



Pretoria Declaration

On Animal Identification and Recording Systems for Traceability and Livestock

Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

Around 130 participants from 30 countries met in Pretoria, South Africa, on 14-16 April 2015, at the occasion of the international Symposium on ‘Animal Identification and Recording Systems for Traceability and Livestock Development in Sub-Saharan Africa’. The Symposium was jointly organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR), the South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Stud Book and Animal Improvement Association and the Agricultural Research Council of South Africa, the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources, and their public and private sector partners from Africa and beyond. The high-level delegates included permanent secretaries of ministries of agriculture, heads of animal production departments and chief veterinary officers, representatives of the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources, the World Animal Health Organization, the International Livestock Research Institute and regional research centers, from farmers associations, development agencies, service providers and breed societies. The Symposium was opened by the Minister of the South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Mr. Senzeni Zokwana.

This Symposium, the first one ever of this kind to take place in Africa, was very timely and offered a unique opportunity for all partners and stakeholders to share and openly discuss experiences on past and ongoing animal identification and recording programmes.

Taking into account

- that the Minister had highlighted in his opening speech the fact that animal identification and recording plays a critical role in the achievement of food security and safety in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme’s 4.2 percent annual growth rate target for the livestock sector by enhancing the role of livestock in agricultural intensification and promotion of market-based livestock development;
- the commitments by African governments to the Malabo Declaration of 2014;

Noting the contributions by key stakeholders and country representatives in the symposium on the importance and contributions of animal identification and recording to

- Animal and public health and disease control;
- Stock theft mitigation;
- Food safety and quality;
- Market access, trade and economic growth;
- Genetic improvement and productivity gains;

Noting also the role of various institutions in the improvement of animal identification and recording technology, and acknowledging the importance of partnerships between international, regional and national organizations, as well as between public and private

sector;

The Symposium hereby observes and recommends the following:

1. The participants recognised animal identification and recording (AIR) as both public and private goods, whereby :
 - a. AIR should be regarded as public goods, delivering benefits to farmers, consumers, and the nation as a whole through control of infectious diseases, animal traceability, promotion of food safety, and improved livestock data quality and use. AIR can be delivered through public or private sector initiatives.
 - b. AIR are also private goods as they contribute to improved breeding and farm management, increases in animal production and productivity, enhanced market access and competitiveness. Therefore, public-private partnerships are critical elements in the development and operation of AIR systems.
2. The public and private nature of AIR systems calls for participatory and inclusive approaches. The identification of stakeholders benefits derives from participation in the system and requires intensive participatory stakeholder consultations in order to ascertain how such benefits could be used to sustainably support such programmes. Only stakeholder buy-in makes the system economically sustainable.
3. Participation of stakeholders is likely to increase if they are able to clearly see benefits from doing so. It is therefore important that the different uses and benefits of the system are explored in the planning stage through a participatory needs assessment. Benefits of participation and disadvantages of non-participation in an AIR system have to be clearly defined and communicated to all stakeholders.
4. When developing a new AIR system, it is essential to participatorily undertake needs assessments, assess the prevailing conditions and existing systems, specify the objectives and determine what is feasible in each given situation. A country can learn from other countries, but should do its own assessment. There is no one-size-fits-all model.
5. Any system must be adapted to socio-economic conditions, production environments, livestock service provisions and veterinary institutions, varying levels of capability within both farmers and officials, limited communication networks and limited availability of resources (both in terms of manpower and finance).
6. A national AIR system requires appropriate national regulation to be in place.
7. The development of an AIR system should be undertaken in a phased manner; it should be extended progressively to new administrative units and/or species and/or functions and activities. It is not advisable to implement a new system that immediately extends to all regions and species. Likewise, it is essential to leave room for piloting, making mistakes, learning and adjusting. The system must be modular, capable of being extended to cover new functions or activities incrementally. The FAO guidelines 'Development of Integrated Multipurpose Animal Recording

Systems' are available and should be used to guide the process.

8. The allocation of a unique identification number for individual animals or groups of animals, for premises and for owners within a country is a pre-requisite for operating any AIR system. Other modules or systems, such as traceability and performance recoding features can be added or linked later.
9. Countries should follow international standards and quality protocols and use certified products to ensure quality. The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Articles 4.1 and 4.2) and the ICAR international guidelines and standards serve as references. International standards also allow for interoperability at regional or international levels, as certain aspects of the systems, for example theft control or breeding, require regional collaboration. The regional harmonization of national regulation is another step towards improved regional collaboration.
10. An integrated AIR system requires comprehensive software. A number of pre-designed commercial software packages are available for purchase. It is important to note that pre-designed commercial software may sometimes not offer a sufficient degree of customizability to meet all requirements of a new AIR system. Alternatively, such software may be developed locally to meet specific needs.
11. An integrated approach is recommended in which data is collected in a manner which minimizes duplication of efforts, e.g. multiple data recording by various stakeholders (veterinary services, breeding services etc.). The dual nature of public and private benefits of AIR systems has several consequences. Country experiences showed that purely public systems may not be sustainable as implementation and operating costs are high. Therefore countries may wish to consider that development and sustenance of a multi-purpose animal recording system is complex and requires long term commitment of human and financial resources and these should not be underestimated. Before any decision is taken to introduce an AIR system, it is important to carry out a detailed economic appraisal of the system. Depending upon the results, this can help to communicate the benefits of the AIR system to stakeholders including funding agencies.
12. Ensuring stakeholder commitment from the outset, including national government, is essential for successful implementation of any AIR system. While public funding is often essential at the outset of such system, in order to ensure its long term sustainability, it is important that the system evolves to enable operating costs to be shared by all beneficiaries, including farmers. Good governance and rule of law are essential to establish the enabling institutional environment for AIR systems and promote sustainable and inclusive partnerships. The competent authority should be a facilitator and a coordinator of the various stakeholders rather than be the single implementer and duly recognize the ownership, multiple access to and integrated use of AIR data.
13. Most technical problems are solvable, as expertise is available and experiences are transferable. However, institutional problems are harder to overcome and have to be solved nationally.

14. The availability of regular training and education programmes for end users is vital to implement and sustain any AIR system. It is equally important to provide online support to end users, through the establishment of troubleshooting support.
15. Partnerships at international, regional and national levels, as well as public-private partnerships, should be strengthened and sustained in order to promote AIR for traceability, genetic improvement and productivity gains, and livestock development in Sub-Saharan Africa.
16. The Symposium thanked the Government and the People of the Republic of South Africa for hosting and supporting it.

Pretoria, 16 April 2015

The participants