Challenges and opportunities for IICA countries in the multilateral trading system: The case of the Committee on Agriculture

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Motivations for the Study

- Improving compliance with the transparency obligations of the Agreement on Agriculture.

- Achieving an active and fruitful participation in the discussions of the Committee on Agriculture.
**Notification of Agricultural Policies**

Current status

### Average compliance rates (%), 1995-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notification</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Andean</th>
<th>Caribbean</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imports under TRQs*</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Safeguard*</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic support</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export subsidies</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total exports*</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The requirement does not apply to all countries in the region.

Source: G/AG/GEN/86/Rev.40 (data as of 18/11/2020).
Participation in CoA Discussions

Current status

- 17 IICA member countries have never asked a question to others in the context of Committee meetings.

**Questions raised by IICA members**

1995 – Sept. 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of the Study

- **Coverage:** IICA members that are also WTO members (33).

- **Done in 3 stages by IICA regions:** (i) Caribbean and Central America, (ii) Andean, (iii) North and South America.

- **Methodology:**
  - Survey to government officials.
  - Literature review, data analysis, expert views.
Answers to the survey (by region)

- Andean: 25%
- Central: 19%
- Caribbean: 25%
- South: 25%
- North: 6%
Difficulties in Notifying

- Difficulties collecting information
- Determining which measures to notify
- Lack of specialized staff
- Complexity of the information to be notified
- Complexity of the notification process
- Inter-agency coordination
- Others
Types of Challenges - Notification

- **Institutional capacity** limitations.
- **Coordination** among domestic agencies.
- **Technical capacity** problems.
- **Reluctance** to notify.
Success Factors - Notification

- Inter-agency **coordination**.
- Essential role of **technical assistance**.
- **Commitment of the authorities**.
- **Technical knowledge** of the officials in charge.
Difficulties in CoA participation

- Lack of financing for capital experts
- Workload of existing staff
- Lack of staff
- Technical capacity for analysis
- Inter-agency coordination
- Others
Types of Challenges – CoA participation

- **Presence** of experts in Geneva.
- **Institutional capacity** constraints.
- **Technical capacity** limitations.
- **Coordination** among domestic agencies.
- **Lack of interest** of authorities.
Success Factors – CoA Participation

- **Collaborative networks** to analyze information and prepare the meetings.
- **National consultative processes** with government agencies and the private sector.
- **Awareness-raising** among capital authorities and the private sector.
Final Remarks

- COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of the CoA monitoring and of compliance with WTO rules.
- In this context, information is a valuable public good.
- Importance of awareness and active participation by developing countries.
- The study found opportunities for cooperation and joint work between IICA and its member countries.
Recommendations of WTO and IICA member countries to improve transparency in agriculture and participation in the Committee on Agriculture.

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Recommendations by the countries

1. Involvement of ministries of Agriculture.

2. Political commitment and involvement of authorities.
Recommendations by the countries

3. Creation of discussion forums.

4. Interinstitutional coordination and support from international organizations and the private sector.
Recommendations by the countries

5. Technical training and post-training support.

Recommendations by the countries

7. Creation of a department dedicated to the WTO.

8. Institutional commitment.

9. Learning by doing.
Possible areas of action by IICA

- Institutional capacity building
- Technical training
- Collaborative networks

Institutional capacity building

Technical training

Collaborative networks