



**CONTRIBUTION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR
COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)**

THE MARRAKESH DECISION AND FOOD SECURITY

Submission by the IICA

The following submission, dated 14 November 2022, is being circulated at the request of the [Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture \(IICA\)](#).

1.1. The IICA is an agency of the Inter-American System, specializing in agriculture, that participates as an observer in the Committee on Agriculture and Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Its objective in participating as an observer in these two regular WTO bodies is to follow up on Members' deliberations and enable expeditious and proactive communication with the agricultural authorities of IICA member countries. These deliberations and any concerns raised in regular WTO bodies are also taken into consideration in the programming of the Institute's technical cooperation activities.

1.2. The purpose of this document is to share information with WTO Member countries regarding some of the technical cooperation activities carried out by the IICA in the 2021-2022 period to support Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries in the area of food and nutrition security.

1.3. The IICA takes a comprehensive approach as regards activities that contribute to the food security of member countries. This means that its approach covers different closely related thematic areas such as international trade and regional integration; climate action and agri-food sustainability; agricultural health and food safety and quality; innovation and the bioeconomy; territorial development and family farming; agri-food digitization; and youth and gender equality.

1.4. In the document entitled "[International Trade of Agrifood Products from Latin America and the Caribbean and the Transformation of Food Systems](#)", the IICA *analyses* the role of international trade in food systems, in particular those of Latin America and the Caribbean. It also discusses the need to strengthen multilateralism and take greater advantage of the opportunities and synergies arising from free trade agreements (FTAs) and regional integration processes.

1.5. It should also be noted that the Institute cooperates with its member States in the sharing of knowledge and experiences; in the building of technical and institutional capacities; in advising on strategic processes and the design of public policies; in the articulation and/or technical secretariat of multi-institutional authorities; in the development, facilitation and implementation of tools and methodologies; and in the management and administration of projects related to the agricultural sector.

1.6. In short, the technical cooperation activities contributing to food and nutrition security carried out by the IICA in its 34 member countries included the following:

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- Capacity-building processes were carried out for the benefit of close to 5,000 people, who recognized the potential of the bioeconomy as a development strategy. The Institute also participated in international meetings on this topic, aimed in particular at promoting public policies and preparing concrete plans for various countries and production chains, as well as guides and catalogues aimed at strengthening the technological, organizational and entrepreneurial capacities of bioenterprises.
 - In the interest of rural well-being in the Americas, priority was given to cooperation to ensure a better understanding of the status of family farming and to improve institutional frameworks, support services and stakeholder capacities within this production sector. The Institute also contributed to positioning cooperativism as an associative strategy, to fostering the digitization of family farming as a way to boost its competitiveness, and to raising awareness of the potential of territorial development to boost agricultural and rural well-being. In response to the crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, cooperation actions in support of public institutions were carried out to improve the performance of family farming and increase well-being in rural areas.
 - The IICA made efforts to improve the participation of agri-food products in international markets, as a way of reactivating economies in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic; to generate political and technical evidence of the value of rules-based trade and the importance of intraregional trade; to organize business roundtables; and to strengthen the trade capacities of agricultural SMEs and chains. The IICA continued to work extensively in various agri-food chains.
 - The Institute played a very important role in bringing the agriculture of the Americas to the forefront at major global events concerning climate-related production systems, such as the United Nations Food Systems Summit. The capacities and knowledge of political leaders and authorities in respect of this issue and the relationship between climate and agriculture have been strengthened. The IICA's accreditation by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other efforts resulted in the accelerated development of proposals for consideration by the countries and potential donors in the areas of resilient agriculture, sustainable soil management, water resource management and climate-smart food production. Other relevant achievements were the implementation of the "Living Soils of the Americas" initiative, which will serve as a bridge between science and public management to restore and protect the region's soil, and the rapid response actions coordinated with various member States to support countries affected by natural phenomena, with emphasis on the implementation of reconstruction or production rehabilitation programmes.
 - In the area of agricultural health, more than 5,000 people received training on topics including the following: the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) of the United States, transboundary diseases, African swine fever, Fusarium, huanglongbing, leaf rust, pesticides, trade regulations linked to the dairy sector, food labelling and leadership. This was complemented by efforts to modernize plant health, animal health and food safety services. In addition, in response to the health emergency caused by COVID-19, training events on preventive measures for the agricultural sector were organized.
 - The IICA actively addressed matters related to agricultural innovation, which is fundamental for a much-needed and urgent increase in competitiveness and digitization, as well as equity and sustainability. The various regional mechanisms in which the Institute participates, such as the cooperative programmes for agricultural research and technological development (PROCI), and commissions, forums and agricultural technology funds, continued to interact and serve as ideal means for delivering technical cooperation.
 - Lastly, in the area of gender and youth, the First Forum of Female Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas was established, as were women's platforms and networks, which are mechanisms that will contribute to knowledge-sharing, public policymaking and the implementation of solutions to shine the spotlight on women's leading role in food systems. Additionally, as part of the "IICA of Open Doors" initiative, the IICA organized hackathons and other events to foster young people's participation

as a way to continue to encourage the younger generations to become involved in so-called "Agriculture 4.0".

1.7. Finally, and in follow-up to the Ministerial Declarations on the emergency response to food insecurity adopted at the Ministerial Conference (MC12),¹ the IICA expresses its commitment to contribute to the implementation of these Ministerial Declarations, particularly concerning the work programme to be adopted in the Committee on Agriculture to examine how the Decision could be more effective and operational pursuant to Article 16 of the Agreement on Agriculture and to consider concerns raised by Members.

1.8. The permanent representatives and delegates from Latin America can, and should, play a very proactive role in the fulfilment of the Ministerial Declaration, given that this region possesses a number of characteristics that qualify it to become a partner to bring Members' positions closer together. In this connection, the region contains a group of developing countries, net food exporters, committed to the reform process and concerned about the adoption of export restrictions by other member countries, which create distortions to international trade. At the same time, a group of net food-importing countries belong to this region, which are immediately affected by the negative impact of the measures adopted that impede the normal flow of goods, putting their food security at risk. This group of countries share the same concerns as their counterparts in other parts of the world, particularly the African Group and some Pacific Island nations.

1.9. It is clear that food security, particularly for LDCs and NFIDCs, has been under threat in recent years, first due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the trade restrictions adopted by a number of food-exporting countries, then by the container crisis and finally by the war in Ukraine. In this regard, the consequences of these events had a swift impact on the world's economies, and the trend in inflation and the increase in the prices of key cereals, fertilizers and fuels suggest that the coming years will be complex and full of challenges.

1.10. The IICA, under its 2022–2026 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) and in line with the commitments undertaken with the member countries, contributes to the multilateral trading system, using its toolbox to create the means to bring positions closer together, facilitating dialogue and the creation of collaborative networks among agricultural and foreign trade authorities in the member countries in the first instance, and incorporating environmental stakeholders in the medium term.

1.11. For more information on the IICA's activities in this area, please *contact*:

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

Visit the Institute's website at: <http://www.iica.int>

¹ JOB/AG/236 and WT/L/1139.