



Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

**Technical Cooperation of IICA and the Hemispheric
Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable
Development**

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3.3 IICA Technical Cooperation and the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development

3.3.1 Background

In 2021, within the framework of the Food Systems Summit (FSS), the ministers and secretaries of Agriculture of the Americas, with the support of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), spearheaded a process to develop a consensus position and define joint actions to support the transition towards more sustainable and resilient agrifood systems in the Americas, thereby contributing to global and regional food security and to the fight to resolve the global climate crisis.

At the Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles, United States in June 2022, IICA presented a proposal to establish a Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development (HPFSSD). This proposal was instrumental in laying the foundation for Executive Committee resolutions No. 685 and 686, adopted at the Forty-second Regular Meeting of that governing body in 2022, presenting concrete proposals for collective action in the Americas to combat food security and ensure sustainable development.

Consequently, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) wholeheartedly endorsed the creation of a Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development (IICA/JIA/Res. 545 (XXII-O/23)). It also instructed the Director General of the Institute to expand and intensify any actions needed for the Partnership's consolidation, in consultation and coordination with the Member States, and including the widest possible cross-section of stakeholders in the agrifood sector. The Partnership was forged in response to the food security crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine crisis, and their repercussions on regional agricultural and food systems.

The Partnership seeks to drive collective action by the countries in the region to establish a platform to mobilize the significant technical capacities existing in the region, to devise solutions to common problems that are undermining the potential contribution of the region's natural resources to regional and global food and environmental security.

Collective action will require countries to work together, in accordance with their interests and needs, to define joint solutions to common problems; generate supranational public goods; develop governmental technical and policy capacities in strategic areas; and to consolidate the agrifood positioning of the region at the global level.

The basic strategy adopted for the Partnership mirrors the technical cooperation structure of IICA's 2022-2026 Medium-term Plan, thereby ensuring that that the Plan's strategic focus is incorporated into the activities of the Partnership. Therefore, the work of the Partnership is carried out according to seven key areas: innovation and bioeconomy; digitalization of agrifood systems; international trade; climate action, water and soil; One Health; family farming; and gender equality and youth.

In 2023, activities concentrated on bringing together high-level technocrats from different countries in the region to discuss common emerging problems and to identify cooperative response strategies. To this end, major regional events were organized, one on each of the selected topic areas. Stemming

from these events, a general consensus was reached on the need to undertake a series of targeted collective actions.

3.3.2 Summary of achievements

Further to IABA Resolution No. 545, the Institute has taken steps to implement the Partnership, by undertaking the following technical cooperation actions:

i. Bioeconomy

- Technical capacity building, the design of bioeconomy-related policies and investments for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).
- Assistance in strengthening the Region's standing at the main global bioeconomy forums, such as the Group of Twenty (G20), the Global Bioeconomy Summit, COP16 Biodiversity and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), among others.
- Launch of the Latin American Bioeconomy Network, with more than 60 members in 10 Latin American countries; development and launch of the landing page of the network: <https://bioeconomialatam.net/>; development of a toolkit for the incubation and acceleration of biobusinesses; and organization of discussions on strategic science and technology issues (S&T) for the bioeconomy in Latin America, among other areas.
- Creation of the Pan American Liquid Biofuels Coalition with 25 organizations in 13 countries, which, in just over a year has positioned itself as the main hemispheric mechanism coordinating the development, promotion and sustainable consumption of these clean energies throughout the hemisphere.
- Establishment of the Pan-American Bio-inputs Forum.

ii. Science, technology and innovation (STI)

- Revision of research priorities, identification of new technological public goods and development of prospective and strategic agendas among national public institutions and international organizations.
- Modernization and strengthening of the institutional organization of S&T, focusing actions on operational agility, coordination with the private sector and funding mechanisms.
- The design of effective public policy frameworks that create an ecosystem favorable to the private sector and conducive to the modernization that the agrifood systems of the region require.
- Strengthening of existing collaborative mechanisms (such as PROCISUR and PROCINORTE) and implementation of new reciprocal cooperation platforms to access cutting edge technology, drive technological development in the Amazon region and spur innovation in the countries in the tropical region and the Caribbean.

iii. Digitalization of agrifood systems

- Establishment of an AgTech Network with key stakeholders in the digitalization field, promoting strategic thinking and actions to drive the development of digital innovation ecosystems.
- Establishment of Digital Agriculture Week, in partnership with 20 public and private strategic partners, as a benchmark event involving multiple stakeholders.
- Development of a Digital Agricultural Policy Platform to survey and analyze policies to promote the development and adoption of digital technologies, as well as to create opportunities for dialogue and collaboration among countries to implement a new generation of public policies for that purpose.
- Creation of the first version of the Repository of Digital Solutions and Best Practices for Agrifood Digitalization. Assessment and categorization of more than 210 AgTechs and preparation of various digitalization case studies. Continuous updating of this information will facilitate the identification and adoption of options that are more capable of addressing the challenges facing farmers in the Americas.
- Surveying and analysis of digitalization policies in two regions and seven countries, and establishment of a Dialogue Room within the framework of the launch of Digital Agriculture Week 2024 and the Public Policy Observatory for Agrifood Systems (OPSAa).
- Publication of studies on the use of digital technology for droughts, remote sensing for agricultural statistics and the AgTech ecosystem in the Andean Region, registering more than 2,000 downloads. Moreover, the study on the AgTech ecosystem in Central America is in the final stage of development.

iv. International and regional trade

- Creation of a network of agricultural negotiators to the World Trade Organization (WTO), aimed at promoting the adoption of common regional positions, to foster open, transparent and predictable international trade. Moreover, the Institute published the [*“Delegate’s Handbook on Participation in the WTO Committee on Agriculture”*](#).
- Coordinated effort to address the emergence of regulations that restrict the agrifood trade of countries in the region, with the publication of the document [*“Acciones para enfrentar el surgimiento de normas ambientales con potencial para restringir el comercio agroalimentario de los países de América Latina y el Caribe”*](#) (in Spanish only).
- As a collective initiative to increase intraregional trade and to capitalize on existing agreements, publication of the “Capacity Building Guide for More Effective Use of International Trade Agreements”, with work currently underway to design implementation formats for the guide, both through in-person sessions as well as through a self-paced online course.

- Increase in intraregional trade through more effective use of existing trade agreements and coordination with mechanisms and other institutions that promote regional integration.

v. Climate action and financing

- Development of a joint plan of action with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), with respect to the Global Goal on Adaptation.
- Support for agricultural negotiators in the UNFCCC intersessional meeting in the process to develop the preliminary program for the Sharm-el-Sheikh joint work on agriculture and food security, providing support to four LAC negotiators.
- Capacity development and provision of information as a follow-up to the Twenty-eight Conference of the Parties (COP28), with respect to methane reduction in rice cultivation and livestock production.
- Consolidation of the Voluntary Carbon Market Initiative and launch of its website: <https://agcarbonpartnership.iica.int/en/notas-de-prensa/>.
- Technical advances in the Living Soils of the Americas initiative.
- Approval of the project “Capitalizing on Carbon and Market Incentives to Positively Transform the Livestock Sector in Colombia”, with funding from the UK Partnership for Accelerated Climate Transitions (UK PACT).

vi. One Health

- Establishment of a Permanent One Health Working Group on Agrifood Systems, consisting of representatives of the countries of the Americas and agencies, to enable continuous and coordinated collaboration to operationalize One Health in the region.
- Systematization of successful experiences, best practices and lessons learned in operationalizing One Health in the Americas, to serve as models and guidelines with respect to the determinants of success and the challenges involved. Indicators were also developed to facilitate the quantification of aspects related to the implementation of One Health in agrifood systems.
- In terms of collective actions on “One Health as an Agricultural Health Strategy for Agrifood Systems”, IICA plans to undertake eight initiatives in 2024 in areas such as animal health and its contribution to agrifood systems; the development of a One Health performance, vision and strategy (PVS) tool; publications and working documents; initiatives with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) aimed at supporting capacity development in managing and communicating risks in Mexico and Central America for the prevention, control and eradication of the New World screwworm (NWS), using a “One Health” approach; and an agreement and joint plan of action with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) to apply PVS in food safety, which will include the organization of workshops, working groups, etc.

vii. Family farming and inclusive rural development

- Institutionalization of an exchange mechanism with key family farming (FF) stakeholders to design and evaluate a new generation of public policies, as well as to determine the investments and funding needed for their implementation.
- Completion of a situational study on the four types of FF public policies in MERCOSUR (2018-2023), which was requested by the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF) of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) for presentation to that body's Common Market Group (GMC/MERCOSUR).
- In coordination with the REAF and with the Confederation of Family Producer Organizations of the Expanded Mercosur (COPROFAM), IICA's Agricultural Climate Action and Sustainability Program embarked on a study to examine indicators of FF's contribution to the fight against climate change in MERCOSUR countries.
- Progress in designing a portal to support digital transformation in cooperatives; review of agreements to establish partnerships with AgroTech Andalucía and Cooperativa NCBA CLUSA; and preparation of the advanced draft of a document discussing public policies on FF digitalization in Latin America, based on experiences in the European Union and Spain.
- Advanced draft of a proposal on value addition at source in FF, in coordination with the Innovation and Bioeconomy Program, OPSAa and the Institute's delegations in Bolivia, Peru, Colombia and Mexico.
- Promotion of FF modernization in production, management, trading and marketing of its products through the Cooperative Skills Center for Digital Transformation.

viii. Gender and youth

- Ratification of the Permanent Forum of Female Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Senior Officials of the Americas as a forum to build civic responsibility and to bring greater awareness of gender-related efforts in the Americas. Organization of the fifth staging of the Forum is underway. It is slated to take place on 17-18 October at IICA Headquarters, under the theme "Measuring Care Work to Demonstrate the Contribution of Rural Women to Agrifood Systems in the Americas".
- Dissemination of the priorities emanating from the Forum to the working groups established by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) within the framework of the Declaration for the Rights of All Women, Adolescents and Girls in Rural Areas of the Americas, adopted at the 53rd General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in June 2023.
- Promotion of a new generation of public policies focusing on analyzing public sector initiatives and best practices, by reviewing data on differentiated participation, according to gender. This effort will take place within the scope of OPSAa, seeking to assist in strengthening policies; to ensure more targeted investments in the rural sphere; and to democratize care work in the Americas.

- Capacity building through the Leadership School for the Transformation of Agrifood Systems in the Americas (ELTSA), through the development of a training course on the care economy for technical teams in the ministries.
- The development of a strategy to update the digital platforms on Rural Women and the Hemispheric Community of Rural Youth is underway, with a view to providing relevant information for these sectors and for technical staff in the ministries of Agriculture working in these areas.
- Ongoing development of a Training Program for Rural Women, implemented in collaboration with strategic partners such as CIM and the BBVA Microfinance Foundation, in addition to other activities to build capacities.

ix. Policies

OPSAa

- Joint preparation of a concept document examining a new generation of policies for agrifood system transformation in the Americas, in collaboration with leading regional institutions, including the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, CAF-Development Bank of Latin America and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
- Working agenda within the framework of the Hemispheric Network of Agrifood Policies to foster a new generation of public policies.
- Completion of an evidence synthesis under the Avanzar2030 project, with the participation of 30 researchers from more than 20 institutions, under the leadership of IFPRI, the University of Notre Dame and IICA. The study seeks to bridge data gaps, analyze public initiatives and their associated costs, as well as to generate the evidence needed to develop a new public policy agenda.

ELTSA

- Launch of a virtual platform to build capacities and leadership for the transformation of agrifood systems.

3.3.3 Summary of indicators

