

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

## 2011 Annual Report Executive Summary



# Achievements

**T**he **Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2011** was held in San Jose, Costa Rica, from October 19-21, 2011 under the theme *“Sowing innovation to harvest prosperity”*.

The results of the meeting were significant in determining the current and future direction of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). One of these results was the **San Jose Declaration of Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas 2011**, in which the Ministers expressed the following: **“agricultural innovation** is a catalyst for growth and positive change, and further, to foster innovation it is vital to increase and intensify production and productivity, improve incomes, reduce poverty and inequality, decrease the environmental impacts of the agrifood sector, respond to natural disasters, increase access to new technologies, adapt to **climate change** and, consequently, achieve **food security** and a better **quality of life** for all our citizens”.

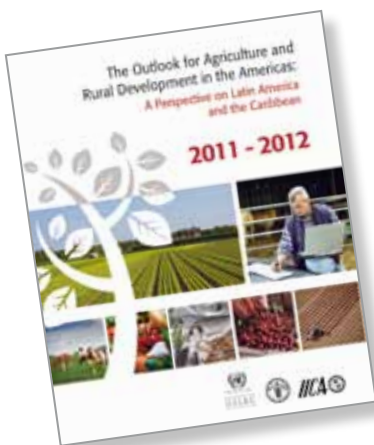
- This statement renewed the mandate that IICA has held since 1942, that is, to support the efforts of its member countries to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being. The actions and activities carried out by the Institute in 2011 were consistent with its mission to provide **innovative technical cooperation** towards the achievement of competitiveness and sustainability and thereby, promote sustainable development for the peoples of the Americas.



- Thanks to the restructuring of the cooperation model, through the formulation of IICA-Country strategies, as well as agendas that address priority topics for the countries of the Americas, a vast portfolio of national, regional and hemispheric projects were

implemented. Additionally, novel schemes were introduced to strengthen support activities, such as the creation of a fund for the stimulation and execution of innovative projects, which is currently financing 17 ongoing multinational activities, each one with a duration of approximately 18 months. Other initiatives include the integration of the Institute's technical personnel in thematic networks and the visiting professionals initiative, which has increased the technical resources available to the Institute.

- The year 2011 also saw the publication of the report "Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: a Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2011-2012",



**carried out jointly** with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Moreover, via the submission of technical notes to the Ministers of Agriculture for consideration and decision-making,

it was possible to critically and objectively examine several topics such as the Group of Twenty (G-20), innovation, trade and food security, among others.

- The six IICA cooperation programs continued to carry out their lines of action in areas of **high priority to the countries**: technological innovation, trade promotion, strengthening of agricultural health and food safety, development of rural territories, food security and climate change. The Institute was able to execute a large number of actions in its 34 member countries in all of these areas.

- In order to promote **technological innovation**, the Institute developed diagnostic and institutional development instruments for improving **national research systems**. Additionally, regional integration mechanisms for research were strengthened, as well as the innovation capabilities of **Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay**, among other countries.

- An intense agenda in the areas of bio-energy, biotechnology, protected agriculture, apiculture, animal rearing, agro-tourism, organic agriculture as well as greenhouse and seed production, among others, was carried out. New mechanisms were put in place at the regional level for **exchange of knowledge**, the most noteworthy of which was the Management Network for Innovation in the Agri-food Sector (INNOVAGRO Network), which brings together 50 public, private and academic institutions.



Photo: Raíza Cartin

*An intense agenda in the areas of bio-energy, biotechnology and protected agriculture was carried out.*



Photo: Nigel Durrant

Support was provided for consolidating the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA).

the art in territorial development policies in **Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay**", the coordination of the Regional Platform for Technical Support and for the National Commissions within the framework of the Central American Strategy for Rural Territorial Development and the implementation of the Ibero-American Program for Cooperation in Territorial Management.

- In order to strengthen the capacities of the agricultural sectors with respect to **agribusiness**, IICA developed several instruments of benefit to small and medium-sized producers. Support was provided for consolidating the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA), and IICA collaborated in the formulation of a ministerial declaration that addressed access to information, transparency and market efficiency, which was signed by the 32 member countries of the organization. IICA also participated in strengthening the capability of the business sector in **food safety**, value chains and costs of production, through the formulation of studies and designs for production infrastructure, mainly in the Caribbean.
- In the area of **agricultural health** and food safety (AHFS), 29 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were able to increase their capacity to analyze the services they offer in AHFS, strengthen their phytosanitary and zoosanitary vigilance, carry out risk analyses and study the socio-economic impact of pests and/or diseases.
- IICA collaborated in ensuring that the voice of the hemisphere was heard in the *Codex Alimentarius* Committees, thereby contributing to the establishment of international standards in food safety. Support was also provided to the Moscamed and Moscafrut projects in **Mexico**; action was taken to control swine fever and avian flu in **Haiti**; consolidate the agricultural health service in **Ecuador** and establish a system for tracking cattle herds in **Costa Rica**.
- Conscious that **agriculture** contributes in a significant way to the **development of rural territories**, the Institute took steps to enhance this contribution, which is highlighted by the drafting of the report "State of
- Thanks to support from IICA, areas such as Loja, El Oro, Pichincha and Chimborazo in **Ecuador**, the Northeastern states of Brazil, Apure in **Venezuela** and Huila in **Colombia**, among others, were able to consolidate the implementation of their development strategies, which constitute the basis for the territorial management models that the Institute provides in the Americas.
- IICA was involved in the formulation of programs and projects in the area of **climate change** and agriculture, in order to place this topic on the national agendas and identify more environmentally-friendly forms of production. Among the noteworthy programs are the Intelligent Agriculture Program (**Argentina**), the Inter-governmental Technical Cooperation Program for Territorial Management of Processes for Adapting Agriculture to the Effects of Climate Change (**Mexico**), several irrigation plans in **Colombia** and **Costa Rica**, and the agro-forestry projects in **Haiti, Ecuador** and **Peru**. In **St. Kitts and Nevis, Barbados** and **St. Lucia**, IICA provided cooperation for creating awareness on more rational use of water.
- On the topic of **food security**, and as a direct contribution to the VI Summit of the Americas, a study was done on the contribution of small-scale family agriculture to food security. Also promoted was the use of certified seedlings by small farmers, and a project agenda was drawn up for **Haiti**. Many of these projects are already underway in that country with the assistance of donor agencies and international organizations. At the request of the ministers of agriculture of **Central America**, a balancing system for availability of basic foods was designed for that region and the **Dominican Republic**.
- Institutional modernization is another one of the priorities for the countries. In this regard, the Institute responded to several requests in the areas of evaluation of socio-economic challenges, formulation of strategic and investment plans, as well as defining State policies. As a result of this latter action, national and regional projects were formulated and implemented and are





Photo: IICA Nicaragua

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now bearing fruit for the countries. Strategic plans were developed for the rural, agri-food and agro-industrial sectors in several countries, such as **Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Panama** and **St. Kitts and Nevis**.

- Working alliances were **consolidated** with ECLAC, FAO, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA). Added to these

are joint activities carried out with the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE), the Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the World Food Program (WFP), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and several divisions of the **United States** Department of Agriculture (USDA) as well Agriculture and Agri-Food **Canada**.

- Also worthy of note is the formalization with the National Council on Science and Technology of **Mexico** (CONACYT), of a **scholarship program** that will provide professionals in the LAC region with a broad academic offering in specializations and postgraduate studies in agriculture and rural development.
- In order to face a complex financial situation and, at the same time, address the growing demand for cooperation services from its member countries, IICA implemented a program of **economic austerity** and a strategy for **continuous improvement**. On the administrative side, processes were standardized and levels of control were increased. As a result, 70% of the resources/processes within the institution are now channeled through the Financial Accounting Administration System (SAP). Assignment of resources to direct support for cooperation was optimized, performance appraisal and results management were simplified, electronic communication has increased, there has been greater use of the video-conference system and purchasing processes have been enhanced. ■



Photo: Emmanuel Fénelon

*Many of the projects in Haiti are underway with the assistance of donor agencies and international organizations.*