
EDITORIAL

We are pleased to resume publication after a gap of nearly three years. The last issue of *Animal Genetic Resources Information* was in 1987 (no. 6). The suspension was caused by budgetary restrictions which affected other publications within FAO including the *World Animal Review*. However, with this issue we resume publication of *AGRI* and bring a larger than normal issue to our readers.

During the recent past some important initiatives for Animal Genetic Resources have taken place. It is expected that they will have a positive impact on the future use and conservation of animal genetic resources throughout the world.

many readers will know that in 1980 FAO and UNEP held a joint Technical Consultation for animal genetic resources in Rome which designed an agenda of technical activities which were considered essential steps towards a global programme. During the decade 1980-90 all these topics have been completed. AS a consequence, in 1989 the FAO Committee on Agriculture reviewed the animal genetic resources programme and found it scientifically sound and with appropriate infrastructures in place. They recommended expansion of the programme to a fully operational level to serve all countries in the world. They also recognised that animal genetic resources are part of the world's biological diversity and are being threatened by human development activities. They therefore recommend the establishment of a global system which will promote sustainable development of animal genetic resources which makes efficient use of them today while ensuring that the needs of future generations are not at risk.

During the last two years FAO has established regional animal gene banks in Africa, Asia and Latin America which are operating at modest levels. They are located, with the cooperation of the governments, in Argentina, Brasil, Mexico, Ethiopia, Senegal, China and India. In addition, a global animal genetic data bank has been established in Hannover, Federal Republic of Germany. This centre is beginning to offer an information service to those concerned with improved use and conservation of domestic animals.

As a result of the recommendations of the FAO Governing Body, these existing facilities are to be fully developed, together with new components into a Special Action Programme. This will include a World Watch List of endangered breeds, an Early Warning System to governments indicating breeds requiring attention, closer links with wildlife, live animal preservation programmes to supplement cryogenic storage of germplasm, and evaluation of under-utilized species.

Readers of *Animal Genetic Resources Information* will be up-dated in future issues with developments in the proposed Special Action Programme.

STAFF CHANGES IN THE ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES GROUP AT FAO, ROME

The Editor of AGRI, Dr. John Hodges, who has been Senior Officer (Animal Breeding & Genetic Resources) at FAO since 1982, leaves FAO in July 1990. His successor is Dr. Fernando E. madalena of Brazil.

Dr. H.-G. Wagner, who was Animal Production Officer (Artificial Insemination and Breeding) moved to a field appointment with FAO at the end of 1989. His successor is Dr. Daniel Chupin of France.

Drs. madalena and Chupin expect to take up their appointments in FAO, Rome shortly.