



## **IICA's Contribution to the Summits of the Americas Process: *2002-2009 Period***

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Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture - IICA

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## Foreword

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The Summits of the Americas Process and the mandates on agriculture and rural life have been a factor in the modernization process of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, undertaken after the Third Summit, to support the countries in their efforts to comply with the mandates of the Summits and the agreements of the ministerial process *“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”*.

The modernization process has led to a strategic definition introduced in the Institute’s Medium Term Plans of 2002-2006 and 2006-2010; a new model for cooperation which goes beyond the mere provision of technical cooperation was adopted, including a restructuring of the Institute.

IICA’s contribution to the implementation and follow-up of the mandates has two points of reference in the Summit of the Americas process. The first is the framework of mandates on agriculture and rural life and international cooperation set out in the Declaration of Quebec and its Plan of Action, in the Declaration of Nuevo Leon, and, more recently in the Declaration of Mar del Plata and its Plan of Action. The second point of reference is rooted in IICA’s status as an institutional partner in the Summit of the Americas process and in its role as Secretariat for the ministerial process *“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”* in the context of the Summit of the Americas process.

Essentially, IICA’s cooperation in implementing the mandates of the Summits is aimed at facilitating the continuity of the ministerial process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and in contributing to its linkage with the Summit process.

Thus, IICA’s role was expanded with the assignment of additional responsibilities, i.e., promoting dialogue and facilitating consensus on critical aspects for the development of agriculture and rural well-being in the Americas.

This report summarizes the framework of mandates related to agriculture and rural life and IICA’s contribution to their fulfillment.



Chelston W.D. Brathwaite  
Director General

## **I. IICA as it faces the dynamics of the hemisphere and the challenges of the XX century**

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In its capacity as an institutional partner in the Summit of the Americas process and as a member of the Inter-American System, IICA is the organization that is specialized in agriculture and the rural milieu. Its purpose it is to provide innovative technical cooperation to Member States so that they can achieve sustainable development for the benefit of the peoples of the Americas. Accordingly, in fulfillment of the mandates of the Summits of the Americas and its institutional mission, IICA supports the countries' efforts to implement the mandates adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the Summits of the Americas in the areas of agriculture and rural life and international cooperation.

In addition, in coordination with the Summits of the Americas, IICA facilitates the continuity of the ministerial process "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas" and its hemispheric ministerial meetings which endeavor to follow-up on the mandates of the Summits. IICA also works with other public, private and social stakeholders in publicizing and implementing the agreements adopted by the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture, in fulfillment of the mandates of the Summits and in response to the new challenges of comprehensive and sustainable development for the countries. IICA is also useful in facilitating an understanding of the Summit process and in publicizing the mandates of the Summits.

IICA is guided by the mandates and the logo of the Fifth Summit: "*Securing our citizens' future by promoting human prosperity, energy security and environmental sustainability*". Accordingly, it has participated and will continue to participate in the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) and in the meetings of the SIRG by providing technical support to the Chairmanship of the Fifth Summit, to the OAS Summit of the Americas Secretariat and to the countries as they prepare for the Fifth Summit.

At the beginning of the process leading to the Fifth Summit, IICA offered its perspective on the challenges facing the hemisphere and its priorities. This was expressed in the JSWG's document entitled "*Towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas. Regional Challenges*".

In this regard, IICA stressed that it is essential to revitalize the hemispheric process by focusing political will in two directions: (i) the effective implementation of the agreements adopted, which requires the building of an institutional framework to support it; and, (ii) establishing few new challenges capable of consolidating, in practical terms, the basic criteria for development, such as the economic and social

inclusion of large sectors engaged in production and other aspects of the national life, urban-rural balance in countries' development, respect to human diversity and achieving well-being in harmony with nature.

In this context, and in preparation for the Fifth Summit, IICA shared three hemispheric challenges with the members of the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG):

- strengthening the institutional framework for the implementation of the commitments adopted
- reappraising the rural milieu as part of the national heritage and as an essential resource for comprehensive development
- building a knowledge base for comprehensive sustainable development

As Secretariat for the ministerial process *“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”*, IICA is assisting Jamaica with preparations for the Fifth Ministerial Meeting, to be held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, in October this year. The theme for that meeting is *“Building Capacity to Improve Food Security and Rural Life in the Americas”*.

In furtherance of that ministerial process, IICA will publicize the outcome of the Fifth Summit so that the Ministers of Agriculture and stakeholders in agriculture are duly informed and adopt the agreements they deem necessary in order to contribute to the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain of the Fifth Summit. As it has been doing since 2002, IICA, through its National Technical Cooperation Agendas in the 34 countries in the Americas, will continue to support the countries' efforts to fulfill their commitments to rural prosperity, food security, climate change and energy security and the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, major challenges for leaders and organizations in the Americas at the dawn of this century.

## **II. Agriculture and Rural Life in the inter-American agenda: Strategic issues for the comprehensive development of countries**

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Agriculture and rural life were not included among the issues considered strategic for the comprehensive development of our countries at the First Summit of the Americas (Miami 1994). Concern over the implications of this situation moved the Ministers of Agriculture to launch a campaign to ensure the inclusion of both on the agenda of subsequent Summits.

With support from IICA, the Ministers of Agriculture undertook actions aimed at positioning agriculture, convinced of its contribution to improving living conditions in the rural milieu, and its role in strengthening democracy, promoting prosperity, eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development, all of which are key objectives of the Summit process. Their efforts finally bore fruit at the Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec 2001).

### **1. The mandates of the Summits of the Americas:**

A political framework that reassesses the value of agriculture and rural life

The Third Summit marked a historic milestone in efforts to build a renewed institutional framework for agriculture and rural life. On that occasion, the Heads of State and Government acknowledged the important contribution that agriculture and rural life make to combating poverty and promoting sustainable development in their countries, in recognition of agriculture's dual role as a way of life for millions of rural inhabitants and as a strategic sector of the socioeconomic system for generating prosperity. With this in mind, they instructed to promote:

- hemispheric joint action among the stakeholders of the actors of the agriculture and rural life, with a view to bringing about sustainable improvements in agriculture and rural life, and
- medium- and long-term national strategies for the sustainable improvement of agriculture and rural life, based on a dialogue among government ministers, parliamentarians and representatives of different sectors of civil society.

At the Special Summit (Monterrey, 2004), they pledged to make a sustained effort to improve the living conditions of rural dwellers, by promoting investments and creating an environment that would be conducive to the improvement of agriculture and contribute to social development, rural prosperity and

food security. To that end, they endorsed the efforts of the Ministers of Agriculture by defining as a mandate of that Summit the implementation of the “*AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*”, which was adopted by the Ministers at their Second Ministerial Meeting (Panama 2003).

At the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata 2005), they pledged to build an institutional framework based on the coordination of public policies, which would include a comprehensive framework for rural and agricultural development that would promote investment, job creation and rural prosperity. To that end, they adopted as a national commitment “*To support the implementation of the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil 2005 on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (AGRO 2003-2015 Plan).*”

In the process leading to the Fifth Summit of the Americas under the motto “*Securing our citizens’ future by promoting human prosperity, energy security and environmental sustainability*”, the countries built consensus on the Declaration of Commitment, including references to agriculture and its importance in promoting human prosperity, energy security and environmental sustainability.

In Quebec 2001, the Heads of State and Government recognized the importance of the Ministerial Meetings as a mechanism for advancing the Summit of the Americas process. The meetings are used address the strategic matters particular to the inter-American agenda and to coordinate the implementation of the mandates set forth by the Heads of State and Government in the Plans of Action of the Summits. They are the highest level hemispheric forum for dialogue, coordination and cooperation among the 34 member countries of the Inter-American System. As such, the Ministerial Meetings reach agreement by consensus on priorities and strategic actions to meet hemispheric challenges.

At the Third Summit, the Heads of State and Government assigned the Ministers of Agriculture a leading role in the implementation of the Plans of Action of the Summits, and promoted the emergence of the Ministerial Process “*Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*” and its meetings.

## 2. The Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and its meetings: *dialogue, consensus and commitment*

In Quebec 2001, the Heads of State and Government recognized the importance of the Ministerial Meetings as a mechanism for advancing the Summit of the Americas process. The meetings are used to address the strategic matters particular to the inter-American agenda and to coordinate the implementation of the mandates set forth by the Heads of State and Government in the Plans of Action of the Summits. They are the highest level hemispheric forum for dialogue, coordination and cooperation among the 34 member countries of the Inter-American System. As such, the Ministerial Meetings reach agreement by consensus on priorities and strategic actions to meet hemispheric challenges.

At the Third Summit, the Heads of State and Government assigned the Ministers of Agriculture a leading role in the implementation of the Plans of Action of the Summits, and promoted the emergence of the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and its meetings. Since 2001, the Ministerial Process has become a continuous cycle that includes, in general terms:

- the adoption of Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements (HMAs) on agriculture and rural life;
- the implementation of the HMAs;
- monitoring of progress in the implementation of the HMAs;
- the identification of challenges in implementing the HMAs; and
- dialogue and development of consensus for the formulation of new HMAs for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu.

As part of that process, in the Ministerial Meetings, progress to date is reviewed and new commitments for strategic actions in the following biennium are assumed.

To date, there have been four meetings within the Ministerial Process. At them, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture, supported by the hemispheric forum of Ministerial Delegates (GRICA), have adopted important HMAs, including *the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas, the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guayaquil 2005 and the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007.*



These HMAs offer the stakeholders of agriculture and rural life a renewed —broad and comprehensive— way of viewing and addressing the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. They also provide a frame of reference for defining national, regional and hemispheric strategic actions needed to move toward the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, the overarching goal of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.

### **3. AGRO 2003-2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas: *a common point of reference for decision makers***

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan is the shared long-term agenda for promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. The Plan was adopted at the Second Ministerial Meeting (Panama 2003), following a broad-based process of dialogue and negotiation aimed at reaching consensus on national proposals, which were then submitted to the same process at the hemispheric level under the responsibility of the Ministers of Agriculture and their Ministerial Delegates.

The Plan provides a framework for bringing about the changes required to achieve the Shared Vision 2015, and is implemented and updated by the countries through the strategic actions contained in the biennial hemispheric agendas defined by the ministers in their Ministerial Meetings.

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action has been updated as a result of the HMAs adopted at the Third and Fourth Ministerial Meetings (Guayaquil 2005 and Guatemala 2007). This Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting was endorsed by the Presidents and Prime Ministers in the Declaration and Plan of Action issued at the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey 2004) and Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata 2005).

### **4. A renewed way of viewing agriculture and rural life: *the AGRO-Matrix***

The agriculture and rural life mandates from the Summits constitute a new political framework in which agriculture is no longer viewed simply as a primary production sector of the economy.

Through the Ministerial Process "*Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*" begun in 2001, the Ministers, their Ministerial Delegates and IICA have gradually developed a new and broader concept of agriculture and rural life and, based on this framework, are defining strategic actions for sustainable development.

In this regard, the AGRO-Matrix synthesizes a new concept of agriculture and rural life and facilitates a comprehensive understanding of both. It recognizes that agriculture and rural life are complex phenomena, with a multiplicity of actors and a diversity of interests that should be taken into account when designing effective strategies and policies aimed at transforming the sector.

The AGRO-Matrix, used by the Ministerial Delegates of Agriculture as the basis for preparing the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, is the conceptual framework for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. This conceptual framework takes into account a systemic concept of agriculture and rural life, broken down into three operational areas (rural territories, agricultural value chains and the national and international context) and a sustainable development approach consisting of four dimensions (production-trade, ecological-environmental, sociocultural-human and political-institutional).

The AGRO-Matrix helps to explain the basic aspects of the complex phenomenon of agriculture and rural life, promotes national, regional and hemispheric strategies, policies and actions to address specific issues and facilitates coordination between different interest groups, in order to develop a new institutional framework for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu.

### The AGRO-Matrix

Systemic Concept	Rural Territories	Agricultural Production-Trade Chains	National and International Context	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
Sustainable development approach				
Production – Trade	I. Promoting competitive rural enterprises	II. Integrating chains and strengthening their competitiveness	III. Promoting an environment conducive to competitive agriculture	→ Competitiveness
Ecological – Environmental	IV. Being environmentally responsible in the rural areas	V. From farm to table: promoting integrated environmental management	VI. Participating in building an institutional environmental framework	→ Sustainability
Sociocultural - human	VII. Quality of life in rural communities: creating know-how and opportunity	VIII. Advancing learning and expertise in the chain	IX. Promoting policies to create capabilities and opportunities for the rural communities	→ Equity
Political - institutional	X. Strengthening public and private sector participation and coordinated action between them in the territories	XI. Strengthening dialogue and commitments among actors in the chain	XII. Promoting national policies and regional and hemispheric cooperation for agriculture and rural life	→ Governance
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Rural Prosperity ~ Food Security ~ International Positioning			OVERARCHING GOAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL MILIEU

This broad way of thinking and acting in agriculture and the rural milieu was the main contribution of the Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 to the dialogue leading to the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

### **III. The mandates of Mar del Plata, the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and IICA’s contribution**

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Since the Third Summit in 2001, IICA has been involved in all stages of the Summit process as an institutional partner. In that sense, IICA has supported countries in the building of a new “*institutional architecture*” to facilitate the implementation of the Summit mandates on agriculture and rural life, and the corresponding ministerial agreements. This new institutional architecture, in turn, assures the continuity of the Ministerial Process “*Agriculture and Rural life in the Americas*” and its articulation with the Summits Process.

Based on the mandates relating to agriculture and rural life and international cooperation, details are provided on IICA’s support to the countries in complying with said mandates as well as the Ministerial Agreements “*Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas.*”

#### **Declaration of Mar del Plata**

##### **The mandate**

*55. We are committed to building a more solid and inclusive institutional framework, based on the coordination of economic, labor, and social public policies to contribute to the generation of decent work, which must comprise:*

*g. A comprehensive framework for rural and agricultural development, to promote investment, job creation, and rural prosperity.*

#### **1. The Ministerial Process progress**

The Ministers of Agriculture of the hemisphere updated the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan at their two most recent Ministerial Meetings held in Guayaquil in 2005 and in Guatemala in 2007. This Plan represents an inter-sectoral **global framework** for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. Specifically, the Ministers renewed their commitment to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan (mandate 35 of the Mar del Plata Action Plan) with the inclusion of themes and strategic actions related to **the creation of**

**employment and decent work** in the Ministerial Hemispheric Agreements of Guayaquil 2005 and Guatemala 2007, such as: Areas for local economic development; Entrepreneurial, innovative and business capacity; Inclusive chains linkages; Strengthening of small- and medium-scale rural enterprise; Social responsibility in rural enterprises, for which purpose the Ministers adopted in Guayaquil 2005, and ratified in Guatemala 2007, the following strategic action:

- *“To promote the concept of social responsibility in rural enterprises; fostering the creation of jobs and the principle of decent work as reflected in international conventions.”*

In harmony with the spirit of the mandate 55 regarding the promotion of a more solid and inclusive institutional framework, the Ministers, in their Fourth Ministerial Meeting of *“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”*, Guatemala 2007, emphasized that the implementation of the strategic actions of the AGRO Plan require the adoption of an approach of *“working together”* with other stakeholders of the public, private and social sectors. At the same time, they emphasized the need and the commitment to repositioning of rural issues in national strategies:

- *“To participate proactively in the repositioning of agriculture and rural issues and priorities in national strategies by promoting in society an increased understanding of the contributions made by the rural sector, a rural-urban balance in the national development agenda and efforts to overcome biases and exclusions that are detrimental to rural communities”.*

The Ministerial Process, linked to the Summit of the Americas Process is based on an approach that favors the creation of a more solid and inclusive institutional framework with the following components:

- a national team, made up by the Ministerial Delegates and their Alternates as well as by their technical team, which provide support for the Minister of Agriculture in the promotion of the national dialogue and in the coordination of the implementation of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements;
- a hemispheric forum of ministerial delegates (GRICA) which, based on a summary of the national proposals prepared by the Secretariat, supports the hemispheric dialogue and negotiations, and seeks consensus on proposed new ministerial agreements which will be submitted to the Ministerial Meeting;

- a Secretariat for the ministerial process and its meetings of Delegates and Ministers in which capacity IICA serves;
- a Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting in the context of the Summit process, which is the forum of ministers of agriculture that adopts the hemispheric agreement and that presents new proposals to the Heads of State and Government;
- a strategic framework for agriculture and rural life in the Americas, comprising the mandates on agriculture and rural life of the Summits and the HMAs, the common thread of which is the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan; and
- a renewed concept, integral and sustainable, to perceive and to act regarding agriculture in pursuit of sustainable development.

## 2. IICA's contribution.

IICA, as the Secretariat of the Ministerial Process, continued supporting the consolidation of the institutionality of the Ministerial Process and its Fourth Ministerial Meeting, Guatemala 2007 whose theme was *“Working together for agriculture and rural life in the Americas”*. In addition, the IICA proposed, within the context of the regional challenges towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas *“Reappraising the rural milieu as part of the national heritage and as an essential resource for comprehensive development”* and the *“Strengthening the institutional framework for the implementation of the commitments adopted at the Summits”*, this last challenge having been proposed based on the six years experience of the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”.

For the two year period 2008-2009, looking forward to the Fifth Summit and the Fifth Ministerial Meeting (Jamaica, October 2009), IICA has continued providing support to the Ministers and their Delegates in the inherent tasks of the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”, within the Summit of the Americas framework, as well as promoting the reappraising agriculture and the rural milieu, and their multidimensional contribution to development, through reports, forums, international events, and proposals to the Joint Summit Working Group.

Particularly, in view of the new concerns regarding food and nutritional security, energy security and environmental sustainability, all of which are themes being considered during the hemispheric dialogue in the context of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, IICA organized an International Experts Workshop, July 8 - 9, 2008, on the *“Contribution of agriculture and the rural milieu to sustainable development and food security in the new international context”*

As well, responding to the above mentioned hemispheric concerns, IICA presented to the Foreign Ministers of the Americas its institutional response to the food situation in the hemisphere, in the framework of the General Assembly of the OAS, in Medellin, Colombia.

### **The mandate**

*75. We instruct the members of the Joint Summit Working Group, comprised of the OAS, IDB, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), PAHO, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the World Bank, ILO, International Organization for Migration (OIM), Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), under the coordination of the OAS, to continue, through their respective activities and programs, to support the follow-up and implementation of the Declarations and Plans of Action of the Summits of the Americas, and of the Declaration and Plan of Action of Mar del Plata, as well as to assist in the preparations for future summits.*

#### **1. *IICA's contribution.***

In response to the mandates and challenges deriving from its role as an institutional partner in the Summits Process, the Institute has embarked upon a process of institutional modernization which defined two complementary roles for the Institute: (i) a conventional renewed role as an international cooperation agency attuned to the new institutional dynamics in the Americas, and (ii) a new role as Secretariat for the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”.

- As a **cooperation agency**, IICA has consolidated a **cooperation model** in which the actions of the Institute are based on the 34 National Technical Cooperation Agendas prepared in conjunction with the public authorities and the private, scientific and academic sectors. IICA is therefore tailoring its technical cooperation to the hemispheric dynamics and to the guidelines set by the Ministers in the framework of the hemispheric ministerial process.
- As **Secretariat for the Hemispheric Ministerial Process**, IICA facilitates the continuity of that process and its linkage with the Summit Process.

### 1.1 To facilitate the continuation of the ministerial process.

IICA assumed the commitment to contribute decisively to implementing the Summit mandates and the agreements of the Ministerial Meetings “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas.” Since 2002, the Institute has been instituting a cooperation model with four complementary strategic components:

- Support the Member States in implementing the mandates, with a renewed style of technical cooperation that begins with consultation with the key stakeholders of agriculture to define jointly the Institute’s Technical Cooperation Agendas at the national, regional and hemispheric levels in IICA’s area of competence (agribusiness, trade, agricultural health and food safety, innovation and technology, education and rural development). Those agendas are revised at least once a year for the purpose of bringing them in line with the needs expressed by the countries and in relation to their challenges for implementing the AGRO 2015 Plan.
- To promote the monitoring of agriculture and rural life and, on the basis of same, to promote reflection and dialogue among the stakeholders in agriculture and the rural milieu on the current situation of and outlook for agriculture and rural life at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.
- To support the Ministers of Agriculture and the Ministerial Delegates in organizing and holding the ministerial meetings. In this regard, efforts are made by IICA to facilitate dialogue among the stakeholders of agriculture and rural life and the building of a consensus on hemispheric, regional and national strategies for sustainable improvement in agriculture and rural life. Also, support is provided for the continuation of the ministerial process, facilitating the monitoring of those strategies.
- Coordinate actions with other international organizations that work to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas. Consistent with the spirit of the Summit Process, IICA continues to strengthen its relations with the other institutional partners in the Summit Process and with other international and regional organizations operating in the Americas to coordinate and complement efforts. As regards to technical cooperation, and at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, IICA has fostered working relations with other international organizations in order to support the countries in implementing their strategies. As for the

monitoring of strategies, the “working together” approach and joint action have been promoted, with a view to obtaining inputs from the institutional partners during the process of preparing the products of the ministerial meetings. Also, and specifically as regards to monitoring the AGRO 2015 Plan, ECLAC, IICA, PAHO, FAO and UNESCO are working together to identify indicators for agriculture and rural life for monitoring the AGRO 2015 Plan. In this regard, IICA and ECLAC held a workshop in 2004 on indicators that was attended by Ministerial Delegates of Agriculture and Rural Life and representatives of the aforementioned organizations. At the 2005 GRICA meeting, held on July 7-8, ECLAC, representing the group of organizations that followed up on the workshop, presented to the Ministerial Delegates information for the creation of a basic set of indicators. The purpose of the initiative is to move toward an information system on agriculture and rural life in the Americas, which will make it easier to set goals and assess progress in compliance with the respective mandates from the Summits of the Americas.

1.2 *To facilitate articulation of the ministerial process with the Summits of the Americas Process*, which implies:

- Reporting to the Summit Implementation Review Group (ministers of foreign affairs of the Hemisphere and their National Summit Coordinators) on the countries’ progress to implement the presidential mandates, the ministerial process itself, and the Institute’s and other international organizations contributions to same.
- Participating in the Joint Summit Working Group, coordinated by the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat.
- Maintaining close communication with the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat.



## Plan of Action of Mar del Plata

### **The mandate**

35. *To support the implementation of the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil in 2005, Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (AGRO 2003-2015 Plan).*

### **1. The Ministerial Process progress.**

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan is the *global framework* for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu as per paragraph 55.g of the Declaration of Mar del Plata. This role may be explained by the broad-based and comprehensive concept adopted by the Ministers and Ministerial Delegates of Agriculture in perceiving agriculture and rural life and to define the necessary strategic actions for improving them. These actions call for a *joint effort* not only with stakeholders in the public, private and social sectors involved in agriculture and the rural milieu, but also in other areas such as the labor, health, education and technology sectors. This is specifically set out in the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 which stresses the importance of promoting cooperation between hemispheric ministerial meetings within the Inter-American System and the Summit of the Americas process.

### **2. IICA's contribution.**

IICA provided support to the Ministers and their delegates in the implementation and updating of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan with the Guatemala 2007 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement, has continued and will continue providing support to the countries during the 2008-2009 Ministerial Process for the implementation of the Plan and its updating on the road to the Fifth Ministerial Meeting, Jamaica 2009. It has taken and will take particular care in making the AGRO Plan known, in informing newly appointed Ministers regarding their role in the Ministerial Process, and contributing to train young leaders in the Americas within a hemispheric and holistic approach through the Forum for Young Leaders that it has been organized at the Center for Leadership in Agriculture located at IICA's HQ, in Costa Rica.

### **The mandate**

43. *To request Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and ECLAC to continue with their efforts to develop an information system for the follow-up and evaluation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, and the other members of the Joint Summit Working Group to join in those efforts as a contribution to defining goals and indicators for the mandates of the Summit of the Americas..*

## 1. The contribution of IICA and ECLAC.

IICA and ECLAC have developed an “*Information System for Monitoring and Evaluating the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan*” which has three components: (i) national actions undertaken and challenges encountered in implementing the AGRO Plan; (ii) performance indicators, and (iii) the expectations of agricultural leaders regarding the future of agriculture and rural life.

With regard to the performance indicators component, initially, support was provided by other international agencies of the Inter-American and United Nations systems, including FAO, ILO and PAHO. IICA will continue to strive to consolidate the participation of the institutional partners in the Summit Process which have information of relevance on the social, environmental, economic and institutional aspects of agriculture and the rural milieu, specifically, those related to work and employment, health and education in the rural milieu.

## **IV. Promoting a development model that recognizes the real contribution of agriculture and the rural milieu to integral and sustainable development in the countries**

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IICA gives significant support to the ministerial process for the sustainable development of agriculture and rural communities led by the ministers of agriculture. Accordingly, IICA endeavors to ensure that process is keyed to the objectives, actions and mechanisms for the implementation of the mandates of the Summits of the Americas by facilitating dialogue and consensus on *strategic actions* to be taken in to account by the countries at the upcoming Fifth Ministerial Meeting “*Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*”, to be held in Jamaica, in October this year.

Based on the policies defined by the Heads of State and Government and the Ministers of Agriculture at their hemispheric meetings, the Institute will continue to consolidate its *model for cooperation*, which it has been promoting since 2002. A central feature of this model is its participatory style that is driven by the need to ensure that the technical cooperation provided by IICA responds to the priorities and commitments of the countries.

The decisions adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the Fifth Summit, based on the theme “*Securing our citizens’ future by promoting human prosperity, energy security and environmental*

*sustainability*” will provide an opportunity to promote a multidimensional approach to agriculture and the rural milieu. At the same time, it will offer an opportunity to undertake multisectoral activities for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu as the countries rethink the future and promote a *new development model* where the contribution made by agriculture and the rural milieu to the economy and integral development in the countries is recognized and valued in its multidimensional scope.

It is therefore necessary for all stakeholders in agriculture in the Americas to consolidate the political decision of the Heads of State and Government and the Ministers on “*working together*” to develop a renewed leadership and institutional framework that will make it possible to move more easily and effectively towards achieving the goals defined at the Fifth Summit of the Americas and by the Ministers at their Ministerial Meetings “*Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*”. In this regard, IICA will redouble its cooperation efforts with other stakeholders in an effort to support the countries as they seek to concretize their goals.