

PROCINORTE
Minutes of the XXVII Meeting of the Board of Directors
July 16th, 2024
Held Virtually

Background and Objectives

1. Share national developments to inform the PROCINORTE Secretariat.
2. Review current Task Forces activities.
3. Receive updates on current animal health (ASF/CSF) research projects.
4. Identification of areas of potential research between the three countries in 2024-25.
5. Explore future funding opportunities and sources.

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1. Opening Session

Dr. Jean-Charles Le Vallée opened the session with greetings and presenting the one-hour agenda.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda tabled was approved by BoD members.

3. Minutes of XXVI Meeting

Minutes of XXVII meeting were accepted by the BoD.



4. Update from each member country

Dr. Jean-Charles invited each country to provide an update on its research or scientific priorities and agendas.

Mexico

- Dr. Luis Ángel Rodríguez del Bosque informed about the upcoming change of government in Mexico after the elections. He emphasized that the new president is a scientist with a focus on environmental issues, which will benefit science and agriculture in the country.
- He announced the creation of a Secretariat of Technology and Innovation headed by a scientist, and the appointment of Dr. Julio Berdegúe as Secretary of Agriculture.
- Dr. Rodríguez del Bosque noted that he had held meetings with Dr. Berdegúe and other agricultural leaders, focusing on priority areas such as water management, rural development, and sustainable agriculture.
- Finally, Dr. Rodríguez del Bosque mentioned that he does not expect changes in INIFAP's budget for the first year of the new government, but that they could be considered starting in the second year.

United States

- Dr. Eve began by mentioning that he was temporarily filling the position of US representative to the PROCINORTE board, but the recruitment process was underway, and he expected the position to be filled by the end of the year.
- He highlighted a USD 300 million allocation for gas monitoring initiatives, such as methane and soil carbon, to predict greenhouse gas emissions in agricultural systems. These efforts include collaborations on projects such as "The Grand Farm" on agricultural automation, and a large-scale dairy production program.
- Dr. Eve mentioned that President Biden's administration is also working on nutrition and eliminating the impacts of sweeteners in desserts. Research priorities in the dairy industry are also being explored.
- He finally mentioned that their Miles City Montana location just celebrated the 100-year anniversary of Fort Keogh Livestock and Range Research Laboratory.

Canada

- Dr. Saindon began by highlighting the political context: the Mexican elections and the upcoming elections in the United States.
- On the innovation side, Dr. Saindon mentioned that their living labs are in place (14 across the country) performing research with really good results. This is part of a ten-years agreement they have placed.



- Also, they have finalized the announcements for all the research clusters (for a five-years project).
- In its latest budget, the Canadian government announced 39 million for two years, in addition to previous support also for two years, which is being allocated mainly to research on pesticides and different pest control methods.
- In addition, Dr. Saindon noted that his department is working on a sustainable agriculture strategy that will soon be published.
- Finally, Dr. Saindon commented that Canada will host the G7 summit in 2025, although it has not yet been decided whether agricultural issues will be included, given the complexity and breadth of the agenda.

5. Updates from IICA HQ

- Mr. Lloyd Day shared that he recently attended an event in Mexico and had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Julio Berdegúe, Mexico's next Minister of Agriculture, and emphasized the importance of Mexico in the regional agricultural context.
- Mr. Day mentioned the screwworm problem: the situation is very serious and should be a priority problem for IICA and for all the countries of the Americas. He also noted the upcoming executive meetings of IICA, which he considers key to making progress on priority projects and noted the importance of collaboration with PROCINORTE.
- Finally, Mr. Day noted the different COPs and the importance of promoting agriculture as a solution to climate change.
- After that, Dr. Ibrahim briefly mentioned that (1) he participated in Washington in an event of the alliance for the prosperity of the Americas, (2) it is important to encourage cooperation between PROCINORTE and PROCISUR and (3) IICA participated in the G20 meeting in Brazil.
- Mr. Day and Dr. Le Vallée introduced Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim as IICA's new director of technical cooperation.

6. Update from the Secretariat

- Dr. Le Vallée gave an update on PROCINORTE activities: (1) the recent Animal Health event in Mexico City on Avian Influenza, African Swine Fever and Bovine Tuberculosis, (2) the upcoming two-day Plant Health event on nematodes and (3) the upcoming Soil, Water and Climate Change Task Force event.
- Dr. Le Vallée pointed out that it is necessary for the board to discuss this event because the lack of support for Mexican scientists could jeopardize the whole event.



7. Discussion

The discussion started on the last problem mentioned by Dr. Le Vallée:

- Dr. Eve mentioned that the March webinar was very successful and that a high-level group of researchers has been assembled for the August meeting in Mexico City. However, if the countries do not support the researchers, the in-person meeting may not take place.
- Dr. Rodríguez del Bosque mentioned that the date of the meeting in Mexico City was chosen to be close to the III Inter-American Congress on Agrobiodiversity, to help participants attend both events in the same week.
- In response to Dr. Le Vallée's request, Dr. Rodríguez del Bosque committed that at least five INIFAP researchers would obtain the necessary support to attend the Soil, Water and Climate Change Task Force event.
- On the request to have a side meeting between high-level managers, Dr. Saindon agreed to send someone on his behalf.
- Finally, Dr. Rodríguez del Bosque made an invitation to members of PROCINORTE to attend in person the III Inter-American Congress on Agrobiodiversity.

8. Closing remarks

Dr. Le Vallée thanked all the participants for their attendance and asked about the possibility of holding the next board meeting in person. It was finally agreed to hold a virtual meeting in mid-November.



Annex 1: List of Participants

Board Members

- Dr. Gilles Saindon, Assistant Deputy Minister, Science and Technology Branch, AAFC
- Dr. Marlen Eve, Interim Associate Administrator, National Research Programs, ARS/USDA
- Dr. Luis Ángel Rodríguez del Bosque, Director General, INIFAP
- Mr. Bob Turnock, Deputy Director, Science Partnerships Division, AAFC
- Mr. Ryan Moore, International Affairs Specialist, ARS/USDA
- Dr. J. Isabel López-Arroyo, Investigador Titular, Entomología, INIFAP
- Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim, Director of Technical Cooperation, IICA
- Ms. Celestina Brenes, Technical Specialist, Bioeconomy and Innovation, IICA
- Dr. Jean-Charles Le Vallée, Executive Secretary, PROCINORTE

Other Attendees

- Mr. Lloyd Day, Deputy Director General, IICA
- Dr. Camino Aparicio, Liaison and Communication Specialist for the IICA Northern Region, IICA Mexico / PROCINORTE Secretariat
- VD Vivian Arguelles, Technical Specialist, IICA Canada / PROCINORTE Secretariat
- Ms. Gloria Ramírez, Office Manager, IICA Canada / PROCINORTE Secretariat

