



**ORGANIZACIÓN DE INFORMACIÓN DE MERCADOS DE  
LAS AMÉRICAS**

**OIMA**

7th. Ordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee  
Miami, Florida

December 11-12th, 2006

**Minutes from the 7th Ordinary Meeting of the Executive Committee of the  
Market Information Organization of the Americas.<sup>1</sup>**  
**OIMA**

The seventh meeting of the Executive Committee from OIMA took place on the 11th and 12th of December 2006 at the Hotel Sofitel in Miami, Florida. The meeting was attended by:

1. Terry Long, OIMA President
2. Marco Moscoso, Vice-president and Representative from the Central and Caribbean Region
3. Andrea Dansa, Representative from the Southern Region
4. Pedro Martinez, President Ex Oficio
5. Adriana Senior, Representative from the Andean Region
6. Juana Tejada, Representative from the Host Country for 2007, Ecuador.
7. Susan Sadocha, USDA
8. Luis F. Palmer, USDA
9. Miguel Garcia, IICA (Technical Secretariat)
10. Frank Lam, IICA (Technical Secretariat)

The entire meeting was presided by Terry Long, OIMA President and was conducted under the following agenda:

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by Frank Lam, IICA (Technical Secretariat)



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**AGENDA  
7th Meeting of OIMA Executive Committee.**

**Miami, Florida**

**December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

8:30 am	Call to order Introduction	Llamar al orden e Introducción	Terry Long, MIOA President
8:40 am	Discussion of agenda	Discusión de Agenda	
9:00 am	Thoughts for the "new" Executive Committee	Reflexiones para el Nuevo Comité Ejecutivo	Pedro Martinez
9:20 am	Reports from the regions	Reporte de las regiones	Regional representatives Representantes regionales
10:00 am	Break	Receso	
10:20 am	Cartagena Meeting - Review minutes - Changes to the Rules - Lessons learned - Letters	Reunión Cartagena - Revisar minutas - Cambio Reglas - Lecciones aprendidas - Cartas	Terry Long, MIOA President Miguel García, IICA Luis Palmer, USDA
11:00 am	Caribbean strategy	Estrategia para el Caribe	Miguel García, IICA
11:30 am	Lunch	Almuerzo	
1:00 pm	Managers' Workshop - Purpose - Location and dates - Topics and presenters	Taller para Administradores - Propósito - Fecha y lugar - Temas y expositores	Terry Long, MIOA President
2:30 pm	Break	Receso	
2:50 pm	Continue discussion	Continuación de discusión	
4:00 pm	Close-out of old business - MIOA website - Promotional Material - Pan American Dictionary	Cierre de asuntos pendientes - Página Web OIMA - Material Promocional - Diccionario Panamericano	Frank Lam, IICA
5:00 pm	Close of Session	Cierre de sesión	Terry Long, MIOA President



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### December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006

8:30 am	Call to order	Llamar al orden	Terry Long, MIOA President
8:45 am	Assessment discussion, Next Steps	Discusión de evaluación, Próximas etapas	Terry Long, MIOA President
10:00 am	Break	Receso	
10:20 am	Strategic Planning - Short term or immediate - Medium term - Long term - Relationship building	Planificación Estratégica - Corto Plazo o inmediato - Mediano Plazo - Largo Plazo - Establecimiento de relaciones	Terry Long, MIOA President
11:30 am	Lunch	Almuerzo	
1:00 pm	Continuation of discussion	Continuación de discusión	Terry Long, MIOA President
2:00 pm	Wrap up discussion	Resumen de discusiones	
2:30 pm	Break	Receso	
2:40 pm	How to get more direct support from the member countries?	Cómo conseguir más apoyo de los países miembros?	Terry Long, MIOA President
3:40 pm	Future activities - FAO/IICA - Technical assistance - International observers - Next regular meeting	Actividades futuras - FAO/IICA - Asistencia Técnica - Observadores Internacionales - Próxima reunión ordinaria	Terry Long, MIOA President Juana Tejada, Ecuador
4:30 pm	Wrap up, recap of discussions, and assignments	Resumen de la discusión y asignaciones	Terry Long, MIOA President
5:00 pm	Closing of Meeting	Cierre de Sesión	



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### Day 1. December 11th, 2006

#### Welcome

At 8:40 a.m. Mr. Terry Long, OIMA President, began the session and welcomed all the participants to the Seventh Meeting of the Executive Committee (CE) from OIMA and requested a formal introduction of the attendees, since there were new members to the CE. Also he made a brief description of OIMA as a network of cooperation among the member countries. He expressed his thanks to Mr. Pedro Martinez, and the former CE for all their work. Following this introduction, all the members proceed to introduce themselves.

#### 1. Discussion of the Agenda

Mr. Terry Long presented to the consideration of the Executive Committee members the proposed Working Agenda for the meeting that was unanimously approved. Also he explained the expected reach of this working agenda for the two days. Mr. Miguel Garcia requested to include a Financial Report. Mr. Fernando Palmer requested to consider if it is possible to conduct an additional meeting of the CE before the ordinary meeting in Ecuador. Mrs. Adriana Senior suggested utilizing the same methodology as this past year. Finally Mr. Terry Long suggested conducting the meeting of the CE one day prior to the administrator workshop to be held in Costa Rica. Mrs. Juana Tejeda, requested a space to share the results of a workshop conducted in Ecuador. Mr. Terry Long suggested that this take place on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, during the morning session. Mr. Marco Moscoso mentioned that the evaluation of the Cartagena meeting be presented by the Technical Secretariat during the space assigned to the Cartagena Meeting.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-01: To conduct the VIII Meeting of the Executive Committee from OIMA in San Jose, Costa Rica.**



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### **2. Reflexions for the New Executive Committee.**

The President ExOficio from OIMA, Mr. Pedro Martinez, mentions that his reflexions will be divided in two parts. First, those that was coordinated during his period and secondly what is pending. Mr. Martinez emphasizes that in this new period there is a need to materialize several projects that have been planned, not only in the short term, but also in the medium and long term. Also, he continues indicating, that it is important to work hand in hand with the budget of the organization.

Similarly, it is important that the countries can work with their own resources, based in the experience from Ecuador. He also considers that OIMA must emphasize in the standardization of contents, processes, etc, and that we all should speak a single language. Other point that was made by Mr. Martinez is related to the development of the SIMAS (Agricultural Markets Information Systems) own resources and to the strengthening of the strategic relationships with other organizations and donor institutions, to search to diversify the funds and not to depend exclusively from USDA.

Pending matters are the standardization and the Pan-American Dictionary. With regard to this last issue, he considers that OIMA should only integrate the information that already exists in the countries. He also talked about the Quality Policy exercise and suggested that this document should be published in the Web page. Also, he requested his participation in the administrators' workshop in Costa Rica, since it represents a possibility for replication in Mexico. Additionally, he highlighted the importance of training the SIMAS teams for the proper conduction of their work. Finally, he mentioned that it is important to measure the organization's progress aiming to improve its performance.

### **3. Reports from the Regions.**

Mr. Terry Long wished to clarify that the reports about to be presented by the Representatives should be considered as informal reports.

In the case of North America, the colleagues from Canada have been experiencing a decline in their SIMA, to such degree, that the industry has requested that the Government improves the SIMA. During February 2006, I attended a workshop between the industry and the Government to see how the



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SIMA can be of better service to the former. A two year plan was devised and a pilot project was constructed. It remains interesting to see how this will function.

For the USA, at these moments, the most important is the construction of the portal, since this allows the user to find information according to its own needs. The USDA is in the process of teaching the end users to use this tool, however there are users that still prefer the information in the way it was presented in the past. The USDA is doing this for two reasons: the budget forced them to do this, and the technology allowed the implementation.

The other issue is that the region is planning to conduct a regional meeting before the administrator workshop. It is expected that this type of meeting will be conducted once a year with the objective to be better prepared for the meeting in Quito in 2007 and to be able to share some point at regional level.

Mr. Pedro Martinez referred to Mexico and expressed that for this region it is easier to get together since they are only three countries. Also he invited the USDA to create an agenda and to share it with the rest of the OIMA membership. Finally, he agreed to prepare the agenda for the meeting of the three countries from the Northern Region.

Mr. Miguel Garcia suggested that this meeting be included during the IICA Tri-national Meeting. Ms. Susan Sadocha mentioned that this can be explored for future meetings, however for this year she does not consider this viable, since the meeting will be in January 2007.

In representation of Central America, Mr. Marco Moscoso, mentioned that with regard to the final report from the consultant, the following countries: Costa Rica, Guatemala and Dominican Republic, have not received any response from the consultant with regard to the suggested changes. The other topic is the issue relating to the administrators workshop and in this sense, the region considers this event as an option to train the human resources and the possibility to replicate it in the region. Also, he suggested that it is necessary to define perfectly what is expected, since this is a large investment. Finally, IICA conducted a fruit workshop where the entire region participated and there is the possibility that the region will present a project on market intelligence and will require looking for financial support among donor organizations and OIMA member countries. This initiative is being coordinated by Mrs. Arlyne Alfaro with IICA support and we hope that the CE from OIMA also supports it.



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Mrs. Adriana Senior explains that in the Andean Region, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, SIMA is found to have a lot of weaknesses and that Colombia has been providing support to these countries. Ecuador has implemented initial steps to strengthening its system and has the will to work. In Peru, they have conducted meetings with the Minister of Agriculture to strengthen their SIMA and in the case of Bolivia, the lack of resources limits the activities. In the case of Colombia, they work in market prices for fresh and processed foods and in market intelligence. She also requested, as region, to learn how to use the USDA portal, since the USA market is the most important market for the entire region. Similarly, together with IICA, joint regional proposal can be prepared. Mrs. Juana Tejada, Representative from Ecuador, reaffirmed the ideas presented by Mrs. Senior. Mr. Moscoso explained that Panama hired a consultant to learn to use the information offered by the USDA and mentioned that this tool can serve other SIMAS making it available.

Mrs. Andrea Dansa mentioned that in the Southern Region, the countries have had talks and that there are many differences in how the countries manage their SIMAS. For example, Argentina does not have market reporters, Chile has a good market intelligence system and Paraguay has many weaknesses. In summary there are many differences in methodologies, however, all agree that it is necessary to work jointly. The goal that has been agreed is to consolidate as a region and they request to work in the Pan-American Dictionary. During the Cartagena Meeting, they had a dialogue with Mexico and Nicaragua who had progress on this issue. The countries that require more assistance are Paraguay, according to the consultant. Another issue that is proposed as region is the suggestion that the Web Page should be more dynamic and that the region will like to cooperate, however they have not been able to materialize this cooperation. Mrs. Dansa proposed to make progress on the Web Page and that the member countries contribute with information. She suggested more bilateral cooperation, however she is not sure how this cooperation should be made, and finally suggested that there is a need for more frequent regional meetings.

Mrs. Senior asked if Argentina has considered changing the methodology, to which Mrs. Dansa responded that Argentina being a large country is very difficult to systematize the information in real time.

Mr. Miguel Garcia indicated that he has three comments. First, what will be the effect of the CAS (Agricultural Council of the South) mandates on OIMA mandates. Mrs. Dansa responded that at these moments the CAS is working in the interchange of information, but she does not know if there is progress in the case of policies. Mr. Garcia commented that he has the impression that the



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majority of the members have the impression that the consultant had the primary objective to accuse the SIMAS and that the CE must try to reduce these negative comments. At the same time, he suggested that it is needed to find mechanisms to allow the Regional Representative to talk more about the region and less about their countries. Additionally he mentioned that in some occasions there are expressions suggesting that the web page does not work or that the consultant did a bad job, and to reduce these effects, OIMA should look at the progress positively. Additionally, he indicated that it is surprising why the topic of the Pan-American Dictionary is being brought to the discussion table again, when in Cartagena it was agreed to suspend this project. Finally, he emphasized on the importance that the regions have to focus on the search for resources, since OIMA cannot depend exclusively of the efforts from the USDA representatives, since the day when they are not present, this organization will cease of exist.

Mrs. Senior mentioned that her report was informal and the Representatives should attend the meeting better prepared, in the case of her region, the delegates did not get together before the CE meeting. She suggests that a basic format should be created to help the regions to prepare the report prior to the CE meetings. She also informs that they will try to do so before the administrators' workshop, however they do not have the resources needed to finance the meeting; therefore she proposes to conduct this meeting electronically.

Mrs. Dansa clarifies that she does not intent to criticize what the consultant did, but rather she is trying to indicate that the facts presented by the consultant is not the true SIMAS' reality in her country (Argentina), since two days are not enough to capture the reality. Secondly, the report for the region represents his personal vision and she expects that either via phone or electronically, the delegates of the southern region will discuss the regional issues before the CE meeting. With regard to the Dictionary, Mrs. Dansa mentioned that the agreement made was to postpone this discussion and to not cancel it and that there are countries that are demanding this Project. Additionally, she recognized that they should attend the CE meetings better prepared and finally she indicated that her intention was not to criticize the Web Page and suggested looking for a specialist in her country that could help in making this a dynamic page.

Mr. Terry Long clarified that the Cartagena Agreement was to suspend indefinitely the Pan-American Dictionary but not to eliminate it. Secondly he indicated that further in this meeting the issue will be discussed, therefore he suggested to refraining all the comments on this issue until future time. He also continued indicating that on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, the issue on how the country can help OIMA will be discussed.



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### 4. Cartagena Meeting.

Mr. Terry Long requested that the CE review the evaluation of the OIMA meeting in Cartagena that was prepared by IICA. Also, he informed that only 12 evaluations were received, and that this was at least in part due to a very fast departure, despite the fact that the request was sent again. He also mentioned that the question on how to improve the Web Page was also included in the questionnaire. Finally, Mr. Long requested a presentation of the financial report.

Mr. Frank Lam from IICA (Technical Secretariat) explained that the financial report is available in the folder prepared for this meeting and that this report contains data to October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006, since IICA is preparing this report every three months. Mr. Lam explained OIMA income and expenses, as well as the administrative expenditures. Finally, he presented the details of the expenditures during the OIMA meeting in Cartagena.

Mr. Pedro Martinez requested a clarification regarding the costs associated with the consulting work performed by Mr. Gilberto Mendoza. Mr. Lam clarified that the amount shown in the report includes all the latest adjustments to this work. Mr. Martinez suggested that the expenditure incurred for this consulting work be considered as investment in projects. Mrs. Senior commented that the report shows income for 2004 and 2005 and she asked if there are enough funds for the meeting in Ecuador.

Mr. Terry Long clarified that for the year 2006, USDA had already assigned fund for OIMA, however they have not been disbursed. It is expected that OIMA will have a new income of \$200,000.00 during the next thirty days and that IICA could include them in the OIMA account. Finally, he considered that this is a simple matter of procedures.

Mr. Moscoso asked if the amount considered all the stages and Mr. Lam answered that in fact it does, the amount includes all the consulting works. Mr. Garcia mentioned that the expenditures of the Cartagena meeting do not include expenditures incurred by the host country. Also, he indicated that approximately 50% of the expenses are related to airplane tickets, despite the fact that IICA follows the policy to purchase the cheapest and more direct routes. Mr. Martinez emphasized that the financial reports should reflect the contribution of the countries. Mrs. Dansa explained that the host country contributions are directly related to the degree of sophistication that each country likes to provide and that this can generate some fear among countries that would like to request to host



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the OIMA Regular Meeting.

Mr. Terry Long clarified that countries that wish to host the meeting, should at least to contribute with the following:

- a. The time for the personnel involved in the organization of the event (in kind contribution)
- b. Translation services (in kind contribution)
- c. Conference rooms and breaks (cash contribution)
- d. Social activities (optional)

Mrs. Tejada mentioned that Ecuador is aware of the expenditures required and of the acquired compromise by Mr. Ortega during the Cartagena Meeting. Additionally she indicated that they have the experience generated during the recent conduction of the SIMA workshop in Ecuador. Mr. Moscoso supported the proposal made by Mr. Long and Mrs. Senior of including all the contributions of the countries, both of those in kind and in cash.

Mr. Lam suggested to the CE that in order to conclude with this discussion topic, the countries should clearly define who will be the responsible people that will provide the information. Mr. Long suggested that only the direct expenditures done by the host countries be reflected. Also, he clarifies, that USDA covers all the cost of its representatives. Also, costs from the CE, such as hotel, airplane tickets, etc. are not covered by OIMA but rather by the USDA. Finally Mr. Long asked if the CE is requesting also to include all the expenditures that are incurred by the USDA. Mr. Garcia indicated that since there have been many different modalities to finance the OIMA activities, for example in some cases the money in custody of IICA is used and then reimbursed, others the OIMA funds are directly used, so he requested authorization to the CE for IICA to prepare a charge of accounts to be used for the OIMA projects.

Mrs. Tejada requested that the CE clarifies the issue of the contribution of the host countries and suggested that the most important thing is to know how much is OIMA spending in its activities and what is the origin of the funds. Mr. Long mentioned that the USDA covers their expenses in order to reduce the burden to OIMA.

Mr. Long concluded that the CE wants to have a better description of the OIMA expenditures and requests to Mrs. Adriana Senior to send all the cost incurred during the Meeting in Cartagena in 2006 and to Mr. Luis Palmer to send all the costs for the Canada Meeting in 2005. Mr. Long asks that if there are no further comments we should move to the topic of evaluation.



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Mr. Long mentioned that it is a shame to have received such a small number of evaluation questionnaires and adds that it is important this topic receives more attention at the Ecuador Meeting. Mr. Moscoso proposed to the CE that during the Quito meeting these questionnaires be collected prior to the end of the meeting. Mrs. Senior considered that there were failures in communication and she suggested that the topic should be included as a topic in the agenda.

Mr. Long summarized how important is to learn from this lesson and prepare us better for the future. Also, Mr. Long mentioned that in his organization, at the beginning the participation in the feedback processes was very low, but little by little trust and confidence were improved. Organizations evolve and the participants expect that decisions be made based on the feedback. Mr. Garcia explained that all the individuals who participate in this meeting are all professionals and it is expected a professional behavior from all of them, particularly from those who did not attend the meeting. For these individuals the organization occurred in not recoverable expenditures, primarily airplane tickets.

Mr. Long mentioned that there is an agreement to send a letter to the representatives (those who signed the letter of intent) from those countries that did not attend the meeting. Also, we all know that there are very little real possibilities of recovering the expenditures; however this situation needs to be corrected. I have in my hands a proposal for the letter that Frank has prepared and he asked to examine such proposal. When I return to Washington, I will prepare a final document and will send it to the countries' representatives, in agreement to the previous CE meeting. If you have any suggestion, I would like to thank you if you could send them to Frank. Mr. Pedro Martinez mentioned that in the Norms of Procedures there is a point related to those who do not attend the meetings. Mr. Frank Lams clarified that in the invitation letter the policy for not attendance is clearly stated, also he suggested that a copy of the invitation letter and from the invoices be attached. Mrs. Dansa mentioned that in many occasions it is very difficult for a country to meet the compromises, because many times there are bureaucratic problems that prevent them to meet these compromises. Mr. Garcia reminds that the letter is addressed to the Ministers. Mr. Moscoso added that the letter needs to be clarified and adjusted. Mr. Garcia suggested that the CE members make their suggestion known to the Technical Secretariat no later than December 12th<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> At the end to the CE meeting (12/12) none of the members of the CE delivered suggestions for the letter to the Technical Secretariat.



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Mr. Marco Moscoso explained that Panama requested to be the host for the OIMA meeting in 2008 and suggested that the Technical Secretariat send a note to all the countries asking if there is any other country interested in hosting this meeting, he also requested to include in the Minutes of the Meeting in Cartagena the request from Panama to become the host country for 2008. Mr. Long thanked that OIMA already has an offer for 2008 and supports the idea of sending a note to all the countries. Also, he informed that this message should not come from IICA but from OIMA. Mr. Moscoso confirmed that Panama will send the formal request to become the host country in 2008. Mr. Frank Lam clarified that in the minute of the Meeting in Cartagena the request from Panama to become the host country for 2008 will be included<sup>3</sup>. Mrs. Dansa asked what would happen if another country also requested to become the host country and who will then make the decision. Mr. Long concluded to include the request from Panama. Mr. Frank Lam requested to the CE to clarify who is going to sign the Minutes, since there are new members in the CE. Mr. Long clarifies that it is the new CE who should sign the Minutes.

Mr. Frank Lam requested to the CE that in the case of Ecuador, Mrs. Tejeda is who will sign. Mr. Long clarified that Mrs. Tejeda is the official representative to the CE from the host country. Mrs. Tejeda informed that she has a copy of the request.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-02. To present the financial report considering the OIMA investments in a new format with a specific chart of accounts for OIMA. Additionally, Mr. Luis Palmer will send the cost incurred by Canada in 2005 and Mrs. Adriana Senior will send the cost incurred by Colombia in 2006 to be included. The report will be based on the good intention from the countries to provide information and is not expected to present receipts or invoices.**

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-03: Send a claim letter addressed to the maximum authorities of those countries whose representatives did not attend the OIMA meeting in Cartagena, attaching the corresponding invoices.**

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-04 Send a letter to the countries to know their interest to become the host country for 2008 and to indicate the intention of Panama to become such host country.**

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<sup>3</sup> The request from Panama was included to the Minute of the OIMA Meeting (Cartagena) the same day.



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### 5. Strategy for the Caribbean

Mr. Terry Long requested to the Technical Secretariat to share the strategy to try to incorporate the Caribbean Region to OIMA. Mr. Frank Lams mentioned that during 2006 IICA began efforts to incorporate Belize and Haiti, however, both countries could not participate at the Cartagena Meeting due to internal problems. He also mentioned that it is expected to consult with the Regional Director for the Caribbean of IICA to request a space during the Caribbean Week to present OIMA. Finally he mentioned that a proposal to bring together all the leaders of the SIMAS from the Caribbean countries is being prepared. This activity is expected to have an approximate cost of \$17,000.00

Mrs. Senior suggested that since there are no funds for this activity, IICA could support the activity in the region or that some members of the CE could support this initiative. Mr. Terry Long suggested exploring the possibility of requesting to the Organizing Committee of the Caribbean Week a space to present OIMA (mission, objectives, reach and projects). Ms. Sadocha suggested that it is important to take advantage of the meeting. Mr. Long clarified that both activities can be conducted; that is a presentation to the entire audience and a more specialized (workshop) presentation.

Mr. Moscoso suggested that IICA could collect the information or conduct a diagnostic on the state of the countries in the region. Also, he continued to mention, that priorities should be established to incorporate new countries, since their incorporation could demand more resources. At this time, we should only focus on participating in the Caribbean Week and designate the President to promote OIMA in that event. Also, he requested that IICA researches the current situation of the countries in the Caribbean. Mr. Terry Long suggested requesting that OIMA be allowed to participate during the Caribbean Week and to postpone the working meeting for the Caribbean. Mr. Moscoso proposed that the OIMA President participates in this activity.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-05: To formally request to the Organizing Committee of the Caribbean Week a space for the OIMA President to present the Organization.**

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-06. Prepare a profile for the SIMAS in the Caribbean.**



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### 6. Administrators Workshop

Mr. Terry Long explained that the objectives and the audience for this workshop are not yet defined with clarity. With Mr. Van Dyke and Mr. Palmer we have discussed this topic and I suggest that in our case, the objective is to obtain market information and make it public. Other systems worry to add value to this information. When the USDA requested the funds, the idea was to share how to administer an organization, how to divulgate the information, how to relate with the industry, what tools are needed to have more success, how to use more effectively the information means already existing in the country. Now I would like to know the CE opinion.

Mrs. Senior said that in her experience, they have had limitations regarding how to analyze the information and that this is something that the industry in her country does not utilize. Mr. Martinez suggested that the workshop should be focused to those that administer the SIMAS and latter on, other workshop for the technical people can be created. Also this workshop has to allow us to find the road that we must follow and to assign the different tasks that we need to fulfill.

Mr. Long continued by mentioning that there are 4 components in all the SIMAS: 1) The administration where policies are determined, 2) Data recollection, 3) Analysis of the information and 4) Divulgateion of the Information, which has a couple of components: the means for diffusion (radio, TV, etc) and the customers (the industry, the institutions, etc). Also he mentioned that he has heard that many SIMAS have a director for each one of the components and that this leads to Andrea's question, on how many people we are going to take to this workshop.

Mr. Moscoso suggested that the CE should select who is going to attend this workshop. He further suggested that each country should present three candidates and that the CE should be the one making the selection. This would allow the CE to assure that the participants will meet the minimum profile needed to make this initiative sustainable, and also that this will in fact contribute to improve the SIMAS in each one of the OIMA member countries. Also he suggested that each participant should conduct a set of tasks prior to the workshop and after the meeting OIMA should provide a follow up, since it is expected to obtain results applicable to each one of the participant countries. The person attending this workshop should make a serious commitment to share the results of the workshop with other members of their country, and also he suggests that the themes for the workshop should be created according to the



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USDA experience. Mrs. Dansa mentioned that in many cases, the directors or administrators are there for political reasons and that they may not be very interested in participating, also the countries will not always have the capacity to share the information. She also believes that the selection should be internal by each country. Mr. Martinez considers that the person attending the workshop should be committed to his/her country and to OIMA, since we will request for them to share the information and we do not have the mechanisms to assure that this is going to take place. He also requested to know the themes for the workshop in order to better define who will attend it.

Mr. Frank Lam mentioned that based on the consulting work performed by Mr. Mendoza, OIMA is already familiar with the situation in the majority of the SIMAS in the region and in order to achieve the objectives determined by OIMA the programs to be established should have concrete results that could be evaluated. Another aspect is to define if these aspects could be approached from a regional or hemispheric perspective, despite the fact that these approaches can be more expensive, but they could help to respond more effectively to the demands and needs from the countries. Mrs. Senior mentioned that in her organization she has assigned a person to each one of the component mentioned by Mr. Long and that to take these persons to Costa Rica or Miami will be extremely expensive. Therefore she suggests implementing a regional activity with the objective to include more people and also considering that regional activities could be less expensive.

Mr. Long mentioned that politically, that the alliance that OIMA has established with IICA is very important, and that for IICA, OIMA is an organization of high profile. Therefore one of the ideas is to strengthen this alliance and to conduct the meeting in Costa Rica. Also I suggested conducting this workshop with emphasis in market intelligence, using the USDA portal. For the workshop in Costa Rica it is suggested that the participants bring information from their countries (who are the customers, from where and what type of information are they needing, what are their products and key markets, both at national as well as international level, what are the quality programs, etc.) At the end the institutions in the countries are the ones responsible for defining who will attend the workshop and that IICA Headquarters has all the facilities to host this workshop, in fact two dates in March have already been proposed: the Week of March 19<sup>th</sup> and the Week of March 26<sup>th</sup>. Also I would like to offer help in training, providing a facilitator for the workshop. Also I would like to establish a sub-group to define a working agenda during the next few days and to obtain the ideas from the CE.



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Mrs. Dansa suggested that the workshop be divided in several working areas and asks if has already been decided if this workshop is going to be regional or hemispheric. Mrs. Senior raised the same question. Mr. Lam suggested that a hemispheric workshop could target the administrators and that in the near future a new regional workshop could be established to address the needs of the technical people dealing with the collection, analysis and diffusion of market information. Mr. Long mentioned that the first workshop should be for the administrators since they need to understand how to create programs to manage information and for this reason he supports the proposal to conduct the workshop targeting administrators and also he supports the idea of having this workshop in San Jose, because it is a more central location, he expects that the participants be of a very high level. He also expects that in the future other regional workshops will be created. Mr. Palmer considers that is important to know the degree of involvement in each country. Mrs. Senior considers that the proposal made by Mr. Long is very satisfactory. Mrs. Dansa expressed that for the Southern Region the month of March is still a time of vacation, however she would like to return with a define program to share it with her colleagues. It is possible she would like to have an agenda. Mr. Long mentioned that the March dates have been provided by IICA. Mr. Moscoso indicated that IICA's General Director is elected by all the countries and that IICA is an institution that represents all the countries that are members of OIMA. Also he considered that IICA has technical resources that could support OIMAs' efforts.

Mr. Long proposed to conduct this activity at IICA's Headquarters in San José Costa Rica and submit this proposal for approval. The CE members approved it. Mr. Long summarized that the workshop will be focused in skill enhancement.

Mrs. Dansa asked if there is going to be an official invitation by OIMA or if it possible to notify the countries as of this moment. Mr. Long replied that as Regional Representatives, they can announce the event as of this moment. Also he emphasized that it is expected to share this information with all the OIMA membership and as President of the organization he will do this in the shortest possible time.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-07 To conduct the administrators workshop at IICA's Headquarters in Costa Rica during the week of March 36<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006. A working group composed by Mr. Terry Long, Mr. Luis Palmer, Mr. Pedro Martinez and Mr. Frank Lam is formed. This group will present a proposal for this workshop within the next 30 days and it is expected to have one participant per country sponsored by OIMA.**



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### 7. Closure of Pending Issues.

Mr. Long made references to the evaluation conducted during the Cartagena meeting with regard to how to improve the OIMA Web page. Mr. Lam informed that since the V Meeting of the OIMA CE, IICA administers the OIMA Web Page. There have been several updates, however we have always wondered what is what we really want to do with this page, and that this was the reason for asking it to the member assembly. He also indicated that in the past, the previously named CE considered that the Web page should be a communication platform for the country members. Also I would like to inform you that the OIMA Forum has been established and it is working and the CE can decide what to do with it.

Mrs. Dansa asked if it is possible using the page, to have links to Price information or if a price search system can be found. Mr. Martinez clarified that the intention was to have a very dynamic page; however there are technical and economical limitations to achieve this. Originally, it was conceived to have a page with containing general information (date of OIMA creation, promotion, events, etc) from the organization. Eventually a point where the page will have more services will be reached, but at this time with the Forum, we can use the page to interchange information. Mr. Lam mentioned that it is important to define who will be the customers for this page, since we intent to satisfy the demand from the private sector, the CE must define the strategy that needs to be followed. Mr. Long mentioned that several interchanges of ideas have been taking place with this regard, since at the beginning the page was conceived only as a source for information for us. He also considers that the Forum will allow updating the information and suggests that until this moment, OIMA is not prepared to create a more complex page; however he also considered that this page should be open to the public with regard to the general information. Mr. Long also informed that USDA is financing the administration of the OIMA Web page.

Mr. Moscoso suggested using the Forum to share information with all the country members. Mr. Lam informed that OIMA Web page is update to the current date. Also he emphasized the need for a very good communication between the owner of the page (OIMA) and its administrator (IICA) in order to implement a good strategy. Mr. Long asked if the Forum requires a password, Mr. Lams replied that in fact there is a need for a password. Mr. Long also asked if the OIMA Quality Policy has been published in the page. Mr. Moscoso mentioned that he does not know this document and that the OIMA CE is who should authorize IICA to



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publish it or not. Mr. Martinez suggested that the Quality Policy should be published; he also proposes that the CE should define if the results from the consulting work carried out by Mr. Mendoza should be placed in the Web page.

Mr. Lam asked if the Quality Policy was approved by the CE since this was not noted in the minutes. Mr. Martinez suggested that the CE reads this Policy to be discussed tomorrow. Mr. Long clarified that the Quality Policy was part of the President farewell, and as such has not been completely endorsed by the membership; therefore it has to be considered as the Past President commentaries. Mr. Martinez considered that if the CE considers that this is a topic of importance it should be included for membership discussion and approval during the next meeting.

Mr. Lam presented the proposal for the OIMA promotional material as well as the corresponding quote and requests that the CE reaches a decision with regard to this matter. Also, Mr. Lam suggested presenting 3 design proposals. Mrs. Senior considered that the prices in the USA are very high. Mr. Long considered that it is a very good idea to have three proposals and to send them to be printed in Latin-America. Mrs. Senior mentioned that she is not in agreement that the logos from SDA and IICA appear in this material. Mr. Long indicated that the OIMA logo is very clear but that it is also important to remember the relationship that this organization has with IICA. Mr. Moscoso suggested that the promotional material should be used also by the countries.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-08: Send 3 design proposals for the OIMA promotional material to the CE. Only the OIMA logo will appear in the promotional material**

With no further points to be discussed, today's working session comes to a close.

### **Day 2: December 12th, 2006**

The meeting started at 8:30 am. Mr. Terry Long informed that the minutes from the VI OIMA CE are ready to be signed. Mr. Frank Lam informed that the CE will receive a series of documents published by IICA to help the Latin-American entrepreneurs.

Mr. Terry Long brought back the issue of the Pan-American dictionary (DP). Mrs. Dansa reported on the conversations with her colleagues and she thinks that the



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topic of the Pan-American Dictionary can be reinitiated. Mr. Long summarized that at the Meeting in Arizona it was agreed to create a DP based on the USDA information, which has more than 1,600 products with their respective scientific names. This list was sent to Canada and Chile and in this last country several suggestions were made such as how to include other language and other services. As result, it was agreed to prepare the TOR for a consultancy, however, as it was mentioned in Cartagena, it has not been possible to agree on what we really want. The possibility of creating this DP has not been totally eliminated, however, and in case we decide to create it, I suggest starting with a very simple project. Mrs. Senior added that there are some pages containing product dictionaries: Mr. Lam suggested to the CE to incorporate some pages with product information to the OIMA Web page. Mr. Moscoso considered that Mr. Lam's proposal is the correct and appropriate approach. Mrs. Dansa supports Mr. Moscoso. Mr. Long requested to Mr. Frank Lam the list of web pages and to place them in the OIMA Web page. Mr. Martinez invited the countries and the CE to collaborate in this activity and to share any information that they may have.

With regard to the Forum, Mrs. Senior suggested that this should be open to all OIMA members. Mr. Long clarifies that it is important that all the OIMA members count with a communication tool, such as the Forum and that the CE use the electronic mail as mean of communication.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-09: Place the Web pages containing information regarding fruits and vegetables specific to the Pan-American Dictionary in the OIMA Web Page during the next 30 days.**

### **8. Discussion on the Evaluation (Consultancy)**

Mr. Terry Long mentioned that during this time it will be discussed what to do with the information generated by the consultancy performed by Mr. Gilberto Mendoza. Mrs. Dansa mentioned that the countries of the Southern Region intent to implement a workshop to verify the results from the consultancy and she considers that it is not pertinent to publish these results in the Web page, since they do not share the results of the consultancy. Mrs. Senior mentioned that the Web page should contain the SIMAS Best Practices. Mr. Martinez added that the consultant offered to incorporate the suggestions made by the countries and he wants to know what happened with this. Also he mentions that in his opinion all information should be made public. Mr. Long commented that there was not a contractual obligation with the consultant to do what Mr. Martinez has indicated and he suggested contacting him via Mr. Lam or Mr. Palmer to know if there is



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any additional information pending to be delivered to OIMA. Mrs. Dansa clarified that this is not an issue of grades, since despite the fact the good work conducted by Mr. Mendoza this does not reflect the reality. She considers that by the moment the information should not be made public.

Mrs. Tejada considered that the evaluation conducted by the Consultant has been taken by her country very constructively and healthy for their SIMA, since it provided a radiography of the system. Mr. Martinez considered that what Mrs. Tejada had mentioned is very valuable and the important thing at this time is if we make these findings public or not. Mrs. Moscoso mentioned that some countries from Central America sent their comments to the consultant and that at this time they have not received a response from him. He also considered that the information should be published. Also he reminded that the consultancy made some suggestions for a series of activities or projects to strengthen the SIMAS and that the CE should register all the activities created after the consultancy. Mrs. Dansa commented that she is in agreement with sharing the Best Practices, however; she considers that there are conceptual mistakes. She also confirmed that she has the total report. Mrs. Senior mentioned that the problems should be discussed by the CE should be regional and not national. Also she mentioned that the consultant should deliver an executive summary of the work performed.

Mr. Long asked the CE if the entire document should be published and their opinion with regard to the suggestion of publishing an executive summary and that the CE prepares the introduction for it, clarifying that the work was conducted by a consultant. Finally, he mentioned that there are many countries waiting to know the entire work to understand how other countries function. Also he added that the document can be shared internally and distribute it in a CD. Mrs. Dansa mentioned that she already has the entire document. Mr. Palmer asked Mrs. Dansa how she obtained the entire document since the CE has not authorized its divulgation. Mr. Lam clarified that in Cartagena a CD containing the chapter corresponding to each country was delivered to the representative from the corresponding country. Finally, Mr. Long asked what it is that will be published in the Web page and mentions that together with Mr. Palmer; they will look for the electronic version of the document that explains the methodology used by Mr. Mendoza, and suggested to publish an executive summary and the report of the best practices. Due to the sensibilities expressed by some countries, Mr. Long asked if the CE supports the idea of asking Mr. Mendoza to prepare an executive summary of the consultancy to be published, paying him the time used for this purpose. Mrs. Senior mentioned that he should not charge for this work. Mrs. Dansa supported Mrs. Senior comment.



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Mr. Long mentioned that the study should be understood as a dynamic tool, that would allow the countries to compare their progress across time, and that synergies should be sought based on this work; for example in a meeting with a donor organization, IICA or any other country could mention the study conducted by OIMA, a product from the organization, and that this could be the base to look for new projects or financing. Mrs. Senior supports the idea that this work serves as instrument to look for new funds for OIMA. Mr. Martinez indicated that the study is already providing results, as in the case of Ecuador, where, with their own resources and with the support of other countries has started a program to improve their SIMA. Other case is the case of El Salvador who has requested help to other countries. Mrs. Dansa supports the comments made by Mrs. Senior and Mr. Martinez. Ms. Sadocha confirmed that IICA has a check list mechanism that allow them to make a diagnostic of the countries, she also believes that will be easier to replicate. She also mentioned that IICA has an office in Washington that could help to look for funds, however, in February there will be a meeting in which the issue of funds will be discussed. It would be interesting to listen what is the opinion of the different organisms and she would be willing to share this in the future.

Mr. Long suggested that one of the approaches could imply requesting the countries their strategies and specific needs, presenting the cases of Ecuador and El Salvador as models. We would also expect that all the countries attend the administrators workshop prepared. Mr. Martinez complemented this idea by indicating that they should bring: What they need but also what I can give. Mrs. Senior considered that Ms. Sadocha should be present during the administrator workshop. Mr. Moscoso considered that the workshop should include regional presentations and to save time it is possible to start working using electronic mail because 18 presentations will take very long time. He does not know exactly what methodology use. Finally he considered that the proposal made by Mr. Frank Lam can be used and ask when will this be discussed.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-10: share the Final Report and the Executive Summary with all the OIMA members using a CD.**

### **9. Next Ordinary Meeting: Quito, Ecuador 2007**

Mrs. Juana Tejada, Representative from Ecuador, host country for the next OIMA



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ordinary meeting, made a detailed presentation of the different hotel, food services, conference rooms and other service options available to conduct the OIMA activity during 2007.

Regarding the date, Mr. Terry Long mentioned that the meeting could perfectly take place at the end of August or at the beginning of September; however he considers that we have enough time to define a more precise date and we can use the meeting in San Jose to decide on the date. Mr. Moscoso considers that a new quote needs to be obtained based on the new conditions (55 persons, four nights, all inclusive-breakfast, lunch and two coffee breaks). Mr. Lam mentioned that if IICA Ecuador negotiates together with the Minister of Agriculture or the USDA, or the three institutions together, IICA can sign the hotel contract. Mr. Long mentioned that this is IICA's responsibility. Mr. Lam mentioned that in the case of Colombia, the responsibility was assumed by CCI who signed the contract and that in case that IICA Ecuador signs the contract; IICA would accept the legal responsibility. Mrs. Juana Tejada suggested that this be determined latter. Mr. Long suggested that IICA Miami and the Minister of Agriculture of Ecuador plan the meeting.

Mr. Frank Lam informed the CE that he had a telephone conversation with Mr. Gilberto Mendoza regarding the Final Report. He mentioned that to this date Mr. Mendoza has not delivered the final report with the suggestions from the countries and has agreed to send it as soon as possible. Also he mentioned that Mr. Mendoza has accepted to prepare an executive summary and to send it at the end of January.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-11: Conduct the OIMA Ordinary Meeting and the Hotel Swiss Hotel Quito and the Technical Secretariat together with the Minister of Agriculture will plan this activity.**

### 10. OIMA Strategic Planning

Mr. Terry Long shared with the CE, the document containing the Strategic Planning (Mission, Vision, Objectives, Strategies) for OIMA, explaining in detail the purpose of this document. Mr. Martinez explained his experience and learning from the RIBDA meeting conducted in Mexico City where he participated representing OIMA. Mr. Long mentioned that his area chief operating officer was invited to Chile where he had the opportunity to talk about OIMA. Mr. Long mentioned that he also does that when he participates in other professional meetings. Mrs. Senior considers that the document shared by Mr. Long will serve



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as guide to OIMA and she expresses her congratulations to Mr. Long for this. Mr. Long considers that OIMA has already conducted several activities and projects and that we all should be happy for what has been achieved. He requested to translate to Spanish the proposed document. Also he suggested preparing a work program. Mr. Frank Lam suggested preparing a Yearly Plan of Action (list of activities, with objectives, products, dates, person responsible, etc, plus their respective budget). Mr. Long suggested preparing a document to show OIMA achievements during this time.

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-12: Approve the document Strategic Planning, translate it to Spanish and placed in the Web Page**

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-13: Prepare a Yearly Plan of Action (2007)**

### **11. Support to Country Members:**

Mr. Terry Long mentioned that this is a topic that has been widely discussed and that at the beginning there were several countries willing to collaborate which are not present at this time. Also he mentioned that up to date very little has been requested from the countries prior to the meetings. The CE should request to each country some information, communicating to them what is intended to achieve in the meeting, to ask them to present opportunities and the country needs. The objective of this topic is who to achieve more participation from the countries, for example, what type of key industries need information including financial support.

Ms. Sadocha mentioned that USDA prepares an annual plan and after that this is passed to IICA. I would like to suggest finding out if you can participate in this plan that is prepared by IICA, at this time they are preparing the 2006-2010 plan and if you can speak at the ministerial level, there will always be an activity plan. Mr. Long considers that the CE can discuss this issue and will request to Mr. Miguel Garcia, that someone in IICA explain to OIMA this process during the next CE meeting. Mr. Lam mentioned that he is involved in the preparation of the Centro American proposal and it can be expected to obtain support to look for funds. Mr. Senior supported Mr. Frank vision and suggests that OIMA should define how to independently present projects and not associated with IICA, since OIMA is not IICA and IICA is not OIMA. Mrs. Dansa mentioned that there are large countries such as Brazil, that do not provide support and other countries do not have the resources to help, so it is therefore important to listen to their



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opinion.

Mr. Moscoso believes that the activities carried out by international organisms cannot be replicated by OIMA, since this would be a lost of resources. In fact during the consultancy it was possible to find duplicity and jealousy among the different institutions in a country and he clarifies that the Caribbean forms part of OIMA and once they incorporate more countries it will be convenient to consider creating other region. Mr. Long considers that OIMA should be considered as a leading organization and that we must make public all our efforts. There is a group of people who call themselves experts claiming to know about this topic, however in reality the institutions in the countries are who really know about them

Mr. Frank Lam suggested to the CE reviewing the issue of OIMA legal personality, especially if the organization is to have a strategy to look for funds. Mr. Long mentioned that OIMA is not an organization but a network of institutions. At the present time there is an institution, which is IICA that can help with this issue, so he does not see the need to look more into this issue. Mr. Lams clarifies that to normally access funds there are some requirements such as an executing entity that must be legally registered in the country. Mrs. Senior considers this to be a very important issue. Mr. Palmer mentioned that at the beginning of the organization there was a group working on this issue and if a new group needed could be conformed again. Mr. Moscoso would like to find some legal advice. Mr. Long suggested to establish a group conformed by Mrs. Senior, Mr. Lam and Mr. Palmer to look into this issue.

Mrs. Tejada suggested obtaining financial resources from the users of the SIMAS. Mr. Long considers that this is very risky. Mrs. Senior supported Mr. Long position.

Finally Mr. Long requested to Mr. Miguel Garcia and Mr. Frank Lam to prepare a presentation regarding the new FAO-IICA relationship and to explore how this can benefit OIMA.

Mr. Long suggested preparing a guide regarding international observers for the next CE meeting. Also Mr. Long informs that the USDA will cover the total cost for the CE meeting in San Jose and OIMA will finance one participant per country for the workshop. Mr. Long proposed to invite representatives and observers from outside the continent.



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**Agreement CE-VII-2006-14: Invite IICA to present its process of planification and how OIMA could be inserted.**

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-15: Create a subgroup to do research regarding OIMA legal personality. This subgroup will be conformed by Mrs. Adriana Senior, Mr. Frank Lam and Mr. Luis Palmer.**

**Agreement CE-VII-2006-16: Invite IICA to make a presentation on the new relationship with FAO and how can this benefit OIMA.**

Without further issues to be discussed, Mr. Terry Long, President from OIMA concluded the meeting.



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**Terry Long, OIMA President and Representative for the Northern  
Region.**

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**Marco Moscoso, OIMA Vice-President and Representative for the  
Central American Region**

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**Adriana Senior, Representative for the Andean Region**

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**Andrea Dansa, Representative for the Southern Region r**

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**Pedro Martinez, President Ex - Officio**

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**Juana Tejada, Representative from the Host Country 2007: Ecuador**

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