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**Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research  
and Technology Development (FORAGRO)**

**Strategic Plan 2019-2030**

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# 1. Introduction

## Background to the reform of FORAGRO

The history of the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO) has been linked to the rapid evolution over the last two decades of the institutional framework for international cooperation on issues relating to agricultural innovation. In the early 1990s, within the context of an increasingly globalized economy, there were some key changes that influenced the emergence of a sustainable and inclusive development model, as well as the transition from the linear model (research → extension → adoption) toward innovation systems. These changes impacted and gave rise to the creation of forums at the global and regional levels.

During the First Regional Advisory Meeting between National Agricultural Research Systems in the LAC Region, held in Bogota in 1996, the creation of a Regional Forum for Agricultural Research and Technology Development was proposed. At the Ninth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), held in October 1997, there was support for the creation of FORAGRO, and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was entrusted with the establishment of a Secretariat to support its operation. Additionally, during the same period, a group of development agencies in the area of science and agricultural innovation, recognizing the need to adopt a more inclusive cooperation model, joined together to institute a global mechanism for addressing these topics, culminating in the establishment of the Global Forum for Agriculture, Research and Innovation (GFAR) in 1996.

Over the following years, FORAGRO promoted numerous initiatives in different spheres of activity, including participation in a variety of hemispheric discussion mechanisms, regional research agendas, prospective studies, capacity development and sharing of experiences, as well as knowledge management and information, and support for the development of regional mechanisms. FORAGRO was deeply involved in the GFAR processes, with active participation in the Global Conferences on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD1 and 2).

As time passed, FORAGRO continued to incorporate different spheres of action, primarily in response to concrete demands from the participants. Over the years, several challenges began to emerge, such as the lack of a basic mechanism to finance activities, a clear dispersion of efforts and the need to focus on its strengths, avoiding duplication with other regional entities, and limited participation of certain groups of key actors. It also became clear that the driving force behind FORAGRO was coming primarily from governmental institutions, in this case the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARI). Although FORAGRO was conceived as an inclusive mechanism, the representative, effective and sustained participation of different groups became a permanent challenge for involving the key actors in the innovation systems.

At the Fourteenth Session of the Executive Committee (EC) held in Brasilia in 2013, it was agreed to commission an external evaluation of FORAGRO with a view to improving its governance, its participatory nature, as well as aspects of sustainability and communication. In response to the recommendations of the evaluation, it was agreed to continue the process with the formulation of a restructuring plan. The Proposal for a New FORAGRO was presented to the EC at its Sixteenth meeting in Turrialba in November of 2016.

The external evaluation identified the need for adopting a governing model that would make it possible to achieve representation and active participation by the relevant set of actors. Although FORAGRO was conceived as an inclusive mechanism, its governance lacked a participatory mechanism to choose representatives of the members in discussion and decision-making bodies. With the exception of the representatives of the regional INIA, there was no formal system for choosing and replacing representatives from the various sectors. Conceptually, FORAGRO was inclusive and representative, but not so its governance. In practice, it lacked mechanisms of its own to provide true governance for multiple actors.

The first step towards implementing new governance was the creation of an Assembly of Members with inclusive representation from the different groups of actors. Following an open call, the Assembly met for the first time in August 2017 in Costa Rica, where a [Charter for FORAGRO](#) was discussed and approved. At that same meeting, priority topics and areas of action through which the Forum could add value were identified in order to move forward in these areas. A process was also defined in order to select the new Steering Committee. On that occasion, the Assembly authorized IICA to enter into an agreement through a Letter of Understanding with the GFAR in order to obtain financing for initiating a process of strategic planning in order to drive the actions from the Forum to the future.

The Charter provided for the formulation of a 10-year Strategic Plan, as a starting point for the planning processes of FORAGRO.

The mission, vision, and functions of FORAGRO, as established in the Charter, as well as the priority topics defined during the Assembly, are described below.

## **Mission, vision, functions, priority topics and areas for action**

The vision, mission, and functions of FORAGRO are well defined in its Charter as follows:

### **Mission**

To serve as a forum to promote dialogue, actively discuss needs and opportunities, generate analyses and proposals, and bolster partnerships that strengthen the science, technology and innovation systems for sustainable agricultural development in the Americas.

### **Vision**

To be recognized as the principal Forum of the Americas where the future of agricultural science, technology, and innovation systems are discussed and shared.

## Functions of the Forum

- To drive and promote improvements, sensitize, report, and share information among its clients and with other actors in support of agricultural, agrifood and agroindustrial research, development, and innovation (RDI), and provide fair access to their benefits in order to serve the needs of the sector and the territories of the Americas.
- To generate relevant information and knowledge in the priority topics of RDI in order to contribute to decision making by the political actors, the productive sector, and the scientific/technological system.
- To facilitate inclusive mechanisms for representation of its groups of stakeholders.
- To represent the Americas at the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR).

## Topics for priority attention and areas for action

The topics for priority attention and the areas for action through which the Forum can add value are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Topics for priority attention and areas for action as identified by the FORAGRO Assembly**

PRIORITY TOPICS			
Natural resources that support agriculture: soil, water, biodiversity	Technological innovation for the environmental, economic and social sustainability of agriculture	Support for innovation in family agriculture	Development of capabilities at multiple levels (research institutions, productive sector, extension systems, governments, actors)
<b>AREAS OF ACTION WHERE FORAGRO CAN ADD VALUE:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as forum for debate—a space where stakeholders can discuss important topics</li> <li>• Provide a space for coordinating actions between organizations and between mechanisms (intra and interregional cooperation)</li> <li>• Develop discussion papers on major topics in order to provide information for decision-makers</li> <li>• Facilitate platforms to manage and disseminate knowledge and information.</li> </ul>			

## 2. Process towards the Strategic Plan

The first step in the formulation of the Plan was the organization of a workshop to define the needs, in order to generate inputs and lay the foundation for developing the plan. This exercise, organized jointly with the [first meeting of the new Steering Committee](#) of FORAGRO in Buenos Aires in April 2018, served to describe, from the standpoint of the participants, the external and internal context of FORAGRO, to explore future scenarios, to define the desired FORAGRO, and to analyze the status quo through an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)<sup>1</sup>, in addition to exploring how to close the gaps and to

<sup>1</sup> The SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was done to determine where FORAGRO is today, what separates it from the desired FORAGRO and what brings it closer to it.

initiate the development of a collective change theory to determine the FORAGRO strategy, in keeping with the [2030 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). Thus, an attempt will be made to align the future orientation and actions of the Forum with the achievement of these objectives within their areas of action. The results of the workshop were complemented by a series of interviews and virtual focus groups with the participation of key actors who did not participate in the on-site meeting held in Buenos Aires.

### **The Desired FORAGRO: key contextual elements**

The key elements of the current context within the region that are relevant for FORAGRO, and which were identified by the participants in the workshop and substantiated during the interviews, are outlined as follows:

- **Inequality, equity, and inclusion**

The region is described as an environment characterized by great diversity as well as major disparities and inequalities both within the countries and between them. The desired future is one in which these disparities are reduced while diversity is maintained, where the natural resources that support productive systems are protected and where food security, social justice, active and equitable participation of stakeholders in decision making, and access for the excluded sectors, are increased. The role that innovation systems play in advancing toward these objectives should be highlighted.

- **Growing complexity of the technological and organizational environment:**

The region is described as one with increasing complexity in the organizational and technological context, with increasingly limited resources for RDI. This scenario highlights the need to strengthen dialogue and promote partnerships among the different sectors in order to influence public policies, define common agendas, facilitate greater cooperation among the actors and therefore advance towards common objectives. The desired future is one in which RDI contributes to the achievement of a productive, resilient, competitive, and inclusive agriculture, and in which the stakeholders cooperate for mutual benefit and the good of the society.

- **Competitiveness and resilience towards achieving the SDGs**

The region is described as one in which the threat of impacts from climate change, the challenges of competitiveness and access to markets, are barriers to eliminating hunger, poverty and improving quality of life. The desired future coincides with achievement of the 2030 SDGs: zero hunger and poverty, resilience of productive systems against climate change, quality of life, partnerships and solid institutions.

### **The desired FORAGRO: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT).**

It is important to understand the *status quo*, i.e. where FORAGRO is today with respect to its objective of reaching the Desired FORAGRO. In order to achieve this vision, an exercise was carried out during the workshop held in Buenos Aires to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), with a view to identifying the opportunities and spaces available for taking advantage of the strengths of FORAGRO and identifying its weaknesses in

order to deal with the challenges. Table 2 presents the findings of the analysis, which was corroborated and supported through the virtual interviews.

TABLE 2	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<b>INTERNAL: FORAGRO AND ITS MEMBERS</b>	20 years of history and work among various actors Structure, diversity, and existing partnerships Participatory mechanisms, inclusive membership, governance, and Charter Adaptability Individual strengths of the institutions and groups that belong to FORAGRO Support from IICA (Secretariat) Political backing (IABA) Can work with regional entities Adaptability Bilingual	Lack of a financial sustainability mechanism Insufficient representation of certain sectors Lack of clarity in its opportunities Heterogeneity of the membership Lack of inclusion of other languages in the region Insufficient attention paid to the countries of the Caribbean Limited interest from the private sector Limited feedback from stakeholders to their institutions Actors and beneficiaries do not know the areas of activity of FORAGRO (lack of visibility)
	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<b>EXTERNAL: ENVIRONMENT</b>	Influence public policies Link bases to political entities Create multi-stakeholder opportunities on issues of RDI Knowledge management through different platforms of interaction Interaction with other cooperation mechanisms Connection of its mandate to the SDGs Linkage with rapid action for Small Island Developing States (Samoa Pathway) Paris Agreement South-South Cooperation	Financial and political situation of the region Budgetary cuts in the institutions Number of organizations that work in that area and do not communicate (perception of duplication) Challenge of seizing upon the diversity of the region and maintaining broad representation in governance Limited political will (related to the lack of visibility and limited perception of relevance)

### **The Desired FORAGRO: Expected Results**

The *Expected Results* were defined during the workshop and were corroborated through a series of virtual meetings where the partners openly expressed their position with respect to the direction in which the New FORAGRO should go. The Strategic Plan of FORAGRO establishes the following Expected Results:

- FORAGRO is able to influence the agendas and public policies at different levels, due to advocacy campaigns, and to its **positioning** on priority topics for the region.
- FORAGRO is **more visible** in the region and within the global context in view of the implementation of a communication and public relations strategy.
- The **ability of regional actors** in decision-making on RD&I priorities, possible partnerships and funding opportunities is strengthened due to information that is made available and shared through FORAGRO.
- **Partnership among stakeholders** and their ability to benefit collectively from existing opportunities is strengthened as a result of the existence of FORAGRO platforms for disseminating, sharing, and reaching consensus on priorities actions.
- **Capacity-building** opportunities are available to stakeholders as a result of a virtual space facilitated by FORAGRO to compile and share existing tools and options.
- FORAGRO improves its **financial sustainability** as a result of a strategy for resource mobilization.

These expected results frame the strategic paths that the new FORAGRO will adopt over the next 10 years, period set during the reform process. The topics presented below may be reviewed and refocused during a medium-term exercise (5 years) with monitoring and alignment based on the changes that may occur in the region in the short and medium term, i.e., it is anticipated that that there will be possible modifications during the 5-year review, and annual monitoring of the current plan.

### **3. Strategic Lines of Action and the Path towards Implementation**

The challenges facing agriculture today (climate change, fluctuating international prices, falling public investment in research in some countries, cost of research, access to innovation, sustainability of natural resources, etc.) provide the opportunity and scope for FORAGRO to play a fundamental role by increasing its relevance, and investing in the dissemination and exchange of knowledge on innovation proposed by its partners in the region. This Strategic Plan details the strategic elements of the New



FORAGRO that are framed within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)<sup>2</sup> and in accordance with these, each element corresponds to one or more specific objectives. The areas highlighted during the consolidation<sup>3</sup> process determine the following strategic lines of action to achieve the Desired FORAGRO.

- a. ***Positioning and Visibility***
- b. ***Relevance as a Discussion and Exchange Forum***
- c. ***Strategic Alliances for Capacity Building***
- d. ***Financial Sustainability***

### **a. Positioning and Visibility**

The long history of FORAGRO and its inclusive nature are important precedents that will facilitate its positioning as an example of joint work that can be replicated in other regions and also in areas of cooperation between actors in the Americas. The positioning can be based on strategic alliances and a close relationship with other initiatives in the region, as well as with global<sup>4</sup> partner platforms of the GFAR and participation in GCARD, in addition to ensuring a permanent presence in discussion forums that offer greater visibility. Some strategic actions that FORAGRO can undertake to achieve greater positioning and visibility, also for its members, are outlined below:

- Take advantage of the possibility of participating in the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) where discussions occur and decisions are also made concerning agriculture in the hemisphere. Topics relevant to RDI can be agreed on and/or guided by FORAGRO. That is, FORAGRO can become a support body of the IABA, by proposing, presenting and promoting strategic issues for agricultural innovation.
- Develop positionings on the priority issues defined by the Assembly with working groups or subcommittees to support the Steering Committee as part of collective actions that establish impact at the regional level.
- Increase visibility and relevance through participation in regional (and international) entities through closer association with organizations such as the

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<sup>2</sup> The Sustainable Development Goals seek to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new 2030 agenda. Access the website for details:

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/en/objectives-de-development-sustainable>

<sup>3</sup> This process has been supported through a letter of agreement signed between IICA and the GFAR (Global Forum for Agricultural Research).

<sup>4</sup> Through GFAR, FORAGRO has important access to other groups whose mission resembles that of FORAGRO in other regions of the world. Some of these groups include: Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa

(AARINENA), Forum of Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), African Forum of Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Council of Western and Central Africa for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF / WECARD), Association for the Strengthening of Research Agriculture in East and Central Africa (ASARECA), Agricultural Research and Development Coordination Center for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), Forum of Universities in Africa (RUFORUMUM), Association of Agricultural Research Institutions of Central Asia and the Caucasus (CACAARI) .

Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF) of MERCOSUR, the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), the Global Forum for Global Advisory Services (GFRAS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and other potential partners with whom there is no direct relationship. In the case of FAO, for example, FORAGRO can play an important and guiding role in joining the Regional Office of Latin America (RLC) in its actions regarding the development and implementation of the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative (HFLACI)<sup>5</sup>. The three lines of work proposed by the HFLACI present specific options that fall within the scope of FORAGRO such as: 1- policies related to the right to food; 2- the strengthening of alliances in the region and 3- support for governance as well as generating capacities<sup>6</sup>. With respect to the International Committee of Food Security (CSA), where the path and policies to combat hunger and poverty are marked globally and in each geographical region, FORAGRO can play a role by participating in the actions of the CSA in food security and global policies in the Americas. This is a strategic feature that would increase its visibility along with direct coordination with the countries and entities that make up the CSA, including the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM), the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) and its specialized working groups.

- Take advantage of the virtual information sharing system on topics relevant to innovation through the Information System for Science, Technology and Innovation for Agriculture in the Americas (INFOTEC)<sup>7</sup> that was developed by IICA in response to a request from FORAGRO.
- Create opportunities through its positioning at conferences, workshops and other initiatives (virtual and/or face-to-face) so that actions may ensue among its partners and other regional actors. In this way, FORAGRO will take advantage of its position to articulate local and regional action networks, by bringing together different actors to carry out RDI activities.
- Make an effort to participate in events organized by GFAR, FAO-RLC and IFAD- following up on the FAO / IFAD calendar and also that of other agencies at the regional level, as well as a greater link with civil society organizations and the private sector.
- Maintain a constant presence by participating in different initiatives, events and/or meetings, at the regional or hemispheric level. Some examples include:

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<sup>5</sup> FAO Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative (IALCSH) <http://www.fao.org/in-action/apoyo-ialcsh/en>

<sup>6</sup> These 3 specific themes of the FAO in the Region can capitalize on the strengths that FORAGRO has through its presence as a unique regional forum. In the specific case of IFAD, an association with FORAGRO will complement some of its programs such as the "Rural Solutions" that establish concrete examples of agricultural innovation and lines of action as well as a dialogue with other regional forums.

<sup>7</sup> INFOTEC see <http://infoagro.net/en/infotec>

playing a role in support of Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger (FAO)<sup>8</sup> and also in Regional Meetings and Conferences of FAO in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC),<sup>9</sup> among others.

- Create the “FORAGRO brand” that will become synonymous with RDI and will be recognized beyond the region. This is a marketing tool that FORAGRO can use as a “flagship” that would give greater visibility to the forum<sup>10</sup>.

## **b. Relevance as a Forum for discussion and exchange on different aspects of the innovation processes at the regional level**

The following actions are proposed for this strategic line of action:

- Act as a mediation, facilitation and communication entity in the Americas. Achieve interaction through virtual platforms to drive and disseminate innovation-action issues in the region. FORAGRO disseminates new technologies, good practices and case studies, thus helping to reduce the technical and social gaps within the region.
- Expand and increase regional and international South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, facilitating access to areas of science, technology and innovation and thereby improving exchange for sustainable development, cementing links and alliances between multiple partners who mobilize and share knowledge, experience, technology and financial resources to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the region.
- Attract new partners such as specific groups that are dedicated to the production and/or processing of agricultural products so that they can use FORAGRO as a means of disseminating their activities. This is a strategic opportunity that will enable fluid communication and exchange of innovative elements of production and marketing, which could be accompanied by a study of regional opportunities that are mutually beneficial to both FORAGRO and these production and marketing groups.
- Propose exchanges between the academic and political sectors with the various stakeholders that comprise FORAGRO, develop virtual platforms that allow for discussion, agreements and a preparation of strategic positioning documents for its members.
- Develop *a Communication Plan* to allow for systematic follow-up on the initiatives from the partners and provision of feedback and periodic information on the strategic decisions taken. In this way, FORAGRO increases its convening capacity and concentrates on priority issues in support of innovation, with elements of exchange and dissemination linking sectors and

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/i8723en/i8723en.pdf> Declaration of Parliamentary Front Against Hunger

<sup>9</sup> Regarding FAO Regional Conferences in Latin America and the Caribbean (LARC) : Next meeting in 2020 in Nicaragua and also the

CAS meeting on Food Security to be held annually in Rome.

<sup>10</sup>The "FORAGRO Brand" can make use of different languages of the region to achieve greater visibility and reach new audiences and partners.

facilitating the flow of specialized information. In this way, the element of strategy is solidified in its Communication Plan, which will also help to achieve visibility and to increase its presence and positioning<sup>11</sup>.

- Publish and disseminate, through virtual means, information about collective actions in order to publicize and share the results and impact of its stakeholders.
- Coordinate actions that may supplement and make aspects relating to innovation visible such as the *10 Year Support to Rural Youth Initiative*<sup>12</sup> and many others.
- Facilitate and narrow the gender dimension with greater emphasis on reaching family farming organizations, organizations of women producers and entrepreneurs within the region, as well as rural youth groups, etc.
- Develop a Monitoring System to follow up on strategic partnerships and collect information on the results achieved as well as their potential impact in the region. In this way, the response capacity and the strengthening of its profile to its partners, other potential members and the general public will be improved, which will facilitate access to future economic resources.

### **c. Strategic alliances for capacity building**

The strengthening of capacities is another line of strategic action prioritized in this plan and where FORAGRO can play an important role through the scope of its actions and the diversity of its members. Accordingly, the proposed actions are:

- Strengthening the presence of FORAGRO in the regions and promoting the decentralization of activities through [sub] regional forums or local partners who could coordinate collective actions, where they can demonstrate a comparative advantage.
- Strengthening strategic alliances with partners and their action networks through the use of virtual platforms and face-to-face meetings<sup>13</sup> in order to manage knowledge and drive training activities.
- Establishing working groups or subcommittees to support the Steering Committee as part of collective actions that establish impact at the regional level.

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<sup>11</sup> Communication is considered an important point that should take into account contributions and new avenues of relationship given the multiplicity of virtual channels that exist and are adopted by different social groups. This gives rise to the strategic use of social networks and communication tools that facilitate the implementation of the revised communication plan of FORAGRO.

<sup>12</sup> See YPARD, 10 years of work: What have we learnt and where are we going. <https://lac.ypard.net/2016-january-5/10-years-ypard-what-have-we-learned-and-where-are-we-going>

<sup>13</sup> Face-to-face meetings should be limited to issues requiring the involvement of the Secretariat and the Steering Committee, thus incurring less travel expenses and the holding of face-to-face events at longer intervals (every two years, etc.)

- Taking advantage of available resources that are accessible through partnerships with other regional platforms (mainly in Africa or Asia) through GFAR; in addition to establishing support for the institutionalization and dissemination of knowledge to expand capacities with regional organizations of farmers, prioritizing women and youth, indigenous and native people.
- Taking advantage of the conceptual framework as well as tools for the development of capacities and innovation such as those proposed by the "Tropical Agriculture Platform" (TAP)<sup>14</sup>, of which FORAGRO is a partner, within the framework of action relating to Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS)<sup>15</sup>.

#### **d. Financial Sustainability**

The financial stability of FORAGRO is an issue that must be carefully planned, given that economic solvency without ups and downs will make the actions of its Secretariat and the management of the Steering Committee easier, in addition to implementing a strategic plan without delays to accompany the RDI processes in the region. To achieve this strategic line of action, the proposal includes:

- Achieving financial stability through multiple contributions resulting from the development and implementation of a consensual fund search strategy with a variety of donors in the sector. The role and positioning of FORAGRO within the region will enable the forum to be a catalyst for economic resources to consolidate its actions and to achieve the Desired FORAGRO.
- Achieving financial stability by establishing mechanisms and guidelines for receiving contributions from partners, so that they do not affect the independence and inclusiveness of the forum.
- Considering potential sources of financing through the identification of new donors who contribute "seed funds" to support the preparation of expressions of interest for its members. Some possible sources of financing may be: the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Commission, the World Bank-LAC, etc. and from the private sector, the Maseca Foundation, the Walmart Foundation, the Nestlé Foundation, the BIMBO Group, etc.
- Stimulating the mobilization of resources by supporting its partners in the preparation of proposals to achieve collective actions at the local, national and regional levels.
- Initiating discussions with the FONTAGRO Steering Committee in order to examine, propose and coordinate agreements that determine joint actions for

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<sup>14</sup> The Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) is a model that can be considered by FORAGRO in its entirety or in some of its elements that fit its regional reality. The work developed by TAP is accessible and used by multiple GFAR partners. See description at

[https://tapipedia.org/sites/default/files/tap\\_flyer\\_a4\\_en\\_print\\_single\\_pages\\_0.pdf](https://tapipedia.org/sites/default/files/tap_flyer_a4_en_print_single_pages_0.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> The framework for Capacity Development in Agriculture and Innovation (CDAIS) uses the GFAR model called "Web of innovation" that proposes non-linear communication with platforms from other regions that is supported by the European Community.

outlining new investment options in the region with partners, which will be mutually beneficial.

#### 4. FORAGRO and the SDGs

The strategic actions of the *Desired FORAGRO* in general, and in each of the points listed above in particular, are effectively represented as supporting the achievement of the implementation and scope of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Region. It should be noted that, although the SDGs as a whole point to a substantial improvement in the quality of life and the management of resources, FORAGRO can have a special impact on the scope of the following *Objectives*:

***Objective # 1 End of Poverty and Objective # 2 Zero Hunger:*** Both objectives reflect a particular emphasis on the scope of food security. FORAGRO can therefore contribute significantly promoting improved decision making for a favorable environment for innovation and through its partners (in production, transformation and marketing);

***Objective # 3 Health and Wellbeing and Objective # 4 Quality Education:*** These objectives are linked to a strategic orientation of FORAGRO regarding issues of food systems and training or non-formal extension education, through communication channels and suggested virtual platforms;

***Goal # 10: Reduction of Inequalities and Objective # 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities:*** FORAGRO can play an important role in the achievement of elements of social equality in the Americas and sustainability in both rural and urban areas, which is of fundamental importance given that Latin America is the region with the highest percentage of urbanization worldwide and has a high index of hemispheric inequality;

***Objective # 17 Partnerships to Achieve the Objectives (of Sustainable Development):*** Through the achievement of this objective, the nature of FORAGRO as a regional forum can be specifically highlighted. The inclusive nature of FORAGRO, the existing alliances and those that will be forged through its new strategy, will consolidate its contribution to Objective #17, which is considered as the culmination of the previous ones and where FORAGRO can have an impact by becoming a model for other forums in various regions of the world.

While this plan outlines the possible contribution of FORAGRO in the implementation of several of the SDGs in particular, it should be noted that all the SDGs are interrelated, and that the realization (or lack thereof) of an objective affects the achievement of all of them. In this respect, FORAGRO contributes to the achievement of sustainable development comprehensively and globally<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> The Sustainable Development Goals seek to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new 2030 agenda. Each goal has specific objectives that can be reviewed following the links of each case.

## 5. Conclusion and Way Forward

The way forward and the issues related to achieving the Desired FORAGRO, embodied in this Strategic Plan, are dependent on the continuing participation of its associate members in ensuring that this plan becomes a coherent and effective guide that provides guidance and meets the Development, Research and Innovation needs of the agriculture sector for the comprehensive development of the Americas. As was previously mentioned, this Plan will be subject to periodic adjustments and reviews, particularly in the medium term (5 years). In addition, this Strategic Plan must be complemented by important elements detailed in a Communication Strategy and a Monitoring Plan. The Monitoring Plan, in particular, will facilitate follow-up on the activities outlined in the annual work plans, with their corresponding activities, budget details and additional responsibilities to achieve the adjusted implementation of the Strategic Plan. During the next 10 years, the agriculture sector throughout the hemisphere will undoubtedly present challenges that should be reflected and reframed in the Strategic Plan of the *Desired FORAGRO* so that this "road map" continues to evolve in order to respond to the changing needs of its members in the Region and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in the Americas.