

## 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Agriculture

### Item 2.1: Livestock Sector contributions to achieving SDGs

#### Introduction notes

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The livestock sector contributes directly or indirectly to each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular to SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 15. However, there are complex interactions where achievement of some of the SDG targets could conflict with the accomplishment of others.

It is therefore likely that policymakers will have to trade off gains in one area against losses in the others. This document discusses these interactions through four interrelated criteria:

- i. food security, nutrition and healthy diets;
- ii. inclusive economic growth and improved livelihoods;
- iii. animal health and welfare; and
- iv. natural resources and climate change.

#### Status

Globally, more than 800 million people are chronically hungry and billions more face other forms of malnutrition. While animal-source foods are energy and protein-dense and sources of many other essential nutrients, the food systems worldwide provide low-cost calories for most people, but often without adequate attention to nutrition and healthy diets.

Around 10 percent of the world's people live in extreme poverty. As livestock supply chains constitute the world's third most important source of income and the global demand for livestock products is expected to increase by up to 50 percent by 2050, further economic opportunities are created. However, ability to take advantage of these opportunities is not equal.

The human health burden of zoonoses is high, with an estimated 2.7 million human deaths a year. Many animal diseases that are not zoonotic trigger heavy economic losses (averaging 25 percent at global level).

Livestock are the biggest user of agricultural land, contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and use significant amounts of the world's freshwater. However, livestock have also the potential to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture, and to important ecosystem functions.

While progress has been reported for most of the SDG indicators related to livestock under FAO custodianship, countries seem to be lagging in achieving SDG 2. This will likely be accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic slowdown.

#### Way forward

A holistic and inclusive approach to livestock sector policy and technical actions is needed that should include all stakeholders within the food system, build the capacity of countries to develop and use coherent evidence-based policy, institutional and technical tools, generate analytical evidence and facilitate policy dialogue. The following concrete actions are proposed:

- FAO strengthens its livestock sector policy and technical support to Members by using an integrated approach that contributes positively to the SDGs while addressing the complex interactions between the livestock sector and the SDGs, including through the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.
- FAO produces voluntary guidelines to enhance the productivity of small-scale livestock keepers and improve their contribution to food security, nutrition and poverty eradication.
- FAO produces comprehensive and evidence-based global assessments of the contribution of livestock to food security, nutrition and healthy diets.
- FAO develops appropriate data, knowledge and tools to guide countries in preparation and implementation of livestock policy and investments in relation to achieving the SDGs.

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