

Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements

**AGRO 2003-2015 Plan
for Agriculture and Rural
Life in the Americas**

Bavaro 2001 - Panama 2003 - Guayaquil 2005 - Guatemala 2007



Ministerial Meetings "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas"
held within the context of the Summits of the Americas Process



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Plan for Agriculture and
Rural Life in the Americas

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Printing: IICA Headquarters

Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements: AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas: Bavaro 2001- Panama 2003 – Guayaquil 2005 – Guatemala 2007 / IICA. – San Jose, C.R.: IICA, 2007

132 p; 23 x 15,2 cm

ISBN 13: 978-92-9039-861-5

Also published in Spanish, French and Portuguese

1. Agriculture 2. International agreements 3. Rural development 4. International cooperation I. IICA II. Title

AGRIS
E14

DEWEY
327.17

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“Without a doubt, hemispheric meetings on key issues such as agriculture and rural life play a critical role in refining the focus and sustaining the momentum of the Summits of the Americas process. The National Secretariat for the Fifth Summit of the Americas recognizes the importance of Ministerial Meetings as an institutional mechanism for addressing strategic topics on the Inter-American agenda and coordinating the implementation of mandates agreed to by the Heads of State and Government. Over the past six years, the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life have served not only as the highest political forum for Ministers of Agriculture to discuss priorities and strategic actions but also as the main avenue for placing agriculture and rural life squarely on the Hemispheric agenda.”

**Closing ceremony of Fourth Ministerial Meeting
“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”**

**Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodríguez, Trinidad and Tobago
Chairperson of the Summit Implementation Review Group and
Fifth Summit of the Americas National Secretariat Coordinator**

Foreword

The Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”, launched in 2001 by the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture of the Americas and their Delegates, has been strengthened as a result of the fora of agricultural business operators, social actors, Ministerial Delegates of Agriculture and Rural Life (GRICA 2007) and Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas (Fourth Ministerial Meeting).

These events, held in the context of the the Week of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, were conducted under the slogan “***Working together for agriculture and rural life in the Americas***” and provided a forum for discussion by leaders of strategic topics for agriculture and rural life, the identification of challenges in the two areas and the adoption of strategies for joint action by stakeholders in agriculture in the public, private and social sectors.

The adoption of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas marks a renewed commitment on the part of the countries to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. It also signifies increased momentum for the Ministerial Process based on the two strategic guidelines that inform that Agreement: “(...) promote with the agricultural stakeholders a broad-based approach to thinking and acting in agriculture and the rural milieu and, the second one, “working together” to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas”.

The Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements (HMA) adopted since the First Ministerial Meeting, held in Bavaro in 2001, reflect the political and sovereign will of leaders in agriculture in the countries with respect to the Shared Vision of Agriculture and Rural Life through 2015. They also reflect their agreement as to

the strategies that need to be promoted jointly to move towards the realization of that vision and the measures for facilitating the respective actions.

The HMAs are the outgrowth of a broad and transparent dialogue. In this process, the Ministerial Delegates play a leading role, especially in building consensus across the hemisphere, starting with the countries and then extending to the Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life of the Summits Process (GRICA).

The full texts of all of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements, from the First to the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, are included in this publication in an effort to chronicle the history of the Ministerial Process, and specifically, the HMAs. Also included in Annex 1 are the strategic actions of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan in effect, adopted at the ministerial meetings, held in Panama in 2003, in Guayaquil in 2005, and in Guatemala in 2007.

The perception of society, its leaders and institutions of the contribution of agricultural and rural life to development is of crucial importance in achieving the political positioning of the related priorities in national strategies. This perception is oft times unfavorable because society has access to information that offers a distorted and shortsighted view of the actual and potential contribution that agriculture, the rural milieu and rural dwellers make to the overall development of countries.

The scenario with regard to agriculture and the rural milieu is changing. New developments in the field of energy generation, climate change mitigation, the production of food and new materials, and their positive impact on equity and good

governance confirm the dual role of agriculture, as recognized by the Heads of State and Government at the Third Summit of the Americas, held in Quebec in 2001:

“(…) as a way of life for millions of rural families of the Hemisphere as well as the role it plays in the creation of prosperity as a strategic sector in our socio-economic system…”

All of this paves the way for broadening the concept that society as a whole has, in the Americas, of agriculture and rural life.

It is therefore appropriate to highlight strategic actions seven and eleven of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007, which focus on the repositioning of rural life and on recognition of the true value of agriculture and the rural milieu. They should also be seen as the political vision for the 2008-2009 Ministerial Process at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, as we move towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

Through these actions, we could meet head on the situations that result in an under-estimation of the importance of agriculture and of its strategic importance. At the same time, we would be in a position to respond to the invitation extended to us by Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez, Coordinator of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, to participate in defining strategic priorities on which we can build consensus for collective action.

This is a challenge for all of us. To meet it, we have the framework of mandates on agriculture and rural life in the context of the Summit of the Americas process to empower us. We also have the strategic HMAs as a reference for joint action with other stakeholders.


In each of our respective spheres of influence, we must therefore play a role of leadership in promoting “working together for agriculture and rural life in the Americas”, in conjunction with stakeholders in the public, private and social sectors, and thereby move forward in building an institutional framework that will facilitate the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu.



Bernardo López Figueroa
Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala
Chairperson of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting
“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”



Anabella Osorio Escobar
Ministerial Delegate for Agriculture and Rural Life
Chair of GRICA 2007



Chelston W.D. Brathwaite
Director General
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting

Introduction

Leadership, working together and the reassessment of agriculture and rural life: pillars for a renewed institutional framework

Throughout the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” begun in 2001 in response to the mandates of the Third Summit of the Americas, the Ministers have adopted a number of far-reaching decisions of importance for agriculture and rural life, which are set out in the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements (HMAs) approved in the Ministerial Meetings of 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007 and form part of this document.

Prior to presenting the HMAs, however, this document provides information that will help to understand the context in which the ministerial process began and how it has evolved, its meetings and its results.

A number of topics are addressed in this document, including the hemispheric political framework that reassessed agriculture and rural life, the Ministerial Process derived from same, the reasons why the process is fundamental if the next step in consolidating the positioning of agriculture and rural life is to be taken, and how to move forward with the unfinished task of ensuring that the HMAs are reflected fully on the development agendas of the countries and the organizations that support them in implementing their strategies.

It concludes by indicating that, if that next step is to be taken, renewed leadership will be needed to develop mechanisms that will enable the different interest groups in agriculture and rural life to work together to build a renewed institutional framework in the countries of the Americas.

The HMAs in context

Over the last six years, efforts to build a more just, secure, prosperous and equitable world in the 21st century through dialogue and consensus building at the global and hemispheric levels have been

strengthened. The Millennium Development Goals and their targets for 2015, as well as the mandates and commitments of the Summit of the Americas process, are two significant results of those efforts which have important implications for agriculture and rural communities.

Specifically, the mandates and commitments related to agriculture and rural life derived from the Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec 2001):

- attached greater value to agriculture and rural life by recognizing their importance in the comprehensive development of countries;
- bestowed on the Ministers of Agriculture a leading role in the implementation of the mandates of the Summits process;
- gave rise to the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and its meetings, as instruments for energizing the Summits process; and
- included IICA as an institutional partner in all stages of that process, along with the OAS, PAHO, IDB, ECLAC and the World Bank.

Working within the context of the Summits process, and engaging in an ongoing broad-based, participatory and transparent ministerial process, the Ministers of Agriculture and their Ministerial Delegates have discussed and built consensus on the HMAs adopted in the Ministerial Meetings “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” held within the context of the Summit of the Americas process, in Bavaro in 2001, Panama in 2003, Guayaquil in 2005 and Guatemala in 2007.

What is the Summit of the Americas process?

This process, spearheaded by the Heads of State and Government of the Americas, with the support of the Ministers of Foreign Relations and the National Summit Coordinators, is aimed at moving forward in the formulation and implementation of an inter-American agenda for

the development of the Americas. That agenda includes commitments, mandates and concrete actions in areas of strategic importance for the comprehensive and sustainable development of our countries. The Heads of State and Government made the decision to include agriculture and rural life among the strategic issues of the Third Summit of the Americas, given the key role they play in making such development possible.

Four regular Summits (Miami 1994, Santiago 1998, Quebec 2001, and Mar del Plata 2005) and two special summits (Santa Cruz de la Sierra 1996 and Monterrey 2004) have been held to date. Between Summits, two mechanisms ensure the continuation of the process: (i) the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), which is the hemispheric forum of the Ministers of Foreign Relations (held once a year) and of the National Summit Coordinators (held several times a year) to follow up on the mandates adopted and propose texts for new mandates; and (ii) the Ministerial Meetings, in which the ministers give direction to the implementation of those mandates through specific ministerial agreements, provide follow-up and propose new mandates.

These two mechanisms are complemented with the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG), which is the hemispheric forum of the international organizations that are partner institutions in all stages of the Summits process.

What led to the reassessment of the value of agriculture and rural life?

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).

What is the political framework for reassessing 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 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) to implement the **hemispheric**

joint action the Heads of State and Government pledged to promote at the Quebec Summit in 2001.

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).”*

The mandates and commitments of these three Summits constitute a policy framework for attaching greater value to agriculture and rural life in the Americas, and give rise to a new ministerial process whose agreements contribute to implementing and updating the mandates of the hemispheric Summits.

What is the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan?

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan is the shared long-term agenda for promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, called for in paragraph 18 of the Declaration of Bavaro for the Improvement of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas.

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, and the measures for their implementation and follow-up negotiated by the GRICA and 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).

What are the Ministerial Meetings “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas?”

The decision taken by the Heads of State and Government at the Quebec Summit to recognize and promote hemispheric ministerial meetings as mechanisms for the implementation of their mandates, in particular those on agriculture and rural life, led to the establishment of the *Ministerial Meetings “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” held in the context of the Summits Process*. They are aimed at addressing the strategic issues and the specific mandates related to agriculture and rural life identified by the Heads of State and Government in their declarations and hemispheric actions plans, and constitute a hemispheric forum for multilateral political dialogue, coordination and cooperation among the 34 member countries of the Inter-American System.

“Ministerial meetings for many issues are the most important operational mechanism for the collective design of sectoral action plans on public policy in the region. This is the most important added value that the Summits of the Americas Process has brought to the OAS and to our countries.”¹

The Ministerial Meetings, which are part of the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” provide an opportunity to learn of progress in implementing the mandates of the Summits and the HMAs. As such, these hemispheric meetings are part of two complementary and articulated processes: the Summit of the Americas process and the “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”

1 Official Documents from the Summits of the Americas Process from Miami to Quebec City, Volume III. OAS. Quote taken from the Preface presented by Jaime Aparicio Otero, Director of the OAS Summits Office.

process. The HMAs adopted at these meetings give continuity to the process of building the Shared Vision 2015 and, at the same time, contribute to the preparation of the new decisions that the Heads of State and Government are required to take.

Thus, the Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” the highest-level hemispheric ministerial forum, is the political space in which the Ministers of Agriculture reach agreement by consensus on **priorities and strategic actions** for improving agriculture and rural life.

The identity of the Ministerial Meeting, underpinned by a continuous ministerial process, is expressed and consolidated with the HMAs. Thanks to this identity as a hemispheric body, the Ministerial Meeting has positioned itself as a key political player that is having a real impact on the Summit of the Americas process.

What are the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life?

They are ministerial decisions on strategic aspects of agriculture and rural life in the Americas that the ministers take by consensus. As international instruments in support of the Summit of the Americas Process, the HMAs document the ministers’ determination and commitment to promote **strategic actions** for the sustainable improvement of agriculture and the rural milieu, working with the actors responsible for the development of agriculture and rural life.

The HMAs carry considerable political weight because they are the result of a highly participatory ministerial process, are based on the realities identified in the national proposals and are strengthened with the hemispheric consensus built by the Ministerial Delegates of the 34 member countries of the Inter-American System by means of dialogue and negotiation. That political weight is derived from the governments’ pledge to implement and follow up on the HMAs, with a view to updating them and ensuring the

continuation of the process required to move toward the Shared Vision 2015, defined by the Ministers of Agriculture in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

The political weight of the HMAs was reaffirmed when they were adopted as official documents of the Summit of the Americas process, and as inputs for the declarations and plans of action issued by the Heads of State and of Government.

What is the Ministerial Process and how are the HMAs developed?

Development of the HMAs begins in the countries, with a Ministerial Process that encompasses national consultations which yield the proposals that the countries share. Based on these national proposals, the countries enter into dialogue, negotiate and reach a hemispheric consensus on the text of each HMA.

Given the diversity of the countries' interests and views, the Ministerial Process has made it possible to reach a broad consensus on the HMAs. As a result, the HMAs reflect common concerns and issues on which the countries agree, which are of great value for improving agriculture and rural life.

With a view to facilitating hemispheric dialogue and building consensus, since 2001 the Ministerial Process has included two groups of key players who have their respective hemispheric forums and agreements: (i) the Ministerial Delegates of Agriculture and Rural Life and their hemispheric forum, the GRICA; and (ii) the Ministers of Agriculture and their forum, the Ministerial Meeting "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas."

The Delegates coordinate the formulation of national proposals for the HMAs and, meeting as the GRICA, build the hemispheric consensus required for the agreements signed by the ministers in their meetings. They also coordinate the preparation of the national progress reports on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and identify the challenges faced in implementing it.

What is the “institutional architecture” that underpins the ministerial process?

For the Ministerial Meetings to be effective in further positioning agriculture and rural life in the Summit process, the Ministers and their Delegates, with support from IICA, conduct the Ministerial Process, which is underpinned by an “institutional architecture” whose key components are of two types: the first four being organizational in nature, and the last two political-conceptual.

- A *national team* comprising a Ministerial Delegate of Agriculture and Rural Life, an Alternate Delegate and a technical support group made up of members of the policy or planning units of the ministries of agriculture. The key duties of this team are: (i) to coordinate implementation of the mandates of the Summits and the HMAs in the respective country; (ii) to prepare the reports on progress and challenges, which are shared with the other Ministerial Delegates; and (iii) to conduct national consultations in order to gather the inputs needed to begin building consensus on new HMAs.
- A *hemispheric forum of Ministerial Delegates*, the GRICA, chaired by the Ministerial Delegate of the host country of the following Ministerial Meeting, who is accompanied by the Ministerial Delegate of the host country of the last Ministerial Meeting. The Ministerial Delegates, through dialogue and negotiation, build consensus on proposals for new HMAs they submit to the consideration of the Ministers.
- A *Secretariat of the Ministerial Process and its Ministerial Meeting*, provided by IICA, whose main task is to support the national, regional and hemispheric dialogue that: (i) underpins the HMAs; (ii) gives continuity to the Ministerial Process; (iii) facilitates regional integration within the context of the hemispheric process; (iv) facilitates articulation of the Ministerial Process

with the Summit of the Americas process; and (v) contributes to further positioning agriculture and rural life on the inter-American agenda. As a contribution to the dialogue, the Secretariat supports the work of the Delegates, the GRICA and the Ministerial Meeting. The Secretariat also serves as the institutional memory of the process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” constantly updating its Web site: www.iica.int/cumbres.

- A *Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting in the context of the Summit process*, which is the forum of Ministers of Agriculture. This forum gives direction to and conducts the hemispheric process and adopts the HMAs which make it possible to continue working toward the Shared Vision 2015. Through the Secretariat, the Chair of the Ministerial Meeting sends some of those HMAs to the Chair of the SIRG and to the Secretariat of the Summit Process of the OAS for consideration by the Heads of State and Government, so that they can make the decisions required to move forward toward the Shared Vision 2015.
- 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. This HMA, which is a reference point for decision makers, comprises the Shared Vision 2015, the Strategic Objectives, the hemispheric ministerial agendas and the measures for implementing and monitoring same.
- A *renewed concept of agriculture and rural life*, the AGRO-Matrix, which the Ministerial Delegates and the Ministers developed over the span of three Ministerial Meetings (Bavaro 2001, Panama 2003, Guayaquil 2005) in an attempt to reach agreement on the scope of action of the AGRO Plan.

What are the HMAs and what do they define?

In the 2001-2007 Ministerial Process, the four Ministerial Meetings held to date have yielded the following HMAs:

Guatemala 2007. (Fourth Ministerial Meeting)

■ *AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. HMA Guatemala 2007*

The agreement comprises two parts: (i) the 2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda “*Providing leadership for a holistic approach to agriculture and rural life,*” with 11 strategic actions that complement those adopted in the Ministerial Meetings held in 2003 (Panama) and 2005 (Guayaquil); and (ii) the section Implementation and Follow-up “*Working together for agriculture and rural life in the Americas,*” which includes 6 measures with direct implications for the work in the countries and regions, as well as for the role of the international organizations and the Secretariat of the Ministerial Process.

The Agreement of Guatemala 2007 focuses on how to build a renewed institutional framework for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, with the participation of the public, private and social sectors. In this regard, the agreement attaches priority to two complementary strategic orientations “... *the first one, to promote with the agricultural stakeholders a broad-based approach to thinking and acting in agriculture and the rural milieu and, the second one, “working together” to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas.*”

Guayaquil 2005. (Third Ministerial Meeting)

■ *AGRO 2003-2015 Plan: Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*

The decision to implement the Plan by means of biennial ministerial agendas created the need to keep abreast of progress in the implementation of their strategic actions and, based on the

information garnered, to update the Plan. The Agreement reaffirms the ministers' commitment to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and updates it with complementary strategic actions for the 2006-2007 biennium, as well as implementation and follow-up measures. The Agreement places emphasis on the promotion of national policies for agriculture and rural life, and the strengthening of regional integration and international cooperation.

- *Ministerial Agreement on the Implementation and Follow-up of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan in preparation for the Fourth Ministerial Meeting*

Basically, this covers the preparation of the national reports on the progress being made in implementing the Plan and the challenges facing the countries. Based on the reports, the Plan will be updated for the 2008-2009 biennium.

- *Ministerial Agreement on the Information System for Monitoring the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan*

It recognizes the effort initiated by IICA and ECLAC, and supported by FAO, PAHO, UNESCO and the ILO. It calls for further efforts to develop the system.

- *Ministerial Agreement on the Proposal for the Fourth Summit of the Americas*

The Ministers instructed the Chairperson and the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting, based on the ministerial proposal, to help consolidate the positioning of agriculture and rural life within the Summits process.

Panama 2003. (Second Ministerial Meeting)

- *AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*

The Ministers' decision to reach consensus on a shared hemispheric agenda, taken at the First Ministerial Meeting, prompted further dialogue and the development of the second HMA.

The Ministers' determination was reflected in the Plan, in the following four complementary components: the Shared Vision 2015; the Strategic Objectives, to focus the efforts; the strategic actions needed to achieve the objectives (the 2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda); and, the measures for implementing and following up on the Plan.

The Ministers and their Delegates based the preparation of the Plan on a new and broader conception of agriculture and rural life, of great value in developing effective strategies for agriculture, which is summarized in the **AGRO-Matrix**.

- *Ministerial Agreement on Implementation of and Follow-up to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan*

Bavaro 2001. (First Ministerial Meeting)

- *Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro for the Improvement of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*

In the Declaration, the Ministers of Agriculture pledged to promote joint action aimed at improving agriculture and rural life, as called for in the Plan of Action adopted at the Third Summit of the Americas. They stressed the importance of making progress with the efforts related to food security, rural poverty alleviation and the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, addressing together the issues of competitiveness, equity, environmental sustainability and democratic governance.

What is the AGRO-Matrix and what is it used for?

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.

It is one of the main outcomes of the consensus-building process followed by the Ministerial Delegates in their efforts to support the Ministers of Agriculture in developing the HMAs adopted at the Ministerial Meetings held in 2003, 2005 and 2007.

The AGRO-Matrix, used as the basis for preparing the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, is the conceptual framework for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, as stated in the second paragraph of the Plan.

There are two aspects that need to be differentiated in the AGRO-Matrix. They are: (i) the two pillars of its structure; and (ii) the three components of the desired situation.

The two pillars of its structure are: a systemic concept of agriculture and rural life, broken down into three categories or operational areas (rural territories, agricultural value chains and the national and international context) and a sustainable development approach consisting of four dimensions or types of actions (production-trade, ecological-environmental, sociocultural-human and political-institutional).

The three components of the desired situation needed to attain the Shared Vision 2015 are: the twelve purposes, the seven strategic objectives and the overarching objective, which guide the strategies, policies and actions adopted.

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

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 is the ideal tool for understanding and defining the “real” contribution of agriculture and rural life to the development of countries. Its use facilitates the development of a common base of information on agriculture and rural life and on the nature and magnitude of the processes they involve. It also helps to organize the compilation of the opinions and expectations of the multiple actors of agriculture and rural life, and to define and rank objectives and strategic actions, to identify the impact of policies and programs and to measure the progress made in achieving the purposes and strategic objectives and moving toward the Shared Vision 2015.

What is the information system?

At the time they approved the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action in 2003, the Ministers of Agriculture felt the need to propose measures for implementing and following up on same. They stated as much in the HMAs of Panama, Guayaquil and Guatemala.

At the Ministerial Meeting in Guayaquil (2005), the Ministers considered it was necessary to monitor and evaluate the efforts being made via an information system that would cover the following aspects of its implementation:

- the fulfillment of agreements
- the impact of same on improvement of agriculture and rural life
- the opinions and expectations of leaders.

To this end, the Ministers approved the HMA on the Information System for Monitoring the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan (IS). At the Guatemala Ministerial Meeting, the Secretariat of the Ministerial Process reported to the Ministers on progress in implementing that HMA.

The information system (IS) is a ministerial initiative aimed at generating and using up-to-date information to facilitate decision making in the formulation of policies and strategies for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. It is based on the integration of three components of information under the AGRO-Matrix. These components are:

- national actions and the challenges the countries face in implementing the AGRO Plan
- performance indicators related to agriculture and rural life
- the expectations of leaders of agriculture and rural life

The development of the IS requires the joint effort of the countries and international organizations. The actions and challenges component is based on the national progress report prepared by the Ministerial Delegate of each country. The performance indicators component is based on work headed by ECLAC, in coordination with IICA, which has received support from other international organizations, primarily

FAO and PAHO. The expectations of leaders component is based on the responses obtained in the National Consultation of Leaders of Agriculture and Rural Life conducted by IICA.

The IS provides the stakeholders of agriculture with up-to-date strategic information, organized around a conceptual framework which is based on a comprehensive concept of agriculture and rural life and is always available on the Web site of the Secretariat of the Ministerial Process.

The opportunity and the challenge: how to move forward with the unfinished task of linking the hemispheric and national levels?

The mandates of the Summits and the HMAs are necessary, but not sufficient to make the Shared Vision 2015 a reality in the countries. They serve as a policy and technical framework for formulating national strategies and policies, ensuring institutional alignment and focusing national efforts and international cooperation. However, to begin working toward the change the HMAs are promoting with the Shared Vision 2015, it is necessary to emphasize the development of a renewed institutional framework at the national level in their implementation.

The additional step that is required to develop that institutional framework is a renewed leadership that will promote the adoption of an intersectoral strategy calling on the public, private and social sectors to work together, with the coordinated support of international organizations. The goal of this strategy will also consolidate the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and also to link, in that process, the hemispheric and regional levels with the national level.

The great challenge to be faced in taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the mandates of the Summits and the HMAs can be summed up as follows: it is urgent to pick up the pace toward 2015 with a renewed leadership that will promote, from the countries, the “working together” strategy.

GUATEMALA 2007: FOURTH MINISTERIAL MEETING

- **The 2006-2007 Ministerial Process:** from Guayaquil 2005 to Guatemala 2007
- **The Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007**

ON THE ROAD TO GUATEMALA 2007
***“Working together” for the agriculture and
rural life in the Americas***

Positioning agriculture and rural life on the national agenda and devising and implementing the measures needed to achieve their sustainable development are permanent challenges, challenges that all the actors of the agricultural sector must help tackle. Hence, the call to “work together” with all of them in realizing the 2015 Shared Vision, taking into account the hemispheric political framework and our ministerial agreements.

In essence, the 2006-2007 Ministerial Process, “working together,” offers the key actors responsible for the sustainable development of agriculture and rural life a mechanism and an opportunity to construct a renewed institutional framework and to beef up the joint activities and cooperation that will help us advance, swiftly and successfully, toward the Shared Vision of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas for 2015.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bernardo López Figueroa', is centered on a light beige background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Bernardo López Figueroa
Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala
Chairperson of the Fourth Ministerial

Fourth Ministerial Meeting – 2007



At the Fourth Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” in the context of the Summit of the Americas process, the Ministers updated the **AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action** by approving the *Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*.

THE 2006-2007 MINISTERIAL PROCESS:

The 2006-2007 Ministerial Process: from
Guayaquil 2005 to Guatemala 2007

The 2006-2007 Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life” leading up to the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, held in Guatemala in 2007, revolved around implementation of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guayaquil 2005. The strategic actions and measures for implementing and following up on that HMA and others that complement it gave pride of place to the following:

- The establishment of a national policy in the countries;
- An adjustment of regional strategies;
- Development of an information system for following up on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan; and
- The updating of the hemispheric agenda for the 2008-2009 biennium and measures for its implementation.

In early 2006, Guatemala, as the host country for the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, assumed its initial and proactive role as Chair of the 2006-2007 Ministerial Process, which it steered and spearheaded. In the publication, *Towards Guatemala 2007: Working together for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*, the Chair proposed the slogan for guiding the Process and the meeting. In that publication, the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food stated the following:

“Essentially, the 2006–2007 Ministerial Process, ‘working together’, offers stakeholders responsible for the sustainable development of agriculture and rural life a forum and an opportunity to build a renewed institutional framework and strengthen joint action and cooperation as a means of contributing to rapid and successful progress towards a shared vision of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas through 2015.”

In mid-June of 2006, the Minister also informed his counterparts about the path decided on in the run-up to the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, the implementation of the 2005 Guayaquil Agreement and the designation of the regular and alternate Ministerial Delegates. He also asked them to take necessary action to coordinate the work required for this meeting.

To assist the Ministerial Delegates with the assignments mandated by the ministers, the Chair prepared, with support from the Secretariat, a proposal entitled “Basis for a work program for the Ministerial Delegates”. This document, which served as a general reference for work at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, pinpoints the four objectives that highlight the “working together” approach, the basic activities, expected results and general programming towards Guatemala 2007.

The Delegates played a fundamental role in developing the 2006-2007 Ministerial Process and accomplished the following in their respective national spheres:

- Coordinated implementation of the HMAs, as mandated by the Ministers at their Third Ministerial Meeting;
- Reported on and coordinated, with their respective foreign ministries, the dissemination and follow-up of the mandates on agriculture and rural life of the Summits;
- Provided support for the “**National consultation 2007 with leaders of agriculture and rural life of the Americas**”, aimed at ascertaining the expectations and opinions of leaders, which is one of the three components of the Information System for the Follow-up of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. That consultation was coordinated by IICA in the 34 countries of the Americas, pursuant to the mandate of the Fourth Summit of the Americas and HMA Guayaquil 2005, in reference to an information system for the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan;
- Prepared the national report on progress made and challenges faced with the implementation of HMA Guayaquil 2005; and
- Participated in the preparation of HMA Guatemala 2007.

Based on the ***“2007 National Report on the progress made and challenges encountered in implementing the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guayaquil 2005”*** provided by 26 countries, IICA, in its capacity as Secretariat for the Ministerial Process, prepared the “Base Document for the 2007 Hemispheric Dialogue”. This document was the main input used at the GRICA 2007 meeting, held on July 23 and 24, to prepare and build consensus on HMA Guatemala 2007.

The hemispheric dialogue, led by the Ministers of Agriculture, with support from the Ministerial Delegates, was a distinctive and vital element in the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” aimed at establishing the HMAs, in that it promoted participation by the private, social and public sectors in the countries and ensured the relevance and legitimacy of the strategic decisions adopted by the Ministers at their Ministerial Meetings “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”.

Indeed, through virtual dialogue held in July and the 2007 GRICA meeting, the Ministerial Delegates built hemisphere-wide consensus on strategic topics and actions relating to the 2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda and measures for its implementation and follow-up. The Ministers endorsed that consensus at their Fourth Ministerial Meeting, as reflected in the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas.

The Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007

Four years after it was signed, the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan has been expanded and improved as a result of the strategic guidelines and actions in the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 and the measures for its implementation and follow-up.

Three significant aspects for a renewed institutional framework characterize the decisions of the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture and are of enormous conceptual, practical and political value to stakeholders in agriculture and rural life in the Americas who are interested in or responsible for the comprehensive and sustainable development of agriculture and rural life.

First are the two underlying strategic guidelines, which reflect the conceptual approach that informed the Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and the actual HMA: promoting with stakeholders in agriculture and rural life a broad-based concept of agriculture and rural life and a different approach to these areas, and promoting with them the “working together” approach to agriculture and rural life in the Americas. Both guidelines are complementary and, together, offer significant potential for establishing and implementing more effective national, regional and hemispheric strategies and policies.

The first feature is reinforced by the second distinctive aspect of HMA Guatemala 2007: the express desire to promote the strategic actions jointly and in coordination with other stakeholders in agriculture and rural life in the public, private and social sectors. This is specifically emphasized in the participation and establishment of partners and commitments to move forward with building a more conducive renewed institutional framework for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, the overarching objective of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

The third distinctive feature of HMA Guatemala 2007, which is rather of a political nature, concerns the need to view agriculture and rural life in the context of society and its priorities and to consider the repercussions that this has on national strategies and policies. This HMA, which has extraordinary value for the Ministerial Process leading up to 2009, embodies the ministerial commitment to participate proactively in the repositioning of agriculture and rural life and the related priorities in national strategies, and to promote an increased appreciation of agriculture and the rural milieu, thereby contributing to meet strategic and emerging challenges to development.

These strategic actions aim at promoting in society an increased understanding of the contribution of agriculture and the rural milieu to development, rural–urban balance in national strategies and an end to the biases and exclusions that exist to the detriment of agriculture and rural communities. What is more, the spirit and political vision that ensue from HMA Guatemala 2007 provide the mainstay for the proposals and priorities that emerge from the process as we move towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas, to be held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009.

MM4/HMA8-2007
July 26, 2007

AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN
HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT GUATEMALA 2007
FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN THE AMERICAS

We, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture, gathered together as the Fourth Ministerial “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”, within the context of the Summit of the Americas process, as follow up to the Ministerial Agreement Guayaquil 2005 and the commitment adopted with such agreement by the Heads of State and of Government during the Fourth Summit, Mar del Plata 2005, reaffirm our commitment with the implementation and updating of the AGRO 2003- 2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas.

Therefore, considering the national reports on progress made and challenges identified in the implementation of the AGRO Plan during the 2006-2007 ministerial process and based on the consensus reached by the Ministerial Delegates during the GRICA 2007 (Implementation and Coordination Group for the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life), we adopt the strategic actions of the Hemispheric Agenda for the 2008-2009 biennium and the measures for its implementation and follow up.

Two strategic orientations inspire the Guatemala 2007 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement: the first one, to promote with the agricultural stakeholders a broad based approach to thinking and acting in agriculture and the rural milieu and, the second one, “working together” to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Providing leadership for a holistic approach to agriculture and rural life

The updating of the Hemispheric Agenda for the 2008-2009 biennium is based on the current validity of the strategic actions adopted in 2003 and 2005, and on new challenges identified by the countries in the 2006-2007 ministerial process.

In defining the strategic actions of the present Hemispheric Agenda, and in accordance with the broad based approach towards agriculture and rural life adopted by the Ministers in the development of the AGRO Plan in 2003 and the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guayaquil 2005, the conceptual framework of the Plan AGRO was used, as reflected in the AGRO Matrix, which synthesizes the renewed approach to agriculture and rural life and the situation which will be desirable to advance the Shared Vision 2015.

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

I. Promoting competitive rural enterprises

(Rural territories – production/trade dimension)

Entrepreneurial and business capability and capability for innovation

1. To strengthen and promote the development of entrepreneurial and business capabilities and capability for innovation in men and women in rural communities to support the creation of new business operators and enterprises and the sustained and competitive growth of emerging and existing enterprises.

II. Integrating chains and strengthening their competitiveness

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

Market information

2. To increase the availability of, and improve access for rural producers and other sectors linked to the productive chain to, reliable and timely market information through various public and private mechanisms or services.

Inclusive chains linkages

3. To promote the integration of rural producers and micro, small- and medium-scale agri enterprises into production and marketing/trade chains contributing to a sustainable income.

III. Promoting a harmonized environment conducive to competitive agriculture

(National and international context – production/trade dimension)

Strengthening of small- and medium scale rural enterprise

4. To implement policies that promote coordination between the public and private sectors, to improve the competitiveness of rural enterprises and producers to maximize trade.

Mobilizing resources

5. To mobilize public and private resources for the creation of infrastructure in an effort to promote investment in the rural sector and promote competitive agriculture.

IV. Being environmentally responsible in the rural areas

(Rural Territories – ecological/environmental dimension)

Environmental plan for businesses

6. To promote the creation of national capabilities to develop and implement agro environmental policies in the rural milieu with the participation of rural organizations, academia and the public and private sectors.

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)

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

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

(Rural Territories – sociocultural/human dimension)

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

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)

Repositioning of rural issues in national strategies

7. 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.

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

(Rural Territories – political/institutional dimension)

Establishment and follow-up of partnerships and agreements

8. To support rural stakeholders and their organizations with establishing coordinating, consensus building, and follow-up mechanisms on partnerships and agreements to facilitate joint efforts in implementing policies and strategies in rural territories.

XI. Strengthening dialogue and commitments among actors in the chain

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

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

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

(National and international context – political/institutional dimension)

Establishment of partnerships and agreements

9. To promote cooperation and the establishment of lasting alliances and agreements at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, which allow for greater participation of the private and social sectors in public policy development and implementation geared towards the improvement of agriculture and rural life.

Modernization and institutional strengthening of the rural public sector

10. To promote the modernization of public institutions in agriculture to enable them to integrate actions and services, that will improve linkages with other public, private and social stakeholders, as well as international partners, in the implementation of the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan.

Reassessment of the value of agriculture and the rural milieu

11. To promote efforts to reassess the value of agriculture and the rural milieu by helping to address strategic and emerging development issues, promoting urban-rural integration, taking into consideration social, political, economic, ecological and cultural factors, reporting on the multidimensional contributions made by the rural sector to national development.

Implementation and Follow-up

Working together for agriculture and rural life in the Americas

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 agricultural stakeholders in view of their international commitments and agreements.

Dissemination of the AGRO Plan and its Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007

12. The implementation of the 2007 Guatemala Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement requires a joint action on the part of stakeholders in the public, private and social sectors. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the dissemination of the 2007 Agro Plan and its Guatemala 2007 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement, an activity that the ministerial delegates will undertake with the support of the respective IICA offices, taking into account the countries' National Policies.

Facilitating joint action

13. The renewed, 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 contribution of agriculture and the rural milieu to development in our countries. In this sense and taking into account paragraph 12, we strongly recommend that, in publicizing the AGRO Plan, we promote the broad-based and comprehensive view expressed in the AGRO-Matrix, and that it be implemented in cooperation with the public, private and social stakeholders in implementing this Ministerial Agreement.

Regional mechanisms and strategies

14. 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 support of the implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

Information System

15. Having been informed of progress in the development of the Information System for Monitoring and Evaluating the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and its three components, we support efforts to promote the system in the countries through the integration of existing mechanisms, and we ask the Secretariat to report on progress to the Fifth Ministerial Meeting. We acknowledge the work accomplished under the leadership of IICA and ECLAC, with support from FAO and PAHO, and we urge them to encourage other international organizations to join this effort and, together, continue supporting efforts to improve this tool.

Support from and alignment of the international organizations

16. We reiterate our calls to the international organizations, made in 2001, 2003 and 2005, and request that they actively participate in the implementation of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007. In this regard, we shall promote and support the creation and operation of interagency groups at the national level.

Updating of the Hemispheric Agenda

17. The 2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda is the third of six biennial agendas by means of which the AGRO Plan is to be implemented. 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 following 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 updating this Ministerial Agreement for the 2010-2011 biennium.
- * The Technical Secretariat with reporting, in the Fifth Ministerial, on progress with 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 Fifth Summit of the Americas.

*Signed in the city of La Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala
on twenty-sixth day of July of two thousand and seven.*

Antigua and Barbuda
Joanne Massiah



Argentina
Luis Gerardo Petri



Bahamas
Lawrence S. Cartwright



Barbados
Erskine Griffith



Belize
Juan Vildo Marín



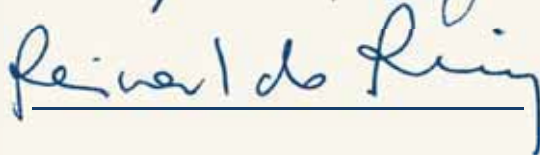
Bolivia
Susana Rivero Guzmán



Brazil
Célio Brovino Porto



Canada
Christian Paradis



Chile
Reinaldo Ruiz



Colombia
Lorena Garnica de la Espriella



Costa Rica
Marco Vargas



Dominica
Claudia Bellot



Dominican Republic
Salvador Jiménez



Ecuador
Carlos Danilo Vallejo



El Salvador
Mario Ernesto Salaverria



Grenada
Roland Bolha



Guyana
Brian Greenidge



Haiti
François Séverin



Honduras
Héctor Hernández



Jamaica
Donovan Stanberry



Mexico
Victor Manuel Villalobos



Nicaragua
Ariel Bucardo



Panama
Guillermo Salazar



Paraguay
Miguel Angel Pangrazio



Peru
Ismael Benavides



Saint Lucia
Ezechiele Joseph




Saint Kitts y Nevis
Cedric Roy Liburd



Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Montgomery Daniel



Suriname
Kermechend Stanley
Raghoebarsing



Trinidad and Tobago
Jarrette Narine



United States of America
Ellen Terpstra



Uruguay
José Mujica



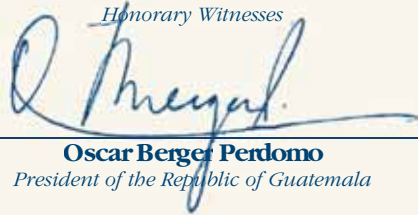
Venezuela
Tatiana Pugh



Bernardo López Figueroa

*Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala
Chairperson of the Fourth Ministerial*

Honorary Witnesses



Oscar Berger Perdomo

President of the Republic of Guatemala



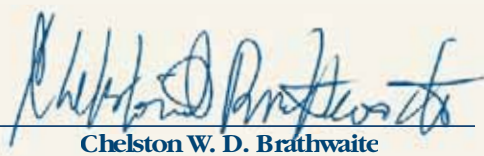
Gert Rosenthal Koenigsberger

*Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Guatemala*



Luis Alberto Rodriguez

*Coordinator of the Fifth Summit
of the Americas*



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite

Director General

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

GUAYAQUIL 2005: THIRD MINISTERIAL MEETING

■ **Foreword**

■ **The 2005 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements**

- AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas
- Implementation and Follow-up of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan in preparation for the Fourth Ministerial Meeting
- Information System for Following up on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan
- Ministerial Proposal on Agriculture and Rural Life for the Fourth Summit of the Americas



“Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance

The Heads of State and Government of the Americas advocated growth through job creation, proposed a renewed institutional framework and supported implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan

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:

A comprehensive framework for rural and agricultural development, to promote investment, job creation, and rural Prosperity

**Fourth Summit of the Americas, 2005
Paragraph 55 g), Declaration of Mar del Plata**

To carry out the above, the Heads of the State and Government defined as a national commitment:

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

**Fourth Summit of the Americas, 2005
Paragraph 35, Plan of Action**

Third Ministerial Meeting - 2005



At the Third Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” in the context of the Summit of the Americas process, the Ministers updated the **AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action** by approving the *Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*. They also approved other hemispheric agreements related to the implementation and monitoring of the Plan and to the ministerial proposal to be presented to the Fourth Summit of the Americas.



“Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance”

The Heads of State and Government asked international organizations to continue their support of the implementation and monitoring of the mandates and commitments of the Summits

We instruct the members of the Joint Summit Working Group, comprised of the OAS, IDB, Economic Commission for Latin América 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.

**Fourth Summit of the Americas, 2005
Paragraph 75, Declaration of Mar del Plata**

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.

**Fourth Summit of the Americas, 2005
Paragraph 43, Plan of Action**

Foreword

The Third Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”, which took place 30-31 August 2005 in Guayaquil, marked another milestone in the renewal of agriculture and rural life, edging the region closer to the Shared Vision for 2015 approved in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. At the third meeting of their hemispheric forum, the ministers of agriculture renewed their commitment to the mandates issued by the Heads of State and Government at the last two Summits of the Americas (Quebec 2001 and Monterrey 2004) and provided input for the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata 2005).

In the ***Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas***, the ministers reaffirmed and renewed their commitment to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and its components: the Shared Vision 2015 and the Strategic Objectives. Signed during the Third Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”, the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil updates the AGRO Plan, incorporating complementary strategic actions for the 2006-2007 biennium along with measures for implementing them and providing follow-up.

This important accomplishment on the part of the ministers has a positive impact on the highest level political forum in the hemisphere. The Heads of State and Government of the Americas, gathered at the Fourth Summit of the Americas, the theme of which was “Creating jobs to fight poverty and strengthening democratic governance,” committed their countries to supporting implementation of the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil as a concrete step toward growth with job creation.

The Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements (HMAs) presented in this publication are a sovereign expression of the political will of the countries. They were arrived at through a broad, transparent process of hemispheric dialogue in which the Ministerial Delegates and their hemispheric forum played a leading role (Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life - GRICA).

Under the chairmanship of Ecuador, the GRICA held several sessions in 2005, in San Jose, Costa Rica (7-8 July) and Guayaquil (29 August). The Ministerial Delegates reached consensus on important issues and strategic actions that were subsequently included in the agreements of the Third Ministerial Meeting, which complement and give continuity to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. The ministerial process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” got under way in May 2001, immediately after the Third Summit of the Americas. Two important milestones followed: the First Ministerial Meeting (Bavaro 2001), where the ministers adopted the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, and the Second Ministerial Meeting (Panama 2003), where they signed the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

The purpose of this publication is to make available all the hemispheric ministerial agreements on agriculture and rural life adopted within the framework of the Summit of the Americas process. Therefore, in addition to the agreements adopted in Guayaquil 2005, it contains those approved in Panama 2003 and Bavaro 2001.

We expect this set of agreements to pave the way for a renewed institutional framework and strengthen joint action and inter-American cooperation. The mandates issued at the Summits and in the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements are necessary but insufficient to realize the Shared Vision of 2015. With a decade to go until 2015, let us make these mandates and agreements a political and technical resource for the design of National policies, the promotion of investments and the creation of an enabling environment for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, food security and rural prosperity in the countries of the Americas by 2015.

As an institutional partner in the Summit of the Americas process and the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meetings, IICA will continue to support the ministerial process for the improvement of agriculture and rural communities and help coordinate it even more closely with the overarching objectives of the mandates of the Summits of the Americas, and with the actions and mechanisms used to implement and monitor them.



Pablo Rizzo Pastor

*Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Ecuador
Chairman of the Third Ministerial Meeting
“Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”*



Jorge Hernan Chiriboga

*Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Ecuador
Chairman of the 2005 GRICA*



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite

*Director General
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting*

THE 2005 HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENTS

The Ministerial Meeting, based on the consensus reached by the 2005 GRICA, adopted the following four Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements. They complement those approved in 2001 and 2003, in particular the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. The following are the principal definitions from the four 2005 HMAs.

AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN. MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT OF GUAYAQUIL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN THE AMERICAS

In the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil, the Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and its components: the Shared Vision 2015, the Strategic Objectives, the Hemispheric Agenda and the implementation and follow-up measures.

Thus, the 2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda, whose motto is *“Promoting state policies for agriculture and rural life,”* establishes complementary strategic actions for the following 11 strategic issues:

- Areas of local economic development
- Quality management and certification
- Development of products based on the biotechnologies
- Generation of energy from alternative sources
- Policies for agroindustry
- Environmental services and environmentally sound practices
- Market opportunities for goods and services produced in an environmentally sustainable manner
- Social responsibility in rural enterprises
- Integral development of rural territories
- National policies
- Interinstitutional and multisectoral work

The ministers approved a series of measures related to the implementation of, and follow-up to, the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan. As well as updating the Plan, they called for the regional mechanisms and strategies for the improvement of agriculture and rural life to be strengthened, for international organizations to support the ministerial process for the implementation of the Plan and joint, coordinated action, and for the development of an information system on agriculture and rural life to provide follow-up to, and evaluate, the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

Ministerial Agreement on the Implementation of and Follow-up to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan in Preparation of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting

In this agreement, the ministers: (i) entrusted the Ministerial Delegates and the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting with the task of disseminating the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, updated with the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil; (ii) instructed the Ministerial Delegates to prepare, with the Secretariat's help, the national progress reports on the Plan and the challenges that lie ahead, and the GRICA to update the Plan for the 2008- 2009 biennium; and, (iii) asked the Secretariat to prepare a report on the status of the AGRO Plan and the actions carried out to coordinate the ministerial process with the Summit of the Americas Process.

Ministerial Agreement on the Information System for Following up on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan

The Ministers asked the international organizations that supported the initial effort to develop an information system for providing follow-up and evaluating the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan to continue with this effort, with a view to completing it before the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, in 2007. They also urged other international organizations to take part in this initiative and asked the Secretariat to present this experience to the Joint Summit Working Group.

Ministerial Agreement on the Ministerial Proposal on Agriculture and Rural Life for the Fourth Summit of the Americas

The Ministers asked the Chair and the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting to submit the two paragraphs of the proposal to the Summit Implementation and Review Group (SIRG), comprising the National Summit Coordinators of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, for possible inclusion in the Draft Declaration and Plan of Action of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, Mar del Plata 2005.

MM3/HMA4-2005
August 31, 2005

AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN
MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT OF GUAYAQUIL ON
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN THE AMERICAS

We, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture of the Americas, assembled in Guayaquil, Republic of Ecuador (August 30-31, 2005) at the Third Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” within the framework of the Summit of the Americas process, in fulfillment of the mandates on agriculture and rural life issued by the Heads of State and Government at the Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec 2001) and the Special Summit (Monterrey 2004), and in follow-up to the AGRO 2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas adopted at the Second Ministerial, reaffirm our commitment to the Plan and its components: Shared Vision 2015, Strategic Objectives, Hemispheric Agenda and Implementation and Follow-up.

Accordingly, pursuant to the ministerial agreements on implementation and follow-up of the Plan adopted in 2003, the national progress reports and the challenges identified in implementing the AGRO 2015 Plan, presented by our respective ministries, we hereby update the Hemispheric Agenda, for implementation in the 2006-2007 biennium, and adopt the measures necessary for implementation and follow up.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

Promoting national policies on agriculture and rural life

The process of updating the Hemispheric Agenda, for implementation in 2006-2007, is comprised of two components: the continued validity of the strategic actions adopted in 2003, and the new, complementary strategic actions identified by the countries in 2005. In order to move towards the Shared Vision for 2015 and the achievement of the Strategic Objectives, we express our wish to continue the efforts which began in 2003, and besides, to promote, together with stakeholders of the agri-food sector and the rural milieu and others linked to the development of agriculture and rural life, the following complementary strategic actions:

I. Promoting national policies on agriculture and rural life

(Rural territories – production/trade dimension)

Areas of local economic development

1. To further promote local economic development with support from public and private investment based on an integrated approach aimed at improving the productivity, competitiveness and managerial capabilities of rural enterprises, with a view to generating employment and improving living conditions in rural territories.

II. Integrating chains and strengthening their competitiveness

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

Quality management and certification

2. To promote quality integrated management in the agricultural production chains by, inter alia, developing agricultural health and food safety systems, including certification mechanisms. Information related to existing quality management tools shall be disseminated to facilitate the expansion of production and trade.

Development of products based on the biotechnologies

3. To develop new products based on the application of biotechnologies, within the framework of national policies on innovation considering biosafety mechanisms, with the coordinated participation of public and private sectors in compliance with existing regional and international agreements.

III. Promoting an environment conducive to competitive agriculture

(National and international context – production/trade dimension)

Generation of energy from alternative sources

4. To promote policies that will encourage the generation of energy from alternative sources based on agricultural and agroindustrial activities, sustainable use of renewable natural resources and modern biotechnology.

Policies for agroindustry

5. To promote the adoption of policies for the development of market oriented agro-industries, agribusiness and nonagricultural rural activities.

IV. Being environmentally responsible in the rural areas

(Rural Territories – ecological/environmental dimension)

No complementary strategic actions have been added to those contained in the Hemispheric Agenda approved in 2003.

V. From farm to table: promoting integrated environmental management

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

No complementary strategic actions have been added to those contained in the Hemispheric Agenda approved in 2003.

VI. Participating in building an institutional environmental framework

(National and international context - ecological/environmental dimension)

Environmental services and environmentally sound practices

6. To encourage the development of various approaches and mechanisms that recognize the value of the environmental services offered by the rural milieu and environmentally sound practices. Market opportunities for goods and services produced in an environmentally sustainable manner
7. To improve institutional frameworks and consolidate the progress reached in the production and marketing of sustainable agricultural products.

VII. Quality of life in rural communities: creating knowhow and opportunity

(Rural Territories - sociocultural/human dimension)

No complementary strategic actions have been added to those contained in the Hemispheric Agenda approved in 2003.

VIII. Advancing learning and expertise in the chain

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

No complementary strategic actions have been added to those contained in the Hemispheric Agenda approved in 2003.

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

(National and international context - sociocultural/human dimension)

Social responsibility in rural enterprises

8. 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.

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

(Rural Territories – political/institutional dimension)

Integral development of rural territories

9. To foster integrated rural development based on a multisectoral and participatory approach, and strengthened public-private coordination.

XI. Strengthening dialogue and commitments among actors in the chain

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

No complementary strategic actions have been added to those contained in the Hemispheric Agenda approved in 2003.

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

(National and international context – political/institutional dimension)

National policies

10. To promote long-term national policies for the development of the agri-food sector and the rural milieu, taking into consideration existing international frameworks.

Interinstitutional and multisectoral work

11. To strengthen sectoral and multisectoral coordination to facilitate the implementation of long-term national policies, for improving agriculture and the quality of life in rural communities.

Implementation and Follow-up

Strengthening regional integration and international cooperation

The AGRO 2015 Plan reflects the intention of member countries to work towards the shared vision with the understanding that national governments have the main responsibility for implementing the shared agenda and the execution of the Action Plan in compliance with international commitments and agreements.

Updating of the biennial agendas

12. The 2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda is the second of six two-year agendas by means of which the AGRO 2015 Plan is implemented. National governments will deliver reports on their progress in implementing each two-year agenda to the Ministerial Meeting “Agricultural and Rural Life in the Americas” which takes place at the end of that two-year period, and use these reports to update the agenda for the next period.

Regional mechanisms and strategies

13. To strengthen regional meetings of ministers of agriculture, mechanisms for the regional integration of agriculture, for consultation, identification of priorities, coordination of actions and adoption of regional policies on matters of common interest, in support of the implementation of the national strategies aimed at improving agriculture and the quality of life in rural communities.

Support for international organizations and interagency agendas

14. To recognize and thank international organizations for their efforts in support of the ministerial process for the implementation of AGRO 2015 Plan. We ask them to continue these efforts, avoiding duplication of actions and strengthening

the inter-institutional and multisectoral work. We recall our call, as we did in 2001 and 2003, to international financial institutions and other regional cooperation agencies and cooperating governments to engage in this institutional effort, strengthening joint actions, in accordance with national and regional strategies, aimed at implementing and following up on the shared agenda of the AGRO 2015 Plan.

Information system for agriculture and rural life

15. To support the development of an agriculture and rural life information system for the AGRO 2015 Plan follow-up and evaluation. In this regard, we acknowledge the initial efforts made by ECLAC, IICA, PAHO, FAO and UNESCO in the identification of indicators for the AGRO 2015 Plan. We applaud the recent incorporation of the ILO into this initiative. We request their continued support, and call other international organizations associated with agriculture and rural life to join this initiative by providing information, resources and technical support in order to implement the system in 2007.
16. Recognizing the importance of developing appropriate measurement and assessment mechanisms for the progress of the AGRO 2015 Plan, we will work along side international organizations in collecting national data for input into the information system for follow-up to the AGRO 2015 Plan. Moreover, efforts will continue to define appropriate measurements to evaluate the progress of the Plan.

Signed in the city of Guayaquil, Republic of Ecuador, on the thirty-first of August of the year two thousand and five.

Antigua and Barbuda
Charlesworth T. Samuel

Argentina
Miguel Santiago Campos

Bahamas
V. Alfred Gray

Barbados
Erskine Griffith

Belize
Jaime David Burgos

Bolivia
Guillermo Ribera Cuellar

Brazil
Roberto Rodrigues Rodrigues

Canada
Wayne Easter

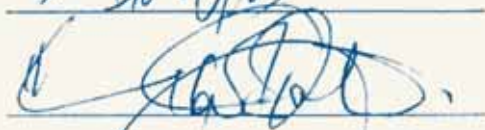
Chile
Arturo Barrera Miranda

Colombia
Fernando Arbeláez Soto

Costa Rica
Rodolfo Coto Pacheco



Dominica
Randolph Cato



Dominican Republic
Amilcar Romero Portuondo



El Salvador
Mariano Ernesto Salaverria



Grenada
Roland Bhola



Guatemala
Bernardo López Figueroa



Guyana
Satyadeow Sawh



Haiti
Philippe Mathieu



Honduras
Roberto Villeda Toledo



Jamaica
Roger Clarke



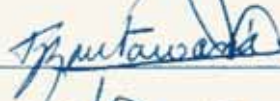
Mexico
Víctor Manuel Villalobos



Nicaragua
José Augusto Navarro



Panama
Erick Fidel Santamaría



Paraguay
Gustavo N. Ruíz Díaz Roa



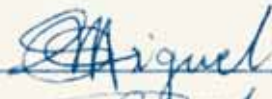
Peru
Manuel Manrique Ugarte



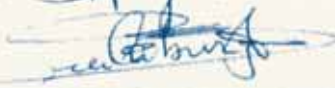
Saint Lucia
Ignatius Jean



St. Kitts and Nevis
Cedric Roy Liburd



St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Girlyn Miguel



Suriname
Gerrit Arno Breinburg



Trinidad and Tobago
Jarrette Narine



United States of America
William L. Brant



Uruguay
Ernesto Agazzi



Venezuela
Freddy Escalona



Pablo Rizzo Pastor

*Minister of Agriculture and Livestock
Chairperson of the Third Ministerial Meeting*

Honorary Witnesses



Alfredo Palacio

President of the Republic of Ecuador



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite

*Director General
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture*

MM3/HMA5-2005
August 31, 2005

HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT
**IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF THE
AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN IN PREPARATION
FOR THE FOURTH MINISTERIAL MEETING**

The Third Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life” within the context of the Summit of the Americas,

Having seen:

The report of the Secretariat on the ministerial process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” entitled “Building today the Agriculture and Rural Life of 2015: Opportunity for a renewed institutional framework, joint action and cooperation,”

The “Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” adopted by this the Third Ministerial Meeting,

The Declaration of Nuevo Leon, issued at the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey 2004), specifically mandate 43, on agriculture and rural life, and mandate 72, on coordination among and support from international organizations and partner institutions in the Summit process in implementing and following up on the mandates of the Summits;

Considering:

That the Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life” within the context of the Summit of the Americas plays an important role in the implementation of the mandates and in contributing inputs for decision making by the Heads of State and Government;

That the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan is a hemispheric ministerial agreement that can be viewed as a mandate from the Summit process, and constitutes

the shared agenda and the strategic framework for the development of national and regional strategies for improving agriculture and rural life;

That the Ministerial Delegates, in their respective countries, have been playing a coordinating role in the implementation of the Hemispheric Agenda and in the preparation of the progress reports;

That the Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life of the Summits Process (GRICA), which is the Hemispheric Forum of Ministerial Delegates, played a major role in building consensus for preparation of the Plan and updating same;

That IICA, as Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting, provides support to the Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life of the Summits Process (GRICA) and to the Ministerial Meetings “Agriculture and Rural Life,”

Agrees:

1. To entrust the Ministerial Delegates and the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting with disseminating the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, updated with the “Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas.”
2. To charge the Ministerial Delegates, with support from the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting, and in advance of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, with preparing the national reports on compliance with the 2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, and on the challenges encountered in implementing the Plan.
3. To charge the Hemispheric Forum of Ministerial Delegates (GRICA) with updating the Hemispheric Agenda, for application in 2008-2009 to be presented at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting.
4. To charge the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting, drawing on the reports of the Ministerial Delegates, with preparing a report on compliance with the Hemispheric Agenda and on the actions it carries out to ensure coordination of the ministerial process with the Summit of the Americas process to be presented at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting.

MM3/HMA6-2005
August 31, 2005

HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT
**INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR FOLLOWING UP ON THE
AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN**

The Third Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life” within the context of the Summit of the Americas,

Having seen:

The “Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” adopted by this the Third Ministerial Meeting, specifically as regards the development of an information system on agriculture and rural life for following up on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan,

The report from the Secretariat on the ministerial process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” entitled “Building today the Agriculture and Rural Life of 2015: Opportunity for a renewed institutional framework, joint action and cooperation,”

The presentation by the Secretariat on an information system for following up on the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, and progress achieved thanks to joint action among ECLAC, IICA, FAO, PAHO, UNESCO and ILO,

Considering:

That the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan is implemented via biennial Hemispheric Agendas;

That it is necessary to monitor and evaluate efforts being made, by means of an information system that covers compliance with the agreements, the impact of same on the improvement of agriculture and rural life, and the opinions and expectations of leaders,

Agrees:

1. To ask those international organizations that have supported the initial effort to develop an information system for follow up and evaluation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, and the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting, to continue said effort, coordinating actions aimed at further developing the system with a view to the Fourth Ministerial Meeting, in 2007. Also, to encourage other international organizations to join in this initiative.
2. To ask the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting to present this experience, along with the organizations that have participated in this initiative, at the Meeting of the Joint Summit Working Group, as a contribution in defining goals and indicators for the mandates of the Summits of the Americas.

MM3/HMA7-2005
August 31, 2005

HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT
**MINISTERIAL PROPOSAL ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL
LIFE FOR THE FOURTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS**

The Third Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural Life” within the context of the Summit of the Americas,

Having seen:

The presentation by Mr. Luis Alberto Rodriguez, Director of the Summits of the Americas Secretariat of the OAS,
The consensus reached on the Ministerial Proposal on Agriculture and Rural Life for the Fourth Summit of the Americas,

Considering:

That the dialogue on and efforts to reach consensus on the Declaration of Mar del Plata and its Plan of Action will continue at the SIRG Meeting (September 7-9) and subsequent meetings;

That we believe it is imperative to consolidate the positioning achieved for agriculture and rural life in earlier summits, as a contribution to the implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan,

Agrees:

1. To entrust the Chair of the Third Ministerial Meeting and the Secretariat with forwarding to the Chair of the SIRG (the following Ministerial Proposal on Agriculture and Rural Life:

Declaration of Mar del Plata

A comprehensive framework for rural and agricultural development, to promote investment, job creation and rural prosperity, as a contribution to the objectives defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this Declaration.

Plan of Action

We shall promote comprehensive national policies and strategies for agriculture that will encourage agricultural trade, investments in the rural milieu to contribute to its sustainable development, the creation of jobs and the improvement of living conditions in rural communities, and agricultural production based on principles of agricultural health and food safety.

PANAMA 2003: SECOND MINISTERIAL MEETING

- **Foreword**
- **AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action
for Agriculture and Rural Life in
the Americas**
- **Implementation of and Follow-
up to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan
of Action**



***Heads of State and Government of the Americas
Support for the Implementation of the AGRO
2003-2015 Plan of Action***

We commit to maintain a sustained effort to improve living conditions for inhabitants of rural areas, by promoting investment and creating a favorable environment to achieve sustainable improvements in agriculture that will contribute to social development, rural prosperity, and food security. In this context, we support the implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, adopted at the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, held in Panama in November 2003.

**Special Summit of the Americas, 2004
Paragraph 43, Declaration of Nuevo León**

Second Ministerial Meeting – 2003

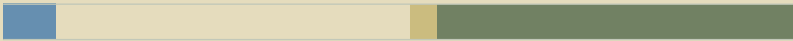


At the Second Ministerial Meeting “Agriculture and Rural in the Americas” held within the context of the Summits of the Americas Process, the Ministers of Agriculture adopted the ***AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*** (Panama, November 11-12, 2003).

Democracy and economic and social development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing as fundamental conditions to combat poverty and inequality. We will spare no effort to free our fellow citizens from the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty.

- *We commit to further efforts to reach international development goals, especially the reduction by 50% by the year 2015 of the proportion of people living in extreme poverty.*
- *We commit ourselves to promote programs for the improvement of agriculture and rural life and agro business as an essential contribution to poverty reduction and integral development.*

**Third Summit of the Americas, 2001
Paragraph 19 y 20, Declaration of Quebec City**



Foreword

With the desire to disseminate the hemispheric ministerial agreements on agriculture and rural life to a wide audience, we are pleased to share this publication with the leaders and key stakeholders of agriculture, and other organizations responsible for agricultural development.

We are convinced that the valuable and visionary ministerial agreements presented herein and the support received from the Heads of State and Government at the Special Summit of the Americas for implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action, will do much to help strengthen joint efforts, encourage investment and create an atmosphere conducive to the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, food security and the promotion of rural prosperity in the countries of the Americas.

Execution of the Hemispheric Agenda for the first biennium of the aforementioned Plan (2004-2005) offers us the opportunity to address the presidents' mandates. The Ministers of Agriculture agreed to adopt the Hemispheric Agenda for the second biennium of the Plan (2006-2007), at the Third Ministerial Meeting, in 2005, taking into account the reports of the national governments on progress made in implementing the first Agenda.

In addition, and on the basis of the above, it will be necessary to report to the Presidents and Prime Ministers regarding compliance with the mandates issued on agriculture and rural life at the last Summits (Quebec City 2001 and Monterrey 2004) and to draw up proposals to be submitted to the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Argentina 2005) on ways to continue improving agriculture and rural life in the Americas.



Lynette M. Stanziola A.
*Minister of Agricultural Development
of Panama
Chair, Second Ministerial Meeting*



Salvador Urrutia Loucel
*Minister of Agriculture and
Livestock of El Salvador
Vice-Chair, Second Ministerial Meeting*



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite
*Director General
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting*

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas includes agreements reached by consensus on the following four complementary components:

- the **Shared Vision for Agriculture and Rural Life by 2015** is a characterization of the desired future in terms of the national and international context, rural territories and agricultural production-trade chains;
- the **Strategic Objectives** aimed at focusing the efforts of the leaders of the Community of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas;
- the **2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda** is the first of six biennial agendas that contains a number of strategic actions to be promoted by the governments together with the stakeholders of agriculture and others responsible for the development of agriculture and the improvement of rural life;
- **implementation and follow-up** encompasses agreements on the preparation of national progress reports, the updating of the hemispheric agenda for the following period and the definition of measurements to indicate the progress of the plan. Also, the ministers encourage the institutional partners of the Summits process to continue their efforts to support the implementation of its agreements, and call on international funding institutions and cooperating governments to coordinate their strategies based on the hemispheric agenda.

The Plan embodies the overarching purposes and principles contained in the Declaration of Bavaro. Therefore, it is based on a **systemic concept of agriculture and rural life** which includes rural territories, agricultural production-trade chains and the national and international context; as well as an **approach to sustainable development** which takes into account the differences among countries and regions of the hemisphere in terms of the production-trade, ecological-environmental, sociocultural and human, and political-institutional dimensions.

MM2/HMA2-2003
November 12, 2003

“AGRO 2003-2015”

PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE OF THE AMERICAS

We, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture of the Americas, assembled in Panama City, Republic of Panama (November 11-12, 2003) at the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life within the framework of the Summit of the Americas process, in fulfillment of the mandates on agriculture and rural life issued by the Heads of State and Government at the Third Summit of the Americas, and in follow up to the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, which we approved at our First Ministerial Meeting, held in the Dominican Republic in the year 2001, hereby adopt this AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, including The Hemispheric Agenda 2003-2005.

We based the preparation of the Plan on a systemic concept of agriculture and rural life which encompasses rural territories, agricultural production-trade chains and the national and international context, and an approach to sustainable development which takes into account the differences amongst countries and regions in the hemisphere in production-trade, ecological-environmental, sociocultural and human development, and political-institutional dimensions.

1. The Shared Vision 2015

Situated in the year 2015, we observe agriculture and rural life characterized as follows:

National and international context

1. Macroeconomic policies facilitate effective management of agricultural development that foster and promote the improvement of rural life and allow greater access to efficient services, new and

appropriate technologies, improved infrastructure, user-friendly information systems, and transparent markets.

2. Agricultural trade is taking place in an international framework significantly less distorted by subsidies and market access barriers.
3. Agriculture is recognized as a key component of the health and food security systems and of strategic importance to development.

Rural territories

4. The rural economy comprises both agricultural and nonagricultural activities, based on the coordinated action of the public and private sectors. There are organizations, institutions and enterprises with capacity for innovation. There are efficient support services and improved access to technology for production and trade. It also generates goods and services with levels of production and productivity in line with national and world markets.
5. Agriculture uses environmentally friendly practices and technologies that address sustainable management of natural resources.
6. There has been a substantial reduction in rural poverty as defined in Millennium Development Goals. The quality of life of the inhabitants in rural communities has improved as well as the levels of employment and employment opportunities.
7. The different social and productive groups of the rural sector have democratic mechanisms for reflection and dialogue and have mechanisms for their full participation in the definition and execution of actions aimed at improving rural life.

Agricultural production-trade chains

8. Agriculture encompasses production-trade chains whose links add value. It has mechanisms among the different stakeholders to discuss various aspects of the distribution of global benefits.

9. Agriculture supplies safe, healthy, and high-quality products; it has support services and is efficient and competitive.
10. Production-trade chains use systems and technologies that mitigate the effects of natural disasters and sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies.
11. Production-trade chains have information systems that enhance knowledge and learning processes to facilitate the management of risk involved in agriculture and contribute to the operation of efficient food security systems.

2. The strategic objectives

In order to attain the Shared Vision in 2015 and to focus the efforts of the leaders of the Community of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, we reaffirm our commitment, as agreed to in the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, with the strategic objectives of **Rural Prosperity, Food Security, the Positioning of Agriculture in the International Scenario and Regional Integration, Agricultural Health and Food Safety and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu.**

3. The Hemispheric Agenda: Chapter 2003-2005

To advance toward Rural Prosperity, Food Security and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu we pledge, as called for by the Heads of State and Government during the Third Summit of the Americas (Plan of Action - Section 10 - Mandate 1), to promote, together with the stakeholders of the agricultural sector and others associated with the development of agriculture and rural life, the following strategic actions:

National and international context

Production-Trade Dimension

1. Support a real and meaningful reform in agriculture by strengthening the multilateral rules governing agricultural trade, as agreed in Doha, including substantial improvements in market access; reductions of, with a view to elimination of, all forms of export subsidies, and substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support. Support the establishment of free trade areas in the hemisphere and in other regional or sub-regional forums. Support and participate in capacity building and technical assistance that contributes to these objectives.
2. Assign high priority to regional policies on animal and plant health and on food safety, strengthening national and regional systems, and reaffirming their commitment to the competent organizations recognized by the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the relevant international organizations (Codex Alimentarius, the World Animal Health Organization (OIE), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)) and regional organizations.
3. Foster economic and social conditions conducive to the development of agribusinesses, the generation of employment, the integration of production-trade chains and their participation in the international context.
4. Promote micro, small and medium scale rural enterprises, cooperatives and community groups engaged in agricultural production, agroindustry and rural services.
5. Promote cooperatives as a way to improve production and marketing organization and to improve rural income.
6. Support programs that encourage internal and external private investment in the rural milieu, promoting the adoption of legal measures that provide investors with security.

7. Foster the establishment of priorities and the revitalization of research capabilities by coordinating among farmers, research centers and agricultural services, and facilitate access to innovative technologies that are adaptive and practical with direct links to production, processing and marketing systems.
8. Facilitate access to new technologies to improve productivity; and establish a hemispheric mechanism to advance better understanding of the science and safety of biotechnology products, including the development of a data base. Consider the development of biotechnology and its use in agriculture with a sustainable strategic vision.
9. Support actions to comply with international agricultural health standards.

Ecological-Environmental Dimension

10. Promote organic agriculture, as well as regulations for the production, oversight, quality certification and trade of organic products.
11. Collaborate with the appropriate domestic authorities on the updating of environmental regulations for agriculture and strengthen public-private coordination for environmental management.
12. Encourage active participation of agricultural and rural community leaders in national discussions related to international negotiations on the environment and sustainable development.
13. Encourage the establishment of a hemispheric network specialized in early warning and agrometeorological monitoring for the mitigation of natural disasters through the joint efforts of public and private institutions in the hemisphere.

Socio-Cultural and Human Dimension

14. Promote rural development programs that include gender equity, including multicultural considerations, where applicable, and special attention to different age groups to improve the living conditions of the rural population.
15. Promote agricultural and rural training and recommend to the competent authorities the evaluation and accreditation of agricultural education.

Political-Institutional Dimension

16. Strengthen the mechanisms for cooperation among countries in the areas of technical assistance, knowledge, information and experience which contribute to the modernization of agriculture and rural life.
17. Develop additional opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with agricultural and non-agricultural stakeholders and with civil society and to ensure that agricultural institutions have sufficient capacity to pursue these objectives.
18. Strengthen regional and hemispheric interaction among and between agricultural ministries and international organizations.

Rural territories

Production-Trade Dimension

19. Promote conditions that will stimulate, in the rural milieu, the development of needed infrastructure, competitive enterprises, and greater investment to improve rural life.
20. Promote innovative types of financial and non-financial services, and risk management for the rural milieu.

21. Promote food security through increased productivity, greater market access through improved distribution and the production of safe, nutritious foods, as well as the production and consumption of products that offer greater competitive advantages, taking into consideration social and economic issues.
22. Improve rural connectivity and access to information through the creation of information network systems within communities.
23. Promote increased coordination among farmers, research centers and agricultural public and private services to establish priorities and implement actions in the areas of research and technology transfer.

Ecological-Environmental Dimension

24. Increase understanding of the environmental impact of conventional agricultural systems, and of production systems suited to agroecological systems.
25. Promote access to, and adoption of, agricultural, forestry and fisheries practices that are environmentally sound, including agroecological and organic alternatives.
26. Foster better understanding, facilitate dialogue and work towards hemispheric consensus with regard to the links between agriculture and biodiversity within the framework of national and international agreements.
27. Strengthen national and local capabilities to mitigate natural disasters.
28. Foster sustainable agriculture with an expanded agroecological and innovative vision based on land use planning, diversification and non-food uses of agricultural products.
29. Foster dialogue and collaborate with other sectors related to rural life for the development of activities that link agriculture with other non-agricultural activities such as agro-tourism, eco-tourism and environmental services.

Socio-Cultural and Human Dimension

30. Support public-private interaction and coordination in order to improve national capabilities for strategic action, dialogue and negotiation.
31. Improve the agricultural education system and promote the improvement of education of the rural population.
32. Promote appropriate social protection measures for economically vulnerable rural families.
33. Promote the participation of the rural population and consider its cultural diversity in the design and application of rural development strategies.
34. Promote policies that support access to resources such as land, credit, market information and other services.

Political-Institutional Dimension

35. Support the participation of rural communities in decisions that affect their lives and the environment in which they live, specifically to develop their capabilities, leadership skills and their ability to participate in government programs.

Agricultural Production-Trade Chains

Production-Trade Dimension

36. Promote the strengthening of linkages in agricultural production-trade chains, and the expansion of infrastructure for development.
37. Promote research, development and marketing programs for products that recognize added value use of national raw materials.

Ecological-Environmental Dimension

38. Promote environmental management in the links of the production-trade chains.

Socio-Cultural and Human Dimension

39. Promote the development of entre-preneurial capabilities among different social and cultural groups in the rural communities.

Political-Institutional Dimension

40. Promote institutional frameworks to facilitate dialogue and negotiation among all participants in the production-trade chains.

4. Implementation and Follow-up

The “AGRO 2003-2015” Plan of Action reflects the intention of member countries to work towards the shared vision with the understanding that national governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the shared agenda and recognition that each national government will undertake the Plan of Action consistent with international commitments and agreements.

1. The 2003-05 Hemispheric Agenda is the first of six two-year agendas by means of which the “AGRO 2003-2015” Plan of Action will be implemented. National governments will deliver reports on their progress in implementing each two-year agenda to the Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural and Rural Life which takes place at the end of that two-year period, and use these reports to up-date the agenda for the next period.
2. We recognize the efforts of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Pan American

Health Organization (PAHO), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in support of this process. We urge them to continue their efforts and renew our call, as set out in paragraph 20 of the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, to the other institutions of the Summit of the Americas process, international financial organizations (Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Andean Development Corporation (CAF) and World Bank) and cooperating governments, to join this effort to coordinate their strategies with a view to implementing the shared agenda of the “AGRO 2003-2015” Plan of Action.

3. Moreover, we entrust the delegates to define appropriate measurements for this Plan of Action.

Signed in Panama City, Republic of Panama, on the twelfth of November of the year two thousand and three.

Antigua and Barbuda
Winston D. Burleigh



Argentina
Miguel Santiago Campos



Bahamas
V. Alfred Gray



Barbados
Erskine Griffith



Belize
Servulo Baeza

Bolivia
Diego Montenegro Emst

Brazil
Edilson Guimarães

Canada
David Adam

Chile
Jaime Campos Quiroga

Colombia
Carlos Gustavo Cano

Costa Rica
Rodolfo Coto Pacheco

Dominica
Vince Henderson

Dominican Republic
Eligio Jáquez

Ecuador
Sergio Seminario

El Salvador
Salvador E. Urrutia Loucel

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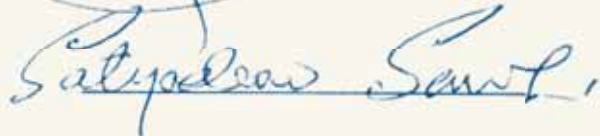
Grenada
Malachy Dottin

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Guatemala
Carlos Sett Oliva

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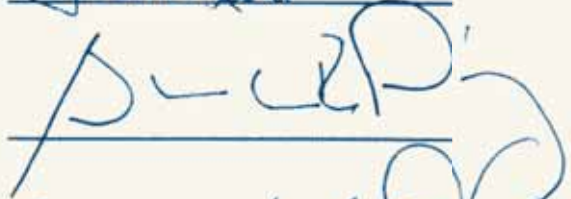
Guyana
Satyadeow Sawh

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Haiti
Sébastien Hilaire

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Honduras
German Pérez D'estephen

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Jamaica
Roger Clarke

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Mexico
Víctor Manuel Villalobos
Arámbula

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Nicaragua
José Augusto Navarro Flores

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Paraguay
Antonio Ibáñez Aquino

Peru
Francisco González García

St. Kitts and Nevis
Cedric Roy Liburd

St. Lucia
Calixte George

St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Philmore Isaacs

Suriname
Gerrit Arno Breinburg

Trinidad and Tobago
Trevor W. Murray

United States of America
James G. Butler

Uruguay
Martín Aguirrezabala

Venezuela
Héctor Garzón



Lynette M. Stanzola

*Minister of Agricultural Development
Chairperson of the Second Ministerial Meeting
for Agriculture and Rural Life*

Honorary Witnesses



Mireya Moscoso

President of the Republic of Panama



Harmodio Arias

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite

*Director General
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture*

MM2/HMA3-2003
November 13, 2003

HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT
**IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF THE
AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN**

The Inter-American Board of Agriculture, at its Twelfth Regular Meeting,

Considering:

That as a result of the Summit of the Americas process and the agreements adopted by the ministers to implement the decisions of the Heads of State and Government, a new institutional architecture is being constructed to contribute to: (i) economic growth with equity; (ii) social development; and (iii) democratic governance;

That the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, within the framework of the Summits of the Americas process, made it possible to reach consensus on issues of strategic importance to agriculture and rural life;

That within this framework, the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (AGRO 2003-2015 Plan), which was the chief output of the Second Ministerial Meeting, constitutes the common agenda to be used by our countries in developing national and regional plans of action;

That the Hemispheric Forum of Ministerial Delegates, Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life (GRICA), has been playing a key role in the process of analyzing, discussing and building consensus among the countries of the hemisphere for the preparation of the Plan of Action;

That IICA, as a partner institution in the Summits process, has been helping the countries to implement the mandates of the Heads of State and Government and serving as a link with the follow-up mechanisms of the Summits of the Americas process; furthermore, as the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting it provides support to the GRICA and the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life;

That, at the meeting of the Board of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), held in 2000 in New Orleans, United States of America, and attended by the ministers of agriculture from the hemisphere, we promoted the creation of the Interagency Group on Rural Development, as a hemispheric network designed to complement the action of its member agencies and, especially, to implement joint, national and regional training, technical assistance and investment projects and projects aimed at generating and disseminating important information for the development of the rural economies of the Latin American and Caribbean countries;

That the ministers of agriculture are involved in four forums on agriculture and rural development, namely: the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life within the framework of the Summit of the Americas process; the Inter-American Board of Agriculture; the FAO Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean; and the Ibero-American Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture,

Resolves:

1. To entrust IICA with continuing to provide support to the ministers of agriculture in the process to implement the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.
2. To instruct the Ministerial Delegates and their hemispheric forum (GRICA), assisted by the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meeting, to present to the Third Ministerial Meeting a progress report on the implementation of the 2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and the proposal for updating it.

3. To ask the Interagency Group on Rural Development, comprised of the World Bank, the IDB, ECLAC, FAO, IFAD, GTZ, IICA and USAID, to draw up a proposal for an interagency agenda, with a view to gradually aligning international cooperation with the actions established in the Hemispheric Agenda of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.
4. To adopt the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action as the Common Agenda to be used as an instrument of joint and common action by the nations of the hemisphere in the four ministerial forums, as a support for the transformation of agriculture and the improvement of rural life.

BAVARO 2001: FIRST MINISTERIAL MEETING

- **Declaration of Bavaro for the Improvement of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas**

Our Governments,

Recognizing the fundamental importance of agriculture as a way of life for millions of rural families of the Hemisphere as well as the role it plays in the creation of prosperity as a strategic sector in our socio-economic system and taking note of the importance of developing its potential in a manner compatible with sustainable development that would ensure adequate treatment and attention to the rural sector, will:

- *Promote dialogue involving government ministers, parliamentarians and civil society, in particular organizations linked to rural areas as well as the scientific and academic communities, with the objective of promoting medium and long-term national strategies toward sustainable improvement in agriculture and rural life.*
- *Instruct the Ministers of Agriculture to promote, in cooperation with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), joint action by all the actors of the agricultural sector to work towards the improvement of agriculture and rural life that enables the implementation of the Plans of Action of the Summits of the Americas.*

**Third Summit of the Americas, 2001
Section 10, Plan of Action**

First Ministerial Meeting – 2001



At the Ministerial Meeting on “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” held within the context of the Summits of the Americas Process, the Ministers of Agriculture adopted the ***Declaration of Bavaro for the Improvement of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*** (Dominican Republic, November 26-27, 2001).

In the Declaration of Bavaro, the Ministers of Agriculture committed themselves to the mandate of the Third Summit of the Americas which calls for promoting joint actions involving all the stakeholders in agriculture aimed at improving agriculture and rural life. They identified the critical issues that must be addressed immediately and stated their conviction of the need for, and willingness to promote, a shared agenda that would enable their countries to tackle these issues.

The Ministers of Agriculture called particular attention to the need for significant progress in the areas of:

- **sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu**
- **food security; and**
- **the reduction of rural poverty,**

by means of ten types of strategic actions:

- i. further liberalization of agricultural trade;
- ii. the strengthening of dialogue and consensus building on strategies;
- iii. the development of an institutional framework conducive to the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu;
- iv. support for rural organizations and communities, with a view to enhancing their capabilities;
- v. the elimination of anti-agricultural biases in policies, and the recognition in such policies of the broad contribution of agriculture to the well-being of all members of society;
- vi. promotion of environmentally friendly agriculture;
- vii. prevention and mitigation of natural disasters and sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies;
- viii. greater investment in the development of human capital;
- ix. reduction of knowledge, information and technology gaps; and
- x. the modernization of agriculture and the strengthening of services in support of agri-food production and trade.

Furthermore, they urged the international institutions that provide cooperation and funding for development, and cooperating governments, to coordinate the strategies they adopt for providing support and to harmonize the technical and financial cooperation they provide in connection with the implementation of the Declaration.

DECLARATION OF BAVARO FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN THE AMERICAS

1. We, the Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas, meeting as the Inter- American Board of Agriculture (IABA), in Bavaro, Dominican Republic, reaffirm our steadfast commitment to the mandate issued at the Third Summit of the Americas calling for concerted action with all those involved in agriculture, aimed at the improvement of agriculture and rural life.

Cognizant that:

2. There has been a renewed commitment to the integration of the Hemisphere, economic well-being, security of our peoples, strengthening of democracy, generation of prosperity, environmental protection and the development of human potential. Agriculture is recognized as the livelihood of millions of rural families in the hemisphere, for its contribution to food security as well as for its strategic importance in the socioeconomic system.
3. As a result of consultations with other leaders of the Agriculture and Rural Life Communities in our countries, we have reached national consensus and a spirit of collaboration and support regarding the need to implement medium- and long-term strategies aimed at sustainable improvement of agriculture and rural life.

We consider it essential:

4. To move forward in the achievement of the objectives of agricultural trade liberalization, the elimination of subsidies and unfair commercial practices within the multilateral trade negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and in other hemispheric and subregional fora, and to support the creation of free trade areas and integration agreements in the Americas.

5. To assign high priority to food security, food safety and food quality in national policies.
6. To create and strengthen institutional opportunities for dialogue among all levels of government, business and agricultural organizations and civil society, with a view to reaching agreement on strategies and commitments related to the management of agriculture and rural development, within a framework of transparency and accountability.
7. To renew the national and international institutional frameworks in such a way that they contribute to the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, based on the objectives of greater competitiveness, equity, sustainable management of natural resources and democratic governance.
8. To strengthen or develop institutional mechanisms intended to support organizations of the civil society and rural communities in the improvement of their capabilities and living conditions, because they are one of the pillars of democratic principles and social harmony.
9. To design and implement macroeconomic policies which eliminate the bias against agriculture, and foster the increased contribution of the agricultural sector to the improvement of the quality of rural life.
10. To promote processes aimed at the transformation and modernization of agriculture for the purpose of increasing production, productivity, profitability, and improving competitiveness in global markets, with special emphasis on the creation and revitalization of small- and medium-scale production units and the integration of agri-food chains.
11. To ensure that agriculture generates economic growth with equity and provides alternatives to the production of illicit crops, prevents the degradation of natural resources, and creates employment opportunities for vulnerable groups in accordance with the legislation of each country.

12. To reduce the knowledge, information and technological gaps, both within and among countries of the Hemisphere, in order to obtain increased competitiveness and more equitable economic development.
13. To adopt strategies, policies and programs intended to reduce the growing incidence of rural poverty, which, aside from affecting the poor, contributes to the degradation of natural resources; fosters violence; encourages the production and marketing of illicit crops; creates insecurity with respect to land tenure; and weakens democratic governance.
14. To reduce the detrimental effects of natural phenomena and external factors through policies for the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters and sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies, promoting support programs, special considerations related to investment, trade, technical assistance and other forms of support, especially to smaller economies.
15. To implement differentiated strategies and programs that enhance the possibilities for development in agriculture through increased investments in the development of human capital, particularly for vulnerable groups.
16. To redouble efforts focusing on the use of environmentally friendly agricultural practices, and to provide economic incentives for such efforts through mechanisms that do not distort trade.
17. To strengthen and expand services in support of agri-food production and trade, with special emphasis on rural financing, agricultural health, and technology innovation and transfer, through the adoption and implementation of policies, strategies and action programs that will contribute to guaranteeing investments aimed at agricultural and agroindustrial production.

Therefore, in keeping with the mandate received from the Heads of State and Government in their efforts to combat poverty, generate greater prosperity, increase economic opportunities, foster social justice and develop human potential,

We declare our intention to:

18. Lead and facilitate the process of implementing this Declaration, and reaching consensus on the strategic guidelines for a shared agenda, to be used by our countries in developing future national and regional plans of action.
19. Adopt policies, strategies and programs that will encourage harmonious,
20. Equitable development, as well as improve the quality of life in rural areas; thereby discouraging rural-urban migration.
21. Call on the institutions associated with the Inter-American Summit process, the international financial institutions and the cooperating governments to coordinate their strategies and to support the actions aimed at improving agriculture and rural life. In addition, to call on the international cooperation organizations that make up the Interagency Group on Rural Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to harmonize their technical and financial cooperation efforts in support of this Declaration and future national and regional plans of action that are consistent with same.

Signed in Bavaro, in the Province of Altigracia of the Dominican Republic, on the twenty-seventh of November of the year two thousand and one.

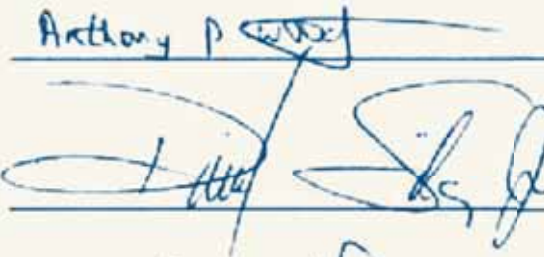
Antigua and Barbuda
Vere C. Bird Jr.

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Argentina
Marcelo Regúnaga

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The Bahamas
Valerie Outten

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Barbados
Antony P. Wood

Belize
Daniel Silva

Bolivia
Jorge Monje

Brazil
Marcus Vinicius Pratini
de Moraes

Canada
David Kilgour

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Chile
Jaime Campos Quiroga

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Colombia
Rodrigo Villalba Mosquera

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Costa Rica
Alfredo Robert Polini

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Dominica
Vince Henderson

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Ecuador
Galo Plaza Pallares

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El Salvador
Armando Servellón

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Grenada
Claris Charles

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Claris Charles', written on a horizontal line.

Guatemala
Jorge Rolando Escoto
Marroquín

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Guyana
Navin Chandarpal



Haiti
Sébastien Hilaire



Honduras
Guillermo Alvarado Downing



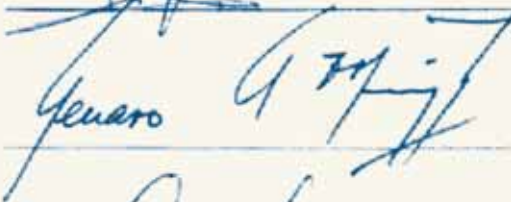
Jamaica
Roger Clarke



Mexico
Javier Usabiaga



Nicaragua
Genaro A. Muñiz Bermúdez



Panama
Pedro Adán Gordón S.



Paraguay
Carmelo Peralta



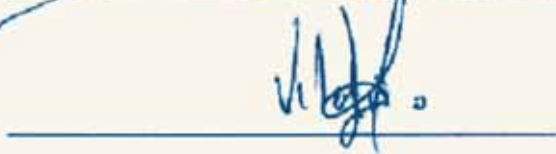
Peru
Alvaro Quijandria



St. Kitts and Nevis
Rafael Adonis Archibald



St. Lucia
Eustace Vitalis



St. Vincent and the
Grenadines
Simeon Greene



Suriname
Geetapersad Gangaram
Panday



Trinidad and Tobago
Swallow Mohammed



United States of America
Thomas Hunt Shipman

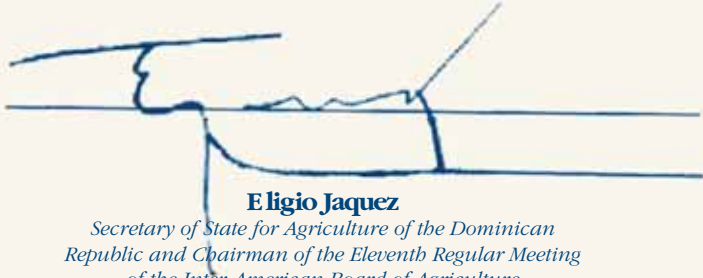


Uruguay
Gonzalo E. González

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Venezuela
Efrén Andrade

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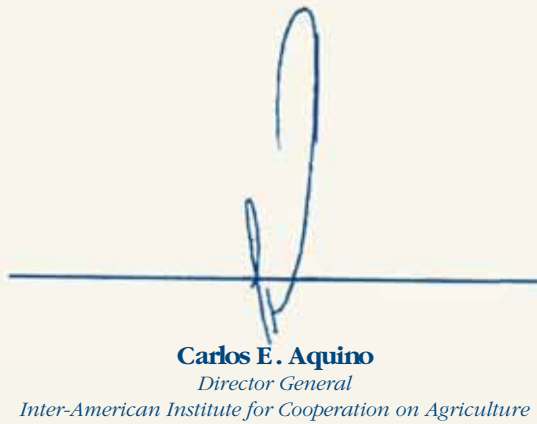


Eligio Jaquez
Secretary of State for Agriculture of the Dominican Republic and Chairman of the Eleventh Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture

Honorary Witnesses



Hipolito Mejia
Constitutional President of the Dominican Republic



Carlos E. Aquino
Director General
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

ANNEX 1

HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT

AGRO 2003-2015

Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

Panama 2003 – Guayaquil 2005 – Guatemala 2007

- *The Shared Vision 2015 and the Strategic Actions belonging to the twelve Purposes of the AGRO-Matrix*
- *2008-2009 measures for Implementation and Follow-up*

**Ministerial Meetings “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”
held within the context of the Summits of the Americas Process**

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan reflects the countries' determination to work toward the Shared Vision 2015. In setting about their work, in 2003 the ministers decided to implement the Plan by means of six biennial agendas.

The 2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda, the first part of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007, is the third of those agendas. Realizing that the earlier agreements were still relevant, the ministers decided that the new agenda should include both the strategic actions adopted in 2003 and 2005 and the complementary strategic actions designed to meet the new challenges identified by the countries in the course of the 2006-2007 ministerial process. Accordingly, and to facilitate a comprehensive reading of the AGRO Plan, we present below the elements of the Shared Vision 2015 and the ongoing strategic actions pertaining to the 12 Purposes of the AGRO-Matrix.

Furthermore, we present the second part of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007 along with the measures required to implement and provide follow-up to the AGRO Plan.

PART 1

THE SHARED VISION 2015 AND THE STRATEGIC ACTIONS OF THE 2003-2005, 2006-2007 AND 2008-2009 HEMISPHERIC AGENDAS PERTAINING TO THE 12 PURPOSES OF THE AGRO-MATRIX.

I. PROMOTING COMPETITIVE RURAL ENTERPRISES

115

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 4 (Second Part): The rural economy comprises both agricultural and nonagricultural activities. There are organizations, institutions and enterprises with capacity for innovation. There are efficient support services and improved access to technology for production and trade. It also generates goods and services with levels of production and productivity in line with national and world markets.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

19. Promote conditions that will stimulate, in the rural milieu, the development of needed infrastructure, competitive enterprises, and greater investment to improve rural life.
20. Promote innovative types of financial and non-financial services, and risk management for the rural milieu.
21. Promote food security through increased productivity, greater market access through improved distribution and the production of safe, nutritious foods, as well as the production and consumption of products that offer greater competitive advantages, taking into consideration social and economic issues.

22. Improve rural connectivity and access to information through the creation of information network systems within communities.
23. Promote increased coordination among farmers, research centers and agricultural public and private services to establish priorities and implement actions in the areas of research and technology transfer.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

Areas of local economic development

1. To further promote local economic development with support from public and private investment based on an integrated approach aimed at improving the productivity, competitiveness and managerial capabilities of rural enterprises, with a view to generating employment and improving living conditions in rural territories.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Entrepreneurial and business capability and capability for innovation

1. To strengthen and promote the development of entrepreneurial and business capabilities and capability for innovation in men and women in rural communities to support the creation of new business operators and enterprises and the sustained and competitive growth of emerging and existing enterprises.

II. INTEGRATING CHAINS AND STRENGTHENING THEIR COMPETITIVENESS

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 8 (First Part): Agriculture encompasses production-trade chains whose links add value.

9. Agriculture supplies safe, healthy, and high-quality products; it has support services and is efficient and competitive.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

36. Promote the strengthening of linkages in agricultural production-trade chains, and the expansion of infrastructure for development.
37. Promote research, development and marketing programs for products that recognize added value use of national raw materials.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

Quality management and certification

2. To promote quality integrated management in the agricultural production chains by, inter alia, developing agricultural health and food safety systems, including certification mechanisms.

Information related to existing quality management tools shall be disseminated to facilitate the expansion of production and trade.

Development of products based on the biotechnologies

3. To develop new products based on the application of biotechnologies, within the framework of national policies on innovation considering biosafety mechanisms, with the coordinated participation of public and private sectors in compliance with existing regional and international agreements.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Market information

2. To increase the availability of, and improve access for rural producers and other sectors linked to the productive chain to, reliable and timely market information through various public and private mechanisms or services.

Inclusive chains linkages

3. To promote the integration of rural producers and micro, small- and medium-scale agri enterprises into production and marketing/trade chains contributing to a sustainable income.

III. PROMOTING AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE TO COMPETITIVE AGRICULTURE

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 1: Macroeconomic policies facilitate effective management of agricultural development that foster and promote the improvement of rural life and allow greater access to efficient services, new and appropriate technologies, improved infrastructure, user-friendly information systems, and transparent markets.

Paragraph 2: Agricultural trade is taking place in an international framework significantly less distorted by subsidies and market access barriers.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

1. Support a real and meaningful reform in agriculture by strengthening the multilateral rules governing agricultural trade, as agreed in Doha, including substantial improvements in market access; reductions of, with a view to elimination of, all forms of export subsidies, and substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support. Support the establishment of free trade areas in the hemisphere and in other regional or sub-regional forums. Support and participate in capacity building and technical assistance that contributes to these objectives.
2. Assign high priority to regional policies on animal and plant health and on food safety, strengthening national and regional systems, and reaffirming their commitment to the competent organizations recognized by the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary

and Phytosanitary Measures and the relevant international organizations (Codex Alimentarius, the World Animal Health Organization (OIE), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)) and regional organizations.

3. Foster economic and social conditions conducive to the development of agribusinesses, the generation of employment, the integration of production-trade chains and their participation in the international context.
4. Promote micro, small and medium scale rural enterprises, cooperatives and community groups engaged in agricultural production, agroindustry and rural services.
5. Promote cooperatives as a way to improve production and marketing organization and to improve rural income.
6. Support programs that encourage internal and external private investment in the rural milieu, promoting the adoption of legal measures that provide investors with security.
7. Foster the establishment of priorities and the revitalization of research capabilities by coordinating among farmers, research centers and agricultural services, and facilitate access to innovative technologies that are adaptive and practical with direct links to production, processing and marketing systems.
8. Facilitate access to new technologies to improve productivity; and establish a hemispheric mechanism to advance better understanding of the science and safety of biotechnology products, including the development of a data base. Consider the development of biotechnology and its use in agriculture with a sustainable strategic vision.
9. Support actions to comply with international agricultural health standards.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

Generation of energy from alternative sources

4. To promote policies that will encourage the generation of energy from alternative sources based on agricultural and agroindustrial activities, sustainable use of renewable natural resources and modern biotechnology.

Policies for agroindustry

5. To promote the adoption of policies for the development of market oriented agro-industries, agribusiness and nonagricultural rural activities.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Strengthening of small- and medium scale rural enterprise

4. To implement policies that promote coordination between the public and private sectors, to improve the competitiveness of rural enterprises and producers to maximize trade.

Mobilizing resources

5. To mobilize public and private resources for the creation of infrastructure in an effort to promote investment in the rural sector and promote competitive agriculture.

IV. BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE IN THE RURAL AREAS

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 5: Agriculture uses environmentally friendly practices and technologies that address sustainable management of natural resources.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

24. Increase understanding of the environmental impact of conventional agricultural systems, and of production systems suited to agroecological systems.
25. Promote access to, and adoption of, agricultural, forestry and fisheries practices that are environmentally sound, including agroecological and organic alternatives.
26. Foster better understanding, facilitate dialogue and work towards hemispheric consensus with regard to the links between agriculture and biodiversity within the framework of national and international agreements.
27. Strengthen national and local capabilities to mitigate natural disasters.
28. Foster sustainable agriculture with an expanded agroecological and innovative vision based on land use planning, diversification and non-food uses of agricultural products.
29. Foster dialogue and collaborate with other sectors related to rural life for the development of activities that link agriculture with other non-agricultural activities such as agro-tourism, eco-tourism and environmental services.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Environmental plan for businesses

6. To promote the creation of national capabilities to develop and implement agro environmental policies in the rural milieu with the participation of rural organizations, academia and the public and private sectors.

V. FROM FARM TO TABLE: PROMOTING INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 10: Production-trade chains use systems and technologies that mitigate the effects of natural disasters and sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

38. Promote environmental management in the links of the production-trade chains.

VI. PARTICIPATING IN BUILDING AN INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

10. Promote organic agriculture, as well as regulations for the production, oversight, quality certification and trade of organic products.
11. Collaborate with the appropriate domestic authorities on the updating of environmental regulations for agriculture and strengthen public-private coordination for environmental management.
12. Encourage active participation of agricultural and rural community leaders in national discussions related to international negotiations on the environment and sustainable development.
13. Encourage the establishment of a hemispheric network specialized in early warning and agrometeorological monitoring for the mitigation of natural disasters through the joint efforts of public and private institutions in the hemisphere.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

Environmental services and environmentally sound practices

6. To encourage the development of various approaches and mechanisms that recognize the value of the environmental services offered by the rural milieu and environmentally sound practices.

Market opportunities for goods and services produced in an environmentally sustainable manner

7. To improve institutional frameworks and consolidate the progress reached in the production and marketing of sustainable agricultural products.

VII. QUALITY OF LIFE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES: CREATING KNOW-HOW AND OPPORTUNITY

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 6: There has been a substantial reduction in rural poverty as defined in Millennium Development Goals. The quality of life of the inhabitants in rural communities has improved as well as the levels of employment and employment opportunities.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

30. Support public-private interaction and coordination in order to improve national capabilities for strategic action, dialogue and negotiation.
31. Improve the agricultural education system and promote the improvement of education of the rural population.
32. Promote appropriate social protection measures for economically vulnerable rural families.

33. Promote the participation of the rural population and consider its cultural diversity in the design and application of rural development strategies.
34. Promote policies that support access to resources such as land, credit, market information and other services.

VIII. ADVANCING LEARNING AND EXPERTISE IN THE CHAIN

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 11: Production-trade chains have information systems that enhance knowledge and learning processes to facilitate the management of risk involved in agriculture and contribute to the operation of efficient food security systems.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

39. Promote the development of entrepreneurial capabilities among different social and cultural groups in the rural communities.

IX. PROMOTING POLICIES TO CREATE CAPABILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE RURAL COMMUNITIES

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 3 (first part): Agriculture is recognized as a key component of the health and food security systems.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

14. Promote rural development programs that include gender equity, including multicultural considerations, where applicable, and special attention to different age groups to improve the living conditions of the rural population.

15. Promote agricultural and rural training and recommend to the competent authorities the evaluation and accreditation of agricultural education.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

Social responsibility in rural enterprises

8. 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.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Repositioning of rural issues in national strategies

7. 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.

X. STRENGTHENING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION AND COORDINATED ACTION BETWEEN THEM IN THE TERRITORIES

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 4 (first part): The rural economy comprises based on the coordinated action of the public and private sectors.

Paragraph 7: The different social and productive groups of the rural sector have democratic mechanisms for reflection and dialogue and have mechanisms for their full participation in the definition and execution of actions aimed at improving rural life.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

35. Support the participation of rural communities in decisions that affect their lives and the environment in which they live, specifically to develop their capabilities, leadership skills and their ability to participate in government programs.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

Integral development of rural territories

9. To foster integrated rural development based on a multisectorial and participatory approach, and strengthened public-private coordination.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Establishment and follow-up of partnerships and agreements

8. To support rural stakeholders and their organizations with establishing coordinating, consensus building, and follow-up mechanisms on partnerships and agreements to facilitate joint efforts in implementing policies and strategies in rural territories.

XI. STRENGTHENING DIALOGUE AND COMMITMENTS AMONG ACTORS IN THE CHAIN

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 8 (second part)

Agriculture encompasses production-trade chains. It has mechanisms among the different stakeholders to discuss various aspects of the distribution of global benefits.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

40. Promote institutional frameworks to facilitate dialogue and negotiation among all participants in the production-trade chains.

XII. PROMOTING NATIONAL POLICIES AND REGIONAL AND HEMISPHERIC COOPERATION FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE

Shared Vision 2015

Paragraph 3 (second part): Agriculture is recognized of strategic importance to development.

2003-2005 Hemispheric Agenda

16. Strengthen the mechanisms for cooperation among countries in the areas of technical assistance, knowledge, information and experience which contribute to the modernization of agriculture and rural life.
17. Develop additional opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with agricultural and non-agricultural stakeholders and with civil society and to ensure that agricultural institutions have sufficient capacity to pursue these objectives.
18. Strengthen regional and hemispheric interaction among and between agricultural ministries and international organizations.

2006-2007 Hemispheric Agenda

National policies

10. To promote long-term national policies for the development of the agri-food sector and the rural milieu, taking into consideration existing international frameworks.

Interinstitutional and multisectorial work

11. To strengthen sectoral and multisectorial coordination to facilitate the implementation of long-term national policies, for improving agriculture and the quality of life in rural communities.

2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda

Establishment of partnerships and agreements

9. To promote cooperation and the establishment of lasting alliances and agreements at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, which allow for greater participation of the private and social sectors in public policy development and implementation geared towards the improvement of agriculture and rural life.

Modernization and institutional strengthening of the rural public sector

10. To promote the modernization of public institutions in agriculture to enable them to integrate actions and services, that will improve linkages with other public, private and social stakeholders, as well as international partners, in the implementation of the 2003-2015 AGRO Plan.

Reassessment of the value of agriculture and the rural milieu

11. To promote efforts to reassess the value of agriculture and the rural milieu by helping to address strategic and emerging development issues, promoting urban-rural integration, taking into consideration social, political, economic, ecological and cultural factors, reporting on the multidimensional contributions made by the rural sector to national development.

PART 2

AGRO 2003-2015 PLAN. HEMISPHERIC MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT GUATEMALA 2007. THE IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP MEASURES FOR 2008-2009.

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 agricultural stakeholders in view of their international commitments and agreements.

Dissemination of the AGRO Plan and its Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007

12. The implementation of the 2007 Guatemala Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement requires a joint action on the part of stakeholders in the public, private and social sectors. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the dissemination of the 2007 Agro Plan and its Guatemala 2007 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement, an activity that the ministerial delegates will undertake with the support of the respective IICA offices, taking into account the countries' National Policies.

Facilitating joint action

13. The renewed, 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 contribution of agriculture and the rural milieu to development in our countries.

In this sense and taking into account paragraph 12, we strongly recommend that, in publicizing the AGRO Plan, we promote the broad-based and comprehensive view expressed in the AGRO-Matrix, and that it be implemented in cooperation with the public, private and social stakeholders in implementing this Ministerial Agreement.

Regional mechanisms and strategies

14. 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 support of the implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

Information System

15. Having been informed of progress in the development of the Information System for Monitoring and Evaluating the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and its three components, we support efforts to promote the system in the countries through the integration of existing mechanisms, and we ask the Secretariat to report on progress to the Fifth Ministerial Meeting. We acknowledge the work accomplished under the leadership of IICA and ECLAC, with support from FAO and PAHO, and we urge them to encourage other international organizations to join this effort and, together, continue supporting efforts to improve this tool.

Support from and alignment of the international organizations

16. We reiterate our calls to the international organizations, made in 2001, 2003 and 2005, and request that they actively participate in the implementation of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement Guatemala 2007. In this regard, we shall promote and support the creation and operation of interagency groups at the national level.

Updating of the Hemispheric Agenda

17. The 2008-2009 Hemispheric Agenda is the third of six biennial agendas by means of which the AGRO Plan is to be implemented. 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 following 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 updating this Ministerial Agreement for the 2010-2011 biennium.
 - The Technical Secretariat with reporting, in the Fifth Ministerial, on progress with 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 Fifth Summit of the Americas.

