result of increases in productivity, not the expansion of the agricultural frontier. However, consumption will grow at a slower rate than production.

The health, organic, prepared and ethnic food segments of the agricultural markets will increase, but production will gradually be adapted to respond to changes in demand and to comply with health and quality standards.

Shorter and more vertical agrifood chains will become more prevalent; meaning that small-scale farmers who cannot meet the demands of large-scale marketing may be

left behind. These farmers will have to differentiate their products or cater to specific market niches.

Poverty in rural areas will not be reduced until the technological gap between modern agroindustrial and the traditional small-scale production sectors is narrowed, and the analysis of the distribution of the benefits of technology is incorporated into its design.

The rural poor will become more vocal in their demands. In response, government authorities must foster a formal political dialogue aimed at solving the problems of unequal distribution of income and land, as well as the allocation of resources to education and training.

The prevailing high prices of petroleum products in the world will result in increased interest in the production of agro-energy from agricultural products, including sugarcane, grains and oilseeds. The experience of Brazil in the production of alcohol as a fuel for motor vehicles will become of increasing interest to many countries of the hemisphere. Agro-energy use will have a positive impact on the environment and will create new job opportunities.

Given the above global trends what must our responses be?

We must produce for the market

The actors in agrifood production chains must stop focusing on supply and begin to base production on demand. This will only be possible if:

- they keep abreast of changes in the world order, be it to tap the opportunities offered by new markets or to take strategic actions against potential competitors;
- they take actions in anticipation of reforms in the multilateral framework, in order to benefit from the elimination of subsidies; they monitor changes in demand, with a view to adapting both products and manufacturing practices;
- they gain the confidence of consumers by complying with food safety requirements;
- new competencies, strategies and work plans must be defined for the ministries of agriculture; and public-private initiatives aimed at the development of agribusinesses must be fostered.

We must ride the wave of the technological revolution

Producing for the market also means that agriculture and rural areas must embrace the technological revolution. Agriculture must be diversified and modernized in such a way that it will be compatible with natural resource conservation, economically viable, based on knowledge management for the market and centered on technology and innovation processes through agribusinesses. To accomplish this, the flow and management of information must be improved by integrating the rural and agricultural sectors into the digital world. We must provide public research institutions with more financial and human resources.

We must reduce poverty and improve income distribution

It is necessary to create decent employment opportunities in agricultural and non-agricultural activities in rural territories, and to promote the adoption of a national development model that views rural issues as strategic issues and is aimed at eliminating poverty and inequity. This will be feasible if the current style of growth is changed, shifting the benefits to the poorest, recognizing the true contribution of all the actors in the chains, improving the distribution of benefits, fostering social collaboration, and strengthening the families and dignity of rural inhabitant.

We must foster the development of the capabilities of the actors in the food and agribusiness sector

This area of work is instrumental in creating the conditions needed to tackle the first three successfully. Farmers must become agricultural entrepreneurs. To do this, they must acquire additional knowledge, improve their management skills, learn to interpret the demands of the markets, become familiar with the regulations that govern trade, and, above all, base their business decisions on accurate and up to date information. New organizational capabilities will also have to be created to incorporate family farming and small-scale farmers into the production-supply chain. They will also need new abilities, skills and knowledge to enable them to participate in non-agricultural activities in rural territories and gain access to better jobs.

The future role

Our goal, today, is build on the achievements of the past and continue to assist our Member States in repositioning the agricultural sector to face the global challenges of the 21st Century.

I believe that today, our countries face six major global challenges. (i) to eradicate poverty and hunger; (ii) to ensure environmental sustainability and respond to climate

change; (iii) to combat transboundary disease, e.g. Avian influenza, Foot and Mouth disease, Mad Cow Disease; (iv) to promote competitiveness of their economies in order to face international competition and participate in the global economy; (v) to resolve the problems associated with the high cost of energy and the availability of water; and, (vi) to develop a global partnership for development, including completion of the Doha Development Agenda for global trade.

Given the above challenges, we have prepared, in cooperation with the Member States, a Medium-Term Plan for 2006-2010, which seeks to consolidate the changes of the past and to assist our Member States to cope with the new challenges.

The plan has as its fundamental objective to assist our Member States to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by working with them to achieve sustainable agricultural development, food security and rural prosperity.

We hope to obtain the approval of the Committee for this plan.

In addition to the approval of the plan, we seek the approval of the Committee for the Hemispheric Program on Biotechnology and Biosafety and the Program Budget for 2007.

We will be presenting, for your consideration also, a revised version of the Hemispheric Program on Agroenergy, an updated version of the analysis of Office in Spain, and amendments to the Rules of Procedures of the General Directorate and the Staff Rules.

These matters were considered by the SACMI at their Regular Meeting earlier this year and we benefited from their suggestions and ideas, most of which have now been incorporated into the documents which are provided for your consideration today.

I look forward to your cooperation and support as we continue to work together to build IICA into an institution of technical excellence for the agriculture of the Americas.

APPENDICES

AGENDA
(IICA/CE/Doc.475(06))

1. **Provisional Schedule of the Meeting** *IICA/CE/Doc.476(06)*

2. **Reports of the Director General to the Executive Committee**
 - 2.1 Message from the Director General *(Unnumbered)*

 - 2.2 Report of the 2006 Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues *IICA/CE/Doc.477(06)*

3. **Institutional Matters and Cooperation Services**
 - 3.1 2005 Annual Report of IICA *IICA/CE/Doc.478(06)*

 - 3.2 Proposed 2006-2010 IICA Medium-Term Plan. *IICA/CE/Doc.479(06)*

 - 3.3 Proposed Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program, and Funding of Priority Actions *IICA/CE/Doc.480(06)*

 - 3.4 Progress in preparing the Proposed Hemispheric Program on Agro-Energy and Bio-Fuels *IICA/CE/Doc.481(06)*

 - 3.5 The International Dimension: The Future of the IICA Office in Spain *IICA/CE/Doc.482(06)*

4. **Financial and Budgetary Matters**
 - 4.1 Financial Statements of the Institute for 2005 and Report of the Independent Auditors *IICA/CE/Doc.483(06)*

 - 4.2 Twelfth Annual Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC) of IICA *IICA/CE/Doc.484(06)*

 - 4.3 Current Status of Quota Payments and Progress in the Collection of Quotas Owed to the Institute *IICA/CE/Doc.485(06)*

- 4.4 Proposed Program-Budget for 2007 *IICA/CE/Doc.486(06)*
- 5. Modernization of Human Resources Management**
- 5.1 Proposed Amendments to the Staff Rules and to the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate *IICA/CE/Doc.487(06)*
- 5.2 System for Determining and Modifying the Salary of the Director General *IICA/CE/Doc.488(06)*
- 6. The Governing Bodies of IICA and the Ministerial Meeting**
- 6.1 Status of the Resolutions of the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA *IICA/CE/Doc.489(06)*
- 6.2 Status of the Resolutions of the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee *IICA/CE/Doc.490(06)*
- 6.3 Term of the Chairperson of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture *IICA/CE/Doc.491(06)*
- 6.4 Proposed Amendments to Articles 73, 96 and 97 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee and Articles 65, 67 and 88 of the Rules of Procedure of the IABA *IICA/CE/Doc.492(06)*
- 6.5 Date and Site of the Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee *IICA/CE/Doc.493(06)*
- 7. Other Business**
- Strengthening the IICA-CATIE Relationship *IICA/CE/Doc.494(06)*

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