The Programming Committee of the Board met on 5 March to consider the IDB country strategy with Costa Rica (2006-2010). Directors thanked Management for the document and supported the proposed strategy.

Directors referred to several of the issues raised during the recent discussion of the country program evaluation, such as: measures to expedite project execution and legislative approval of Bank loans and the role of the country office in this regard; challenges faced by the Bank’s private sector windows to increase their activities in the country; and Bank’s terms and conditions in comparison with CABEI’s. It was expected that the new integrated strategy for the private sector would permit taking advantage of business opportunities originating from trade liberalization. Directors also discussed the status of the Bank’s current portfolio in the country, as well as the proposed pipeline.

Reference was made to the possibility of using more adequate instruments such as CCLIPs, that could better adapt to the lengthy ratification process by the Parliament. The Director for Costa Rica stressed the significant impact of migration on the demand for the country’s social services, namely health and education.

The Committee asked Management to prepare a revised version of the document, adding historical information on lending flows to the table on Annex IV and moving it to the main body of the document.

As the Chairman of the Committee, I recommend that the Board approve the proposed IDB country strategy with Costa Rica, comprising the amendments agreed upon.