

Global Forum for Food and Agriculture

Communiqué 2018

"Shaping the Future of Livestock – sustainably, responsibly, efficiently"

Preamble

We, the agriculture ministers of 69 nations, have assembled here on 20th January 2018 for the 10th Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference, held during the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA), to discuss how we can shape the future of global livestock production. We fully acknowledge our responsibility to enhance food security and nutrition, sustainably improve the efficiency and profitability of the food and agriculture sector, advance the right to adequate food and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in particular SDG 2 "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture". We believe that making livestock production and animal husbandry more sustainable, more responsible and more efficient worldwide will play a crucial role in meeting this responsibility.

We note that the demand for food of animal origin, in particular food derived from meat, milk and eggs, is projected to rise significantly in many regions of the world due to the growing population, increasing purchasing power and changes in consumer behaviour. At the same time, consumers are increasingly calling for livestock production to be made more sustainable and more respectful of animal welfare.

We recognise that in many parts of our world diverse livestock systems play a major role in combatting hunger and malnutrition as well as reducing poverty by securing the livelihoods of many people, in particular in rural areas, and constitute an important national economic factor, for instance through promoting investment and trade and providing jobs in rural areas.

We are aware that livestock production can have environmentally significant impacts on soil, water and air and contribute to climate change. We underline that livestock is also impacted by climate change.

We recognise the differences that exist regarding access to adequate food and nutrition, and the diversity of livestock systems and production methods worldwide. In addition, we are aware of religious and socio-cultural practices as they relate to livestock.

We underscore the importance of the diversity of animal genetic resources and their conservation, sustainable use and development for breeding, livestock husbandry and food security.

We underline the current and potential impact of innovations, especially those derived from digitalisation and bio-economy, on the evolution of livestock production systems worldwide.

We stress that livestock production worldwide will have to meet the growing demand efficiently and sustainably, and will have to improve farmers' profitability, with due attention to the social and environmental dimension of sustainability, thus also ensuring that this production is climate-friendly and respectful of animal welfare. We emphasise that access to land, water, knowledge, technology, innovations, finance and markets is a fundamental prerequisite for efficient and sustainable livestock production for all farmers. Insufficient access is a particular constraint for many smallholders and family farmers.

We are committed, in cooperation with farmers and stakeholders in the private sector, academia and civil society, to enhancing efforts to actively shape the future of livestock production.

With this declaration we are providing impetus and highlighting potential areas for political action and encourage the international bodies such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), both individually and under their agreed tripartite collaboration, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to integrate these areas into their strategies.

In this regard, we call for the implementation of the:

- 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular those relating to food security and nutrition;
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement (COP21, COP22, COP23), in particular National Determined Contributions (NDCs) related to mitigation actions for sustainable agriculture;
- Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realisation of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security;
- Policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) at its 43rd session on "Sustainable Agriculture Development for Food Security and Nutrition: What Roles for Livestock?";
- Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT);
- Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI principles);
- Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management drawn up by the Global Soil Partnership;
- OIE Global Animal Disease and Global Animal Welfare Strategy and the results of the OIE's work on animal health and welfare standards (Terrestrial Code);
- joint OIE and FAO programmes to eradicate the Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) and foot-and-mouth disease and the joint OIE, WHO and FAO programme on eradicating dog-mediated rabies;
- Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance led jointly by the WHO, the OIE and the FAO, the FAO's Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance and the OIE Strategy on Antimicrobial Resistance and the Prudent Use of Antimicrobials;
- the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources of the FAO and the Interlaken Declaration;
- Codex Alimentarius' international food standards for protecting health and ensuring fair trade practices; and the
- WTO Agreements on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and on Technical Barriers to Trade.

Call for Action

We, the agriculture ministers assembled at the GFFA 2018, aim to safeguard the supply of, and access to, sufficient, safe, nutritious and affordable food from livestock production for the growing world population and to meet the economic, environmental and social challenges the livestock sector faces.

Ensuring food security and nutrition

The livestock sector needs to further enhance its contribution to global food security and nutrition in light of the fact that more than 815 million people are suffering from chronic hunger and even more from malnutrition in all its forms.

We aim:

1. to meet the growing demand by developing policies that make the production of food of animal origin more efficient and sustainable by improved, locally adapted livestock feeding methods and livestock production systems, including integrated crop-livestock-forestry systems, and pasture and rangeland restoration;
2. to promote better dissemination and application of technologies and innovations, in particular regarding breeding, feeding and livestock husbandry;
3. to improve access to food of animal origin for low-income households, especially women, adolescents and children, given the particular essential contribution of food of animal origin in combating malnutrition in all its forms;
4. to give attention to ensuring the safety of food of animal origin in order to minimise the risk of foodborne diseases;
5. to expand research and knowledge creation and transfer in order to develop traditional and alternative sources of protein to feed both people and animals sustainably and safely, and thus improve access to protein of high nutritional value;
6. to contribute to improved consumer education and information regarding healthy and sustainable diets;
7. to reduce food losses and wastage within livestock production systems, in particular by making better use of human-inedible feed resources and by reducing animal losses through improved disease prevention and husbandry practices.

Improving livelihoods

The livestock sector safeguards the livelihoods of around 1.3 billion people, of whom many are poor and vulnerable, constitutes food value chains, creates income and employment in many regions of the world and helps to develop rural areas.

We aim:

1. to foster responsible public and private investment in the livestock sector to improve productivity, strengthen value and distribution chains and enhance access to local, regional and global markets;
2. to promote the application of VGGT as well as of the RAI;
3. to strengthen the position of farmers and workers along the value chains, and ensure that their working and living conditions comply with International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, are protected by domestic laws, and provide an adequate livelihood;
4. to reaffirm the importance of rule-based trading systems to support the efficient, sustainable and safe production and supply of food of animal origin and the need to remove discriminatory trade barriers and to continue the WTO reform process on agriculture trade;
5. to provide women and men with equal access to education and training in order to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge, technologies, including digitalisation, and practices;
6. to expand the legally secure access of all farmers, in particular smallholders, young farmers and women farmers, to land, other natural resources, financing and markets;
7. to promote youth initiatives, including education, training, rural advisory services and inclusive finance;
8. to ensure that minorities enjoy equal rights and that the rights of indigenous communities are protected.

Conserving natural resources, protecting the environment and addressing climate change

The livestock sector uses large quantities of natural resources and accounts, according to the FAO, for 14.5% of all anthropogenic greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions globally.

Improvements made in this sector could make a major contribution towards addressing climate change and protecting the environment, while also enhancing worldwide food security and ensuring the viability and profitability of the sector. The potential impacts of climate change to animal husbandry need to be addressed as well.

We aim:

1. to promote sustainable and resource-efficient livestock production, including through innovations, integrated systems, agro-ecological methods and organic farming, inter alia by phasing out unsustainable policies and practices;
2. to maximise positive externalities and minimise environmentally harmful impacts caused to soil, water and air by animal production;
3. to reduce livestock's greenhouse-gas emissions by making livestock production systems more efficient, while also meeting animal health and animal welfare requirements; to minimise losses and waste of water, energy and nutrients, in particular by improving the integration of livestock into the circular bio-economy;
4. to promote the adaptation of livestock production to the effects of climate change;
5. to support regionally adapted agricultural value chains, including feed production, with the aim both of ensuring that resources are used efficiently and sustainably and that ecosystems and biodiversity are protected;
6. to foster site-specific and traditional animal husbandry systems such as pastoral farming, insofar as these systems use ecosystems sustainably and secure food supply and livelihoods;
7. to conserve and use sustainably the diversity of breeds and other animal genetic resources;
8. to promote and support international research collaboration on reducing the intensity of GHG emissions from livestock production systems, including by pasture restoration and soil carbon sequestration;
9. to support capacity building and the sharing of best practice in these areas and regarding the accurate measurement of GHG emissions from livestock.

Improving animal health and animal welfare

With sufficient access to veterinary services and with improved management regarding animal health and animal welfare, global animal production could, according to the OIE, be increased by around 20%.

We aim:

1. to improve animal health and animal welfare by promoting good animal husbandry management practices, biosecurity and biosafety, innovations, technologies, practices and knowledge exchange;
2. to enable farmers to have access to veterinary services, veterinary consultation and effective veterinary medicinal products, to protect animals and humans against the outbreak and spread of animal diseases, especially zoonosis;
3. to combat the occurrence and spread of antimicrobial resistance, as laid down in the "One Health" approach, and to strive to restrict the use of antibiotics in veterinary medicine to therapeutic uses alone¹;
4. to strengthen governance of veterinary medicinal products, in particular to improve legislation to enable us to combat the production and distribution of counterfeit and substandard products;
5. to bring livestock breeding and husbandry further in line with consumers' expectations;
6. to ensure that countries meet their obligation to immediately report outbreaks of animal diseases to the OIE and support the modernisation of the internet-based World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS+);
7. to strengthen international cooperation and especially to make national and cross-border control of animal disease more effective, in particular on the ground using the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TAD) platform jointly established by FAO and OIE;
8. to support the National Veterinary Authorities in policy and strategy development in order to implement and enhance effective and efficient disease prevention, control and eradication measures.

¹ For clarification: This commitment refers to the respective bullet point in the conclusions.

Conclusions

We, the agriculture ministers,

- call for concerted action by all relevant stakeholders to engage in shaping livestock development to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDG;
- take action to promote rules, standards and voluntary agreements at national, regional and international level in order to make the production of food of animal origin more sustainable, more responsible and more efficient;
- underline the importance of a balanced consumption of food of animal origin for a healthy diet, health protection and the efficient use of resources;
- are determined to intensify research and development and to promote technologies, including digitalisation, veterinary medicinal products, including vaccines, genetics and breeding techniques, and the implementation of these technologies in practice;
- will drive the promotion and development of sustainable, resilient and climate change-adapted value chains and animal production systems that contribute to reducing emission intensity and increasing carbon sequestration; we therefore highlight the need to reinforce international research collaboration, knowledge transfer, cooperation and capacity building in this respect;
- undertake to give greater consideration to animal health and animal welfare in training programmes that are based on the International Standards on Animal Health and Animal Welfare developed by the OIE, and to expand international exchange of knowledge and experiences;
- invite FAO, OIE and International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) to collaboratively promote the international consultation on sustainable, responsible and efficient livestock production systems, and to develop good practices, based on integrated assessments, intergovernmental processes and multi-stakeholder consultations; we call upon them to identify knowledge gaps, to initiate respective research and to make knowledge available to farmers and the public; we encourage them to include other relevant actors such as the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI),

the Global Research Alliance (GRA) and the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock (GASL) and to report to the GFFA Ministers;

- commit ourselves to take measures to reduce the risks of diseases, to avoid the unnecessary use of antibiotics and to phase-out the use of antimicrobial substances for growth promotion in the absence of risk analysis in line with the Codex Alimentarius Commission recommended code of practice CAC/RCP 61-2005;
- support the OIE's efforts in its Programme to strengthen the efficiency and capacities of the veterinary services; and
- support the OIE's global Animal Welfare Strategy and its implementation; in this regard we call upon the OIE and other stakeholders to continue to develop basic principles and basic requirements for animal welfare-friendly husbandry at international level.

We, the agriculture ministers, conclude that concrete action across all stakeholders and international cooperation is necessary in order to make livestock production and animal husbandry more sustainable, responsible and efficient. We are facing up to our responsibility to take action to promote and progress discussions on this subject in international fora.