
EDITORIAL

The new Programme for the Global Management of Animal Genetic Resources is in the process of being discussed by FAO Governing Bodies, and it is hoped that its launch can occur during the second semester 1995.

The list of National Technical Focal Points for European countries (Eastern and Western) is not yet completely established. 25 of the 38 solicited countries have already nominated a coordinating national institution, and within this, a Country Contact. These coordinators provide the Nations technical link to FAO Programme and as such are responsible for coordinating all aspects of AnGR activities. As soon as they are known, they are requested by FAO to implement the updating and validation of data already entered for their respective country in the Global Databank for Animal Genetic Resources.

Design of the global information system (DAD-IS) for the Programme is progressing. A new, more user friendly software has been selected (FileMaker Pro) and all the data from the previous Global Database (under DBase III) will be soon converted. Meanwhile work on the other components of DAD-IS is being initiated. For instance, a consultant has just been recruited to design the user interface: the screen from which each of you must be able to enter DAD-IS, not only for consulting the Global Database, but also for accessing all the other modules, such as the training modules, or the aide for design and analysis of research activities. A project document has been prepared and submitted for funding for a pilot phase of DAD-IS in a few countries, presumably in Asia.

The Project Identification Missions on the better management of AnGR are going on regularly. In Central and Eastern European countries, the mission has visited Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic and Romania, while the French speaking African mission will visit Chad, Mali and Togo. The two final workshops are planned, and by the end of April the portfolio of projects proposals will be finalized by these missions, working closely with National Consultants throughout these sub-regions.

Very few of the projected 1200 to 1600 AnGRs globally at high risk have any material stored. To establish guidelines to assist countries through the decision processes for the initiation of an *ex situ* programme, a series of three working groups has been set. The first one, held in December 1995 at FAO HQ, has addressed the genetic basis for such a programme (why to preserve a breed, how to select breeds to be preserved, numbers and type of animals to be sampled...), the present and foreseeable status of cryopreservation, and the health procedures and regulations which need to apply. The second one, to be held in June 1995 at Cicello, Italy, will address all aspects of the conservation of live animals, be it in farm parks or reserves, or via private farmers with or without support from Governments. The third working group, planned for the second semester 1995, will address all the legal aspects (rights and duties of the owner and of the user of a given genetic resource). Reports, conclusions and recommendations of these three working groups will be published as an Animal Production and Health Paper (Red book).

We are completing the series of training courses for the establishment and operation of genebanks and databanks, with a training course for Near East countries to be held in Cairo from 25 April to 3 May 1995.

So, despite all staffing problems, the AnGR Group is progressing.