



LEAGUE FOR
PASTORAL PEOPLES
AND ENDOGENOUS
LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT

Advocating Livestock Keepers' Rights

at the International Technical Conference
on Animal Genetic Resources
Interlaken, Switzerland, 1–7 September 2007



A report by the
**League for Pastoral Peoples and
Endogenous Livestock Development**
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Introduction

The First International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources was organised by FAO and the Government of Switzerland in Interlaken from 1-7 September, 2007. It was also the culmination of almost seven years of advocating for Livestock Keepers' Rights by the League for Pastoral Peoples and Endogenous Livestock Development (LPP) and the LIFE Network. This report documents the various activities that took place in 2007, analyses the outcome of the conference, and outlines future plans.

Purpose and process of the Interlaken Conference

The purpose of the conference that was attended by 109 governments was to highlight the critical situation of farm animal genetic resources worldwide and to reach an agreement on common strategies for their management. The official programme consisted of a pre-conference Scientific Forum, of the release of the Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the finalisation and approval of two draft documents, the Interlaken Declaration on Animal Genetic Resources and the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources. The Interlaken Declaration was to be a political statement about the importance of animal genetic resources, while the Global Plan of Action was a detailed action plan that described its rationale, elaborated a set of strategic priorities for the characterization, sustainable use, development, and conservation of animal genetic resources and contained provisions for implementation and financing.

In the run-up to the conference, LPP and the LIFE Network had been advocating for the inclusion of Livestock Keepers' Rights (Box 1) in both documents. There was also alarm over a phrasing in the draft Global Plan of Action that rendered the exchange of animal genetic resources contingent upon adherence to Intellectual Property Rights.

Box 1 Cornerstones of Livestock Keepers' Rights

Livestock Keepers' Rights are a bundle of rights and entitlements that would enable livestock keepers to conserve and develop their breeds. The concept was developed and refined in a series of meetings with livestock keepers and pastoralists over the last 7 years, starting in Sadri (2000), Rome (2002), Karen (2003), Bellagio (2006), Yabello (2006), Sadri (2007), and Addis Ababa (2007). It includes the following cornerstones:

- 1: Recognition of livestock keepers as creators of breeds and custodians of AnGRFA
- 2: Recognition of the dependency of the sustainable use of traditional breeds on the conservation of their respective eco-systems
- 3: Recognition of traditional breeds as collective property, products of indigenous knowledge and cultural expression.
- 4: Right of livestock keepers to breed and make breeding decisions
- 5: Right of livestock keepers to participate in policy making processes on AnGRFA issues

6: Support for training and capacity-building of livestock keepers and provision of services along the food chain.

7: Right of livestock keepers to participate in the identification of research needs and research design with respect to their genetic resources, so as to ensure compliance with the principle of Prior Informed Consent, or “PIC”.

Together with financing and (non-)trade-distorting incentives, Livestock Keepers’ Rights was one of the three main contentious issues for governments. On financing, developed countries sought to avoid any commitments, while developing countries saw financing as a prerequisite for the implementation of the Global Action Plan. The issue of trade versus non-trade distorting incentives is a much debated subject in WTO negotiations. Livestock Keepers’ Rights were strongly advocated for by the African region, but opposed by the developed countries because they regarded them as un-chartered legal territory. All three issues were considered as divisive enough to prevent an agreement. Out of the fear that insistence by the African Region on inclusion of references to Livestock Keepers’ Rights could stand in the way of reaching an agreement, the European region, in its opening statement, suggested that they should be referred to the CBD’s working group on paragraph 8j, and to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

Activities by LPP and the LIFE Network

Pre-Interlaken

The agenda at Interlaken was to agree upon documents that had been drafted and practically finalized several months ago. To influence the process in favour of small-scale livestock keepers, in 2007 LPP and LIFE had conducted a series of preparatory workshops, participated in a meeting of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) and produced a film and advocacy materials.

Preparatory workshops

In the first half of 2007, LPP and the LIFE Network organised two regional preparatory workshops¹, one of them in Rajasthan (India) hosted by LPPS, the other one in Ethiopia hosted by the Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (IBC) and co-organized with IBC, the Ethiopian Society of Animal Production, the Endogenous Livestock Development Network, and Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia. Both of these workshops were aimed at convincing governments of the importance and need for Livestock Keepers’ Rights. The Indian workshop managed to persuade the government - that had until then barely taken note of the Interlaken process - to take the issue serious. At a national level workshop on AnGR and IPR that was held in May, one of the topics was to look into ways of formalizing and implementing Livestock Keepers’ and Pastoralists Rights on a national level. Just prior to the Interlaken Conference, Indian LIFE Network members were invited to a preparatory meeting for deciding an Interlaken strategy in the Ministry of

¹ For both workshops, separate reports are available at www.pastoralpeoples.org

Agriculture. At the Ethiopian workshop, the African government representatives decided that they would back Livestock Keepers' Rights, and it is due to their efforts that references to rights were included into the draft documents during the CGRFA (Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture) meeting in June 2007.

Participation in CGRFA

LPP and LIFE Network participated in the 11th meeting of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA 11) held at FAO in Rome. Besides providing inputs during sessions, they organised a side event entitled "Diverse Livestock for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation". Chaired by Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, the event featured presentations from Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

- Andreas Wilkes, The Mountain Institute, China
Ethnic communities, local breeds and development: Observations from China
- Hanwant Singh, Lokhit Pashu-Palak Sansthan (LPPS), Rajasthan (India)
Saving the camel for sustainable land-use and poverty alleviation
- Tom Loquang, Kisup Ateker, Uganda
Community based breed documentation as a tool for empowerment
- Marcello Centeno, INTA, Argentina
Strengthening Patagonian shepherders through obtaining a Geographical Indication

Films

For the purpose of convincing policy makers of the crucial role of pastoralists in conserving livestock biodiversity and emphasizing the connection between conservation and access to resources, LPP and the LIFE Network cooperated with Delhi-based documentary makers Moving Images to produce the film "Keepers of Genes" that was shot at several locations in India. The film is accompanied by a book of the same name of which 800 copies have been printed. The film has already been widely shown on four continents, including Argentina, Brazil, Ethiopia, India, and Europe. It has also been entered in several film festivals, and hopefully will also contribute to awareness raising among non-specialists.

In order to help international audiences to understand the Raika and their role in husbanding diversity, a short clip "Camel breeders of the Kings" was also shot by Moving Images.

At Interlaken

Participants

LPP mobilised 30 participants (including four staff) from 12 countries, including 7 countries in Africa, 5 in Asia, 2 in Latin America and 2 in Europe. All of them were either

from livestock-keeping communities or closely working with them on the ground (see list in Appendix 2).

Raika delegation

A very special experience was the participation of a group of Raika pastoralists from Rajasthan, composed of Dailibai Raika, Mangilal Raika and Rama Ram Raika. Prior to the conference, this delegation spent several days in Germany at the LPP headquarters for orientation sessions, for learning how traditional breeds are employed in nature and landscape management in Europe, for visiting relevant projects (i.e. a goat dairy and biodynamic animal husbandry project), and for interacting with media. The group was accompanied by a traditional musician and by the director of LIFE partner organisation LPPS in Rajasthan, Hanwant Singh. The colourful group proved to be a hit with the media and the general public wherever they went. An Indian dinner with press conference that was held in Germany was attended not only by local media, but also by the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ), as well as by radio and TV journalists.



LPP member and long-time supporter Bettina Bock and delegate Dailibai Raika



Field trip into the Swiss Alps to learn about local breeds and management practices



Musician Tula Ram with François Pythoud, organiser of the Interlaken Conference

Participation in the Science Forum

LIFE Network members Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, Jacob Wanyama, Raul Perezgrovas, and Nitya Ghotge were invited by the organisers to act as respondents to four scientific lead papers that covered the following subjects:

- “Dynamics of livestock production systems, the drivers of change and prospects for animal genetic resources”
- “inventory, characterization and monitoring of animal genetic resources”
- “sustainable use and genetic improvement” and

- “conservation of animal genetic resources: approaches and technologies for in situ and ex-situ conservation”.

Representatives of other stakeholder groups, including the livestock industries, had also been invited as panellists. This resulted in lively discussion. Gratifyingly, one of FAO’s stated conclusions from the Science Forum was the need to engage farmers and other livestock keepers in research!

Side events

LPP and LIFE Network members organised four side events:

1. Livestock genetics industry and its impact in developing countries

held on 4th September, 13:15-14.30, chaired by Anna Eusebi, Tanzania, with presentations from:

- J. Cabarles Jr., Philippines: *Effect of industrialized animal production in the livestock industry of the Philippines and to the livelihood of marginal farmers*
- S. Gura, Germany: *Intensive livestock production destroys diversity and livelihoods*
- S. Gura, Germany: *Livestock breeding industry and public policies: Impact on smallholders and their breeds*



Left to right: Tom Loquang, Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, Hanwant Singh, P. Vivekanandan, Maria-Rosa Lanari, Abdul Raziq

2. Everything you always wanted to know about Livestock Keepers’ Rights

held on Wednesday, 5 September, 13:15-14:30 h, with presentations by

- Thomas Loquang, Kisup Ateker, Uganda: *Livestock Keepers’ Rights – the History*
- Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, LPP, Germany: *Livestock Keepers’ Rights: the Cornerstones*
- Hanwant Singh, Lokhit Pashu-Palak Sansthan, Rajasthan, India: *Film clip about Raika pastoralists*
- P. Vivekanandan, SEVA, India: *Experiences with lobbying for Livestock Keepers’ Rights in India*
- Maria Rosa Lanari, INTA, Argentina: *Valorization of a transhumant sheep production system through obtaining a Geographical Indication (G.I.)*
- Abdul Raziq Kakar, SAVES, Pakistan: *The perspective of pastoralists from Pakistan*

3. Endogenous Livestock Development: Supporting poor livestock keepers

This side event was organized by LPP staff Evelyn Mathias and other members of the ELD Network. It was held on Thursday: 6th Sep 2007, 13:15 – 14:45 with presentations by

- Jacob Wanyama, VETAID Mozambique *About the Network:*
- Tezera Getahun, Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia: *Large in size little recognized – the camel in Ethiopia:*,
- Raul Perzgrovas, Instituto de Estudios Indigenas – UNACH, Chiapas, Mexico: *Tzotzil shepherdness lead research:*
- Evelyn Mathias: LPP and ELD network, Germany: *Farmers initiatives towards sustainable diary farming in the Netherlands:*
- Barrister Nchunu Justice Sama, Foundation for Environment and Development, Environmental/ Human Rights Law, Cameroon: *Livestock Keepers Rights: Legal Perspectives:*



Left to right: Barrister Nchunu Justice Sama, Tezera Getahun, Evelyn Mathias, Nitya Ghotge, Jacob Wanyama, Raul Perezgrovas

4. Side event on animal genetic resources in India

This event was organised by LIFE Network member SEVA on 6th September and included presentations by P. Vivekanandan, Dr. D.K. Sadana of the National Bureau on Animal Genetic Resources, and screening of the film “Keepers of Genes”.

Media work

Besides organising a pre-conference press conference and sending out a press release, LPP arranged the participation of three free-lance print, radio and TV journalists in the Interlaken events. Articles have appeared in leading German daily newspapers, such as TAZ and FAZ, while radio and TV programmes are still in preparation. One programme will be aired in the Deutschlandfunk.

In addition, LIFE Network members participated in the press conference organised by Swissaid on 6th September. In India too, articles about the Raika tour appeared in The Hindu before and after their trip, while in Germany a report appeared in the Arche Nova, the periodical of the Society for Endangered Livestock Breeds (GEH).

Information and advocacy materials

At the Interlaken conference LIFE distributed advocacy materials produced specifically for the conference. These included a leaflet summarizing information about Animal Genetic Resources and Intellectual Property Rights, a poster detailing Livestock Keepers' Rights and a four-page colour brochure introducing the LIFE Network and Livestock Keepers' Rights. A study about livestock genetics industries was also widely distributed. All materials are available from www.pastoralpeoples.org.

Participation in the exhibition

At a stand in the Exhibition tent, the publications and posters of LPP and the LIFE Network listed in the previous section were on display. Musician Tola Ram Bhopa delighted visitors and conference participants with his songs about how the camel came to Rajasthan.

One of the highlights of the conference was a fusion concert with a Swiss Yodel group in which the Indian delegation displayed a remarkable aptitude for yodelling while the Swiss Yodellers were in perfect harmony with Tola Ram's *ravanhatta* instrument! Maybe this unexpected harmony is because yodelling has its roots in communication between alpine farmers and their cattle.



Tola Ram performing a traditional epic about how the camel came to Rajasthan

Process documentation

At the initiative of LPP, the events at Interlaken, including the tour of the Raika delegation, as well as the negotiation of the wording of the conference documents were filmed by Moving Images' Creative Director, Sanjay Barnela. LPP and Moving Images are currently looking for funding to put together a film on "Livestock Keepers' Rights."

Participation in government negotiations

The expertise of the LIFE Network was also instrumental during the actual negotiations. Some of its members were invited to participate and assist in the regional government meetings in which wording and negotiation positions were discussed. In particular, Barrister Nchunu Justice Sama was enlisted by the delegates of the African region to help them in elaborating wording for "Livestock Keepers' Rights" in the official documents. Barrister Nchunu's legal expertise was then also made use of by the delegates of the G77, however the South Pacific region, under the influence of Australia, refused to support the issue.

Cooperation with Animal Diversity Forum

Together with the IPC (International Planning Committee of the Food Sovereignty Forum), LPP and the LIFE Network jointly organised the Animal Diversity Forum that was held at Wilderswil parallel to the official conference. This meeting resulted in the Wilderswil Declaration (available at www.ukabc.org/wilderswil.pdf).



Raika delegates at the Wilderswil meeting



Sheep breeder Rama Ram Raika

Conclusions

Evaluation of the outcome

On the final day of the conference, the Global Plan of Action (GPA) and the Interlaken Declaration were adopted by the governments. The GPA is a comprehensive and detailed document. Disappointingly, but predictably, it casts animal genetic resource management as an issue that is to be controlled and managed by the state and gives livestock keepers only a supporting role instead of making them the key actors. Nevertheless, the GPA does recognise and emphasize the **important role of local and indigenous communities** in upholding diversity. Especially Strategic Priority 6 (Box 2) is directed entirely at supporting indigenous and local production systems by various mechanisms that also address the welfare of livestock-keeping communities.

Box 2 Strategic Priority 6: Support indigenous and local production systems and associated knowledge systems, of importance to the maintenance and sustainable use of animal genetic resources

Actions:

- Support indigenous and local livestock systems of importance to animal genetic resources, including through the removal of factors contributing to 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.

- 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.
- Promote the development of niche markets for products derived from indigenous and local species and breeds, and to strengthen and associated knowledge systems, of importance

The rights of livestock keepers are referred to in the GPA six times, even if rather obliquely, and in some rather unexpected contexts. By comparison, there are two references to sovereign rights of nations over their AnGr, whereas Intellectual Property Rights are alluded to twice. (However, IPR were deleted from the context in which they were contentious to NGOs.) While the term “Livestock Keepers’ Rights” is thus not explicitly used, the GPA touches upon several of the cornerstones of Livestock Keepers’ Rights, notably points 1,2,3,5, and 6 (see Box 1).

Nevertheless, the GPA falls short in two critical aspects. First, it does not address the crucial issue of concentration in the livestock genetics sector which is recognised as the major factor driving change. Secondly, it does not directly address the somewhat likely future scenario of patents and other types of IPR interfering with the customary right of farmers and pastoralists to breed. However, Strategic Priority Area 4 leaves a loophole by recognising “*the need to take into account the increasing role of intellectual property rights in the sector, and the need to secure equitable benefit-sharing, the rights of indigenous and local communities, particularly pastoralists, and the role of their knowledge systems.*”

Lessons about influencing the debate

Less than 10 years ago, in 1998, when LPP first attended the second session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources (ITWG-AnGr) at FAO in Rome, farmers and pastoralists were not even regarded as stakeholders in animal genetic resources, and there was no notion of indigenous knowledge with respect to managing livestock diversity. At this stage, conservation was the exclusive mandate of scientists and governments, and indigenous livestock breeds were perceived as the results of natural selection only. Since then, attitudes and mindsets have changed significantly, as is testified by the official report of the conference – it makes extensive reference to pastoralists (20 times), farmers (28 times), and indigenous communities (21 times). Much of this change can be attributed to the efforts of LPP and the LIFE Network to make visible the role of pastoralists, small farmers and indigenous people in actively managing and shaping diversity.

Contrary to many other NGOs, LPP and the LIFE Network have worked mostly from the *inside* to change attitudes and approaches of governments and scientists towards the role of pastoralists and other livestock keepers in the management of AnGr. We have tried to convince and win over these stakeholders through fact-based argumentation, including documentation of IK, exposure workshops among livestock keepers in the field, through a large number of side events at international conferences, as well as through

publications, and a film. After a slow start, the response has been gratifying, especially by many government representatives in Africa and Asia, the continents on which we focused our efforts. Some of the Latin American countries too are sympathetic.

Future approach

The amount of discussion that surrounded the issue underscored that Livestock Keepers' Rights have now turned into a political issue that the major players in animal genetic resources will no longer be able to ignore. Indeed, in the follow-up to the conference, Brazil has already criticized that Livestock Keepers' Rights were not given sufficient attention at Interlaken and has requested FAO to integrate a detailed analysis of the concept into its multi-year programme of work. Furthermore, individual governments can be expected to protect and implement LKR at national level – India is an example of a country in which government representatives had no respect for livestock keepers, but that has now picked up on the issue. Members of the CGRFA Secretariat at FAO have advised us that they believe LKR will not materialize over night, but eventually, if livestock keepers and their supporting NGOs keep up the pressure at national levels.

More important than formalizing LKR on paper, will be the recognition of LKR as an approach and guiding principle recipe for pro-poor and biodiversity-conserving livestock development by donors and development agencies. The practical, field level implementation of LKR would amount to a paradigm change in livestock development that would be in line with the implementation of several international conventions, CBD, UNCCD, UNCCC etc.

Acknowledgments

LPP is extremely grateful to Misereor for having supported its work in the early stages when it was not yet sure where it was going; later the GTZ provided crucial support in enabling us not only to develop a method for documenting IK about animal breeding, but also to share the results of our action research with government officials from Asia. In 2004, funding from the EED made it possible to hold the Karen workshop – to become a key stone in Livestock Keepers' Rights movement. In the last couple of years, FAO has also actively supported research and writing about these aspects of animal genetic resource management. In the year before the Interlaken Conference, many other donors that have supported NGO activities in the plant sector also came on board and supported the Interlaken preparation and participation. These include Swedbio, HIVOS-NOVIB-OXFAM Biodiversity Fund, DEZA, Bread for the World, Swissaid, and The Christensen Fund. The support of Bettina Bock, Bruno Haas, Günther Bock and the Stürz Family to LPP over all these years is also gratefully acknowledged.

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