



# **REPORT OF THE FORTY-FOURTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**San Jose, Costa Rica**

**23-24 July 2024**

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) 2024



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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**





**THE FORTY-FOURTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR  
COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)**

The Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Institute was held in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of that governing body.

The Member States of the 2024 Executive Committee were as follows: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

**PREPARATORY SESSION**

*Opening of the session*

The Preparatory Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of IICA was called to order at 08:45 hours on 23 July 2024, with the Member States on the Committee participating in person and virtually. Presiding over the meeting was Mr. Indar Weir, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security of Barbados, the country currently chairing the Executive Committee.

The session was attended by eleven of the Member States sitting on the 2024 Executive Committee, with full voting and speaking rights. Of them, eight were represented in person—namely Belize, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay—and three joined the session virtually—namely Argentina, Dominica and the United States of America.

Moreover, pursuant to Article 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee, the following Member States participated in person, with the right to speak but not to vote: Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Grenada, Honduras, Mexico and Panama. Member States that participated virtually, with the right to speak but not to vote, were Canada, El Salvador, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

## Agreements

### Election of the Chair and Rapporteur of the meeting

The representatives of the Member States on the Executive Committee unanimously elected Mr. Ángel Manero Campos, Minister of Agricultural Development and Irrigation of Peru, as Chair of the meeting, following a proposal by the Representative of Uruguay, which was seconded by the Representative of the Dominican Republic.

Next, the Chair proceeded with the election of the Rapporteur. The representatives of the Member States on the Executive Committee unanimously elected Mr. José Abelardo Mai, Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise of Belize as Rapporteur of the meeting, in response to a proposal by the Representative of the Dominican Republic, which was seconded by the Representative of Costa Rica.

The Officers of the Meeting were elected as follows:

Chair:	Ángel Manero Campos
Rapporteur:	José Abelardo Mai
<i>Ex officio</i> Secretary:	Manuel Otero

### Agenda of the meeting

The Chair submitted for consideration by the representatives the provisional work agenda of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, included in document No. 761 (24), which was unanimously approved, without modifications.

The Chair then informed the participants that the working and information documents, as well as the draft resolutions of the meeting had been made available to the countries in electronic format, and in Spanish and English, via the online information system of the Executive Committee.

### Working committees

It was agreed that no working committees would be established, and that all matters would be dealt with in the plenary sessions. However, the Chair noted that, pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of that governing body, committees could also be set up during the meeting, if the representatives of the delegations sitting on the Executive Committee

deemed it necessary. However, any committees established would need to meet as provided for in the rules.

### Duration of the meeting

It was decided that the meeting would conclude on Wednesday, 24 July 2024 at 16:30 hours.

### Countries' right to vote

The Chair sought the opinion of the Legal Advisor with respect to the scope and application of the rules governing the right to vote in meetings of the Executive Committee, in keeping with the Rules of Procedure of that governing body and all other provisions regarding their application.

The Legal Advisor outlined the provisions regarding the right to vote outlined in Chapter IX of the aforementioned rules and Article 24 of the Convention on IICA. He informed the meeting that only two Member States on the Executive Committee were in arrears with respect to their quota payments, namely Venezuela and Bolivia, and noted that for some time Venezuela had not participated in meetings of the governing bodies of the Institute.

The Representative of Bolivia then intervened and explained that his country had been facing some difficulties with respect to foreign exchange and exports, which was complicating the economic situation in the country. He requested that his country be allowed to participate and to vote, with the understanding that the problem of the delay in quota payments would soon be amended.

The Executive Committee member countries granted Bolivia's request to participate in the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, with full voting rights.

### Credentials

The Technical Secretary reported that all the delegations of the Member States on the Executive Committee that were present had been accredited with the corresponding credentials issued by the competent authorities in their respective country, as had the delegates of the other IICA member countries participating as observers, the IICA Associate Member and various international organizations, among other guests.

## Consultation by the Director General with the Executive Committee

The Chair then announced that the Director General wished to make a special address to bring two specific situations to the attention of the Executive Committee, involving two Member States: Nicaragua and Colombia.

### The situation in Nicaragua

The Technical Secretary advised the meeting that on 19 January 2024, the Institute had received an official letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, indicating Nicaragua's intention to denounce the Convention on IICA, withdraw from the organization and to close the office of the Institute in that country. He then went on to outline the actions that the Director General had undertaken in a bid to prevent this withdrawal. First, on January 23<sup>rd</sup> he had requested a meeting with the Nicaraguan Minister of Foreign Affairs but had received no response. Secondly, on February 27<sup>th</sup> he had sent a note, reiterating his request for a meeting and attaching a list of projects that IICA had been leading in Nicaragua. Again, he received no response. Then, on May 9<sup>th</sup> the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) was informed about the situation and the actions taken. The SACMI Member States had agreed that the necessary support should be mobilized through the embassies and ministries of Agriculture, to intervene and mediate to encourage the Government of Nicaragua to reconsider its decision and to reestablish relations. Fourthly, on May 30<sup>th</sup> the Director General had sent a letter to the President of Nicaragua requesting that the country reconsider its withdrawal. However, on June 4<sup>th</sup> a letter was received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirming the country's decision to renounce the Convention and to leave the Institute.

The Director General indicated that, given that Nicaragua was a country close to IICA, the organization would continue to pay the salaries of the staff in the delegation until the end of the year. On the other hand, he stressed that the Institute wished to continue supporting Nicaraguan farmers and to retain Nicaragua as a member. Finally, he asked all the member countries to use their good offices to encourage the Government of Nicaragua to reconsider its decision.

### The situation in Colombia

The Technical Secretary stated that in 2007 the Government of Colombia had created and implemented the Agro Ingreso Seguro (AIS) program, which IICA had helped to develop and implement, within the framework of the Basic Agreement signed with

Colombia in 1968, authorizing the Institute to operate in that country. At the end of 2009, oversight bodies of the Colombian State had launched an investigation that had held various officials and other persons accountable for alleged misuse by various beneficiaries of the resources received through the AIS Program. He also went on to explain that IICA was named in a publication of entities that were being held fiscally responsible, based on a determination by the Comptroller General of the Republic of Colombia. The Comptroller General, which is an autonomous entity, established that IICA should be subject to the administrative jurisdiction of the Colombian State and should pay approximately USD 2.5 million as an administrative sanction for the damage caused. The Technical Secretary reported that the Institute continued to enjoy immunity from the laws of Colombia. However, despite various legal, diplomatic and political efforts that IICA had carried out to find a viable solution, as well as the fact that it had continued to undertake various technical cooperation actions, its work in the country was limited. He stressed how important Colombia was for IICA and the region and the desire of both parties to resolve the situation and continue working together for the benefit of the agriculture sector.

The Director General noted that there had been sustained efforts to engage in discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Colombia and with the Embassy of Colombia in Costa Rica, to devise a solution. He explained that to arrive at a definitive solution to the situation, the Institute was requesting that the Executive Committee support its decision to pay the sum of USD 2.5 million that the Colombian Comptroller General was asking of IICA.

The Chair submitted the request of the Director General for the consideration of the Member States on the Executive Committee, which supported the proposal to pay the sanction, to restore normal relations between IICA and Colombia.

The Representative of Colombia thanked the delegates for their support. She pointed out that the Comptroller General of Colombia was an institution that was independent of the Executive Branch. She said that efforts were aimed at supporting the growth of agricultural production and rural development and contributing to two important issues for the region: climate change and peace. On behalf of the Government of Colombia, she once again thanked the Executive Committee for the support provided to strengthen that country's relations with the Institute.

The Representative of Uruguay endorsed the Director General's actions to handle the situations in Nicaragua and Colombia. He inquired about the reasons for Nicaragua's decision to denounce the Convention on IICA. Furthermore, in his capacity as Chair of

the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), he proposed that a three-member committee be established to intervene and serve as a mediator in the situation.

In response, the Technical Secretary stated that the note by Nicaragua only communicated the country's decision but offered no explanation. However, he went on to explain that the second letter from the country stated its desire to sever all relations with the Organization of American States, of which the Institute is a specialized agency.

The Director General instructed the Technical Secretary to share the relevant documents on Nicaragua and agreed with the proposal of the Chair of the IABA to establish a committee.

The Representative of Mexico endorsed the Director General's efforts to resolve the situations involving Nicaragua and Colombia. She proposed that a letter be prepared on behalf of the ministries of Foreign Affairs of the IICA member countries, requesting a conversation and agreement with Nicaragua at the highest level.

The Representative of Honduras added her voice to the expressions of support and agreed that the greatest effort must be made with respect to the situation of Nicaragua. She pointed out that the Minister of Agriculture of Nicaragua was serving as President pro tempore of the Central American Agricultural Council, which made this matter one of even greater concern. She assessed the implications for trade, animal health, food safety and regional projects, among other considerations.

The Representative of the Dominican Republic and the Representative of Peru, in his capacity as Chair, agreed with the necessary actions that would be taken. The Chair offered to travel personally to speak with the Minister of Agriculture of Nicaragua.

### Close of the session

The Preparatory Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned at 09:36 hours on 23 July 2024.



## FIRST PLENARY SESSION

### Opening of the session

The First Plenary Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was called to order at 09:48 hours on 23 July 2024 and was chaired by the Representative of Peru.

### Remarks by the Chair Elect of the Executive Committee

The Chair of the Executive Committee said he was pleased and grateful to have been selected to preside over the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee.

### Progress by the Institute in actions towards carbon neutrality

The coordinator of IICA's actions towards carbon neutrality presented a report on activities that demonstrate the Institute's commitment and sense of responsibility to assist in the fight against climate change: a) its status as a carbon neutral organization, recognized by Costa Rica's Ministry of the Environment and Energy and by the Government's Blue Flag Ecological Program; b) its efforts to make adjustments to ensure efficient consumption of water, electricity and fuel; c) its actions to reduce carbon emissions for the Executive Committee meeting; d) its promotion of a tree planting project, since 2023; and e) its success in increasing environmental awareness among its employees and suppliers of the Institute.

### Message by the Director General

The Director General extended a warm welcome to the participants in the Executive Committee meeting. He reflected on difficulties taking place on the international scene at that time, such as: a) the war in Eastern Europe and conflict or violence in at least twenty countries; b) the global climate crisis and the vulnerable location of the Americas; and c) the slowdown in economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean, a region projected to experience only 2% economic growth for the year. He pointed out that those difficulties would threaten agrifood transformation in the Americas and emphasized the importance of agriculture as a powerful instrument for peace and food security.



He said that this context had influenced IICA's actions to mobilize knowledge, ensure early detection of trends and to alert countries about opportunities and challenges. He believed that the Institute should evolve to become a knowledge management platform at the service of its member countries, transforming their requests and needs into technical cooperation opportunities.

The Director General then spoke extensively about the agenda of the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development in the Americas, addressing issues such as a) the status of global and hemispheric agricultural trade, b) the role of animal health services in the Americas in global and regional food security; and c) the future of agriculture.

He confirmed that the Hemispheric Partnership was already a reality and was seeking to define a new vision of technical cooperation, combining the efforts of the countries. As such, he underscored the importance of IICA's participation in the Twenty-ninth United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2024.

He reported that among the activities that the Institute had undertaken for the year were the First Meeting of Leaders of Rurality of the Americas, held in Costa Rica and attended by 40 rural leaders from 21 countries. He indicated that two of them were participating in the Executive Committee meeting and would speak about the network that had been established with the technical support of IICA, to drive actions to empower these leading players in rural life.

He emphasized the relevance of the institutional mission, indicating that its targets should always be upgraded, in keeping with three converging dimensions – its role as: 1) an organization based in the Americas with a global outlook; 2) a catalyst for collective actions and 3) an institution of open doors.

In the opinion of the Director General, the Institute should be recognized as the food security agency of the Americas, considering its success in building new bridges with the private sector, through strategic partnerships, and the fact that it was evolving into a veritable platform that recognizes and integrates a wide range of stakeholders, anchored by components such as the Advisory Council for Food Security in the Americas, an institutional Advisory Committee on Communication, and in the future, by a private sector consultative committee. He also highlighted the increasingly close and synergistic relationship of this platform with the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) to tackle the challenges facing agriculture, while promoting public-private collective action.

He highlighted the achievements of the IICA of Open Doors initiative, which was redefining the role of the Institute as a technology hub, focusing in particular on the upcoming generations that would assume the task of nurturing the future of agriculture in the hemisphere. He announced that on that occasion, the Interpretive Center for Tomorrow's Agriculture (CIMAG) would officially launch the Virtual Agricultural Machinery Center and the Urban Farms Module.

He also revealed that during the meeting the Institute would propose the creation of a Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas, in response to a ministerial mandate to establish a new funding source to accelerate the agrifood development process in countries of less economic clout or that are facing emergencies, such as ones recently experienced in some Caribbean and Central American countries.

Finally, he invited all the Member States to continue moving forward, working together to provide technical cooperation services of excellence, while keeping pace with the demands and needs of the era.

#### *Analysis and comments*

The Representative of Barbados wholeheartedly endorsed the Director General's presentation and the decisions he had taken. He also expressed concern about the challenges that had been mentioned. He pointed out that climate change was creating immense challenges for the Caribbean, for example, the fallout from Hurricane Beryl. However, he agreed that resources were limited in all the regions and that therefore everyone should join forces.

The Representative of Argentina reaffirmed the strategic role of IICA and the technical support it was delivering in its 34 Member States, to fuel agricultural development and rural well-being. He underscored the need for and value of the Institute's technical cooperation in tackling a wide variety of sectoral issues that transcend national borders and require a regional approach to promote and implement new policies and to build capacities. He assured the meeting that Argentina would continue to support IICA's work and to contribute to technical knowledge exchange in cooperation projects for capacity development in agricultural production.

The Representative of the United States of America thanked the Director General and the Institute, highlighting their efforts to address the challenges facing agrifood systems. She pledged the continued commitment of her country to support the work of IICA and its member countries.

The Representative of Jamaica thanked the Director General for his presentation and expressed solidarity with Barbados, Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with respect to the impact of Hurricane Beryl. He highlighted the issues of innovation and resilience in agriculture and its capacity to adapt. He stressed the great importance of the region for food security and the need to bolster its position by way of public policies.

The Representative of Honduras added her words of congratulation to the Director General for the work carried out by the Institute and its staff. She stressed the importance of knowledge management in the areas of: a) technology and irrigation, given that the gaps in these areas continue to separate countries; 2) food security, as she maintained the need to devise a strategy to reduce vulnerability; and 3) climate change and integrated disaster risk management, which she felt were recurring problems that no significant progress had been made in resolving.

The Representative of Grenada thanked the Director General for his presentation. He agreed with the remarks of the Representative of Jamaica and described agriculture as the one industry that could improve people's lives and living conditions. He noted the vulnerability of the Caribbean region to climate change, in particular the small island States, and again stressed the potential of agriculture to increase the region's gross domestic product and enhance its standard of living. While recognizing the support that these countries had received from IICA, he appealed for continued efforts to formulate strategies to improve resilience and to develop the agricultural industry, as a means of transforming and improving lives.

The Representative of Trinidad and Tobago expressed concern for those small farmers who depend on agriculture as a source of livelihood and must face climate change-related challenges, but who are overlooked in many regional forums. He argued that the solutions and the new technologies must be tailored and adapted to suit each type of agriculture, in order to improve food security sustainably.

The Representative of Belize also congratulated the Director General for his presentation and expressed solidarity with the Caribbean on the recent passage of Hurricane Beryl, which had also affected Belize and its agrifood system. He referred to other pending issues that he felt should be addressed: 1) mass migration to North America, which had led to a shortage of labor to harvest crops and in turn to an increase in production costs; b) weather-related soil problems—causing soils in some regions to be dry and cracked and in others to be water logged—coupled with the incidence of major forest fires; and 3) the high cost and demand for energy that had led to outages, affecting thousands of producers and their families.

The Representative of Mexico thanked the Director General for his presentation and for including important and priority topics on the Executive Committee agenda. She commended the Institute for its progress in undertaking multiple actions to drive sustainable agriculture, with a focus on climate change. She commented that, amidst the current challenges, agriculture was a critical sector in providing solutions, in particular for vulnerable communities. She emphasized the importance of transforming production activities and agrifood systems, particularly through technology innovation. Finally, she expressed Mexico's solidarity with the Caribbean countries.

#### Message from the Government of Colombia

The Representative of Colombia shared her country's belief that cooperation would drive the transformation of rural areas. She stressed the Americas' capacity to excel in agriculture and its major responsibility to address the climate crisis and to identify solutions to it. She highlighted the value of the Amazon biome as a key area in providing protection against this crisis. She mentioned her country's desire to implement integrated agricultural and rural reform in the near future. Thus, she underscored the fact that IICA's work in agricultural extension services, forests and water was critical.

On the other hand, she noted that Colombia was deeply grateful for the step that the Institute was taking to regularize its relationship with the country.

#### Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development in the Americas

##### *IICA's technical cooperation for the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development in the Americas*

The Director of Technical Cooperation recalled that the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development of the Americas was created by the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, via Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 545 (XXII-O/23), with the strategic objective of mobilizing technical capacities in the region in the quest for solutions to common problems that are limiting the effectiveness of agrifood systems in the Americas. The Partnership focuses on specific areas such as: innovation and the bioeconomy; digitalization of agrifood systems; international trade; climate action; water and soil; One Health; family farming and gender and youth.

He indicated that, during 2023 the partnership had emphasized the creation of the mechanisms needed for collective action as the basis for technical cooperation, among

them: a) consensus building; b) the establishment of strategic partnerships with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (One CGIAR), the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean; c) networking; d) the defining of roadmaps; and 3) the Public Policy Observatory for Agrifood Systems (OPSAA) and the Leadership School for the Transformation of Agrifood Systems of the Americas.

He then outlined the areas on which the work of the Partnership would focus during the 2024-2025 period: a) the implementation of roadmaps and increased interaction with strategic partners, with respect to new policy support instruments, capacity building, experience sharing and positioning in international agendas; and b) the introduction of a future perspective on agriculture.

He then outlined some of the expected outcomes that were being pursued in each of the technical programs for this same period:

a) Bioeconomy: metrics, policy tools, bioentrepreneurship services, regulatory systems for bioinputs and biosciences, joint strategies for advanced biofuels and joint work agendas between Latin America and the major global bioeconomy forums (the Group of Twenty [G20], the United Nations Biodiversity Conference, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], etc.).

b) Science, technology and innovation, and agricultural digitalization: a strategic thinking platform, cooperation mechanisms in tropical agriculture and biosciences, networking with AgTechs and leading stakeholders, a digital solutions platform, experiences with digitalization and recommendations for the design of digitalization policies.

c) International trade: strengthening of agrifood trade's contribution to sustainable development and food security, development of networks of key stakeholders, formulation of trade policies and export capacity building programs, development of joint negotiating positions and responses to new regulatory issues, and organization of preparatory meetings ahead of the Thirtieth United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30).

d) Climate action: contributions and inputs from the countries in response to the appeal in the Sharm-el-Sheikh work plan of the United Nations Framework

Convention on Climate Change and validation of a work proposal regarding actions in preparation for COP30.

e) One Health: implementation of joint strategies at the regional and hemispheric levels to tackle emerging challenges and to continue strengthening agricultural health and food safety services at the national level.

f) Family farming: application of strategies to improve the digital environment in the sector, particularly in cooperatives, and to introduce a new generation of public policies on family farming.

g) Gender equality and youth: policy coordination and capacity building in the care economy and gender equality; strategic virtual platforms for youth and rural women; mechanisms to implement a gender and youth focus in projects and positioning of the gender equality and youth agenda in high level forums, such as the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the World Food Forum (WFF).

h) OPSAa: development of a unified conceptual framework for a new generation of policies, the Hemispheric Policy Network and an evidence synthesis within the framework of AVANZAR 2030.

Finally, he announced the upcoming launch of the Platform for Tropical Agrifood Systems, an initiative that the Institute believes will prove extremely useful in bridging gaps in food production and responding to the growing demands for food security and nutritious food. He explained that the platform will operate in partnership with organizations such as CATIE, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and One CGIAR and will focus on bolstering innovation capacities in tropical food systems, to contribute to countries' productivity and sustainability.

### *Panel discussion on the Status of Global and Hemispheric Agricultural Trade*

#### Remarks by Mr. Fernando Mattos

Fernando Mattos, Minister of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, in his capacity as moderator, explained that the aim of the discussion was to foster the exchange of ideas and discourse on the political actions needed to strengthen the strategic role of the agrifood trade of the Americas in food security and sustainable development. He mentioned that given the current global trade context, the countries of

the region should join forces to tackle common challenges and to capitalize on shared opportunities.

#### Presentation by Mr. Marcos S. Jank

Marcos S. Jank, Senior Professor at INSPER, outlined the elements of trade and global food security. He indicated that, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), food insecurity is a situation in which people lack regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. Then, he gave a general overview of unequal access to safe and nutritious food in the world. He highlighted the fact that global malnutrition was trending upward following years of decline.

Professor Jank stressed that the main drivers of food insecurity were wars and conflict, economic shocks and extreme weather events. He commented that the rise in food inflation was having a disproportionate impact on the poor, who spend a major part of their income on food, the high price of which was limiting their access to adequate nutrition.

He viewed international trade as essential to increasing food security and felt that it played a critical role in: a) redistributing food production, thereby increasing the quantity and quality of products in all regions; b) expanding the variety of available food, thus widening the choice for consumers and helping to diversify their diets; c) improving economic access to food, given that it stabilizes prices; d) supporting the fight against hunger and malnutrition; e) contributing to the consumption of safe food, by applying health standards in domestic production and distribution systems; f) creating opportunities to improve agricultural productivity and to boost the income of farmers; and g) facilitating the efficient allocation of global resources, including natural resources, by moving food from food-surplus to food-deficit regions. He spoke about the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and polarization of global food trade balances.

He ended the presentation with a description of the main agricultural export chains of Latin America and the most important destination countries for the agrifood products of the region.

#### Presentation by Mrs. Gloria Abraham

Mrs. Gloria Abraham, Advisor to the IICA Director General and the International Trade and Regional Integration Program, spoke about the status of agrifood trade in the Americas, highlighting progress in collective actions in this area under the Hemispheric

Partnership. She provided data on the main Latin American trade indicators for the 2021-2023 period, as well as the region's share of global agrifood exports, the growth of these exports, intraregional trade and the concentration of these exports in key markets. She noted that, although the region was already a leading exporter of essential products in global agrifood chains, it still had immense untapped potential, particularly in intraregional trade.

In Mrs. Abraham's view, the region was facing various challenges: a) increasing changes and fragmentation in economic and trade relations; b) an escalation in protectionist measures due to various crises; c) a possible decline in the competitiveness of value chains, resulting from the increase in production, marketing and transportation costs; e) the complex situation within the multilateral trade system and the urgent need to produce results and agreements within the World Trade Organization (WTO); and f) the promotion of new standards to foster environmental protection and conservation, which could restrict trade and impose significant economic and social costs on other countries.

Within the context of the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development of the Americas, she highlighted three fundamental areas of focus in relation to international and regional trade: a) strengthening participation in the WTO to foster open and predictable international trade; b) addressing restrictive rules that negatively impact agrifood trade; and c) increasing intraregional trade, through more effective use of existing agreements. Finally, she outlined the main achievements that had been made in these areas during the 2023-2024 period, stressing the positive impact of these actions on sustainable development and food security.

### Analysis and comments

The Minister of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, as the moderator of the panel, posed a question to guide the discussions: what concrete actions could be promoted to strengthen the role of ministries and secretariats of Agriculture in the decisions taken in the WTO and how can they collaborate amongst themselves to reach agreements and present common actions in this sphere?

The Representative of the United States of America expressed the view that global trade and its current problems were issues of tremendous importance at this critical time. He pointed out that the last five years, including the pandemic experience, had taught us two important lessons: the labor supply in the agriculture sector of the region was not as strong as we may have believed; and b) the vulnerabilities in food systems came to



light, as they were forced to grapple with problems such as the shortage of inputs, the decline in production, climate change and supply chain disruptions.

He pointed out that trade and a clear understanding of sciences and risk-based standards are essential in addressing these challenges. He underscored the importance of collaborating with key strategic partners, such as the Institute and the Member States, to present a common position to the WTO, just as other countries had done, with the support of international organizations, particularly in the context of population growth, which calls for science- and innovation-based solutions. He emphasized the fact that the Western Hemisphere should lead these efforts, by promoting an enabling environment for science, technology and agriculture, as a central part of the solution.

The moderator thanked the Representative of the United States of America for his remarks and posed the following question to the Representative of Barbados: what specific actions should be promoted to allow small and medium-scale producers and exporters, as well as family farmers, to benefit fully from trade opportunities offered by intraregional trade?

The Representative of Barbados pointed out that although there are numerous trade agreements between regions and countries, the mere existence of a treaty does not guarantee effective market access. He explained that other elements are required, such as market research, the availability of trained staff to support and provide guidance to producers, access to financing, the creation of a brand that is recognized throughout the world and the promotion of associativity, as an effective way to facilitate entry into and success in new markets, particularly for SMEs.

In relation to the last point, he highlighted the fact that when businesses come together in cooperatives, this allows them to improve their access to markets and financing, by maximizing the scale of production. Finally, he underscored the importance of generating awareness in all spheres regarding the fundamental role of the agriculture sector.

The moderator thanked the Representative of Barbados and posed his third question to the Representative of Argentina: what joint actions could be taken at the regional level to demonstrate the progress that the agriculture sector has made in ensuring greater sustainability and effectively tackling the emergence of rules and regulations that may affect the ability of the region's agrifood trade to contribute to global and regional food security?

The Representative of Argentina indicated that fragmentation and the multilateralism crisis were current trends affecting entry into the international market and he pointed out the challenges facing the region, due to regulations and new international standards, such as those imposed by the European Union. He noted that these requirements could become unjustified trade barriers, but could also be seen as opportunities, given the region's potential to take advantage of the growth in global trade.

He stressed that the region had developed environmentally friendly production systems over the last three decades, which had consolidated its position as a reliable global supplier, and that in order to bolster that position, he believed it was critical that it undertake the following joint actions, based on its strengths: a) develop the regional response capacity, b) capitalize on complementarities, c) reduce vulnerabilities and the implementation costs of actions to meet the new requirements and d) harness the potential of the region to contribute to global agrifood trade and food security. He indicated that the approach should adopt two complementary strategies: a defensive strategy that involves questioning the rules and respecting international disciplines and the other, an offensive strategy that highlights the distinctive attributes of the region, based on its advantages.

He maintained that to ensure effective joint action, the region would need to undertake efforts in the following key strategic areas: a) the establishment of consensus and joint positions in negotiating forums and international cooperation spheres, based on a defense of multilateralism, science, the transparency of rules and support for small farmers, while ensuring the means of implementation; b) the development of capacities to monitor trade barriers, such as early warning systems, impact assessment, identification of the affected stakeholders, determination of gaps affecting compliance and experience sharing; and c) the creation of viable regulatory frameworks and the necessary public assets to ensure that this strategy can be implemented in each of the countries. He advised the meeting that Argentina had launched a national strategy aligned with these strategic areas and was inviting the countries of the region to coordinate joint actions.

The Representative of Honduras stressed the fact that trade is a complex issue, influenced by the tension between social, economic and environmental dimensions. She acknowledged the value of the study that was presented and proposed various areas for future work by IICA, for example studies on the impact of the costs to produce food for export, particularly in a context in which many countries were still finding it difficult to properly feed their own people. Moreover, she underscored the importance of efficient

use of water, recognizing that water consumption was a source of growing concern throughout the planet.

She spoke to the need to conduct a study on the impact of monocropping on erosion and soil quality, as well as on the adequate management of waste in the post-harvest and production stages, to reduce food chain losses. The Representative suggested that a map be created to identify countries with the capacity to store grains, as a precautionary measure to avoid shortages in cases of extreme events.

Finally, she emphasized the importance of aligning trade and food policies and taking into account the role of women and youth in agriculture when conducting studies. She argued that free trade agreements and protectionist measures should be reviewed and pointed out the need for a precise analysis regarding the return on investment for producers. In closing, she stressed the importance of collaboration between the foreign trade and agriculture sectors, given that transcendental decisions are taken in the WTO that affect agricultural production.

The Representative of Mexico appealed to the countries of the region to ensure effective participation in the debates on the multilateral trade system, through their ministries of Agriculture, given that these are crucial forums for discussing the issues that regulate and facilitate international trade. She underscored the need to jointly address matters such as the liberalization of agricultural trade, the reduction of support measures that distort trade and the promotion of agricultural negotiations focusing on markets.

She highlighted the fact that multilateralism provides valuable opportunities for discussion among all the blocs of countries and the critical need to ensure the participation of cooperation organizations, such as the Institute. Furthermore, she emphasized the need to promote coordinated cooperation within the region to support the establishment of environmental rules that are compatible with WTO rules, as a way of avoiding unnecessary restrictions on the flow of food trade. Finally, she said that the region must remain vigilant, to prevent the adoption of rules that could limit agrifood trade.

The Representative of Brazil insisted that intraregional sales of agricultural products within the Americas must be increased, despite the barriers and restrictions in various countries. On behalf of the Southern Common Market and Brazil, he reaffirmed their commitment to negotiating new trade agreements to capitalize on logistical advantages and proximity to other countries in the hemisphere.

He highlighted COP30 in 2025, as an ideal forum to showcase the wealth of the region, linking it to the priorities established by the Agriculture Working Group of G20 to combat hunger and poverty: 1) guaranteeing the sustainability of food systems, while respecting the unique features of each country; 2) increasing the contribution of international trade to food security; 3) recognizing the fundamental role of family farmers and indigenous communities in food systems; and 4) promoting the sustainable integration of fisheries and aquaculture in the oceans. These priorities are part of a global strategic agenda that emphasizes food security and equitable opportunities.

The Representative of Uruguay, in his role as moderator, underscored the region's vital role in production and international trade and underscored its crucial contribution to economic, social and environmental sustainability. He noted that multilateralism was essential to devising trade solutions. He also pointed out the need to generate and utilize data based on research and to actively participate in international forums. The Representative argued that the region should not limit itself to having external regulations imposed on it but should develop sound policies and joint positions to enhance its standing in international negotiations.

He also pointed out that although international trade had been the topic discussed, sufficient attention had not been paid to domestic trade, which often relegates farmers' involvement to only the initial commercial transaction. He was of the view that domestic trade in the region is imperfect and requires studies to provide guidance to producers on how to improve negotiations, to ensure that they obtain greater benefits. Finally, he insisted that the various aspects of domestic trade must be improved prior to focusing on improving international trade conditions.

This marked the end of the first panel discussion.

#### *Presentation of the IICA Chair title to Marcos Jank*

The Coordinator of the Legal Unit for International Affairs and Protocol (LUIAP) explained that the Chair is a title that the Institute confers on high-level authorities and personalities in the Americas, in recognition of their significant contributions to agriculture. After reading Marcos Jank's resumé, outlining his achievements, he made mention of his contributions to sustainable development.

Then, the Director General conferred the title of Chair on Mr. Jank.

He underscored the important contribution that Mr. Jank could offer to trade in the Americas. He described IICA as a network that brings together outstanding individuals

to transform agriculture in the region. After listing the nine other recipients of the title of Chair, he reviewed the extensive professional experience of Mr. Jank and warmly welcomed him as Chair of the Institute.

Marcos Jank expressed pleasure and appreciation on receiving the IICA Chair in Trade and Food Security. He spoke about his interest in understanding Brazil's integration into global agricultural trade, his relationship with Roberto Rodríguez and his participation in various spheres to learn about global agricultural trade. He also referred to the potential of the Americas in the areas of integrated systems and growth in production, energy, food and sustainable techniques, while also recalling the milestones of his career.

#### *Award of recognition to Ronald E. Guendel*

The Coordinator of the Legal Unit for International Affairs and Protocol announced the Institute's presentation of the award of recognition to Ronald Guendel and then provided an overview of Guendel's professional journey.

The Director General made the presentation of the award to Ronald Guendel, Global Vice-President of Smallholder Farming at Bayer Crop Science, who boasts more than twenty years' experience in various areas related to agriculture. The Director General noted that Guendel was being recognized for his invaluable friendship, support and contributions to IICA's strategic initiatives, such as CIMAG, to support the strengthening of agrifood systems and family farming.

Ronald Guendel said he was excited and grateful to have received the award and was eager to continue supporting the agriculture sector of the Americas, through the Institute.

#### *Close of the session*

The first plenary session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned at 13:39 hours on 23 July 2024.



## SECOND PLENARY SESSION

### Opening of the session

The Second Plenary Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was called to order at 14:55 hours on 23 July 2024, under the chairmanship of Peru.

### Panel discussion on the Role of Animal Health Services in the Americas in Global and Regional Food Security

#### Remarks by José Carlos Martín Campercholi

José Carlos Martín Campercholi, President of the National Service of Animal Quality and Health of Paraguay (SENACSA), in his capacity as moderator of the panel discussion, made reference to Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 550 (XXII-O/23), which had instructed the IICA Director General to coordinate with the Member States and regional agencies specializing in animal and plant health to organize hemispheric meetings to assess and determine the current status of animal and plant health in the hemisphere, as a follow-up to collective actions on this topic defined in the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development of the Americas.

He indicated, that in keeping with this resolution, the Hemispheric Summit on Animal Health had been held in April in Paraguay and had enjoyed the participation of entities such as the Latin American Poultry Association (ALA), the Pan-American Center for Foot and Mouth Disease and Veterinary Public Health (PANAFTOSA), the State Agency for Animal and Plant Health Protection, the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) and IICA.

He then handed over the floor for the panelists to make their presentations.

#### Presentation by Carlos Orellana Vaquero

Carlos Orellana of Chile, President pro tempore of the Permanent Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone (PVC), noted that this was a historic moment for the world of animal health, given that the pandemic triggered by the coronavirus acute respiratory syndrome (COVID-19) had provided an opportunity to raise awareness about issues, such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests and quarantine, which were previously only of concern to health officials.

He brought up the issue of avian influenza, noting that the ideal scenario for the next three to five years would be to achieve effective control. However, in his opinion, the main threats were: a) budgetary concerns, given that decision-makers failed to recognize the importance of proactiveness and planning prior to the onset of a health crisis and discussions should address the impact of health on the economic context; b) the absence of technical capacities for diagnosis and field work, which the countries would have to develop further, given the continued presence of avian influenza; and c) the lack of the intra and interinstitutional coordination needed to promote transparency among the countries, considering that avian influenza is a cross-border disease.

He outlined the animal health measures that countries would need to take – targeting of efforts, capacity development, sensitization of the authorities in the countries and public and private sector coordination, given that the State would not be equipped to tackle the issue on its own.

He explained that the One Health concept could assist in addressing animal-borne diseases. However, he stressed that there were two aspects to the approach – the theory and the practical application, with the latter being subject to the scope of each institution and agency. He also pointed out that another factor that could not be overlooked was the fact that climate change and migratory movements complicate the treatment of animal- and food-borne diseases.

He noted that the Institute could support countries in tackling health emergencies through capacity development and the creation of a discussion platform with political actors.

The moderator asked the presenter what role ministers of Agriculture should play in a health emergency, such as avian influenza.

Carlos Orellana stated that the role of the ministers of Agriculture should be to understand the impact of the diseases on the various sectors of the economy, to support discussions among key stakeholders, such as exporting countries, and to sensitize the authorities in charge of resource allocation, given that a health campaign requires not only resources, but also policy implementation. He stressed that the ministers are the ones providing the support needed to manage health emergencies.

#### Presentation by Luis Barcos

Luis Barcos, WOAHA Representative for the Americas suggested that African swine fever (ASF) would not be eradicated in the Americas in the near future, therefore its



spread from Dominican Republic or Haiti would have to be prevented. He explained that the situation was not the same in both countries, given that Haiti was not equipped to implement effective control measures.

He then offered IICA and the ministers various recommendations on how to tackle ASF: a) foster interaction between the public and private sectors—ranging from producers to veterinary services—ensuring that all parties understand their individual responsibilities; b) begin discussions regarding trade measures, with an emphasis on intraregional trade, especially if the disease were to be detected in a specific territory; and c) consider scientific alternatives to the culling of animals, such as rendering, which could ensure greater sustainability, subject to the implementation of biosecurity measures. He emphasized the need to reflect on the issues and to refrain from practices that undermine economic and environmental sustainability.

The Representative of the Dominican Republic noted that his country was facing major health and budgetary challenges as a result of the emergency brought on by ASF, which had coincided with the COVID-19 crisis. He indicated that the experience had exposed institutional weaknesses, as well as the lack of coordination between the Government and the private sector, given that, although the protocols to manage ASF were known, their implementation was affected by the lack of agreement between both sectors. He also stated that there was an evident disparity in approaches among decision-makers, as those in the government sector prioritized immediate solutions, whereas technocrats aim for long-term solutions.

He reported that currently the Government and technical cooperation institutions were working to control the disease, with some success. He explained that a process had begun to compensate farmers and measures were being implemented to strengthen diagnostic capacities, which were still insufficient, as samples still had to be sent for testing outside of the country. He commented that, with the support of the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA), the Institute, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United States Government, through the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), significant actions were underway, such as an active surveillance program that provides rapid response to any suspected threat. He also mentioned that biocontainment measures had been implemented at ports and airports, with the use of canine binomials, which now meant that Dominican Republic was the country most equipped to detect pork products and to prevent the spread of the disease.

He stressed that, notwithstanding the country's efforts, considerable challenges remained, such as the need to make long-term investments in biosecurity and to modernize control points. He noted the progress made in strengthening biosecurity practices in more than 80% of livestock farms, which had been crucial in eliminating the virus from the country's main production region. However, he stressed that there were still outbreaks of the disease in small backyard farms, which would require continuous investment to strengthen controls. He also stated that efforts had begun to implement "One Health" and to foster dialogue among the relevant ministries in the country.

The Representative of the United States of America underscored the actions that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) had undertaken in Central America and the Caribbean, since 2023, in collaboration with IICA and the agricultural services of that nation, to strengthen surveillance and ASF response. He noted some examples: a) missions that were undertaken to talk to animal health authorities in the Caribbean and to understand their greater concerns regarding ASF, which had alerted them to the fact that the greatest hurdle was the availability of resources to undertake and analyze tests; and b) training exercises in the United States for specialists from the countries in these subregions.

He highlighted the Institute's support since the beginning of the process, which had been instrumental in the preparation of a letter of intent to fight against ASF. The letter provided a springboard to proceed to evaluate gaps throughout the region and to begin testing and surveillance. He advised the meeting that the next step would be a meeting in Puerto Rico the following week, where various persons would gain hands-on experience in testing and surveillance to build their capacities. Subsequently, there would be training on risk assessment, disposal and disinfection.

He underscored the value of continuing to work with the regional authorities and to move forward with efforts targeting South America.

#### Presentation by Abelardo De Gracia

Abelardo De Gracia, Regional Director of Animal Health at OIRSA, began his presentation on the New World screwworm emergency in Central America and its potential impact within the hemisphere. He presented alarming statistics on the epidemiological situation in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, as at week 28. He indicated that efforts were being made in Nicaragua to contain the outbreak of the disease, which had recently been detected in Matagalpa, in the country's central region.

However, he warned that the situation in Costa Rica and Panama was even more serious, as there had been widespread outbreaks throughout these territories. The Regional Director warned of the significant risk of the fly moving to northern Nicaragua, spreading throughout Central America and reaching North America.

He said the focus of current efforts was to effectively control the pest. He specified that an ideal situation over the next two years would be to contain its movement, by preventing it from spreading to the northern part of the region. To achieve this objective, he felt it would be essential to: a) establish a well-defined containment zone, b) implement intensive active and passive surveillance, c) control movement by establishing inspection stations in epidemiological zones, d) work in accordance with the One Health concept, e) provide training for veterinary and public health services to address suspected cases and f) release sterile flies in the affected zones, through aerial and ground mechanisms.

He warned that, if priority was not given to the control of animal-borne diseases, which can result in immense financial losses in production systems, this could significantly reduce the availability of animal-based products. He stressed the urgent need for the States to allocate resources to contain and control this disease, in collaboration with the production sectors and through public-private partnerships. He pointed out that the resources of international agencies and some cooperating countries would not be sufficient to contain, control or eradicate the pest and that it was imperative that an integrated approach be adopted, pooling public health and animal health efforts, in order to ensure effective communication and the application of clear procedures.

He stressed the fact that IICA's remarkable infrastructure throughout the hemisphere, which facilitates communication and training, was a valuable tool that should be exploited to the fullest, to assist in controlling and containing the disease.

Finally, he recommended that the veterinary services in the countries: a) adopt active and passive surveillance measures immediately in the respective territories, allocating all the resources available; b) begin training of technical staff and development of large-scale health education programs, targeting producers and the wider public; c) standardize the criteria governing positive and negative diagnoses and cut-off values, in order to obtain a clearer epidemiological picture; and d) reduce the time between taking samples from suspected cases and diagnosis to between 24 to 48 hours, to obtain data that will facilitate an analysis of the epidemiological situation that is as close as possible to real time.

The Representative of Mexico shared a video outlining actions that the National Service of Agrifood Health, Safety and Quality (SENASICA) had implemented to prevent the entry of the New World screwworm to that country. The video expressed the willingness of Mexico to work with the ministries of Agriculture of the Central American region on virtual training and telediagnosis, much in the same way that Guatemala had been doing, to tackle the situation. It also offered to make the resources provided by the United States of America available to the Government of Nicaragua. Finally, it issued an appeal to all the veterinary systems of the region to join forces, with the support of the Institute and OIRSA, to address the emergency from a regional and integrated perspective.

The Representative of Uruguay highlighted the experience of the countries in the Southern region that are members of the PVC, which had worked together to tackle common problems, in an atmosphere of trust. He noted the importance of strengthening sanitary, surveillance and diagnostic services, as well as cooperation, to overcome the threat of the New World screwworm. He noted that the available areas in production plants used to produce sterile flies to tackle the fruit fly could be converted to perform a similar function to address the problem of the New World screwworm.

#### Analysis and comments

The Chair, speaking as the Representative of Peru, admitted that he was uninformed about the risks associated with the New World screwworm and underscored the importance of harnessing international cooperation, particularly through IICA, to combat the threat. He recommended that the existing capacity in Mexico to manage the fruit fly be harnessed as an effective strategy to tackle the screwworm.

The Director General pointed out the gravity of the situation, as shown by the new map of pests and diseases and reported that a draft resolution would be submitted for the consideration of the Member States, seeking to demonstrate the regional nature of the emergency and to prompt joint action among international organizations, to establish the mandate needed to decisively tackle the problem in the manner required.

The Representative of Belize expressed profound concern about the movement of the screwworm within the region, particularly in view of the abundance of cattle in his country. He questioned the effectiveness of the “containment” actions and wondered what results were expected over the next six months. He underscored the economic importance of cattle exports to Belize and noted his concern that if the pest were detected this would cause exports of cattle to be barred for a year, which would have a significant impact on public health and the economy of the country.

The Representative of Honduras explained that her country had acquired valuable experience in containing the avian influenza, due to its geographic location. In her view, the most important lesson learned was the need for constant surveillance coupled with the use of information technologies to ensure continuous communication regarding problems and reports in the region, thereby facilitating the issuing of projections and alerts on possible threats. Thus, she suggested that a protocol be developed to share information regarding prevention.

She echoed the sentiments of the Institute's Director General, by stressing that notwithstanding the availability of IICA's cooperation, it was equally important that the countries undertake work internally, supported by education and communication. She pointed out that prevention programs are crucial for all sectors and thanked the United States for its generous donation of funds to address these problems in Honduras.

She noted that various countries in the hemisphere had already established protocols for national emergencies and felt that it was important that these strategies be shared in order to make technical progress as a region in containing pests and diseases. She reiterated that information dissemination was a crucial aspect of this process. She emphasized that the screwworm problem was having a severe impact not only on livestock, but also on vulnerable persons. Existing laws and policies were not sufficient in the absence of a budget and thus, she urged the countries to allocate national resources to these emergencies.

Again, she emphasized that this situation could not be addressed by any one country in isolation and therefore spoke to the importance of reincorporating Nicaragua into the Institute to continue participating in these joint efforts. She also suggested that the Institute play a key role in the training of canine binomials to operate on large livestock farms, to bolster the efforts of OIRSA.

Abelardo De Gracia advised that the first version of a containment plan for the screwworm had already been prepared, which could serve as the basis for joint work in the region.

The moderator of the panel discussion mentioned that veterinary services in the region had matured significantly, which would be vital in addressing the existing challenges. He singled out public-private partnerships as the main strategy to tackle these issues, given that they allow for pooling the resources, knowledge and capacities of both sectors. He also felt that regional blocs play a crucial role, by facilitating cooperation and coordination among countries, enabling a more effective and unified response to

shared threats. Moreover, the moderator noted that it was essential that decisions be based on veterinary science, to ensure that the policies and actions implemented would be underpinned by scientifically sound and updated information.

He ended by reiterating that collaboration and information exchange among countries would be vital to advance technically and to respond collectively to emergencies. He assured the participants that the success of strategies and the protection of not only animal health, but all public health in the region, would hinge on the effective participation of all stakeholders and adequate allocation of resources in national budgets.

### *Panel Discussion on the Future of Agriculture*

The Deputy Director General of the Institute, as the moderator of the panel discussion, reflected that the previous discussions had reviewed the past and present agricultural scenarios. Thus, this session would address the future of the sector. He then gave an overview of the career paths of the panelists.

### *Presentation by Jack Bobo*

Jack Bobo, Director of the Food Systems Institute at the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, referred to the global challenges facing agriculture today and the importance of innovation in tackling them. He said that currently, 40% of the world's land area is used for agriculture—an activity generating 25% of the planet's greenhouse gas emissions—and consuming 70% of its fresh water. In the meantime, the world's population continues to grow, which will result in a 25% increase in the demand for food by 2050. Despite these challenges, he argued that the food system is not failing but has achieved significant advances. For example, agricultural production has reduced its use of resources. Nonetheless, he indicated that if the world hopes to tackle future challenges, it will need to accelerate the pace of improvement, adopting a positive approach.

He underscored the importance of modifying communication with respect to sustainability, suggesting that the focus be shifted from “what should be done” to “what could be achieved”. He remarked that sustainability should be seen as a journey, rather than a destination. He also introduced the concept of strategic foresight and invited people not only to prepare for the future but also to effectively create the future that they desire.

Finally, he underscored the fact that the next 25 years would be the most important in the history of agriculture and therefore there would be a need for a proactive approach in strategic planning and communication to build a more sustainable and equitable food system in the future. He urged participants to take advantage of current opportunities to make strides in the battle against hunger and poverty, and to begin to shape the future they want.

#### Presentation by Álvaro Lario

Álvaro Lario, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), underscored the importance of reflecting on the future of agriculture in the global context of political and climate uncertainty. He maintained that Latin America and the Caribbean play a pivotal role in biodiversity and natural resource protection, but that climate change is endangering this wealth of resources. He noted that extreme weather phenomena are also contributing to food insecurity in the region.

He highlighted the role of emerging technologies and nature-based solutions, such as investments in agroecological approaches in countries such as Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru, which were improving the food security and resilience of small farmers. He also stressed the value of continuing to invest in rural economies and promoting financial and social inclusion, through technologies such as Web3 and blockchain.

He underscored the need to support small-scale farmers, rural SMEs and local innovators, especially youth and women, in order to transform food systems and achieve a more sustainable, prosperous and equitable world.

#### Remarks by Muhammad Ibrahim

The IICA Director of Technical Cooperation briefly described the current context of agriculture, emphasizing the need to adopt new approaches to respond to emerging demands. He pointed out that agrifood systems must be aligned with the principles of sustainability, health, food security, responsible consumption, gender equity and inclusion, and must also adapt to new global trade rules.

He announced that the Institute would hold a series of regional dialogues on the future of agriculture, with a view to generating a shared vision that could guide decision-making by policymakers in the region and based on which the roadmaps of the Hemispheric Partnership could be adjusted. He listed the topics to be addressed in these dialogues, namely: 1) digital agriculture, 2) food trends and nutrition, 3) climate change,

4) geopolitics and international and regional trade, 5) the evolution of rural areas, 6) technological innovation, 7) the bioeconomy and 8) gender equity in agrifood systems.

Lastly, he announced that a report outlining the main results of these dialogues would be presented at the next IABA meeting in 2025.

#### Remarks by Lloyd Day

The Deputy Director General of IICA, in his capacity as moderator of the panel, highlighted Mr. Bobo's remarks regarding the fact that technological advances had clearly demonstrated the capacity of the Americas to increase production. He underscored the importance of public policies that could act as catalysts in maximizing the impact of these innovations. Lastly, he thanked the speakers.

#### Report of the First Meeting of Leaders of Rurality of the Americas

The Institutional Communication Advisor to the Director General of the Institute presented the Report on the First Meeting of Leaders of Rurality of the Americas, held in April 2024. Thirty-six recipients of IICA's Soul of Rurality Award were in attendance, representing 18 countries in the region. He explained that the objective of the meeting had been to foster dialogue and the sharing of experiences among these leaders, who represent the most diverse regions of the hemisphere, with a view to driving agricultural and rural transformation in the Americas.

By way of a video, the main activities carried out were presented, as were the comments of some of the participants, who expressed their commitment to establish a network aimed at fostering actions to strengthen rural areas and support their leaders, enhancing their role as guarantors of food and nutritional security and custodians of the planet's biodiversity. In the video it was also mentioned that, during the meeting, the Director General had outlined a proposal for a roadmap and concrete actions, as well as presented the Declaration of the Leaders of Rurality.

#### Remarks by José Muñoz

The Leader of Rurality from Argentina thanked the Institute for having organized the event for the Leaders of Rurality. In that regard, he underscored the importance of the network of leaders and agrotechnical schools, which, when adapted to local needs, offer practical and applied training that, unlike traditional programs, enables students, many of whom come from farming families, to apply what they have learned directly on their farms.



He stressed the importance of training and rural extension and stressed that a passion for agriculture could be instilled from a very young age and be passed on to future generations. He also highlighted the need for simple innovations, such as cover crops and pressurized irrigation, to meet the challenges of climate change and improve small farmers' productivity.

Lastly, he reflected on the crucial role of cooperativism and associative undertakings in involving youth in the agriculture sector, given that they foster long-term sustainability. He also mentioned the importance of germplasm banks, native species and bees for biodiversity conservation, as well as the value of sponsorship to support students in completing their studies.

#### Remarks by Lorena Valdez

Lorena Valdez, a Leader of Rurality from Ecuador, recounted her experience as a member of the Asociación de Mujeres Afroecuatorianas Timbiré en el Futuro (AMATIF), an association that seeks to empower women and that grows fine and flavor cocoa on 40 hectares. She remarked that female farmers preserve traditional seeds and utilize organic inputs, with a view to preserving their cultural legacy and protecting the environment.

She explained that, with IICA's support, they had improved their techniques and obtained new tools to produce high-quality cocoa. She remarked that this support had opened her eyes to new production and business development options, including ecotourism.

Lastly, on behalf of authorities in her canton, she presented the Director General of the Institute with a gift as a gesture of gratitude for the support that had been provided to AMATIF, which had been crucial for its growth and development.

#### Report on partnerships with the private sector and report on the event held with producers' associations

The Deputy Director General summarized the actions that had been carried out with the private sector during Manuel Otero's administration. He mentioned that, in 2019, the IABA had approved a resolution through which it called for public-private collaboration in relation to policies on maximum residue levels. He commented that, during the 2020 pandemic, fruitful virtual meetings had been held, and that, at the United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021, the following ideas had been underscored: the leading role of producers, science as the foundation for policies, and agriculture as part of the solution.

He mentioned that, in 2022 and 2023, IICA had participated in the Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP27 and COP28, respectively), where it had installed the Home of Sustainable Agriculture of the Americas pavilion. He noted that earlier that year, IICA had held a Meeting with the Private Sector and Meeting with Agricultural Federations of the Americas, organized together with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Group of Twenty Summit in Brazil.

He reported that the Institute had recently brought together some of the world's leading agrifood sector companies, including Bayer, Croplife, Biogénesis Bagó, Syngenta, Elanco, Walmart and Cargill, to engage in dialogue on agrifood systems, opportunities for joint work and their vision.

Regarding the first Meeting of Agricultural Federations of the Americas at IICA Headquarters on 22 July 2024, which had brought together leaders of the hemisphere's production sector, he highlighted six important messages: 1) the Institute promotes a comprehensive approach that addresses national production, international trade, science, technology, innovation and climate change adaptation; 2) water scarcity and soil degradation are posing major challenges for national production that must be overcome through the development of sustainable production models adapted to local conditions and rural cultural practices; 3) international trade is a determining factor in transforming food systems; 4) effective participation in forums such as the WTO Ministerial Conference is crucial to strengthen the strategic role of agrifood trade; 5) international trade assists farmers, especially from developing countries, in accessing innovation and new tools that facilitate their entry into international markets and contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change; and 6) the growing trend among international markets of approving and implementing environmental standards that are not science-based affects producer's competitiveness and access to international markets.

He ended his presentation by underscoring the importance of communicating these messages to producers to truly achieve the main objective of these proposals and improve agrifood systems and agriculture.

The Director General congratulated the Deputy Director General on his work in this area and noted that IICA, an institution led by the ministries of agriculture of its member countries, had evolved and grown stronger. He commented that the Institute had established a network for dialogue that includes the private sector and other

international agencies, with a view to fostering horizontal and reciprocal cooperation to drive the advancement of societies and rural development.

*IICA's participation in the Twenty-ninth United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) (Azerbaijan, November 2024)*

The Acting Manager of the Agricultural Climate Action and Sustainability Program commented that, at COP29, agriculture would once again be a key agenda item; in fact, it would be the only sector to be highlighted in discussions and negotiations, unlike the tourism or energy sectors, for instance. She also mentioned that the Americas would occupy a leading role in these discussions and underscored the fact that the Secretariat of the Convention had been occupied by countries of the region for the past three years. She highlighted the important role of the Americas as the world's breadbasket, accounting for 28% of global agrifood exports and, in turn, guaranteeing food and nutritional security.

She reported that, for several years, the Institute had been actively involved in these conferences through its Home of Sustainable Agriculture of the Americas pavilion, which had allowed for sensitizing the sector and facilitating exchanges between negotiators and various stakeholders. She commented that, during COP27 and COP28, IICA had significantly bolstered the participation of agriculture of the Americas, addressing key issues such as damages, losses, funding and adaptation. It hosted 102 side events, attracted more than 11,300 participants, gathered more than 376 speakers, welcomed more than 25,000 visitors to the pavilion, and collaborated with 170 private sector partners.

She mentioned that, in the lead-up to COP29, which would be held in November 2024, a key topic to be addressed would be financing the fight against climate change, with special emphasis on allocating resources to climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. She also listed other key objectives related to water and food security, agrifood system resilience, the climate crisis in the Caribbean and unlocking funding for resilient agrifood systems. Lastly, she highlighted the five objectives of IICA's pavilion at COP29: a) to offer a space devoted to agriculture and food systems of the Americas, in the context of wider global discussions, b) to demonstrate that agrifood systems serve as a catalyst for climate solutions, c) to give visibility to the contributions of producers and other sector stakeholders to climate adaptation and mitigation, d) to raise awareness of the challenges, proposals and progress achieved in climate action within the sector, and e) to establish multilateral partnerships to accelerate investment in and commitment to the value chain.

She concluded her remarks by encouraging the delegates to support the Institute's pavilion, in order to keep agriculture on the agenda at these conferences and ensure that regional climate action efforts become tangible.

#### *Inauguration of the Garden of Honduras*

The Coordinator of the Legal Unit for International Affairs and Protocol announced the inauguration of the Garden of Honduras. The Secretary of Agriculture and Livestock of that country, the Ambassador of Honduras in Costa Rica, and the Director General of IICA cut the ribbon.

The Director General pointed out that one of the main elements of the garden is a replica of the Mayan god of maize. He indicated that the garden was inaugurated in recognition of Honduran culture and the importance of that crop for the Americas, both in the past and in the present, particularly for food security in the region.

On behalf of the President of their country, the Ambassador of Honduras in Costa Rica and the Secretary of Agriculture and Livestock of that country thanked the Director General for the recognition. The Secretary added that the garden pays tribute to farmers, their history, their ancestral roots and agrifood as the basis for State commitments.

#### *Close of the session*

The Second Plenary Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Institute was adjourned at 18:52 hours on 23 July 2024.

## THIRD PLENARY SESSION

### Opening of the session

The Third Plenary Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was called to order at 08:05 hours on 24 July 2024. It was chaired by the Representative of Peru.

### Inauguration of the Virtual Agricultural Machinery Center

The inauguration began with an overview of the center, an extension to the Interpretive Center for Tomorrow's Agriculture (CIMAG), designed to provide children and adolescents with greater access to activities with a rural focus and based on the STEAM pedagogical model, which includes the fields of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.

The Director General emphasized the importance of this virtual center in training the younger generations, given that it would connect agriculture to new technologies and would foster a more innovative agriculture sector in the future.

The Manager of the Information-Communication Technologies and Digital Agriculture Division mentioned that the objective of the inauguration was to motivate children to develop and acquire digital skills related to land preparation, planting, harvesting, storage, distribution and teamwork in the field of agriculture.

The Chair of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Chair of the Executive Committee and the Director General of the Institute inaugurated the Virtual Agricultural Machinery Center, by cutting a ribbon.

### Report on the climate emergency in the Caribbean

#### Remarks by Saboto Caesar

Participating via videoconference, the Minister of Agriculture of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines greeted the Director General and the participants. He reported that, over the past five years, his country had suffered the effects of climate change, including volcanic eruptions, severe droughts and hurricanes. He indicated that Hurricane Beryl had severely impacted the agricultural and fisheries sectors. He noted that the government in his country was working to provide technical assistance to producers and

fishers who had been affected and was preparing a detailed assessment of the hurricane's impact on ecosystems, with a view to minimizing the effects and improving production and productivity. He expressed his gratitude for the continued support of the Member States and IICA, particularly the Institute's Technical Coordinator and Representative in Saint Lucia. Lastly, he described IICA as a trusty ally in times of crisis.

#### Presentation by the Institute's Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean Region

The Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean Region presented the Report on the Climate Emergency in the Caribbean, highlighting the development of a roadmap for disaster mitigation and rehabilitation in the aftermath of agricultural disasters in IICA Member States. He remarked that the high frequency of catastrophic events, which have close to 100% probability of occurring, requires countries to be better prepared with clearly established roles and responsibilities to optimize resources and avoid duplicated efforts.

He presented the roadmap, which focuses on three priorities: restoring food production, strengthening livelihood systems, and enhancing resilience to natural disasters and climate change in farming communities. He also commented that the roadmap includes four strategic priorities, namely: a) to strengthen the Institute's position in affected countries, b) to improve rapid assessment of damage, c) to restore production and livelihoods and d) to build technical capacity in climate change resilience and mitigation. Furthermore, he explained that the roadmap proposes five key mechanisms to change the situation: a) strategic engagement in disaster risk management, b) IICA's support to the agriculture sector, c) agri-first responders, d) preparedness through tools and methodologies and e) creation of a resilience and insurance fund.

Next, he referred to the intervention phases: mitigation (risk mapping and policies), preparedness (early warning systems and resource mobilization), response (emergency relief and damage assessment) and recovery (reconstruction, economic recovery and monitoring). Lastly, he announced that Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the countries most affected by Hurricane Beryl, had requested formal assistance, which the Institute would coordinate in order to address the emergency.

#### Remarks by the Director General of IICA

The Director General thanked the Minister of Agriculture of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for his report and the Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean Region for his presentation. With respect to disasters, he considered that, from a self-critical

lens, the Institute generally took *ex post facto* action and that, given the certainty that these events would become more frequent and intense, it should develop *ex ante* proposals. To that end, he suggested, among other things: a) identifying seed banks in advance; b) establishing mobile nursery systems; c) developing a regional insurance program, not only for the Caribbean; d) applying precision agriculture technology under controlled conditions; and e) redirecting some resources to help affected countries with seed capital, in order to attract the attention of banks and encourage other agencies to provide assistance to the Caribbean in addressing the situation.

He added that IICA would need to shift its attitude and develop a rural resilience and sustainability strategy, as these were key topics for the global strategy.

### Proposal for the establishment of a Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas

The Manager of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation at the Institute commented on the recent risks facing agrifood systems due to global warming, the lack of innovation and poor use of natural resources. He presented a proposal to create a Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas, which would seek to transform these challenges into opportunities by means of a hemispheric partnership that fosters resilience and sustainability. He pointed out that IICA considers agriculture to be part of the solution and underscored the need to identify new cooperation modalities and to obtain resources to strengthen food security and sustainable development, in response to the 2023 IABA's endorsement of the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development.

He explained that the fund, conceived as a multilateral cooperation mechanism, seeks to mobilize, manage and allocate financial resources in order to bolster the institutional, technical and administrative capacities of the Member States. It also seeks to increase autonomy and efficiency in the implementation of public policies, respond urgently to health and environmental emergencies and maximize natural resource protection. He highlighted the Institute's experience in managing these types of funds, such as the Simón Bolívar Fund, and the fact that it utilizes these resources to swiftly respond to agricultural challenges.

He indicated that the fund would operate in keeping with IICA's procedures and would focus on mobilizing international cooperation resources, by developing strategies aimed at maximizing external funding. He added that the Fund would select relevant projects aligned with public policies and with donors' priorities, and that it would not only build

the capacities of member countries, but also increase their influence in global forums, promoting the identification of common interests and addressing shared challenges.

He explained that the Fund would rely on several funding sources, including voluntary contributions, strategic partnerships and donations, which would guarantee a solid, flexible and diversified foundation for its activities. He pointed out that it would operate under agreed-upon investment principles, in order to guarantee transparency and accountability and apply resources strategically to benefit agricultural development in the Americas. He concluded his remarks by describing the proposal as a catalyst for change, whose capitalization and implementation in the coming months would be key to ensuring the prosperity of agrifood systems in the future.

### *Analysis and comments*

The Representative of Grenada reported on the devastating impact of Hurricane Beryl, which had torn through the country on July 1, with grave consequences for agriculture, fisheries and the population. He indicated that 90% of the nearly 1,255 ha of nutmeg had been damaged due to the loss of 9,000 trees, and that 80% of the country's staple crops, including cocoa and bananas, had been destroyed. He also mentioned that the livestock sector had experienced significant losses and that infrastructure, machinery and utilities had been destroyed.

He requested special assistance from the Institute in the form of food, equipment, machinery and manpower to clear up and rehabilitate fields. He stated that there was a high likelihood of food shortages. He underscored the importance of psychosocial treatment to overcome trauma in the aftermath of the hurricane, as well as the need to transform agricultural production to increase resilience. He highlighted the crucial role that IICA's technical cooperation could play in this process, noting that in 20 years, the country had suffered the impact of two devastating hurricanes. He thanked the Institute for the support it had provided to Grenada. Lastly, he underlined the importance of approving the resilience fund.

The Representative of Trinidad and Tobago congratulated the Director General on the resilience fund initiative to address climate change challenges in the Caribbean. He believed that other donor agencies would also provide resources in that regard. He considered that the region was in great need of technical assistance to rebuild the agriculture sector and stressed the importance of having warehouses with seeds, products and items that could be mobilized quickly, as well as mobile greenhouses. He commented that it was possible to forecast and foresee the path of these natural events, to ensure that countries are prepared. He recommended considering other aspects, such



as the great biodiversity of forests, which plays an important role in food production, as well as the psychological impact of land devastation and production and livelihood losses on farmers.

The Representative of Jamaica echoed the remarks of the Representative of Trinidad and Tobago and described the catastrophic impacts of Hurricane Beryl, which had devastated key sectors for the country's economy and food security. He considered that, beyond the immediate damage, the vulnerability of the agriculture sector to adverse weather phenomena was alarming, especially considering that there were still several months remaining in the hurricane season. He stated that Hurricane Beryl's unusually early arrival demonstrated the urgent need to strengthen resilience and regional cooperation. He urged the Caribbean region to expedite its recovery and strengthen its resilience in the face of growing environmental threats. He conveyed his optimism based on the discussions and topics addressed at the meeting; however, he stressed the region's need for concrete, immediate actions to guarantee food security and avoid crises that affect the country's stability, which he considered a matter of national security.

The Representative of Barbados reported that, although his nation had suffered minor damage from the hurricane, it had lost 220 of its 312 fishing vessels, along with most of its banana crops and other agricultural products. He mentioned that the proposed fund was a valuable initiative, but that other complementary actions should also be implemented. Given the fact that the rainy and hurricane season runs from July 1 to November 30, he believed it was crucial for Caribbean countries to receive training in damage assessment. He also announced that a tissue culture laboratory was being built in Barbados, which could serve as a germplasm bank for the region.

He stressed the importance of using technology to issue early warnings and ensure that the population is informed of and prepared for emergencies. He also mentioned that when Barbados had been affected by ash fall, animals had been unable to feed themselves and the country had had to import feed, which underscored the need to better prepare for future contingencies.

The Representative of Uruguay highlighted the region's spirit of solidarity in support of the Caribbean and pointed out that, although the rest of the hemisphere was facing significant climate issues, they were not as severe as in the Caribbean region. He commented that vulnerability affects all regions; as an example, he mentioned that Uruguay had experienced floods, Argentina had suffered droughts and Chile had faced

fires. However, he noted that hurricanes in the Caribbean should awaken a spirit of solidarity so that all possible assistance could be provided.

He stressed that complex responses would be required to address the population's demands in relation to the devastation of production systems, the renewal of crops and the corresponding investments. He mentioned that, at the upcoming meeting of the Southern Common Market in Buenos Aires, the proposal for the resilience fund would be presented. In that regard, he commented that the fund covers all aspects of the agricultural economy, with special emphasis on two priorities: addressing emergencies and improving structures to better adapt to climate vulnerability. He also underscored the need for countries of the hemisphere to take a stand in international forums to address the causes of these climate issues, ensure that major emitters of CO<sub>2</sub> are held accountable, and demand not only aid, but also reparations for the most vulnerable and affected countries. Lastly, he acknowledged IICA's efforts to address the needs of agriculture in international forums and offered his support for the creation of the fund.

The Representative of Brazil joined the expressions of solidarity with Caribbean countries. He indicated that his country had also faced significant climate challenges. In response to these events, he stated that Brazil supported the creation of the resilience fund. In that regard, his country expressed its commitment through two offers: a) making available the experience of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation to restore eroded soils in the Caribbean and b) making a special donation on behalf of the Government of Brazil to the Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas, as a gesture of solidarity. He added that Brazil's intention was not only to improve the region's productive and commercial environment, but also to strengthen integration among the countries, by fostering cooperation and mutual support in times of need to jointly address climate challenges.

The Representative of the Dominican Republic indicated that his country is in the path of hurricanes and had faced great economic challenges due to the damages caused by these phenomena. He reported that, in the previous two years, his country's government had had to allocate large sums of money to compensate affected producers, especially those who grow plantain, a key crop for the local economy. In addition to the hemispheric fund, he proposed considering the implementation of a hemispheric agricultural insurance as a complementary action; to that end, he suggested that countries in the region make a collective insurance offer. He thanked the Director General of the Institute for the tour of CIMAG and the new Virtual Agricultural Machinery Center and proposed that an exhibit on the future of agriculture in the Americas be established in the Dominican Republic.

The Representative of Mexico expressed her solidarity with Caribbean countries and her commitment to regional cooperation to face climate challenges and guarantee food security in the region. She emphasized the fact that all countries are vulnerable and that it was therefore necessary to maintain a high level of sensitivity to these situations. She offered technical assistance on behalf of Mexico's National Institute of Forestry, Agricultural and Livestock Research, as well as the potential contribution of seeds within the context of the emergency.

The Representative of the United States of America thanked the Director General of IICA for his leadership in promoting resilience and sustainable agricultural practices in the region. He highlighted the fact that the fund's objective is to improve resilience and foster technological innovation, and reaffirmed his country's backing for this approach. He considered that additional support would be needed in matters related to biotechnology and climate change, in order to spearhead food and nutritional security activities for the benefit of all the Institute's member countries.

The Director General of IICA reiterated his solidarity with the affected countries and underscored the need to undertake immediate actions. He pointed out that the Institute must be viewed as an interconnected system, in which all countries collaborate to identify solutions, and highlighted the importance of strengthening the Early Warning System in the Caribbean.

He also stressed the importance of supporting crop recovery by supplying seeds, implementing portable greenhouses and agricultural insurance, and of providing training in damage assessment. He concluded his remarks by thanking all the countries for supporting the fund and announced that a resilience plan for the Caribbean would be presented at the Twenty-ninth United Nations Climate Change Conference, which demonstrated the region's unity and commitment.

### *Financial and administrative matters*

#### Report on the execution of the 2024-2025 Program Budget

The Director of Corporate Services stated that the new financial architecture, which involved effective management of the budget and adequate administration of cash, provided IICA with solid finances and financial reserves.

He added that, via Resolution No. 552, the 2023 IABA had approved, without modifications, the 2024-2025 draft Program Budget in the amount of USD 33,074,100, made up of USD 29,574,100 from Member State quotas and USD 3,500,000 from

miscellaneous income expected to be generated each year. He emphasized that there had been no increase in quota requirements from the previous biennium. However, there had been a USD 1 million increase in miscellaneous income over the previous biennium, given that the income fund had grown, due to improvements in the investment process and certain increases in investment rates. He stated that, as at the end of June 2024, 54% of quota resources, equivalent to USD 16,028,900, had been executed, as had 20% of miscellaneous income, corresponding to USD 685,435.

Next, he spoke about the execution of the 2023 Program Budget, indicating that a total of USD 31,212,120 had been executed, distributed as follows: a) direct technical cooperation services: 85%; b) management costs: 5%; c) general costs and provisions: 8%; and d) renovation of infrastructure and equipment: 2%. He then presented a breakdown of the amounts executed by budget chapter. He stressed the importance of Member States paying their quotas on time to enable the Institute to effectively carry out its technical cooperation plans.

Lastly, he commented on some of the main achievements of administrative management, such as: greater execution of external resources, adequate collection of quotas, adequate cash balances for use as financial reserves, better investments, an efficient use of budgetary resources, the use of technology in virtual meetings, reduction of the vehicle fleet and renegotiation of contracts with external suppliers.

### 2023 Financial statements of IICA and report of the external auditors

The Director of Corporate Services reported that the financial statements had been prepared, audited and approved in strict compliance with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States (US GAAP). He presented the results of the 2023 external audit, undertaken by the firm Deloitte, which, based on the auditing evidence, had concluded that “the financial statements of the Institute present fairly, in all material respects, IICA’s financial position as at 31 December of 2022 and 2023”. He pointed out that for the sixth consecutive year, the financial statements had received a clean audit opinion.

He indicated that the Institute had strengthened its policy for the strict, rational, austere and transparent management of resources to overcome the current global economic-financial situation. He added that these resources had been geared towards offering technical cooperation of excellence by prioritizing expenditures aimed at addressing the needs of the Member States. Lastly, he announced that budgetary savings in the amount

of USD 6 million on average had been achieved, which had allowed for protecting institutional finances and further driving technical cooperation actions.

### Thirtieth Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)

Mr. Fernando Magalhães Soares Pinto, in his capacity as a member of the ARC, presented the thirtieth report of the committee. He confirmed that the work of the external auditors complied with international auditing standards and with IICA's rules. He also reiterated that, in the opinion of the external auditors, IICA's financial statements presented fairly, in all material respects, the Institute's financial position as at 31 December 2022 and 2023, in accordance with US GAAP.

He highlighted three aspects: 1) the outstanding quotas, pointing out that the ARC recognized the Institute's quota collection and recommended bolstering these efforts in 2023, given that quotas are the foundation for technical cooperation; 2) follow-up actions on the findings of the audit, confirming that the Institute had addressed the recommendations of the external auditors on a timely basis; and 3) policies and procedures, indicating that the ARC supported IICA's efforts to update its auditing, human talent and financial policies. Finally, he congratulated the Institute for having obtained a clean opinion from the external auditors for the sixth consecutive year.

### Report on the collection of quotas

The Manager of the Financial Management Division reported on the status of the collection of Member State quotas, both at the close of 2023, as well as for 2024 (up to 17 July). She referred to Article 23 of the Convention on IICA and to Resolution No. 414 of the IABA, "Revised Measures for the Collection of Quotas Owed to the Institute", which states that Member States shall contribute to the financial support of IICA through annual quotas established by the IABA, in accordance with the system for calculating quotas of the Organization of American States.

She explained that quotas are considered due on the first day of the fiscal year and are considered to be in arrears as of the first of July of that year.

She stated that at the end of 2023, 17 countries were up to date in their payments, 14 in regular status and 3 in arrears. She added that, as at 17 July 2024, a total of USD 19.8 million had been received and that 12 countries were up to date, 18 in regular status and 4 in arrears. She stressed the importance of IICA receiving the expected resources, in order to effectively execute its technical cooperation plans.

### Proposal for partially recovering the financial capacity of Member States' quota contributions, given the decrease in purchasing power due to inflation

The Programming and Budgeting Manager presented the proposal for partially recovering the financial capacity of Member States' quota contributions, given the decrease in purchasing power due to inflation during the period 1995-2023. She commented that the freezing of Member State quota contributions since 1995 had generated a significant reduction in IICA's purchasing power, due to the recurring effects of several factors, including: a) changes in the consumer price index and the exchange rate in several countries; and b) rising operational costs, both in terms of personnel costs as well as the increase in the prices of goods and services procured by the Institute to deliver technical cooperation services to its Member States.

She explained that, in 2015, the real value of quotas reflected a 38.48% reduction in the purchasing power of quota resources compared to 1995. She also stated that, via Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 493 (XVIII-O/15), the Member States had approved a 6.57% increase in the quota budget for 2016-2017, with a view to recovering the loss of the resources of the Miscellaneous Income Fund and the incremental costs incurred due to the effect of inflation on operational and salary costs, in order to maintain at least the same operating level as in 2015.

She added that, at the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the IABA (2023), the member countries had requested that the Director General prepare a study on the quota increase that would be required to recover losses due to inflation up to 2023. She explained that, according to the study, the "freezing" of Member State quota contributions as of 1995 had had a negative impact on the financial capacity of cooperation actions. Despite the 6.57% increase in the level of quotas since 2016, the progressive loss of the purchasing power of these resources had reduced the real value of quota contributions to the Institute during the 1995-2023 period by 37.9%, a percentage similar to the 38.4% in 2015, which had been the reference year for the increase made.

Lastly, she asked the countries to consider expanding the quota budget by 10% and maintaining the over-quota contributions agreed upon by the Member States. She explained that this would enable the next Administration to partially recover the financial capacity of countries' quota contributions and compensate for the loss of purchasing power due to the effects of inflation on operations and salaries, with a view to maintaining an operational level at least equivalent to 2023.

### Analysis and comments

The Director General commented that IICA was financially stable, given that it had maximized the use of resources and implemented various measures to lower costs. However, he acknowledged the fact that certain issues would need to be addressed in order to increase the Institute's technical capacity, such as improving salaries for professionals or increasing the number of staff members. He added that the current economic, political and environmental context was posing significant challenges for countries, which would therefore demand greater technical cooperation, and that the Institute would find it difficult to increase its response capacity with current resources. He therefore urged the countries to further analyze the proposal for partially recovering the financial capacity of Member States' quota contributions, given the decrease in purchasing power due to inflation during the period 1995-2023. He expressed his hope that the proposal would be approved, as a legacy to the next administration in 2026.

The Representative of Uruguay, Chair of the 2023 IABA, reiterated his support for the proposal, which his country had presented at the last regular meeting of that governing body. He stated that the statistics that had been presented clearly demonstrated the need for a quota increase. He commended the Director General and his team for their excellent work optimizing the use of resources. However, he pointed out that measures would need to be undertaken to ensure that limited resources would not affect the Institute's operation.

He expected the technical cooperation needs of Member States to grow due to the challenges of the current context and stated that IICA would therefore require a greater amount of economic, human and technical resources to address them. He remarked that the Institute had also expanded its presence at the international level and considered it beneficial for it to continue participating in events such as the United Nations Climate Change Conference, for which it would also require resources.

He pointed out that 10 years had passed since the last quota adjustment; therefore, he considered a 10% increase to be a reasonable way to partially recover the loss in purchasing power and that he would even suggest a higher increase. He encouraged the member countries to be generous and to support this increase at the next IABA meeting. He acknowledged the fact that many Member States were facing budgetary issues but encouraged them to undertake efforts to remain up to date on their quota payments to the Institute, to ensure that quotas could be collected in a satisfactory and timely manner.

The Representative of Costa Rica agreed with the statement by the Representative of Uruguay. He considered that critical challenges would need to be addressed and that the Institute's services would therefore be in greater demand. He considered that the 10%

increase in quotas was reasonable and could even be greater, and that it represented the first step towards offsetting the loss of purchasing power due to inflation. He backed the proposal and encouraged the other countries to do so as well, as it would be a way to repay the Institute for its assistance.

The Representative of the United States expressed her gratitude for the information presented. She congratulated the Institute on the efforts it had undertaken to avoid increasing Member State quotas and maintain technical cooperation services in the region. With respect to the 2023 financial statements and the report of the external auditors, she appreciated IICA's transparency in the use of resources from governments and other institutions. She recommended that future reports include information on externally funded projects.

She stated that she was aware of the scope and content of the ARC's report, but suggested, for instance, that a section be included in which the ARC could provide recommendations on how to improve the financial and administrative situation and the management of executed projects. She added that the report should also specify the end date of each ARC member's appointment. She commented that her country expected to complete its quota payment before the end of 2024 and urged the other countries to remain up to date with their payments, since these financial resources enable the Institute to provide technical cooperation services.

The Representative of Peru expressed his agreement with the proposed quota increase.

The Representative of Brazil mentioned that his country had undertaken efforts to remain up to date with its quota payments and hoped to continue to do so. He echoed the remarks of the Representative of Uruguay and expressed his agreement with the 10% increase to partially recover the financial capacity of Member States' quota contributions.

The Representative of Canada requested more information on the use of reserves, given the savings that had been mentioned. He reiterated his country's support for IICA's management, through the timely payment of its quota, and commented on restrictions to making other contributions in addition to the approved quota.

The Representative of Argentina expressed his support for the proposal to increase the quota by a higher percentage to offset the loss of purchasing power. He reported that his country would settle all outstanding quotas by the end of the year.



In response to the Representative of Canada, the Director of Corporate Services clarified that the reserves corresponded to savings capitalized in recent years, thanks to the Institute's austerity policy. He added that these reserves were used to address emergencies and fund shortcomings in annual income due to non-payment of assigned quotas. He explained that the proposed percentage would not represent an extraordinary contribution, but rather a means for partially recovering losses in the real purchasing power of quotas.

The Director General explained that the savings achieved had been the result of constant work during his administration. He commented that, each year, the countries had been informed of the Institute's financial situation. He added that IICA's purchasing power would need to be recovered in order to expand the impact of its actions. He expressed his gratitude for the proposal and the efforts that Colombia and Argentina were undertaking to settle outstanding quota payments.

The Legal Advisor recounted that, years earlier, the Institute had had to resort to credit lines to meet its financial commitments, due to negative cash flows resulting from the amount of quotas in arrears. He acknowledged the efforts of the Member States to pay their quotas in a timely manner, as well as the adequate management of the aforementioned resources to cover any contingencies in the collection of quotas.

### *Review of institutional rules*

The Legal Advisor described the progress in updating the regulations of the General Directorate and clarified that this was a complex process. Therefore, on that occasion, the proposed update to the Staff Rules was being presented, in keeping with the provisions of Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 555 (XXII-O/23).

He referred in detail to the process that had been followed to update these rules: a) the proposal had been presented at the Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues in April 2023; b) it had then been submitted for consideration by the Executive Committee and by the IABA in July and October 2023, respectively, and both governing bodies had expressed support for the update; c) a multidisciplinary team had been established, led by the Director of Corporate Services, with the participation of the Human Talent Division and the support of IICA's legal advisors; d) the proposal had been submitted for analysis by the IICA Staff Association, Institute delegations and other units of the General Directorate; e) Working Document No. 5 had been distributed to the Member States; and f) based on this process, Working Document No. 6, Comments by Member States on the Proposed Update to the Staff

Rules, had been prepared for the Committee. He pointed out that, as resolved by the 2023 IABA, this Committee would be responsible for analyzing the proposed update to the Staff Rules and endorsing it, subject to the approval of the IABA at its 2025 Regular Meeting.

Next, he listed the objectives of the proposed amendments to the Staff Rules: a) to update IICA's practices in relation to human talent management, technological advances and gender equality; b) to incorporate references to the Code of Ethics, Personal Data Protection Policy and Policy on the Handling of Reports and the Protection of Whistleblowers and Witnesses; c) to incorporate Article III of the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate, to eliminate duplicated information and adjust terminology; d) to reorganize personnel obligations in a single chapter—Chapter III; e) to incorporate all aspects related to remuneration, wages and emoluments into Chapter IV; f) to include rules about promotions, training and the merit system in Chapter V; and g) to add a glossary and an acronyms section. He clarified that an update to the Staff Rules would not entail any additional costs for the Institute.

Lastly, he listed the documents that were being presented for consideration by the Executive Committee: 1) Report on the Status of Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate; 2) Incorporation of Chapter III of the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate into the Staff Rules; 3) Organization of Chapters and Articles; 4) Incorporation of the Remuneration System into the Staff Rules; 5) Proposed Update, by Chapter and Article and 6) Comments from Member States on the Proposed Update to the Staff Rules.

### Analysis and comments

The Representative of Mexico recognized progress achieved in modifying the regulations. She considered that the proposed update to the Staff Rules accounted for technological advances, incorporated a gender approach and updated obsolete regulations to respond to institutional needs. She added that it also reflected changes based on current administrative practices. Lastly, she stressed the importance of modernization.

### *Report of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and Report on IICA-CATIE collaboration activities*

Mr. Luis Pocasangre, Director General of the center, presented CATIE's general actions and highlighted its mission and historic connection to the Institute. He highlighted the impact that education in the field of tropical agriculture had had since IICA's foundation

in 1942, the Center's creation in 1973 and the foundation of the School of Agriculture of the Humid Tropical Region (EARTH University) in 1990.

He mentioned that CATIE stood out for its extensive history in the field of higher education, with numerous graduates who had reached ministerial and leadership positions in the region. He underscored the importance of its research programs, especially in agroforestry and the genetic improvement of coffee and cocoa, which had played a crucial role in facing challenges such as those related to leaf rust and climate change. He emphasized the fact that the Center's 75 years of experience in coffee collection was recognized worldwide for its contribution to the development of high-yielding and resistant hybrid varieties.

He referred to CATIE's collaboration in key climate action projects, through the use of geospatial technologies to address water and food security issues. He also indicated that the institution had signed strategic agreements and strengthened its relationship with the Institute, which had enabled it to coordinate research and development activities in several countries. He underscored the importance of continuing this joint work to address the global challenges of climate change and food security in tropical regions. He stressed the need to adapt tropical agriculture to new technologies.

Lastly, he announced the creation of the Dr. Manuel Otero Inter-American Chair: Innovations in the Agrifood Systems of the Tropics, in recognition of the Director General, a graduate of CATIE, and his record of achievement, contribution to tropical agriculture, role in the food security agenda, and innovative ideas implemented through IICA.

### Analysis and comments

The Director General described the Center as an institution that plays a fundamental role within the context of tropical agriculture. He considered that the future of humanity depends on the tropics. In that regard, he believed it was crucial for the Institute and CATIE to strengthen their partnerships with each other and with other institutions. He added that he felt honored and grateful to receive the Chair in Innovation from the Center and considered that it represented a valuable opportunity for the region and IICA.

### Close of the session

The Third Plenary Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned at 12:30 hours on 24 July 2024.



## FOURTH PLENARY SESSION

### Opening of the session

The Fourth Plenary Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was called to order at 13:50 hours on 24 July 2024 and was chaired by the Representative of Peru.

### Report of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)

The Executive Director of CARDI highlighted the relevance of presenting a report on the joint activities related to agricultural research and development that CARDI and the Institute had undertaken for more than 35 years in the Caribbean. He provided a brief overview of his institution's work and the countries in which it operates, and mentioned that both institutions had signed a new technical cooperation agreement in 2023, which would remain in effect until 2025. He commented that the agreement focused on supporting agricultural research, technical advisory services, innovation and technology transfer in areas such as livestock farming, crop industrialization, germplasm management, food safety, biotechnology, climate change mitigation and knowledge management.

Next, he listed the projects and initiatives that were underway or soon to be undertaken: a) a project to restore Barbados' papaya industry; b) a project entitled "Brown Gold: Strengthening Community Composting in Grenada" in Saint Lucia and Grenada; c) an initiative aimed at safeguarding the coconut industry in the Greater Caribbean; d) a project related to next generation sweet potato production in the Caribbean; e) a proposal to conduct a re-evaluation of the cassava value chain; f) a geospatial training workshop, together with the University of the West Indies and the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund; g) a workshop on improving Caribbean agricultural productivity, together with the United States Agency for International Development; and h) the organization of symposiums on topics of interest to the region, among other actions.

With respect to strategic partnerships, he indicated that CARDI and IICA continued to collaborate closely within the context of several agreements between the Caribbean Community and the Council for Trade and Economic Development. He added that both institutions continued to collaborate in regional activities and that the Caribbean Week of Agriculture would be held in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in October.

Lastly, he announced that CARDI would be celebrating its 50th anniversary on December 5 and thanked the Institute for its collaboration and support in conducting research and exchanging knowledge for the benefit of all interested parties.

### 2023 Annual Report of IICA

The Manager of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation reported that the Institute had prepared its annual report, which was available on the Institute's digital platforms. He explained that certain innovations had been implemented and that it was now being presented in a web format rather than in text format. He explained that this new format, available on any device with an internet connection, facilitates universal access to information and offers an improved and interactive user experience, with a responsive design and attractive visual elements that illustrate the projects undertaken and the achievements made throughout the year.

He highlighted the fact that this new digital format was in keeping with IICA's carbon neutrality approach, under which the Institute had ceased to publish reports on paper and was promoting sustainable practices. He indicated that the report incorporated multimedia elements, such as videos, infographics and high-quality photographs enriched through artificial intelligence, which had significantly improved data presentation and analysis.

Lastly, he remarked that the Institute remained a close and proactive partner and was committed to its mission of service. He reported that a separate version of the report had been prepared in the official language of each country, with a view to guaranteeing the relevance and accessibility of information and ensuring that all interested parties had access to its contents.

### IICA Conecta

Next, the Institute's Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager presented the IICA Conecta initiative, which exemplifies the Institute's technical cooperation of excellence founded on transparency. He highlighted the fact that the institutional management process, from planning to evaluation, was documented on accessible systems. He remarked that various initiatives, such as the Interpretive Center for Tomorrow's Agriculture, embody this vision of a modern IICA that offers technical cooperation in real time and in a digital format, based on knowledge management and evidence-based decision-making.

He described the initiative as a broad institutional effort to integrate information, financial, results management, human talent and projects systems. He added that it includes the Public Policy Observatory for Agrifood Systems, comprised of more than 230 business intelligence dashboards and various databases, such as libraries with documents, news and videos. He added that all this information was available online and displayed in the IICA Conecta Situation Room at Headquarters, which allowed for managing it in a more efficient and transparent manner.

Lastly, he reported that these efforts would be expanded to include the IICA delegations. To that end, training sessions on how to maximize the use of these technological tools were being delivered to staff members, thereby reaffirming IICA's commitment to providing modern and transparent technical cooperation.

#### *Reports of the Technical Secretariat of the Governing Bodies*

##### Report of the 2024 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)

The Technical Secretary commented that the SACMI is a permanent commission of the Executive Committee and that, in 2024, it was comprised of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States of America and Venezuela. He indicated that the Commission had met virtually on May 9 and that the respective report had been sent to the SACMI members and uploaded to the information system of the Executive Committee.

##### Status of the resolutions of the Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee and of the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)

The Technical Secretary pointed out that the reports on the status of the resolutions of the Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, as well as those of the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the IABA, had been uploaded in due time and form to the information system of the corresponding governing body.

##### Date and venue of the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

The Technical Secretary explained the guidelines related to the organization of the next Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee in 2025 and mentioned that it would serve as a preparatory event for the next IABA meeting. He reported that no member country had offered to host the Committee meeting.

The Chair, in his capacity as Representative of Peru, verbally expressed his country's offer to host the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, which was submitted for consideration and approved by the Committee.

The Representative of Uruguay voiced his support for this decision regarding the meeting venue and inquired about the date on which it would be held.

The Representative of Brazil inquired whether the next IABA meeting would be held before or after the Executive Committee meeting.

The Technical Secretary responded that, pursuant to institutional rules, the Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee must be held three months before the Regular Meeting of the IABA. He clarified the fact that the Executive Committee meeting would be held in Peru, provided all regulatory procedures were met, and that the IABA meeting would be held in Brazil, as had been agreed upon by the Board.

#### *Reading and approval of draft resolutions*

The Rapporteur read out draft resolutions “The Agricultural Trade Situation – Globally and in the Hemisphere”, “Dialogues on the Future of Agriculture”, “Advisory Council on the Private Agrifood Sector”, “Participation of IICA in the Twenty-ninth Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)”, “Proposal for Partially Recovering the Financial Capacity of Member States’ Quota Contributions”, “2023 Financial Statements of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Report of the External Auditors and Thirtieth Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)”, “Amendments to the Regulations of the General Directorate”, “Report on the Collection of Quotas”, “2023 Report of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE)”, “2023 Report of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)”, “2023 Annual Report of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)”, “Report of the 2024 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)”, “Status of the resolutions of the Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee and Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)”, and “Date and Venue of the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee”, which were approved without modifications.

The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution “The Role of Animal Health Services of the Americas in Global and Regional Food Security”.



The Representative of Brazil suggested adding a reference to the Pan American Health Organization in operative paragraph No. 2, given its role as the entity that regulates the issues referred to in the resolution.

The Technical Secretary requested that the Delegation of Brazil submit the proposed text to the Secretariat and assured the Executive Committee members that the resolution would be adjusted as agreed upon by the delegations. The draft resolution was approved with these changes.

The Rapporteur read out the draft resolution “Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas”.

The Delegation of Grenada suggested that operative paragraph No. 4 specify that support would be provided to countries affected by Hurricane Beryl.

The Rapporteur recommended not limiting support to countries affected by Hurricane Beryl and, instead, broadening its scope for the benefit of all countries affected by natural disasters. Therefore, he proposed eliminating the phrase “...that have occurred in recent weeks” from the final text of operative paragraph No. 4.

The Delegation of Grenada accepted the proposal by the Rapporteur. The draft resolution was unanimously approved with the agreed-upon modifications.

#### Close of the session

The Fourth Plenary Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned at 15:12 hours on 24 July 2024.

## CLOSING SESSION

### Opening of the session

The Closing Session of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was called to order at 15:13 hours on 24 July 2024, chaired by the Representative of Peru.

### Remarks by the Director General

The Director General thanked the delegations for attending the meeting and highlighted the high level of participation in that Executive Committee meeting. He expressed his hope that participants felt satisfied with the topics discussed and reaffirmed that the Institute belongs to them. He stressed the fact that the delegates are responsible for fulfilling an agenda that contributes to agricultural sustainability and global food and nutrition security. He reiterated his request for support in revisiting the issue of Nicaragua for the benefit of its farmers and applauded the progress achieved in resolving the case in Colombia after 14 years.

He underscored the need to strengthen exports without neglecting the region's food security and urged the countries to expand their participation as a bloc within the World Trade Organization and other international forums. With respect to animal health, he expressed his concern regarding the New World screwworm and called for joint action, given its complexity. He also highlighted IICA's commitment to undertaking intensive work in relation to outlooks for agriculture and highlighted the importance of bolstering the Caribbean's resilience to the climate crisis, in keeping with the proposal to establish a multilateral financing fund.

The Director General thanked the Member States for recognizing IICA's need to recover the purchasing power of the quotas and for entrusting the Institute with managing external resources in the amount of USD 210 million. He underscored the leading role played by the ministers of Agriculture and the private sector's valuable contribution to strengthening the agricultural ecosystem. He reported that IICA's technical cooperation was advancing in terms of digitalization and the integration of information systems, which would enable the countries to make decisions in real time. Lastly, he expressed his gratitude to the Chair of the Executive Committee for offering to host the next meeting of that governing body in Peru, to the Government of Brazil for hosting the upcoming meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, and to the Institute's personnel for making the meeting a reality. He predicted that the year ahead would be a fruitful one, filled with cooperation and new projects.

Remarks by the Chair

The Chair thanked the Executive Committee for entrusting him with that role and for the joint work carried out. He expressed his excitement at Peru hosting the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee.

Close of the session

The Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned at 15:17 hours on 24 July 2024.

## **RESOLUTIONS**



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**RESOLUTION No. 714**

**2023 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Information document No. 8, “2023 Annual Report of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)”,

CONSIDERING:

That Article 4.f of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee establishes that this governing body of IICA is to receive, analyze and approve the annual report on the activities of the General Directorate of the Institute and take appropriate action;

That the General Directorate prepared and published the 2023 Annual Report of IICA, which was presented to the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS) in due time and form;

That the report describes the cooperation activities carried out by the Institute in 2023 for the purpose of implementing its cooperation agendas at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, within the framework of its 2022-2026 Medium-term Plan (MTP);

That the Representative of IICA in each of its 34 member countries presented to the national authorities the respective report on the cooperation that the Institute provided to the country in 2023; and

That the 2023 Annual Report of IICA is available for consultation in digital format on the Institute’s website ([www.iica.int](http://www.iica.int)),

RESOLVES:

To approve the 2023 Annual Report of IICA.



**RESOLUTION No. 715**

**THE AGRICULTURAL TRADE SITUATION – GLOBALLY AND IN THE  
HEMISPHERE**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The document “Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development in the Americas: Concept Note on the Agricultural Trade Situation – Globally and in the Hemisphere”,

CONSIDERING:

That the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), in Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 545 (XXII-O/23), acknowledged that international and regional trade strengthens sustainable development and food security, and urged the countries to undertake joint efforts to safeguard against the introduction of rules, regulations and actions with the potential to restrict the agrifood trade of the countries of the region, and to assist in increasing intraregional trade;

That international trade is extremely important for global food security, as it helps to create a balance between food deficits and food surpluses among countries; redistributes food production; increases the variety of available food; improves the affordability of food; facilitates the consumption of safe food; and creates opportunities to improve agricultural productivity and boost the income of farmers, while ensuring the efficient allocation of global resources, including natural resources;

That the Americas, despite being the major net food exporting region of agrifood products, is home to both net food exporting and net food importing countries, such as the Caribbean nations;

That, in the current international trade climate, the countries of the Americas must insist on the need to foster free, open, transparent trade that is governed by science-based rules, as a means of improving market access and consolidating the role of trade in ensuring global food security;

That, even while pursuing legitimate objectives to protect the environment, some countries are introducing measures that could potentially restrict trade; and

That, during this Executive Committee meeting, the Member States of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) have engaged in productive discussion, exchanging ideas on the policy actions needed to enhance the strategic role of agrifood trade of the Americas in food security and sustainable development,

#### RESOLVES:

1. To support the collective actions of the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development in the area of international trade, aimed at strengthening the contribution of agrifood trade in the Americas to sustainable development and regional and global food security.
2. To urge the governments of IICA Member States to foster more transparent, open, science-based, equitable and sustainable trade within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO), by increasing the participation of the ministries of agriculture in decision-making within the multilateral trade system and fostering inter-ministerial cooperation to promote the adoption of joint positions on issues of common interest.
3. To instruct the Institute to continue to advocate for actions that facilitate intraregional trade and the leveraging of trade opportunities arising from existing trade agreements to benefit all the stakeholders in the agrifood sector.
4. To request that IICA work with its Member States to spearhead actions that will showcase successful efforts by agriculture in the region to improve sustainability and strengthen coordinated action to overcome barriers to international trade imposed for environmental reasons, as well as to increase participation in international and regional markets by capitalizing on the productive competitiveness the region has achieved through efficient and environmentally sustainable practices.

**RESOLUTION No. 716**

**THE ROLE OF ANIMAL HEALTH SERVICES OF THE AMERICAS IN GLOBAL  
AND REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The document “Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development in the Americas: Concept Note on Strengthening the Role of the Americas’ Animal Health Services in Global and Regional Food Security”,

CONSIDERING:

That the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), via Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 550 (XXII-O/23), acknowledged that “pests and diseases pose a permanent threat that affects or stands to affect the countries of the Americas” and that “agricultural health plays a key role in guaranteeing ‘safe and healthy food’ for everyone and particularly in strengthening food and nutrition security, by ensuring the ideal balance, quantity and quality of food of both animal and plant origin”;

That, pursuant to that resolution, the international seminar “Animal Health and its Contribution to the Transformation of Food Systems in the Americas” was held on 11 April 2024 in Asuncion, Paraguay, with the support of the Government of that country, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)”;

That ministers and senior agricultural authorities from countries in the Americas, directors of official health services and representatives of multilateral organizations participating in the seminar agreed on the need to quickly shore up animal health surveillance systems against new threats, with a view to consolidating the position of the region as a major global producer and exporter of protein;

That modernizing and strengthening official animal health services is vital to ensuring hemispheric and global food and nutrition security, which will depend in great measure on the operationalization of the One Health approach;

That, currently, animal health services are facing various challenges, among them: a) the avian influenza health emergency that poses a serious threat to the global poultry industry; b) African swine fever, a disease of animal origin that, although not a threat to human health, is devastating for poultry production and negatively impacts the economies of the countries; and c) the re-emergence of the New World screwworm in Central America for the first time in almost 25 years;

That IICA, in coordination with national authorities and in partnership with other international and regional organizations involved in animal health, has been carrying out actions to prevent and combat these threats; and

That the Member States of the Institute have held fruitful discussions at this Executive Committee Meeting, exchanging ideas on the need to bolster the strategic role of animal health in the countries of the Americas, to ensure food security and sustainable development, and to reinforce actions to tackle the three aforementioned threats,

#### RESOLVES:

1. To emphasize the importance of strengthening official animal health services, by incorporating new strategies, tools and procedures to improve the accuracy of risk assessment, enable the early detection of these risks and facilitate the efficient use of public and private resources to address them.
2. To increase support for the official veterinary services of countries in the Americas, including by undertaking new technical cooperation actions for the prevention, control and eradication of avian influenza (AI), African swine fever (ASF) and the New World screwworm (NWS), particularly through institutional modernization, digitalization and the strengthening of surveillance, intelligence and rapid response systems.
3. To coordinate and implement, together with other competent international organizations, especially the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), regional and hemispheric efforts geared towards building capacities to prevent and respond to emergencies caused by AI, ASF and NWS, based on

collaboration with the public and private sectors to introduce the required regulations, policies and measures.

4. To create forums that enable ministers to discuss, keep abreast of and increase awareness of issues related to cross-border diseases, including AI, ASF and NWS, and that support preventive actions, by strengthening surveillance and preparedness to provide animal health solutions in the IICA Member States.
5. To support intersectoral coordination (agriculture, the environment and public health) and cooperation between competent international organizations, as well as public and private entities at the hemispheric, national and local levels, given the critical importance of both factors for the implementation of a One Health approach in rural communities, involving producers, local governments and other stakeholders, as well as for the formulation and execution of integrated and effective public policies on this issue.
6. To thank and commend the Government of Paraguay for successfully organizing the international seminar “Animal Health and its Contribution to the Transformation of Food Systems in the Americas”.

**RESOLUTION No. 717**

**DIALOGUES ON THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

CONSIDERING:

That anticipating the types of changes that lie ahead is essential to develop strategies and policies to enable agriculture and agrifood systems of the Americas to overcome their challenges;

That, due to the eruption of digital technologies, agriculture and rural life are undergoing a transformation, whose sheer scale and potential implications make it necessary to establish a public policy framework to guide and shape these changes;

That there are new challenges affecting food security, human health and nutrition, such as access to healthy diets, changes in consumer habits, and a greater share of processed and ultra-processed foods in diets, among others, and that it is therefore necessary to identify the nutritional and health trends that are influencing food demands and, consequently, food security;

That climate change is one of the most pressing challenges throughout the world because, on the one hand, global warming is altering production conditions in different ecological zones and, on the other, extreme climate events are on the rise and having a negative impact on agricultural output, and that the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions has become one of the objectives of various economic activities, including agriculture;

That a series of “externalities” have impacted food production and global agricultural trade, such as the economic slowdown, increased armed conflicts, the weakening multilateral trade system and the implementation of increasingly protectionist economic strategies;

That it is necessary to monitor the evolution of agricultural structures and the composition of the labor force, as a result of population, migratory and urbanistic

processes, as well as its potential implications for agricultural production and living conditions in rural areas;

That it is important to determine the role of scientific knowledge, technology and innovation in boosting agricultural production, bearing in mind the limited available arable land and new market demands, as well as to foresee disruptive developments in different areas of innovation and technology and what their impact will be;

That most countries of the Americas are faced with inadequate investment in and funding of research and development (R+D) for agriculture, as well as a growing involvement of the private sector in the development of cutting-edge technologies, and that it is therefore crucial to anticipate how investment will evolve and how the necessary financing for investment in agricultural R+D will be obtained;

That the bioeconomy plays a significant role in transforming societies and that, given the wealth and diversity of natural resources in the region, it holds great potential for agrifood systems; and

That the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) proposes to organize a series of technical dialogues to exchange ideas on the future of agriculture of the Americas and its main drivers, to inform the development of consensus strategies at the regional level and the formulation of new national policies,

#### RESOLVES:

1. To support the initiative by IICA to host a series of forums on the future of agriculture in the second half of 2024, with the participation of specialists in each of the topics to be addressed and at least two ministers of IICA Member States in each forum.
2. To urge the member countries of IICA to actively participate in this initiative to continue strengthening collective actions within the framework of the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development.

IICA/CE/Res. 702 (XLIII-O/23)

20 July 2023

Original: Spanish

**RESOLUTION No. 718**

**HEMISPHERIC FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCE  
AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE AMERICAS**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc. 762 (24), “Proposal for the Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas”,

CONSIDERING:

That, via Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 545 (XXII-O/23), the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) resolved “to wholeheartedly endorse the building of a Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development and instruct the Director General of the Institute to expand and intensify any actions needed for its consolidation, in consultation and coordination with the Member States, and including the widest possible cross-section of stakeholders in the agrifood sector”;

That, in the annex to the abovementioned resolution, it proposed “creating a Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas, which will seek to facilitate the participation of smaller countries with less economic clout in collective actions”;

That, in fulfillment of that resolution, the Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has developed a proposal that establishes that the objectives of the Fund are to: a) mobilize, manage and execute new financial resources to improve the institutional, technical and administrative capacities needed to execute programs and projects to build the resilience and adaptive capacity of the agricultural systems of the Americas; and b) serve as a bridge to assist in urgently addressing high-impact events, such as health and environmental emergencies; and



That, for the operation of this new financial instrument, IICA possesses the necessary experience managing external resources, as well as the trust of its Member States and observer countries in its technical cooperation actions, which has strengthened its financial base to carry out operations of increasing impact,

#### RESOLVES:

1. To support the proposal presented by the Director General of IICA to create the Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas as a multilateral cooperation mechanism designed to benefit agrifood systems of the Americas at the national and multinational levels, pursuant to the terms set out in working document IICA/CE/Doc.762 (24).
2. To urge the Member States, Associates and Permanent Observers, as well as other international organizations, to join the Institute in its efforts to identify, negotiate and approve resources that can add to this Fund, channeling them towards the development of projects that can foster resilience and sustainability in the Americas in the short term.
3. To request that IICA effectively manage these new financial resources through intelligent and strategic investments, to ensure that the Fund optimizes the use of its financial assets, capitalizes on its resources and guarantees their steady flow, in order to undertake cooperation activities of a broader technical and geographical scope.
4. To request that the Institute prioritize, among the initial actions of the Fund, the recovery of the agricultural production systems of countries affected by catastrophic climate events.
5. To instruct the Director General to present, at the regular meetings of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI), the Executive Committee and the IABA, an annual report on the status of the Fund and the monitoring of all its sub-accounts.

**RESOLUTION No. 719**

**ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE PRIVATE AGRIFOOD SECTOR**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The reports of the meeting on partnerships with the private sector (April 2024) and of the meeting with producers' associations (July 2024) organized by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA),

CONSIDERING:

That IICA is an open, flexible and innovative organization, which enables it to continuously adapt to changes in the international context, particularly in the agrifood sector, such as the growing number of non-state international stakeholders that establish relations and carry out activities that complement international cooperation;

That, in several countries, the relationship between the public and private sectors has evolved, providing private initiatives and civil society with more opportunities to participate in national development projects and that, in addition, many companies have incorporated into their agendas a vision for the future that is based on economic and environmental sustainability, as well as social responsibility;

That these conditions open a window of opportunity for collaboration between the Institute and the private sector, within the framework of a well-defined strategy supported by the countries, for the benefit of the various social stakeholders involved in agricultural and rural development;

That Article 4, subparagraph c of the Convention on IICA states that, to achieve its purposes, the Institute may "establish and maintain relations of cooperation and coordination with (...) governmental and nongovernmental entities that pursue similar

objectives”, and Article 20, subparagraph e, instructs the Director General of IICA to establish these relations for cooperation and coordination;

That, in fulfillment of the current Medium-term Plan, the Director General has been fostering closer collaboration with various stakeholders from agrifood system production sectors, through strategic partnerships that have benefited the Institute and its Member States; and

That IICA considers it necessary to institutionalize the participation of these production sectors, so that they may contribute to strengthening the cooperation that the Institute provides to its member countries, and so that they may share their perspectives on agricultural development and rural well-being agendas with IICA’s governing bodies,

**RESOLVES:**

1. To underscore the importance of all agrifood system stakeholders of countries of the Americas taking part in achieving more productive, sustainable and inclusive agriculture.
2. To entrust the Director General of the Institute with establishing the Advisory Council of the Private Agrifood Sector, to enable IICA to develop cooperation and collaboration initiatives with this sector, which, in turn, could establish communication channels with the governing bodies of the Institute.
3. To request that the Director General present, at the next meeting of the Executive Committee, a report on the fulfillment of this task.

**RESOLUTION No. 720**

**PARTICIPATION OF IICA IN THE TWENTY-NINTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP29) TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC)**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The document “IICA’s participation in the Twenty-ninth Conference of the Parties (Azerbaijan, November 2024)”,

CONSIDERING:

That, at the Conference of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2023, the Member States of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) agreed that agrifood systems are part of the solution to climate change and that it is therefore necessary to ensure that the contributions of these systems to overcoming this global challenge be taken into account at all forums and negotiations held by the international community on this matter;

That driving climate action and funding in agriculture, given the sector’s capacity to respond positively to such challenges, is a priority strategy of the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development and that, in that regard, it is crucial for the agrifood sector of the Americas to be present at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP);

That COP is an essential forum to advocate for the agriculture sector; demonstrate its contributions and potential in terms of climate change mitigation and adaptation and risk reduction; and highlight the actions of the Member States of the Institute to build a more resilient, low carbon sector;

That, pursuant to Resolution IICA/CE/Res.687 (XLII-O/22) of the Executive Committee, IICA participated in the Twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties

(COP27), held in Egypt in 2022, where it installed the “Home of Sustainable Agriculture of the Americas” pavilion;

That, in fulfillment of Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 547 (XXII-O/23) of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Director General of the Institute supported the participation of the ministries and secretariats of Agriculture of countries of the Americas, as well as of IICA, in the Twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties (COP28), held in Dubai in 2023, where it installed a pavilion;

That the continued participation of the ministries and secretariats of Agriculture of the Americas in matters related to climate change and sustainable development is imperative, leading up to the Twenty-ninth Conference of the Parties (COP29), to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11 to 22 November 2024; and

That this is an important forum for highlighting relevant issues for the agriculture sector and the situations that climate change is causing in our regions, such as an expected earlier start to the hurricane season in countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), a shortage of water for agriculture and the impacts of rising temperatures on this sector,

**RESOLVES:**

1. To underscore the importance of promoting and implementing effective climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in countries of the Americas, in keeping with the regulatory frameworks, institutional structures and public policies currently in place in each of the countries.
2. To urge the Institute and its Member States to continue fostering dialogue on matters related to climate change at the regional and global levels, placing special emphasis on the role of agriculture in driving sustainable and resilient development and supporting collective action and the adoption of joint positions.
3. To entrust the Director General with supporting the participation of the ministries and secretariats of Agriculture of countries of the Americas, as well as of IICA, at COP29 (Baku, 2024), and with installing a pavilion related to agriculture at the conference venue.
4. To generate forums to discuss key issues—such as increased climate vulnerability in Caribbean islands—to be included in the COP29 agenda and considered in initiatives arising from the event.

**RESOLUTION No. 721**

**PROPOSAL FOR PARTIALLY RECOVERING THE FINANCIAL CAPACITY OF  
MEMBER STATES' QUOTA CONTRIBUTIONS**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE Doc. DT 771, "Proposal for partially recovering the financial capacity of Member States' quota contributions, given the decrease in purchasing power due to inflation 1995-2023",

CONSIDERING:

That Article 8.b of the Convention on the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) establishes that the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) is empowered to "approve the biennial Program Budget and to determine the annual quotas of the Member States" and Article 23 states 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";

That the IABA, via Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 552 (XXII-O/23), approved "the overall allocation of USD 33,074,100 per year from the Institute's Regular Fund for the 2024-2025 Program Budget, financed by: (i) USD 29,574,100 in annual quota contributions from the Member States, as indicated in the scale attached hereto as Annex A, which includes the assessed quotas computed in accordance with the percentages established in the quota scale approved by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) for that year";

That any change in the amount of the budget and the quota scale could therefore not be applied until the 2026-2027 Program Budget is approved;

That the IABA, via Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 553 (XXII-O/23), resolved to “advise the Director General to prepare a study on increasing Member State quotas to offset inflationary losses during the period 2016-2023”;

That, pursuant to that resolution, the Director General presented the requested study to the Executive Committee, which concludes that “the freezing of the required quota contributions of the Institute’s Member States as of 1995 had a negative impact on the financial capacity of cooperation actions” and that “despite the 6.57% increase in the level of quotas since 2016, the progressive loss of the purchasing power of these resources has reduced the real value of quota contributions to the Institute during the 1995-2023 period by 37.9%, a percentage similar to 38.4% in 2015, which was the reference year for the increase made”; and

That the same study indicates that “the accelerated increase in costs for staff and other objects of expenditure, essential for undertaking cooperation actions, has considerably limited the organization’s operational and response capacity to address growing and diversified demands for cooperation services in the Member States in a timely manner”;

#### RESOLVES:

1. To accept the “Proposal for partially recovering the financial capacity of Member States’ quota contributions, given the decrease in purchasing power due to inflation 1995-2023”, which was presented by the Director General, pursuant to IABA Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 553 (XXII-O/23).
2. To instruct the Director General to present the proposal for the consideration of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI), the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee and the Twenty-third Regular Meeting of the IABA, for subsequent approval in the 2026-2027 Program Budget.

**RESOLUTION No. 722**

**REPORT ON THE COLLECTION OF QUOTAS**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc. 764 (24), “Status of the Collection of Quota Contributions”,

CONSIDERING:

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

That the timely payment of quota contributions and the collection of arrears from previous years facilitate the implementation of the programs and projects included in the cooperation strategies established at the national, regional and hemispheric levels in the 2022-2026 Medium-term Plan (MTP) of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); and

That the payment of quotas by the member countries must be accelerated to enable the Institute to continue fulfilling its mission to encourage, promote and support agricultural and rural development in the countries,

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.



2. To instruct the Director General of the Institute to: a) continue efforts to collect the quotas for 2024 and those owed for previous years; and b) keep IICA's member countries informed of progress in this area.
3. To urge the Member States to remain current with the payment of their quotas to the Institute, and those that are in arrears, to follow through with the plans agreed upon to meet their financial obligations to IICA, which are key actions to enable the Institute to remain a strong institution that effectively carries out its mission to support its member countries.

**RESOLUTION No. 723**

**2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA), REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS AND THIRTIETH REPORT OF THE AUDIT REVIEW COMMITTEE (ARC)**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Documents IICA/CE/Doc. 765 (24), “2023 Financial Statements of IICA and Report of the External Auditors”, and IICA/CE/Doc. 766 (24), “Thirtieth Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)”,

CONSIDERING:

That Article 4.d of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee establishes that it is the responsibility of this governing body of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) to “examine the financial status of the Institute, and upon the Board’s request or when a decision by the Board is required under the Convention, to send the corresponding report and recommendations to the Board”;

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

That, pursuant to Article 3.k of its Rules of Procedure, the Executive Committee is responsible for receiving and approving the ARC’s reports and making a determination on their recommendations; and

That, in its Thirtieth Report, the ARC states that it examined the report of the external auditors on IICA’s financial statements for the 2023 fiscal year and found the

work performed to be satisfactory and in accordance with the rules of the Institute and international auditing standards,

**RESOLVES:**

1. To accept the 2023 financial statements of the Institute and the report of the external auditors, and to instruct the Director General of IICA to submit them to the Twenty-third Regular Meeting of the IABA for its information.
2. To approve the Thirtieth Report of the ARC and instruct the Director General to implement the recommendations contained therein.
3. To thank the members of the ARC for the work accomplished.
4. To recognize the efforts undertaken by the Institute to maintain financial records with a clean opinion and to urge the Director General to continue implementing his policy of transparency.

**RESOLUTION No. 724**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE REGULATIONS OF THE GENERAL DIRECTORATE**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Documents IICA/CE Doc. DT 767 numbers 1-6,

CONSIDERING:

That, during the regular meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) held in April 2023, it was announced that a study was being launched to review the regulations of the General Directorate of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) governing human talent and financial operations, as an integral part of the institutional transformation process;

That the aim of the study has been to propose modifications to the current rules for the consideration and approval of the Institute's governing bodies, ensuring that they account for technological developments, better address IICA's needs, and reflect the changes that have taken place in administrative practices at the Institute since the rules were established in 1983;

That, among the regulations to be amended are the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate (RPGD), the Staff Rules, the System for the Determination of Remuneration for IICA Personnel and the Financial Rules;

That, pursuant to Article 8(i) of the Convention on IICA, only the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) can modify the RPGD, which includes general rules speaking to the categories, rights and obligations of Institute staff, as well as to the financial management of the organization;

That both the Executive Committee, via Resolution IICA/CE/Res. 709, and the IABA, via Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 555 (XXII-O/23), expressed their support for the study, and the IABA resolved to "authorize the Executive Committee, at its next regular

meeting, to: a) adopt the modifications to regulations that are within its competence; and b) adopt and put into effect the necessary modifications to the RPGD, subject to the approval of the IABA at its 2025 Regular Meeting”;

That, based on the result of the study, the Director General of the Institute has proposed that the draft Staff Rules presented in Document IICA Doc. 767 No. 5 be adopted, incorporating the current rules of the System for the Determination of Remuneration for IICA Personnel and the provisions set out in Chapter III of the RPGD, except for articles 40 and 69, regarding compensation for the Director General of the Institute, which will become articles 14 and 15, respectively, of Chapter II of the RPGD;

That in response to the SACMI’s request for observations, the Government of Mexico submitted its suggestions to the General Directorate, which is recommending that they be included in the draft Staff Rules as set out in Document DT 767 No. 6; and

That the General Directorate has determined that the adoption of the draft Staff Rules would not involve or require any adjustment to or increase in the Institute’s budget,

**RESOLVES:**

1. To repeal the current Staff Rules and adopt, in its place, the draft Staff Rules proposed in Document IICA Doc. DT 767 No. 5, with the modifications set out in document DT 767 No. 6.
2. To repeal Chapter III – “Personnel” of the RPGD, except for articles 40 and 69.
3. To repeal the System for the Determination of Remuneration for IICA Personnel, given that its regulatory content has been incorporated into the Staff Rules adopted via this resolution.
4. To authorize the transfer of articles 40 and 69 of current Chapter III of the RPGD to Chapter II – “The Director General” of those rules as articles 14 and 15, and to adjust the numbering of subsequent chapters and articles to reflect the repeal of Chapter III.
5. To establish that the operative paragraphs of this resolution shall enter into effect immediately, subject to the approval of the IABA at its next regular meeting, to be held in 2025, and to recommend that the IABA ratify them at that meeting.

**RESOLUTION No. 725**

**REPORT OF THE TROPICAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND HIGHER  
EDUCATION CENTER (CATIE) FOR 2023**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The Report of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) for 2023 and the Report on Joint Collaboration Activities between the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and CATIE,

CONSIDERING:

That, by means of Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 441 (XIV-O/07), the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) delegated to the Executive Committee responsibility for receiving and analyzing the reports and plans of CATIE and requested that, in future, the Director General of this Center forward directly to the General Directorate of IICA the report and plans of CATIE for acceptance by the Executive Committee,

RESOLVES:

1. To accept CATIE's Report for 2023.
2. To urge IICA and CATIE to continue to strengthen their links and mechanisms for implementing joint activities in support of the efforts of the Member States of both organizations to achieve competitive, sustainable and inclusive agricultural development.

**RESOLUTION No. 726**

**REPORT OF THE CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (CARDI) FOR 2023**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

The report on the work program of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) for 2023,

CONSIDERING:

That, under the terms of the agreement currently in force between the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and CARDI, the latter organization must submit an annual report on its activities; and

That, by means of Resolution IICA/JIA/Res. 440 (XIV-O/07), the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) delegated to the Executive Committee responsibility for receiving and analyzing CARDI's reports and plans and requested that, in the future, the Executive Director of that Institute forward directly to the General Directorate of IICA the report and plans of CARDI for acceptance by the Executive Committee,

RESOLVES:

1. To accept CARDI's report on the implementation of its work program for 2023 and express appreciation for its presentation.
2. To urge IICA and CARDI to continue to strengthen their technical linkages and mechanisms for executing joint activities in support of efforts to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being in the Caribbean countries.

**RESOLUTION No. 727**

**REPORT OF THE 2024 REGULAR MEETING OF THE SPECIAL ADVISORY  
COMMISSION ON MANAGEMENT ISSUES (SACMI)**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Information document No. 9, “Report of the 2024 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)”,

CONSIDERING:

That the purpose of the SACMI, as a standing commission of the Executive Committee, is to advise the Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and to facilitate more regular discussion with the Member States on administrative, financial and strategic issues, in order to enhance the process of reaching consensus in the Executive Committee and in the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA);

That, via Resolution IICA/CE/Res. 580 (XXXIII-O/13), the Executive Committee established that the meetings of the SACMI should preferably be held online, so that sessions may be held as frequently as necessary, and to generate savings for the Institute;

That, via Resolution IICA/CE/Res. 660 (XL-O/20), the Executive Committee instructed the SACMI to serve as an extended permanent working group aimed at supporting, analyzing and developing a proposal for the Institute’s comprehensive transformation, and that pursuant to that resolution the SACMI held a regular meeting on 9 May 2024; and

That the above-referenced report of the SACMI contains recommendations for consideration by the Director General and the Executive Committee,

RESOLVES:

To accept the Report of the 2024 Regular Meeting of the SACMI.



**RESOLUTION No. 728**

**STATUS OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE FORTY-THIRD REGULAR  
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE TWENTY-SECOND  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE INTER-AMERICAN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE  
(IABA)**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Documents IICA/CE/Doc. 768 (24), “Status of the Resolutions of the Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee”, and IICA/CE/Doc. 769 (24), “Status of the Resolutions of the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)”,

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 Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee and at the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the IABA,

RESOLVES:

To accept the reports “Status of the Resolutions of the Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee” and “Status of the Resolutions of the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)”.

**RESOLUTION No. 729**

**DATE AND VENUE OF THE FORTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, at its Forty-fourth Regular Meeting,

HAVING SEEN:

Document IICA/CE/Doc. 770 (24), “Date and Venue of the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee”,

CONSIDERING:

That, in accordance with Article 22 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee, that governing body of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is required to hold one regular meeting each year. Therefore, the date and venue of the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee in 2025 must be set;

That Article 23 of said Rules of Procedure states that governments of Member States of the Institute interested in hosting a regular meeting of the Executive Committee shall so inform the Director General of IICA in writing, before the deadline set by the Executive Committee for presentation of offers;

That Article 24 of said Rules of Procedure stipulates that the Executive Committee shall examine the offers to host a meeting in accordance with the principle of rotation and geographical distribution; and

That the Government of Peru wrote to the Director General offering to host the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee,

RESOLVES:

1. To sincerely thank the Government of Peru for its kind offer to host the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee in that country.

2. To establish that said meeting shall be held in Peru in the second half of 2025.
3. To instruct the Director General to issue the convocation to the Member States to participate in said meeting of the Executive Committee, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the rules currently in effect.

## **SIGNING OF THE REPORT**



## **SIGNING OF THE REPORT OF THE FORTY-FOURTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 97 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee, the Report of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee is hereby signed at 16:30 hours on the twenty-four day of July of the year two thousand and twenty-four, in San Jose, Costa Rica.


This report will be edited by the Secretariat and the changes approved during the Closing Session will be included before it is published in the four official languages of the 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, post the electronic files on the Institute's Web page and send the final version of this report to the governments of the Member States, the Associate States, the Permanent Observers of the Institute and other participants in the meeting.

San Jose, Costa Rica.



Manuel Otero  
Director General of IICA  
*Ex officio* Secretary of the  
2024 Executive Committee



Ángel Manero Campos  
Minister of Agricultural  
Development and Irrigation of Peru  
Chair of the 2024 Executive Committee



## **ANNEXES**





## ANNEX 1: AGENDA OF THE MEETING

IICA/CE/Doc. 760 (24)

### Provisional Agenda

IICA/CE/Doc. 760 (24)

#### **1. Provisional Schedule**

*IICA/CE/Doc. 761 (24)*

#### **2. Message from the Director General of IICA**

*(no document)*

#### **3. Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development in the Americas**

3.1. Panel discussion on the agricultural trade situation - globally and in the hemisphere

*Information document n.° 1*

3.2. Panel discussion on the status of agricultural health and food safety

*Information document n.° 2*

3.3. The technical cooperation of IICA and the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development

*Presentation and Information document n.° 3*

3.4. Proposal regarding a seminar series on the future of agriculture

*Information document n.° 4*

3.5. Status of the Hemispheric Fund for Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in the Americas

*IICA/CE/Doc. 762 (24)*

3.6. Report on private sector partnerships

*Presentation*

3.7. Report on the event held with farmer associations

*Presentation*

**Provisional Agenda**  
IICA/CE/Doc. 760 (24)

3.8. Report on the First Meeting of Leaders of Rurality of the Americas  
*Presentation and Information document n.° 5*

3.9. IICA's participation in the Twenty-ninth Conference of the Parties  
(Azerbaijan, November 2024)  
*Information document n.° 6*

**4. Administrative, financial and programmatic-budgetary situation**

4.1. Report on the execution of the 2024-2025 Program Budget  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 763 (24)*

4.2. Status of the collection of quota contributions  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 764 (24)*

4.2.1 Estudio sobre incremento de cuotas  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 771 (24)*

4.3. 2023 Financial Statements of IICA and Report of the External Auditors  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 765 (24)*

4.4. Thirtieth Report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 766 (24) and Presentation*

4.5. Review of institutional regulations  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 767 (24)*

**5. Strengthening of strategic partnerships**

5.1. Report of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education  
Center (CATIE)  
*Information document n.° 7*

5.2. Report on joint collaboration activities between IICA and CATIE  
*Presentation*

**Provisional Agenda**  
IICA/CE/Doc. 760 (24)

- 5.3. Report of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)  
*Information document n. ° 11*

**6. Activities of the General Directorate and the governing bodies**

- 6.1. 2023 IICA Annual Report  
*Information document n. ° 8*
- 6.2. Report of the 2024 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)  
*Information document n. ° 9*
- 6.3. Status of the resolutions of the Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 768 (24)*
- 6.4. Status of the resolutions of the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 769 (24)*
- 6.5. Date and venue of the Forty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee  
*IICA/CE/Doc. 770 (24)*

**7. Other Matters**

## ANNEX 2: SCHEDULE OF THE MEETING

IICA/CE/Doc. 761 (24)

### Monday, 22 July

- Participants arrive and are transported to the hotel IICA personnel
- Registration begins at the hotel

### Tuesday, 23 July

- 07:45 • Participants are transported to IICA IICA personnel
- 08:30 • Registration continues at the Secretariat of the meeting

#### *Preparatory session*

- 08:45-09:35 • Preparatory session of the regular representatives of the Member States of the 2024 Executive Committee Member States

#### *First plenary session*

- 09:35-09:45 • Remarks by the Chair-elect of the Executive Committee Chair
- 09:45-10:05 • Message from the Director General of IICA Director General  
Member States
- 10:05-10:35 • Analysis and comments
- 10:35-10:55 *Refreshments*
- 10:55-11:10 Message from the Government of Colombia Minister of Agriculture

### **Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development**

11:10- 11:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IICA's technical cooperation for the Hemispheric Partnership for Food Security and Sustainable Development</li> </ul>	Directorate of Technical Cooperation
11:25- 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel discussion on the status of global and hemispheric agricultural trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Gloria Abraham (IICA)</li> <li>- Dr. Marcos Jank (Insper Agro Global)</li> <li>- Minister Fernando Mattos (MGAP-Uruguay)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Directorate of Technical Cooperation  Member States
13:00- 13:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Presentation of IICA Chair title to Marcos Jank</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Presentation of Recognition to Mr. Ronald E. Guendel, (Bayer)</i></b></li> </ul>	
13:15- 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>	

### ***Second plenary session***

14:30- 16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel discussion on the role of animal health services in the Americas in global and regional food security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Carlos Orellana Vaquero (CVP)</li> <li>- Mr. Luis Barcos (WOAH)</li> <li>- Mr. Abelardo de Gracia (OIRSA)</li> <li>- Mr. José Carlos Martín C. (SENACSA-Paraguay)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Directorate of Technical Cooperation  Member States  Directorate of Technical Cooperation
16:00- 16:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel discussion on the future of agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Jack Bobo (University of Nottingham)</li> <li>- Dr. Álvaro Lario (President of IFAD)</li> <li>- Dr. Muhammad Ibrahim (IICA)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Member States  Institutional Communication Division
16:50- 17:10	<i>Refreshments</i>	Member States

17:10-17:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the First Meeting of Leaders of Rurality of the Americas</li> <li>• Leader from Ecuador and Leader from Argentina</li> </ul>	Deputy Director General
17:50-18:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and comments</li> </ul>	Directorate of Technical Cooperation
18:10-18:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on partnerships with the private sector</li> </ul>	Member States
18:25-18:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on event held with producers' associations</li> </ul>	
18:40-19:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IICA's participation in the Twenty-ninth Conference of the Parties (Azerbaijan, November 2024)</li> <li>• Close of the first day of the meeting</li> <li>• Inauguration of the Garden of Honduras</li> </ul>	
	<i>Cocktail reception</i>	





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thirtieth report of the Audit Review Committee (ARC)</li> <li>- Report on the collection of quotas</li> </ul>	
10:40-10:55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study on the increase of quotas</li> </ul>	
10:55-11:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and comments</li> </ul>	
11:15-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of institutional regulations</li> </ul>	Member States
11:30-11:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and comments</li> </ul>	Legal Advisor
11:45-12:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE)</li> </ul>	Member States
12:15-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on joint collaboration activities between IICA and CATIE</li> </ul>	Director General of CATIE
12:30-14:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and comments</li> </ul> <p><i>Lunch</i></p>	
		Member States

#### ***Fourth plenary session***

14:00-14:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)</li> </ul>	Director General of CARDI
14:20-14:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and comments</li> </ul>	Member States
14:30-14:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IICA CONECTA</li> <li>• 2023 Annual Report of IICA</li> </ul>	Directorate of Corporate Services
14:45-15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the Technical Secretariat of IICA's Governing Bodies</li> </ul>	Technical Secretariat
15:00-15:25		

- Report of the 2024 Regular Meeting of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)
- Status of the resolutions of the Forty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee
- Status of the resolutions of the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)
- Date and venue of the Forty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

15:25-  
16:30

- Reading and approval of draft resolutions

Chair  
Rapporteur  
Member States

### ***Closing session***

- 16:30 • Close of the meeting

Chair  
Director General



## ANNEX 3: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### MEMBER STATES OF THE 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### **Argentina**

Agustín Tejeda (Principal)  
Undersecretary of Agricultural  
Markets and International  
Negotiations  
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock,  
and Fisheries

Santiago Bonifacio (Alternate)  
National Director of International  
Cooperation and Articulation  
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock,  
and Fisheries

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