



*INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE - IIBA*

Twelfth Regular Meeting  
November 13, 2003

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**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR  
IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE MEETINGS OF THE  
INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IIBA)**

**Panama City, Panama**

The role of the governing bodies of IICA has been changing with the growing importance of the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life held within the context of the Summit of the Americas process. As a result, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) has been devoting less time than in the past to analyzing and making decisions on the internal affairs of the Institute; this task has been taken up increasingly by the Executive Committee. In addition, new information and communications technologies have made it possible to simplify processes and realize important savings in time and costs.

The above has had a notable effect on the procedures traditionally used for the meetings of the IABA as the highest governing body of the Institute. Likewise, the Institute's policy on financial prudence (of particular importance because its regular fund budget has been frozen since 1995) obliges IICA to develop procedures that are more expeditious, effective and less costly.

Aware of the need to adjust the IABA's working procedures, the Director General proposes to the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, at its Twelfth Regular Meeting, the following:

- a) **To reduce from 45 to 30 days the time frame for presenting the working documents of IABA meetings to the Member States.** (Article 22)

***Justification:***

As the working documents are now submitted by Internet, delegates are able to receive them the same day they are sent out. A similar measure has already been adopted by the Executive Committee, at its Twenty-second Regular Meeting (2002), by means of Resolution 379.

- b) **During IABA meetings, to maintain the use of the four official languages only for simultaneous interpretation and for the translation of resolutions. The Final Report of the IABA meetings, which will include the summary minutes of the meeting, the resolutions and the appendices, will be prepared after the meeting, in the four official languages of the Institute.** (Article 65)

***Justification:***

During IABA meetings, it is indispensable to offer simultaneous interpretation services in the Institute's four official languages, in order to ensure that deliberations are conducted with the greatest of fluency and ease of the participants. It is also essential that the resolutions be presented in the four official languages, since they embody the agreements

reached during the meeting. The summary minutes of the sessions can be deferred and included later in the final report of the meeting.

This procedure will make it possible to realize substantial savings in translation costs during the meeting and reduce the number of précis writers needed. It will also simplify the work of the Technical Secretariat without affecting the effectiveness of the Board's work.

- c) **The IABA, in plenary session, will approve the resolutions and not the minutes of the meeting; therefore, the “agreements of the meeting” and not the “report of the meeting” will be signed.** (Articles 87 and 88)

*Justification:*

Due to its new dimension, the length of IABA meetings has been considerably shortened, making it impossible to draft, revise, translate and distribute the minutes to participants on the same day of the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

Given that the essence of the IABA meetings is the analysis, careful review and approval of resolutions, IICA will continue to present same in the four official languages of the Institute.

The final report of the meeting will be prepared in the four official languages of the Institute, and will contain the resolutions approved, the summary minutes of the working sessions, and the appendices which, according to the rules, are to be distributed to all the Member States.

In synthesis, the three proposed changes: i) will not affect the performance of the IABA as the highest governing body of the Institute; ii) will facilitate the work of the Technical Secretariat; and iii) will enable to the Institute to realize savings.

Attached as the only appendix to this document is a table comparing the current language of the articles to be amended, and the language proposed for implementing the changes.

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<sup>1</sup> IABA meetings used to be three days long, which allowed the Secretariat to work day and night shifts to draft, translate and reproduce the minutes in the Institute's four official languages.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE IABA**

Original Text	Proposed Text
<p><b>A. Time frame for sending out the working documents</b></p>	<p><b>A. Time frame for sending out the working documents</b></p>
<p><b>Article 22.</b> The provisional agenda for each regular meeting of the Board shall be prepared by the Director General, taking into account decisions made at previous meetings, recommendations of the General Assembly, Councils and other organs of the Organization of American States, and proposals from the Member States. This provisional agenda shall be sent, together with the call to meeting, to the Member States, IICA Associates, the Permanent Observers, and other participants. The Director General shall send the necessary background documentation to the Member States, IICA Associates and Permanent Observers, at least <del>45 days</del> prior to the opening date of the meeting.</p>	<p><b>Article 22.</b> The provisional agenda for each regular meeting of the Board shall be prepared by the Director General, taking into account decisions made at previous meetings, recommendations of the General Assembly, Councils and other organs of the Organization of American States, and proposals from the Member States. This provisional agenda shall be sent, together with the call to meeting, to the Member States, IICA Associates, the Permanent Observers, and other participants. The Director General shall send the necessary background documentation to the Member States, IICA Associates and Permanent Observers, at least <u>30 days</u> prior to the opening date of the meeting.</p>
<p><b>B. Procedures and Discussions</b></p>	<p><b>B. Procedures and Discussions</b></p>
<p><b>Article 65.</b> The working documents of the Board, in exceptional cases, may be distributed in one of the official languages of the Institute. <del>Resolutions, recommendations, agreements, minutes and reports of the Board must be distributed in the four official languages.</del></p>	<p><b>Article 65.</b> The working documents of the Board, in exceptional cases, may be distributed in one of the official languages of the Institute. <u>During the meeting, the draft resolutions, recommendations and agreements of the Board will be distributed in the four official languages.</u></p>

<p><b>C. Minutes and Final Report</b></p>	<p><b>C. Minutes and Final Report</b></p>
<p><b>Article 87.</b> Minutes shall be kept of the plenary sessions and of the sessions of the committees. They shall be prepared by the Director General, in the capacity of ex-officio Secretary of the Board, who may designate this duty to the Technical Secretary. <del>The Technical Secretary shall prepare for each plenary session a report summarizing the prominent points of each such session. These summary reports shall be in the four official languages of the Institute, and must be approved by the plenary.</del></p>	<p><b>Article 87.</b> Minutes shall be kept of the plenary sessions and of the sessions of the committees. They shall be prepared by the Director General, in the capacity of ex-officio Secretary of the Board, who may designate this duty to the Technical Secretary. <u>The Final Report of IABA meetings, comprising the summary minutes of the sessions, the resolutions and the appendices, shall be prepared after the meeting in the four official languages of the Institute.</u></p>
<p><b>D. Official languages: regarding the translation of documents</b></p>	<p><b>D. Official languages: regarding the translation of documents</b></p>
<p><b>Article 88.</b> The Final Report shall contain all the resolutions passed by the Board, as well as the Minutes and the appendices. Prior to publication, and taking into account the observations of interested Member States, the Technical Secretariat shall carefully review the Report to assure that the text is stylistically correct and consistent in all the official languages of the Institute. <del>The Chairperson of the Board and the ex-officio Secretary shall sign the approved Final Report.</del></p>	<p><b>Article 88.</b> The Final Report shall contain all the resolutions passed by the Board, as well as the Minutes and the appendices. Prior to publication, and taking into account the observations of interested Member States, the Technical Secretariat shall carefully review the Report to assure that the text is stylistically correct and consistent in <u>the four official languages of the Institute.</u> <u>The Chairperson of the Board and the <i>ex officio</i> Secretary shall sign the agreements (resolutions) of the meeting.</u></p>