

GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

GFAR 2000, DRESDEN

NEW INNOVATIVE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

1. TITLE

Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO) in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

2. TENDERER INFORMATION

FONTAGRO
Technical-Administrative Secretariat
Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
1350 New York Avenue, NW. Stop B0602
Washington, D.C. 20577
Ph.: 1(202) 623-3876
Fax: 1(202) 623-3876
e-mail: fontagro@iadb.org
Web-site: www.fontagro.org

3. THEMATIC AREA

FONTAGRO covers the four scientific domains considered by the GFAR Steering Committee for the new innovative research partnerships.

4. PROJECT DESIGN INFORMATION

Mission and Objectives of FONTAGRO

?? The Fund's mission is to promote the increment in the competitiveness of the agricultural sector while ensuring sustainable management of natural resources and the reduction of poverty in the LAC region.

?? The Fund operates as an endowment and is a competitive funding mechanism and a forum for countries of the region to define a regional agenda for research leading to technological innovation in agriculture. More specifically the Fund:

- ?? **Focuses on strategic regional research activities to increase the competitiveness of agriculture while protecting the natural resource base and contribution to the reduction of poverty.**
- ?? **Increases the ability of the region to meet research challenges through cooperation, especially where the necessary scale of operations and skills are not easily available in just one country.**
- ?? **Increases the level and ensures sustainability of resources for research, particularly aimed at producing public-good type technologies of regional interest.**
- ?? **Encourages collaboration among research organizations within the region, between the region, and with others outside the region.**
- ?? **Promotes quality and innovation in research through competitive funding of research projects of cross-country interests in areas defined in the Medium Term Plan 1998-2000.**
- ?? **Strengthens the participation of the region in decision making in fora where international agricultural research is planned and financed.**
- ?? **These objectives are associated with several principles, which help guide the Fund's operation.**

Basic Principles

The Fund is set to finance its research grants from the annual income earned by its endowment fund. It allocates resources on a competitive basis according to the procedures laid out in its Manual of Operations. The Manual includes operational criteria for evaluation of proposals, which relate to the objectives of the Fund. In addition to these criteria, decision-making is guided by the following principles:

- ?? **Ownership. The Fund is owned and directed by its member countries and development organizations contributing to its capital endowment. All subscribing countries from LAC have a basic voice in its decisions, with additional weight in voting conferred by the size of contributions. Besides all the countries of LAC as potential members, four development organizations have joined the Fund as sponsors, providing various types of support: the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC, member as well), the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).**
- ?? **Inclusiveness. Membership is open to all countries and development organizations, which subscribe to its basic principles.**

- ?? **Transparency.** The decisions of the Fund are guided by transparent criteria relating to its mission and objectives.
- ?? **Universal Access.** The Fund supports research leading to the production of public goods that are freely available to all, including potential beneficiaries outside membership in the Fund. The Fund may protect the intellectual property arising from its research in order to ensure free and fair use by others.
- ?? **Integration.** Through its activities, the Fund aims to a greater integration of research among countries in the region. Because regional research has not been sufficiently developed, the Fund may engage in limited capacity building where this is needed in order to achieve greater regional collaboration.
- ?? **Quality and Relevance.** A formal process for the review of research proposals ensures their scientific quality and relevance to the goals of the Fund. There is no allocation of the Fund's resources to countries, political regions, or areas of investigation.
- ?? **Focus.** The Fund focuses on a subset of the agricultural research needs of the region as described in Medium Term Plan 1998-2000.

Organization and Resources

The Regional Fund is a cooperative program. It is not a legal entity by its own laws. Two of its sponsors, the IADB and IICA provide FONTAGRO with the needed institutional procedures and legal frame to operate. Country members can make their contributions to the capital endowment as components of IADB loans related to the rural sector. The IADB has provided grant resources for the initial annual competitions of proposals.

Research Project Proposals and Implementation

Research proposals are developed and submitted to FONTAGRO by research organizations (research institutes, research networks, Universities, NGOs, and private entities) from two or more member countries. Selected projects are implemented by those organizations in partnership within the consortia (formal or informal) sending the proposals.

FONTAGRO and other Agricultural Research Mechanisms

The Regional Fund looks to strengthen existing regional and global agricultural research mechanisms. Regarding the CGIAR, FONTAGRO sees this international system as the global village research base, and involves international centers in consortia with other national and regional entities providing complementary funding for problems of LAC relevance.

Projects Under Execution and Recommended for Funding

See annex table for projects currently under execution from the 1998 Call and those recommended for funding from the 1999 Call. Funding from FONTAGRO leverages resources from the participant institutions in each consortia, through the co-funding of specific items within each budget's proposals.

5. STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Accomplishments So Far

- ?? Created in March 1998, temporarily under the umbrella of the IADB ('til the end of 2002). An Executive Secretary was appointed (seconded by IICA), and a 13-member Board of Directors has met four times.
- ?? Twelve LAC countries (their governments) pledged US\$70 million for FONTAGRO's endowment (US\$15 million have been realized), targeted at US\$200.0 million (to generate up to US\$15.0 millions annually for competitive research grants of up to three years duration, capped at US\$500,000).
- ?? A Medium Term Plan 1998-2000 outlining priorities and a Manual of Operations specifying conditions for the acceptance, financing, and monitoring of projects, have been prepared.
- ?? Two rounds of annual competitions have been launched, 1998 and 1999. From the 1998 call, 12 projects are actually under execution through IICA for a total of US\$3.0 millions. Additionally 12 await funding from the 1999 Call.
- ?? Strategies for collaboration with the U.S., Canada, and Europe have been developed and launched.

Consolidation Stage

- ?? FONTAGRO's consolidation stage will run until the end of 2002, when the commitments of support from the IADB and IICA could come to an end. Starting year 2003, FONTAGRO's capital endowment is expected to be at least of US\$70 million, providing resources for around US\$4 million annually for project funding and expenses of the Technical Secretariat.
- ?? By the end of the consolidation stage, all the countries of LAC are expected to become members, plus the U.S. and Canada, making FONTAGRO a mechanism to promote regional agricultural research in the frame of the Americas.

Future Institutional Organization

At least during its consolidation stage, FONTAGRO is operating as a cooperative program, not as an international legal entity. There are two alternatives for the Regional Fund to endure towards the future. One is that FONTAGRO becomes an integral part of an existing international development organization. The other is to promote an independent legal entity, in the form of an Inter-American agricultural research foundation, for example, with FONTAGRO's members and sponsors as members of the new foundation.

FONTAGRO – 1998 Call for Proposals – Technical Evaluation
(Projects currently under execution)

RANK	Title	FONTAGRO's Grant ¹	CRITERIA			
			Ec-Fin-Soc Impact (Max.: 40 pts.)	Technical Quality (Max.: 30 pts.)	Institutional Capacity (Max.: 20 pts.)	Environn Impa (Max.: 10)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	Fusarium wilt in wheat	350.0	34.25	24.25	18.00	
2	Industrial quality in wheat, Southern Cone	350.0	32.25	24.25	19.75	
3	Extension research in LAC	100.0	20.00	28.25	20.00	
4	Poverty and environmental degradation in LA	300.0	26.00	24.00	18.00	
5	IPM in Andean fruit trees	250.0	28.00	22.50	15.00	
6	Maize, genetic resistance against insects	250.0	26.25	25.00	17.75	
7	Development of sweet potatoe products in AL	250.0	28.00	21.75	16.50	
8	Potatoe, industrial uses	250.0	25.25	24.25	18.00	
9	Nothofagus, genetic make up	250.0	22.50	22.00	19.75	
10	Maize, competitive zones	250.0	12.00	27.50	20.00	
11	Papaya, genetic resources	200.0	23.50	21.00	15.00	
12	Globalization and technological scenarios	200.0	30.00	16.75	17.00	

¹ Miles de US\$

FONTAGRO – 1999 Call for Proposals – Technical Evaluation
(Projects recommended for funding)

RANK	PROPOSAL		CRITERIA			
	Title	Amount Requested ¹	Ec-Fin-Soc Impact (Max: 40 pts)	Technical Quality (Max: 30 pts)	Institutional Capacity (Max: 20 pts)	Environ Imp (Max: 10)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	Smilax spp in Agroforestry Systems	250.0	32.00	25.75	20.00	
2	Wheat: Durable Resistance to rusts	300.0	33.50	24.75	19.00	
3	Coffee: Variety Improvement	250.0	30.00	24.25	17.25	
4	Beans Andean Region: Variety Improvement	250.0	32.00	24.00	17.00	
5	Oil Palm: Disease Resistance	200.0	36.25	18.00	16.75	
6	Banana and Plantains: Variety Improvement	200.0	28.25	24.00	17.75	
7	Fishing in the Pacific Coastal Region	100.0	31.00	19.00	12.25	
8	IPM in Sigatoka for Plantains	150.0	28.25	21.75	14.25	
9	Potato Moth	200.0	22.50	22.50	20.00	
10	Pyricularia in Rice: Southern Cone	200.0	29.00	20.25	15.00	
11	Agrosilvo and Pasture Systems: Amazonia	200.0	21.00	22.75	16.25	
12	Biological Control in Apple Trees	200.0	21.00	19.50	18.25	

¹ Miles de US\$

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