



Press Release

Small-scale livestock keepers need level playing field to put livestock development on sustainable path, say experts.

International Conference „LIVESTOCK FUTURES“ held in Bonn (Germany) on 6th and 7th September, 2012.

Bonn, 8. September, 2012.

During an international conference convened by the League for Pastoral Peoples and Endogenous Livestock Development (LPP), 80 experts from 16 countries and five continents discussed the future scenarios of livestock keeping.

The experts – representing a wide variety of institutions and organisations ranging from herders’ associations and non-government organisations to German government ministries and United Nations (UN) bodies – recognised the troubled condition of the livestock sector and warned about the dangers of exporting industrial systems without appropriate regulatory frameworks. They emphasized the need for steering it into a more sustainable direction with less dependence on fossil fuels and artificial fertilizers. Alternative approaches would generate employment instead of leading to outmigration, use more solar power and thrive for closed nutrient cycles, preventing accumulation of manure while making full use of its value in maintaining soil health and fertility. The preferred approach to animal diseases would focus on prevention by providing a healthy environment with fresh air, sunshine, and free movement.

There was agreement that although many small-scale livestock keepers and pastoralists already fulfil these criteria their role and value in global food security tends to be ignored and is currently underestimated and undervalued.

Policies for a more sustainable livestock sector should seek to encourage or enforce internalisation of externalized (environmental, social, and public health) costs. Secondly, subsidies for industrial production must be reined in. Thirdly, the relative position of small-scale livestock keepers must be strengthened by formalizing their participation in policy making processes and by supporting them to claim their “livestock keepers’ rights” under existing policy frameworks such as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the Right to food, and the African Union (AU) policy framework on pastoralism. Furthermore, more emphasis has to be given to enable livestock keepers to access markets and obtain fair prices, to take advantage of the demand for regional and niche products and to build their own organisations. Rural entrepreneurs could play an invaluable role in setting up value chains and should be supported, as well as appropriate education and exit strategies for youths from rural livestock keeping backgrounds.

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LPP at Youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZ3xmjEWczU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xEmSuRqlx0g>