

September 2002



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Item 3.2 of the Draft Provisional Agenda

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Ninth Regular Session

Rome, 14 – 18 October 2002

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF FARM ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Para.</i>
I. First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources	1-10
II. Other components of the Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources	11-14

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF FARM ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

I. FIRST REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

1. The preparation of the *First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* in the context of the *Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources* is being coordinated by the Animal Production and Health Division (AGA) of FAO. The purpose of this section is to report to the Commission on recent progress since May 2002 (Document CGRFA-9/02/4), and to outline future work as proposed by FAO's Global Focal Point for Animal Genetic Resources. In March 2001, 190 countries were invited by the Director-General of FAO to participate in the country-driven State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources process, and to submit to FAO country reports configured as strategic policy documents. By mid September 2002, 130 countries have accepted the invitation to participate in the process and to prepare country reports.

2. One global training of trainers session for twenty-two experts representing all regions and fourteen regional workshops were conducted during 2001 and 2002 for the training of 396 professionals from 178 countries. The participants act later as national trainers to facilitate the within-country process involving the entire range of stakeholders in developing the Country Reports. During these meetings most countries indicated that some degree of technical and financial help would be necessary to develop their country reports. After completion of this regional training effort, a country follow-up strategy aiming at facilitating the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources process was therefore initiated. FAO is implementing this follow-up and assistance process directly and in collaboration with the World Association for Animal Production (WAAP).

3. FAO technical staff and regional consultants provided further technical support to countries through sub-regional and national Animal Genetic Resources workshops. Since May 2002, nine sub-regional progress-reporting seminars have been held in Lithuania, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Austria, Egypt, Pakistan, The Gambia, Ivory Coast and India. Details of country report preparation were discussed with the participation of delegates from 107 countries. Parallel to these seminars, regional experts are visiting countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, West Africa and the Near East, on behalf of FAO, to implement direct support to countries in these regions. Further activities are planned in other regions as resources become available.

4. The structure of the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources process is based on taking full advantage of regional expertise and optimizing the use of human and financial resources. It has followed naturally as a consequence of the experiences gained during the global training effort described in Document CGRFA-9/02/4. Countries have been grouped based on their own decisions expressed at regional workshops, and taking also into consideration ecological regions and common animal genetic resources. The groups are: Africa (6), Americas (3), Asia and the Pacific (4), Europe (6), Near East (2) and, the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States (2).

5. In order to ensure timeliness and quality of reporting, a country report monitoring system has been established. As agreed earlier, countries began to send draft country reports to FAO in August 2002. The flow of country reports is expected to increase during the next few months. It is desirable that all countries produce country reports following the format and contents described in the Guidelines for Developing Country Reports. These Guidelines were accepted by Second Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as the common basis for the regional training of trainers workshops and for use by the countries. The monitoring and evaluation of draft country reports is organized on a regional basis.

6.

7. Following regional and national technical support activities, regional synthesis of country reports will take place during 2003 and 2004. Regional experts will be invited to design the Guidelines for Regional Strategic Priorities Actions Reports under the coordination of the Global Focal Point. They will subsequently undertake report analyses and prepare syntheses to highlight policy areas and issues justifying priority actions. The framework for these activities will be regional workshops to identify priorities based on country reports and reports from organizations and expert groups. Three regional workshops are being organized in 2003, in order to facilitate participatory debate on priority issues, relevant to specific regions. Additional workshops covering all regions will be conducted in 2004.

8. Global synthesis will follow regional workshops and culminate in a Global *Strategic Priorities Actions Report* and the development of possible options for a follow-up mechanism. In its Third Regular Session proposed for 2003, the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture will review the progress in the development of the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources process and of the *Strategic Priorities Actions Report*. It will also consider the format and contents of the *First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources*. Stakeholders, international conferences and governing bodies will be informed about the need for coordinated actions for conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources at risk. In its Tenth Regular Session in 2004 the Commission will consider the proposed format and contents of the *First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* and will consider the *Strategic Priorities Actions Report* and options for a follow-up mechanism.

9. During 2005 the Global Focal Point will coordinate the preparation of the draft of the *First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources*. In its Fourth Regular session proposed for 2005, the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture will provide recommendations to the Commission on the findings contained in the *First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* and on the follow-up implementation mechanism. In 2006 the Commission will consider the final version of the *First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* and its follow-up implementation mechanism.

10. Thematic studies will be undertaken to complement the country reports, focussing on cross-cutting issues. These studies will serve as background documentation leading to specific chapters of the *First Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources*. Some Cross-cutting issues were identified at the Second International Stakeholders Meeting, as essential issues to the goals of the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources process that would not come directly from individual country reports or summaries of these reports. Some of these issues may require special studies on the state of the art in order to be addressed adequately. Scientific state-of-the-art studies are currently under preparation on the following subjects: impact of animal genetic resources on the environment, effects of the environment on animal genetic resources, impacts of gene migration on animal genetic resources, valuation of animal genetic resources, emergency interventions and animal genetic resources, molecular approaches to assist in decision-making for conservation activities, and legal aspects of management of animal genetic resources.

II. OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF FARM ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

11. The Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS) serves as a global tool for the communication and management of animal genetic resources information. It is an important component of the *Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources*. DAD-IS is continuously being improved and expanded, e.g. through the integration of European national and regional animal genetic resources databases and to overcome difficulties that were experienced by some countries in the timely updating of the DAD-IS Databank. Funding for these purposes has been approved by the European Union. This process is being supported by moving DAD-IS to an Open Source development environment, thereby providing the opportunity for regional and national

databases to be fully integrated with the database. Furthermore, work is undertaken to improve the user-friendliness and timely on-line updating of information in DAD-IS. Specific support for such purposes was provided over a period of two years by the Government of The Netherlands through the funding of a systems engineer. Additional financial resources are required to further develop DAD-IS and ensure adequate maintenance of the software.

12. The DAD-IS database provides the basis for the Early Warning System for Animal Genetic Resources, and for the production of the World Watch List for Domestic Animal Diversity. The updating and release of the third edition of the World Watch List in November 2000 helped increase the public awareness of the diversity of domestic animals and of the rapid loss of these resources. Over 6,300 mammalian and avian domestic breed populations of the 30 mammalian and avian species recorded by 180 countries together with their wild relatives, newly domesticated species and related feral populations are listed and described. Countries reported additional breed populations and updated population data of breed populations reported earlier. Data quantity and quality increased since 1990 when FAO started to encourage reporting of animal genetic resources information. However, the data set requires further development. The trend in erosion of animal genetic resources is again confirmed. Overall figures available represent a 10 percent increase in the number of breeds recorded at risk since 1995, and a 13 percent increase since 1993. The level of endangerment of domestic animal breeds justifies closer monitoring of animal genetic resources important to food and agriculture. Most breeds at risk are not supported by any established conservation activity or related policy, and breed extinction rates are increasing. There is a need to implement regular surveys and monitor animal genetic resources providing the basis for planning and policy decisions.

13. The Animal Genetic Resources Information Bulletin (AGRI), an FAO Publication Series, is used as a major instrument to inform and update a diverse readership on progress in the overall development of the *Global Strategy for the Management of Animal Farm Genetic Resources* and on the status of breeds globally. The Bulletin now serves as the international refereed journal for animal genetic resources, allowing researchers the opportunity to publish a broad range of articles on assessment, description, conservation and utilization of animal genetic resources all over the world. Two issues have been published yearly. The Bulletin has been used, in 2001 and 2002, to distribute information and guidelines on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources process. The Global Focal Point has the executive editorial responsibility and will in future implement an editorial board composed of internationally recognized experts in the area, in order to ensure and enhance the quality level of the articles published.

14. Developing and implementing a cost-effective communication strategy is a key element of the *Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources*. The Global Focal Point has produced a draft communication strategy, which was reviewed by the Informal Panel of Experts at their last meeting. The Global Focal Point also has developed additional communication tools and products. These include the publication of AGRI, the organization of electronic conferences, the updating of fact sheets, the production of CD-ROMs and DAD-IS on the Internet; the production and distribution of an Executive Brief that explains the rationale and content of the Global Strategy to non-experts, and updating the conceptual rationale for the Global Strategy to explain the basis for the Global Strategy to technical experts directly or indirectly involved in animal genetic resources. Two videos on animal genetic resources in Asia and in Southern Africa were produced and widely distributed. The DAD Photo and Video Archive will be developed as funds become available. Updating and release of further editions of the World Watch List are envisaged. In addition to above described outputs, increased effort was put in the development and strengthening of partnerships with international non-governmental organizations and with the scientific community to further build and improve linkages between the stakeholders in animal genetic resources management. Increasingly, stakeholders actively supported the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources process and the implementation of the Global Strategy by disseminating information products and messages and by getting involved with their programmes of work.