



Foro de las Américas para la  
Investigación y el Desarrollo  
Tecnológico Agropecuario  
([www.ica.int/foragro](http://www.ica.int/foragro))



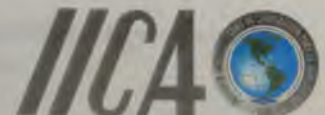
Sistema de Información Científica y Tecnológica  
del Sector Agropecuario en las Américas

(<http://infotec.ws>)

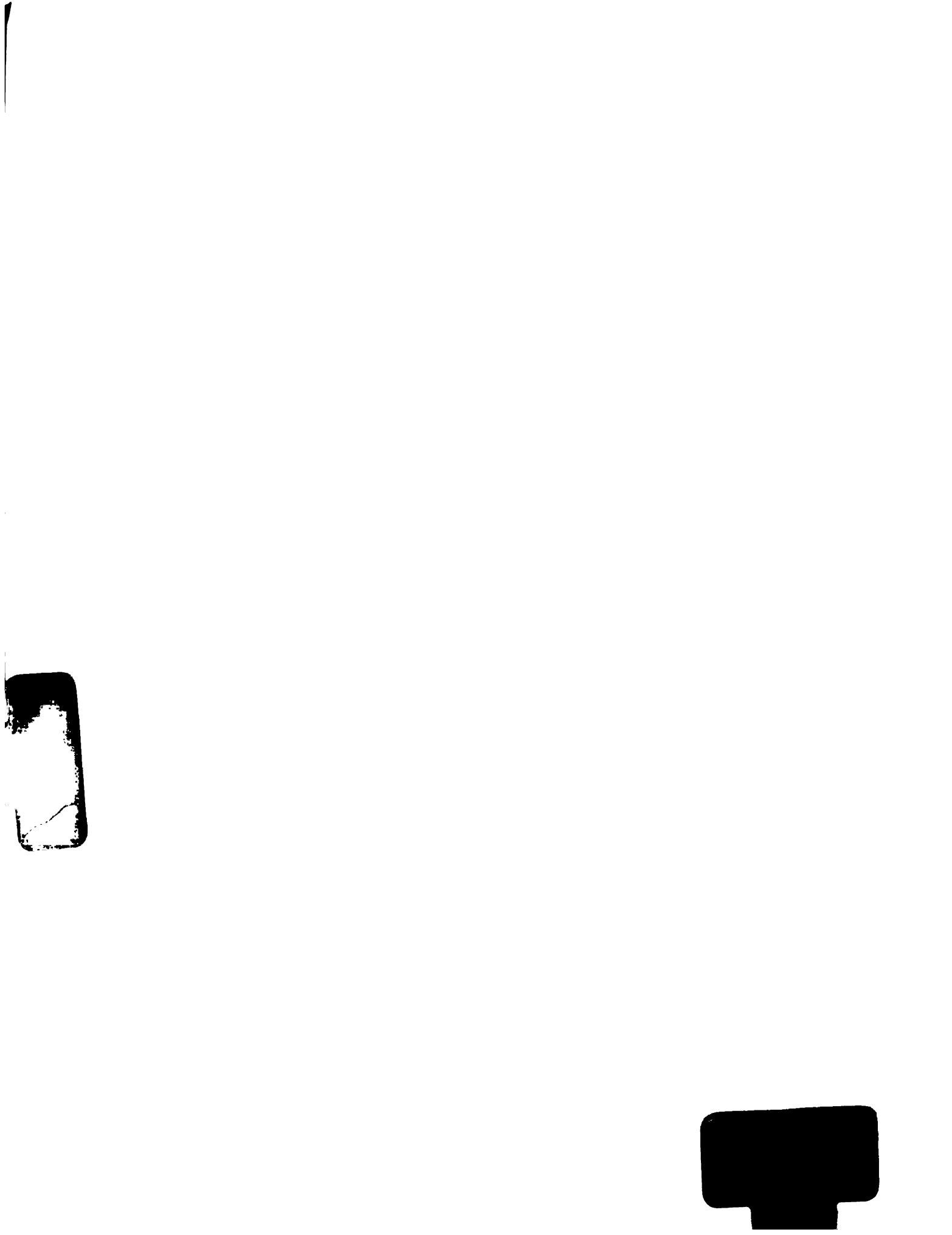
## Foro de las Américas para la Investigación y el Desarrollo Tecnológico Agropecuario: FORAGRO

### Plan de Acción 2003-2004 (PAF)

Brasil, Brasília  
15 y 16 de octubre 2002



Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura  
([www.ica.int](http://www.ica.int))



**Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research  
and Technology Development: FORAGRO**

**2003-2004 Plan of Action (POA)<sup>1</sup>**

**Visit our websites:**

**[www.iica.int/foragro](http://www.iica.int/foragro)**

**[www.infotec.ws](http://www.infotec.ws)**

## **1. Introduction**

This document contains FORAGRO's biennial Plan of Action for 2003-2004. In preparing it, the drafters took into account both the Medium Term Plan and the directives issued by the Executive Committee at its meetings in April and October 2002. Also borne in mind were the recommendations and declarations of "Mexico 2000" and "Brasilia 2002," the meetings of all FORAGRO's members.

The Forum's principal function is to channel regional efforts, articulating actions between actors and adding value to multinational and regional actions. The Forum facilitates the identification and periodic updating of priority agricultural research and development (R&D) topics for the Americas, stimulates the programming of actions and promotes their implementation by its regional and national members, in association with international organizations.

## **2. Objectives of the 2003-2004 Plan of Action**

### **2.1. General objectives**

The 2003-2004 POA is designed to consolidate FORAGRO, based on a common vision of both the main problems facing agriculture and the opportunities, and by developing a regional R&D agenda as a strategic input for regional development. The Forum's core actions involve support for the identification and development of a regional agenda based on the priority topics identified at Brasilia 2002, the facilitation of articulation among the PROCi subregional mechanisms and the evaluation of the performance of the Regional System with a view to optimizing it. Other key objectives for the biennium include participation in subregional, regional and international decision-making bodies, to reposition R&D and lobby for more investment to be made.

---

<sup>1</sup> Document prepared by the Technical Secretariat of FORAGRO, assisted by EMBRAPA, and approved by the Executive Committee of FORAGRO at its meeting in Brasilia on October 15-16, 2002.

## **2.2. Specific objectives**

Following on from the above, and taking ongoing actions into account, the specific objectives of the 2003-2004 POA are as follows:

- a) Continue conducting analytical studies of the situation and performance of agriculture and the rural milieu from the technological perspective, to provide the basis for identifying and periodically updating FORAGRO's agenda.
- b) Facilitate the implementation of programs, projects and activities related to the priority topics established at Brasilia 2002, as the basis of the Regional R&D Agenda.
- c) Facilitate virtual and person-to-person meetings and discussions among members of FORAGRO and with other relevant actors.
- d) Consolidate the agricultural scientific and technological information system (INFOTEC).
- e) Evaluate the regional R&D system's performance in support of the consolidation of the Technology Innovation System in the Americas, through the articulated efforts of the PROCI subregional cooperative mechanisms and regional networks, FONTAGRO, the regional research centers and FORAGRO itself.
- f) Increase connectivity among the components of the Regional R&D System and between it and the International Research System, the International Centers and the Global Research System, in particular with the CGIAR and the GFAR.

## **3. Actions for the period 2003-2004**

The Forum's activities are implemented under two major components, namely: a) Political-Institutional Actions; and b) Priority topics for the regional R&D agenda. (See Annex 1 for a complete list). The priority topics component focuses on concrete R&D actions, whose implementation the Forum promotes among its members. However, the Forum does not implement R&D actions directly, because it is not an executor. Its direct actions are more of a political-institutional nature.

Taking into consideration the Forum's progress, the recommendations of the Executive Committee, the Brasilia 2002 Declaration and the MTP, as well as the institutional context in which the Forum operates, the following actions are proposed as the basis for the work program:<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Each action includes a concise list of activities, which has been discussed in greater depth by the Executive Committee.

### **3.1. Institutional-political lines of action:**

#### ***3.1.1. Scientific and Technological Information System (Line 5)***

The Executive Committee took the important decision of endorsing further efforts to develop INFOTEC, with support from IICA and Forum members, as a strategic instrument of FORAGRO and the Regional R&D System. The Executive Committee also felt it essential that the GFAR continue to provide support for this activity. Its support is considered strategic, given the priority the GFAR itself attaches to the development of the Regional Agricultural Information Systems (RAIS).

Proposed actions:

- a. Develop a system of indicators of the situation of ICT and S&T in agriculture, for the LAC countries: strategic partnerships or networks will be set up to design the system and gather information.
- b. Develop an information module on experts: design, program and include information from members and others cooperating in the Regional System.
- c. Develop specific components or on-line spaces for the networks on priority topics: encourage the creation of virtual networks on topics that are the highest priority for regional R&D, also developing forms of access and communication, according to the needs of the network and its outputs.
- d. Technology market: reach agreements for the participation of national research institutes in the INFOTEC technologies metabase, which will operate as a regional "yellow pages" for technology, and promotion of training in e-commerce for users.
- e. Articulation with actors in the region (e.g., PROCIs, FONTAGRO, R&D Centers, ICT training centers) and international articulation with other regional forums and the RAIS/GFAR.

Expected outcome: Strengthening of INFOTEC and support for specialized networks.

**3. I.2. *Fourth Meeting for Hemispheric Dialogue - FORAGRO 2004 (Lines 1 and 8)***

Panama has been proposed as the location for the next international meeting of FORAGRO. The Agricultural Research Institute of Panama (IDIAP) will organize a Management Committee for this purpose, which will coordinate with the Forum's Technical Secretariat, President and Executive Committee. The City of Knowledge has been proposed as a possible site.

Some activities with regard to the next international meeting are as follows:

- a) Objective and theme: "Evaluation and proposals for action to consolidate the Regional R&D System" has been proposed as the theme of the meeting. A study and analysis of future alternatives will be prepared.
- b) Financing: financing will be sought, based on the work of the Forum's Management Committee, President and Executive Committee, IICA and the Technical Secretariat.
- c) Preparation of papers and studies, as well as relevant information to be presented, for the deliberations and decisions at the meeting.
- d) Organization of the meeting and dissemination of information about it.
- e) Holding of the meeting and other collateral events consistent with the interests of FORAGRO and its participants (for example, specific meetings of PROCIs or other networks and exhibits).

Expected outcome: FORAGRO 2004 meeting held.

**3.1.3. *Technologies for the institutional management of technological innovation: documentation of methodologies and experiences (Lines 4 and 7)***

EMBRAPA has proposed supporting this activity, from the perspective of "training national teams to manage Science and Technology." The program's components could include: 1) communication policies; 2) institutional performance evaluation systems; and 3) intellectual property policies in agricultural R&D organizations.

The Technical Secretariat of FORAGRO and EMBRAPA will prepare a proposal to be submitted to international funding agencies (IDB, World Bank, ...). Support will also be sought from the GFAR, CGIAR, USAID, IICA, etc.

Through its Secretariat of Technical Cooperation and Directorate of Technology and Innovation, IICA offered to act as the main executing arm. The President of the Forum and the Technical Secretariat will seek additional support to pinpoint management experiences and methodologies in the region that are relevant to the objective, which is to train national teams of public and private research managers and administrators in innovation management techniques.

The sequence of the activities to be implemented is as follows:

- a. Identification of the specific topic(s) and preparation of the terms of reference for documenting them.
- b. Preparation of the materials.
- c. Scheduling of a forum or specialized meeting on the topic(s), mobilizing the capacities of FORAGRO members
- d. Holding of the forum and/or specialized meetings.
- e. Publication of the experiences.

Expected outcome: Holding of meeting(s) or forum(s) and publication of experiences.

#### ***3.1.4. Political presence (Line 6)***

In the short term (2003): presence in international and national forums relevant to the Forum's activities.

- a. Ministerial Meeting (Forum) under the aegis of the Twelfth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture in Panama, November 2003
- b. Meetings of the CGIAR (Manila) and ICW (Washington) and of the GFAR and subsequent meetings
- c. Meetings of the Board of FONTAGRO, PROCIs, CATIE, CARDI
- d. Meetings of Agricultural Committees of PARLATINO

e. Others to be decided (i.e. civil society forums)

The Technical Secretariat, with support from the Executive Committee, will prepare and circulate among the members a calendar of international and global events relevant to the objective of this activity of the Forum. When necessary, members of FORAGRO will be asked to participate as its representatives, e.g., when the proximity of the event or the topic so permit.

Expected outcome: FORAGRO represented at the mentioned events.

**3.1.5. *Diagnostic study and future scenarios for the Regional Agricultural Technology Research and Development System (Line 9)***

The Executive Committee reached agreement on this task. Actions envisaged:

- a. Preparation of and agreement on the terms of reference for the work. This task will be undertaken by the Technical Secretariat, with support from the Forum's President and Executive Committee.
- b. Derived from the above: commission the study and secure the financial resources needed, the analysis and presentation at FORAGRO 2004, for discussion and recommendations.

Expected outcome: Document on current status and possible future actions for consolidating the System. Presentation of the study at the FORAGRO 2004 meeting, for discussion, political validation of options, and recommendations for action.

**3.2. *Actions with regard to the development of priority topics (Line 2)***

Based on the priority topics identified at the last international meeting of FORAGRO in April 2002 in Brasilia (see Annex No. 2), additional prioritization was needed according to the work of the Executive Committee at its meeting in October, in order to select the topics that would be worked on during the 2003–2004 biennium.

As a result of the consultations with the Executive Committee, the following four priority topics were selected for the activities in the next biennium:

- Genetic resources
- New Technologies
- Natural Resources
- Agribusiness



The following actions will be implemented for each one of the priority topics:

- a. Analysis of the “state of the art” regarding research and technology development on the specific topic, including an institutional mapping exercise to identify the main actors and potential partners for coordinated regional action.
- b. Setting-up of the functional group (or network) on each priority topic and designation of the lead institution and the respective coordinator, who must have the institutional support required to articulate and coordinate tasks.
- c. Formulation of the program or project proposal and its discussion at a technical meeting.
- d. Organization for implementation by the national and regional members, and negotiation of external resources.

**3.3. *Strengthening of the Technical Secretariat and setting-up of the Technical Advisory Group of the Forum’s Technical Secretariat (GTAF)***

The Executive Committee, endorsing the recommendations of the International Meeting in April, felt it necessary to initiate a specific activity aimed at strengthening the Technical Secretariat, with the following lines of work:

- a. Strengthening of the Forum’s Technical Secretariat, with associate professionals or by means of temporary internships with human resources from member institutions and, where possible, international technical cooperation.
- b. Mobilization of additional financial resources from external sources, based on the technical proposals, to support the Secretariat’s coordination actions.
- c. Organization of the Technical Advisory Group for the Forum’s Secretariat (GTAF), comprised of the Executive Secretaries of the PROCIS; and, in collaboration with them, preparation of the duties and modus operandi of the GTAF, as well as the outputs it is expected to produce.
- d. Determine an operating budget and how it is to be financed, and seek resources in kind and in cash, in agreement with the members and other organizations interested in FORAGRO.

#### **4. Operating strategy**

The 2003-2004 POA will be implemented following the principles established in FORAGRO's MTP, as described below:

Annual programming: The Technical Secretariat will prepare annual work plans containing actions consistent with the POA and agreed with the President of the Executive Committee (EC). If issues arise that require the approval of the EC, the Committee members will be consulted.

Annual implementation of actions: Based on the lines of action identified in the POA, the planned actions will be implemented. An annual report will be presented to the Executive Committee on the implementation of the actions and the results obtained.

Participation of the members: The members of FORAGRO will play a decisive role in the development, promotion and implementation of actions. The Technical Secretariat and the GTAF will coordinate the respective actions.

Expansion of FORAGRO's audience to include producers' organizations: The Secretariat, with support from the GTAF and the Executive Committee, will compile the names of candidates from associations of national and regional producers, to be submitted ad referendum to the Executive Committee, with a view to inviting some of them to future meetings of the Forum.

Groups and/or consortia on the priority topics: The Technical Secretariat, with support from the GTAF and interested members, will set up working groups and/or consortia to initiate the implementation of the actions planned in regard to each topic.

Thematic networks: Also for the priority topics established in the POA, and when deemed necessary, FORAGRO's Technical Secretariat will support and promote the development of specialized networks, to support the implementation of actions and, in general, to promote the topic in the region. The networks will promote communication and the mobilization of information for the preparation of project proposals, and may be supported by INFOTEC, regarding the use of the digital platform available.

Action articulated with the PROCIs: FORAGRO's agenda will be based on a joint effort with the PROCIs at two levels. First, via articulation with FORAGRO's Technical Secretariat through the GTAF and its links with FORAGRO's Executive Committee. Second, at the level of coordination of actions among the PROCIs, on topics relevant to FORAGRO.

Communication and dissemination: FORAGRO has its web page ([www.iicanet.org/foragro](http://www.iicanet.org/foragro)) and INFOTEC ([www.infotec.ws](http://www.infotec.ws)). The implementation of

FORAGRO's POA will be underpinned to a great extent by a major effort to develop a system of communication towards and among the members and stakeholders. The Technical Secretariat will oversee this task. The dissemination of both political impact and analytical and technical documents and bulletins will also be an essential part of FORAGRO's development.

**Financing:** Implementing the POA will call for resources to be mobilized, both for the Forum's annual coordination activities and management meetings (coordination actions of the Technical Secretariat; meetings of the Executive Committee; hemispheric dialogue via the Fourth International Meeting; Political and Technical Presence), and for the development of the Regional R&D Agenda on the priority topics. The amount of resources involved is specified in the biennial budget approved by the EC.

**5. Estimated costs of the 2003-2004 POA and potential sources of financing.**

| HEADING                          | MEDIUM TERM PLAN |               |               | BIENNIAL PLAN OF ACTION |               |               |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                  | RESOURCES        |               |               | RESOURCES               |               |               |
|                                  | 2003             | 2004          | TOTAL         | 2003                    | 2004          | TOTAL         |
| 1. Coordination Actions          | 30000            | 30000         | 60000         | 10000                   | 10000         | 20000         |
| 2. Meetings Executive Com.       | 20000            |               | 20000         | 20000                   |               | 20000         |
| 3. Hemispheric Dialogue          |                  | 100000        | 100000        |                         | 100000        | 100000        |
| 4. Policy Presence               | 6000             | 6000          | 12000         | 6000                    | 6000          | 12000         |
| 5. Agenda priority topics        | 50000            | 25000         | 75000         | 50000                   | 25000         | 75000         |
| 6. Information and documentation | 35000            | 30000         | 65000         | 35000                   | 30000         | 65000         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                     | <b>141000</b>    | <b>191000</b> | <b>332000</b> | <b>121000</b>           | <b>171000</b> | <b>292000</b> |

1. Coordination Actions: Technical Secretariat and Support Group; travel, communications, materials
2. Executive Committee Meetings
3. Hemispheric Dialogue: Biennial Meeting in Panama, 2004
4. Political Presence: Presence of FORAGRO in relevant forums
5. Regional Agenda:
  - 5.1. Priority Topics: Terms of Reference; Meeting preparation profile; Project prepared by PROCIS; Negotiation
  - 5.2. Program for Institutional Management of Science and Technology: Terms of Reference; Identification of materials; technical meeting and presentation at IV FORAGRO Meeting.
  - 5.3. Diagnostic study of Regional Research System.

## **ANNEX 1. FORAGRO. LINES OF ACTION**

### **A. POLITICAL-INSTITUTIONAL**

1. Hemispheric Dialogue
2. Support for the construction of a Regional Technology Research and Development Agenda
3. Sharing of experiences
4. Prospective studies
5. Development of an information system
6. Lobbying on behalf of R&D through political and technical presence in relevant political and technical forums
7. Training and instruction
8. Knowledge and Society
9. Evaluation of performance and support for the consolidation of the Regional R&D System (new)

### **B. PRIORITY TOPICS FOR THE REGIONAL R&D AGENDA**

These topics are the “natural” result of the analysis and discussion that takes place within the Forum on the situation of agriculture from the technological perspective. Although the Forum does not execute projects directly, it does encourage its members to implement concrete R&D actions aimed at finding solutions to common problems of the region’s agriculture. During the Third International Meeting of FORAGRO, held in May 2002 in Brasilia, the following R&D topics were identified as a priority for the region’s agriculture:

1. Water resources (rational utilization, conservation, quality and availability)
2. Genetic resources (conservation, characterization and utilization)
3. Sustainable management of natural resources (soils and biodiversity)
4. Promotion and development of agribusiness
5. Technologies utilizing agro-ecological principles
6. Insertion of small-scale production into agrifood chains
7. Clean production (as a requirement for market access, the demand of consumers and harmonization with nature)
8. Development and utilization of new agricultural technologies (biotechnology and precision agriculture)
9. Integrated pest management and integrated management of crops and animals
10. Information systems and training of human resources in ICTs
11. Climate change.

## **ANNEX 2**

### **MEXICO 2000 DECLARATION “AGRICULTURE WITH KNOWLEDGE”**

The participants from more than 30 countries of the Americas which include national agricultural and forestry research institutes, universities, private sector, regional and international institutions and centers, NGOs, producer associations, in the second meeting of the Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO), meeting in Mexico City from September 6 to 8, share a strategic role of agriculture and the rural milieu based on the following principles:

- Agriculture and the rural milieu are strategic in the development of the Americas to reduce rural and urban poverty and strengthen food security.
- The competitiveness of agriculture and the new ruralism, based on the sustainable use of the many natural resources of the region, in a globalized economy depend increasingly on knowledge and technology.
- The creation and maintenance of technological capabilities require political will, sufficient resources and effective management.
- The current challenge related to taking advantage of the new opportunities of agriculture needs a profound institutional transformation which includes changes in policy, rules, organizational adjustments and human capital development.
- There is a technology gap that is especially critical in tropical agriculture which should be given priority to close it.
- The challenges and opportunities of globalization make it necessary to integrate collaborative efforts and strategic alliances into scientific and technological cooperation among countries.

Under these principles and with the full support of the participants in the meeting the following is affirmed:

1. We recognize FORAGRO as a forum suited to facilitating dialogue and reflection on the strategic issues of agriculture and technological innovation.
2. We share the goal of increasing in the next decade investment in research to at least 1% of agricultural GDP.
3. That the results of research must generate an important social and economic impact taking into consideration the conservation of natural resources and traditional small-farmer practices.

4. We support the importance of providing FONTAGRO and other mechanisms with financial resources to facilitate the consolidation of the agricultural and forestry research networks.
5. Special forums will be convened on topics related to legislation, measurement of impact and transfer for agricultural and forestry research.
6. FORAGRO must use its influence to ensure that the priorities of agricultural and forestry research in the Americas are included on the agendas of the international research systems.
7. We recognize the relevance of the cooperative research programs (PROCs) as a foundation for supporting the execution of the guidelines of FORAGRO, as well as the importance of the private sector, universities, NGOs and producers in the preparation of a shared research agenda.
8. The General Directorate of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is asked to set time aside during the eleventh Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and the ministerial forum for the presentation of the conclusions of the second FORAGRO meeting.

These and other actions contributed by the participants in the forum order the FORAGRO executive committee to prepare a plan of action that includes a strategy for positioning and reassessing agriculture with knowledge to reduce poverty in the rural milieu and address the issues related to food and competitiveness in agriculture in our countries.

The participants in the second FORAGRO meeting

8 September 2000, Mexico City

## ANNEX 3

### SOME INPUTS FOR THE PLAN OF ACTION STEMMING FROM THE MEXICO 2000 MEETING

As a result of the “Mexico 2000 - Agriculture with Knowledge” Meeting of FORAGRO, several topics were identified on which the Forum should base its actions in the next few years. These topics emphasize the lines of action of FORAGRO and also pave the way for other new ones. Some of the important topics were as follows:

- Need to implement actions aimed at repositioning the role of agriculture and science and technology, seeking greater political support and new alliances with the parliamentary sector in the region.
- Support for the definition of a regional R&D agenda including regional priorities, strategies for collaborative action, information systems, based on a shared prospective vision of agriculture and rurality.
- Implement actions aimed at demonstrating the risks of under-investing in scientific and technological development for the agricultural sector, to find arguments that will convince policymakers and planners to allocate resources to R&D compatible with the region’s level of economic development.
- Implement actions aimed at increasing articulation and cooperation links in the Americas with the International Research System and with advanced research centers in developed countries. This action is regarded as strategically important, in order to have more widespread access to scientific and technological events that could be very useful for agriculture in the Americas. It also includes the need to achieve greater representation of the priorities of LAC in the CGIAR’s work plans and investments, and achieve faster progress in developing competitive technology for staples.
- Underscore the need to boost the processes aimed at modernizing agriculture, by strengthening the public and private infrastructure and human resources for R&D, especially in tropical ecosystems.
- Support initiatives aimed at implementing educational reforms to facilitate a shift in the region’s agriculture from an agrarian vision to agriculture based on knowledge and innovation. This action involves respect for native populations, their culture and their ancestral practices, as well as efforts to find effective ways of incorporating the new paradigm into rural economies.
- Focus efforts on the promotion of more equitable agricultural development in the region, by enhancing scientific and technological capabilities in the poorest or least endowed regions, especially in the tropical region of the Americas.

- Support the efforts of national research systems to promote and internalize the new innovation paradigm, replacing the agrarian paradigm, by promoting greater connectivity among the actors, within a framework of multiplicity. This action calls for more technological integration and greater exchange and use of the information and technologies available, for shared problem solving, and the promotion of new horizontal cooperation actions in the field of R&D.
- Promote exchange on best practices in modernization and institutional transformation processes with emphasis on agricultural R&D, in the context of agriculture with knowledge.
- Implement actions aimed at achieving more and more effective participation by both the private sector and universities in the orientation and actions of FORAGRO, in keeping with the institutional transformations taking place in regional and national R&D systems.
- Promote actions designed to encourage the international banking system to take a greater interest and participate more in the financing of actions aimed at increasing the incorporation of know-how into agribusiness.



**Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research  
and Technology Development**

**Third International Meeting of FORAGRO - Brasilia 2002  
Agriculture and Technology Development:  
Toward the Integration of the Americas**

**DECLARATION OF BRASILIA 2002**

We, the participants in the Third Meeting of FORAGRO, acting in a personal capacity, consider that, as part of the process of hemispheric integration, it is necessary to promote the development of a regional agenda for technology innovation founded on alliances among the countries of the Americas. Such alliances, with the active participation of governments and members of society in general, especially those who live and work in rural areas, and the support of international technical and financial cooperation organizations, should be aimed at achieving the following purposes:

1. To shift agriculture toward an agribusiness system in order to recognize its economic and social importance and fundamental role in national development.
2. To promote increased production, productivity and quality, with a view to improving the competitiveness and diversification of agriculture in the region, food security and sovereignty and the development of new opportunities to produce and add value.
3. To balance agricultural and environmental development, promoting the use of technologies that are less harmful to the environment, and the sustainable management and conservation of natural resources, especially biodiversity and water resources.
4. To promote the combined use of new and conventional technologies, with a view to obtaining products that are profitable, of the highest quality and safe in terms of the environment, agriculture and human health.
5. To contribute to the alleviation of poverty by generating production alternatives based on technologies that will improve living conditions in rural areas and thereby stem the migration of the population, and encourage the management of fragile ecosystems, especially in the tropics.

With this in mind, we, the participants in the Third Meeting of FORAGRO, acting in a personal capacity, declare our intention:

1. To continue to identify and implement research priorities that will make it possible to tap the opportunities of the new world economic order, reduce rural poverty and conserve natural resources.

2. To ensure that the development of knowledge via agricultural technology innovations is placed high on the agendas of policy makers in the countries, and of hemispheric integration efforts.
3. To optimize agricultural technology systems in the Americas, so that greater use is made of them and they have a bigger socioeconomic impact.
4. To draw attention to the need for both the public and private sectors to invest more, given the chronically low level of investment in science and technology in most of the countries.
5. To support the modernization of education based on new knowledge and technologies, but also respecting traditional practices, incorporating the new technological paradigms and taking all farmers into consideration, especially small-scale ones.
6. To work to ensure that science and technology figure more prominently on the economic integration agenda, strengthening cooperation between research and development institutions and programs.
7. To continue to call attention to the urgent need for markets to become even more open, and for industrialized countries to reduce the subsidies they grant to their farmers.

We consider the following topics, presented in random order, to be the most relevant in terms of hemispheric cooperation:

- Water resources (sound use, conservation, quality and availability)
- Genetic resources (conservation, characterization and use)
- Sustainable management of natural resources (soil and biodiversity)
- Promotion and development of agribusinesses
- Technologies using agroecological principles
- Incorporation of small-scale agriculture into agrifood chains
- Clean production (as a prerequisite for market opening, consumer demand and harmonization with nature)
- Development and use of new agricultural technologies (biotechnology and precision agriculture)
  - Integrated pest management and integrated crop and livestock management
  - Information systems and human resources training
  - Climate change

To address these topics, the following proposals should be implemented:

1. To consolidate FORAGRO as the most appropriate hemispheric mechanism for facilitating dialogue among the public sector, private sector, universities, NGOs, producers and the international research sector on topics of strategic importance for agriculture, from the perspective of technology. To do this, the Executive

Committee must take an active role, strengthening the development of the Technical Secretariat, so that both can participate more effectively in the global system.

2. To promote institutional strengthening, to encourage the reorganization and consolidation of agricultural research programs and networks, recognizing the importance of the PROCIs, and using them, with support from the countries, as strategic mechanisms in strengthening regional cooperation.
3. To draw attention to the importance of, and strengthen, mechanisms for the funding of agricultural research, such as the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund- FONTAGRO.
4. To promote strategic alliances with the international and regional centers in areas of research that are a priority for, and have an impact on, the Americas.
5. To ask the General Directorate of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) to set aside time during the Ministerial Meeting held in conjunction with the Twelfth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) for the presentation of the conclusions of the Third International Meeting of FORAGRO.

Brasilia, 26 April 2002

