

History of Livestock Keepers' Rights

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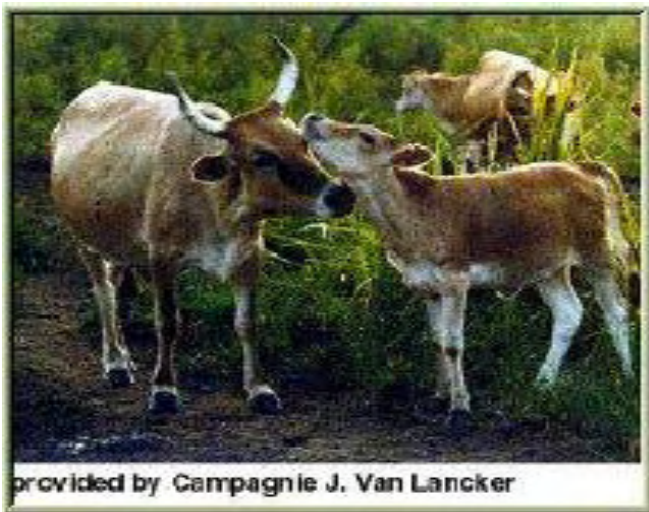
WHAT AFRICAN INDIGENOUS LIVESTOCK KEEPERS HAVE ON OFFER.



Provided by: Drew Conroy



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Livestock keepers

- 70% of world's poor own livestock
- 640 million subsistence farmers keep livestock
- 190 million pastoralists and agro-pastoralists depend on livestock
- Livestock keepers are custodians of the world's rich animal genetic resources.
- However, livestock keepers all over the world lack rights to appropriate development support.
- Importance of unique characteristics of indigenous livestock as “innovative” solutions to world hunger and poverty is increasingly being “recognized”.

The road towards LKR

- Because livestock keepers' rights are central to the food sovereignty and the production systems of pastoral and other livestock keeping communities, they have been the subject of several meetings. The following are some of the landmark outputs:

2000: The Sadri Declaration – Sadri – Rajasthan, India

- Pastoralists and other livestock keepers met to discuss ways of implementing community-based conservation of animal genetic resources in India.
- They identified the need for new policies to secure access to grazing and water resources, to recognize the importance of local livestock breeds and the need to reorient research towards supporting pastoralism and local livestock rising.

2002: Forum for Food Sovereignty – Rome, Italy

- The movement to realize livestock keepers' rights gathered strength at the 2002 Forum for Food Sovereignty. Many pastoralists and other livestock keepers participated directly.
- The concentration of market power in the livestock industry and other threats to pastoralism and local livestock keeping were exposed,
- The scope of livestock keepers' rights was established and the possibilities of incorporating them into a legally binding treaty were discussed.
- It was recognized that the inclusion of Livestock Keepers by the CBD and FAO in the decision making processes was lacking.
- Need for new approach, with pastoralists and other livestock keepers at the centre, was necessary.

2003: Karen Commitment – Karen - Kenya

- The Karen Commitment to Pastoralist/Indigenous Livestock Keepers' Rights was developed in a meeting in Kenya of pastoralist elders and leaders of livestock keepers, supported by several NGOs and a few others, including FAO. Among other points, it called on the FAO to start negotiating a legally-binding agreement that would be in harmony with the CBD.
- It also stated that there should be a moratorium on the release of genetically-modified livestock until bio-safety is proven, in accordance with the Precautionary Principle.

2006: Bellagio Brief – Bellagio - Italy

- Took further the outcomes of the Karen meeting and to continue a dialogue with FAO about establishing a framework for recognizing livestock keepers' rights. They also highlighted that the patenting of breeding processes and individual genes may restrict the rights of communities and individuals to breed, manage and use their livestock as they choose, thus posing a threat to the viability and continued development of their breeds.

2006 – The Bonn meetings - Bonn, Germany

- Prepared for International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources to be held in Interlaken Switzerland
- Livestock keepers should be key participants in the FAO conference in Switzerland
- Produce an information dossier containing short briefings on about key issues,
- Develop contacts with national AnGR coordinators/focal points.
- Publicity documents in local language on livestock keepers.
- Share Country reports on the State of the World's AnGR submitted with livestock keeping communities
- The “Interlaken Declaration” should stress the importance and role of pastoralists and livestock keepers.

Workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in May, 2007

“Managing AGR in Africa: Strategies, priorities, livestock keepers’ rights, and the way forward.”

- **Bundle of rights (Cornerstones)** – Certain minimum requirements need to be fulfilled.
- Rather than representing legal rights, LKR currently correspond to development principles that would help livestock keepers continue to conserve biodiversity.