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**ANNEX 1**

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**INTERLAKEN DECLARATION ON ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES**

1. In recognition of the essential roles and values of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, in particular, their contribution to food security for present and future generations; aware of the threats to food security and to the sustainable livelihoods of rural communities posed by the loss and erosion of these resources; we, the representatives of one hundred and nine States, and the European Community and forty-two Organizations have gathered together in Interlaken, Switzerland, at the invitation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and hosted by the Government of Switzerland, at this first International Technical Conference for Animal Genetic Resources, aware of our responsibilities and the many challenges that must be addressed, but convinced and confident that progress can and should be made. This International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources is a major contribution to establishing an effective international framework for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, and world food security.
2. We recognize that states have sovereign rights over their animal genetic resources for food and agriculture.
3. Confirming our common and individual responsibilities in respect of conservation, sustainable use and development of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, we recognize the interdependence of countries, regions and peoples regarding these resources.
4. We commit ourselves to achieving the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture. We also commit ourselves to facilitating access to these resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use, consistent with relevant international obligations and national laws. Our objective is to enhance world food security, improve human nutritional status, and contribute to rural development.
5. We welcome *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*, which was developed in a country-driven process under the guidance of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the FAO. It is the first comprehensive worldwide assessment of the state of animal genetic resources and provides the basis for the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*.
6. We recognize that existing diversity in animal species is not used to the extent possible for increased food production, improved human nutrition, and to further sustain rural communities, or for more efficient production systems. We note with alarm the significant ongoing loss of livestock breeds. The continuing erosion and loss of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture would compromise efforts to achieve food security, improve human nutritional status and enhance rural development. We acknowledge that efforts to further conserve, develop, improve and sustainably use animal genetic resources should be enhanced.
7. We recognize that prompt action should be taken to conserve animal breeds at risk, due to the alarming rate of erosion in animal genetic resources.
8. We recognize the need to promote the development of knowledge, in particular through research, leading to improved sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.
9. We recognize that the genetic resources of animal species most critical to food security, sustainable livelihoods and human well-being are the result of both natural selection, and directed selection by smallholders, farmers, pastoralists and breeders, throughout the world, over generations. The result is a wide variety of livestock breeds that provide a diverse stream of

benefits to the environment, humanity and its cultural heritage. We are conscious that all countries will need to play their part in conserving these resources as a basis for livestock development, food security and the better nutrition of their rural and urban populations, as well as to sustain their rural communities.

10. We acknowledge that maintaining the diversity of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture is essential to enable farmers, pastoralists and animal breeders to meet current and future production challenges resulting from changes in the environment, including climate change; to enhance resistance to disease and parasites; and to respond to changes in consumer demand for animal products. We also recognize the intrinsic value of biological diversity and the environmental, genetic, social, economic, medicinal, scientific, educational, cultural and spiritual importance of breeds of livestock, and our ethical responsibility to ensure genetic resources are available to future human generations.

11. We are aware that the demand for meat, milk and other animal products is dramatically increasing. The sustainable use, development, and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture will make a vital contribution to achieving the goals of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security, the World Food Summit Plan of Action, as well as the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 1: *eradication of extreme poverty and hunger*, and Goal 7: *ensure environmental sustainability*. The sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture make an essential contribution to facilitating the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

12. We recognize the enormous contribution that the local and indigenous communities and farmers, pastoralists and animal breeders of all regions of the world have made, and will continue to make for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture. We further recognize the historic and relevant contribution of all persons engaged in animal husbandry, who have moulded animal genetic resources to meet societal needs. It is their ownership and management of the genetic resources of their livestock that has enabled them to make important contributions in the past. It is this ownership and management that should be ensured for future societal benefits. We affirm that they should participate in the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture. We affirm the desirability, as appropriate, subject to national legislation, of respecting, preserving and maintaining traditional knowledge relevant to animal breeding and production as a contribution to sustainable livelihoods, and the need for the participation of all stakeholders in making decisions, at the national level, on matters related to the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.

13. We are aware that future demand for animal products must be met within the context of sustainable agriculture and development, and that this will require integrated approaches to economic development and the pursuit of social, cultural and environmental objectives. We understand the need for adopting management approaches that combine the best of traditional and modern knowledge and technologies, and the need to apply the agro-ecosystem approach and integrated natural resource management practices.

14. We acknowledge that major gaps and weaknesses exist in national and international capacities to inventory, monitor, characterize, sustainably use, develop and conserve animal genetic resources. We recognize the need for substantial financial resources, long-term support for national and international animal genetic resources programmes, to increase world food security and contribute to sustainable rural development. We affirm the need to review institutional capacity, management structures, programmes and policies, to identify deficiencies and address them through strengthening national capabilities, particularly in developing countries. We call for enhanced partnerships among governments, scientists, farmers, pastoralists, breeders and consumers, to build upon ongoing efforts to manage animal genetic resources and overcome major gaps and weaknesses.

15. We recognize that the transfer of technologies relating to sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources is essential for world food security and the needs of the growing world population, and should be facilitated, consistent with relevant international obligations and relevant national laws. We recognize that the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture will require the support and participation of farmers, pastoralists and breeders; local and indigenous communities; organizations and institutions; the private sector; and civil society. We recognize the need to promote technical and financial cooperation at the regional and international levels among countries, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

16. At this first International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources, we have adopted the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*. We are convinced of the utmost importance of integrating it into national biological diversity and agriculture policies, plans and programmes, and indispensable national, regional and international cooperation. This *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources* provides a comprehensive and coherent framework for enhancing management activities in relation to animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, including through strengthening policies, institutions and building capacity. Implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources* will contribute to creating synergies among ongoing activities, as well as facilitate the most efficient use of available financial and human resources, and more effort is required to maintain adequate financial resources for supporting developing countries.

17. We acknowledge that the provision of new and additional resources can make a substantial difference in the world's ability to address the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture. We therefore recommend that concrete steps be taken to ensure an adequate increase in financial resources to support the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources* by developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

18. We recognize that the main responsibility for implementing the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources* rests with national governments. We undertake to honour our commitments to taking the necessary steps to implement the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*, in accordance with our national capacities and resources. We invite all people and their communities and organizations to join us in the common cause.

19. We acknowledge the essential role of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in supporting country-driven efforts in implementing the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*. We invite the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to oversee, assess and report on progress in the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*.

20. We warmly express our gratitude to the Government of Switzerland for hosting the International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; for the excellent arrangements that were provided, and the very generous hospitality that contributed to make the Conference a resounding success.

**Adopted this 7<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2007**