



Progress report on the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources* - 2007 to 2013

Animal Genetic Resources Network - Southwest Pacific

Strategic Priority Area 1: Characterization, Inventory and Monitoring of Trends and Associated Risks

Most relevant strategic priorities and actions:

Strategic Priority 1, Action 6: *“Strengthen global and **regional information systems** ...”*

Strategic Priority 1, Action 7: *“Establish or strengthen existing breed endangerment early-warning and response systems, through the further development of national, **regional and global risk monitoring mechanisms**...”*

SPA 6: The SW Pacific region has created and maintained an emailing list a form of internet network where it was used as platform for all sorts of discussions, dissemination information, AnGR National Coordinators to communicate and discuss issues affecting the region. We have 85 members who are members to the Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Mailing List <swpangr@lyris.spc.int>. The server is based at the SPC AHP office in Suva, Fiji. The topics covered a wide range of issues include; dissemination of information from DAD-IS network, discuss and inform people of the various activities and issues within the the region and international livestock issues, production issues, dissemination of global and regional information, country reports updates, climate change issues, livestock resilient breeds, feed and feed for livestock production, animal waste management and appropriate technologies, animal welfare and other uses.

SPA 7; The region is lacking in this area as we have not established endangerment early-warning and response systems as we have limited funds to set up these mechanisms. The region is depending very much on the efforts of the individual countries govts in giving us some indications of form of early warning on AnGR related issues although these are not usually accurate. The region really needs resources to establish such mechanisms to make this a better area for reference and information. The South West Pacific Inventory, Characterisation AnGR project does not go far enough to identify endangered species or breeds or the trends and thus no specie or breed status is assessed in the region. The region needs to identify; endangered breeds for urgent conservation and development; establish early warning mechanisms; the national governments agencies need to take ownership of the AnGR and other areas. With funding availability, the region is planning at establishing risk monitoring mechanisms for region can use for reporting and monitoring of breeds.

Due to lack of funding for regional meetings/workshops the region has been piggy-backing on other regional meetings to address the matters relating to AnGR. This is usually when reps from most of the countries come together in a central place to meet and we have used the opportunities to set aside a day or 2 to discuss matters relating to AnGR. This has been the only avenue that the region has been making discussions apart from networking and inter-nets.

Inventory and characterisation in general - The SW Pacific had been very privileged to have funding from FAO to carry out a South West Pacific AnGR Inventory and Characterisation survey which was conducted in six countries of Fiji, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. This inventory survey was conducted to do DNA analysis of the indigenous pig and chicken breeds that are common in these countries. The survey was completed in 2010 and the DNA analysis reports from ILRI has been received with some good results. One of the significant result is that the survey has indicated that the indigenous

chickens in the SW Pacific are free from the contamination of the commercial chickens and are therefore important for the global conservation work. It is also noted in the DNA analysis and report that there is very little movement of local pigs and chickens from one country to another.

There has been very little done by the countries in the inventory and characterisation with the exception for Papua New Guinea who have initiated a research on inventory and characterisation on the local chicken and a pig diversity inventory study.

Strategic Priority Area 2: Sustainable Use and Development

Animal Genetic Resources are important in every country for future breeding and for food security, however, this is yet to capture a priority spot among the competing priorities in the national and regional forums. The region *acknowledged* the need to sustainably use all AnGR for food and agriculture and conserve those at risk to, *inter alia*, ensure food security, economic development, poverty reduction, adaptation to climate change pests and diseases and sustainable livelihoods.

The region is fully aware of the importance of sustaining the genetic resources that we need to develop for future use. This message has been raised many times in the regional meetings and correspondences. The region through SPC is encouraging all countries and especially the rural livestock farmers of all production systems to make use of their genetic resources and develop these for sustainable use. SPC as the focal point for the region has called on the individual Pacific Islands countries to continue raise awareness and funds to initiate conservation, sustainable use and development programmes and the significance of the AnGR to the people of the countries.

Strategic Priority Area 3: Conservation

Most relevant strategic priorities and actions:

Strategic Priority 8, Action 2: *“Encourage the development and implementation of national and **regional in situ conservation programmes** for breeds and populations that are at risk ...”*

Strategic Priority 10: *“Develop and implement **regional and global long-term conservation strategies**”*

Strategic Priority 9, Action 2: *“Establish or strengthen national and **regional facilities for ex situ conservation**, in particular cryogenic storage. Support the efforts of countries within a region that have opted to establish a regional facility.”*

SP8 Action 2: The region have development plans to address Action 2 but all these plans are on hold due to the limited funding that the region is able to have and thus the slowness to implement these planned activities. The region is encouraging though individual countries to develop implementation of national in situ conservation programmes of breeds including the breeds that they consider as in danger of being lost. The region is aware that the rural farmers are keeping the indigenous breeds that have not been inventoried and these breeds have been kept by certain farmers over generations, these need to be characterized to be assessed and conserved before they are lost. The danger of losing these is high as the tendency to introduce high productive breeds is becoming evident in the rural areas as more and more rural farmers are crossing their local breeds to exotic breeds hoping for a high production off-spring.

The countries of the region are restricted by the low government priorities that AnGR matters get from the national budgets. The countries see the importance of the genetic resource erosion that is continuing to happen in the countries. A major stride towards trying to get some of these activities implemented is that the countries in the region are developing new National Livestock Strategies (for some first time). They are getting technical advisory support from SPC to develop these documents. In these new strategies, AnGR among other priority production areas is being promoted to a priority area so that national governments will see the importance of AnGR and hopefully allocate funds according to priorities. The countries are aware of the threats that are confronting the countries such as the negative impacts of climate change, climate change related disasters, natural disasters, incursion of diseases, uncontrolled culling and slaughter and inappropriate breeding practices. Conservation of indigenous breeds is currently being done by rural farmers who keep their selected/preferred breeds in their own production systems. This is where it is risky for them to lose these breeds which could be due to many of the threats listed but especially that of climate change impacts which is a common threat in the small island countries.

For the regional in situ conservation programmes the region is establishing 3 conservation activities in 3 countries of Fiji

(indigenous pigs), Niue and Cook Islands (indigenous chickens) under the FAO GPA Funding Assistance. The SPC which is the regional focal organization is coordinating the establishment of these conservation, multiplication and distribution centers. These centers will become the conservation and multiplication and will distribute indigenous pigs and chickens stock to farmers and stakeholders.

SP 10:

The SW Pacific region does not have facilities for such conservation activities but the plan is to continue to encourage each country to devise strategies to conserve AnGR.

One such activity is the recently approved FAO GPA-FS project for the SW Pacific countries of Fiji, Niue and Cook Islands. In this project the SPC as the regional focal organization point is coordinating the establishment of 1 pig conservation, multiplication and distribution center in Fiji, 2 similar centers for indigenous chickens for Niue and Cook Islands. These centers were proposed to collect the indigenous pigs and chickens identified in the FAO Project No. GCO/GLO/157MUL and these will be raised and multiplied so that the off-springs can be distributed to farmers and stakeholders or to replenish the rural farmers of the breeds.

SP 9: The region have also plans to have established in the region ex situ conservation facilities but has have limited resources to build these. We are aware of the initial setting up of the facilities would be expensive, but in the long run would be cheaper and be better to conserve the breeds in such a facility so that even if the current threats occur our breeds would be safe for future use. SW Pacific is eyeing the developed countries of Australia, New Zealand and the other metropolitan countries to help the region for these initiatives. Perhaps we can have partnership in such a project. And one of the main aim of setting up of the conservation centers in Fiji, Niue and Cook Islands under the GPA-FS is to provide the resources (individuals to collect the samples for conservation). SW Pacific would be happy to collect the samples and store these in some countries with these facilities, because we believe that the genetic resources is for the world and thus the world should provide such facilities similar to the plant conservation center in Europe.

Strategic Priority Area 4: Policies, Institutions and Capacity-building

Most relevant strategic priorities and actions:

Strategic Priority 13 Action 3: *“Establish or strengthen, in partnership with other countries, as appropriate, relevant research, training and extension institutions, including national and **regional agricultural research systems**, to support efforts to characterize, inventory and monitor trends and associated risks, sustainably use and develop, and conserve animal genetic resources.”*

Strategic Priority 17: ***“Establish Regional Focal Points and strengthen international networks”***

Strategic Priority 19 Action 1: ***“Support regional and international campaigns to raise awareness of the status of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, and seek to develop wide support at the government and institutional levels, as well as among the general public.”***

Strategic Priority 23, Action 1: ***“Assist all stakeholders to strengthen capacity-building, including by exchange of experience, by enhancing research and educational activities, and by providing **training opportunities, technology transfer and financial resources**, at national, **regional** and international levels ... ”***

Implementation and financing (paragraph 57): *“The international networks for animal genetic resources should be encouraged and strengthened through implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources, noting the **important role of Regional Focal Points and regional networking to build collaborative partnerships, to coordinate regional management efforts in animal genetic resources, to further develop information sharing, and for technical cooperation, training and research.**”*

SP 13 Action3: The region supports partnership with countries, organizations and other stakeholders and is always on the look out for collaboration to such development involving AnGR development, conservation and utilization although we have had little activities happening the region at the moment. The region is encouraging all countries to include AnGR in these partnerships. Climate Change and Food Security are the main focus of the region and countries at this present time and thus we have had

some conservation activities being implemented as part of the adaptation activities to help the rural communities. The region is also looking at

SP17: SW Pacific has established a position for the regional focal point within the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Although the TOR of position does not specifically mention AnGR focal point as one of the responsibilities we just continue to carry out the work as required from the region and FAO on an adhoc basis. Thus the AnGR focal point activities sometimes come as second priority rather than top priority. It would be help if some form of financial assistance is given to this position from FAO so that the focal point position is sustainable.

Currently, the focal point continues to support and conduct activities that strengthen regional and international networks and collaborations. The regional focal point continues to ensure that national coordinators for the countries are appointed and so far all of the countries in the region have appointed a AnGR National Coordinator except for the following countries, Kiribati, FSM and Solomon Islands which have to nominate a NC. We believe that every country will have a NC appointed by this year 2014. The appointment of these NC will strengthen the collaboration and cooperations between the regional countries sharing information, discussion and networking in matters relating to AnGR

SP19 Action 1

The region acknowledge the importance of AnGR to food security and agriculture and the threats that threaten these resources so it has made it one of the aim is to campaign so that more people will be aware of the importance of AnGR to the people for lives of the people. There are plans in the regional strategy for regional advocacy programmes to inform decision makers and the general public for the need for conservation, development and sustainable use of AnGR in the region.

SP23 Action 1

The region would like to see assistance given to all stakeholders to strengthen capacity building including enhancing research and educational activities through training, technological transfer financial resources. These are important factors to be addressed immediately if we are to raise the level of awareness and development of AnGR in the regions and the world. The region is looking at strategies to establish national and regional information systems that include traditional knowledge and production systems and the values (economic and other values) of our animal genetic resources. Many are unaware of the importance of these resources even though rural livestock keepers may be keeping these breeds over decades for their own use. The region has been handicapped by the lack of resources to carry out training and awareness campaigns to the countries. In all these limited resources handicapping the region, the Regional Focal Point is still determined to maintain and develop the regional and international collaboration and cooperation that has been continuing.

The regional emailing list <swpangr@lyris.spc.int> is a platform that the region is using to sharing discussions, information, dissemination of information, capacity building issues, messages related to Agriculture, AnGR and other issues.

Implementation and financing of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources

Most relevant paragraph:

Implementation and financing (paragraph 50): *“... implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources will require substantial and additional financial resources and long-term support for national, regional and international animal genetic resources programmes and priority activities, provided such incentives are consistent with relevant international agreements. The process should encourage and support the participation of governments and all relevant stakeholders. **Regional and international collaboration will be crucial.**”*

It is important that all stakeholders to the AnGR should encourage and support all efforts by individuals, governments agencies, and others to provide incentives and resources to implement the work of AnGR. The collaboration and cooperation and partnerships is pivotal to the work of the AnGR to support the GPA for long-term activities. Regional and international collaboration will be needed to enhance these efforts to further the development of AnGR. All governments should be made aware that AnGR is crucial for future generations breeding and development and thus the cooperation of all involved especially for the country AnGR implementers to get resources needed to address the issues.

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