



REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE OF THE AMERICAS 2015 AND OF THE EIGHTEENTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico
19-23 October 2015



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What is IICA?

More than 70 years ago, a group of visionaries recognized the need to create an agency specializing in agriculture for the American continent, with a purpose that still remains valid today: to promote agricultural development and rural well-being in this region.

As a result, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was born. Throughout this time, the Institute has succeeded in identifying challenges and opportunities and, most importantly, evolving into an international technical cooperation organization that permanently responds to the new demands of the agricultural sector.

Our **mission** is to *encourage, promote and support our Member States in their efforts to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being through international technical cooperation of excellence.*

In partnership with our Member States, our **vision** is *to create a competitive, inclusive and sustainable inter-American agriculture that feeds the hemisphere and the world, while at the same time generating opportunities to reduce hunger and poverty among farmers and rural dwellers.*

We provide cooperation by working closely and continuously with our 34 Member States, addressing their needs in a timely manner. Our most valuable asset is undoubtedly the close relationship we nurture with the beneficiaries of our work.

We have a wealth of experience in areas such as technology and innovation for agriculture, agricultural health and food safety, agribusiness, agricultural trade, rural development, natural resource management and training.

We are also committed to achieving results. Our 2014-2018 Medium Term Plan contributes to the evolution of our technical cooperation model with the aim of consolidating IICA as an organization geared toward accomplishing concrete and visible results. We work to facilitate the positive changes that our Member States wish to achieve in the agricultural and rural sectors.



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Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) 2015



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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS
OF AGRICULTURE 2015 AND THE EIGHTEENTH
REGULAR MEETING OF THE IABA**

OPENING CEREMONY

OPENING CEREMONY

Start of the ceremony

The opening ceremony of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) was called to order at 19:18 hours on October 20, 2015 at the Hotel Grand Velas, in the municipality of Solidaridad, Quintana Roo State, Mexico. The President of Mexico, Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, and the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of that country, Mr. José Calzada Rovirosa, were in attendance.

Address by the Governor of Quintana Roo State, Mr. Roberto Borge Angulo

The Governor of Quintana Roo, Mr. Roberto Borge Angulo, welcomed everyone present. He underlined the importance of the meeting, which afforded the countries an opportunity to take important decisions concerning future policies designed to promote agricultural productivity and rural inclusion.

He mentioned that, while Mexico had made great efforts to promote agricultural development and combat poverty, agricultural production was still insufficient to meet the population's needs, making the promotion of agricultural productivity a matter of key importance for the country.

He added that tourism was the main source of income for Quintana Roo, as the state was one of the country's principal tourist destinations. Agriculture was also a sector of great importance for the state, however, as it complemented the tourism industry.

In Quintana Roo, the demand from the tourism sector outpaced agricultural production, so the government was making every effort to promote agricultural development and reduce poverty, issues of concern to other countries taking part in the meeting as well.

In conclusion, he said he hoped that the meeting would be a success, and that the organizers and participants would achieve all the objectives they had set for it.

Remarks by the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico, Mr. José Eduardo Calzada Roviroso

The Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico, Mr. José Eduardo Calzada Roviroso, said it was a great honor for his country to host the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture.

He then welcomed the ministers and heads of delegation of IICA's Member States. He was sure that the deliberations of the meeting would be very productive, as the countries would exchange opinions regarding their experiences and different ways of tackling the challenges faced by agriculture and supplying sufficient food.

He noted that the theme of the event, "Grow better, produce more, feed everyone: sustainable agricultural productivity and rural inclusion," highlighted the challenge facing humankind of feeding more than nine billion people in 2050. He added that, given the hunger and malnutrition that could occur, it was necessary to act now to identify specific, viable actions for increasing food production by 70% in the years ahead. He described it as a strategic priority that called for forward-looking solutions. Ending hunger and improving nutrition were priority goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations (UN), and a moral obligation that could not be ignored.

He emphasized that producing more was the only way to realize the right of all people to food, which required efforts to promote technological innovation, increase investment in production, improve production techniques, reduce the amount of food wasted, and make the food system more efficient. Advancing toward that goal called for partnerships between nations, and joint international cooperation activities aimed at making more food available. He suggested that IICA had a key role to play in carrying out the task, since its contributions were essential to equip the countries with public policies designed to promote sustainable agricultural productivity and rural inclusion.

He remarked that, as the motto of the meeting made clear, the dialogue would generate initiatives and projects aimed at growing better, producing more, and feeding everyone. He concluded his remarks by underscoring that the agreements reached at the meeting would be of great importance, as they would demonstrate the political will of the ministers of agriculture of the Americas, and their commitment to undertaking responsible actions on behalf of society.

Remarks by the Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Mr. Víctor M. Villalobos Arámbula

The Director General of IICA referred to the *milpa*, a construct involving human beings, agriculture and the environment that was thousands of years old and closely related to the focus of the deliberations suggested by the Government of Mexico for the meeting: “Grow better, produce more, feed everyone: sustainable agricultural productivity and rural inclusion.”

He explained that “growing better” meant meeting the needs of both the present and the future without compromising long-term sustainability. This called for the development of a form of agriculture that did not exhaust natural resources, made optimum use of water, and was resilient and capable of adapting to climate change and managing the reduction of risk. He highlighted the need to adopt good agricultural practices, and promote constant innovation and the application of scientific and traditional knowledge to raise productivity. He described such actions as a prerequisite for achieving competitiveness and equipping agricultural stakeholders to integrate into markets and establish themselves there.

He suggested that “producing more” required international cooperation, with a policy framework and reforms based on scientific principles, the capacity to facilitate the development of knowledge and innovations, and investments that benefited both large agricultural firms and family farming. He explained that such an inclusive approach would make it possible to bridge the gaps between producers, regions, and countries, for which he recommended strengthening the State’s lead role in the agricultural sector, developing a process for the modern management of agricultural education, promoting a culture of innovation, consolidating the region’s leadership in international trade in agricultural products, fostering an entrepreneurial culture among smallholders, and strengthening international cooperation for the development of productive, sustainable and inclusive agriculture.

The IICA Director General stated that agriculture was the springboard for achieving food security for a constantly growing population, for which higher agricultural productivity was essential. He added that the Americas had enormous potential to contribute to the achievement of that goal, as it had the capacity to become the global breadbasket.

He then underscored the Institute’s importance to the member countries as an international organization that added value to the work of governments, producers, academia, the private sector, and civil society, through multilateral collaboration and the generation of international public goods related to high-impact issues.

He therefore asked the ministers of agriculture of the Americas, meeting as members of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, to take the decision to strengthen IICA financially, for their own sake and for the sake of millions of people involved in agriculture. This, he promised, would result in a more productive, sustainable, and inclusive agricultural sector.

Remarks by the President of Mexico, Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto

Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico, pointed out that one of the state's basic obligations was to ensure that its people had access to food.

He noted that, according to United Nations (UN) data, the world's population would reach more than nine billion in 2050, 24% more than at present. He added that, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), meeting the future demand for food would require a 60%-70% increase in production, and only 10%-20% could be achieved by incorporating new land into production. Hence, agricultural productivity had to be improved.

He observed that while some producers had access to markets, many smallholders used their products for personal consumption. Both types of producers needed public policies aimed at increasing productivity.

He mentioned that today, the countries of the Americas had more technologies available, but that the challenge lay in delivering them to all farmers, with a view to helping to improve food security, lessen the environmental impact, and reduce poverty and social inequality.

Finally, he called on the countries to strengthen IICA, to enable it to continue to be an instrument for dialogue and the sharing of experiences, and a coordinator of inter-American efforts to promote the rural sector, so that the rural population could grow better, produce more, and feed everyone.

Close of the ceremony

The opening ceremony of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA was adjourned at 20:00 hours on October 20, 2015.

TECHNICAL FORUM
“TOWARD COMPETITIVE, SUSTAINABLE,
AND INCLUSIVE PRODUCTIVITY:
OPPORTUNITY FOR AGRICULTURE
IN THE AMERICAS”

TECHNICAL FORUM “TOWARD COMPETITIVE, SUSTAINABLE, AND INCLUSIVE PRODUCTIVITY: OPPORTUNITY FOR AGRICULTURE IN THE AMERICAS”

Opening of the forum

The technical forum “Toward Competitive, Sustainable, and Inclusive Productivity: Opportunity for Agriculture in the Americas” got under way at 09:00 hours on October 21, 2015, in Mimosa rooms I and II of the Hotel Fairmont Mayakoba, in the city of Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico. Mr. José Calzada Roviroso, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico, acted as the moderator.

Opening remarks

The Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico conveyed the greetings of the President of Mexico, who hoped that agreements of great importance to the countries of the Americas would be reached in the forum.

He mentioned that that the purpose of the forum was to reflect on the importance of increasing agricultural productivity to meet the growing demand for food. He noted that there was much hard work to be done in a complex environment that called for policies to promote greater resilience to climate change, respect for the environment, the preservation of health and quality, and the integration of small-scale producers into value chains.

He referred to the common challenge of making the Americas the world’s largest food producer, for which production would have to be expanded by means of new forms of cultivation. Innovation and technology were key factors in the equation, as they were vital to achieve a sustainable increase in productivity, and public-private partnerships also had an important role to play.

Turning to family farmers, he pointed out that they accounted for the majority of producers, and included those who grew crops for personal consumption and did not possess the technology needed to raise their levels of productivity and income. They required support as a matter of urgency, to afford them more access to technological innovations. He also stressed the importance of protecting ecosystems and promoting an increase in the incomes of small-scale producers.

He reiterated Mexico's commitment to initiatives designed to construct a wide-ranging agenda leading to close, expeditious, and focused collaboration aimed at helping to boost sustainable agricultural productivity and rural inclusion. He noted that IICA was playing a key role in those efforts and that the decisions reached at the meeting would be key to improving the living conditions of the peoples of the different countries.

Presentation on the 4 per 1000 initiative for carbon sequestration

France's Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Agrifood and Forestry, Catherine Geslain-Laneelle, presented the 4 per 1000 initiative, whose objectives are to: a) contribute to food security through increased fertility achieved by means of carbon sequestration in agricultural soils, b) adapt agriculture to climate change, and c) mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

She pointed out that a number of innovative practices backed by scientists were showing the world that thousands of farmers helped to increase soil carbon and, thus, soil fertility. She explained that the term "4 per 1000" was coined at a scientific conference where it was shown that an increase of 4 per 1000, or 0.04%, in the carbon stored in the soil would compensate for the greenhouse gas emissions produced by all human activity and contribute to the achievement of food security.

She then explained that the initiative was based on work on two fronts: a) the participation of multiple partners in efforts to share best practices and offer programs aimed at training, the financing of projects, the development of public policies and the improvement of supply chains; and b) an international scientific research and cooperation program designed to develop mechanisms for assessing the soil's potential for carbon sequestration, analyze the performance of agricultural practices to increase the amount of carbon stored in soil, promote innovation for that purpose, and estimate changes in carbon stocks, among other objectives.

She described the initiative as vertical, transparent, and collaborative. An executive committee monitored the project and a scientific advisory committee ensured that the actions carried out were based on sound science.

Finally, she invited local governments, national authorities, donors, private-sector institutions, international research agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other institutions involved in agriculture and rural development to join in the initiative, as agriculture had a key role to play in counteracting climate change.

Report on the Inter-American Meeting of National Animal and Plant Health and Food Safety Services in the Face of the Challenges of International Trade, held in Brasilia from September 2-3, 2015

Kátia Abreu, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply of Brazil, began her report by highlighting the contribution made by the Americas to the diet of billions of people across the globe, thanks to products such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, beans, cassava and corn, with the latter being regarded as sacred by the peoples who grew it. She also pointed out that the Americas accounted for 39% of the world’s agricultural exports.

She mentioned that, despite those undeniable triumphs, many challenges had yet to be met if food insecurity was to be eliminated. The definitive solution to the problem, she suggested, lay in focusing on three structural elements: agricultural productivity, sustainability, and health.

With respect to productivity, she mentioned that Brazil was the tropical nation with the largest acreage in the world, and also the one that made greatest use of technology. This had led to it becoming one of the world’s ten biggest producers. She added that Brazilian agribusiness generated one third of the countries’ income and employment. Higher productivity had been achieved through the use of knowledge and technologies related to management and genetics, many of which had been generated and disseminated by the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA).

She explained that the progress achieved by Brazil in raising productivity had been accompanied by environmental sustainability. Thanks to the knowledge generated, the country had been able to produce increasing amounts of food, bioenergy, and fibers on the same amount of land. Furthermore, Brazil had one of the world’s most advanced sets of environmental legislation, which strengthened its commitment to sustainable agriculture. She cited important initiatives in this regard, such as the Low-Carbon Agriculture (ABC) program used to encourage the adoption of sustainable technologies like direct seeding and the integration of crops, livestock, and forest to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase productivity.

She then turned to agricultural health, the third structural element that was essential for eliminating food insecurity and which made it possible to supply the world with quality food free from pests and diseases. She added that a month and a half previously the Inter-American Meeting of National Animal and Plant Health and Food Safety Services had been held in Brazil. The 35 countries of the Americas that took part had identified the need to promote the exchange of knowledge and information on agricultural health and food safety (AHFS).

She pointed out that several of the challenges faced in that field were common to all the countries of the Americas, such as the need to promote the continuous modernization of AHFS services, focus on foodborne diseases, and eliminate the use of different standards for domestic and overseas markets. She explained that the agricultural protection system designed to guarantee food safety and quality was a maximum priority for Brazil; hence, the country's efforts to devise innovative mechanisms and instruments in the processes used by their health services, including a risk assessment tool used to improve decision-making and facilitate trade among countries.

Since not all the countries of the Americas had the human and financial resources required to conduct risk assessments, she proposed setting up a working group to create procedures for assessing animal and plant health risks. The group's discussions would be based on the principles of the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and take into account the needs of all the countries in the region.

She felt the initiative would be a good example for the rest of the world, and asked everyone present to endorse her proposal, so that the discussions could begin aimed at the adoption of harmonized procedures to facilitate trade between countries and make trade safer.

Recommendations of the technical document "Toward competitive, sustainable, and inclusive productivity: Opportunity for agriculture in the Americas"

The Director General of IICA observed that the world in general, and the agricultural sector in particular, were having to cope with rapid and, in some cases unpredictable, changes that were giving rise to new scenarios and new production systems that used natural resources more responsibly, but with greater pressure to meet the demand for food, oils and fibers for the world's burgeoning population.

He suggested that the agricultural sector faced three main challenges. It needed to: a) analyze what was happening with the factors of production and the external agents that affect them; b) identify ways of improving productivity that were a viable option for all stakeholders; and c) promote higher productivity without overexploiting natural resources.

He then explained that an improvement in total factor productivity called for an increase in the amount produced but using the same quantity of inputs—in other words, countries had to produce more with the same.

He mentioned some of the reasons why agricultural productivity needed to be increased: a) the demand for food for the world’s burgeoning population; b) the vulnerability of natural resources, mainly soil and water; c) exclusion; and, d) climate change. He added that in the past 30 years agriculture had grown more slowly than the rest of the economy. He explained that one of the main reasons why the Americas needed to focus on agricultural productivity was because the sector was growing less strongly than gross domestic product (GDP); in other words, production was increasing less than in the rest of the economy.

He also pointed out that the increase in productivity in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) was low in comparison with other regions. In LAC, productivity had grown by an average of 2.1%, with strong variations between countries, while in other regions growth averaged between 3.5% and 4.2%. He added that major opportunities existed for increasing productivity and closing gaps, but such efforts called for further research, extension, training and, in particular, financing and investment.

Finally, he recommended six actions that could be implemented to help meet the challenges of agricultural productivity and that could also be taken into account in drawing up a common inter-American agenda on the subject: a) strengthen the State’s lead role in the agricultural sector; b) devise a process for the modern management of agricultural education; c) continue to invest in the creation of a culture of agricultural innovation; d) consolidate the region’s leadership in international trade in agricultural products; e) promote a business-oriented and organizational culture among small-scale producers; and, f) strengthen international cooperation for the development of productive, sustainable, and inclusive agriculture.

Dialogue on Sustainable and Inclusive Agricultural Productivity

The Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico introduced the panels and suggested a series of questions that could be used to guide the ministerial dialogue.

Question 1: What should the ministers of agriculture do to raise sustainable and inclusive productivity in all types of agriculture? How could the gap between large- and small-scale agriculture be bridged, and how could public policies make a more effective contribution to the process?

In his answer to the question, panelist *Tabaré Aguerre*, Minister of Agriculture of Uruguay, analyzed the issue from three different standpoints:

As an expert of the IICA flagship project *Resilience and comprehensive risk management in agriculture*:

- There is no single answer. The difference between our countries' agribusinesses is not great, but our family farming subsectors are significantly different. The two types are not mutually exclusive.
- Agriculture offers millions of farmers a means of improvement and prosperity, provided public policies and differentiated instruments are in place to enable small—and especially family—farmers to compete within value chains.
- In the countries, subsistence, transition and consolidated family farmers coexist. The first of those groups face the biggest difficulties. Development is possible for all three types, bearing in mind that, with the growing demand for food, opportunities exist for everyone.

From the perspective of risk management and resilience:

- Risk includes threats posed by climate events and the vulnerable aspects of production systems.
- Both scientific research and public policy are needed to reduce vulnerability.
- Some of the key points to be considered in a resilience strategy are as follows: protect natural resources, assess ecosystem services, set up information systems and support for decision-making by public policymakers and business managers, democratize access to information, strengthen the infrastructure for water harvesting and irrigation, give small producers access to financial tools for risk management, and strengthen the institutional arrangements with instruments differentiated by type of producer.

As the person responsible for public policies in Uruguay:

- In a holistic vision, food security and environmental sustainability are viewed as two sides of the same coin. The minister underscored the importance of productive agricultural practices intended to help recover degraded soils, maintain their capacity to retain water and conserve the health of crops, all of which influences food security, rural development, and the construction of resilience.
- In Uruguay, policies have been implemented for that purpose. For example, agriculture is regulated by requiring producers to submit crop plans. They are asked not to select crops that they do not have the capacity to produce. The second policy promotes the creation of index-based insurance for the livestock sector, to avoid costly payouts.

Panelist *Jessica Mahalingappa*, of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), described her country’s experiences and international collaboration on agricultural health:

- Pests and diseases also affect small producers.
- When outbreaks occur, direct support plans are needed that include emergency actions and training campaigns.
- A joint approach is needed. APHIS/USDA works with IICA to carry out programs to combat pests and diseases, so they do not have a negative impact on trade or producers’ well-being.

Panelist *Armando Paredes*, Director of Agroindustrias APAL S.A. of Mexico, gave his opinions from the perspective of Mexico’s private sector:

- Differentiated policies are needed for commercial and small-scale agriculture. Solving the problems faced by small-scale agriculture calls for the participation of not only the ministries of agriculture, but also other government ministries or secretariats.
- In the countries, producers with highly profitable operations coexist with low-income smallholders who have great productive potential, and subsistence farmers who struggle to make ends meet because they grow crops that are not suited to the areas where they farm. This problem calls for the implementation of policies aimed at the modernization of production.
- Subsistence producers need specific long-term policies for the modernization of production, policies that extend beyond a particular government’s term of office.
- Transition agriculture calls for legal and political certainty.
- Crosscutting policies can benefit the different types of producers. One such policy involves promoting competition in financial services and the marketing of inputs, to bring down costs.
- Agriculture is capital-intensive but investment in the activity is marginal in comparison with other sectors of the economy.
- Financial tools exist that offer security to people who invest in intermediate and commercial agriculture. The trusts for investment in real estate established in Mexico are a case in point; they can be used to purchase the land so that the producer has capital. This can provide an opportunity for growth for those two types of agriculture.
- An adequate legal framework is required, one that promotes investment in small- and medium-scale agriculture and these two segments’ integration into markets.
- In addition to innovation and research, efforts are needed to promote access to information and communication technologies (ICT) such as the Internet, to afford all producers access to knowledge and information.

In responding to the question, panelist *Julio Berdegué*, of the Latin American Center for Rural Development (RIMISP) highlighted the real importance of family farming:

- Latin America is basically a region of family farmers. Small-scale producers make up around 85% of all producers.
- The strategies, policies and most of the instruments used to achieve the development of family farming are well known and known to work. So, why is that development not achieved?
- It is important to determine why development agendas related to the competitiveness of small-scale agriculture are not implemented, and which stakeholders would support them.
- More effort should be made to support family farmers, as only 20% of them receive comprehensive support. They should all be offered quality goods and services, instead of spending up to 80% on private transfers.
- Public budgets should be restructured so that, instead of transfers, they include resources for the generation of public goods in the areas of education and training, ICT and road infrastructure, among others.

Panelist *José María Sumpsi*, of the Polytechnic University of Madrid, drew attention to the following points:

- Numerous studies have shown that the dual structure of agriculture in Latin America is gradually disappearing. An intermediate sector is emerging between the extremes of subsistence smallholders and commercial agriculture that could be called “the third way,” with producers partially or totally integrated into markets. It is a more specialized form of family farming with more inclusion and security. This group is the segment that public policy should target.
- Subsistence farming is still carried out in very disorganized, vulnerable, and remote territories with high indices of poverty and exclusion. In such places, the problems should not be tackled by ministries of agriculture, but by the ministries responsible for social welfare, although a productive component clearly must be considered. The key element is that public policy link social assistance and poverty alleviation systems with the mechanisms and instruments for the development of production. Therefore, in subsistence farming the ministries of agriculture should only provide support and not function as the key ministry for solving the problems of that segment.
- Public policy can do little for commercial agriculture. The segment is comprised of highly productive farms. All that the public sector can do to help them is to deliver public goods and services in areas such as the dissemination of information, the promotion of exports, and the management of health and market risks.
- Public policy should focus on encouraging the intermediate segment, through policies and instruments in the areas of technical assistance, agricultural extension, access to

credit, risk management, the promotion of associative enterprises, and access to markets and insurance, among others.

- If what needs to be done to develop family agriculture is no secret, why has that development not taken place? A possible answer is that the implementation of public agricultural policy in Latin America lacks continuity. To be successful, agrarian policy needs to be applied continuously; for example, the time horizon for implementation of Europe’s current agricultural policy is from 2014 to 2020.

Question 2: How can overall productivity be increased in the hemisphere? How can we do it working together?

Tabaré Aguerre

- Taking climatic diversity and a focus on exports as givens, it must be possible to identify interests that all countries have in common and areas in which they can work together, and that is an aspect in which IICA has an important role to play.
- To promote the sustainable intensification of productivity, the generation of regional public goods is key in areas such as agricultural health, for example. Another key aspect that should be taken into account at the regional level when promoting productivity is the responsible use of natural resources, which calls for a vision that includes the conservation of landscapes and watersheds.
- Agriculture provides a great opportunity to construct prosperity, but for that to happen investment must be attracted to the sector. It has to be demonstrated that the activity is profitable and its integration into international trade must be strengthened.
- With regard to risk management, it is not advisable for countries to try to protect only their own territory. Some phenomena, such as droughts and floods, can affect several countries at once, so it makes sense to devise risk management tools at the regional level.
- Other important areas that should be considered for increasing overall productivity across the continent together are risk reduction or mitigation, early warning systems, good agricultural practices, risk transfer, the rapid response to emergencies, and the exchange of information.

Jessica Mahalingappa

- In the area of agricultural health, there are specific diseases that countries should tackle together at the regional level and not country by country. The countries have worked successfully in that area for 20 years, thanks to cross-border efforts rather than work country by country, as demonstrated by the excellent results of the programs to combat foot-and-mouth disease and screwworm.

- With regard to innovation, it is important to have a common policy aimed at making the Americas the world's leading region for common policies on issues such as biotechnology, innovation, and climate change.
- Other important areas in which joint activities should be carried out are efforts to combat pests and diseases in border areas and the design of common policies.

The representative of The Bahamas pointed out that most of the panelists' comments had to do with Latin America, where the challenges were different from those facing the Caribbean region. He mentioned the fact that many Caribbean farmers were finding themselves excluded because they were not competitive, and some countries in the region no longer received preferential treatment as members of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Given this situation, promoting the competitive inclusion of Caribbean farmers was of the utmost importance, for which he requested IICA's assistance.

Armando Paredes

- The countries of the region can work together in the following areas:
 - o Irrigation technologies, which have a significant impact on productivity and the environment.
 - o Competitive inputs, for which competition in the market needs to be promoted.
 - o The exchange of knowledge and genetic resources.
 - o Identification and exchange of technologies.
 - o Establishment of common standards. It is necessary to ensure compliance with standards across the continent to prevent any slip-up from having a serious effect on trade.
 - o Identification and tapping of the advantages offered by free trade agreements.
 - o Agricultural health and food safety.
 - o Policies designed to strengthen the role of the private sector, which invests in technology for the improvement of productivity and supports small-scale agriculture with innovative technologies.
 - o Strategies aimed at underscoring agriculture's true importance and positioning the sector better, so it is seen as a sector worth investing in.

Julio Berdegué

- There is no serious problem in the areas of information, knowledge, and services. Many trade agreements exist, the ministers of agriculture know what their colleagues are doing in relation to health, students study overseas and there is daily access to information available on the internet. IICA is an agency that facilitates processes of this kind.

- Latin America has three of the world’s leading research centers: the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), and the International Potato Center (CIP). There is also the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA). The countries do not take sufficient advantage of these four institutions.
- Agreement needs to be reached on actions at the regional level to ensure that greater use is made of EMBRAPA.

José María Sumpsi

- Developing a regional agenda is a complex process, as the situation of the countries varies enormously.
- There are five important areas that should be considered for joint action: a) development of information and mechanisms for consolidating regional networks and observatories; b) animal and plant health and food safety (the proposal presented by Brazil’s minister of agriculture at this meeting is an excellent option); c) creation of an agricultural price and market system for Latin America; d) construction of a regional institutional research and innovation system based on the mechanisms that already exist; and, e) establishment by all the Latin American countries of a joint position on climate change and agriculture and implementation of a regional initiative on the subject.

Questions 3 and 4: To what extent can technological changes be implemented on small farms and how can they boost productivity? What do you think about the financing of the primary sector by private banks?

Tabaré Aguerre

- Technological systems need to be developed that make it possible to increase productivity and promote sustainability, which necessarily will depend on the scale of operation of the producers concerned.
- For reasons of scale, producers may not be able to support themselves through their agricultural activities alone. This neither qualifies or disqualifies them as producers, but makes them beneficiaries of a public policy with a differentiated approach, one that considers aspects such as knowledge generation and transfer and financing.
- A series of factors are taken into account for private financing: the profitability of the agricultural activity, market transparency, and the existence of efficient price formation mechanisms.
- It is easier to obtain financing when the risk has been quantified and instruments for managing it exist.

- Agriculture may be regarded as a second-class activity, due to its low profile. Information needs to be disseminated with a view to repositioning it, demonstrating that its importance is greater than its contribution to food security.
- Efforts must be made to overcome the typically negative view of agriculture at every level, including in the financial sector.
- The objectives proposed for agricultural and rural development cannot be achieved with financing only from the public or private sector.

Jessica Mahalingappa

- Technological changes are unlikely to reach small producers if technological innovation initiatives are undertaken by the private sector. Therefore, the public sector has an important role to perform to ensure that such changes do reach small farmers. Education has a key role to play, as it enables producers to learn to use new technologies, which could be included in a long-term plan.
- The public sector can play an important role in eliminating social exclusion, as it promotes the incorporation of women and young people into socio-productive processes. Not only should resources be offered for primary and secondary education, but also for university-level training, as that is the level at which new technologies are developed.
- On the question of financing, it is essential that both the public and private sectors invest resources so that people do not lose their means of subsistence. As the representative of The Bahamas pointed out, the amount of investment channeled into agriculture varies greatly among the countries.

Armando Paredes

- There is a great deal of technology that can be made available to small-scale producers, but the biggest challenge lies in organizing such a transfer. Demographic aspects also have to be taken into account, as many young people involved in agriculture decide to pursue other activities.
- One model that could be adopted for the purpose would be to take advantage of students of universities and research institutes, as the health system in Mexico does (medical students serve at least two years as interns in health centers). This could be replicated with university agronomy students.
- Small-scale producers do not have access to price coverage mechanisms in stock exchanges, or insurance, due to the high costs involved; therefore, it is necessary to think about mechanisms that would afford them access to those financial instruments, which reduce their risks.

- Commercial banks do not grant financing for agricultural activities because of the risks and high costs involved. One policy that could be applied would be to promote more competition through the development of niche banking.
- In many cases, formal financing exists, but there are speculators, who charge high interest, and weak legal frameworks in some countries. These two problems should be assessed and solutions sought to ensure that financing is available for the sector.

Julio Berdegú

- In countries where technology is adopted on a massive scale, producers have access to various services, such as technical assistance, training, support for postharvest management, certification, marketing, access to markets, financing and, in some cases, access to irrigation technology.
- The problem is that, with certain exceptions, the programs under which those services are provided are not coordinated, so farmers do not receive a comprehensive range of services.
- It is not advisable to leave everything in the hands of the private sector. Although joint public-private actions have been carried out in Latin America since the 1990s, and the private sector continues to serve small producers, the action of the public sector is essential.

José María Sumpsi

- In general, the incorporation of the use of new technologies by small-scale producers is not dependent on scale (farm size, for example). The problem is they receive little support to enable them to adopt such technologies.
- Irrigation and water harvesting systems have a very positive impact in terms of increased productivity and protection of the environment, which means they can be very useful for the Caribbean, given the problems that the countries face because of the scarcity of water.
- It is not in the interest of private banks to assume the risks that exist in agriculture. Therefore, in the case of this sector public-sector financing is needed.

Dialogue and comments by the heads of delegation

The Director General of IICA thanked the panelists and opened the floor for comments by the ministers and heads of delegation.

The representative of Brazil thanked the panelists for endorsing her proposal concerning the setting up of a regional agricultural health group, adding that everything that had been mentioned also applied to Brazil. She pointed out that 40 years ago her country was a net

food importer and that its only export product was coffee; hence, the political decision was taken to improve the situation of agriculture.

She explained that the first measure to be adopted was the creation of EMBRAPA, to supply alternative varieties and technological options for the country's entire tropical region. In addition, a model was established for research focused on the needs of, and demand for, the different types of products.

She felt that the problems of small producers were similar to those of large ones, but smallholders were affected by the fact that the services set up to provide them with assistance were very unstable. She explained that in order to address the obstacles preventing rural producers from joining the middle class, Brazil would be instituting an Opportunities Program in 2016, under a five-year farming act that would promote the universalization of services. She explained that training would be a strong emphasis of the program, along with credit (a portfolio of USD 15 million), measures to overcome market-related difficulties and, in particular, the promotion of associative enterprises and cooperatives.

Finally, she referred to her willingness to propose the creation of a LABEX (a virtual laboratory at EMBRAPA) for LAC, which would afford the countries of the region access to all the research, information, and technology developed by EMBRAPA. She cautioned that the design of technologies for small-scale producers had to be adapted to their conditions and needs.

The representative of Panama shared his country's experience in setting up a system for financing agriculture, using private banks, which might be of interest to other countries, the differences between the LAC nations notwithstanding. In Panama, he said, 48% of agricultural financing was provided by the private banking system. He explained that an interest rate of one percent had been established for all commercial loans, and the resources generated were used to finance the agricultural banks. He added that 50% of the resources were used to subsidize the banks that lend money to the agricultural sector at lower interest rates and that, if the interest rate was 7%, the producer paid only 3%.

He commented that, thanks to the financing system, the private sector had become interested in agriculture. He added that political will had been the key to its implementation, resulting in the regulation of imports. He mentioned that requirements had been established for producers, such as an agricultural insurance policy and certification of the fact that the activity being financed was viable on the land on which it would be carried out. He pointed out that producers who used irrigation systems or produced in greenhouses could obtain a zero interest rate. He concluded by informing the

meeting that the implementation of the agricultural financing system had increased productivity considerably.

The representative of Costa Rica stressed the importance of the topics being addressed in the forum, and said the 4 per 1000 initiative was vital to tackle the challenges of climate change and increase productivity. He then thanked the representative of Brazil for offering to share the research apparatus of EMBRAPA. He informed the meeting that within the framework of the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) had decided to issue a joint declaration on climate smart agriculture for the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). He added that the declaration was in the process of being drafted, with support from IICA, the International Regional Organization for Plant Protection and Animal Health (OIRSA), the Organization of the Fishing and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA), the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and other agencies, and invited the other countries to join in the initiative.

The representative of the Dominican Republic observed that associative enterprises were a key element in improving well-being and increasing the likelihood of young people remaining in the countryside instead of migrating to the city. He cited as an example the rice cooperative of which he was a member, which had achieved financial self-sufficiency, had life and health insurance, and had made it possible improve the processing of the product for the benefit of consumers.

He pointed out that agricultural insurance was particularly important in a country with frequent cyclones, tornados, and droughts like the Dominican Republic. Since private banks were unwilling to finance small producers because of the high risk involved, public tools needed to be created to promote access to financing and insurance for smallholders. He explained that such action would increase the likelihood of producers and their children remaining in the rural milieu.

He felt that trade agreements should be reviewed periodically, to make sure they continued to benefit both small and large countries.

The representative of Mexico emphasized the importance of food production, whose true importance many people failed to recognize. He felt that society was not aware of the scale of the challenge involved in feeding a population that was growing continuously.

The representative of Argentina referred to research, extension, and technology transfer, areas in which mechanisms for coordination, dialogue, and the exchange of experiences were of the utmost importance, such as the Cooperative Program for the Development of

Agrifood Technology in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR). He added that the failure to coordinate research, extension, and technology transfer efforts limited producers' adoption of technologies designed to help them improve processes aimed at the modernization of production.

He believed that more emphasis should be placed on the production of processed foods, an area in which the Americas possessed huge capacity. It was essential to have tools that promoted the adding of value and the more efficient processing of primary production.

He then underscored the importance of financing for the productive sector, but said it was also very important that agricultural research programs had resources, which was an area in which most of the countries of the continent were failing badly.

He agreed with the representative of Brazil that research needed to be based on the needs and demand, as it was in the case of the National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA) of Argentina and its five regional agricultural research centers, focused on designing solutions tailored to the demand.

He also agreed with Mr. Paredes regarding the importance of producers being organized, as processes aimed at modernizing production depended on the existence of producers' organizations, to enable farmers to integrate into certain links in the marketing process.

In concluding his remarks, he suggested that the constraints to increasing agricultural productivity lay especially in the lack of mechanisms and tools to enable producers to adopt the technologies and knowledge available, and in the failure to make use of existing ones.

The representative of Nicaragua informed the other participants that his country had nine million *manzanas* of agricultural land, and 262,000 producers (75% of whom were smallholders) who supplied 60% of the products required for domestic consumption. The agricultural sector accounted for nearly 19% of GDP.

He pointed out that the Nicaraguan government had instituted a national policy of dialogue and consensus aimed at increasing agricultural productivity by coordinating the efforts of all the different stakeholders in the agricultural sector toward the attainment of a single goal. He added that the policy had made it possible to learn about the techniques used by producers and establish the Escuela Técnica en el Campo, in which 15,000 families were involved. Nicaragua also had a national risk management program targeted at small producers, in which private banks were participating.

He explained that the implementation of the policy had led to higher crop productivity, a substantial increase in the national herd, and efforts to tackle the problems faced with regard to marketing and market access. He pointed out that a positive factor for his country’s agriculture was the existence of three agro-climatic areas: a dry corridor, a humid zone, and an intermediate humid zone. In conclusion, he underscored the need to continue to promote agricultural productivity through the use of technologies, education, and seed improvement, among other aspects.

The representative of Haiti mentioned that, like many other nations, her country faced challenges in improving its agricultural productivity and that the relationship established with EMBRAPA had produced positive results.

The representative of the United States of America underlined the importance of the contribution that IICA could make to the countries’ efforts to tackle the major challenges facing the sector, such as the production of food for a growing population, the lack of resources, the impact of climate change and energy consumption. He mentioned that improving productivity called for science-based innovative technologies and sustainable environmental policies. He added that the key actors in the sector needed to be involved, climate resilience improved, and pertinent information generated that could be used to improve agricultural practices and environmental conservation.

He emphasized the need for the countries to work together to solve global problems and called for measures to be implemented to reduce losses of agricultural products, which increased waste and affected the environment through methane gas emissions. He added that, to improve agricultural productivity, countries should apply the lessons learned, work together to achieve food security, and seek IICA’s support to make high-impact improvements. He then offered his country’s collaboration as a partner in efforts aimed at sustainable development, the improvement of productivity, and the management of climate change, among others. He said that joint effort would make it possible to produce more and feed everyone. He concluded by pointing out that an average of 30% of all food produced was lost between the producer and the consumer and that, to meet the current and future demand for food, reducing the amount lost was essential.

The Director General of IICA thanked the representative of the United States of America for his country’s support for the Institute. The fact that the increase in productivity achieved was undermined by the amount of food lost was regrettable, he remarked.

The representative of Canada agreed that innovation was a key factor in increasing productivity, as the panelists had stated. A case in point was a new variety of wheat that had made it possible to raise productivity by 20%, and boost fiscal revenues. He called on the countries to share information, exchange best practices, promote innovation,

comply with standards, and promote open global agricultural trade regulated by science-based standards, as tools to reduce food losses and agriculture's impact on the environment. He underlined the potential of innovation and trade to enable agriculture to feed the growing population in a sustainable way. He offered to share the experiences of Canada's science clusters and reiterated his country's commitment to working with IICA.

Panelist Julio Berdegué pointed out that in their comments the representatives had highlighted issues for a common agenda for the 21st century including climate change, innovation, productivity, and food losses. He noted that the ministries of agriculture faced difficulties in addressing that agenda, which was an opportunity that IICA could seize upon to promote reforms, institution building and the capacity development required for that purpose.

Panelist Armando Paredes felt that IICA could serve as a fulcrum and disseminate experiences and contribute to common agendas like those related to the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement. He hoped that the member countries would honor their commitments to IICA, so the organization could carry out its work in the countries. He felt that the public needed to be made aware of the effort that went into food production and greater support obtained for the ministries of agriculture.

Panelist Jessica Mahalingappa appreciated the meeting's recognition of the importance of agricultural health issues. She acknowledged the magnitude of the challenges faced, but was grateful for the opportunity to learn about other ideas for tackling them. She felt that the changing environment and increasing competition would make innovation even more necessary. She believed that joint work, based on a common vision, increased the likelihood of innovation, the inclusion of small-scale producers, and the growth of the middle classes.

Panelist Tabaré Aguerre pointed out some important ideas that had emerged from the comments made that warranted further consideration:

- Agriculture is a strategic activity and it is important to complement production and trade, based on competitive and comparative advantages.
- Agricultural productivity and trade should be promoted, for which the countries needed to foster technological innovation, and, especially, transfer knowledge and technologies to producers. Money is invested in research to generate knowledge and knowledge is invested in innovation to generate money.
- It is essential to promote the sustainable intensification of agriculture, for which the following aspects should be taken into account:
 - o Sustainable soil use. Soil is a living organism and grazing land and vegetation play a vital role in fixing carbon.

- Sustainable and rational water management.
- Adaptation of production systems to climate variability by means of knowledge, innovation, risk management, training, and the dissemination of technologies. With regard to global environmental agreements, the obligations for the different countries should vary.
- Family agriculture. This is a strategic component of rural development. There should be differentiated public policies to promote the integration of family farmers into markets, strengthen the institutional framework put in place for work with family farmers, and do more to empower the rural population.
- Public-private interinstitutional links for the production of institutional public goods. In this field, institutions like IICA are important to help countries identify needs and define hemispheric, regional, domestic, and territorial agendas. Cases in point are the priorities established by the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) for the joint creation of regional public goods in regard to issues such as AHFS, family farming, and others. Although the needs vary in the different regions and countries, the approach is appropriate.

Panelist José María Sumpsi highlighted four points:

- There are opportunities for the countries to work together on research + development + innovation (R+D+i). There are different possible arrangements (EMBRAPA, South-South cooperation, clusters) that are complementary and that need to be discussed and evaluated for a regional R+D+i system. He emphasized the importance of technology transfer, the organization of producers (in associative enterprises) and agricultural practices.
- At the institutional level, stable agricultural policies are required that are implemented continuously for a longer period of time, especially those aimed at family farming. Brazil is one country that has demonstrated the benefits of such policies, having obtained successful results.
- Climate change will revolutionize the financing of agriculture, as a lot of the resources available will be used to fund adaptation to the phenomenon and contribute to climate change mitigation. In this regard, institutions need to be modernized and the ministries of agriculture need professionals with competences and expertise in those fields.
- The ministries should adjust their relationship with technical and funding agencies, so that the latter establish common long-term priorities and agendas for the support they provide to the countries. To that end, the agencies should reorganize their priorities, financing, and human resources. IICA’s overhauling of its technical cooperation to focus on the issues addressed by the four flagship projects and agricultural health is an example of such action. Finally, he encouraged the ministers to support such

reform and help the Institute to be better equipped to provide inter-American, multinational and national public goods.

The representative of Guatemala thanked the Government of Mexico for organizing the event. He pointed out that in March 2015 the CAC had decided to reposition the Central American Strategy for Rural Area-based Development (ECADERT) within the Central American Integration System (SICA), with a view to strengthening the intersectoral approach in the implementation of the strategy, and the decision had been welcomed by the Summit of SICA Presidents. He explained that the instrument went beyond the agricultural sector to encompass issues related to rural development in areas such as health, education, cultural considerations, and infrastructure, among others. He announced that the Third Week of Rural Area-based Development for SICA member countries would be held in Antigua Guatemala, from November 23-25, 2015, with the support of the current President *pro tempore* of the CAC, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador, and IICA, and extended a cordial invitation to the ministers to take part in the activity.

He explained that in his country the agricultural sector had placed emphasis on five key areas linked to family farming and adopted the rural area-based development approach: a) the national rural extension system, b) the strategic food reserve, c) climate change, d) the promotion of irrigation, and e) the strengthening of production chains. He pointed out that in Guatemala there were four types of agriculture: infra-subsistence, subsistence, surplus production, and commercial production, and the challenge lay in promoting the gradual development of all four. In conclusion, he mentioned that, as a result of the importance that his country had placed on the coordination of the public agricultural sector, the latter had become more effective.

The representative of The Bahamas hoped that his country would have the opportunity to hold a technical forum like the one at this meeting. The Bahamas was taking its first steps in agriculture and the information he had gleaned from the forum and the discussions was very useful for his country.

He pointed out that The Bahamas had a population of roughly 350,000, and received nearly eight million tourists every year, making the tourism sector the mainstay of the country's economy. As a result, the food problem was vital, since The Bahamas could not produce enough food and imported 90% of what it consumed. He explained that the biggest concern was the fact that some countries still granted agricultural subsidies, causing an economic imbalance for the producers of countries like The Bahamas and others in the Caribbean.

He mentioned that his country faced two other problems: a) the high cost of transportation among the Caribbean countries, which made it more economical for his country’s producers to export to Miami rather than to other countries in the region; and, b) the disasters caused by climatic phenomena such as hurricanes, which often devastated the economy and were the reason why insurance companies refused to insure the harvests of his country’s producers. Finally, he thanked IICA and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) for the support they provided to The Bahamas through actions on behalf of agriculture, and urged the developed countries to invest in his country, where the climate made it possible to produce all year round.

The Director General of IICA thanked the representative of The Bahamas for his presentation. It reflected the purpose and focus of the meeting, which was to find solutions to the agricultural problems faced by the Member States. He pointed out that the Caribbean countries and, to a lesser extent, those of Central America, were highly vulnerable. He went on to say that some proposals had been put forward at the meeting that would have to be studied in order to find a solution, which IICA could do with the countries. He concluded by remarking that prosperity had to be achieved by all the countries, and efforts would have to be stepped up with that goal in mind.

Director General Emeritus Chelston Brathwaite thanked the participants for the opportunity to take part in such an important meeting. He proposed that the participants observe a minute of silence in memory of Francisco Morillo, Director General of IICA during the period 1982-1986, who had passed away recently. He had left a very great legacy behind him at IICA. The motion was approved and a minute of silence was observed.

Brathwaite then referred to the technical document that had been presented and the discussions in the technical forum, from which valuable ideas could be garnered for future decisions. He remarked that, in seeking solutions to food security problems, it was important to consider minor crops, while other issues currently of importance included health, nutrition, climate change, and the conservation of the environment. Hence, the importance of the next COP meeting (COP 21), due to be held shortly in France, where the aim would be to achieve a global treaty on climate change. Finally, he suggested that IICA could support the countries’ efforts to reach agreement on a regional position that they could take to the event, with a key message on environment and climate change.

Conclusions of the forum

The Director General of IICA proceeded to read out a series of important points mentioned during the technical forum, drawing on notes that had been taken:

- It is important to develop differentiated policies and instruments for family agriculture.
- Family farming is a strategic element of rural development, but rural development also includes other important factors.
- Public policies should be developed to support the financing of producers, through coordinated efforts involving the public and private sectors.
- The importance of agriculture needs to be reappraised as a matter of urgency, emphasizing its contribution to food security and the other major contributions it makes to the wider economy.
- Knowledge geared to the specific needs and situations of countries needs to be developed, and then channeled to the key actors.
- It is important to generate regional and global public goods in different thematic areas in order to strengthen family farming.
- The public sector performs an important role in ensuring that new technologies reach small producers.
- New forms of organization should be defined to make it possible transfer new technologies to small producers and make production more efficient.
- It is necessary to consider demographic and migratory factors faced by agriculture, including the tendency for many young people to migrate from the country to the city.
- Platforms should be created with universities that produce human resources to meet the needs in rural areas.
- Instruments should be sought to afford small producers access to agricultural insurance and financing, so they are not obliged to resort to informal credit, which tends to be very burdensome.
- It is recommended that the countries review their legal frameworks with a view to increasing and facilitating the granting of financing to farmers.
- Technologies can be made available to small producers, but the challenge lies in training them so they can adopt them.
- Differentiated instruments are needed that permit family farmers to integrate competitively into value chains.
- There is an urgent need to recognize the importance of agricultural health.
- A way must be found to tackle the challenge of feeding more than nine billion people in 2050.
- Efforts should be made to identify the common problems that the countries face in achieving food security, while at the same time taking into consideration the different climates of the countries and the pressure placed on production systems by population growth.
- The countries need to promote competitiveness and efficient integration into international markets.

- Productivity has a lot to do with technology, but once technology has been generated, it has to be introduced (innovation). Transfer should therefore be regarded as an important part of the process.
- The challenge of the sustainable intensification of production must be addressed, so that the way in which food is produced today does not jeopardize food production in the future.
- The intensification of production is based on the soil, which is vital for productivity. Efforts to fix carbon in the soil can also help to improve agricultural productivity.
- The aim should be to achieve agriculture adapted to the climate.
- The interlinking and coordination of the services delivered to family farmers are vital to enhance the effectiveness of public policy instruments.
- The creation of integrated price and market systems is another element that helps to raise productivity in an integrated way.
- One of the constraints to the financing of agriculture by the private sector is the fact that the latter perceives the former as a high-risk activity. This makes it important to seek ways to motivate the private sector to grant financing to the agricultural sector, such as the one mentioned by the representative of Panama.
- With regard to agricultural health, two important elements are cross-border actions and common policies.

Finally, he noted that the panelists had highlighted a very important point: it was essential to work in a coordinated manner to achieve a common goal, and IICA was well placed to coordinate efforts aimed at promoting the transfer of knowledge in order to develop more efficient agriculture.

The Director General thanked the forum panelists for the painstaking and professional way in which they had performed their task.

Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2015-2016

The Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico introduced Miguel García, of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Alejandro Flores, of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and Adrián Rodríguez, of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), who gave a joint presentation on the report on the outlook for agriculture and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2015-2016.

Mr. García explained that the three organizations had embarked on the joint effort more than seven years previously, after the ministers of agriculture issued a mandate asking

IICA, FAO, and ECLAC to join forces to analyze the short-term and structural issues that had the biggest impact on the performance of agriculture.

He proceeded to describe the trends in the macroeconomic context: a) a sluggish economy, with growth of no more than 3%; b) price contraction; c) volatile exchange rates; and, d) improvement in the U.S. economy, which would benefit Mexico and the Central American countries, but the South American countries less so, as they had strong links with the European Union and China.

He also highlighted the three main predictions for the period in question: a) falling growth, which ruled out any upturn and would continue to affect Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina; b) low energy prices, whose impact would vary (they would benefit energy importers but could adversely affect exporters); and c) continued volatility in markets.

He drew attention to the following trends in the agricultural sector: a) faster growth of LAC agriculture than of the economy as a whole; b) higher productivity as the driver of the growth of the agricultural sector; c) a reduction in LAC agriculture's contribution to softening the impact of economic crises; and, d) expansion of LAC agrifood exports, targeting new markets and markets where the demand is strongest.

Mr. Flores then referred to the subsectors of crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries, and aquaculture. He mentioned the following points: a) global demand for food and raw materials had slowed; b) LAC's livestock production continued to grow at an impressive rate and South America, particularly Brazil, accounted for a growing share of meat production; c) growing world demand for fishery products had become a major threat to the subsector's sustainability; LAC had recorded sustained growth in aquaculture production since 2000, and was the only region with scope for further expansion of this activity; and d) important efforts had been made to reduce deforestation in LAC, although the issue continued to be a major concern.

Finally, Mr. Rodríguez, of ECLAC, commented on the areas of rural well-being and policies and the institutional framework. He drew attention to the following: a) the proportion of households engaging in agriculture had fallen; b) although poverty reduction had gone hand in hand with the growth of the non-agricultural sector, expansive social policies could be the main driver of the decline in poverty; c) income inequality had fallen between 2000 and 2012; d) the number of rural women heads of household had increased, due to the increase in job opportunities in the non-agricultural sector; e) the rate of employment of rural women had increased more than the rate of rural employment in general; and, f) the profile of female rural employment varies from one age group to another.

Mr. García then stated that the analysis of the data had revealed that raising agricultural productivity was the best way to achieve the growth, equity, stability, and sustainability of LAC’s agricultural sector. He mentioned some of the recommendations made in that regard: strengthen the State’s lead role in the sector; improve the management of education and the capabilities of human resources; increase investment in research, development, and innovation; and enhance trade policies and boost the entrepreneurial and associative capabilities of producers.

He said the document was now available to everyone and feedback would be appreciated, to enable the institutions involved to make future versions even more useful for decision-makers.

Close of the forum

The technical forum “Toward Competitive, Sustainable, and Inclusive Productivity: Opportunity for Agriculture in the Americas,” held under the aegis of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015, concluded at 19:00 hours on October 21, 2015.

**EIGHTEENTH REGULAR MEETING OF
THE INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF
AGRICULTURE (IABA)**

PREPARATORY SESSION

0.1 Opening of the session

0.1.1 The preparatory session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) was called to order at 09:00 hours on October 22, 2015, in Mimosa rooms I and II of the Hotel Fairmont Mayakoba, in the city of Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico.

0.1.2 The session was chaired by Ms. Carla Seain, Under Secretary for Political Coordination in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of Argentina, the country elected to chair the Board at the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the IABA.

0.1.3 Representatives of 30 of the 34 Member States of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) took part in the session. Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, and Trinidad and Tobago were unable to attend for reasons beyond their control.

0.2 Agreements

0.2.1 Election of the Chair and Rapporteur of the meeting

0.2.1.1 The representative of Guatemala nominated Mr. José Calzada Roviroso, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico to serve as the Chair of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA. The Secretary was elected by acclamation.

0.2.1.2 The representative of Mexico then proposed that Ms. Ana Isabel Gómez, Director of the Executive Secretariat of Agriculture Sector Planning of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica, be elected to serve as Rapporteur. The motion was approved unanimously.

0.2.1.3 The following persons were elected as officers of the meeting:

Chair:	José Calzada Roviroso
Rapporteur:	Ana Isabel Gómez
Secretary <i>ex officio</i> :	Víctor M. Villalobos

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0.3 Agenda of the meeting

0.3.1 The representative of Costa Rica requested that discussion of a resolution on the future of the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) be included. The meeting agenda contained in document IICA/JIA/Doc. 368 (15) was approved with the proposed modification.

0.4 Duration of the meeting

0.4.1 The plenary decided that the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA would conclude at 17:00 hours on Thursday, October 22.

0.5 Setting up of working committees

0.5.1 The Chair pointed out that, pursuant to Article 52 of the Rules of Procedure of the IABA, the Board could create temporary or special committees to examine matters related to the nature and purposes of the Institute. No proposals had been received for the establishment of committees, but the Chair explained that that they could also be set up during the meeting, if the representatives of the Member States so wished.

0.6 Deadline for submitting draft resolutions

0.6.1 October 22 at 14:00 hours was set as the deadline for submitting draft resolutions.

0.7 The right to vote in meetings of the IABA

0.7.1 The Director General of IICA asked the Legal Adviser to explain the scope and application of the rules governing the right to vote in meetings of the IABA.

0.8 Other business - document IICA/JIA/Doc. 368 (15)

0.8.1 The representative of Nicaragua referred to the agenda item related to the Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture contained in the meeting agenda. He asked whether the declaration would simply be considered as approved. He reminded his fellow representatives that he had expressed reservations about it during the meeting of ministerial delegates and announced that his country would not be signing it.

0.8.2 The Technical Secretary explained that the text of the declaration analyzed and discussed at the meeting of ministerial delegates had been circulated. It was assumed that it was acceptable to the countries, unless some comment was made or addition or adjustment suggested when it was read out in the plenary.

0.9 *Close of the session*

0.9.1 The preparatory session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA was adjourned at 09:34 hours on October 22, 2015.

FIRST PLENARY SESSION

1.1 Opening of the session

1.1.1 The first plenary session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) was called to order at the 09:40 hours on October 22, 2015 in Mimosa rooms I and II of the Hotel Fairmont Mayakoba, in the city of Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico. Mr. José Calzada Rovirosa, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico was in the chair.

1.2 Results of technical cooperation

1.2.1 The Director General of IICA, Mr. Víctor M. Villalobos, explained the importance of strengthening the Institute financially if it was to continue to provide technical cooperation to the Member States on the same scale and of the same quality as it did at present.

1.2.2 He mentioned the main areas of impact of the new cooperation model, which included the design of agricultural policies, agricultural health and food safety (AHFS), the strengthening of agribusiness capabilities, innovation, area-based development, and climate change adaptation, among others.

1.2.3 He then described some of the most significant results obtained so far through the Institute's technical cooperation actions. In the area of AHFS, more than 60 delegates from Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) and African countries had been brought together to study draft international food safety standards within the framework of the Codex Alimentarius.

1.2.4 He then mentioned that IICA had also brought together more than 20 senior officials from the ministries of environment and agriculture of 19 countries in the Central, Andean and Southern regions to facilitate progress toward reaching agreement on a more coordinated position on the issues for which they were responsible, particularly for the conferences of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the upcoming COP 21, in France.

1.2.5 With regard to horizontal cooperation, he explained that, under a partnership with the Mexican government, for the past three years IICA had been

supporting the granting of scholarships to citizens of LAC countries who wished to take graduate-level courses in agricultural subjects at leading Mexican higher education institutions. To date, 423 students from 22 Institute member countries had benefited. He mentioned that, working with Mexico's Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA), IICA was supporting the Caribbean and Central America with a program aimed at enhancing capabilities in agriculture. A total of 1338 technicians had taken part so far.

- 1.2.6 The Director General added that IICA was at the service of its Member States, which should not only take advantage of its institutional strengths but also help to maintain the organization. Finally, he thanked the countries for their financial support for the institution and emphasized that the agricultural sectors of the Member States benefited from every dollar invested in IICA.

1.3 *IICA's financial and programming-budgetary situation*

1.3.1 2016-2017 Program Budget

- 1.3.1.1 The Secretary of Corporate Services of IICA, Mr. Carlos O'Farrill, explained the main criteria adopted in preparing the Program Budget for the 2016-2017 biennium. The Institute had implemented a dynamic, holistic model consistent with its 2010-2020 Strategic Plan (SP) and 2014-2018 Medium-term Plan (MTP).

- 1.3.1.2 He pointed out strategic aspects of the two plans had provided the underpinnings for the two-year budget, which focused on the four instruments established in the MTP: a) flagship projects (FP), b) rapid response actions (RRA), c) projects of the Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation (FonTC), and, d) externally funded projects. He commented that the budget was based on the income received in the form of quota contributions –which were established in accordance with the quota scale of the Organization of American States (OAS)– and the Miscellaneous Income Fund.

- 1.3.1.3 He mentioned that the exhaustion of the latter fund posed a serious threat to the Institute's finances. It had gradually been depleted because of changes in the countries' financial and fiscal policies. The proposed quota increase of 6.57% would make it possible to recover some of the ground lost with the exhaustion of this source of financing; and additional contributions were required to cover increases in costs due to inflation, salary policies and other

factors. These financial measures would enable IICA to maintain the same level of operations and meet the commitments established in the MTP.

1.3.1.4 He then explained that the total proposed income budget for 2016-2017 was USD 34.9 million (USD 30.6 million in Member State quotas and USD 4.3 million in miscellaneous income). The proposal included the application of the new quota scale approved by the OAS, a 6.57% increase, and estimated over-quotas that had to be ratified by the Member States.

1.3.1.5 Turning to the expenditure budget for the biennium, he remarked that its distribution would be based on the amount of income received. The resources would be used to finance the following costs: a) flagship projects, b) rapid response actions, c) FonTC projects, d) the basic structures of the Institute's delegations in the Member States, e) services and technical support actions (including the contributions to CARDI and CATIE), f) management units, and g) corporate activities.

1.3.2 Financial strengthening

1.3.2.1 The Secretary of Corporate Services commented on the need to increase the quota budget by an average of 10.5% in order to implement the MTP successfully. He explained that, were the budget not to be increased, qualified staff and operating capacity would be lost. He stressed that the Member States' were assured of a highly positive return on their investment in IICA, and the generation of value added in the agricultural sector.

1.3.2.2 He added that the financial strengthening would have a series of positive effects. It would make it possible, among other things, to a) conserve the support for the agricultural health services of the Member States, b) continue to strengthen capabilities for the management of agrifood chains, marketing and support for public policies, and c) forge new strategic partnerships, based on the Institute's strengths, with a view to undertaking projects with other organizations. He concluded by pointing out that IICA was an effective, expeditious, redistributive, and dependable partner.

1.3.3 Report on the collection of quota contributions

1.3.3.1 The Secretary of Corporate Services gave the latest details of the situation with regard to the payment of Member State quotas. Fourteen countries were up to date, nineteen were in regular status, no country was in special status, and one

country was in arrears. He thanked the countries for their efforts to pay their quotas on a timely basis and stressed how important that was for the Institute.

1.3.4 2013-2014 financial statements and report of the external auditors

1.3.4.1 The Secretary of Corporate Services presented the results of the 2014 external audit performed by the firm of Deloitte, which had concluded that “the financial statements of IICA represented reasonably, in all important aspects, the Institute’s financial position as of 31 December 2014.”

1.3.4.2 He pointed out that the audit evidence obtained was considered sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for a qualified opinion. He added that the qualification was due to the fact that some of the provisions for employee termination benefits required actuarial studies, using US generally accepted accounting principles.

1.3.5 Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)

1.3.5.1 Mr. Steve Rickrode, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit at the US Department of Agriculture and a member of the Audit Review Committee (ARC), presented the report to the plenary.

1.3.5.2 He explained that, according to its Statute, the ARC had an obligation to point out to the Executive Committee and the IABA any aspect that it deemed to be in violation of the standards and regulations governing the operations of the General Directorate.

1.3.5.3 He then reported that the ARC had performed its annual review of the audited financial statements for the years ending December 2013 and December 2014. The ARC found the external auditors’ work to be consistent with international auditing standards and IICA’s regulations.

1.3.5.4 He stated that the ARC had reviewed and considered the qualified opinion of the external auditors with respect to the following two internal audit matters: i) the absence of actuarial studies on termination benefits, and ii) the absence of a vulnerability analysis identifying possible security flaws related to IICA’s information technology infrastructure. With regard to the first point, the ARC acknowledged the administration’s efforts to conduct some actuarial studies and suggested that IICA consider conducting additional studies, over time, to ensure that termination benefits were calculated correctly. Concerning the

second point, it suggested that IICA consider a vulnerability analysis when resources were available.

1.3.5.5 Finally, he mentioned that the ARC had studied the note included in the financial statements relating to the AIS Program in Colombia. The ARC acknowledged IICA's continuous efforts to resolve the situation and was of the opinion that the Institute had taken into account the risk associated with a possible lawsuit and was dealing with the situation appropriately.

1.3.6 Recovery of proportional indirect costs (RePIC-INTR)

1.3.6.1 The Secretary of Corporate Services pointed out that, as a result of the Institute's efforts in the countries, the percentage applied for the recovery of proportional indirect costs (RePIC-INTR) had risen by nearly two points since 2008 and the goal of 8% was close to being achieved.

1.3.7 Analysis and comments

1.3.7.1 The Chair opened the floor for comments and analysis regarding the presentations.

1.3.7.2 The representatives thanked the Government of Mexico, SAGARPA, and IICA for their hospitality. They expressed appreciation for the technical cooperation that the Institute provided through its specialists and delegates, and emphasized the importance of IICA's work in national efforts to achieve the sustainable and inclusive development of the agricultural sector and rural areas.

1.3.7.3 The representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, the United States of America, and Venezuela expressed their countries' support for the proposed financial strengthening through an increase in Member State quotas, and their willingness to assume the obligation of a larger contribution to IICA's budget to offset the loss of income stemming from the decline in miscellaneous resources.

1.3.7.4 The representative of Suriname added that the increase should be even more than 10%, to enable the Institute to provide better services.

- 1.3.7.5 The representative of Haiti wished to make clear that, just as the countries needed IICA, the Institute needed the support of the countries.
- 1.3.7.6 The representative of Panama thanked IICA for clarifying the financial situation and highlighted the support that the Institute provided to the countries in agriculture and other areas for which various institutions were responsible.
- 1.3.7.7 The representative of Dominica underlined the great capacity that IICA had demonstrated in reacting to recent adverse climatic events, as well as the fact that it was the agency through which actions financed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) would be implemented.
- 1.3.7.8 The representative of the United States of America expressed satisfaction with the proposed budget for the next biennium. "IICA is all the countries," he commented, and called upon the Institute to assume a strong leadership role in the agricultural issues common to the countries, so they could tackle the challenges together.
- 1.3.7.9 The representative of Argentina announced that, despite the fact that the national budget for 2016 had already been approved, her country would make every effort to pay the increased quota and its over-quota in 2016.
- 1.3.7.10 The representative of St. Kitts and Nevis underscored the importance for the Caribbean of receiving more support through horizontal cooperation, in view of the region's needs, the tasks that lay ahead, and the limited resources available when compared with other countries in the region.
- 1.3.7.11 The representatives of Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay, and Peru expressed their governments' support for the proposed quota increase but explained that, as their respective national budgets for 2016 had already been approved or were in the process of approval, they could not pledge to pay the quota increase until 2017.
- 1.3.7.12 The representative of Nicaragua endorsed the quota increase, pointed out that his country already contributed 30% more than the established quota (over-quota), and said that he could only commit to maintaining the quota with the additional contribution of 30% in 2016.
- 1.3.7.13 The representative of Brazil reaffirmed his commitment to IICA and drew attention to the Institute's work in various areas, as well as its efforts as the coordinator of inter-institutional and inter-ministerial efforts. However, he

explained that, due to internal problems and the fiscal readjustment, his government could not commit to paying a higher quota to IICA until 2017.

1.3.7.14 The representative of Venezuela viewed the proposed quota increase positively, but explained that, due to the special situation facing his country in the short term, he could not make a commitment to paying a higher quota. Nevertheless, the situation would be reexamined as progress was made in resolving the situation.

1.3.7.15 On behalf of IICA and its staff, and in a personal capacity, the Director General thanked the representatives for their comments on the usefulness of the Institute's technical cooperation. He remarked that the backing received strengthened the organization's determination to continue supporting the Member States. He assured the countries that their efforts to invest in IICA would be translated into resources for technical cooperation, and reaffirmed his readiness to continue to work together, according to the continent's priorities, on behalf of agriculture.

1.4 Reading and approval of draft resolutions

1.4.1 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution "Establishment of procedures for sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessments for countries in the Americas." The Chair invited the representatives of IICA's member countries to comment on the subject.

1.4.2 The representative of Uruguay noted that during the previous day's panel discussion emphasis had been placed on regional cooperation for the generation of regional public goods. He also reported that the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) had met a few days previously to define priority issues, which included plant and animal health. He explained that the CAS had two of the regional organizations mentioned in the draft resolution (the Standing Veterinary Committee (CVP) and the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone (COSAVE)), so it should have discussed the matter.

1.4.3 He believed that the idea put forward by Brazil of setting up a working group was a good one, but that care needed to be taken with the wording of the resolution, as capabilities varied from country to country, limiting the possibilities of standard risk assessment procedures. He endorsed the idea of IICA coordinating the proposed working group. In his capacity as Chair *pro tempore* of the CAS, he said he would raise the matter with the regional mechanism.

- 1.4.4 The representative of Jamaica requested that the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), created recently by the Caribbean community (CARICOM), be included among the regional mechanisms mentioned in the first operative paragraph.
- 1.4.5 The representative of Chile thanked Brazil for its proposal but suggested that the scope of the resolution should be limited, so that the working group focused on the detection of gaps in risk assessment and the analysis of the possibility of establishing common basic procedures. He pointed out that the definition of risk in his country depended on standards established by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Codex Alimentarius. He explained that, as the productive capacity and integration into trade of each country varied, with different requirements for imports, the definition of common standards should not be included in the resolution.
- 1.4.6 The representative of Paraguay emphasized the importance of risk assessment, but agreed with the comments of the representatives of Uruguay and Chile. He recommended studying the matter in greater depth.
- 1.4.7 The representative of Nicaragua said the matter was undeniably important, but that the conditions were not right for discussing the resolution at that moment. He agreed that the specific characteristics of each country needed to be studied in greater depth and mentioned that OIRSA was the regional agency specializing in agricultural health.
- 1.4.8 The representative of Argentina agreed with the comments of the representatives of Uruguay, Chile, and Paraguay. She underlined the importance of establishing a working group, as Brazil had proposed, but questioned the desirability of adopting a resolution on the subject. She thought it important to boost the regional mechanisms and therefore felt that the matter should be addressed by the CAS.
- 1.4.9 The representative of Brazil clarified that the aim of his country's proposal was to generate a discussion on the subject of risk assessment, not to establish standards for everyone. In proposing the creation of the working group, the intention was to discuss the subject, analyze the needs of each country, strengthen the organizations so that they could all improve risk analysis, and strengthen the dealings of the group of countries of the Americas with international bodies.

- 1.4.10 The Director General suggested that the representative of Brazil revise the wording of the resolution to incorporate the observations made by the different Member States.
- 1.4.11 The representative of Ecuador noted that, while the representative of Brazil's remarks had made the purpose of the proposal clear, the draft resolution presented did not.
- 1.4.12 The representative of the United States of America congratulated Brazil for raising the matter and offered to collaborate in drafting the wording suggested by the Director General, and stressed the importance of adopting a resolution on the subject.
- 1.4.13 The representative of Brazil accepted the Director General's proposal and agreed to work with the other representatives to draft a new resolution.
- 1.4.14 The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution "2016-2017 Program Budget." After she had finished, the Chair invited the representatives of IICA's member countries to comment on the matter in question.
- 1.4.15 The representative of Nicaragua wished to clarify that his country would continue to pay the same quota as the one it had been contributing.
- 1.4.16 IICA's Secretary of Corporate Services clarified the following points: a) a table was attached to the resolution containing the budget of quotas and over-quotas. It would be adjusted in line with what was approved and the comments of the ministers and delegates, and a new version sent out within a few weeks; b) the Institute was aware that some countries' budgets had already been approved and so it would not be possible to cover the amount of the quota with the increase in 2016. Payment of the quota would be recorded as pending and IICA would deal with the matter directly with each country concerned; and, c) some countries contributed over-quotas voluntarily, and these would also be confirmed bilaterally.
- 1.4.17 The representative of Peru pointed out that, according to the Secretary of Corporate Services, the total amount would also have to be adjusted in line with the countries' comments, so the amount currently shown was different from the one that would appear in a few days.
- 1.4.18 The Secretary of Corporate Services said the representative of Peru's observation was correct. He explained that the overall budget was very close

to the one that IICA would have to begin its operations next year, details of which would be provided subsequently. The draft resolution “2016-2017 Program Budget” was approved as read.

- 1.5 *Report of the IABA’s representative on the Governing Council of the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) covering the period 2013-2014*
- 1.5.1 The Technical Secretary explained that in Resolution No. 585 of the Thirty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, of May 22, 2014, the Director General of IICA was instructed to submit to the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA the report of the IABA’s representative on the Governing Council of CATIE for the period 2013-2014. The report had been uploaded to the information system created for the meeting participants.
- 1.6 *Status of the resolutions of the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the IABA and the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee*
- 1.6.1 The Technical Secretary pointed out that the report on the status of the resolutions adopted at the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the IABA (2013) and the Thirty-fourth (2014) and Thirty-fifth (2015) Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee were available in the information system set up for the meeting.
- 1.7 *Report on the ministerial meetings of agriculture and the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*
- 1.7.1 The Technical Secretary explained that the purpose of the AGRO Plan approved in 2003 had been to coordinate efforts in rural development and agriculture linked to the Summits of the Americas process. As 2015 had been established as the deadline for completing implementation of the plan, a report had been prepared that was also available in the information system of the IABA meeting and the representatives could make any comments on the subject they wished.

- 1.8 *Report on the joint activities carried out by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) covering the period 2013-2015*
- 1.8.1 The Technical Secretary referred to a mandate issued by the IABA instructing IICA to work with FAO in a more coordinated way. As a result, the directors general of the two institutions had signed a collaboration agreement. He pointed out that the report containing details of the joint activities carried out was available in the aforementioned information system. He added that the joint program of work was geared toward developing international public goods, dealing with emergencies, designing policies, and producing the document “Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas,” in which ECLAC was also involved.
- 1.9 *Extension of the contract on CATIE signed by the Government of Costa Rica and IICA*
- 1.9.1 The representative of Costa Rica referred to the draft resolution related to the extension of the contract signed by the Government of Costa Rica and IICA on the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE). He began by underscoring the importance of science in tackling the challenges posed by the new conditions, such as the need to increase productivity without compromising the environment, address climate change, and eradicate rural poverty.
- 1.9.2 He then explained that CATIE was an institution that helped to tackle such challenges by means of research, education, and extension, as an academic institution mandated to strengthen agriculture, especially in the tropical regions of the Americas.
- 1.9.3 He explained that the legal framework of CATIE was the contract in question, which had to be approved by the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica. It was renewed automatically every 20 years if there were no objections. As the contract was set to expire in 2020, and given the importance of the continuity of the contract to ensure the sustainability of CATIE, and to reassure donors (there were projects that would last more than five years) and students of CATIE’s legal status, the representative of Costa Rica asked the IABA to adopt a resolution stating its desire to see CATIE continue to operate.

1.9.4 Comments

- 1.9.4.1 The representative of Honduras seconded the position of Costa Rica. He expressed his appreciation for the work of CATIE and, given the legal situation that had been explained, his country supported the proposal.
- 1.9.4.2 The representative of the United States of America expressed firm support for Costa Rica. He stressed that CATIE was very important for the Americas and needed to continue to operate. Action was required to ensure that its sources of financing were not affected and that there were no negative effects for the students.
- 1.9.4.3 The representative of Guatemala announced that the Governing Council of CATIE had issued a resolution instructing that the corresponding actions be taken, and supporting the representative of Costa Rica's proposal.
- 1.9.4.4 The Director General expressed the Institute's support for coordinated joint work with CATIE. He underscored the need to continue to strengthen both institutions and confirmed that IICA would continue to work closely and intensively with CATIE so that the latter could carry out its mandates.

1.10 Close of the session

- 1.10.1 The first plenary session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA was adjourned at 12:21 hours on Thursday, October 22, 2015.

SECOND PLENARY SESSION

2.1 Opening of the session

2.1.1 The second plenary session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) was called to order at 15:05 hours on October 22, 2015 in Mimosa rooms I and II of the Hotel Fairmont Mayakoba, in the city of Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico. Mr. José Calzada Roviroso, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico presided.

2.2 Presentation on the Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture Mexico 2015

2.2.1 The Chair asked the Chair of the Meeting of Ministerial Delegates to present the Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture.

2.2.2 The Chair of the Meeting of Ministerial Delegates pointed out that the document containing the draft Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture had been circulated among all the representatives of the Member States. He summed up the content of the declaration in the following eight points:

- The importance of including the international agreements and declarations whose influence in the Americas broadens the constitutional support for achieving the objectives of competitiveness, equity, and governance.
- The key role that agriculture plays as a strategic activity for economic development, especially for poverty eradication.
- The commitment to guiding public policy toward the attainment of common objectives, within a framework of profound respect for the sovereign right of each member country to prioritize the issues on its domestic agenda.
- The design of public policies that promote productivity, based on sustainable activities and care of the environment.
- The importance of knowledge and technological innovation as indispensable factors for achieving competitive, sustainable, and inclusive productivity.
- The consideration of productivity as a crosscutting goal of a multifactorial, multidimensional, and multisectoral nature that calls for coordinated joint activities designed to bring about significant changes that make it possible to produce more food.

- The implementation of a process of continuous modernization of institutions to equip them to meet the current challenges in terms of productivity. The process should include investment in human capital and infrastructure, among other aspects.
- The striking of a balance between scientific and ancestral knowledge for the promotion of a modern, inclusive and quality educational system for all the people involved in agriculture and the rural milieu.

2.2.3 He added that the representative of Nicaragua had requested that the following message be read out to the plenary: “Nicaragua cannot accept any of the content of the Declaration but wishes to express its respect for the political systems and models of government of each country.”

2.2.4 He then remarked that the various visions and positions relating to productivity expressed in the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 had made it possible to grasp the different situations in which the countries found themselves. He explained that the dialogue had focused on establishing the institutional infrastructure for collaboration and mutual support among all IICA Member States.

2.3 *Ceremony for the adoption and signing of the Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture, Mexico 2015*

2.3.1 The Chair invited the representatives of the countries to express their agreement with the Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture Mexico 2015 and asked them to sign copies in the Institute’s four official languages.

2.3.2 The ministers and heads of delegation began signing the declaration at 15:25 hours on October 22, 2015. Nicaragua refrained from doing so, for the reasons stated by the Chair of the Meeting of Ministerial Delegates.

2.4 *Reading and approval of draft resolutions*

2.4.1 The Rapporteur of the meeting read out the following draft resolutions: Report on “The Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2015-2016”; “Date and Venue of the Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)”; “Extension of the Contract signed between the Government of Costa Rica and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) on the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE)”; “The Ministerial Meetings of Agriculture and the

AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action”; “Status of the Resolutions of the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee”; “Institutional process for the formulation and presentation of proposals for the financial strengthening and strategic restructuring of the Institute”; “2013-2014 Financial Statements of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Report of the External Auditors and Twentieth and Twenty-first Reports of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)”; “Report on the Collection of Quotas”; “Vote of thanks to the Government of Mexico”; and, “Working group to improve the capabilities of the countries of the Americas for sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment.” All of the foregoing draft resolutions were approved without modification.

2.5 Close of the session

- 2.5.1 The second plenary session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA was adjourned at 15:25 hours on October 22, 2015.

CLOSING SESSION

3.1 Opening of the session

3.1.1 The closing session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) was called to order at 15:50 hours on October 22, 2015 in Mimosa rooms I and II of the Hotel Fairmont Mayakoba, in the city of Cancun, Riviera Maya, Mexico. Mr. José Calzada Rovirosa, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico, was in the chair.

3.2 Remarks by the Director General of IICA

3.2.1 The Director General of IICA thanked the representatives for their support for all the matters addressed during the meeting, for the contributions made during the technical forum, and for signing the Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture Mexico 2015.

3.2.2 He referred to the approval of the increase in the quota scale as an example of the Member States' support for IICA. He highlighted the fact that the increase marked the end of a period of 20 years during which the quota contributions had been frozen. He added that the institution was committed to offering more and better quality technical cooperation services.

3.2.3 He thanked the government and people of Mexico for their hospitality, and the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico, who had served as the Chair of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, for his excellent handling of the meeting. Finally, he expressed his appreciation to all the support staff for the great job they had done.

3.3 Remarks by the Chair of the IABA

3.3.1 The Chair of the IABA thanked the IICA member countries for the trust they had placed in Mexico two years earlier in accepting his country's offer to host the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA.

3.3.2 He also thanked the representatives of the Member States for their participation and contributions, which had permitted a frank and open

dialogue, with fruitful discussions that would be of great benefit for the collective growth of the Americas.

3.3.3 He described as very useful the agreements reached to increase productivity, raise collective awareness of the importance of food production, and draw the peoples of the Americas closer together.

3.4 *Close of the meeting*

3.4.1 The closing session of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA was adjourned at 16:00 hours on October 22, 2015.

**DECLARATION OF MINISTERS OF
AGRICULTURE MEXICO 2015**

**MEETING OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE
OF THE AMERICAS 2015**

“Grow better, produce more, feed everyone”

**DECLARATION OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE
MEXICO 2015**

We, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture of the Americas, meeting on the Riviera Maya, Quintana Roo, Mexico, from 20 to 22 October 2015, to engage in dialogue, reach agreement on commitments, and request the support of international cooperation agencies in promoting more competitive, inclusive and sustainable agricultural productivity that contributes to the sustainable development of the countries of the Americas, hereby agree to issue the following declaration:

Bearing in mind that:

1. At the hemispheric level, this Declaration builds on the mandates issued by the Heads of State and Government at the summits of the Americas, the resolutions of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, mainly those dealing with sustainable development, innovation, water and energy, and the agreements of the previous hemispheric meetings of ministers of agriculture, which were constructed in accordance with the objectives of competitiveness, sustainability, equity, and governance.
2. With respect to the global agreements on development, the Declaration seeks to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, most of which are linked to agriculture and rural development, set forth in the document *“Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”* adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015.
3. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, July 2015, adopted the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, which includes topics of interest for agriculture and rural development, such as investment, financing, trade, infrastructure, science, technology, capacity building and international cooperation for development.
4. Heads of State, Ministers, and representatives of developed and developing countries, heads of multilateral and bilateral agencies, and representatives of public and private organizations adopted guidelines for the management of international development cooperation in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011), in which emphasis is

placed on the alignment of international cooperation with national priorities, the harmonization of international cooperation, and broad efforts to build partnerships for development.

5. The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, September 2014, adopted the “SAMOA Pathway” (SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action), which highlighted the vulnerabilities and resource constraints of SIDS countries and called for support for their efforts to build resilience.
6. The meeting secretariat distributed among the member countries, for informational purposes and to obtain feedback, the proposed technical document entitled “Competitive, Inclusive and Sustainable Productivity: Opportunity for the Americas,” which outlines the situation and challenges facing agricultural productivity in terms of competitiveness, sustainability, and inclusion.

Mindful that:

7. Agriculture is a strategic activity for the development and well-being of the countries, makes a significant contribution to economic development with social inclusion and to rural and national prosperity, and is crucial to achieve food security and end poverty.
8. Agriculture, in general and particularly in the Americas, faces various challenges in endeavoring to maintain and improve on the productivity growth rates observed in recent years.
9. Agricultural productivity rates in the Americas vary significantly across countries and types of agriculture.
10. Raising the productivity of agriculture is a task that has to be addressed rapidly and decisively, adopting a comprehensive, collaborative approach and sustainable practices.
11. Increasing productivity calls for a transformation of agriculture through a wide range of innovations designed to ensure competitiveness, sustainability and inclusiveness.
12. The countries of the Americas have great potential to increase agricultural production and productivity; nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that while some have adequate natural resources, such as water, land, energy, biodiversity, knowledge, as well as human talent, others, particularly SIDS, are challenged by

vulnerability and natural resource constraints which hinder their efforts at raising agricultural productivity.

13. Raising agricultural productivity requires the rapid development of the technical and functional capabilities of individuals, organizations and society in order to address its complexities with sustainable solutions and adaptation to climate change.
14. Increasing agricultural productivity is multifactorial (land, capital and labor), multidimensional (economic, social, environmental and institutional) and multisectoral (public and private sectors and civil society), and achieving this goal in a competitive, sustainable and inclusive manner calls for participation, consensus-building and the joint action of the appropriate national and international public and private sector stakeholders.
15. Raising agricultural productivity in a sustainable and inclusive manner is one of the pillars essential to achieving food security of our peoples.

Call upon:

16. The cooperating countries and entities, international funding agencies and providers of funds and research centers and regional research and innovation mechanisms, and national, regional or hemispheric programs of greater scope centered on actions related to increasing agricultural productivity, bearing in mind the national priorities and development policies designed by beneficiary countries.

Commit to:

17. Strengthening, where relevant, the professional leadership, participation and proactive capacity of ministries of agriculture in the definition and implementation of national policies to improve the State's oversight of agriculture and to guide the sector through the structural changes required to enhance agricultural productivity as deemed necessary pursuant to national development policies.
18. Maintaining dialogue with the representatives of the agricultural sector and other sectors, to analyze and draw up agreed proposals on the increase of agricultural productivity in a competitive, sustainable and inclusive manner to contribute to the eradication of poverty, as well as to facilitate greater information, in order to increase public awareness.

19. Continuing to promote the implementation of policies, programs and instruments to foster productivity, investment, innovation, infrastructure, science and technology, agricultural health and food safety, as well as adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, with special emphasis on family and small-scale farming, through the following actions, as necessary, to:
 - a. Revitalize and encourage investment directed to the provision of public goods in, and for, agriculture.
 - b. Modernize, as required, the institutions of the agricultural public sector and promote the appropriate priorities required to address the challenges facing agriculture.
 - c. Promote rural and territorial development through the participatory management and policies for transformation and sustainable development of the agriculture sector.

20. Evaluating, working and promoting, with the pertinent stakeholders and authorities, where necessary, a modern, inclusive educational system for stakeholders in agriculture and the rural milieu, with strategic actions to:
 - a. Strengthen professional capacities, designing training programs in agriculture, rural economy and rural development studies with respect for ancestral and traditional know-how.
 - b. Promote improvements in the quality and coverage of rural education, educators' capabilities and the educational infrastructure and establish training programs for new agricultural producers, targeting young people, small family farmers and women.
 - c. Establish programs to enable farmers to acquire additional knowledge and skills.
 - d. Strengthen the entrepreneurial and organizational capabilities of agricultural and rural producers and establish programs to strengthen producers' capacity to develop and become involved in productive projects.
 - e. Promote and support nutrition education programs with a view to reducing malnutrition, obesity, food loss and waste, and emphasizing the consumption of healthy locally produced foodstuffs and improving their use.

21. Promoting and contributing to the strengthening of a culture of innovation systems, through sustainable agriculture adapted to climate change, integrating value chains that foster productivity, focusing on strategic actions intended mainly to:


- a. Develop public policy instruments that promote, based on national and regional priorities, public and private investment and mechanisms that facilitate close links between the two sectors.
 - b. Promote efficient and sustainable management of natural resources in the products, services, processes, and technologies used in agriculture and its value chains.
 - c. Strengthen the relationship between technology research and development centers and the productive sector.
 - d. Identify, assess, disseminate, and make use of local and ancestral knowledge.
 - e. Strengthen the dissemination of scientific knowledge and research systems whose work involves improvements in production and national strategic priorities.
 - f. Promote the creation of interinstitutional and interregional networks that facilitate flows of information, including scientific and evidence-based information, and knowledge management among stakeholders in agriculture and value chains.
 - g. Improve the collection, availability and usability of agricultural and nutritional data to spur innovation, reduce duplicative efforts, enable better decision-making and increase transparency.
22. Supporting cooperation in international agricultural trade, by promoting and implementing actions to:
- a. Collaborate in the establishment of policies governing safety, health, and trade based on scientific principles.
 - b. Undertake efforts to achieve further inter-American trade integration.
23. Spearheading the implementation of joint initiatives with organizations and sectors that strengthen the business and entrepreneurial culture in agriculture and the rural milieu, including actions intended to:
- a. Support the business and organizational development of agricultural and rural producers in order to improve their negotiating skills, their participation in markets and their strategies for sustainable and inclusive development.
 - b. Increase opportunities for access to productive assets, financing, and integrated risk management, with the inclusion of young people and women agricultural and rural producers.
 - c. Support the implementation of programs on social responsibility for businesses and responsible investment principles in agriculture and value chains.
 - d. Strengthen the inclusion of small-scale and family producers in value chains.

- e. Simplify formalities and improve business conditions for agricultural enterprises.
24. Promoting harmonization of the development cooperation provided by the international cooperation agencies that operate in each of our countries, and the alignment of their cooperation with our national priorities with regard to more productive, sustainable and inclusive agriculture. To that end, we will undertake the following actions:
- a. Request the international and regional organizations that operate in our countries to include in the cooperation programs an agenda for the sustainable intensification of agriculture based on the priorities of the country concerned.
 - b. Work in a coordinated manner with international cooperation agencies to close the gaps that exist in agricultural productivity.
 - c. Promote the strengthening of collaboration between related international organizations on the preparation of analyses, studies, and proposals for the competitive, sustainable and inclusive improvement of productivity.
 - d. Request collaboration for the design of national policies and programs for productive, sustainable, and inclusive agriculture.

Signed on the Riviera Maya, Mexico, on the twenty-second day of October, two thousand and fifteen.

Antigua and Barbuda

ARTHUR NIBBS



Argentina

CARLA JEJIN



V. ALBERT GRAY
Bahamas



RALPH FARNUM
Barbados



Belize

Bolivia

Brazil

Tatiane Lipovetskaia
Palermo



Canada

FRED CORRELL



Chile

CARLOS FURCHÉ



Colombia

Costa Rica
Luis Felipe Ascaz Cavallini



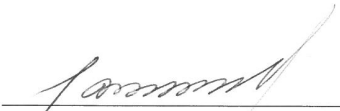
Dominica
Sofia Sok DRZGO



Dominican Republic
Leonardo Mercedes



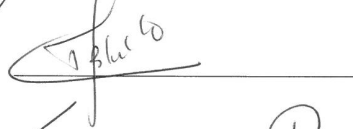
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Javier Ponce



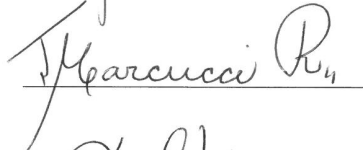
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Wifredo Rubio Reys



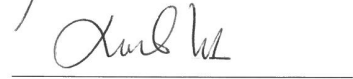
Rolando Bhera
Grenada



Sebastian Marcucci
Guatemala



Noel L. Holder
Guyana



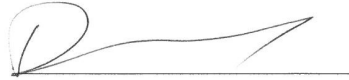
Colette Blanchet
Haiti



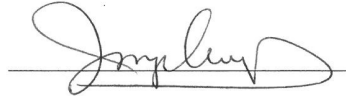
Honduras
Ricardo Herrera



Jamaica
DORRAN STANBERRY



Panama
Jorge Arango Arias



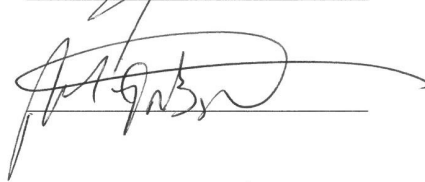
Paraguay
Jorge GATTINI



Peru
José Luis Chávez



Saint Kitts and Nevis
Alexis Jeffers
Moses Jn. Baptiste
Saint Lucia



ASHLEY R. COLL
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



Suriname
Djoem adiz KASANMOESDIRAN



Trinidad and Tobago



United States of America
MICHAEL T. SCUSE



Uruguay
THOMAS ARRIAGA



Venezuela
JOSE Aguilera



MEXICO

José Eduardo Calzada Rovirosa

Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA)

Chairperson of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015

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IICA/JIA/Res. 492 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 492

**REPORT ON “THE OUTLOOK FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMERICAS: A PERSPECTIVE ON LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN 2015-2016”**

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The report, “The Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2015-2016,”

CONSIDERING:

That, in the Ministerial Declaration Bávaro 2001, the countries of the Americas pledged to target the problem of rural poverty and make significant strides in reducing it;

That Article 3.a of the Rules of Procedure of the IABA establishes that this highest-level governing body of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is to take note of the report of the Director General of the Institute on the status of the development of agriculture and the rural milieu in the Americas; and,

That the General Directorate has presented to the Member States of IICA the report, “The Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2015-2016,” which highlights the role played by agriculture in contributing to the creation of employment and the reduction of rural poverty,

RESOLVES:

To accept the report, “The Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2015-2016,” and underscore its importance for the governments of the region as an extremely useful tool for the tasks of analysis and policy-making.

IICA/JIA/Res. 493 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 493**2016-2017 PROGRAM BUDGET**

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/JIA/Doc. 371 (15), “2016-2017 Draft Program Budget” and Resolution IICA/CE/Res. 597 (XXXV-O/15) of 16 July 2015, in which the Executive Committee, at its Thirty-fifth Regular Meeting, recommended that the IABA approve the expenditure budget for 2016 and 2017, and consider a 6.57% increase in the quota budget and voluntary over-quota contributions pledged by the Member States, in order to recover the loss of the resources of the Miscellaneous Income Fund for the biennium and the incremental costs that will be incurred due to the effect of inflation on operating and salary costs, in order to maintain at least the same operating level as in 2015,

CONSIDERING:

That the Convention on the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) establishes:

- i. In Article 8.b, that a function of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) is “to approve the biennial Program Budget and to determine the annual quotas of the Member States;”
- ii. In Article 23, that “the Member States shall contribute to the maintenance of the Institute through annual quotas established by the Board, in accordance with the system for calculating quotas of the Organization of American States;”
- iii. In Article 14.b, that a function of the Executive Committee is “to examine the proposed biennial Program Budget that the Director General submits to the Board and to make such observations and recommendations as it deems appropriate;”

That the Director General submitted the 2016-2017 Draft Program Budget to the consideration of the Executive Committee at its Thirty-fifth Regular Meeting, in a format consistent with the structure and content established in the rules currently in effect, and that includes the recommendations made by the Executive Committee for the financial strengthening of IICA; and

That, in order to compensate for the irreversible exhaustion of the Miscellaneous Income Fund and maintain an operating level at least similar to that of 2015, the proposed Program Budget considers the following:

- i. An increase of 6.57% in the quota budget, based on the new quota scale of the OAS;
- ii. Over-quota contributions pledged by the Member States to achieve the 10.5% increase required to cover the incremental costs incurred due to the effect of inflation on operating and salary costs, and thus maintain the same level as in 2015,

RESOLVES:

1. To acknowledge that the new model of the Program Budget is clearly consistent with the institutional strategic framework established in the 2014-2018 Medium-term Plan (MTP) approved by the Executive Committee and the IABA.
2. To approve the overall allocation of the sum of USD34,364,900 per year from the Regular Fund for the 2016-2017 biennium of the Institute, financed with quota contributions from the Member States totaling USD30,064,900 per year, including the quotas allocated and over-quota contributions, according to the amounts indicated in the Scale attached hereto as “Annex A,” and USD4,300,000 per year in miscellaneous income, consisting of income estimated to be generated and from the Miscellaneous Income Fund.
3. To approve the use of resources for the 2016-2017 Program Budget for expenditures, in accordance with the allocations for each of the chapters, headings and strategic priorities specified in Document IICA/JIA/Doc. 371 (15), “2016-2017 Draft Program Budget” with the agreed adjustments. The summary of allocations by chapter is attached as “Annex B.”

4. To authorize the Director General to effect transfers among chapters of the Program Budget, provided that the total transfers do not significantly affect the priorities approved.
5. To authorize the Director General to make the necessary adjustments in the allocation of resources approved in this resolution, should the combined income for the fiscal years 2016-2017 fall below estimated levels for the biennium, and to inform the Executive Committee and the IABA of the situation.
6. To instruct the Director General to ensure that any additional over-quota contribution received that exceeds the total amount approved for the 2016-2017 biennium is applied to the Regular Fund for the work program and priorities identified in the 2016-2017 Program Budget, in accordance with the Medium-term Plan approved by the IABA.
7. To express appreciation for the voluntary over-quota contributions pledged by the Member States for the Program Budget, and any others they might consider making to complement the amount required to maintain at least the same operating level as in 2015.

ANNEX A
Scale of Quotas and Contributions of Over-quotas of Member State
and Miscellaneous Income 2016-2017

MEMBER STATES	2016				2017			
	IICA				IICA			
	OEA ¹	ASSESSED QUOTA	OVER-QUOTA	TOTAL QUOTAS	OEA ¹	ASSESSED QUOTA	OVER-QUOTA	TOTAL QUOTAS
	%	USD ²	US\$	USD ²	%	USD ²	US\$	USD ²
Antigua and Barbuda	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600
Argentina	2,400	703.600	247.000	950.600	2,400	703.600	247.000	950.600
Bahamas	0,049	14.400	7.000	21.400	0,049	14.400	7.000	21.400
Barbados	0,034	10.000	5.500	15.500	0,034	10.000	5.500	15.500
Belize	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600
Bolivia	0,056	16.400	600	17.000	0,056	16.400	600	17.000
Brazil	12,427	3.643.200		3.643.200	12,427	3.643.200		3.643.200
Canada	10,583	3.102.600		3.102.600	10,583	3.102.600		3.102.600
Chile	1,347	394.900	14.600	409.500	1,347	394.900	14.600	409.500
Colombia	1,311	384.400		384.400	1,311	384.400		384.400
Costa Rica	0,230	67.400	2.500	69.900	0,230	67.400	2.500	69.900
Dominica	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600
Dominican Republic	0,317	92.900	3.500	96.400	0,317	92.900	3.500	96.400
Ecuador	0,322	94.400	3.500	97.900	0,322	94.400	3.500	97.900
El Salvador	0,086	25.200	12.500	37.700	0,086	25.200	12.500	37.700
Grenada	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600
Guatemala	0,145	42.500	13.800	56.300	0,145	42.500	13.800	56.300
Guyana	0,022	6.500	1.700	8.200	0,022	6.500	1.700	8.200
Haiti	0,026	7.600	4.200	11.800	0,026	7.600	4.200	11.800
Honduras	0,042	12.300	3.200	15.500	0,042	12.300	3.200	15.500
Jamaica	0,070	20.500	5.100	25.600	0,070	20.500	5.100	25.600
Mexico	6,788	1.990.000	487.300	2.477.300	6,788	1.990.000	487.300	2.477.300
Nicaragua	0,026	7.600	2.800	10.400	0,026	7.600	2.800	10.400
Panama	0,176	51.600	6.000	57.600	0,176	51.600	6.000	57.600
Paraguay	0,075	22.000	8.800	30.800	0,075	22.000	8.800	30.800
Peru	0,860	252.100	9.400	261.500	0,860	252.100	9.400	261.500
Saint Lucia	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600	0,022	6.500	1.100	7.600
Suriname	0,026	7.600	4.200	11.800	0,026	7.600	4.200	11.800
Trinidad and Tobago	0,135	39.600	15.000	54.600	0,135	39.600	15.000	54.600
United States of America	59,470	17.435.300		17.435.300	59,470	17.435.300		17.435.300
Uruguay	0,247	72.400	7.900	80.300	0,247	72.400	7.900	80.300
Venezuela	2,144	628.600		628.600	2,144	628.600		628.600
SUB TOTAL	99,568	29.191.100	873.800	30.064.900	99,568	29.191.100	873.800	30.064.900
Cuba	0,431	126.400		126.400	0,431	126.400		126.400
TOTAL QUOTAS	99,999	29.317.500	873.800	30.191.300	99,999	29.317.500	873.800	30.191.300
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME²		4.300.000		4.300.000		4.300.000		4.300.000
TOTAL REGULAR FUND³		33.491.100		34.364.900		33.491.100		34.364.900

Note: The Kingdom of Spain contributes an annual quota of USD60,000 as an Associate Member, pursuant to the agreement adopted in the First Plenary Session of the Eleventh Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, held on November 26, 2001, in Bávaro, Dominican Republic.

1/ As per Resolution AG/RES. 2860 (XLIV-O/14) of the General Assembly of the OAS.

2/ In USD rounded out to the nearest hundred.

3/ The total of the Regular Fund does not include Cuba.

ANNEX B**Allocation of the Regular Fund by Chapter 2016-2017
(USD)**

CHAPTER	2016		2017	
	REGULAR FUND		REGULAR FUND	
	USD	%	USD	%
I: Direct Technical Cooperation Services	30.784.554	89,6	30.973.781	90,1
II: Management Costs	1.727.733	5,0	1.766.156	5,1
III: General Cost and Provisions	1.290.000	3,8	1.290.000	3,8
IV: Renewal of Infrastructure and Equipment	562.613	1,6	334.963	1,0
TOTAL	34.364.900	100,0	34.364.900	100,0

IICA/JIA/Res. 494 (XVIII-O/15)
22 October 2015
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 494

REPORT ON THE COLLECTION OF QUOTAS

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/JIA/Doc. 372 (15), "Report on the Collection of Quotas,"

CONSIDERING:

That the financing of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and its technical cooperation projects can only be achieved if Member States remain current with the payment of their annual quota contributions;

That the IABA, at its Thirteenth Regular Meeting, by means of Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 414 (XIII-O/05), adopted the document "Revised measures for collecting quotas owed to the Institute;" and

That, thanks to the support of the Ministers of Agriculture and other authorities in the Member States, the measures adopted and the efforts of the General Directorate, the collection of quotas has been more stable, which has contributed to the satisfactory implementation of the technical cooperation services established in the 2014-2015 Program Budget of the Institute,

RESOLVES:

1. To thank the Ministers of Agriculture and Foreign Affairs, as well as other high-level government officials in IICA's Member States, for the efforts they have been making to honor their annual quota payments to the Institute in a timely fashion.
2. To maintain in effect the measures established by the Executive Committee and the IABA to encourage the Member States to make their annual quota payments in a timely fashion and to pay arrears for previous years.

3. To instruct the Director General of the Institute to continue efforts to collect the quotas of the Member States, both for the current year and previous years, and to keep the Member States informed of progress in this area.
4. To strengthen the commitment of the Member States to remain current with the payment of their annual quotas, especially those countries that have agreed plans with the Institute for the payment of quotas owed for previous years.

IICA/JIA/Res. 495 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 495

2013-2014 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA), REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS AND TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST REPORTS OF THE AUDIT REVIEW COMMITTEE (ARC)

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The documents IICA/JIA/Doc. 373 (15), “2013 and 2014 Financial Statements of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and Report of the External Auditors” and IICA/JIA/Doc. 374 (15), “Twentieth and Twenty-first Reports of the Audit Review Committee (ARC),”

CONSIDERING:

That the Executive Committee, pursuant to articles 3.c and 4.d of its Rules of Procedure, studied, at its Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings, the financial statements of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the reports of the external auditors for 2013 and 2014, and, as a result, by means of resolutions IICA/CE/Res. 589 (XXXIV-O/14) and IICA/CE/Res. 596 (XXXV-O/15), recommended that the documents in question be submitted to the consideration of the IABA;

That, in its Twentieth and Twenty-first Reports, the ARC states that it studied the reports of the external auditors and found that the General Directorate had properly administered IICA’s financial resources, in accordance with the rules of the Institute and with generally accepted auditing standards; and

That, the Executive Committee, at its Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings, resolved to approve said reports by means of resolutions IICA/CE/Res. 589 (XXXIV-O/14) and IICA/CE/Res. 596 (XXXV-O/15),

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the 2013 and 2014 financial statements of IICA, as well as the reports of the external auditors.
2. To accept the Twentieth and Twenty-first Reports of the ARC.
3. To express to the members of the ARC the satisfaction and appreciation of the Member States of IICA for the work accomplished.

IICA/JIA/Res. 496 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 496

**STATUS OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE SEVENTEENTH REGULAR MEETING
OF THE INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA) AND THE
THIRTY-FOURTH AND THIRTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Documents IICA/JIA/Doc. 375 (15), “Status of the Resolutions of the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)”, and IICA/JIA/Doc. 376 (15), “Status of the Resolutions of the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee,”

CONSIDERING:

That the abovementioned status reports demonstrate that the General Directorate of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has complied with the resolutions adopted at the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, and has carried out satisfactorily the tasks required to comply with the resolutions adopted at the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee,

RESOLVES:

To accept the reports “Status of the Resolutions of the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)” and “Status of the Resolutions of the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee”.

IICA/JIA/Res. 497 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 497**DATE AND VENUE OF THE NINETEENTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE
INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA)**

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/JIA/Doc. 377 (15), “Date and Venue of the Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA),”

CONSIDERING:

That, in accordance with Article 16 of the Rules of Procedure of the IABA, regular meetings of this governing body of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) are to be held every two years and, therefore, it is necessary to establish the date and venue of the Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA in 2017; and,

That, in accordance with Article 18 of said Rules of Procedure, if no Member State offers to host the regular meeting of the IABA, the meeting is to be held at the Headquarters of the Institute, in San Jose, Costa Rica,

RESOLVES:

To hold the Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA at IICA Headquarters, in San Jose, Costa Rica, in the second half of 2017.

IICA/JIA/Res. 498 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 498

VOTE OF THANKS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

CONSIDERING:

That, thanks to the hospitality of the Government of Mexico, the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA took place in Cancun, Mexico, from 19-23 October 2015,

RESOLVES:

1. To express its sincere appreciation to H.E. Mr. José Calzada Rovirosa, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico, for his support in the organization and implementation of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2015 and the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, events of great importance for agriculture in the Americas.
2. To express appreciation to the staff of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA), the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE) and other public and private institutions of Mexico for their warm welcome and their collaboration in the implementation of the two events, which have been determining factors in the success of both.

IICA/JIA/Res. 499 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 499**THE MINISTERIAL MEETINGS OF AGRICULTURE AND
THE AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN OF ACTION**

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

CONSIDERING:

That, within the framework of the Summits of the Americas process and its mandates on agriculture and rural life, the ministers of agriculture of the continent decided to hold biennial ministerial meetings at which they adopted, by consensus, the Declaration of Bavaro for the Improvement of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (Dominican Republic, 2001), and the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (Panama, 2003) and its updates and thematic focuses (Ecuador, 2005; Guatemala, 2007; Jamaica, 2009; Costa Rica, 2011; Argentina, 2013 and Mexico, 2015);

That, on November 13, 2003, the IABA adopted Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 387 (XII-O/03), "Implementation of and Follow-Up to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action," in which it adopted said Plan, charged the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) with continuing to assist the ministers of agriculture with the process of its implementation, and instructed the ministerial delegates and their hemispheric forum, supported by the secretariat of the ministerial meetings operated by IICA, to present progress reports on the implementation of the Plan and proposals for updating it;

That, based on that mandate, IICA has assisted the ministers and their delegates with the implementation of, and follow-up to, the Plan in its areas of responsibility and in which it has expertise as an agency that provides technical cooperation to its member countries, and in its capacity as the technical secretary of the biennial forums of delegates and ministers held since 2001;

That the work program of the AGRO Plan was scheduled to conclude in 2015, coinciding with the target date of the Millennium Development Goals. For that reason, the secretariat prepared the document "Report on the Meetings of Ministers of

Agriculture and the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” which outlines the background to, and results and conclusions of, the process of ministerial meetings and the agreements adopted through 2015; and,

That the United Nations General Assembly adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, with 169 targets that are closely related to agriculture and rural well-being in the countries of the Americas,

RESOLVES:

1. To acknowledge the effort made by the countries, in particular by the ministers of agriculture and the delegates, to construct the ministerial agreements, and to implement and provide follow-up to them in their respective countries.
2. To extend special recognition to the Dominican Republic, Panama, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Costa Rica, Argentina, and Mexico, for their successful hosting of the biennial meetings of ministers of agriculture held from 2001 to 2015.
3. To capitalize on the experiences and lessons learned from the ministerial process surrounding the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action in drafting an agenda for the sustainable development of agriculture through 2030.

IICA/JIA/Res. 500 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 500**EXTENSION OF THE CONTRACT SIGNED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA AND THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA) ON THE TROPICAL AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER (CATIE)**

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

CONSIDERING:

That the Government of Costa Rica and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) signed a contract on the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE or the Centre), whose last amendment took effect on 12 September 2000 (the Contract);

That the aims of CATIE are to promote research in the field of the sciences associated with agriculture, natural resources and related disciplines in the tropical regions of the Americas, particularly Central America and the Caribbean, and promote graduate studies and other educational programs in said sciences, for the benefit of IICA's member countries;

That, pursuant to its thirty-third clause, "the term of the present contract is 20 years starting from the date on which the proposed amendment takes effect. The term may be extended for equal and consecutive periods. This term will be automatically extended if, two years before the end of the term, the following two conditions exist: a) the Government of Costa Rica, through the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, does not communicate its intention to end the Contract, and b) the General Directorate of IICA, pursuant to the decision of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, does not notify the Governing Council of its decision to terminate the Contract and dissolve the Association";

That, according to clause nine of the aforementioned contract, the IABA is the highest-level governing body of CATIE and, among other functions, has the power to decide to dissolve the civil association;

That the Governing Council of CATIE is made up of one minister of each of the institution's member countries linked to the agriculture and/or natural resources sector, the Director General of IICA, and one representative of the IABA;

That the Government of Costa Rica, through the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Dr. Luis Felipe Arauz Cavallini, as chair of the Governing Council of CATIE, has expressed its wish that the Center continue to fulfill its functions as an entity devoted to research and education in the sciences associated with agriculture, renewable natural resources and related disciplines for the benefit of the Mesoamerican and Caribbean region, in order to ensure the bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies of CATIE's legal status, for the benefit of its member countries.

That the Governing Council of CATIE, at the request of the Government of Costa Rica, represented by its minister of agriculture, unanimously adopted Resolution 11-14/XVI ROCS of 31 October 2014 in which it requested that the IABA, as the highest governing body of CATIE, support and endorse the position of the Government of Costa Rica regarding the need to secure an automatic extension to the Contract, emphasizing the enormous contribution made by CATIE and its value in meeting the needs of its member countries; and

That, on 9 October 2015, the Governing Council of CATIE elected Mr. Muhammad Ibrahim to serve as the Director General of the Center for the period 2016-2020,

RESOLVES:

1. To support the automatic extension of the Contract, from 2020 onward, according to the terms of clause thirty-three of said contract.
2. To request that the Director General of IICA and the new Director General-elect of CATIE prepare a report on the relationship between the two institutions, including a proposal for improving it that would benefit the member countries of the Center and of the Institute.
3. To task the Executive Committee of IICA with studying said report at its next regular meeting and presenting it, with its recommendations, to the next regular meeting of the IABA.

IICA/JIA/Res. 501 (XVIII-O/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION No. 501**INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS FOR THE FORMULATION AND PRESENTATION
OF PROPOSALS FOR THE FINANCIAL STRENGTHENING AND STRATEGIC
RESTRUCTURING OF THE INSTITUTE**

THE INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

CONSIDERING:

That, at its Thirty-fifth Regular Meeting held in July 2015, the Executive Committee established a group of friends of the Chair of the Executive Committee (Group of Friends) for the purpose of analyzing and making proposals for the financial strengthening of the Institute for the 2016-17 biennium, which successfully fulfilled the function for which it was created during the meeting;

That, in IICA/CE Res. 597 (XXXV-O/15), the Executive Committee requested that the Director General convene a meeting of the Group of Friends “before the next meeting of the IABA, in order to discuss, comprehensively and with a view to the long term, options for strengthening the strategic structure of IICA, including its finances, and to submit a report to the next regular meeting of the Executive Committee”;

That the mandate of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) is to “advise and assist the Director General in developing, evaluating, and implementing proposals for strategic initiatives and for improving, modernizing, and transforming the administration and financial management of the Institute”;

That the Group of Friends, meeting before this Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA, and after listening to the General Director’s report on the progress made with the efforts to achieve financial strengthening of the Institute, recommended that the group be dissolved and its mandate transferred to the SACMI; and

That the IABA, as the IICA’s highest governing body and as part of the functions assigned to it under Article 8 of the Convention on IICA, may adopt the Group’s recommendation,

RESOLVES:

1. To conclude the work of the Group of Friends established by the Executive Committee at its Thirty-fifth Regular Meeting, without prejudice to the Executive Committee's authority to establish new Groups of Friends of the Chair at future meetings; and to thank its members for their contributions and participation.
2. To transfer the mandate of the Group of Friends to the SACMI, so that it makes concrete recommendations to the Executive Committee at its next Regular Meeting concerning the reorganization and strengthening of IICA – its structure, sources of financing, and mandates – required to meet the cooperation needs of the Institute's member countries.
3. To instruct the SACMI to encourage the Member States that do not form part of the Commission to take part in the discussion and drafting of recommendations to the Executive Committee on the matter, which could include, among others, suggestions for the amendment of the 1979 Convention on IICA.
4. To request that the Executive Committee, taking into account the recommendations of the SACMI, submit to the next meeting of the IABA proposals for the financial strengthening and strategic restructuring of the Institute, together with the draft regulatory amendments required.
5. To request that the Director General provide the SACMI and the Executive Committee with the technical and administrative support they require for this task.

IICA/JIA/Res. 502 (XVIII-0/15)

22 October 2015

Original: Portuguese

RESOLUTION No. 502**WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE THE CAPABILITIES OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE AMERICAS FOR SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY RISK ASSESSMENT**

The INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (IABA), at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The proposal for creating a working group with the objective of improving the capabilities of the countries of the Americas for sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment,

CONSIDERING:

That risk assessment is a modern tool that provides the foundation for sanitary and phytosanitary measures and a technical basis for discussions related to trade facilitation between the countries;

That it will be very useful to boost the human and financial resources of the countries of the region for conducting systematic risk assessments; and,

That improving the capabilities and procedures for sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment in the countries of the Americas will benefit all the countries of the region,

RESOLVES:

1. To create a working group with the objective of improving the capabilities of the countries of the Americas for sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment, coordinated by IICA, in collaboration with the relevant regional organizations, such as the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone (COSAVE), the Regional International Organization for Agricultural Health (OIRSA), the North American Plant Protection Organization

(NAPPO), the Standing Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone (CVP) and others.

2. To carry out the work in accordance with the principles of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the international standard-setting organizations.
3. To instruct that the progress made by the working group be disseminated among all interested parties who may be involved in the discussion of sanitary and phytosanitary measures.
4. To pledge to disseminate a report from the working group among the countries of the region one year after the group's creation.

SIGNING OF THE REPORT

SIGNING OF THE REPORT OF THE EIGHTEENTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Pursuant to Article 85 of the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Report of the Eighteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA is hereby signed at 17:00 hrs. on the twenty-second day of October of the year two thousand and fifteen, in Cancun-Riviera Maya, Mexico.

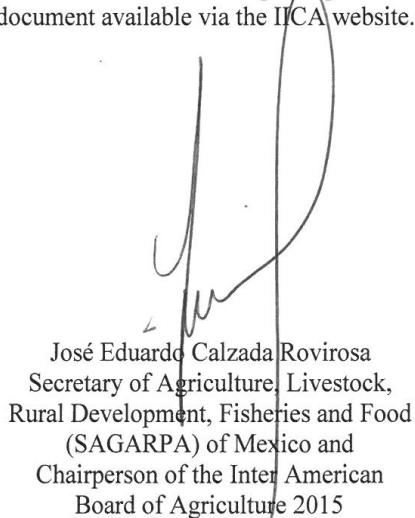
This report will be edited by the Technical Secretariat of the meeting. It will then be published in the four official languages of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in the Official Documents Series, all versions being equally authentic and valid.

The Secretariat shall file the original texts in the archives of the Institute, and send copies of the official version of this report to the governments of the Member States, the Associate Countries, the Permanent Observers of the Institute and other participants in the meeting, and will make a digital version of the document available via the IICA website.

Cancún-Riviera Maya, Mexico.



Victor M. Villalobos
Director General of IICA
Ex-officio Secretary of the
Inter-American Board of Agriculture
(IABA)



José Eduardo Calzada Roviroso
Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock,
Rural Development, Fisheries and Food
(SAGARPA) of Mexico and
Chairperson of the Inter American
Board of Agriculture 2015

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: PROVISIONAL AGENDA
IICA/JIA/Doc. 369 (15)

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. Provisional Schedule of the Meeting | IICA/JIA/Doc. 368 (15) |
| 2. Report to the Member States | |
| 2.1. Message from the Director General | No document |
| 3. Technical Forum: Towards Competitive, Sustainable and Inclusive Productivity: an Opportunity for Agriculture in the Americas | |
| 3.1. Technical document: Competitive, Inclusive, and Sustainable Productivity: Opportunity for the Americas | IICA/JIA/Doc. 370 (15) |
| 4. Results of the hemispheric meeting on agricultural health | |
| 5. IICA Strategic Alliances | |
| 5.1. Progress made in strengthening of strategic partnerships with other institutions | |
| 5.2. The Outlook for agriculture and rural development in the Americas: A perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2016 | Unnumbered |
| 6. Report of the Working Group of Friends of the Chair of the Executive Committee | |
| 7. Financial and program-budget situation | |
| 7.1. 2016-2017 Program-Budget | IICA/JIA/Doc. 371 (15) |
| 7.2. Report on the Collection of Quotas | IICA/JIA/Doc. 372 (15) |
| 7.3. IICA's Financial Statements for 2013 and 2014 and | IICA/JIA/Doc. 373 (15) |

Reports of the External Auditors

- 7.4. Twentieth and Twenty-first Reports of the Audit Review Committee (ARC) IICA/JIA/Doc. 374 (15)

8. Matters Pertaining to the Governing Bodies of IICA

- 8.1. Report of the Representative of the IABA to the Governing Council of CATIE for the period 2013-2014 Information Document No. 01 (15)
- 8.2. Report on the Status of the Resolutions of the Seventeenth Regular Meeting of the IABA IICA/JIA/Doc. 375 (15)
- 8.3. Report on the Status of the Resolutions of the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee IICA/JIA/Doc. 376 (15)
- 8.4. Date and Venue of the Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the IABA IICA/JIA/Doc. 377 (15)
- 8.5. Report on the Meetings of Ministers and the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan IICA/JIA/Doc. 378 (15)

9. Other Business

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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