

IICA



**MEDIUM TERM PLAN
1998 - 2002**

*AGRICULTURE:
BEYOND A SECTORAL VIEW*

WHAT IS IICA?

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is the specialized agency for agriculture of the inter-American system.

As a hemispheric technical cooperation agency, IICA can be flexible and creative in responding to needs for technical cooperation in the countries, through its thirty-four Technical Cooperation Agencies, its five Regional Centers and Headquarters, which coordinate the implementation of strategies tailored to the needs of each Region.

The 1998-2002 Medium Term Plan (MTP) provides the strategic framework for orienting IICA's actions during this four-year period. Its general objective is to support the efforts of the Member States in achieving sustainable agricultural development, within the framework of hemispheric integration and as a contribution to human development in rural areas.

The Institute's work is aimed at making changes in agricultural production, trade and institutions and in the people who work in the sector, using an integrated and systemic approach to development, which is based on competitiveness, equity and solidarity as the key to achieving the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas.

The Member States of IICA are: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, The Bahamas (Commonwealth of), Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela. Its Permanent Observers are: Arab Republic of Egypt, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, European Communities, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Poland, Romania, Russian Federation and Spain.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Reforms

The 1990s have been characterized by the consolidation of democracy, macroeconomic stability and sustained growth (without yet equaling the levels reached in the 1970s). With few exceptions, the performance of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in all three areas has been very encouraging.

External investment flows and growth in the export sector have shown to be the instruments that have contributed most to economic recovery in these countries. However, it is important to recognize that there are marked differences among countries, which have not all implemented reforms at the same speed or in the same manner.

Macroeconomic stability was generally accompanied by a process of reforms, especially in the trade, tax and financial sectors. However, such reforms were often neither deep nor widespread enough to meet requirements, which limited the opportunities for greater growth provided by stability.¹ As a result, frequent social tensions developed that affected the consolidation of earlier accomplishments.

One factor of particular importance is unemployment, which is responsible in many cases for generating political instability and slowing

¹ For example, reforms were not effected in the education and training of human resources, which is essential to growth.

the pace of reform. In recent years, it has reached alarming levels in some countries, especially when one factors in underemployment. Also, despite the efforts of the States, social spending, especially on health and education, has not been able to satisfy the needs of a population characterized by high levels of poverty.

A number of countries in the hemisphere must still overcome numerous obstacles in order to achieve the sustainable levels of growth needed to produce real improvement in well-being. New challenges and new restrictions are being encountered as the process moves forward, demanding, in addition to imagination, creativity, perseverance and consistency in the area of macroeconomic policy, and the democratization of institutions.

We are just now entering an intermediate stage in the stabilization and reform process in which it is common to make adjustments and corrections to neutralize the internal and external destabilizing effects that often produce short-term crises that halt initiatives under way and threaten progress already achieved. The Asian crises and their side effects are the most recent example on the international level, as is the El Niño phenomenon on the national level.

The course to be followed in meeting the future challenges of development does not necessitate a fundamental change in the prevailing model; however, there must be a change in the emphasis on its priorities. Reforms must now be directed toward issues that, while well known, have not been given sufficient attention. It is necessary to give a vigorous boost to questions such as decentralization, consensus-building with civil society, market globalization, scientific-technological innovation, governability and, from a new perspective, the efficient administration and reallocation of public resources.² All this requires a legal and institu-

2 It should be noted that new packages of reforms have already been proposed to correct the weaknesses and shortcomings of earlier ones. Four objectives identified by the IDB provide general guidelines for formulating new policies that will contribute to attaining the objectives of the reforms proposed by that organization. They are: to effect further market reforms; to reduce the causes of volatility (through fiscal policy and monetary and savings policies); to accelerate the education and training of human resources; and to expand the range of equity-seeking instruments (by restructuring the factors market and public institutions).

tional framework which society and its potential and necessary economic partners believe is safe and in which they can trust.

2. Agriculture

2.1 Performance

Agriculture, viewed strictly as a production activity, and despite its continued importance in the economies of LAC, is growing slower than the rest of the economy. For example, between 1990-1996, while the value added of agriculture grew at 2.7% annually, overall GDP grew at 3.3%.

Total GDP and the value added of agriculture performed differently during the boom of the 1970s, the crises of the 1980s and the recovery of this decade. In the 1970s, total GDP grew at an annual rate of 6.0%; in the 1980s, it fell to 1.0%; and in the 1990s, it is recovering at 3.3%. Agriculture followed the same general pattern, but with less dramatic variations: it grew by 3.5% in the 1970s, by 2% in the 1980s and by 2.7% so far this decade.

A comparison of the damage suffered by the agricultural sector with that of the overall economy demonstrates the former's ability to withstand the crisis of the 1980s. This can be explained in part by policies that existed to protect agriculture, even though they benefited the least efficient sectors of the economy. Once again, and following the reforms, agriculture is demonstrating a notable capability to tap market opportunities, as evidenced by the growth in exports, diversification of the types of goods produced, and a strong trend to establish linkages with other sectors.

For example, during the past two decades, while imports grew by 10% annually, agricultural exports from LAC grew by 7.5%, showing positive net balances. Also, agricultural exports have become so diversified that the value of fruit and vegetable exports now exceeds that of traditional products such as coffee, sugar, meat, etc., and which, in the late-1970s, accounted for 66% of total value.

Depending on the period being analyzed, agriculture can show upward or downward trends at the regional or hemispheric levels. Nevertheless, the fact is that in most countries, agriculture has played a prominent role both in times of crisis and in times of recovery. It continues to play this role today in some countries of the hemisphere that are enjoying a period of sustained economic growth, as reflected in their principal macroeconomic indicators.

2.2 A renewed vision

Viewed in the medium- and long-term, agriculture can no longer be the subject of isolated, biased and autarchic analyses. Its multidimensional and interdependent nature opens up new areas of action for it in the rest of the economy, and, at the same time, requires that it behave differently and enter into complex and innovative alliances.

As producers gradually adopt new technologies, production will become more complex but also more competitive. Producers will need to take advantage of all the means at their disposal to gain access to national and international networks offering technical support, information and trade services, in the context of a market that is increasingly globalized, demanding and sensitive to the quality and price of goods.

The need to boost competitiveness has given rise to a systemic approach to agriculture, in which the sector is no longer viewed as merely a food-producing activity but rather a business that, to be profitable, must have efficient marketing systems, good service providers, adequate infrastructure, state-of-the-art technologies that ensure resource sustainability, and strong links with industry and the export sector.³

³ According to Alvin and Heidi Toffler, one of the most advanced industries of the twenty-first century may very well be the most backward one today: agriculture.

Sufficient data and arguments underpin this interesting vision of the future, which is based on a far greater use of state-of-the-art technologies and a much more rational management of natural resources. However, this optimistic vision must not shield us from the reality that millions of small farmers face in the Americas every day.

As reforms move forward and are consolidated, the new institutional framework for agriculture will also be consolidated, which is a basic requirement for enabling agriculture to more rapidly become part of the new economic paradigm, and for attracting other non-agricultural rural activities to the market.

There is considerable extreme rural poverty in the hemisphere and the traditional way of addressing it has limited possibilities of success. While agriculture alone cannot eliminate rural poverty, agricultural development is a necessary condition for achieving it.

In the struggle to overcome rural poverty, we must also abandon the sectoral approach. The integration of agriculture with other non-agricultural rural activities, and of these with the market, is probably the most viable alternative for addressing and overcoming the problem. Of course, this will have to be accompanied by actions targeting the rural poor (to complement their efforts), who must play a decisive role in the design and execution of the programs. This is the only way to achieve the desired impact.

Accordingly, we must consider that there is often a close relationship between rural poverty, quality and the reduced availability of natural resources. These conditions are often specific to certain regions, especially in tropical areas, where treatment will have to take into account more than just proposals for better education or training, or better technology for increasing competitiveness.

3. IICA's Role in Agriculture in the Americas

3.1 A retrospective analysis

The 1994-1998 Medium Term Plan (MTP) emphasized the promotion of sustainable agricultural development through transformations in production, trade and institutions. It was assumed that, within the framework of hemispheric integration, such transformations would bring about changes in society and in human beings. It also underscored the need for development to be founded on three pillars: competitiveness, equity and sustainability.

In that MTP, the Institute addressed topics that four years ago were considered essential for repositioning agriculture in the new socioeconomic and political-institutional context. In executing the MTP, action at the country level was linked to a hemispheric vision, and support was given to strategic alliances with other institutions. In addition, adjustments were made to take advantage of the opportunities created as a result of the first "Summit of the Americas," held in Miami in late 1994.

Initially, the Institute centered its attention on four Areas of Concentration. The first, Socioeconomic Policy, Trade and Investment, provided support to the different regional integration processes under way in the Americas, and within them, efforts to harmonize agricultural policies and prepare for upcoming agricultural trade negotiations in the Member States. New institutional arrangements were promoted for improving agriculture's position in markets including agricultural commodity exchanges and rural information centers. In addition, domestic and international market and price information systems were created and adapted for serving the new needs of farmers. The promotion of analysis and discussions by participants in production-trade chains contributed to the effective articulation of agriculture with other sectors of the economy.

The Area of Science and Technology, Natural Resources and Agricultural Production was successful in helping public and private

institutions in the countries modernize their research systems, develop new institutional models for technology generation and transfer, engage in reciprocal cooperation activities with national agricultural research organizations (PROCI), and develop relations with international centers.

In the 1994-1998 MTP, Sustainable Rural Development was identified as another of the four Areas of Concentration, reflecting the Institute's conviction that this topic would be acquiring greater importance. This prediction proved to be true, as evidenced by the volume of resources invested in rural development, the variety of projects being executed and the frequent requests for services from public and private institutions in most of the countries. The Institute made a major effort, within its means, to respond to these requests, providing strong support to the design of strategies, policies and programs; the execution of components of externally funded projects; the exchange of experiences among countries, especially for the development of the gender approach; and the articulation of rural development with production, rural microenterprises, trade and services, agroindustry and the environment.

The new rules governing international agricultural trade stemming from the creation of the WTO considerably augmented the importance of IICA's Area of Agricultural Health. In this field, the Institute has had a long tradition of support to the countries and has developed a solid network of strategic alliances with other regional and international institutions. Its cooperation focused on sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and the management of emergency situations caused by pests and diseases. Significant progress was made in formulating and harmonizing sanitary and phytosanitary policies and regulations, designing information and surveillance systems, establishing networks of animal and plant health laboratories, and promoting integrated pest management with a view to reducing the impact of agrochemicals on the environment.

During the 1994-1998 period, the Institute also attached great importance to professional and technical training and education (both formal and informal) for human resources working in agriculture in the hemisphere.

More than a priority activity cutting across the other Areas of Concentration, training and education has become a topic of strategic importance whose impact and achievements have placed the Institute at the vanguard in this field. IICA's support to public and private organizations and to universities has received the solid backing of all the countries.

Finally, recognizing the systemic nature of agriculture, IICA adopted a renewed vision of agriculture when it began implementing the 1994-1998 MTP, in order to contribute to a reevaluation and repositioning of the sector. The importance of developing a new institutional framework for agriculture, as well as awareness of the fact that the trend toward economic globalization will have a strong impact on this framework, also oriented the Institute's actions in each of its strategic areas of action. Thus, the Institute was able to provide an equitable and timely response to the great challenges posed by integration in the region, and to comply efficiently with the countries' requests for cooperation. As a result, the Institute consolidated its technical leadership and its important role as a specialized inter-American network.

3.2 Looking to the future

During its 56 years of institutional life, IICA has provided ample proof of its ability to adapt to the needs of its Member States and to the changes taking place throughout the world and in the hemisphere, which has enabled it to be proactive and to provide cooperation services of the highest quality. The Medium Term Plan presented for the 1998-2002 period is faithful to that tradition.

The 1998-2002 MTP, prepared in response to a mandate from the Inter-American Board of Agriculture⁴, identifies two levels at which the Institute will focus its cooperation over the next four years: multinational

4 Resolution N°. 308: *1998-2002 Medium Term Plan*, Ninth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, Santiago, Chile, October 13, 1997.

(hemispheric and regional) and national. Both receive equal attention, not only because they are closely linked, but also because the inter-American nature of the Institute makes it impossible to consider them separately.

Indeed, to speak of cooperation (such as in trade or agricultural health) at the country level, without taking into consideration regional, hemispheric and even global circumstances, would limit severely the Institute's action. Also, it would be to ignore opportunities emerging as a result of globalization and integration in the Americas.

Hence, the 1998-2002 MTP recognizes that over the last four years a series of events occurred at both the world and hemispheric levels that have a considerable impact on agriculture in IICA's Member States.

These events, which provide a general framework for the Institute's action, are described in Chapter I and include: i) the conclusion, in 1994, of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which grants agriculture full recognition as a multilateral trade discipline, creates the World Trade Organization (WTO), and calls for the initiation, in 1999, of a new round of multilateral negotiations on agriculture; ii) the two Summits of Heads of State and Government of the Americas and a Special Summit for Sustainable Development, in which these leaders underscored the importance of strengthening inter-American dialogue and reaffirmed their commitment to integration and development in the Americas; iii) as a result of the aforementioned, numerous meetings held at the ministerial and vice ministerial levels, with members of the business community and professionals, who, in representation of their countries, developed new forms of relations among them and lay the groundwork for initiating, in 1998, negotiations for creating the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and the Agricultural Negotiations Group; and iv) complementing these were the Ibero-American Summits—in preparation for which two meetings of Ibero-American ministers were held (Santiago, Chile in 1996 and Venezuela in 1997)—which opened the way for new relations among the Latin American countries, Spain and Portugal.

At the outset, this document identifies the challenges that agriculture will face as a result of these developments, challenges that also exist for IICA at the political-institutional level, inasmuch as the ministers of foreign affairs of the Americas agreed in 1998 to work to renew the OAS and the inter-American system. In response to this mandate, the OAS General Secretariat is in the process of incorporating the ministerial meetings as a mechanism for analyzing in greater depth the initiatives arising from the presidential summits and determining how to execute them. In its first chapter, the new MTP underscores the fact that the agricultural sector of the hemisphere is indeed fortunate to have an Inter-American Board of Agriculture that can play an active role in this process.

In Chapter II, the policy guidelines issued by the Summits are translated into strategic guidelines for the Institute's action. This takes shape in the strategic framework that defines the Institute's work with its mission, vision and general strategy.

One of the components of the general strategy is the Institute's orientation, in which an important role is given to the renewed vision of agriculture, a vision that serves as a frame of reference for the Institute's technical action and promotes a concept of agriculture that is **broader than a sectoral vision**.

Chapter III discusses the recommendations of the two Ministerial Forums, held in San Jose, Costa Rica (1995) and in Santiago, Chile (1997), and the resolutions of the Ninth Regular Meeting of the IABA that refer to IICA's cooperation services. The subject matter of these recommendations and resolutions is reflected in the strategic areas and priority fields of action set out for IICA in this document, and which provide an organized structure through which to effectively meet the needs of public and private organizations in the Member States. They provide the thematic content of the strategic framework, defined by IICA's mission, vision and general strategy, with the goal being to provide high-quality services that have a significant impact. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the priority topics that will guide the action of the Regional Centers and the types of cooperation they will provide.

The last three chapters establish guidelines and policies that will enable the Institute to take a qualitative leap forward to consolidate its position as a leading institution in the Americas. Chapter IV summarizes policies on institutional resources. Chapter V covers the guidelines to be followed to consolidate the institutional transformation process begun in 1994, when the first steps toward decentralization were taken. Lastly, Chapter VI proposes guidelines for designing a new planning process—taking into account strategic and operational considerations—to guide the actions of the Institute in meeting the challenges posed by the new international and national institutional framework.

CHAPTER I:

**BASES FOR AN INTER-AMERICAN AGENDA
FOR AGRICULTURE**

Throughout this decade, the dialogue among countries has been strengthened by a series of discussions and negotiations aimed at moving the countries toward a sustainable form of development. The political determination that has governed these processes has been translated into a number of agreements that were adopted at global UN conferences, at the Ibero-American, hemispheric and regional meetings of Heads of State and Government, at ministerial meetings and at multilateral negotiations.

1.1 The Community of Nations

The United Nations has held several conferences⁵ and promoted the adoption of international conventions⁶ that have had an impact on government and nongovernmental policies and action programs aimed at promoting sustainable development.

Two conferences were of particular importance for agriculture and rural areas: the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit, 1992) and the World Food Summit (1996). Agenda 21, a worldwide plan for promoting sustainable development, was approved at the Earth Summit. Because of its continued validity, in 1997 the UN General Assembly reaffirmed its commitment to the Agenda

5 These were the conferences on Environment and Development (1992); Human Rights (1993), Population (1994); Small Developing Island States (1994); Social Development (1995); Women (1995); Human Settlements (1996); and Food and Nutrition (1996).

6 Principally those on Biological Diversity; Climate Change; the Struggle Against Desertification and the International Trade of Species in Danger of Extinction.

until the year 2002⁷ and demanded a greater contribution from the production sectors in its execution. The World Food Summit expressed the political determination to achieve food security and to engage in joint efforts to eradicate hunger. The commitments assumed call for, among other things, a food and agricultural trade that promotes food security, and the adoption of agricultural policies that ensure an adequate supply of food at all levels and recognize the multifunctional nature of agriculture.

Another development of great importance for the future of agriculture took place within the framework of the GATT, when the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, which established the World Trade Organization (WTO), concluded in 1994. With these accords, services and intellectual property rights were also incorporated as disciplines under the GATT, and there was a significant expansion of the coverage and disciplines that govern the trade of goods. Two examples are the Agreement on Agriculture⁸ and the complementary Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Moreover, it was agreed that a new round of multilateral negotiations on agriculture would begin prior to January 1, 2000.

In short, within the framework of the United Nations Conferences and multilateral organizations such as the WTO, IMF and the World Bank, countries currently establish, through negotiation and consensus-building, the field of action of many of their national policies. National decisions adopted within the framework of this new international institutional structure are no longer limited to regulating import tariffs or covering certain trade disciplines. Rather, they address issues ranging from monetary and fiscal policy to internal support policies for production and sectoral development, services, investment regulations, labor practices, environmental policies, and more.

7 United Nations Organization. Program for the further implementation of Agenda 21. Special Session of the General Assembly, New York, 23-27 June 1997.

8 The Agreement on Agriculture addresses separately the topics of market access, subsidies and import restrictions, and the topics of agricultural policies and domestic markets.

1.2 The Ibero-American Community

Since 1991, the Ibero-American community has held seven summit meetings, which have become a forum for reflection and for fostering cooperation among the Latin American countries, Spain and Portugal. Issues of common interest have been addressed and agreements reached concerning the consolidation of democracy, the promotion and defense of human rights, and the development of mechanisms for integration and cooperation. The agreements that will play the most critical role in Ibero-American development are those addressing trade and integration, and those stemming from the First and Second Ibero-American Forums on Agriculture concerning the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas.⁹

1.3 The Inter-American System

Over the last four years, the Heads of State and Government of the Americas have strengthened the hemispheric dialogue and reaffirmed their commitment to integration and development in the Americas. In living up to this commitment, they are adopting and implementing agreements that have an impact at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, and that take into account the world order.

Because of the continuity given to these discussions and the dynamics they are generating, the different meetings have come to represent steps in the process known as the Summits of the Americas.¹⁰

9 The first Forum was held in Chile in 1996; the second in Venezuela in 1997.

10 This process includes the meetings of Heads of State and of Government held in Miami (December, 1994), in Santa Cruz de la Sierra (December 1996), and in Santiago, Chile (April 1998), the ministerial meetings and the follow-up mechanisms that have been established.

The political, administrative, technical, trade, institutional and financial deliberations of these presidential agreements are the foundation for the Agenda for Integration and Development in the Americas, or the Inter-American Agenda, whose objectives are:¹¹

- to promote and strengthen democracy and respect for human rights;
- to expand economic integration and free trade;
- to eradicate poverty and discrimination;
- to ensure sustainable development and conserve the environment for future generations; and
- to ensure access to and improve the quality of education.

In order to institutionalize the Inter-American Agenda, the countries of the hemisphere agreed to intensify actions within the Organization of American States (OAS).¹² Since the 1994 Miami Summit, efforts to build a new scheme for cooperation have been fostered between the countries and the institutions of the inter-American system. In this regard, and as part of the process to renew the OAS, one of the key topics of its General Assembly meeting in Caracas (June 1998) was the review of the inter-American system.¹³

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- 11 The actions to be taken to achieve these objectives are set out in the Plan of Action of the Second Summit of the Americas (Santiago, Chile, 1998) and in the Plan of Action for Sustainable Development (Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, 1996), which was ratified at the Summit in Chile.
 - 12 The policy framework for the institutions of the inter-American system are established by mandate of the OAS General Assembly. These mandates incorporate agreements deriving from the Summits of Heads of State and Government and from other ministerial meetings in the hemisphere. They also incorporate the global mandates of the United Nations and other forums to which the OAS Member States belong.
 - 13 The inter-American system, headed by the OAS General Secretariat, is made up of: the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW), the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI), the Inter-American Indian Institute (III), the Inter-American Defense Board, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Precisely in order to define more clearly the initiatives emerging from the Summits of the Americas and to later establish mechanisms for putting them into action, the OAS General Secretariat wishes to strengthen and consolidate the hemispheric ministerial forums (or, if necessary, create them, such as in the case of sustainable development). This gives special importance to the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), which was instituted as *the* inter-American meeting of ministers of agriculture.

1.4 The Challenge for Agriculture in the Americas

Since the conclusion of the Uruguay Round negotiations, and more recently within the framework of those on the FTAA, agriculture, viewed in the broader sense of production/trade chains, has been incorporated into the new international institutional structure. This entails new rights but also new obligations for the economic agents involved in agriculture.

In general, the international regulatory structure that is being developed in the economic, social and environmental areas is generating a new type of consensus-building among states; at the same time, it is heavily influencing the development of a new institutional structure at the national level. It is precisely this multilateral influence on agriculture and rural communities that makes the new international regulatory structure a determining factor in the development of agriculture and rural areas.

Also, there is no question that the institutional changes proposed on the Inter-American Agenda have, and will continue to have, a great influence on the way agribusiness is conducted and production activities are carried out. In addition, they will definitely have an impact on the quality of life in our rural communities and on the recovery and conservation of the environment.

The Plans of Action defined at the Summits clearly indicate that a development approach is taking shape that has evident economic, social,

environmental and institutional implications for agriculture in the hemisphere. In this setting, and in order to achieve an agricultural and rural development that is sustainable over time, the countries must meet two pressing challenges:

- to make agriculture more competitive, and
- to improve living conditions in rural areas.

The first challenge must be met by adopting comprehensive policies and strategies to modernize agriculture, based on environmentally sustainable technologies. Particular attention should be paid to upgrading the management skills of production units, which is the only way they can become enterprises (agribusinesses) that can compete both on domestic and international markets.

If the second challenge is to be met, the first must be more than the outcome of isolated technical or economic efforts; instead, it should be part of a realistic strategy to combat poverty in the countryside and ensure the effective participation of rural women and youths in production/trade chains. No less important is the need to halt the destruction of natural resources. Consistency in these matters, which is necessary for social, political and environmental stability, will make it possible to achieve:

- the sustainability of natural resources, and
- effective democratization of social systems.

The sustainable development of a country, and by extension, of its agricultural sector and rural areas, is viewed as the result of a multidimensional process that takes place over time, in which competitiveness, equity, sustainability and governability are articulated and exert influence on one another.

This approach to sustainable development should serve as the frame of reference for leaders of the public and private agricultural sectors throughout the hemisphere in ensuring that agriculture occupies a

position of importance in the inter-American integration process, and in redesigning their institutions and organizations. This will provide an opportunity to creatively capitalize on the uncertainty generated in agriculture as a result of market opening and liberalization.

CHAPTER II:
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the policy guidelines issued by the heads of state and government, organized into the Inter-American Agenda, as well as those of the ministers of agriculture, are translated into strategic guidelines for the Institute's action. These guidelines are expressed in terms of its Mission, Vision and General Strategy.

2.1 Mission

IICA's mission is to provide cooperation services for agriculture and to strengthen and facilitate inter-American dialogue. The first task aims to support its Member States in bringing about sustainable development in agriculture and rural areas; the second situates this development within the context of hemispheric integration.

Clearly, fulfillment of this Mission demands the joint commitment of the three organs that make up the Institute: the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Executive Committee and the General Directorate.¹⁴

2.1.1 Cooperation services

The provision of cooperation services is the direct responsibility of the General Directorate, which has adopted two closely related courses of action in this regard:

14 The General Directorate comprises all the executing units of IICA, including the Office of the Director General, the support, technical and services units located at Headquarters, and the five Regional Centers (comprising the Regional Directorates and the 34 Cooperation Agencies).

- to support, through specific responses to requests for cooperation, public and private organizations in the Member States whose objectives aim to develop agriculture and rural areas; and
- to support the inter-American dialogue at its various levels, providing technical inputs both prior to deliberations and during the decision implementation and monitoring stages.

Because of the countries' pressing need to look ahead and anticipate potential problems in agriculture, IICA's cooperation services must add a new dimension in order to help the countries foresee possible difficulties in the agricultural sector, interpret them and translate them into opportunities.

2.1.2 The inter-American dialogue

Dialogue is a key source of guidance for the Institute's cooperation services at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, and is of particular importance to IICA because:

- the Institute must participate actively in the Summits of the Americas so that it can contribute to repositioning agriculture in the new setting, and provide the Member States with more and better support for their efforts to achieve sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas; and
- the regional agendas of the ministers of agriculture and the Inter-American Agenda must be integrated to form a coherent strategy for agriculture in the Americas.

In this context, it is important to note that this inter-American dialogue on agricultural matters is lead by the ministers of agriculture of the hemisphere within the framework of the IABA.

This hemispheric body can produce agreements and decisions to be implemented by regional forums (i.e., the CAC) or by special forums (i.e., those formed by countries with common interests, like CORECA). The reverse is also possible, with a given region or group of countries putting forth proposals to initiate dialogue at the hemispheric level.

In other words, inter-American dialogue is viewed as a network linking hemispheric, regional and special forums of ministers and government authorities, as well as representatives of the private, academic and trade association sectors. The possibility exists that these forums will give rise to new public and private groups intended to provide consultation and advisory services on specific topics.

2.2 Vision

We will be the leading inter-American institution providing cooperation in order to bring about a comprehensive transformation of agriculture in the Americas, a transformation that is necessary for achieving sustainable development.

- *This position of leadership will be achieved with the quality of the Institute's human resources, its alliances with other organizations, and the effective use of advances in information technology, communications, education and training. This will enable the Institute to maintain its commitment to excellence in the provision of cooperation services.*
- *This leadership will be reaffirmed and recognized by the role played by the IABA, highest-level political forum for the definition of strategic guidelines for agriculture in the Americas.*

In short, IICA is able to assume such leadership because of:

- **the institutionalized participation of the ministers of agriculture of the Americas in its governing bodies (IABA and**

Executive Committee), which puts IICA in a legitimate position to convene business, academic and trade association leaders of the agricultural sector;

- **its up-to-date understanding of the future of agriculture**, based on a systematic process of strategic thinking and prospective analysis, both essential for repositioning agriculture within the new institutional framework being defined by the Summits of the Americas;
- **its training information, methodologies and materials**, based on the successful experience of more than 50 years of work in support of agricultural producers and organizations associated with agriculture in their efforts to seize the opportunities of globalization and compete effectively in expanded markets.
- **its presence in every country of the hemisphere**, which allows it to have direct relations with its clients and facilitates the task of identifying, articulating and responding effectively to their needs. Also, this broad geographical coverage facilitates the establishment of alliances with other institutions, as well as the identification of highly skilled quality human resources.

2.3 General Strategy

The following general strategy will guide the Institute's actions during the 1998-2002 period:

IICA will improve the effectiveness of its cooperation, ensuring that it is proactive and of the highest quality, based on a renewed vision of agriculture and on participatory cooperation, and reflecting our commitment to sustainable development in the context of hemispheric integration. To this end, the Institute will consolidate its own institutional transformation process, promoting a revision of its rules and regulations, its organization and its cooperation actions.

This General Strategy defines the institutional orientation and the characteristics of our cooperation. Below is a brief explanation of each.

2.3.1 Institutional orientation: toward the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas in the context of hemispheric integration

As set forth in Chapter I, the challenges facing agriculture are so great that, to meet them, it will be necessary to establish better linkages between the state, civil society and the market through processes that articulate *modernization* and *democracy* in a functional manner. The Institute is convinced that stronger ties among these sectors will enable all social strata of the agricultural sector to capitalize on the potential benefits of the new national and international contexts in which agriculture is unfolding today.

Accordingly, it is imperative to adopt a new paradigm for cooperation and consensus-building between the state and civil society. Within the framework of an economy in which markets are to play a more extensive and transparent role, this will require new roles from the public and private sectors.

In response to the processes of globalization, hemispheric integration and economic opening, certain decisions, for example to restructure the agricultural production base, must be made by the producers themselves, provided they have a sound knowledge of new technologies and the behavior of the different segments of their target markets. This means a new role for the state: it must facilitate the flow of information and promote the proper use of that information by producers. Thus, information and training will play a key role in constructing this new paradigm.

Cognizant of the urgent need to tackle this situation, and drawing on its experience, IICA bases its cooperation services on a *renewed vision of agriculture* that aims to replace the traditional concept of agriculture as a primary sector of the economy. Instead, it recognizes the true value of its

contributions on the basis of two elements: one, by viewing agriculture and its organizations from a *systemic perspective*; and two, by understanding that in order to bring about sustainable development, agriculture will require a *comprehensive transformation*.

The *systemic perspective* reveals the many relations that exist among agriculture and its organizations, society, the economy (national and international) and the environment. Under this approach, three basic components allow for a more effective analysis of agriculture and rural areas, therefore, improving the capacity for action. They are: the rural milieu, production/trade chains and the interactions between the two.

- The *rural milieu* is defined as the socio-political scenario in which social and economic relations, which are relatively similar in terms of their potential and their ecological, productive, social and institutional limitations, are articulated. As such, the rural milieu is the ideal level at which to allocate resources efficiently and identify the relations among the different socioeconomic agents, and among agricultural production activities, the environment and the rest of rural society.
- *Production/trade chains* are located in the *rural milieu* and link primary agricultural activities with the rest of the economic system: backward (with the sector that supplies inputs), forward (with the processing sector and domestic and international markets) and horizontally (with production, trade and consumer support services).
- The *interaction between production chains* and the *rural milieu* should contribute to the balance and stability of the overall system. To this end, it is important to keep in mind its four dimensions: technical/economic, social, ecological/environmental and political/institutional. The sustainability of development depends on achieving a balance among these four dimensions.¹⁵

15 As indicated in Chapter I, sustainable development is the result of a process which articulates the objectives of competitiveness, equity, sustainability and governability.

The second element of the renewed vision, the *strategy for comprehensive transformation*, is indispensable for achieving sustainable agricultural development. It comprises four dimensions: production, trade, human capital and institutions.¹⁶

- The *transformation of agricultural production* results from understanding market behavior, and is intended to foster greater productivity and better products (using, of course, environmentally sustainable technologies). It also promotes the diversification and processing of agricultural products, and the modernization of support services (through technological innovation and the application of modern management skills).
- The *transformation of trade* arises from the need to redefine domestic trade systems and link them to international trade systems. The aim is to complement the transformation of production and enhance the competitiveness of traditional and nontraditional production/trade systems on national and international markets.
- The *transformation of human beings* includes the modification and reinforcement of values, the development of skills and capabilities, and the internalization of new knowledge. It is a prerequisite for transforming production and trade, but also a result thereof, since the cumulative appropriation of knowledge and changes in attitudes enrich human resources.
- Efforts to bring about the *transformation of institutions* will promote the development of institutional systems that use more participatory decision-making processes and provide support to the transformation of production, trade and human beings, thus ensuring the continuity of efforts for a comprehensive transformation of agriculture.

16 These transformations were described in the 1994-1998 MTP.

On the basis of these definitions, the Institute reaffirms its commitment to support the efforts made by its Member States, through its cooperation action, to effect these transformations within the context of hemispheric integration. The renewed vision of agriculture therefore constitutes the frame of reference for the Institute's technical work.

2.3.2 Characteristics of cooperation

The General Strategy not only defines the Institute's orientation, it also underscores the need to strengthen and improve the Institute's cooperation actions. Accordingly, these actions should be characterized by the following:

- ***Focused action of the highest quality.*** In essence, IICA's work aims to provide cooperation that is characterized by its excellence and significant impact. For this reason the Institute concentrates its efforts on a priority group of fields of action that reflect the needs of the Member States and are endorsed by the IABA.
- ***Client-driven services.*** The Institute's cooperation responds primarily to the needs that are identified in the countries' public and private organizations, and also to requests from regional and hemispheric organizations and forums. Both the interpretation of the demand and the delivery of services are carried out in close partnership with IICA's clients: through the Institute's Cooperation Agencies in the Member States and through its Regional Center Directorates, which provide liaison with the respective regional integration agencies.
- ***Participatory cooperation.*** The Institute's cooperation services are aimed at developing and strengthening the capabilities of public and private organizations in the Member States. Cooperation is defined and carried out with the active participation of public officials, professionals from different fields, producers and business operators in the countries.

- ***Proactive action.*** IICA recognizes that in order to seize the opportunities derived from globalization and inter-American integration, it is essential to have the capabilities for analysis, innovation and foresight required to anticipate events that will affect agriculture. To this end, and as indicated in the Mission statement, the Institute is committed to strengthening the capabilities of key organizations in the Member States to visualize the future, anticipate problems, interpret them and translate them into opportunities that will benefit agriculture.
- ***Commitment to the Inter-American Agenda*** Because IICA is committed to supporting integration and the development of the Americas, its cooperation actions are aimed at promoting agriculture's participation in integration processes of hemispheric and regional scope.

CHAPTER III:
IICA's COOPERATION SERVICES

IICA's cooperation services respond to the challenges currently facing agriculture, as described in Chapter I, and are the vehicle through which the Strategic Framework defined in Chapter II is translated into actions in support of the Member States' efforts to transform agriculture and bring about sustainable development in the sector.

3.1 Strategic Areas for Cooperation Services

The Institute's cooperation services are grouped into six Strategic Areas that are, in turn, divided into two complementary groups that strengthen and enrich each other's action. The first includes the four Areas of Thematic Concentration: Policies and Trade; Science, Technology and Natural Resources; Agricultural Health; and Rural Development. The second comprises two strategic areas that, in addition to being thematic, articulate the Institute's cooperation actions as a result of their cross-cutting nature : Training and Education, and Information and Communications.

While these six areas define the scope of action of the General Directorate, it is important to recall that the extent to which demands can be met will depend on the human and financial resources available.

The Strategic Areas comprise all cooperation actions, including those executed through programs, projects and activities that the Member States entrust to the Institute through specific agreements and contracts having special sources of funding.

3.1.1 Policies and Trade

The international political, economic and social environment has an increasingly powerful impact on economic and trade policies in the countries of the hemisphere. From an economic perspective, structural adjustment and economic opening arising from the move toward globalization and efforts to regain a position on international markets, combined with the full incorporation of agriculture as a multilateral trade discipline and as part of hemispheric and regional integration processes, place stringent conditions on the design and implementation of sectoral policies to modernize agriculture.

The negotiations on agriculture scheduled to begin in September 1998 in the context of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and those to take place in late 1999 within the framework of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, are of particular importance to the processes to liberalize trade and establish a common body of regulations.

Objective

For the organizations (public and private, national and multinational) of the Member States involved in defining policies for agriculture and in trade integration processes to have the capability for: i) negotiating and administering agricultural trade agreements; ii) harmonizing agricultural policies; and iii) formulating and implementing strategies, policies and programs to make agriculture more competitive.

3.1.2 Science, Technology and Natural Resources

Agriculture must be an essential part of efforts to achieve sustainable economic, social and ecological development in the countries. No other economic activity is as intimately linked to natural resources as agriculture, and for this reason, natural resource sustainability depends to a large degree on the transformations made in agricultural production to make it

a sustainable activity. The countries must strengthen their processes of technical change not only to improve production and productivity, but also to develop environmentally friendly production processes that can be used to efficiently and competitively tap the rich natural resource base of the region.

Within this context, the principal challenges to be met in the hemisphere through technological change are: to increase production levels through greater productivity and optimal use of natural resources, without undermining their usefulness and with due consideration for the environment. To date, relatively few agricultural producers have adopted innovative technologies for increasing their competitiveness on national and international markets. In order to turn this situation around, the traditional approach to research, transfer and extension activities must be modified. In the case of marginal or fragile resources, this also means that it is necessary to develop alternative, not necessarily agricultural, economic activities.

Similarly, a priority is to promote integrated natural resource management because it is necessary not only to make an optimum use of natural resources, without degrading them, but also to avoid having a negative impact, through their misuse, on present and future users. Special attention is given to the resources of biodiversity, as they are a source of products and raw materials for agriculture and industry, soils in combination with water for sustainable agricultural production, and water *per se*, in the amounts, quality and timeliness necessary to satisfy the demands of agriculture and of our communities.

Also, in order to close the gap between modern and traditional agriculture, the countries must build a new institutional structure. In addition to creating new technologies, this means having policies that encourage innovation, facilitate an appropriate use of technology by agricultural producers, and encourage and support the development of different manners to harness and manage natural resources in an integrated fashion.

Objective

For public and private, national and multinational organizations in the Member States involved in agricultural technology development, research and extension as well as natural resource management, to have the capability to: i) design technological policies; ii) create and consolidate national and multinational technological innovation systems; iii) facilitate the international transfer of knowledge; and iv) foster institutional development related to the integrated management of the natural resources associated with agriculture, especially biodiversity and genetic resources, water and soils.

3.1.3 Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The new dynamics of international agricultural trade are prompting the countries of the Americas to redesign their policies and working methods for the area of agricultural health.

With the immediate or gradual elimination of tariffs on agricultural imports, and the elimination, also, of other non-tariff barriers, the only rules remaining or that will remain to govern international agricultural trade are sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

For this reason, the countries must modernize the organization, infrastructure and operations of their national agricultural health systems in order to be able to successfully comply with the new commitments emerging in this field.

Objective

For public and private, national and multinational organizations in the Member States involved in agricultural health and food safety to have the capability to formulate and execute policies and programs aimed at ensuring that products of animal and plant origin comply with the strictest

health and hygiene standards, and can, as a result, compete successfully on the international market.

3.1.4 Rural Development

Rural development is an integral part of national development. Hence, the Institute has a particular responsibility to contribute to creating conditions in which micro- and small-scale producers and rural workers can take advantage, competitively and equitably, of the opportunities offered by globalization, liberalization and economic integration.

Accordingly, the state, civil society and the market must interact in ways that contribute to improving the quality of life for rural inhabitants.

To this end, emphasis must be placed on competitiveness as a means of increasing opportunities for the rural population. Transformations of production and trade must take place within a framework that promotes the participation of family farms and micro- and small-scale producers, including rural women and youths, in production/trade chains. This, in turn, implies attaching new significance to the rural milieu, identifying in it the characteristics that derive from the growing relations between urban and rural areas and to the development of activities that produce greater value added (post-harvest activities and agroindustry, for example).

Objective

For public and private organizations in the Member States involved in rural development to have the capability to formulate and implement rural development policies, strategies and programs aimed at alleviating rural poverty. The goal of these programs, proposals and policies should be to enable family farms, micro- and small-scale producers and operators of agricultural and agroindustrial businesses to compete more successfully in markets and, in this way, improve their economic well-being.

3.1.5 Training and Education

The new needs of agriculture also pose a challenge for agricultural education (basic, vocational and professional). The education sector has the responsibility of training well-grounded professionals and technicians capable of working effectively throughout the productive and trade chain, with a business orientation and the ability to learn on their own.

The Institute's cooperation in this area will therefore focus on spawning and supporting processes that promote the evaluation and modernization of curricula, teacher training and accreditation as factors important to the process to transform agricultural education, with the aim of improving the quality and relevance of its products.

Objective

To enhance the capacity of universities and other academic centers in the Member States that educate and train agricultural professionals and technicians, as well as agribusiness producers, to engage in: i) strategic planning for academic development, the modernization of curricula and teacher training; and ii) the development of mechanisms and networks for exchanges and horizontal cooperation (at the national, regional and hemispheric levels).

3.1.6 Information and Communications

An important challenge facing agriculture in a context of globalization, economic opening and hemispheric and regional integration is how to take advantage of information and communications technology to incorporate agricultural producers into markets and national decision-making processes. Efficient information management will provide opportunities for exploiting the potential of markets and technology, and also contribute to raising rural incomes, improving living conditions in rural areas and reducing poverty.

Information and communications play a key role and must be afforded their rightful position in the new development paradigm that calls for the modernization and democratization of private and public sector decision-making processes. The new technology not only provides agricultural producers with the opportunity to receive information, but also to interact with public organizations and the rest of civil society: in this way, they can make others aware of their problems and of their need for information and support for their productive and trade processes.

This is the real “revolution” that information technology and communications can bring about, as they make it necessary to redefine the orientation, content and operating dynamics of production and marketing support mechanisms. This can make an enormous qualitative difference in helping farmers cease to be mere producers and become agricultural-entrepreneurs, and help agricultural professionals become the agents for change required for the renewed vision of agriculture.

It is therefore essential to identify the barriers that deny agricultural producers access to information and the possibility of using it to take decisions. It is also necessary to identify barriers that affect the availability of important local and national, as well as also regional, hemispheric and even global, information. These barriers can be overcome by organizing an inter-American network of agro-socioeconomic information and providing support to the corresponding national networks. The latter would mesh the local levels with the departmental or regional levels, and, in turn, be linked to the inter-American network.

Objective

To promote the use of modern means of communication, as well as access to relevant information and the exchange, management and analysis thereof, in order to enable agricultural producers to establish interactive links with the suppliers of production and marketing support services, and with policy makers, with a view to: i) modernizing their production structure; ii) making them more competitive; and iii) positioning them effectively in national and international markets.

3.2 Priority Fields for Action

The priority fields for action are a sub-set of the themes covered by the Strategic Areas. The General Directorate will focus its cooperation activities on these fields in order to concentrate efforts and meet the needs of the Member States, providing high-quality services that have a major impact. This will earn IICA recognition as a leading institution, at the inter-American level, in the area of cooperation for agricultural transformation.

By restricting its actions to these fields, the Institute is implementing its policy of investing its regular resources in a limited number of topics of great importance for agriculture in the Americas.

The recommendations made at the two Ministerial Forums (1995 and 1997¹⁷) were the first elements taken into account in identifying the priority fields for action and their content. These recommendations were complemented with resolutions adopted at the Ninth Regular Meeting of the IABA, the recommendations of the Special Committee in Support of the Institutional Transformation Process¹⁸ (July 1997), and the contributions of the First Inter-American Consultation with Agricultural Sector Leaders (May 1997). Analysis of these inputs led to the selection of the following fields of action:

- Improving agriculture's position in international trade and in the hemispheric integration process.
- Strengthening technology innovation systems.
- Integrated development and management of natural resources.
- Strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems.
- Improving living standards in rural communities.

17 These forums were held during the Eighth and Ninth Regular Meetings of the IABA, held in San Jose, Costa Rica (1995) and Santiago, Chile (1997), respectively.

18 Created by the Executive Committee at its Sixteenth Regular Meeting (June 26-28, 1996).

- Strengthening education and training.
- Modernizing the institutional framework of agriculture.
- Repositioning agriculture in the inter-American dialogue.

3.2.1 Objective of the priority fields for action

Based on a specific recommendation from the Special Committee in Support of the Institutional Transformation Process, concerning the need to articulate and focus the Institute's cooperation services, the following common objective has been adopted for the priority fields for action:

To support the Member States' efforts to reposition agriculture and improve competitiveness, in consonance with the strategies to reduce rural poverty and achieve natural resource sustainability.

Improving the position of agriculture in international trade and in the hemispheric integration process

- To contribute to efforts to construct the FTAA and to support preparations for the negotiations to be carried out under the WTO.
- To conduct studies and analyses of the economic opening and trade liberalization processes, and of the evolution of trade and its impact on agriculture.
- To conduct studies on the competitiveness of agrifood systems and support efforts to modernize production.
- To support policy harmonization among countries as part of the regional and hemispheric integration processes.
- To support the development of price and market information systems.

Strengthening technology innovation systems

- To support the consolidation of the Inter-American Technology Innovation System: the Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development and the Regional Agriculture Technology Fund.
- To strengthen the cooperative research and transfer programs, and mechanisms for technology integration.
- To support the development of national technology innovation systems, with emphasis on research and extension.
- To support the design and execution of research, extension and technical assistance programs, in order to increase the productivity of water and soil, in a manner that is compatible with the capability of the resources and the environment.

Integrated development and management of natural resources

- To support institutional building, with emphasis on the design and implementation of policies to conserve genetic, soil and water resources.
- To support the formulation and implementation of policies to modernize water resource management and development systems.
- To upgrade information systems, the dissemination of experiences, and provide support for training on the integrated management of natural resources, with an emphasis on genetic and water resources.
- To conduct impact evaluation studies on the use of water and soil resources.
- To support the design and execution of programs and projects for the participatory management of irrigated agriculture.

Strengthening agricultural health and food safety systems

- To support the modernization of national agricultural health systems, fostering active participation by the private sector.
- To support efforts to apply sanitary and phytosanitary measures in international trade, and to harmonize them.
- To provide forewarnings on emerging issues and support the execution of the corresponding actions, as well as surveillance activities and efforts to address agricultural health emergencies.
- To develop and strengthen liaison and coordination mechanisms in agricultural health at the inter-American and regional levels.
- To cooperate in the areas of food safety related to the inspection and certification of agricultural products for human consumption.
- To cooperate in applying new methodologies and technologies including: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP); residue analysis; microbiological analysis and others.

Improving living standards in rural communities.

- To support the development of mechanisms for strengthening agrifood systems in remote areas and contribute to the generation of jobs and incomes.
- To support programs that incorporate women and rural youths into agrifood chains and the rural economy.
- To support the organization and management of micro- and small-scale agricultural and agroindustrial enterprises in order to capitalize on surpluses in rural areas.

Strengthening education and training

- To contribute to the modernization of higher and vocational agricultural education centers, and of agricultural training systems and institutions in order to improve the relevance and quality of their products.
- To support training programs for the agribusiness community and for the staff of public and private agricultural organizations in order to strengthen their competitive capabilities and improve their position on international markets.
- To systematize and disseminate experiences on the modernization of agricultural education and training, and to strengthen horizontal cooperation.

Modernizing the institutional framework of agriculture

- To promote the organization of hemispheric and regional networks of agribusiness organizations and support existing ones.
- To analyze experiences with institutional transformation in agriculture, and disseminate them.
- To support the design of strategies and mechanisms for strengthening civil society's participation as a provider of services for agriculture.
- To support the design and promotion of rural information centers and agricultural commodity exchanges, as well as trade and production support services.
- To develop an inter-American agricultural and socioeconomic information network, composed of national networks that link the local with the departmental or regional levels.

Repositioning agriculture in the inter-american dialogue

- To monitor the Inter-American Agenda, particularly in regard to agricultural and rural issues, and facilitate its internalization in the member countries.
- To conduct periodic consultations with leaders of the public sector, the business community, trade associations and academia, on topics of strategic importance for the development of agriculture.
- To develop the capacity for reflection and prospective analysis necessary for anticipating developments of interest to agriculture.
- To organize and participate in hemispheric and regional forums involving ministers, the agribusiness community, academics and international organizations to discuss topics of importance to agriculture.
- To develop strategic information in support of actions to strengthen the inter-American dialogue on agriculture.

3.3 Regional Priorities

The Institute is committed to supporting the integration processes under way at the hemispheric and regional levels. However, it also recognizes the countries' different levels of socioeconomic development, the individual characteristics of their agricultural and rural problems, and the disparities in the different institutional systems (public and private) responsible for the agricultural sector.

Accordingly, the Institute's cooperation takes place at two levels: multinational (at either the hemispheric or regional level) and national. The objective of action at the hemispheric level is to orient and provide a consistent framework for IICA's cooperation services; it also supports the

inter-American dialogue. Action at the regional and country levels is organized into five Regional Centers that group the Member States geographically into the Andean, Caribbean, Central, Northern and Southern Centers¹⁹. Each has a Regional Directorate that manages the multinational cooperation actions and coordinates the work of the Cooperation Agencies in each of its corresponding countries.

Under this organizational arrangement, IICA's decentralized actions are based on regional priorities that reflect both the general lines of cooperation set out for the Strategic Areas and priority fields for action, and the specific (collective or individual) needs of the countries of each region. Regional priorities provide a flexible framework for action, since they are reviewed and adjusted to the needs of the countries and resources allocated for action.

The priorities that will guide IICA's specific cooperation in each of the regions are as follows:

3.3.1 Andean Region

The Andean Agricultural Agenda—which is based on a medium-term strategic vision—calls for: i) strengthening the integration process (priority is given to an open regionalism that facilitates creation of the FTAA by the year 2005); ii) improving the position of the Andean countries in the global context (special emphasis will be placed on agricultural exports and the role that agricultural health plays in opening up new markets); iii) improving living standards in rural communities (by

¹⁹ *Andean Region*: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. *Caribbean Region*: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. *Central Region*: Costa Rica, Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. *Northern Region*: Canada, Mexico and the United States of America. *Southern Region*: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

empowering grassroots organizations); iv) developing a new institutional framework for agriculture; and v) promoting the development of a new profile for human resources that emphasizes management skills and creativity, which are critical elements in times of uncertainty.

Accordingly, IICA's technical cooperation with the Andean countries will attach special importance to the formulation and implementation of strategies, programs and projects in the following areas:

Trade and Integration. The Andean Agricultural Agenda places special emphasis on negotiations with MERCOSUR, the creation of the FTAA and the multilateral agricultural negotiations scheduled by the WTO. In the context of open integration processes, the Andean Community of Nations is already negotiating with CARICOM and the Central American Common Market (CACM). A free trade agreement is scheduled to be signed with Panama before May 1999. All the Andean countries also have trade agreements with Chile, including Peru, which recently signed an Economic Complementarity Agreement with its neighbor.

In this area, support will be provided to: i) training for human resources in order to equip them to design foreign trade instruments, participate in trade negotiations and generate new sectoral policies; ii) conducting studies on strategic issues and short-term analyses on the outlook for sensitive commodities; iii) developing marketing instruments, especially national agricultural commodity exchanges, and subsequently linking them through an Andean network; and iv) strengthening trade associations at the national and regional levels.

Technology Innovation. National research and technology transfer systems will be strengthened. To this end, priority will be given to the development and consolidation of reciprocal cooperation mechanisms (e.g., PROCIANDINO) that place special emphasis on: i) strategic planning and the integration of planning, monitoring and evaluation actions; ii) training for human resources in strategic areas of technology innovation; iii) formulating projects that, preferably, are co-financed and fostering the

creation of consortia to gain access to new sources of funding for agricultural research; and iv) sharing and disseminating successful experiences.

Agricultural Health. Major support will be given to consolidating and strengthening the Cooperative Agricultural Health Program for the Andean Region. This program will serve as orientation for: i) further developing the Andean Agricultural Health Forum; ii) improving the technical capabilities of national agricultural health services (especially in areas regarded as a priority by the countries themselves); and iii) developing an Andean program for training on strategic issues. Work will also focus on helping the countries comply with regional and international regulations, with a view to improving the sanitary and phytosanitary quality of their agricultural products, and, as a result, their participation in international markets.

Rural Development. In order to support the modernization of small-scale agriculture in the Andean region, IICA will promote the elaboration and execution of rural development strategies, policies, programs and projects that will contribute to transforming subsistence farmers into entrepreneurs capable of dealing with risk and producing surpluses. To this end, special importance will be placed on: i) supporting the promotion of rural agroindustry, through PRODAR's Andean Network; ii) generating a critical technical mass in the region to underpin the ongoing efforts of specialized institutions (e.g., in Bolivia, Colombia and Peru) working to promote alternative development; iii) supporting the development of native production systems (e.g., the South American camelidae); and iv) conducting studies and formulating investment proposals for developing border areas and fostering integration among the Andean peoples.

Education and Training. Efforts will be made in each country to promote improvements in higher and vocational agricultural education, and to foster alliances with leading academic centers. Work will be undertaken to create National Higher Agricultural Education Forums and, subsequently, a Regional Higher Agricultural Education Forum. Agreements

will be established in each country with education centers recognized for their excellence, with a view to establishing distance training programs for the agribusiness community, agricultural professionals and educators. At least one node of the Hemispheric Video-conference Project is also expected to be installed in the Andean region.

Management for Change. Modernization of public and private institutions involved in agriculture will also be encouraged and supported at the regional and national levels. Participatory methodologies will be used for strategic planning and for formulating investment projects.

3.3.2 Caribbean Region

The movement toward integration in the Caribbean region has gathered momentum in recent years. This can be seen in the decision to accelerate implementation of the CARICOM Single Market; incorporate Haiti and Suriname as new members; and increase the Dominican Republic's participation in regional decision-making process, through CARIFORUM. At the operating level, a regional negotiating mechanism was also established for the post-Lomé IV agreements and those related to the FTAA.

In 1996, the Conference of Heads of State and Government approved the Regional Transformation Programme for Agriculture, following which the region undertook actions to position its agricultural sector for the twenty-first century. Taking into account the guidelines of this program, IICA's cooperation in the region will aim to contribute to the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas, and will be supported by networks set up for the exchange and dissemination of information generated by the Institute. These actions will focus on the following:

Trade and Integration. Emphasis will be placed on: analyzing the problems of agriculture; studying on the evolution of trade and its impact on agriculture; analyzing the competitiveness of agrifood systems; and designing and establishing price and market information systems.

Special attention will be also paid to strengthening the processes aimed at integrating the Caribbean with other regions of the hemisphere.

Technology Innovation. Efforts will be made to spur the development of national technology innovation systems; prepare and execute programs and projects to improve agricultural competitiveness; and conserve and multiply plant genetic resources.

Agricultural Health. Priority will be given to strengthening national and regional agricultural health systems, especially in connection with the management of emerging high-risk situations. Actions in this area will involve the control of pests and diseases, and the dissemination of international regulations.

Rural Development. Emphasis will be placed on drawing up and implementing rural development projects; on programs supporting rural youth, indigenous communities, rural women and the organization of trade associations; and on programs designed to foster rural agroindustry.

Education and Training. Further support will be provided to the Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE) in implementing evaluation mechanisms, modernizing curricula, validating courses, recognizing qualifications and degrees, and facilitating exchanges for professors and students. Further advisory assistance will be provided and training programs conducted for academic centers and national rural extension systems. Local distance training units will be encouraged to join CECADI's system.

Agribusiness Development. IICA will continue to support the efforts of the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA) to promote and organize the agribusiness sector in the region. This support will be associated with CABA's activities in the fields of trade and agricultural policy, and its efforts to develop links between the public and private sectors, and between agriculture and other sectors.

3.3.3 Central Region

In the Central Region, priority will be given to strengthening the agencies that foster agricultural integration, primarily the Central America Agricultural Council (CAC), which is responsible for promoting changes in agriculture's production, trade and institutional structures in order to strengthen the region's position in international markets and advance towards a common agricultural policy.

Based on guidelines issued by the CAC, the Institute's cooperation services will focus on the following:

Trade and Integration. Support will be given to CAC's work to analyze topics of strategic importance for agricultural development in Central America, and technical support will be provided to facilitate its participation in the inter-American dialogue. IICA will also promote the consolidation of information systems for agriculture and training in the area of trade negotiations.

Technology Innovation. Drawing on the experience gained with SICTA, the Institute will promote the creation of the Regional Technology Innovation System. Special emphasis will also be placed on expanding the IICA/HILLSIDES Program, with the aim of encouraging the countries to adopt policies, and prepare and implement projects fostering sustainable hillside agriculture. It will also foster the adoption of methodologies developed by the Program by the corresponding extension services.

Agricultural Health. IICA will help upgrade the capabilities of national systems to conduct epidemiological surveillance, implement suitable inspection and quarantine control procedures, and efficiently manage emerging issues related to diseases and pests.

Rural Development. IICA will support the formulation and implementation of rural development policies, programs and projects, as well

as the design and implementation of rural information systems and the development of distance training centers coordinated at the regional level. Special attention will be paid to investment projects that benefit young people and geographic areas where there is a concentration of indigenous people.

Education and Training. Efforts will be made to strengthen and, where necessary, promote the creation of national and regional fora and networks of higher and vocational agricultural education. Further support will be provided to the elaboration of regional studies and strategic plans for academic development, curriculum modernization and teacher training (including basic agricultural or rural training). The use of distance training methods will also be promoted.

3.3.4 Northern Region

The three countries of the Northern Region are at an advanced, albeit differing, level of economic and technological development. They are also the principal players in a major sub-regional integration effort, the NAFTA, which is of great importance to them and to IICA's other Member States.

The countries of the Northern Region produce basic and sophisticated agricultural products, and have technical expertise, innovative technology, advanced scientific capabilities and vast consumer markets. They will therefore play an extremely important role in IICA's general strategy and be indispensable partners in information exchange and horizontal cooperation with other countries of the hemisphere.

IICA's strategy in this region will be to contribute to efforts to strengthen institutional and technical integration among its three member countries and to facilitate their integration with other regions in the hemisphere. It will therefore focus on establishing communications mechanisms, exchange programs, and transferring information among the countries of that region, and between the northern region and other IICA regions.

The priority themes for IICA action in this region will be the following:

Trade and Integration. The initial focus will be on food safety and will involve both the public and private sectors. Actions will include conducting workshops and seminars, and disseminating information.

Technology Innovation. The focus of this area will be on the exchange of research findings and technical information on agriculture, livestock, agriculture and forestry. IICA will promote the establishment of networks and programs for exchanging data and information that facilitate technology transfer in these fields.

Agricultural Health. In this area, IICA will continue to work with the relevant governmental organizations to identify areas of concern, conduct seminars as needed, and assist in the establishment and implementation of projects to combat exotic pests and diseases.

Education and Training. IICA's focus in this area will be to establish contacts with universities in the three countries with a view to engaging them in a cooperative training process and encouraging them to participate more actively in hemispheric activities. The NRC will also collect and disseminate information on training opportunities and establish cooperative training programs.

Because of its strategic location²⁰, the Directorate of the Northern Regional Center (NRC) will be the primary point of contact for IICA with other international organizations, such as the Organization of American States, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Pan American Health Organization. It will also actively support relations between IICA and foundations, institutions, universities, and the private sector and promote and support mutually beneficial initiatives with these institutions, through cooperation. The NRC's goal will be to facilitate, at the hemispheric level, dialogue, communications, cooperation, the exchange of expertise, and the promotion of international understanding.

20 It is located in Washington, D.C

3.3.5 Southern Region

One of the principal achievements of the Southern Region has been the consolidation of MERCOSUR, which has resulted in a substantial increase in regional trade this decade, due, among other reasons, to the priority given to the free circulation of agricultural and agroindustrial products. Other factors contributing to this consolidation have been the incorporation of Chile and Bolivia as “associate countries;” that negotiations with the Andean Community of Nations are at a very advanced stage; and that preliminary agreements have been reached for creating of the FTAA.

Nonetheless, the socioeconomic characteristics of the five countries continue to be very different: while south and southeastern Brazil, the Argentine humid pampas, the Uruguayan plains and central Chile are among the most advanced regions in the world, the abject poverty that continues to be seen in northeastern Brazil and some rural areas of Argentina and Paraguay is comparable to that in the poorest countries.

To deal with this situation, the Southern Regional Center will respond to requests for cooperation from the countries and support their efforts to achieve agricultural development, with special emphasis on the following:

Trade and Integration. IICA will monitor and support MERCOSUR, the process to create the FTAA, and the trade negotiations taking place under the aegis of the WTO. Regional ministerial fora will also be supported and organized, and studies carried out on the evolution of trade and its impact on agriculture.

Technology Innovation. Further changes will be encouraged in the technological paradigms used to date. Efforts will also be made to introduce the concepts of competitiveness, equity and sustainability into the new technologies developed for products targeted for domestic consumption and for export.

Water Management. IICA will work with the countries to design an integrated strategy for sustainable water use and a cooperation framework for the use of rivers shared by two or more countries. Water must be perceived and used as a finite economic good.

Agricultural Health. The technical cooperation currently provided in this area will be expanded to further support the modernization of the national agricultural health systems, especially laboratories and border agricultural health posts.

Rural Development. IICA will foster the formulation and execution of rural development policies, programs and projects; it will also promote rural agroindustry. Further support will be provided to effectively combat rural poverty and incorporate rural women and youth into production and trade systems.

Education and Training. Cooperation will focus on spurring the regional process to modernize and update agricultural education. Special emphasis will be placed on evaluation and accreditation at the university level, and the creation of a regional postgraduate program. Support will be provided to the Standing Forum on Agricultural Sciences and to promoting a similar mechanism for vocational agricultural education.

3.4 Forms of Cooperation Services

The Institute offers different forms of cooperation tailored to the individual or collective needs of public and private organizations in the Member States. A brief description of each is presented below.

3.4.1 Direct technical support

This refers to the cooperation provided on an individual basis to specific organizations in the Member States in order to resolve present or potential problems through joint work with their staffs, applying concepts

and methods and adapting successful experiences to their circumstances. However, in view of the limited impact of such cooperation (i.e., only on the people involved directly in specific tasks), this type of cooperation should always be complemented with others that have a greater impact, i.e., that foster the development of national capabilities.

Cooperation of this kind will be provided when requests are in line with topics covered by the priority areas of action in which the Institute is seeking to consolidate the technical excellence and competitiveness of its services.

3.4.2 Training

Training is essential to ensure that cooperation makes an effective contribution to the accumulative appropriation of knowledge, which is the basis for human resources development and the catalyst for the transformation of agricultural production, trade and institutions. For this reason, the Institute gives high priority in its cooperation actions to training, as it is the principal instrument through which managers, technical staff, professionals, producers and members of the agribusiness community can develop the skills needed to successfully meet the challenges of the future.

As an effective means of achieving broad coverage, IICA will promote distance learning programs and strengthen alliances with universities, technical institutes, and training and education centers. The hemispheric systems for agricultural training and education (SIHCA and SIHDEA) developed and supported by the Institute and the Distance Training Center (CECADI) will play a key role in cooperation of this kind.

3.4.3 Research and studies

The purpose of the Institute's studies and research is to provide the Member States with up-to-date information on the trends in production

and trade (at the global, inter-American and regional levels), and other issues that impact the development of agriculture and rural areas in the hemisphere.

Through this type of cooperation, the Institute not only consolidates its capacity for reflection and prospective analysis, but also effectively supports the Member States with strategic proposals that enable them to anticipate important developments related to agriculture, trade and rural development. In carrying out these actions, the Institute works in tandem with other national and international organizations with recognized expertise in this area.

3.4.4 Dissemination and exchange of information

Through this kind of cooperation, the Institute provides its Member States with technical information on issues relevant to IICA's Strategic Areas and fosters a sharing of information among countries. Although IICA does not generate information from primary sources, it has agreements with other international organizations that do so and focuses its efforts on obtaining, analyzing and then disseminating that information.

To this end, IICA will consolidate the Inter-American Reference Center for Agricultural Information (CRIIA), which will: i) facilitate the flow of up-to-date information; ii) provide IICA's Member States with important agro-socioeconomic information for decision making by public and private organizations; and iii) provide information to other international organizations on a reciprocal basis.

The Institute will complement this work with the implementation of communication strategies that aim to provide member countries with full access to systematic and regular information on the results of IICA's work.

3.4.5 Horizontal cooperation networks

The Institute will support the consolidation of reciprocal technical cooperation networks with the aim of channeling technical capabilities, resources and experiences from the most advanced Member States to the relatively less developed.

The Institute will also facilitate the exchange of human, technological and genetic resources; the planning and conducting of cooperative research in regions and subregions; and the dissemination and exchange of knowledge and experiences. Through this type of cooperation, IICA will support the work of multilateral or joint-action cooperation agencies created by the Member States, as well as partnership programs conducted under OAS mandate.

3.4.6 Support for the organization of fora

The Institute will also support the countries by facilitating and organizing national, regional and hemispheric discussion fora to address topics related to IICA's Strategic Areas and in which the Member States have a common interest. These fora will provide valuable inputs for capitalizing on opportunities and solving problems, but, above all, for anticipating situations that will have a major impact on the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas.

Priority will be given to the organization of fora that foster dialogue and concerted action at the hemispheric and regional levels. These fora will be based on technical, topic-specific networks set up to analyze and exchange information, and will involve representative groups of officials from the Institute, public and private national organizations, international organizations and associated cooperation agencies.

3.4.7 Technical-scientific, financial and administrative brokerage

Many countries and national and international institutions have technical and scientific capabilities that, if effectively channeled, could help the Member States take full advantage of opportunities for agriculture or solve problems faced by the sector.

IICA will work to develop brokerage services to expedite effective cooperation among technical and scientific institutions. This brokerage should encompass both technical-scientific matters and management, financial and administrative matters. It should also contribute to building stronger ties and foster integration among the agribusiness sectors of the Member States.

The latter is particularly important because most of the technological and financial resources available to the countries for modernizing agriculture are contributed by or channeled through the private sector.

3.4.8 Documentation and dissemination of experiences

In order to disseminate successful experiences and encourage learning, the Institute will complete development of data bases that document its own experiences and those of selected institutions and countries. Priority will be given to the topics covered by the Strategic Areas for cooperation.

Emphasis will be placed on case studies of experiences with institutional transformation and to some of the other priority fields for action.

3.4.9 Project formulation and implementation

This type of cooperation will respond to requests (from Member State institutions or private organizations) for IICA to participate in the formu-

lation and implementation of projects, programs or activities promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas.

Such requests are financed by the countries themselves, with their own resources, or with funds from the multilateral banking system, cooperation agencies or donor countries. When the Institute provides such services (which include a wide range of technical and management services), the national organizations or funding agencies are charged a rate to cover the costs involved in providing the service (Institutional Net Rate or Indirect Administrative and Technical Costs), the amount of which is established by IICA's governing bodies. This service can also be provided to other international organizations or cooperation agencies under specific agreements or contracts.

Through this type of cooperation the Institute not only provides services needed by the projects, but also contributes to developing national capabilities, which, ultimately, is its primary objective.

3.4.10 Special cooperation with research and educational organizations

This cooperation is provided to specific institutions through contractual agreements that the Inter-American Board of Agriculture holds with the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI). IICA will strengthen its alliances with these partners and seek to implement initiatives with them in order to have a greater impact in the Member States and make more effective use of the resources they contribute.

CHAPTER IV:
INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

One of the key elements required for a successful transformation of the Institute is undoubtedly policies that aim to improve the quality and availability of its resources.

The decentralization process under way at the Institute cannot take place without a strong corporate approach that fosters the development of human resources in a manner consistent with the Institute's values and optimum use of its resources. For institutional reasons, certain functions will remain the responsibility of Headquarters, including: the establishment of policies and rules to manage the Institute's resources more efficiently; the overall administration of the cash flow of regular resources and others in the control account; and the management of the international professional personnel.

4.1 Human Resources

The objective of the human resources' policy will be to attract and retain personnel with excellent professional skills and potential. Ongoing training programs will be established to ensure that the Institute's human resources are kept up to date, competent and able to respond quickly to a constantly changing environment.

A more flexible remuneration and benefits policy will be established with a view to keeping salaries and benefits competitive, both locally and internationally. The performance evaluation system will be modernized.

Recruitment and selection procedures for professional personnel will aim to equip the Institute with the best possible people to support the task of repositioning agriculture in the inter-American dialogue and meeting new cooperation requests from the Member States.

People meeting the following qualifications will be given priority in hiring: i) high professional qualifications; ii) leadership and teamwork skills; iii) management skills; iv) negotiation and resource management capabilities; v) experience in issues on the Inter-American Agenda that fall within the Institute's area of expertise; and vi) flexibility and willingness to change.

4.2 Financial Resources

Financial resources will be allocated in accordance with Institute guidelines, the established priority areas for action, and the basic principles of solidarity and austerity. Solidarity means that some of the resources contributed by relatively more developed countries will be allocated to support relatively less developed countries. Austerity is required because of growing financial constraints, which require that resources to be put to the best possible use.

The Institute administers the following financial resources: Member State quotas and miscellaneous income (which together make up the Institute's Regular Fund); revenues from the administration and implementation of externally funded projects and activities; donations; and other income.

At its Ninth Regular Meeting, the IABA approved two important additional sources of funding to strengthen IICA's financial solvency: the Patrimonial Fund and contributions from associated states, organizations and enterprises.

4.2.1 Member State quotas

"Quota resources" are the Institute's basic source of funding and comprise the obligatory contributions of its Member States. These resources will be used for the following purposes: i) to provide coopera-

tion in the Institute's priority fields for action at the hemispheric, regional and country levels; ii) to finance the basic structure of its operating units; iii) to identify and generate external resources; and iv) to finance IICA's contractual commitments with other regional cooperation organizations.

The policy of financing other regional cooperation organizations will be reviewed, with a view to increasing the development of joint projects.

4.2.2 Miscellaneous income

Miscellaneous income consists of the financial returns generated by resources administered by the Institute.

The rules and regulations for managing and distributing these financial returns will be reviewed and updated. Experiences garnered in resource management will be disseminated, and staff training in this area will be promoted.

Since miscellaneous income enters the Regular Fund, a percentage of it will be used to strengthen the Patrimonial Fund. This income will be allocated using criteria similar to those established for quota resources.

4.2.3 Revenues from project management and implementation

These revenues are derived from the Institutional Net Rate (INR) and the Indirect Administrative and Technical Costs (CATIs) charged by the Institute when it is contracted to manage and implement services for externally funded projects and activities. Application of these rates (INRs and CATIs) is regulated by the governing bodies of the Institute.

Policies, rules and regulations will be established to improve the efficiency of Institute efforts to secure external resources and prevent its own resources from being used to subsidize the cost of administering and implementing externally funded projects and activities.

The specific policy governing this matter should ensure that negotiated rates are competitive.

Income generated from the management and implementation of externally funded projects and activities will be used as follows:

- To strengthen the basic structure of the operating unit that generated the resources, and to cover its incremental costs.
- To finance the support units at Headquarters and in the Regional Centers that are responsible for negotiating projects and activities, and for administering and supervising the use of the resources.
- To strengthen the Institute's monitoring, evaluation and training activities.
- To reinforce cooperation in the priority fields for action.
- To finance pre-investment activities, with a view to attracting more external resources.
- To finance the development of new institutional capabilities.
- To increase the Institute's Patrimonial Fund.

4.2.4 Donations

Donations may come from associated countries, international organizations, or any state, company or individual. They may be received in cash or in kind (such as ownership and usufruct rights). Efforts to attract in-kind resources will be encouraged, so long as the related maintenance and administrative costs are reasonable. IICA will continue to promote, in the Member States, the creation of foundations that make it possible to take advantage of opportunities to secure donations.

4.2.5 Other income

This income is derived primarily from the sale of services to private-sector organizations and the sale of publications. Regarding the sale of services, a policy will be set with expeditious rules for promoting and selling services for which the Institute has become highly competitive. A strategy will also be defined for identifying and promoting new revenue-generating services.

4.2.6 Patrimonial Fund

During its Ninth Regular Meeting, the IABA created IICA's Patrimonial Fund and adopted its Statute, through resolution No. 299. The purpose of the Fund is to establish an endowment to partially fund the Institute's activities.

According to the Statute, 60% of the net annual earnings of the Patrimonial Fund are to be used to strengthen the Institute's Regular Fund budget. Therefore, the same criteria used for quota funds will be used for allocating those earnings. Strengthening the Patrimonial Fund will be one of the Institute's highest financial priorities during the 1998-2002 period.

4.2.7 Contributions from associated states, organizations and enterprises

The Institute will strive to add more associate members, including: Permanent Observers; international, regional and national organizations; companies; and non-member states of IICA. This will make it possible to bring in special funds, regulated under the provisions of Resolution No. 312 of the Ninth Regular Meeting of the IABA.

4.3 Informatics

The Institute's strategy in the area of informatics will seek to position the Institute as a provider of high-quality information services and an organization that harnesses new technological developments to perform its hemispheric cooperation work more efficiently and effectively.

In order to support decision-making processes at all the different levels (hemispheric, regional and country), flexible, user-friendly and integrated information systems will be established in line with the Institute's modernization and decentralization strategies.

The informatics infrastructure and the information and communications systems will aim to: i) facilitate the exchange of information among the Member States; ii) maintain effective, low-cost connections among the different units of the General Directorate; iii) facilitate the operation of networks of professionals, by technical and thematic area, at the regional and hemispheric levels; and iv) modernize and computerize management processes.

In order for the Institute to make the best possible use of available technology, the infrastructure for local and remote communications will be strengthened and a training program established to create an informatics culture in keeping with the latest technological developments. This will contribute to increasing the use of tools such as video-conferencing, electronic bulletin boards and technical and management information systems that operate by means of direct satellite connection.

CHAPTER V:
**INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION
TO MEET THE NEW CHALLENGES**

IICA is working to consolidate a transformation process begun in 1994, when the first decentralization measures were taken. The purpose of the process is to reaffirm the orientation and reinforce the characteristics of the Institute's cooperative action, as set out in its General Strategy²¹. This means that the Institute must effectively carry out the two core tasks set out in its Mission: to provide the Member States with high-quality cooperation services that have a major impact, and to strengthen the inter-American dialogue on agriculture.

During the 1998-2002 period, institutional transformation will focus on a review of the Institute's rules and regulations, structure and cooperative action. This will entail, primarily:

- Revising the rules and regulations of the governing bodies (IABA and Executive Committee) in order to equip them to take on a new role in response to the new challenges and responsibilities arising from the Inter-American Agenda and the need to reposition agriculture in this context.
- Internalizing the Institute's Mission, Vision and General Strategy, and the institutional values on which they are based, so that they become an integral part of the institutional culture.

21 The purpose of the institutional transformation process is defined in Chapter II, in the section on the General Strategy. There it is stated that the aim of all IICA's cooperation actions should be to promote the sustainable development of agriculture in the context of hemispheric integration. The characteristics of the cooperation action (institutional values) were defined as: focused, high-quality, client-oriented, participatory, proactive, and committed to the Inter-American Agenda.

- Making substantial improvements in the quality, effectiveness, usefulness and timeliness of the services delivered through the different types of cooperation.
- Strengthening the Institute's external relations in order to consolidate, as part of the process to renew the Inter-American System, its role as the specialized agency for agriculture.
- Consolidating the decentralization process.
- Modernizing the management processes that underpin the Institute's activities.

However, the success of the institutional transformation process ultimately depends on the performance of IICA's human resources. Its principal result should therefore be to develop creative and innovative human resources who, equipped with the latest expertise, will consolidate an institutional culture and organization in keeping with the Institute's Strategic Framework. This calls for a broad training effort to develop new personnel profiles that ensure an institutional performance geared to the future needs of the Member States and the requirements of the inter-American dialogue.

The following is a description of the basic principles that will guide the transformation process vis-a-vis the institutional culture and structure, decentralization and external relations²².

22 The guidelines for cooperation services are dealt with in Chapter III. The guidelines for human, financial and informatics resources are set forth in Chapter IV. The guidelines for the planning processes are found in Chapter VI.

5.1 Institutional Culture

Culture is the key component of the institutional system, and on it will depend the success of IICA's transformation process. Changing the institutional culture involves internalizing institutional values (or attributes of cooperation), modifying organizational attitudes and behaviors, and rethinking the ways individuals interact, not only within the Institute but also with the entities that require its services.

To attain standards of excellence in fulfilling the Institute's Mission, to advance effectively toward achieving its Vision and to implement the General Strategy, efforts will be made to encourage a positive attitude in the staff toward change, an attitude that will elicit a commitment from them to the three components of the Strategic Framework. It is therefore of utmost importance to intensify the integral process of motivation and training, key elements for bringing about changes in behavior and making the Institute a continuous learning organization, with a style of leadership that encourages participation, communication and teamwork.

The basic precepts that give credibility to the Institute will continue to be strengthened, including a consistently high-quality service, accurate and reliable information, and timeliness of action, whether for cooperation services or to facilitate the inter-American dialogue.

5.2 Institutional Organization

Rethinking and strengthening the role of the three organs that make up the Institute (the IABA, the Executive Committee and the General Directorate) is an essential part of the institutional transformation process. Only through the coordinated action of these three bodies will the Institute be able to assume a leadership role in the inter-American dialogue and support the Member States in fulfilling the mandates for agriculture emanating from the Summits of the Americas.

5.2.1 IICA's Governing Bodies

Since IICA is the specialized agency for agriculture of the inter-American system, it falls to the **Inter-American Board of Agriculture** to assume a new role in light of the integration process in the hemisphere. It will act as the highest-level body within the inter-American system for agricultural affairs, and its actions should be carried out within the parameters of the Inter-American Agenda.

For this reason, and given its ability to bring together leaders of the agricultural public and private sectors, academia and trade associations of the region, the IABA will have an external role with responsibility for: i) leading the inter-American dialogue on agriculture (to guide sectoral transformation in accordance with mandates emanating from the Summits of the Americas; ii) acting as the specialized advisory organ for agriculture and rural areas for the Summits of the Americas; and iii) advancing toward the development of a more articulated and coordinated inter-American policy for agriculture.

The IABA's internal role will be to: i) approve the Institute's strategic plans and the rules and regulations of its three organs; and ii) elect the Director General.

The role and membership of the Executive Committee will also be changed so that it can assume responsibility for the operational and administrative functions delegated to it by the IABA. In doing so, it would act as a Board of Directors, working more closely and on an ongoing basis with the General Directorate.

As part of the institutional transformation process, efforts will be made to redefine the responsibilities of the IABA, the Executive Committee and the General Directorate, and make the corresponding changes in their respective rules.

5.2.2 The General Directorate

The institutional transformation process will consolidate the Institute's provision of cooperation services and develop the capacity needed to support the external actions of the IABA. This capacity should make it possible for the General Directorate to: i) provide technical support to the IABA and serve as the Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Working Groups or Committees created by the ministers of agriculture at the hemispheric or regional levels; ii) articulate its work with that of the General Secretariat of the OAS at summit meetings; and iii) monitor compliance with the obligations assumed by the governments in regard to agriculture and rural development.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the performance of the General Directorate, the organizational approach based on networks, in the form of consortia, will be consolidated. Unlike the traditional hierarchical approach, in which actions are confined to isolated compartments, this new organizational approach promotes horizontal articulation among the different units and redefines vertical, hierarchical articulation. The hierarchies are redesigned to fulfill a new role: to facilitate greater articulation and coordination.

In applying this approach to the General Directorate, the consortium is viewed as a mechanism that responds to a corporate, non-compartmentalized vision that facilitates greater articulation and coordination among the managers and employees of the Institute, and between them and the other organizations with which IICA has strategic alliances.

The consortia are conceived as being more than mere internal units: they are an invitation to new partners, a mechanism for extending the reach of the Institute, an arrangement that facilitates partnerships and alliances with organizations and countries that decide to undertake joint actions with the Institute.

Under this approach, any unit of the General Directorate can link up with other Institute units, as well as with other external organizations or

specific units of those organizations. This will produce synergies that make better use of the resources contributed by the Member States.

The internal consortia

The duties and functions of the operating units of the General Directorate were restructured to enable IICA to respond to the new challenges posed and opportunities presented by the Inter-American Agenda. These units were grouped into consortia, as follows:

- The Consortium for Regional Operations, which groups together all the units located in the countries throughout the hemisphere (five Regional Centers, with their respective Directorates and Cooperation Agencies) and the coordinating unit at Headquarters. The basic function of this consortium is to generate and deliver cooperation services, but it also falls to the Directorates of the Regional Centers to play a leading role in supporting the inter-American dialogue at the regional level.
- The Technical Consortium links together the units at Headquarters whose basic functions are to articulate technical/thematic activities, generate technical/thematic guidelines for high-quality cooperation services, and support the inter-American dialogue on agriculture.
- The Consortium for Planning and Coordination consists of the units at Headquarters whose basic functions are to manage the strategic and short-term planning processes, and to contribute to the development of new attitudes and management skills, in accordance with the needs of the inter-American dialogue and cooperation services. This consortium is also responsible for developing institutional policies for the aforementioned functions.
- The Consortium for Corporate Services is made up of the units at Headquarters whose basic functions are to develop guidelines for

corporate services and implement corporate policies and procedures for administering the Institute's human, financial and physical resources (infrastructure and informatics).

The internal consortia of the General Directorate have been established to strengthen horizontal articulation among the operating units in order to increase their effectiveness, particularly as regards the provision of cooperation services and support for the inter-American dialogue. This interaction takes place among the various units of each given consortium, and between them and those of the other consortia, forming networks of functional interaction.

A manager coordinates the work of each consortium, and each manager acts as a leader, promoter and facilitator of the teamwork of the respective units. These managers also promote interaction between their units and those of other consortia.

A Senior Management Committee is responsible for the corporate orientation of the consortia. This is chaired by the Director General and made up of the Deputy Director General, the Director of External Relations and the managers of the consortia. The Committee is responsible for overseeing the overall articulation of General Directorate activities and advising the Director General on strategic decisions that will guide the activities of the Institute in line with the mandates of the IABA, the Executive Committee, and the Institute's Mission, Vision and General Strategy.

Levels of articulation and coordination

Using this organizational approach and in order to provide cooperation services as described in Chapter II, IICA will continue to improve the coordination and articulation of its action, both among the units of the General Directorate and with its partners. To do this, three levels of coordination and articulation have been identified, namely: orientation, operations and thematic.

- The first level, that of *orientation*, is the responsibility of the Committee for Sustainable Development (CODES), chaired by the Director General and made up of a group of unit directors at Headquarters and in the Regional Centers. Its purpose is to ensure that the cooperation action of the General Directorate is geared toward promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and rural areas. To this end, it will foster interdisciplinary teamwork based on the renewed vision of agriculture and keyed to the commitments of the Inter-American Agenda and regional and national priorities. To ensure effective results, at the internal level CODES has a Technical Secretariat, and, at the external level, it is linked to a Consultative Group for Sustainable Development.
- The second level, the *operational* level, is carried out by functional teams set up to carry out cooperation actions and brings together, in a single effort, the technical and financial resources of the technical and service units, both at Headquarters and in the Regional Centers. These groups have clearly defined objectives that are linked to the specific needs of the countries and the Institute itself, and are established to implement a planned task. Representatives or specialists from organizations associated with IICA can participate on these teams.
- The third level, the *thematic* level, is organized into priority fields of action²³ and is made up of specialized networks of professionals, both from Headquarters and the Regional Centers. Their purpose is to monitor new topics, enhance conceptual and methodological consistency to achieve technical excellence, develop strategic partnerships with other organizations and countries, and ensure that the expertise of Institute professionals is updated on

23 These fields are defined in Chapter III, and are those in which the Institute's cooperation services will be recognized for their excellence.

an ongoing basis. The leaders of the Strategic Areas²⁴ are responsible for promoting and developing these networks at the regional level and for providing technical leadership at the hemispheric level to the corresponding networks. These networks can include representatives of organizations associated with the Institute, external specialists or associations of same.

5.3 Decentralization

Decentralization of the Institute is a gradual but progressive process that began with the creation of five Regional Centers (Andean, Caribbean, Central, Northern and Southern), each composed of a Regional Directorate and the Cooperation Agencies located in the countries of the respective region.

Decentralization helps strengthen the Institute's most important comparative and competitive advantages, which include its physical and human presence in the countries of the hemisphere, its accessibility, and its ability to meet the needs of its Member States in a timely and expeditious manner.

The purpose of the decentralization process is to provide more effective support to the Member States, to their regional integration bodies, and to other organizations operating at the multinational level. This means, in particular, upgrading the Regional Centers' cooperation mechanisms, but also involves the development of new instruments for institutional management. It envisages a stronger role for Headquarters in order to ensure that the Institute operates with a corporate vision and action befitting an inter-American agency.

24 Details on these Strategic Areas can be found in Chapter III; they define the thematic scope of action in which the General Directorate responds to requests.

With decentralization, the functions of the Regional Centers are consolidated as follows: i) to support initiatives for joint action among countries of the region; ii) to provide cooperation services to the countries and their regional organizations; iii) to facilitate the inter-American dialogue at the regional level; and iv) to promote and support horizontal cooperation. To help the Regional Centers perform these functions, more financial and human resources will gradually be transferred to them, as will responsibility for programming and technical execution, providing the Directorates of the Regional Centers and the Cooperation Agencies with greater responsibility in decision making (at the operating level).

Under decentralization, Headquarters has responsibility for: i) the strategic management and external relations of the Institute; ii) management of the technical-thematic articulation process (by promoting networks of specialists in the priority fields for action); iii) support for the inter-American dialogue at the hemispheric level; iv) management of strategic and operational planning; v) support for the Regional Centers in providing cooperation services and in strengthening the regional dialogue; and vi) verification of compliance with the Institute's rules and regulations and the proper use of its resources.

The Institute's activities in the Regional Centers will be strengthened in two ways. Firstly, in the technical area, by ensuring that the quality of the technical cooperation services provided in the priority fields for action is first rate and has a significant impact. Secondly, in the management area, in order to: i) enhance the effectiveness of strategic and operational planning in the Regional Centers; ii) articulate the action of the Cooperation Agencies; iii) strengthen external relations (linking the Institute's action with other regional organizations); iv) administer the Institute's human, financial and physical resources; and v) implement externally funded projects and activities. The Regional Centers thus play a key role in and make an important contribution to the implementation of the General Strategy.

The actions of the Regional Centers will be based on strategies and programs geared to the particular characteristics of each region and country.

The Institute's planning system will be redesigned to strengthen the capabilities needed to support this task.

Decentralization will also focus on strengthening the activities that support the inter-American dialogue on agriculture. The creation of the Regional Centers, and especially their geographic composition, constitutes another comparative advantage for the Institute, inasmuch as it provides IICA with effective links with the regional integration bodies. In this connection, the Regional Centers, and particularly their Directorates, will give priority support to the countries of their region in preparing for the deliberations of the inter-American dialogue and in implementing the corresponding decisions at the regional and national levels.

To consolidate the decentralization process, Headquarters must improve its capacity to generate corporate guidelines, manage the strategic and operational planning process, orient the Institute's technical activities, conduct external relations, monitor and evaluate the Institute's performance, and verify compliance with its rules and regulations and the correct use of its resources.

5.4 Inter-American Network of External Relations

Changes in the international economic, political-social and environmental contexts pose a major challenge for agriculture in terms of both the constraints they impose and the opportunities they afford. Moreover, the mandates issued at the Summits of the Americas also call for the development of a new form of cooperation.

Within the framework of the Inter-American Agenda, IICA must assume a more active and proactive approach in order to perform new roles and effectively incorporate agriculture into national priorities and integration processes. To do this, the Institute must strengthen and further develop its relationship with the Member States, with international funding and cooperation agencies, and with private sector and civil society organizations.

This relationship entails establishing strategic alliances, envisaged as the articulation of real and enduring interests with one or more international, intergovernmental, regional or national institutions (public or private) in order to strengthen the Institute's technical, financial and human capabilities, and, at the same time, consolidate and project its institutional image.

External relations are a basic requisite for consolidating and strengthening the Institute's cooperation at the hemispheric, regional and national levels. To improve these links, the Institute will develop an *Inter-American Network of External Relations* that will benefit from a two-way flow of information. This information will be generated by a communications system composed of Headquarters, the Directorates of the Regional Centers, the Cooperation Agencies, the specialized networks of professionals and the different institutional units.

This network will make it possible to:

- Ensure greater consistency in the Institute's external relations with the cooperating countries and international organizations involved in the Strategic Areas and regional and national priorities.
- Identify cooperating countries, institutions or organizations with which alliances can be established, with a view to responding to requests for cooperation from the Member States.
- Pinpoint possible external funding sources for the implementation of actions of interest to the Institute and its Member States.
- Monitor the actions carried out with different counterparts and inform all the units of the Institute of the results of these actions.
- Project the Institute's image.
- Strengthen existing strategic alliances and develop new ones.

- **Have better criteria for decision making and implement operating mechanisms for the coordination and exchange of information among the different units of the network (the Directorates of the Consortia, the Directorates of the Regional Centers and the Cooperation Agencies).**

CHAPTER VI:
STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL
PLANNING



The importance that the Heads of State and Government have attached to the development of the new international and national institutional framework requires consolidation of the Institute's transformation process. An important aspect of this process is the modernization of IICA's management processes that underpin the different components that make up the value chain of IICA's cooperation.

The planning process is essential to the Institute if it is to assume the leadership role advocated in its Vision. More than any other, this process must be redesigned if the Institute is to meet the new challenges facing agriculture in a context of permanent change and uncertainty, and is vital not only on account of external factors, but also in view of the progress that has been made in the first stages of the institutional transformation process, particularly as regards decentralization and plans to decentralize further.

6.1 Principles and Dimensions

The Institute's planning system will be reviewed and redesigned to reflect the following principles:

- Institutional values shared by all IICA units. Under the new approach, the planning system will facilitate a clear understanding of these values²⁵ and foster efforts to reach a broad consensus on same. This will contribute to eliciting a commitment from the staff of the Institute to its Strategic Framework: Mission, Vision and General Strategy.

25 This refers to the characteristics of cooperation defined in Chapter II.

- A prospective vision based on strategic thinking that involves, in a systematic and interactive way, all Institute units. This will entail careful consideration and systematic analysis of the different scenarios and trends in agriculture, and provide a frame of reference for ensuring that cooperation actions are proactive and innovative.
- Emphasis on achieving concrete, verifiable results.
- The decentralization of decision-making and responsibility, based on clearly defined priorities and criteria for resource allocation.
- Simple, easy-to-apply instruments, methods and procedures; priority will be given to the development of interactive, user-friendly, informatics systems that take maximum advantage of telecommunications.
- Flexibility, in order to incorporate adjustments required as a result of cooperative action, and in order to adapt to the different areas for cooperation and the nature of the technical support required for the inter-American dialogue on agriculture.
- Participation of all the Institute's levels and areas in the design, operation and modification of the planning system.

The Institute's planning process consists of two elements: strategic planning and operational planning. Both are envisaged as components of a continuous, integrated, open process that is articulated at the different geographic levels (hemispheric, regional and national). The purpose of the process is not to produce plans but rather to build consensus on the strategic direction IICA's actions should take and, also, to produce consistent results. It is a fundamentally human and creative process that calls for interaction among the staff of all Institute units, and a commitment to its Strategic Framework.

6.2 Strategic Planning

One of the core activities of the Institute's strategic planning is the systematic and ongoing analysis of the environment, and includes the creation of participatory mechanisms for consultation with key actors and institutions involved in agriculture in the hemisphere.

At IICA, strategic planning is defined as an open and flexible process that can respond rapidly in a context of uncertainty and significant change. It develops and sustains the Institute's commitment to a Vision and General Strategy that must be continually revised and adjusted to reflect the results of the analysis of the environment. It is a process that involves, in an orderly and systematic fashion, all the Institute's units, as well as its immediate and extended clientele, in building the desired and viable future advocated in the Vision.

Through this process, the different groups of people involved in agriculture, both within and outside the Institute, participate in the process to actively create the future, and not only adapt to it. This calls for an innovative mindset, great flexibility and a willingness to change, and for the Vision and General Strategy to find expression at the different institutional levels: hemispheric, regional and national.

The strategic dimension of IICA's planning consists of a set of basic actions, namely:

- *Keeping abreast of the evolution of the environment.*²⁶ The strategic analysis of the environment makes it possible to identify external and internal factors that could have a major impact on

²⁶ To do so, participatory mechanisms should be established for consultation with key actors and institutions involved in agriculture in the hemisphere, as well as with the Institute's technical and operating units.

the future of the Institute. At the external level, these include the repercussions of: i) the construction of the new international and national institutional framework; ii) the evolution of the inter-American Agenda; and iii) the evolution of the different scenarios and trends in agriculture (at the global, inter-American, regional and national levels). Within IICA, they include the different scenarios pertaining to financial resources, and the performance of cooperation services, by strategic area and priority field for action.

- *Developing, internalizing and subsequently adjusting the institutional strategic framework.* This refers to the actions that all Institute staff should take to develop and update, together, the Mission, Vision and General Strategy.
- *Developing, internalizing and subsequently adjusting general guidelines for cooperation actions.* This entails determining the nature, orientation and content of the strategic areas and the priority fields for action, hemispheric and regional priorities, and types of cooperation.
- *Defining the guiding principles of the institutional transformation process.* These principles must take into account changes in the environment, possible scenarios dictated by the availability of resources, and the decisions of the Institute's governing bodies.

These actions call for the development of institutional capabilities in each of the aforementioned areas, as well as mechanisms for involving all the Institute units, at the different levels of operation: hemispheric, regional and national. Specifically, the Institute will undertake to upgrade its capacity to prepare and adjust, as the case may be, the strategies of the Regional Centers and the Cooperation Agencies, always based on its Vision and General Strategy, the specific characteristics of each unit, and the priority needs of the Member States.

6.3 Operational Planning

The Institute's operational planning is conceived as the means whereby strategic decisions—for the hemispheric, regional and national levels—are implemented in order to achieve tangible results in the short run. These results must be compatible with the Institute's strategic framework and the guiding principles and priorities defined for the cooperation actions.

This means that, at the start of each programming period, guiding principles consonant with the strategic plan will be defined that establish priorities and the way in which resources will be allocated overall and at the regional level. The plans of operation prepared by the Institute's different units must be consistent with these principles.

Parallel to these efforts, operational programming methods and procedures will be reviewed and, where necessary, adjusted so as to simplify and expedite the mechanisms established for preparing, analyzing and approving the Institute's different cooperation instruments.²⁷ Once again, the emphasis will be on achieving concrete and objectively verifiable results.

Specific measures will also be adopted to increase the transparency and decentralization of decision making and resource allocation. Specifically, the Regional Centers will be delegated responsibility for approving the following: national projects, regional and national legal instruments, annual plans of operation and the way in which the resources they generate are to be allocated, always in accordance with the Institute's rules, priorities and policies. Headquarters will continue to be responsible for determining and modifying the Institute's priorities and for the overall allocation of regular resources, the management of special budget items and the funds that Headquarters administers for the organization as a whole, the approval of regional and hemispheric projects, and the approval of basic agreements.

To facilitate the proper implementation of these provisions, Programming Support Groups will be created that will operate at the regional level (regional GAPs) and the national level (national GAPs). Their work will be complemented by that of the Programming Committee, which will continue to function at Headquarters. In addition, for the operational planning exercise, articulation must be strengthened among the units at Headquarters, as well as with monitoring, supervision and training for planning operations at the regional level.

The monitoring and evaluation of cooperation are viewed as harmonious and closely interrelated elements set up to provide the different levels of the institutional structure with pertinent and timely information for decision-making. This process must be based on performance indicators focused on expected results.

As an integral part of the management process, each of the Institute's units is responsible for monitoring the actions implemented within their respective area of responsibility. To this end, the methods, procedures and instruments necessary for monitoring and evaluation will be reviewed, simplified and improved, in a participatory manner, and training and support will be provided to other units involved in this process.

Evaluation will focus on the analysis of the results of technical cooperation, how these results are achieved, and how the institutional transformation is progressing. Basically, this work will be carried out through periodic evaluation missions to the different units of the Regional Centers, in such a way as to cover the entire Institute every two years. These missions will be made up of Institute officials, although, preferably, they should include external consultants.

27 The Institute's principal cooperation instruments are: multinational and national technical cooperation projects, actions in support of cooperation, short-term actions and agreements.

ACRONYMS

CA	Cooperation Agency
CABA	Caribbean Agri-Business Association
CAC	Central American Agricultural Council
CACHE	Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture
CACM	Central American Common Market
CAN	Andean Community of Nations
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARIFORUM	Forum for the Caribbean (CARICOM and Dominican Republic)
CATIE	Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center
CATIs	Indirect Administrative and Technical Costs
CECADI	Center for Distance Training

CODES	Committee on Sustainable Development
CORECA	Regional Council for Agricultural Cooperation in Central America, Mexico and the Dominican Republic
CRIIA	Inter-American Reference Center for Agricultural Information
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
GAP	Programming Support Group
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
IACI	Inter-American Children's Institute
IACW	Inter-American Commission of Women
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
III	Inter-American Indian Institute
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INR	Institutional Net Rate
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean

MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
MTP	Medium Term Plan
NAFTA	North America Free Trade Agreement
NRC	Northern Regional Center
OAS	Organization of American States
PAIGH	Pan American Institute of Geography and History
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PROCI	Cooperative Agricultural Technology Development Program
PROCIANDINO	Cooperative Agricultural Technology Development Program for the Andean Region
PRODAR	Cooperative Agroindustrial Development Program
SCMA	Standing Committee of Ministers Responsible for Agriculture
SICTA	Central American Integrated Agricultural Technology System
SIHCA	Hemispheric Training System for Agricultural Development
SIHDEA	Hemispheric System for the Development of Higher Agricultural Education
SRC	Southern Regional Center

UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UN	United Nations Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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