

**THE MARRAKESH DECISION AND FOOD SECURITY: CONTRIBUTION OF THE
INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Submission by IICA

The following submission, dated 2 November 2011, is being circulated at the request of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

1. The main purpose of this document is to provide a summary of the activities carried out within the framework of IICA's commitment to food security in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the light of agriculture's importance as a source of income and food in the countries of the region and the current rise in, and continuing volatility of, food prices.
2. IICA has always been committed to the food security of the Americas. One of the strategic objectives of its *2010-2014 Medium-Term Plan* is "to improve agriculture's contribution to food security" and to this end, it supports its member States in the development of national food security strategies and the implementation of national agricultural investment plans with a view to improving not only food production and quality, but producers' incomes, in particular those of small and medium-scale producers. These principles were ratified at the recent meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, held at IICA headquarters in October 2011.
3. To meet these objectives, IICA implements technical focus programmes in the following areas: innovation for competitiveness; agribusiness and marketing; territories and rural well-being; and health and safety. It also implements cross-sectoral programmes on natural resources and climate change, and food security. All of these programmes seek to contribute to agricultural development and food security in the Americas through actions to improve access to food, food availability, and food stability and utilization (the pillars of food security). IICA's Centre for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA) is also working on a number of food security-related lines of action, one of which involves strategic research and analysis for agriculture.
4. IICA, in conjunction with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), recently published the annual report "*The Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2011-2012*", which describes the progress made in agriculture in recent years and presents an overview of rural development and food security in the region.
5. To carry out its functions, IICA has established *institutional thematic networks* for technical cooperation, which act as an internal tool for coordinating and bringing together teams with a view to enhancing technical capacity, sharing knowledge, ideas and experiences, and building a constantly

updated critical mass. The thematic food security network currently comprises 32 technicians and covers all the Latin American and Caribbean countries.¹

6. A number of IICA projects relating to food security in Latin America and the Caribbean have been financed by strategic countries and allies. Such projects include:

- (a) A support programme for food security and employment generation in rural areas of Haiti, implemented in response to the 2010 earthquake with financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- (b) IICA participates in the technical advisory committee of the World Food Programme's Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme and is involved in implementing this programme in four Member countries, including Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.
- (c) IICA and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE) implement a joint action programme in the countries where they work (mainly Central America). This programme covers agriculture and climate change; innovative production (linked to food security); institutional frameworks and capacities for sustainable land management; food security in small-scale agriculture; and knowledge management.
- (d) In Haiti, IICA is implementing two projects to enhance food security and chains; in Central America, it has launched the Regional Programme for Research and Innovation in Value Chains (PRIICA), which is funded by the European Union.
- (e) A technological innovation strategy to improve the productivity and competitiveness of production chains in Central America and the Dominican Republic, and a programme on the adaptation of maize and beans to climate change in Central America and the Dominican Republic, with IDB funding.
- (f) A project to enhance food productivity and quality, and thus food security, in Central America and the Dominican Republic, through innovation and the transfer of technology to small-scale producers of staple foods. Funding provided by Chinese Taipei.
- (g) An "agricultural innovation network" project to promote innovation and technological research in respect of staple crops. Phase III of the project is currently under way and focuses on identifying and disseminating technological innovations for maize and beans which can be replicated throughout the central region. This project is implemented with Swiss cooperation.
- (h) A project on the adaptation of maize and beans to climate change. Funding from the Republic of Korea via the IDB.
- (i) IICA supported the formulation of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).
- (j) IICA, in association with the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama and the Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), is

¹ To access this network, write to karol.alpizar@iica.int or telephone +(506) 2216-0441.

participating in the preparation of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Agenda for Central America.

7. This year, IICA approved the project "*Agriculture's contribution to food security, 2011-2014*", which is implemented by the cross-sectoral coordination programme on agriculture and food security in collaboration with IICA technical focus programmes and CAESPA. The general aim of this project is to support the strengthening of the food security-related institutional framework in member States, with a view to enhancing the contribution to food security made by small and medium-scale producers (including those involved in family farming) and reducing producer vulnerability.

8. At the end of 2010 and throughout 2011, various seminars and workshops were held on public food security policies. In November 2010, an international seminar entitled "*Agriculture and climate change: institutions, policies and innovation*" was held in Santiago, Chile. This seminar, organized by ECLAC, FAO and IICA, looked at how climate change can affect the four pillars of food security (food availability, access to food, supply stability, and consumers' ability to utilize food taking into account its safety and nutritional value), the challenge that climate change poses to food security, and the synergies and trade-offs between food security and climate change mitigation targets.

9. A second workshop entitled "*Central American intersectoral policy dialogue to address food price hikes and volatility: challenges and opportunities*" was held in El Salvador in June 2011. It was organized by ECLAC, FAO, IICA and the Regional Technical Assistance Unit. Here, IICA examined the policy measures taken by Central American countries to boost food production and promote food security.

10. In September 2011, an international workshop on food security, climate change and trade was held in San José, Costa Rica. This workshop was organized by IICA, the Central America and Haiti office of the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), the technical office of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) in Costa Rica, and the Latin American Trade Network. The purpose of the workshop was to analyse the inter-linkages between trade, climate change and food security with a view to supporting the Ministries of Agriculture, Natural Resources, the Environment, and Trade of the tropical Americas region in the formulation of public policies in these areas. It is hoped that the outcome will be a regional medium-term research proposal for generating knowledge, with clearly defined financing mechanisms, which would make it possible to define better strategies and policies.

11. For further information on IICA activities in this field, please contact:

Rafael Trejos Solórzano
Manager of the IICA Centre for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA)
E-mail: rafael.trejos@iica.int
Tel.: +(506) 2216-0218

Adriana Campos Azofeifa
Trade Policy and Negotiations Specialist
E-mail: adriana.campos@iica.int
Tel.: +(506) 2216-0170

12. For more information, please visit the IICA website at <http://www.iica.int>.
