

Editorial

Reviewing progress made in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources

More than five years have passed since the adoption of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*¹. Progress in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* is overseen by the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture². In line with the reporting schedule agreed by the Commission, FAO has recently produced a document entitled *Synthesis progress report on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources – 2012*³, which was presented to the Seventh Session of the Commission's Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in October 2012. The report includes a set of indicators of progress in implementing various elements of the *Global Plan of Action*. The indicators are calculated at national, subregional, regional and global levels, and are presented graphically in the form of "traffic light" colours.

To obtain the input needed to prepare the *Synthesis progress report*, FAO invited countries, regional networks and international organizations to report on their implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*. FAO received 85 Country Progress Reports, 4 Regional Progress Reports and 11 reports from international organizations. All these reports have been published online.⁴

Analysis of the impact of the *Global Plan of Action* at country level reveals that substantial improvements have been made since 2007. However, the Country Progress Reports indicate that the state of implementation of the various elements of the *Global Plan of Action*, and the extent to which progress has been made since 2007, vary substantially among countries and regions (although some caution is needed in interpreting the regional figures because of the uneven coverage of the reporting). Implementation is generally at a high level in the Europe and the Caucasus and the North America Regions, at a medium level in Asia, and at a low level in other regions. However, individual countries from all developing regions have reached high levels of implementation in some aspects of the *Global Plan of Action*. Likewise, some countries from developed regions have reached only low levels of implementation in some aspects. For the world as a whole, the indicator for the *Global Plan of Action's* Strategic Priority Area 4 (Policies, institutions and capacity building) shows a lower level of implementation than the indicators for the other three strategic priority areas.

However, for several developing regions, it is Strategic Priority Area 3 (Conservation) that has the lowest indicator scores.

In all regions, the indicators for the state of collaboration and for the state of funding show a lower level of implementation than those for the strategic priority areas themselves. Financial constraints are also the problems most frequently mentioned in the Country Progress Reports as barriers to the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.

Regional Progress Reports present a mixed picture of the state of collaboration at regional level in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*. Several regions of the world do not yet have a Regional Focal Point or regional network. Activities are most advanced in Europe, the region with the longest-established Regional Focal Point, where a range of activities are reported across all the strategic priority areas of the *Global Plan of Action*. A more limited range of activities is reported by the Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Animal Genetic Resources Network – Southwest Pacific. The Sub-Regional Focal Point for West and Central Africa, launched only in June 2011, has established regional priorities for action in the various strategic priority areas of the *Global Plan of Action*.

The reports from international organizations show that a small number of such organizations continue to make an important contribution to the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*, often via innovative, efficient and participatory programmes and projects. The activities of these organizations span the four strategic priority areas of the *Global Plan of Action*.

Overall, the *Synthesis progress report* concludes that despite the significant impact of the *Global Plan of Action*, the task of improving the management of the world's animal genetic resources management remains far from complete. The reason for this lies mainly in a lack of sufficient financial resources, but also in low levels of collaboration between countries, a lack of established policies and legal frameworks, and a lack of strong institutional and human capacity for planning in the livestock sector.

The editors would like to encourage the readership of *Animal Genetic Resources* to contribute to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and to collaborate with their respective National Coordinators for the Management of Animal Genetic Resources.⁵

¹ www.fao.org/docrep/010/a1404e/a1404e00.htm

² <http://www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/en/>

³ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/me636e.pdf>

⁴ http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/genetics/Reporting_system.html

⁵ <http://dad.fao.org/cgi-bin/EfabisWeb.cgi?sid=-1,contacts>