

SECTION 4

**Preparing the  
National Strategy and Action Plan:  
a step-by-step approach**





## PHASE 1

# Establish, maintain or strengthen the institutional framework and assign responsibilities

The process of preparing a National Strategy and Action Plan must be carefully planned so as to provide a comprehensive framework for action in a reasonable period of time and with a reasonable budget, while ensuring that the process is inclusive and transparent. The *Guidelines* suggest a phased approach to achieving these requirements. The main objective of each phase of work and the recommended preparatory steps are outlined below.

This section describes the institutional arrangements necessary for the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. The importance of a National Advisory Committee and a National Focal Point is stressed, and other supporting institutional arrangements are suggested.

The first key phase of work in preparing a National Strategy and Action Plan is to consider carefully, then establish, the institutional arrangements needed to oversee the preparatory process. This will require determining whether the existing institutional arrangements can adequately support the process or need to be augmented or adjusted.

To determine the most appropriate institutional arrangements, countries should consider the functions required to prepare a National Strategy and Action Plan. The following paragraphs describe the basic preparatory elements that are likely to be required in all countries. While various approaches are possible, the institutional arrangements established should be capable of providing at least the following functions:

- A *secretariat* is essential. The institutional arrangements must provide individuals skilled in logistics, planning, consensus building, document preparation, organizing meetings and convening consultations of various types. The secretariat will require institutional, financial and administrative support, preferably from the ministry that is responsible for agriculture.
- *Multistakeholder oversight* is vital to provide overall direction and transparency in the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. The oversight function requires institutional arrangements that represent the diverse range of interests in animal genetic resources within the country and can build or strengthen long-lasting partnerships for the implementation phase.
- *Networking* is the third key function in preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan. Networking will ensure wider stakeholder participation than can be provided by an advisory committee. The institutional arrangements must be capable of building and supporting a network among the key stakeholders: farmer and breeder



organizations; pastoral communities and indigenous people; local government or community leaders; university and other research institutions; private sector interests; and civil society organizations. Building the network should be an early planning consideration.

- *Mobilization and engagement of experts* is the final key function in preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan. At various preparatory phases, sound technical and scientific advice will be required to address key issues and to overcome gaps in knowledge and information. The institutional arrangements must be able to identify national and, if required, international experts and communicate with them early in the planning process to determine their willingness and commitment to participate in the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

To provide the basic support needed to prepare the National Strategy and Action Plan, the following institutional arrangements are recommended.

### **STEP 1: ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES**

It is strongly recommended that a National Focal Point for Animal Genetic Resources be established or maintained and be assigned the role of providing the secretariat support for the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

Over the last 13 years, numerous National Focal Points for Animal Genetic Resources have been established as part of the overall efforts to initiate and implement the Global Strategy. Countries were officially requested by FAO to nominate a National Coordinator for the Management of Animal Genetic Resources to provide an interface between each country and FAO. As of July 2008, 151 countries had officially nominated National Coordinators. National Focal Points are hosted by a wide range of institutions, including ministries of agriculture, research institutes and universities. They proved to be vital in initiating the global programme for animal genetic resources and were instrumental in the development of the Country Reports that fed into the preparation of *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources* and the *Global Plan of Action*.

The adoption of the *Global Plan of Action* has created new challenges and opportunities for countries to enhance the use, development and conservation of their animal genetic resources. The *Global Plan of Action* must now be translated into national actions based on local priorities and circumstances. Experience gained during the preparation of the Country Reports strongly suggests that continuation of a fully operational and effective National

#### BOX 1

#### ***Global Plan of Action – Strategic Priority 12***

Establish or strengthen national institutions, including National Focal Points, for planning and implementing animal genetic resources measures for livestock sector development.



Focal Point will be extremely important to facilitate the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. Continuation of the National Focal Point will also be beneficial over the long term to coordinate and support implementation.

Strengthening the National Focal Point could be the most crucial aspect of the institutional arrangements associated with updating or preparing a National Strategy and Action Plan and supporting and coordinating its overall implementation. In countries where a National Focal Point is not yet operating, it is recommended that one be established. A fully operational National Focal Point will also provide the key interface for facilitating country participation in, and contribution to, international developments in the field of animal genetic resources management, including those effected through close collaboration with FAO and other international and regional organizations.

It is recommended that:

- the National Focal Point for animal genetic resources be established or maintained and strengthened within the ministry responsible for agriculture or an agriculture-based organization with effective linkages to the ministry responsible for agriculture and other relevant ministries;
- a position of National Coordinator for the Management of Animal Genetic Resources be established or maintained and strengthened to lead the National Focal Point; and
- professional and support staff be assigned to the National Focal Point under the direction of the National Coordinator to provide secretariat functions related to the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. If it is not possible to assign full-time staff to the National Focal Point, then staff should be seconded for the preparatory period and, if possible, over the long term to support implementation.

The following secretariat functions are anticipated for the National Focal Point during the preparatory phase:

- supporting the operation of a National Advisory Committee for Animal Genetic Resources;
- coordinating interagency and cross-sector communication and collaboration during the planning phase;
- briefing senior officials and, as required, the responsible minister on progress made in the various preparatory phases of the National Strategy and Action Plan;
- supporting and facilitating the preparation of written materials such as assessments, prospectuses, drafts of the National Strategy and Action Plan, communication materials and briefing materials for government officials;
- preparing and coordinating expert meetings, workshops, etc.;
- planning and implementing the consultation processes;
- interacting with the media; and
- establishing a network among national and international experts, institutions and organizations to ensure broad participation and support for preparing and later implementing the National Strategy and Action Plan.



## STEP 2: ESTABLISH OR MAINTAIN A NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

It is recommended that a multistakeholder National Advisory Committee be given the responsibility of overseeing the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

Many countries have already established a National Advisory Committee for Animal Genetic Resources. Maintaining or establishing a multistakeholder National Advisory Committee to oversee the preparatory process will provide a means to obtain clear guidance and achieve a high level of transparency. It will facilitate partnerships among diverse interests, which will be essential in the implementation phase.

The National Advisory Committee should consist of representatives from as wide a range of interests as practical. This will require each country to consider carefully which individuals and organizations can best represent the diverse interests of the animal genetic resources sector while keeping the Committee at a reasonable size. Balancing representation and size is always a challenging process. When identifying representatives to participate in the National Advisory Committee, countries are encouraged to consider involving the following types of institutions:

- governmental departments, including those involved in agriculture, rural development and biodiversity conservation and sustainable use;
- research and technical institutions, including those providing extension services;
- universities or other educational institutions;
- farmer/herder/pastoral peoples' associations;
- breeder associations;
- private-sector organizations with interests in animal genetic resources;
- animal genetic resources professional organizations;
- civil society organizations with interests in agricultural biodiversity, such as rare breeds societies; and
- development assistance organizations that are active in livestock development and/or the conservation of animal genetic resources.

The National Advisory Committee's primary functions for the preparatory phase are anticipated to be:

- overseeing the overall process of preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan and providing guidance on development of the process and the main objectives.
- developing a vision statement, goals and possibly a prospectus in order to initiate the preparatory process and develop awareness and support among key stakeholders for the National Strategy and Action Plan.
- liaising with their respective organizations and network building to ensure effective communication among diverse interests. All representatives need to keep their constituents informed during the planning process.
- participating in conferences, meetings and workshops (events directly related to the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan as well as other relevant events) to share their vision for a National Strategy and Action Plan and to build support for its preparation and implementation.



- assisting in the identification of strategic priorities and actions that will provide the main elements of the National Strategy and Action Plan. The Committee should have a key role in validating recommendations from all sources and reach consensus on strategic directions, priorities and actions.
- mobilizing support and financial resources for the preparation and implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. This could be through the development of partnerships and assisting interactions with donors.
- establishing criteria to evaluate progress in the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, which will be one of the most important functions for the Committee if it continues past the preparatory phase.
- evaluating the performance of the National Focal Point. This will be particularly valuable if the Committee is maintained to oversee implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

It is recommended that members of the National Advisory Committee be officially appointed by the minister responsible for animal genetic resources or another responsible minister. If members of the National Advisory Committee are appointed as representatives from an invited organization, they should provide an official response letter from their organization indicating their agreement to participate. The Committee should elect someone prominent from the animal genetic resources sector to serve as chair.

It is strongly recommended that a representative of the National Focal Point be a member of the National Advisory Committee. The National Coordinator should be a member of the National Advisory Committee and could serve as secretary to the Committee or, if appropriate, the National Coordinator could serve as chair of the Committee.

The membership of the National Advisory Committee should, as far as practical, reflect the diverse nature of the animal genetic resources sector in the country without making the Committee so large as to impair its function.

### **STEP 3: ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN OR STRENGTHEN A NATIONAL NETWORK FOR ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES**

It is recommended that a national network for animal genetic resources be established, maintained or strengthened, both for the preparatory phases of the National Strategy and Action Plan and subsequently to support implementation.

A network for animal genetic resources can include formal and informal arrangements for networking among individuals and organizations with significant interests in animal genetic resources. Networks for animal genetic resources can provide an extremely valuable means of communication with which to promote and facilitate the participation of experts and relevant organizations. Through an effective network, individuals can follow the process and make contributions at appropriate times, such as during the consultation phase or as and when they are called upon to serve on expert groups. An established animal genetic resources network will also be highly beneficial over the long term to assist in the mobilization of the substantial human and financial resources that will be required for implementation.



#### STEP 4: ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN EXPERT GROUPS AND/OR WORKING GROUPS AS REQUIRED

It is strongly recommended that the National Advisory Committee and/or National Focal Point should have the authority and capacity to establish expert groups to support the preparatory process.

During the National Strategy and Action Plan preparatory process, it is likely that a range of expert groups will be required to assist the National Advisory Committee to address key issues or gaps in knowledge and information. An expert group on communications, for example, could be established early in the process and maintained throughout the preparatory period. Other groups will be required on an ad hoc basis to provide technical input at various phases. Each country will need to determine which groups are most relevant and important to support the overall preparatory process and will need to decide on the process for appointing members to the groups.

The following list presents the various types of expert groups that countries may wish to consider establishing to support the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan:

- *An interdepartmental or interministerial working group on animal genetic resources should be considered.* In many countries, it will be beneficial to establish a formal interdepartmental working group so that the relevant departments are informed and can contribute to the preparatory process. Moreover, a lead ministry, such as the ministry responsible for agriculture, will be able to keep other relevant ministries informed of progress and issues in the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan and to promote the involvement of these other ministries in the process. An interdepartmental or interministerial working group will also be important to ensure appropriate interface with other relevant national initiatives and in preparing for country participation in international/intergovernmental processes and discussions on animal genetic resources.
- *Species working groups should be considered.* Livestock-species working groups (e.g. for cattle, pigs or sheep) could be established as a part of the animal genetic resources network early in the planning process to oversee the status and trends assessments for each major livestock species. In addition, experts from these species working groups will be well placed to provide specific recommendations on strategic priorities and actions to the National Advisory Committee. It will also be desirable to maintain species-specific working groups during the implementation phase in order to provide ongoing expert advice to the National Focal Point, the National Advisory Committee and the ministry of agriculture.
- *An expert group on science and research should be considered.* A working group on science and research could be highly beneficial in identifying national research priorities for animal genetic resources and new and emerging methodologies and technologies to enhance the use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources. Continuation of this working group during the implementation phase to provide advice to the National Focal Point should also be considered.





- *Ad hoc consultative advisory groups should be considered, especially during the consultation phase.* While the National Advisory Committee would have direct re-responsibility for overseeing the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, it may be desirable to establish ad hoc consultative advisory groups to review drafts of the National Strategy and Action Plan. Ad hoc consultative advisory groups could be sectoral or cross-sectoral in nature. It may be desirable, for example, to have a consultative group in which farmers and breeders are the key participants. Multistakeholder groups that parallel the National Advisory Committee could be established to complement the sectoral groups. In some countries, establishment of consultative advisory groups may be necessary to meet legal requirements to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous and local people. It may also be beneficial to consider establishing consultative advisory groups based on biogeographic regions and subnational boundaries. Advisory groups reflecting the major production systems may also be appropriate.
- *An expert group on communication should be considered early in the process to support the preparation of a communication plan.* As noted in a number of Country Reports, lack of awareness of the important multiple roles and values of livestock and the need to develop and conserve animal genetic resources further is viewed as a barrier to increased investment in animal genetic resources management. Targeted awareness programmes could be highly beneficial to promote support for the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan and to gain support for its implementation. All phases of the preparatory process need to be considered when preparing the communication plan. Important communication milestones may include the initiation of the process, the consultation phase, and the final endorsement and release of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

Working groups and expert groups should be established officially by the National Advisory Committee and/or the National Focal Point or by the minister responsible for animal genetic resources as part of the overall institutional arrangements for the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. It is recommended that members of working groups and expert groups be officially requested to participate (e.g. letter from the National Focal Point or from the minister responsible for animal genetic resources or a senior official) and that their nomination be officially endorsed by their respective organizations. The invitation should indicate their responsibilities and roles.



## PHASE 2

# Initiate preparation of the elements of the National Strategy and Action Plan

This section provides guidance regarding the initiation of the process of preparing the various elements of the National Strategy and Action Plan, beginning with the development of a vision statement and goals for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.

The description of Phase 2 provided here is based on the assumption that the required institutional arrangements have been established.

Preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan will take several months, possibly longer in some countries. The length of the preparatory period will depend on a number of factors, such as the size and nature of the country, the complexity of the animal genetic resources sector and the extent to which consultation processes are required.

It is recommended that the six tasks outlined below be undertaken by the National Advisory Committee, with secretariat functions provided by the National Focal Point. It is assumed that a multistakeholder National Advisory Committee is in place and has received the mandate to oversee the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

These early tasks will not only initiate the actual preparation of the first draft of the National Strategy and Action Plan, but will also serve to develop ownership of the process by the National Advisory Committee and give its members experience in working together.

It is strongly recommended that the National Advisory Committee begin the process by undertaking the following key tasks:

1. *Prepare a preliminary vision statement for animal genetic resources.* The vision statement should communicate the contribution and importance of animal genetic resources in terms of national interests, food security, agricultural and rural development, management of natural resources, etc. and the need to use and conserve these vital resources wisely.

While it will be essential that the vision statement and goals be reviewed by stakeholders and validated and/or adjusted as appropriate, the early provision of the vision and goals will greatly assist communications with senior government officials, heads of relevant organizations, stakeholders and members of the media regarding the need for and purpose of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

2. *Prepare draft national goals for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.* The goals should clearly state the main outcomes sought through the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. It is



recommended that the National Advisory Committee, in preparing the draft national goals, take into account the main aims of the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*. These aims are comprehensive and succinct and may facilitate the Committee in preparing draft national goals at this early phase of their work. Later in the process, stakeholders will have an opportunity to review the draft goals and suggest modifications, deletions and additions so as to achieve a final nationally agreed-upon set of goals.

#### BOX 2

##### **Aims of the *Global Plan of Action***

- Promote the sustainable use and development of animal genetic resources for food security, sustainable agriculture and human well-being in all countries.
- Ensure the conservation of the important animal genetic resource diversity for present and future generations and halt the unintended loss and erosion of these crucial resources.
- Promote a fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, recognize the role of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant to the conservation of animal genetic resources and their sustainable use and, where appropriate, put in place effective policies and legislative measures.
- Meet the needs of pastoralists and farmers, individually and collectively, within the framework of national law, to have non-discriminatory access to genetic material, information, technologies, financial resources, research results, marketing systems, and natural resources, so that they may continue to manage and improve animal genetic resources and benefit from economic development.
- Promote agro-ecosystems approaches for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.
- Assist countries and institutions responsible for the management of animal genetic resources to establish, implement and regularly review national priorities for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.
- Strengthen national programmes and enhance institutional capacity – in particular, in developing countries and countries with economies in transition – and develop relevant regional and international programmes. Such programmes should include education, research and training to address the characterization, inventory, monitoring, conservation, development and sustainable use of animal genetic resources.
- Promote activities aimed at raising public awareness and bringing the needs of sustainable use and conservation of animal genetic resources to the attention of concerned governments and international organizations.



## BOX 3

**The importance of a prospectus**

The importance of establishing a positive spirit and understanding among senior decision-makers and other stakeholders early in the planning process should not be underestimated. Some stakeholders may not view the notion of a new National Strategy and Action Plan as a positive development, fearing that it could create new obligations or that it may not fully reflect or respect their interests. Preparation of a prospectus can help alleviate fears and apprehensions and demonstrate that the preparatory process will be transparent. The prospectus can

be used to initiate preliminary consultations that identify organizations that can assist in the process, such as by helping to convene meetings and workshops and providing advice and experts.

Preparation of a detailed prospectus is particularly recommended for countries that do not have much experience in strategic planning for animal genetic resources, such as those that did not prepare a Country Report for Animal Genetic Resources or those that prepared it without broad participation of stakeholders and a consultation process. If countries choose not to prepare a detailed prospectus, the vision statements, goals and outline can provide a good basis to communicate with senior officials and stakeholders.

3. *Consider preparation of a detailed prospectus*<sup>1</sup>. A prospectus is similar to a business plan or concept note. It can be considered an elaborated outline that will facilitate understanding and agreement among all members of the National Advisory Committee on the content, scope, objectives and preparation process of the National Strategy and Action Plan. Once agreed upon by the Committee, a prospectus can be used as a communication product to explain the need for the National Strategy and Action Plan to stakeholders, the general public and members of the media. It will also build confidence among responsible ministers, senior government officials and leaders of stakeholder groups that the Committee understands the task ahead and has a clear plan for its work.

It is recommended that the prospectus include the following elements:

- the rationale for the National Strategy and Action Plan with general information on the importance of the livestock sector in the country and an explanation of the need to ensure the sound management of animal genetic resources as crucial national assets;
- the detailed process for the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, including the consultation process – this is an important element of the prospectus, especially given that its primary function is to gain support and involvement of key government ministries, stakeholders and those with general interest in animal genetic resources;
- the draft vision statement and goals, which will communicate the importance of animal genetic resources and the main outcomes sought in preparing and implementing the National Strategy and Action Plan; and
- a draft outline of the National Strategy and Action Plan in order to communicate its content and scope.

<sup>1</sup> A prospectus is a description of the main features of a proposed forthcoming work that is prepared and circulated for the purpose of obtaining support.



4. *Prepare a draft outline of the National Strategy and Action Plan.* Preparing a draft outline will help members of the National Advisory Committee agree on the main content and scope of the National Strategy and Action Plan. General agreement on the content and scope will greatly facilitate the design of the preparatory process, including the establishment of expert groups. (An illustrative outline is provided in Annex 2 to assist with this important task.)
5. *Prepare a communication plan.* Various communication products and approaches will be required for each phase of the process of preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan, including the consultation period. Preparation of a communication plan is necessary to identify the main target audiences and the best means of communicating with each of them. Opportunities should be identified for profiling the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan (newsletters, conferences, public meetings, etc.). Ways and means to engage best with members of the media should also be considered. The plan should outline the various communication products that need to be prepared to assist the National Advisory Committee and National Focal Point to communicate effectively and to report on progress during the preparatory process.
6. *Prepare, update and disseminate briefing materials and communication products.* It is particularly important to keep up-to-date briefing materials available for the responsible senior officials and ministers during the preparatory process. Maintaining up-to-date briefing and communication materials for all members of the National Advisory Committee is also highly recommended. Members of the National Advisory Committee should be encouraged to participate in events such as conferences and meetings to explain the need for, and the process for developing, the National Strategy and Action Plan. Providing members of the National Advisory Committee with relevant updated information materials will assist them in communicating consistently with their constituents and others and to act as advocates for the success of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

#### BOX 4

##### **Preparation of a vision statement and goals**

The National Advisory Committee has an important role in preparing a draft vision statement and goals. The Committee needs hands-on experience to take ownership of the process and ensure that they are significantly contributing to the end product.

The work of a National Advisory Committee can be difficult during its early stages, so it is necessary to ensure that everyone is participating and comfortable with the task and with working together. Collective preparation of a draft vision statement and goals will better enable the National Advisory Committee members to interact with their own constituents and with other stakeholders to provide the rationale for the National Strategy and Action Plan. Providing them with communication materials will be extremely important for consistent messaging.



### PHASE 3

## Undertake assessments to provide the basic information necessary to enable the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan

This section stresses the importance of undertaking background assessments during the early planning phase to provide the background information needed to underpin the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. Three key assessments are recommended should it be determined that current information is inadequate or out of date.

The National Advisory Committee must decide what background information they deem necessary to underpin the preparation of the first draft of the National Strategy and Action Plan. It is recommended that reliable and adequate information be available in three main areas: (A) the roles and values of animal genetic resources; (B) current and future demands and trends for animal products and the main threats to animal genetic resources; and (C) the status of relevant national and international biological diversity, agriculture and livestock strategies, plans and policies.

In some countries, the data and information collected during preparation of the Country Report may be adequate to provide the background information for the National Strategy and Action Plan, in which case additional assessment work is not required. If information in any of these three areas is not available, however, or if information is out of date, assessments are recommended to address the gaps. The objectives and rationales for each of the proposed assessments are provided below. (Suggestions for the detailed conduct of the each of the assessments are provided in Annex 1.)

#### BOX 5

##### Preparation of a background assessment

It is important that the background-assessment work be distinguished from data and information gathering or other assessments that might be required in the future to implement fully the various elements of the National Strategy and Action Plan. The background-assessment phase of work is aimed at providing initial basic information to support preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, not to implement it.



## STEP 1: ASSESS THE ROLES AND VALUES OF ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

Livestock breeds have numerous roles and values and significantly contribute to food production and economic development in all regions of the world. Country Reports noted that the importance of local breeds is often underestimated by policy-makers and members of the public, and the overall contribution of livestock to human well-being is neither fully recognized nor appreciated. Many Country Reports noted that lack of appreciation of animal genetic resources made it difficult to mobilize human and financial resources for development of this sector. In some cases, this has resulted in adverse or inappropriate policies being implemented.

The key objective when assessing roles and values is to ensure that adequate data and information is available to demonstrate and explain to policy-makers and the general public the need to invest in the better management of animal genetic resources. In most countries, demand for publicly funded programmes is greater than the availability of financial resources; thus, programmes need to be rationalized and prioritized. Being able to articulate the roles and values of animal genetic resources clearly will promote investments in this sector. Preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan should be thought of as preparing the *business case* for animal genetic resources. Convincing arguments to justify investment in animal genetic resources are essential.

Given the broad contributions of livestock in most countries, assessing their multiple roles and values will help to provide a strong rationale for preparing a National Strategy and Action Plan and investing in its implementation. While understanding of the full contribution of animal genetic resources may be enhanced further in the course of the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, having basic information on the roles and values of animal genetic resources available at the beginning of the process will help to draw interest to the need for a National Strategy and Action Plan and, in some countries, may be necessary to initiate the process. Determining the roles and values will also help to identify all the key stakeholder groups, which will be important in ensuring their representation in the preparation and implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

## STEP 2: ASSESS CURRENT AND FUTURE DEMANDS AND TRENDS FOR ANIMAL PRODUCTS AND THE IMPLICATIONS AND POTENTIAL THREATS TO ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

The demands and supply trends (type, quality and quantity) for animal products and services, both at the country level and in world markets, are changing as a result of a number of factors. These include changes in human population patterns, socio-economic conditions, consumer demands, health and environmental standards, sources of feeds and other inputs and opportunities arising from new technologies. As a result, the animal production sector is evolving rapidly and requires ongoing strategic planning and implementation of programmes to optimize the use of available animal genetic resources and production systems.

The key objective for undertaking an assessment of demands and trends for animal products and the implications and potential threats to animal genetic resources is to determine how trends and demands potentially will affect – both positively and negatively – animal genetic resources in the short and the long terms. It is essential to have some basic



information on demands, trends and threats at an early phase in the process to help focus the work of expert groups and other preparatory activities and to ensure that the National Strategy and Action Plan addresses both current and future demands for animal products and services as well as the implications of future changes, including any threats to animal genetic resources.

### **STEP 3: ASSESS THE STATUS OF RELEVANT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, PLANS, LEGISLATION AND POLICIES**

Over the past several decades, significant agricultural biodiversity planning and policy development has occurred within countries and through various international mechanisms. Reviewing current international and national obligations and commitments for the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity – and, in particular, legislation and policies aimed specifically at livestock and agricultural biodiversity – is one of the necessary first steps in the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

A number of Country Reports noted that livestock-development policies and legislation resulted in adverse impacts to animal genetic resources, often adversely affecting local breeds. Suggestions arose that some policies had been put in place without full understanding of their long-term effects.

The main objective in assessing current national and international biodiversity and agricultural strategies, plans, legislation and policies is to determine opportunities, impacts and gaps, and thereby to provide a basis for recommending ways and means to improve the current situation. An assessment early in the planning process will help the National Advisory Committee determine whether further expert analysis is required to enable the Committee to develop recommendations on any reforms in policies and legislation that may be necessary to ensure a supportive policy environment for achieving animal genetic resource-related goals.

Another benefit of assessing existing national and international agreements and policies regarding agricultural biodiversity early in the process is that it will remind policy-makers of existing national commitments and agreements for international collaboration, including donor support for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources, thus providing additional rationale for preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan.





## PHASE 4

# Prepare a draft set of strategic priorities and actions for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources

This section provides guidance that will assist countries in synthesizing all available information and identifying draft strategic priorities and actions for inclusion in the National Strategy and Action Plan. The draft set of strategic priorities and actions will provide the main basis for stakeholder consultations; it will then be further developed – in the light of the inputs received during the consultations – to form the core element of the final National Strategy and Action Plan.

It is recommended that the next phase of work involve three main steps of analysis and synthesis that lead to the preparation of a first-draft set of strategic priorities and actions, which will form the core component of a draft document for consultation. Preparation of an updated set of strategic priorities and actions is a phase of work that is likely to take several months to complete and may require, *inter alia*, commissioning or organizing literature reviews, workshops and meetings and expert reports.

Many of the Country Reports submitted during the process of preparing *The State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* identified national priorities for achieving the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources. The Country Report should be a starting point for identifying and updating national strategic priorities and actions for inclusion in the National Strategy and Action Plan. Other relevant national strategies and plans should also be reviewed at this phase of work: for example, the national livestock strategy and the national biodiversity strategy.

As the *Global Plan of Action* represents the common wisdom resulting from the recommendations put forward by 169 countries and many experts, reviewing this document as a basis for the preparation of an updated draft set of national strategic priorities and actions is strongly recommended. This approach could be time- and cost-effective when developing a first-draft set of strategic priorities and actions for the National Strategy and Action Plan. Countries will need to assess the relevance and relative priority of each of the strategic priorities and actions included in the *Global Plan of Action* in accordance with their own conditions and priorities.



TABLE 1  
Progress made in implementing existing national strategic priorities

Strategic Priority Areas of the <i>Global Plan of Action</i>	National strategic priorities as contained in the Country Report or other relevant strategies	Status of implementation of each strategic priority		
		Completed	Initiated	Remains a priority
Characterization, inventory and monitoring of trends and associated risks	1.			
	2.			
	...			
Sustainable use and development	1.			
	2.			
	...			
Conservation	1.			
	2.			
	...			
Policies, institutions and capacity building	1.			
	2.			
	...			

Tables 1 and 2 are intended to assist with the identification of a draft set of strategic priorities and actions. The approach focuses on analysis of existing Country Reports, agriculture- and biodiversity-related national strategies, plans and initiatives and the *Global Plan of Action*.

### STEP 1: REVIEW AND IDENTIFY RELEVANT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND ACTIONS CONTAINED IN THE COUNTRY REPORT AND/OR ANY EXISTING STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES RELEVANT TO ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

The National Advisory Committee may wish to undertake this task with support of the National Focal Point and expert groups. Table 1 is intended to facilitate the review and analysis. The recommended approach is to organize the results of the review process within a framework based on the four Strategic Priority Areas of the *Global Plan of Action*, with the status of each action to be described as “completed”, “initiated but not completed” or “not initiated and remains a national priority.”

### STEP 2: REVIEW AND IDENTIFY RELEVANT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS CONTAINED IN THE GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION

Because it provides a comprehensive framework and a diverse set of actions, each country should review the *Global Plan of Action* to determine which strategic priorities and actions are relevant at the national level and what actions the country has already undertaken to achieve each relevant strategic priority. That is, countries should consider each relevant strategic priority



and action identified in the *Global Plan of Action* and determine whether it has already been achieved or whether it remains a priority action and will be included in the updated National Strategy and Action Plan. As in Step 1, the National Advisory Committee may wish to undertake this task with the support of the National Focal Point and expert groups.

Table 2 is intended to facilitate the review and analysis. It may be desirable to indicate the relevant priority of each action and determine whether the action requires a short-, medium- or long-term response. Where global or regional action is required, countries may wish to indicate the contribution they intend to make to the achievement of a successful outcome. For example, contributing national data on the status and trends of animal genetic resources will enable global and regional analysis.

**TABLE 2**  
**Progress made in the implementation of relevant provisions of the *Global Plan of Action***

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 1: Characterization, inventory and monitoring of trends and associated risks</b>			
1. Inventory and characterize animal genetic resources, monitor trends and risks associated with them, and establish country-based early warning and response systems	1. Conduct or complete inventories of the location, population status, trends and characteristics of animal genetic resources.		
	2. Expand characterization and monitoring of trends in and risks to animal genetic resources.		
	3. Encourage the establishment of institutional responsibilities and infrastructure for monitoring trends in animal genetic resources (for example population size and genetic diversity), including identification, registration and pedigree systems.		
	4. Promote participatory approaches to characterization, inventory and monitoring of trends and associated risks that foster collaboration among all stakeholders, including livestock keepers and researchers.		
	5. Undertake international cooperative monitoring of trends and associated risks, inventory and characterization activities among countries sharing transboundary breeds and similar production systems.		
	6. Strengthen global and regional information systems and networks for inventory, monitoring and characterization. <i>Inter alia</i> , the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS) and the Global Databank for Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture should be strengthened to obtain, evaluate and condense information from national databases and monitoring systems, and distribute this information, highlighting threats and needs.		
	7. Establish or strengthen existing breed endangerment early warning and response systems, through the further development of national, regional and global risk monitoring mechanisms, and the inclusion of early warning criteria in existing databases.		



TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 1: Characterization, inventory and monitoring of trends and associated risks</b>			
2. Develop international technical standards and protocols for characterization, inventory, and monitoring of trends and associated risks	1. Develop agreement on a common set of minimum criteria and indicators for animal genetic diversity, including means for assessing endangerment status, and methods to assess environmental, socio-economic and cultural factors related to animal genetic resources management.		
	2. Develop technical standards and protocols for phenotypic and molecular characterization, including methods for the assessment of quantitative and qualitative production traits, nutrient utilization, functional traits and economic valuation. This makes possible the assessment of comparative breed performance in different production environments.		
	3. Develop protocols for participatory monitoring of trends and associated risks, and characterization of local breeds managed by indigenous and local communities and livestock keepers.		
	4. Strengthen research and development of methods for characterization, and breed evaluation, valuation and comparison. Develop interoperability protocols for information systems.		
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: Sustainable use and development</b>			
3. Establish and strengthen national sustainable use policies	1. Review existing national policies on sustainable use to assess their impacts on animal genetic resources management.		
	2. Develop, as necessary, national policies that incorporate the contribution of animal genetic resources to sustainable use, which may include setting strategic objectives for breeding and sustainable use; conducting economic and cultural valuation of animal genetic resources; and developing approaches, including mechanisms, to support wide access to, and the fair and equitable sharing of, benefits arising from the use of animal genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.		
4. Establish national species and breed development strategies and programmes	1. Develop long-term planning and strategic breeding programmes and consider a number of elements, including: efforts to improve underutilized breeds, especially within low to medium external input production systems; assessments of the impact of exotic animal breeds and the development of measures for producers to realize positive impacts and prevent negative impacts; training and technical support for the breeding activities of pastoralist and farming communities; and the integration of improved husbandry practices in animal genetic resources development programmes. Whereas plans and programmes developed will be national, in some cases cooperation with other countries may be required.		



TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: Sustainable use and development</b>			
	2. Assess breed development programmes and revise, as appropriate, with the aim of meeting foreseeable economic and social needs and market demands, bearing in mind scientific and technological parameters. The information about breeds and production systems could be made available to consumers.		
	3. Establish and develop organizational structures of breeding programmes, especially breeders' organizations and breeding schemes, including recording systems.		
	4. Incorporate consideration of the impacts of selection on genetic diversity into breeding programmes and develop approaches to maintain the desired variability.		
	5. Establish or strengthen recording schemes to monitor changes in non-production traits (e.g. health, welfare) and adjust breeding goals accordingly.		
	6. Encourage the development of backup collections of frozen semen and embryos from current breeding schemes to ensure genetic variability.		
	7. Provide information to farmers and livestock keepers to assist in facilitating access to animal genetic resources from various sources.		
5. Promote agro-ecosystems approaches to the management of animal genetic resources	1. Assess environmental and socio-economic trends that may require a medium- and long-term policy revision in animal genetic resources management.		
	2. Integrate agro-ecosystem approaches in national agricultural and environmental policies and programmes of relevance to animal genetic resources, where appropriate, particularly those directed towards pastoralist and rural smallholder communities, and fragile environments.		
	3. Establish networks to enhance interaction among the main stakeholders, scientific disciplines and sectors involved.		
6. Support indigenous and local production systems and associated knowledge systems of importance to the maintenance and sustainable use of animal genetic resources	1. Assess the value and importance of indigenous and local production systems; identify trends and drivers of change that may affect the genetic base, and the resilience and sustainability of the production systems.		



TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: Sustainable use and development</b>			
	2. Support indigenous and local livestock systems of importance to animal genetic resources, including through the removal of factors contributing to genetic erosion. Support may include the provision of veterinary and extension services, delivery of micro-credit for women in rural areas, appropriate access to natural resources and to the market, resolving land tenure issues, the recognition of cultural practices and values, and adding value to their specialist products.		
	3. Promote and enable relevant exchange, interaction and dialogue among indigenous and rural communities and scientists and government officials and other stakeholders, in order to integrate traditional knowledge with scientific approaches.		
	4. Promote the development of niche markets for products derived from indigenous and local species and breeds, and strengthen processes to add value to their primary products.		
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: Conservation</b>			
7. Establish national conservation policies	1. Set and regularly review conservation priorities and goals.		
	2. Assess factors leading to the erosion of animal genetic resources and formulate appropriate policy responses. Establish or strengthen information systems on animal breeding approaches as well as on different gene banks, as they affect animal genetic diversity, in order to enable breeders and countries to make appropriate choices in their improvement programmes.		
	3. Establish institutional structures and policies, as appropriate, including specific measures to conserve breeds at risk of extinction, and to prevent breeds from becoming at risk. A combination of <i>in situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> measures is necessary.		
	4. Provide and catalyse incentives for producers and consumers to support conservation of animal genetic resources at risk, as evaluated by individual countries, provided that such incentives are consistent with existing international agreements.		
8. Establish or strengthen <i>in situ</i> conservation programmes	1. Set and regularly review <i>in situ</i> conservation priorities and goals.		
	2. Encourage the development and implementation of national and regional <i>in situ</i> conservation programmes for breeds and populations that are at risk. This may include support, either directly for breeders of threatened breeds, or measures to support agricultural production systems that manage areas of importance to breeds at risk, the encouragement of breed organizations, community-based conservation organizations, non-governmental organizations and other actors to participate in conservation efforts provided that such support or such measures are consistent with existing international agreements.		



TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: Conservation			
	3. Promote policies and means to achieve the sustainable use of a diversity of local breeds, without the need for support from public funds or extra funding, through <i>in situ</i> conservation.		
9. Establish or strengthen <i>ex situ</i> conservation programmes.	1. Set and regularly review <i>ex situ</i> conservation priorities and goals.		
	2. Establish or strengthen national and regional facilities for <i>ex situ</i> conservation, in particular cryogenic storage. Support the efforts of countries within a region that have opted to establish a regional facility.		
	3. Establish modalities to facilitate use of genetic material stored in <i>ex situ</i> gene banks under fair and equitable arrangements for storage, access and use of animal genetic resources.		
	4. Develop and implement measures to secure <i>ex situ</i> collections from loss of genetic diversity resulting from disease outbreaks and other threats, in particular by establishing backup samples.		
	5. Identify and fill gaps in <i>ex situ</i> collections.		
	6. Develop procedures for replenishment of genetic material taken from gene banks, by systematically developing links with live populations, or establishing <i>in vivo</i> populations of breeds at risk at off-farm locations, such as zoos and parks.		
10. Develop and implement regional and global long-term conservation strategies	1. Assist countries to develop and implement conservation plans for breeds and populations, particularly transboundary breeds and populations, combining <i>in situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> measures.		
	2. Establish integrated support arrangements to protect breeds and populations at risk from emergency or other disaster scenarios, and to enable restocking after emergencies, in line with the national policy.		
	3. Establish regional and global networks of gene banks for animal genetic resources and harmonize approaches to conservation in gene banks and to facilitating exchange.		
	4. Facilitate the establishment of core collections of animal genetic diversity, at the appropriate regional or species level.		



TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: Conservation</b>			
11. Develop approaches and technical standards for conservation	1. Undertake research, including participatory research, to develop <i>in situ</i> and <i>ex situ</i> methods and technologies, including for conservation breeding. Elaborate standardized methods and guidelines for their use, where necessary.		
	2. Document and disseminate knowledge, technologies and best practices.		
	3. Promote the use of appropriate genetic indicators to complement phenotypic characterization as a basis to make decisions on conserving animal genetic resources.		
	4. Review the impact of zoo sanitary standards on the conservation of animal genetic resources, and in particular, their accessibility.		
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: Policies, institutions and capacity building</b>			
12. Establish or strengthen national institutions, including National Focal Points, for planning and implementing animal genetic resources measures, for livestock sector development	1. Analyse national institutional capacity in support of holistic planning of the livestock sector.		
	2. Establish or strengthen fully functional National Focal Points for animal genetic resources.		
	3. Develop strong national coordination between the National Focal Point and stakeholders involved in animal genetic resources, such as the breeding industry, government agencies, civil society organizations, and networks and advisory committees.		
	4. Develop and implement intervention tools, as appropriate, for national planners to shape the future development of the livestock sector in accordance with national priorities, including in relation to the deployment of animal genetic resources, and the effects of animal production systems on the environment.		
	5. Promote coordination and synergy between the different authorities dealing with various aspects of planning, within and across ministries, as well as with other stakeholders, and ensure their participation in the process.		
13. Establish or strengthen national educational and research facilities	1. Identify the short-term, medium-term and long-term needs for research and education, and promote the formation of the relevant cadres of experts, nationally or through international training.		
	2. Review national research and education capacities in relevant fields, and establish targets for training to build the national skill base.		
	3. Establish or strengthen, in partnership with other countries, as appropriate, relevant research, training and extension institutions, including national and regional agricultural research systems, to support efforts to characterize, inventory and monitor trends and associated risks, sustainably use and develop, and conserve animal genetic resources.		
	4. Review the national educational needs of livestock keepers, while respecting traditional knowledge and indigenous practices.		





TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: Policies, institutions and capacity building</b>			
14. Strengthen national human capacity for characterization, inventory, and monitoring of trends and associated risks, for sustainable use and development, and for conservation	1. Establish or strengthen training and technology transfer programmes, and information systems for the inventory, characterization and monitoring of trends and associated risks; sustainable use and development; and conservation, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.		
	2. Establish or strengthen collaborative networks of researchers, breeders and conservation organizations, and other public, civil and private actors, within and between countries, for information and knowledge exchange for sustainable use, breeding and conservation.		
	3. Establish or strengthen community-based organizations, networks and initiatives for sustainable use, breeding and conservation.		
15. Establish or strengthen international information sharing, research and education	1. Establish or strengthen international research and education, in particular, to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to better use and develop animal genetic resources.		
	2. Continue to develop the FAO Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS), as a global communication tool and clearing-house mechanism for animal genetic resources.		
	3. Develop means for reporting on the status and trends of national animal genetic resources that may also assist governments in relevant reporting in other international fora, to reduce the overall reporting burden.		
	4. Establish and strengthen the development of national databases to enable information sharing among countries.		
16. Strengthen international cooperation to build capacities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• characterization, inventory, and monitoring of trends and associated risks;</li> <li>• sustainable use and development;</li> <li>• conservation of animal genetic resources</li> </ul>	1. Build or strengthen technical cooperation and establish facilities for technology transfer and exchange of experience, and enhance educational and other training opportunities, between countries, considering the particular interests of developing countries and countries with economies in transition.		
	2. Establish or strengthen international collaboration in the characterization, use and development, and conservation of transboundary breeds.		



TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: Policies, institutions and capacity building</b>			
17. Establish Regional Focal Points and strengthen international networks	1. Support the establishment of country-driven Regional Focal Points for animal genetic resources, where appropriate.		
	2. Establish or strengthen and maintain regional networks, including regional databases, if required, for the use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.		
	3. Link regional activities on animal genetic resources to regional organizations.		
	4. Maintain and strengthen the FAO Global Focal Point for animal genetic resources to promote international networking and collaboration.		
18. Raise national awareness of the roles and values of animal genetic resources	1. Provide targeted, effective information through media, public events and other means to raise awareness about the important roles and values of animal genetic resources. This should address their specific characteristics and the consequent special policy needs for their sustainable use, development and conservation, including livestock keepers' contributions, needs, and all relevant rights that may exist at national level. Target audiences include policy-makers, all major stakeholders within the livestock sector and related sectors, and the general public.		
19. Raise regional and international awareness of the roles and values of animal genetic resources	1. Support regional and international campaigns to raise awareness of the status of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, and seek to develop wide support at the government and institutional levels, as well as among the general public.		
20. Review and develop national policies and legal frameworks for animal genetic resources	1. Periodically review existing national policies and regulatory frameworks, with a view to identifying any possible effects they may have on the use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources, especially with regard to the contribution and needs of local communities keeping livestock.		
	2. Consider measures to address any effects identified in reviews of policy and legal frameworks. Measures may include policy or legislative changes, or adjustments at the level of implementation, taking into account the need to balance the goals and objectives of the relevant legal instruments and policies, and the interests of different stakeholders.		
	3. Encourage consistency of national law and policies concerning animal genetic resources with relevant international agreements, as appropriate.		
	4. Ensure that relevant research results are taken into consideration in the development of national policies and regulations on animal genetic resources.		



TABLE 2 (continued)

Strategic Priorities	Actions	Status of action	
		Achieved	To be addressed
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: Policies, institutions and capacity building</b>			
21. Review and develop international policies and regulatory frameworks relevant to animal genetic resources.	1. Review existing international agreements that impact upon the use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources, with a view to ensuring that international policies and regulatory frameworks take into account the special importance of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture for food security, the distinctive features of these resources needing distinctive solutions, the importance of science and innovation, and the need to balance the goals and objectives of the various agreements, as well as the interests of regions, countries and stakeholders, including livestock keepers.		
	2. Review the implications and impacts of international agreements and developments relevant to access to animal genetic resources and sharing the benefits of their use upon animal genetic resources stakeholders, especially livestock keepers.		
22. Coordinate the Commission's efforts on animal genetic resources policy with other international fora	1. Develop cooperation with and strengthen the involvement and contributions of international organizations and fora in supporting the work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture on animal genetic resources.		
23. Strengthen efforts to mobilize resources, including financial resources, for the conservation, sustainable use and development of animal genetic resources	1. Assist all stakeholders to strengthen capacity-building, including by exchange of experience, by enhancing research and educational activities, and by providing training opportunities, technology transfer and financial resources, at national, regional and international levels, as detailed in PART III <sup>1</sup> below.		
	2. Develop a follow-up process to implement the <i>Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources</i> .		
	3. Strengthen cooperation and coordination of conservation, sustainable use and development of animal genetic resources at national, regional and international levels, including through <i>ex situ</i> backup systems for the protection against the risk of emergency or disaster scenarios.		

<sup>1</sup> This refers to Part III of the *Global Plan of Action*.



### STEP 3: PREPARE A SET OF UPDATED DRAFT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS BASED ON THE REVIEW CONDUCTED IN STEPS 1 AND 2

This step is one of the most important in the entire preparation process and perhaps the most complex. It not only requires summarizing past strategic directions and actions and determining their current relevance, it also requires that new and additional priorities and actions be identified to fill gaps, realize new opportunities or address emerging challenges.

While it is recommended that the National Advisory Committee and the National Focal Point be given overall responsibility for this phase of work, the use of expert groups or working groups should strongly be considered. Focused group work at this phase will help to verify the status of existing strategic priorities and actions and aid in the identification of additional strategic priorities and actions – to address issues or opportunities not addressed in an existing national strategy or in the *Global Plan of Action*.

If groups of experts were established to assist with Steps 1 and 2 above, they should be maintained during Step 3. Careful consideration will need to be given to the type of expert groups required. One approach would be to have one expert group for each of the four Strategic Priority Areas of the *Global Plan of Action*. These groups would be responsible for reviewing the results of Steps 1 and 2 and providing advice to the National Advisory Committee in the form of a summary set of strategic priorities and actions. Using this approach, the National Advisory Committee, with the assistance of the National Focal Point, would need to combine the work of each of the four expert groups to produce an overall draft set of updated strategic priorities and actions. Table 3 is intended to assist this process.

Another approach is to use species working groups for each of the major livestock species. Each group would need to address all four Strategic Priority Areas of the *Global Plan of Action*, again working on the basis of the analysis and tables suggested in Steps 1 and 2. Their efforts would be combined when they complete their analyses. Table 3 will also be useful if this approach is used.

The establishment of a communications group and a research group was suggested in Phase 1. If this has yet to happen, it is recommended that groups focused on communications

#### BOX 6

##### Establishment of expert and working groups

While the establishment of expert/working groups has financial and time implications and adds complexity to the overall process of preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan, the establishment of such groups is extremely important at this phase of work. Preparation of a draft set of strategic priorities and actions is a critical component of the process and requires significant expertise. In addition, engaging experts at this phase of the process should be considered a key part of the overall consultation process. Many participating experts will likely develop a sense of ownership of the National Strategy and Action Plan and may become “champions” for its implementation.



TABLE 3  
Updated draft strategic priorities and actions

Strategic Priority Areas in the Global Plan of Action	National strategic priorities	National priority actions
Characterization, inventory and monitoring of trends and associated risks	1.	1.
		2.
		...
	2.	1.
		2.
		...
	...	1.
		2.
		...
Sustainable use and development	1.	
	2.	
	...	
Conservation	1.	
	2.	
	...	
Policies, institutions and capacity building	1.	
	2.	
	...	

and on research needs and priorities be established. They should be requested to develop strategic priorities and actions in their respective areas of expertise for consideration by the National Advisory Committee.

Expert groups should be provided with clear terms of reference to guide their work, and it should be made apparent to the participants that they are assisting the National Advisory Committee. The Committee must retain overall responsibility for finalizing the draft set of strategic priorities and actions. Suggestions on how to guide the formation and operation of expert groups is provided in Annex 3.

At this stage, the National Advisory Committee may consider commissioning expert reports or rapid assessments in key subject areas where a particular gap has been identified and where addressing the gaps will significantly contribute to the identification of appropriate strategic priorities and actions. Commissioning expert reports and assessments must be carefully considered as their preparation will have cost implications and may extend the preparatory planning phase. Expert reports at this phase of work should assist the Committee in identifying strategies and actions needed to address major gaps in information or in addressing any issues or opportunities that may have been identified.



## PHASE 5

# Prepare the first draft consultation document

This section provides advice on how to prepare a document for consultation in order to ensure that stakeholders (including local and indigenous peoples) have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources.

Preparation of a consultation document on the National Strategy and Action Plan is an extremely important phase of work. This is the beginning of the process of assembling the various parts of the National Strategy and Action Plan into a document that can be reviewed by all interested parties.

The National Advisory Committee must now decide who should write the consultation document on behalf of the Committee. This is an important issue and the Committee should carefully examine its options. If members of the secretariat have the necessary writing skills and experience in preparing strategic documents, it is strongly recommended that the secretariat prepare the draft consultation document under the direction of the National Advisory Committee. This approach is recommended as the first option because staff from the secretariat can be assigned the necessary time to complete the task. Moreover, they will have been engaged in the overall process and will understand what is now required. The National Advisory Committee should remain fully engaged in the process by providing advice and reviewing draft sections of the document as they are developed, prior to review by stakeholders.

A second option would be to contract one or more individuals to prepare the draft document. During the convening of expert groups, potential candidates for future work often emerge, and it may be that individuals with the necessary writing skills can be identified and recruited to prepare the draft consultation document through the expert group process. Several writers may need to be contracted.

In some countries, contracting writers may be the most practical solution to preparing a first draft document. However, if this option is chosen, clear terms of reference and ongoing direction from the secretariat and National Advisory Committee are needed to ensure that writers deliver what is required. The National Advisory Committee should review any draft materials prior to release for consultation. The secretariat may need to assemble various components of the document prepared by the contracted writers.

A third option is to form a small drafting committee of members of the National Advisory Committee to prepare the consultation document. This option can only be considered feasible if members of the Committee have proven writing skills and can commit the time necessary. All members of the National Advisory Committee should



review the draft document produced by the drafting committee prior to its release for formal consultations.

The National Advisory Committee must also decide on the content of the first draft National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources for consultations and provide their views to the writers. At this phase of the work, the National Advisory Committee will have available the following materials on which to base the preparation of the first draft:

- a draft vision statement and set of goals and the outline for the National Strategy and Action Plan;
- information on the roles and values of animal genetic resources, on threats to these resources and on current policies, programmes, legislation, etc.;
- a set of draft strategic priorities and actions organized around the four Strategic Priority Areas of the *Global Plan of Action*; and
- communication materials that explain the rationale for a National Strategy and Action Plan and the process being followed to prepare it.

While the National Advisory Committee could undertake consultations focused only on some elements of the National Strategy and Action Plan – for example, the strategic priorities and actions – the recommended approach is to prepare a comprehensive document, a first draft National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources for consultations, including background information, the vision statement and goals and the strategic priorities and actions.

The consultation document should also clearly describe the rationale for preparing the National Strategy and Action Plan and the process being followed during its preparation. It should indicate how the results of consultations will be used to finalize and achieve a government-endorsed National Strategy and Action Plan. Much of this information may not be required in the final National Strategy and Action Plan. However, including information on the rationale and the preparatory process in the consultation document is recommended for reasons of transparency. Recommendations for the consultation process are provided in Phase 6.



## PHASE 6

# Undertake consultations to review the draft National Strategy and Action Plan

This section describes the activities necessary to ensure that the consultation process promotes and achieves full and effective stakeholder participation in the review of the draft National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources. The consultation process must capture the comments provided by participants in order to enable the National Advisory Committee to consider their inputs as they finalize the National Strategy and Action Plan.

Each country will need to decide on a consultation process appropriate to its needs, circumstance and budget. A stratified consultation process, whereby certain groups are asked to review the entire draft document while others are requested to focus on particular sections may produce the best results. For example, the Committee may wish to make the entire document available for comments at public meetings and complement this approach by undertaking focused workshops to review the particular elements of the National Strategy and Action Plan on which they are interested in receiving feedback – for example, the draft strategic priorities and actions. Such workshops, with relevant stakeholder participation, may also support and facilitate future implementation of agreed-upon actions.

Several guides are available to assist in the design of effective consultation processes. The following list provides a general set of guiding principles for effective consultation.

1. *The consultation phase must be considered early in the planning process.* Each phase of the preparatory process may require some sort of consultation, and the National Advisory Committee and National Focal Point must identify these requirements early in their work.
2. *Identification of the target stakeholders, individuals and organizations is crucial for effective consultations.* While the general public will be interested in the National Strategy and Action Plan, the main focus of the consultation process will be various stakeholder groups. Those groups need to be identified early in the process so the best means to engage them can be determined. A range of consultation methods appropriate to a range of audiences is likely to be required; some stakeholders may want to design their own consultation approach and process.
3. *Preliminary consultations should be considered.* Usually, it will be important to convene preliminary consultations to encourage stakeholder participation early in the planning process and during the main consultation phase of work. Preliminary consultations will help identify interested individuals and organizations. In some instances, preliminary consultations may be necessary to convince some stakeholders that their input will be considered and that it is therefore in their best interest to participate.





4. *Prepare participants for the consultations.* Once individuals and organizations agree to participate in the planning process, provide them with information well in advance of the consultations to assist their preparations. Consultation products, such as a questionnaire, will help participants develop their advice and can be extremely valuable to help the secretariat obtain and organize inputs.
5. *Be outcome driven.* Ensure that participants understand the specific outcomes that are being sought from the consultations. Preliminary discussions with stakeholder groups may be beneficial for developing an understanding of the desired outcomes among stakeholders. For example, consultations with particular individuals and organizations may be requested to focus their attention and advice on particular aspects of the draft document. While flexibility during consultations is important so that participants have opportunities to reflect on all aspects of the National Strategy and Action Plan, the National Advisory Committee is responsible for keeping the consultations on the desired track and thus should seek particular outcomes as required.
6. *Choose a range of consultation methods.* Successful consultations on the National Strategy and Action Plan will require interaction with diverse interests, and a range of methods should be considered in order to identify the most effective means of engaging the key target audiences. Consultation methods may include open meetings, workshops, questionnaires, bilateral discussions and Web-based discussions. Bear in mind that some individuals or groups will not be comfortable expressing their views in group settings, and therefore allow for individual inputs to be made during the consultation process.
7. *Identify and address barriers to participation in the consultation process.* Participation in the consultation process may be limited by many factors including language barriers, discomfort during participation in open fora or lack of financial resources for travel. Potential barriers to participation should be identified and addressed in the communication plan prepared early in the planning process. Consider providing financial support for participation in the consultation process, as required.
8. *Establish clear timelines for the consultation process.* All participants need to be aware of the timelines for the consultation process, and the National Advisory Committee should ensure the timelines are followed.
9. *Acknowledge self-design consultations.* Some organizations may wish to undertake their own consultation processes with their constituents; the results of these processes should be acknowledged and taken into consideration.
10. *Seek commitments from participants during the consultation process.* In addition to providing an opportunity to obtain feedback on the National Strategy and Action Plan, the National Advisory Committee should use the consultation process to promote stakeholder commitments to support the implementation phase. Consultations should be designed to achieve multipurpose outputs whenever possible.
11. *Carefully document suggestions made during consultations.* The secretariat should be well prepared to document the results of the consultations. Approaches to capturing comments and proposals (questionnaires, recordings, summary notes, etc.) should be an important early planning consideration. The National Advisory Committee must also



decide whether they will prepare and distribute a summary of the inputs received during the consultations.

12. *Provide ownership and opportunities for stakeholders to endorse the finalized National Strategy and Action Plan in some manner.* The consultation process should promote ownership among stakeholders of the final outcome: an agreed-upon National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources. The National Advisory Committee may also wish to use the consultations to promote the involvement of stakeholders in the final preparatory phase, which is endorsement of the National Strategy and Action Plan.
13. *Follow up with participants.* As they will have provided their time and energy to participate in the consultation process, a commitment should be made to keep all participants informed of further progress in the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. This should include opportunities to participate in any subsequent planning phases and in the implementation phase.



## PHASE 7

# Finalize the National Strategy and Action Plan

This section provides advice on the finalization of the main elements of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources: the vision statement, goals, strategic priorities and actions following consultations and the detailed action plan component.

During consultations, the secretariat should have recorded or documented all the participants' suggestions. Participants could have made suggestions as to how to revise the draft text or regarding the introduction of additional materials. They may also have indicated what they consider to be priorities. In cases where consultations are conducted as multistep, multistakeholder processes, it is recommended that a summary of consultations be prepared to assist in the finalization of the National Strategy and Action Plan and to demonstrate transparency to the consultation participants. A summary document may not be necessary if the consultation is carried out during a national consultation workshop with participation of the drafting team, secretariat and the National Advisory Committee.

The National Advisory Committee and secretariat should now carefully review the comments received and decide on any revisions to the draft document. When final agreement among Committee members on the strategic priorities and actions is achieved, the action plan component of the National Strategy and Action Plan can be prepared.

Implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan will require several years of effort and involve a diverse range of individuals and organizations. Many actions will be ongoing in nature, such as long-term monitoring of trends and risks to animal genetic resources and implementing conservation measures. Annual planning and budget preparation will be required during the implementation phase.

At this phase of work it is recommended that the National Advisory Committee prepare the action plan component of the National Strategy and Action Plan by:

- establishing lead agencies for each strategic priority and associated actions;
- identifying, with the lead agency, partner organizations that will support the lead agency in the implementation of the strategic priority and actions;
- indicating the expected outcomes associated with the strategic priority and actions;
- estimating the time required to achieve the desired outcomes (ongoing action or achievable in the short, medium or long term); and
- recommending the institutional arrangements necessary to oversee the implementation phase of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

In preparing the action plan it is important that the National Advisory Committee give full consideration to current national capacity to deliver the proposed actions. The implementation period is likely to require five to ten years and thus, while it is desirable to have a challenging



TABLE 4  
Action plan elements

Strategic Priority				
Action				
Tasks				
Lead implementation organization	Partner organizations	Time frame	Expected costs	Sources of financing
Expected outputs				

and ambitious National Strategy and Action Plan, the action plan component must be realistic and outline a step-by-step incremental approach consistent with existing capacity.

It is also important that linkages or potential linkages among the various strategic priorities and actions be identified and taken into account during preparation of the action plan component. Some strategic directions and actions may need to be addressed prior to the others. It is also important to identify where failure to achieve an action may prevent the achievement of another action. Table 4 is provided to assist with the preparation of the action plan component of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

### STEP 1: ESTABLISH LEAD AGENCIES AND PARTNERS AND THE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

To be able to develop a comprehensive and effective action plan component during this phase of work, two key outcomes should be sought from the preparation process:

1. establish a lead agency for each of the main strategic priorities and actions; and
2. identify partners and agree on the institutional arrangements for the implementation phase of the National Strategy and Action Plan.

Ideally, the minister responsible for animal genetic resources will agree to take overall lead responsibility for implementing the National Strategy and Action Plan and therefore, during this phase of work, the National Advisory Committee should interact with the ministry responsible for agriculture to reach agreement on lead agencies and partners for each of the strategic priorities and actions. This will require discussions with other departments and organizations.

### STEP 2: ESTABLISH INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This is perhaps the most important consideration for the National Advisory Committee during this phase of work. The National Advisory Committee should provide to the minister responsible for animal genetic resources clear recommendations on the institutional arrangements it believes are necessary to implement the National Strategy and Action Plan successfully. It should advise the ministry on future roles for the National Advisory Committee and the National Focal Point during the implementation phase.



It is recommended that the National Advisory Committee continue to provide overall insight and supervision during the implementation phase. If necessary, the membership of the Committee should be adjusted to reflect the change in function from overseeing the planning process to providing guidance on implementation.

It is recommended that the National Focal Point provide facilitation and coordination during the ongoing implementation phase, as many supporting activities will be required. The main activities anticipated for the National Focal Point during the implementation period include:

- preparing an annual programme of work and budget for the national programme with special emphasis on the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan;
- facilitating the activities of the national animal genetic resources network;
- preparing project proposals and mobilizing financial resources from both national and international sources;
- managing the project and preparing the budget – coordinating, as required, the implementation of specific sustainable use, development and conservation projects;
- managing data and information, including overseeing the development of a national database and contributing to regional and global databases for animal genetic resources;
- establishing an animal genetic resources monitoring programme and possibly an early warning system for breeds at risk;
- coordinating breed conservation programmes and supervising *ex situ* gene banks for animal genetic resources if established;
- facilitating coordination and collaboration among research, training and extension services;
- preparing communication materials and undertaking education and public awareness programmes;
- identifying opportunities for cooperation among countries with common interests and international agencies involved with animal genetic resources;
- facilitating evaluation of progress made in the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, including developing appropriate performance indicators or measures to assess progress;
- routinely reviewing national and international commitments, legislation, policies, conventions and treaties to ensure compliance, including the preparation of progress reports; and
- maintaining linkages with, and contributing to the work of the FAO Global Focal Point, Regional Focal Points where they exist, and international animal genetic resources networks.

### **STEP 3: ESTIMATE THE COSTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES**

It is desirable to provide estimates of the expected costs of achieving the outcomes desired for each strategic priority and action and to identify possible sources of funding. It may be difficult to provide precise cost estimates during this phase of work as lead agencies will need to prepare budgets and work plans for the responsibilities they have accepted. However, estimating the costs involved in implementing each of the actions and evaluating the total costs involved are necessary steps towards governmental endorsement of the National Strategy and Action Plan. Even if the costs are indicative at this phase of work, they will give a general estimate of financial needs from both domestic and external sources.



## PHASE 8

# Establish a process and timeline for monitoring and evaluation

This section provides advice on how to put in place a system for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources. Progress reports are needed to provide a basis for future action at the national level and to meet international reporting requirements.

The final phase of preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan is to establish a monitoring, evaluation and reporting schedule. Two distinct types of monitoring and reporting are required. Monitoring of the status and trends of animal genetic resources is essential to underpin national management activities. The *Global Plan of Action* suggests a number of actions for monitoring the status of animal genetic resources within the country, and each country should have considered status and trends reporting when preparing their strategic priorities and actions in Phases 4 through 7 above; thus, this type of monitoring and reporting is not addressed in this section.

The second type of monitoring and reporting requires periodic assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. Actions taken must be assessed routinely to determine whether the desired results are being achieved. In instances where it is determined that action was not taken or did not achieve the desired outcomes, the situation should be reviewed and solutions sought.

National monitoring of progress in implementation is also important to promote further international support for efforts to achieve the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources in developing countries. The section on implementation and financing in the *Global Plan of Action* notes that conclusions reached by the Commission in the light of national reports on progress in implementation and on status and trends should be brought to the attention of concerned governments and international institutions in order to fill gaps, rectify imbalances or lack of coordination and to consider new initiatives or activities. This makes the imperative of national reporting clear.

It is recommended that the National Advisory Committee ensure that the National Strategy and Action Plan include a section on progress reporting, which provides for the preparation of an annual synthesis report on progress made by each lead agency. Table 5 has been prepared to assist countries with establishing a framework for reporting. The suggested approach requires that the National Advisory Committee, in cooperation with each lead agency, develop evaluation criteria to assess their performance with respect to each strategic priority for which they are responsible.

It is recommended that each lead agency report to the National Advisory Committee and that the National Advisory Committee provide to the minister responsible for animal



TABLE 5  
National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources: evaluation framework

Lead agency	
National strategic priority	
Action	
Task	
Evaluation criteria	
Outputs achieved	
Opportunities and challenges to implementation	
Future action required	

genetic resources an annual synthesis report with recommendations for any adjustments that may be required.

It is necessary to monitor implementation progress on a yearly basis in order to plan responses to possible obstacles to implementation. Most importantly, an annual progress report will greatly assist the effective preparation of the work plan and budget for the subsequent year of implementation.

It is recommended that the National Advisory Committee also consider international reporting requirements. In preparing the schedule for comprehensive national reporting, the National Advisory Committee should consider the Commission's Multi-year Programme of Work, so that the national report is available when the Commission is considering animal genetic resources at its regular sessions, and in particular when the Commission is receiving reports on the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.

To reduce the burden of reporting, it is recommended that the national comprehensive progress report be prepared using the four Strategic Priority Areas of the *Global Plan of Action* as a framework. It is suggested that the first comprehensive progress review take place four to five years after finalization of the National Strategy and Action Plan and that a second review be planned for approximately eight to ten years after the finalization, bearing in mind that at certain times national reports will be required as contributions to international reporting. The comprehensive reports should provide a basis on which to consider any potential major revisions to the National Strategy and Action Plan.

Inclusion of a monitoring, evaluation and reporting schedule in the National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources completes the preparatory process. Suggestions for the endorsement and public release of the National Strategy and Action Plan are provided below, in Phase 9.



## PHASE 9

# Formally endorse the National Strategy and Action Plan

This section describes the process of obtaining official government endorsement of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources and ensuring its widespread public release and support.

The finalization of the National Strategy and Action Plan should not be considered the end of the process; rather, it should signal the beginning of the implementation phase of work. The endorsement and launch of the National Strategy and Action Plan must be an important early consideration and a focus of the communication plan.

Strong government endorsement of the National Strategy and Action Plan is extremely important. Ideally, stakeholders will also be given an opportunity to indicate their commitment to implementation. A public launch of the National Strategy and Action Plan will help to achieve rapid and effective transition from the planning phase to implementation.

It is strongly recommended that the National Advisory Committee seek official endorsement by the government of the National Strategy and Action Plan and a commitment to review progress in its implementation. Each country will need to determine the best approach to obtaining governmental commitment to the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan. It is also crucial to determine ways and means to generate stakeholder and public awareness that the National Strategy and Action Plan has been endorsed by the government and is publicly available.

In planning for the endorsement and release of the National Strategy and Action Plan, countries may wish to consider:

- preparing a Statement of Commitment, which indicates official government endorsement of the National Strategy and Action Plan;
- providing means for public-sector institutions, such as research institutes, universities and others, to commit themselves to supporting the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, including by signing a Statement of Commitment;
- providing means for non-governmental organizations and the private sector to commit to supporting the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, including by signing a Statement of Commitment;
- widely distributing the National Strategy and Action Plan using a variety of means;
- preparing communications material to accompany the National Strategy and Action Plan, such as a summary document, an executive brief, pamphlets, fact sheets, video material, etc. It is important to be aware of language requirements and the need for plain language to ensure understanding of the National Strategy and Action Plan by non-experts and the general public;





- engaging the media, providing them with information and briefing sessions, and facilitating access to officials and participants involved in the preparation of the National Strategy and Action Plan, such as members of the National Advisory Committee and the responsible minister;
- releasing the National Strategy and Action Plan at a national livestock-related event, such as a national meeting of the society for animal production, scientific conference, animal breeding show, or breeders' association general assembly; and
- making the National Strategy and Action Plan available outside the country – for example, announcing its endorsement through the DAD-Net network and distributing it through the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS). It should also be reported in the Country Progress Reports that countries will be requested to prepare regularly in order to monitor the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action*.

