



IICA CALLS FOR NEEDED CHANGE IN CULTURE TOWARD AGRICULTURE INSURANCE IN THE REGION

Washington, DC, October 14, 2011 – “The global donor community has dealt with agricultural insurance in a fragmented manner and this has proven to be costly,’ echoed U.S. Representative of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), David C. Hatch, yesterday as he addressed attendees at an international workshop convened in Lima, Peru entitled, “Insurance for Adaptation to Climate Change in Public, Productive and Financial Sectors.”

Coordinators of the event organized the three days of sessions to bring together regional experts and stakeholders to exchange experiences, best practices and strategies on innovative uses to address risk management and adaptation to climate change. Event sponsors include the Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Economy and Finance; Ministry of Environment; international organizations and reinsurers.

Conference organizers hope the sessions will serve to help identify financial mechanism for risk management and adaptation to climate change; identify opportunities, bottlenecks and future challenges; help promote public–private partnerships and design financial strategies for the various sectors affected by climate change in the countries.

According the IICA Representative, the global donor community should also consider increased participation of other stakeholder sectors in international conferences. “One way of achieving this shift in thinking is to increase Government involvement and encourage private sector engagement,” he continued. Hatch also encouraged linking multiple ministries and the early engagement of insurance and global reinsurance companies.

In his concluding remarks, the IICA Representative suggested that addressing risk with small farmers and women be prioritized given their unique challenges; and reiterated that agriculture insurance was one financial tool available in responding to climate change.

Throughout Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC), agriculture plays a critical role in the economy and in the lives of its people. As a result, IICA’s primary stakeholders, the ministries of agriculture, have voiced their concerns of the potential threats of climate change to their local farming communities. To this end, IICA, the inter-American agency responsible for agriculture development, is currently assisting institutions in its member countries, particularly the ministries of agriculture, in the development of public policies and in the design and implementation of strategies to help local farmers improve their productivity and competitiveness.

According to IICA officials agriculture LAC is highly vulnerable and could deteriorate further by 2030, making it essential to improve agriculture and encourage the diversification of production. In early September, IICA announced a joint effort with the Ibero-American Conference (SEGIB) and the Latin American Trade Network (LATN) to analyze for the first time, the relationship between climate change, food security and trade, in the Andean and Central

American regions. Research results will be used to support policy development in the Andean and Central regions. Also, results will be shared with the tropical regions in Latin America which can be incorporated in strategies to adapt to climate change, ensuring the availability of food, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting agri-food trade.

October 19-27, the Institute will hold its Ministerial Meeting at headquarters in Costa Rica where member countries will be challenged to modernize their agricultural innovation system to ensure food security. Central to these discussions will be the role of technological innovation in the adaptation of agriculture to climate change.

About IICA

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture is the specialized agency for agriculture and the rural milieu of the Inter-American System, whose purpose is to provide innovative technical cooperation to the Member States, with a view to achieving their sustainable development in aid of the peoples of the Americas.

For additional information on IICA, please visit <http://www.iica.int/usa> or <http://www.iica.int>

Additional information, alondon@iicawash.org