

Editorial

Dear reader,

This issue of the journal provides you with 15 articles, ranging from classical characterization studies to the description of the institutional framework in the field of research with a specific focus on sub-Saharan African countries. Such studies contribute to the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*¹.

The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture oversees monitors and evaluates the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*. The 15th Regular Session of the Commission took place in Rome in January 2015. The meeting represented again an opportunity for its 178 member countries to review progress made in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*. The report of the session is now available on the Commission's Web² site dealing with many issues relevant to the readership of our journal.

The Commission welcomed the draft *Second Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*³ as a comprehensive, timely and high-quality document. It requested the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to finalize the Second Report. Furthermore the Commission called upon governments and donors to make available the financial resources necessary to translate, publish, print and distribute the Second Report and its in-brief version.

On another note, the Commission endorsed guidelines for the *Development of Integrated Multipurpose Animal Recording Systems*⁴ being part in a series of publications prepared by FAO to support countries in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*. These have been prepared with the objective of helping countries to design and implement such systems and to maximize the chances

that they will be sustained. They aim to put performance recording in a more general context, and hence to complement rather than replace the previous FAO guidelines.

In the editorial of the last issue I reported on the Global Databank for Animal Genetic Resources DAD-IS⁵ which currently contains data from 182 countries and 38 species, and that based on DAD-IS data, trends in genetic erosion of breeds can be observed. Unfortunately the number of breeds where no risk status can be calculated is high with almost 60 percent. This is a result of either complete lack of information on population sizes or lack of updating of population data for a period of more than 10 years. With regard to this fact the Commission stressed the need for countries to regularly update their official national breed data in DAD-IS, or any other information system that automatically shares data with DAD-IS. The Commission stressed the importance of DAD-IS as the international clearing house mechanism for information on animal genetic resources, urged FAO to ensure long-term support for DAD-IS maintenance and invited donors to provide *ad hoc* support to enable the development of DAD-IS, as necessary.

As editor of a journal dealing specifically with animal genetic resources, please allow me to invite all authors and readers of our journal to assist the National Coordinators for the Management of Animal Genetic Resources⁶ in improving data quality and quantity of DAD-IS, as such type of information is not only the basis for reviewing the impact of the *Global Plan of Action* but also for any meaningful decision for the management of national breed populations.

Yours sincerely,
Roswitha Baumung

¹ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/a1404e/a1404e00.htm>

² <http://www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/cgrfa-meetings/cgrfa-comm/en/>

³ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm313e.pdf>; <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm310e.pdf>;

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm312e.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm379e.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/dad-is>

⁶ <http://dad.fao.org/cgi-bin/EfabisWeb.cgi?sid=-1,contacts>