



Fifth Ministerial Meeting
“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”
within the context of the Summit of the Americas Process
Montego Bay, Jamaica October 26-29, 2009

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October 29, 2009

AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN
Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Jamaica 2009
for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

Building capacity for enhancing food security and rural life in the Americas

We, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture or Heads of Delegation, gathered together at the Fifth Ministerial meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”, in the city of Montego Bay, Jamaica and within the context of the Summit of the Americas process, as a follow-up to the Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 and the mandates related to agriculture, food security and rural life issued at the Fifth Summit of the Americas (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago 2009), hereby reaffirm our commitment to the implementation and updating of the *AGRO 2003- 2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*

Therefore, having reviewed the national reports on progress made and challenges encountered and identified in the implementation of the AGRO Plan during the 2008-2009 Ministerial Process, and based on the consensus reached by the Ministerial Delegates during the 2009 Meeting of the GRICA (Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture), we adopt the *strategic actions* of the Hemispheric Agenda for the 2010-2011 biennium and the *measures* for implementing and following up on the AGRO Plan.

2010-2011 Hemispheric Agenda

The updating of the Hemispheric Agenda for the 2010-2011 biennium is based on the current validity of the strategic actions adopted in 2003, 2005 and 2007, and on new challenges and emphasis identified by the countries during the 2008-2009 Ministerial Process, in particular those related to food security, the global economic crisis and climate change, and their impacts on agriculture and rural life.

In defining the *strategic actions* of the present Hemispheric Agenda, and in accordance with the broad-based approach to agriculture and rural life, the AGRO Matrix used by the Ministers and Ministerial Delegates in preparing the AGRO Plan in 2003 and the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements Guayaquil 2005 and Guatemala 2007 was used.

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 on 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 and institutional environmental framework	→ Sustainability
Socialcultural – 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			OVERREACHING GOAL → SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL MILIEU

In this context, the principal strategies that inspire this Agreement are:

- to increase national capacities for enhancing food security and rural life,
- to strengthen the positioning of the issues and the priorities of agriculture and rural development in the public consciousness and in national strategies,
- to invest more in agriculture and rural development,
- to encourage the stakeholders of agriculture to adopt a broad-based approach to thinking and acting in agriculture and the rural milieu, and
- to promote with them the “working together” approach to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

Therefore, we express our will to promote, jointly with other stakeholders of agriculture and rural life the following, *strategic actions*:

I. Promoting competitive rural enterprises
 (Rural territories – production/trade dimension)

More and better food

1. To promote technological innovation and to disseminate the use of good production practices and of science based technologies, including environmental and sanitary ones, among producers, growers’ organizations, local leaders, and professionals providing technical assistance to contribute to increase production, productivity, nutrition, food quality and safety, competitiveness, and sustainability of agricultural activities.

Diversification of the Food basket

2. To improve the quality of life in rural areas by encouraging the production of traditional foods of cultural significance that are locally consumed, enhancing the use of under-utilized species and varieties and promoting an increase in their productivity and marketing, through research among other means, with a view to contributing to the diversification of the food basket, local supply, food security and the conservation of biodiversity.

II. Integrating chains and strengthening their competitiveness

(Agricultural production-trade chains – production/trade dimension)

Storage and food processing

3. To promote the improvement of harvesting, storage and food processing technologies and infrastructure through public and private investment that contributes to a better use of agricultural production, a reduction of post harvest losses and an increased food supply to local and export markets.

III. Promoting a harmonized environment conducive to competitive agriculture

(National and international context – production/trade dimension)

Plant and animal health and food safety

4. To strengthen capacity development and modernization of national and international institutions for plant and animal health and food safety with the objective of:
 - improving veterinary, phytosanitary and public health status of the countries,
 - the harmonization of sanitary and phytosanitary measures according to science-based international standards,
 - border and cross-border disease controls, and
 - the management capacity to prevent and combat invasive organisms and diseases.

Soils and water management

5. To strengthen, jointly with the cooperation of other national institutions and with the technical assistance of international organizational bodies:
 - the implementation of national strategies,
 - exchange of international experiences, and
 - mobilization of resourcesto enhance the capacities of agriculture stakeholders, promote conservation and sustainable management of soils and water resources and to address degradation, desertification, floods and droughts for the protection of land and water as common resources of humankind so as to encourage agricultural production and productivity.

Land and land tenure

6. To create programs that facilitate access to land, and establishing mechanisms for security of tenureship and land titling for small producers.

Risk management and agricultural emergencies

7. To improve and develop instruments for the management of risks such as:
 - agricultural insurance

- mechanisms to combat risks related to illegal occupation and praedial larceny,
- integration of early warning information systems,
- international networks for cooperation in risk assessment,

as well as to strengthen the comprehensive management of emergencies in agriculture and the rural milieu caused by agro-climatic and meteorological changes, and by human intervention.

IV. Being environmentally responsible in the rural areas

(Rural Territories – ecological/environmental dimension)

The challenges identified are covered by the previous hemispheric agendas and, therefore, no complementary strategic actions are suggested.

V. From farm to table: promoting integrated environmental management

(Agricultural production-trade chains – ecological/environmental dimension)

The challenges identified are covered by the previous hemispheric agendas and, therefore, no complementary strategic actions are suggested.

VI. Participating in building an institutional environmental framework

(National and international context - ecological/environmental dimension)

Climate change

8. To strengthen the agricultural sector's capacity to mitigate and to adapt to climate change through the development and implementation of strategies that address:
 - coordination between environmental and food security policies,
 - development of incentives for those that protect the environment,
 - generation and use of environmentally sustainable technologies and practices,
 - increasing public and private sector investment, and
 - assessment of the impact of climate change and the exchange of information.

Multisectoral agroenvironmental management

9. To actively encourage a multisectoral approach for the development of national strategies in agro-environmental management in rural areas.

VII. Quality of life in rural communities: creating know-how and opportunity

(Rural Territories – sociocultural/human dimension)

Management and leadership

10. To improve entrepreneurial management and leadership capacities through the operation of appropriate rural institutions offering services such as training, technological dissemination, innovation, market information and other services required for production, processing and marketing. These activities should give special priority to small and medium size producers and entrepreneurs, field workers, women and youth.

VIII. Advancing learning and expertise in the chain

(Agricultural production-trade chains – sociocultural/human dimension)

The challenges identified are covered by the previous hemispheric agendas and, therefore, no complementary strategic actions are suggested.

IX. Promoting policies to create capabilities and opportunities for the rural communities

(National and international context - sociocultural/human dimension)

Production and income

11. To promote expansion of producers and rural entrepreneurs and increased rural incomes through:

- clear price signals for inputs, food products and associated processing and transportation costs,
- increased capacity for post harvest storage and marketing,
- national strategies directed to the incorporation of rural groups, organizations and communities into the production process,
- increased investment in agriculture,
- strengthening of small and medium size rural enterprises,
- participation of rural women and youth in income and employment generating activities, to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in the rural milieu giving priority to those that present a higher level of social vulnerability and to food insecurity.

X. Strengthening public and private sector participation and coordinated action between them in the territories

(Rural Territories – political/institutional dimension)

Focusing on rural territories

12. To promote the use of a systemic, multisectoral and participatory approach in the design of policies and programs and in the assignment and focusing of resources for improving agriculture, food security and sustainable rural development.

XI. Strengthening dialogue and commitments among actors in the chain

(Agricultural production-trade chains – political/institutional dimension)

Coordination mechanisms and chain approach

13. To promote or strengthen, as required, the creation and operation of formal coordination mechanisms with all public and private agricultural production chain stakeholders, to facilitate, among other things:

- identifying and eliminating those factors that restrict their competitiveness,
- the integral analysis of such chains through a chain approach,
- trust building and institutional mechanisms to solve the conflicts inherent to each chain,
- improving logistics from farm to the table,
- improving regulatory compliance
- responding to crises
- dialogue, reaching agreements and follow-up of action commitments.

XII. Promoting State policies and regional and hemispheric cooperation for agriculture and rural life

(National and international context – political/institutional dimension)

Institutional capacity

14. To enhance the public and private institutional capacity in order to promote:

- participation of stakeholders in the agricultural sector and the development of their own capacities,

- expansion of technical services and technological innovation to improve the entire agricultural value chain, with particular emphasis on small and medium sized producers and entrepreneurs,
- building trade capacities for the benefit of agriculture and rural communities,
- environmental management of the different agricultural activities,
- inter-institutional coordination, and
- informed participation in international forums regarding agriculture and rural life.

Investment in agriculture and rural development

15. Promoting National policies to increase public and private, national and international investment as well as better financing of agriculture, agribusiness, small and medium-size enterprises, cooperatives, infrastructure and public goods for the rural milieu.

Implementation and Follow-up

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan reflects the will of the countries to work together towards the Shared Vision 2015, with the understanding that national governments are the main parties responsible for the implementation of the shared agenda and to coordinate the participation with the other public and private agricultural stakeholders in view of their international commitments and agreements.

Dissemination of the Jamaica 2009 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement and the AGRO-Matrix

16. The implementation of the Jamaica 2009 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement requires a joint action on the part of stakeholders in the public, private and social sectors. Therefore, it is necessary to widely disseminate the Jamaica 2009 *Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement*, an activity that the ministerial delegates will undertake with the support of the IICA offices in their countries, taking their national policies into account.

The broad-based and comprehensive way in which we conceive agriculture and rural life in the Plan (expressed in the AGRO-Matrix) represents the main contribution of our ministerial process to facilitate an understanding of the importance of agriculture and the rural milieu to development in our countries, in accordance with the call of the Port of Spain Declaration of Commitment, Trinidad and Tobago, for us to initiate actions by 2009 to facilitate implementation of the Heads of State and Government commitments as indicated in paragraphs 23, 24, 25, 90 and 93 of this declaration.

Regional mechanism and strategies

17. To strengthen regional meetings of ministers of agriculture, regional meetings of other agricultural stakeholders, as well as working together with the mechanisms for the regional integration of agriculture and for consultation and identification of priorities, coordination of actions and adoption of regional policies on matters of common interest, in the context of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

Support from and alignment of the international organizations

18. We reiterate our calls to the international organizations, made in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and request that they actively participate in the implementation of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Jamaica 2009.

Updating of the Hemispheric Agenda

19. The 2010-2011 Hemispheric Agenda is the fourth of six biennial agendas for the implementation of the AGRO Plan. National governments will deliver reports on progress in implementing each biennial agenda and identify challenges faced. These reports will serve as input for updating the Agenda for the 2012-2013 period. We therefore entrust:

- The Ministerial Delegates with preparing, with the support of the Secretariat of the Ministerial Process, the national report on progress and challenges in implementing this Ministerial Agreement.
- The Hemispheric Forum of Ministerial Delegates (GRICA) with developing the Ministerial Agreement for the 2010-2011 biennium.
- The Technical Secretariat, with reporting, in the Sixth Ministerial Meeting, on the progress of the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and on any actions carried out to ensure coordination of this ministerial process with the Summit of the Americas process, with the purpose of consolidating the positioning of agriculture and rural life in the Sixth Summit of the Americas, to take place in the city of Cartagena de Indias, Colombia in 2012.

Dialogue forums for other agricultural stakeholders

20. Due to the importance of the participation of all stakeholders in the value chain to achieve the agricultural and rural milieu development objectives, we consider necessary to promote dialogue forums parallel to the Ministerial Meetings for the other key agricultural stakeholders, such as private industry and social organizations, among others. With this in mind we request IICA and other international organizations, institutional partners of the Summit of the Americas Process, to support the implementation of such forums in future Ministerial Meetings.

Implementation mechanisms

21. Against the background of concerns about the effective implementation of the Hemispheric Agenda 2010-2011, we mandate IICA to provide support to strengthen and monitor the implementation of the Agro Plan in Member States and to facilitate exchange of experiences.

Signed in the city of Montego Bay, Jamaica
on the twenty-ninth day of October of two thousand and nine