



GLOBAL AGENDA OF ACTION

IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK SECTOR DEVELOPMENT



A DRAFT STRATEGY

(Revised version: 30 January 2013)

SUMMARY

CONTEXT

In decades to come, the global demand for livestock products will continue to increase driven by growing populations, incomes and urbanization. Such demand is mostly being met by rapidly growing modern forms of livestock production. Traditional systems, while still strong in many developing countries, have come under demographic, economic and environmental pressures.

Future demand growth will have to be accommodated within the context of the growing scarcity of natural resources and challenges posed by climate change. Both intensive and extensive production systems are already important users of water, land and nutrients and contributors to climate change. Major adjustments will be required if the global livestock sector is to meet these challenges, while also creating opportunities for social and economic development.

Realizing that the size and complexity of the tasks ahead require urgent and concerted action, stakeholders from the public and private sector, academia and research institutions, inter-governmental organizations and civil society have formed a partnership to build a “Global Agenda of Action in support of Sustainable Livestock Sector Development” (*the Agenda*).

The aim of the Agenda is the sustainable development of the livestock sector through improved resource use to support livelihoods, long-term food security and economic development. This draft strategy puts forward the scope, focus, and preliminary set up to build the Agenda.

SCOPE

The purpose of the Agenda is to act towards continuous improvements of practices, such as choice of technologies, management or policy making, to ensure a more efficient use of natural resources. Through its joint activities, the Agenda offers opportunities for dialogue and collaboration at all levels, enhanced knowledge sharing, better and joint understanding of key issues, harmonized development of methodologies and consensus on guiding principles for moving forward.

FOCUS

The initial work will focus on three areas with an important potential for more efficient use of natural resources, as well as social and economic gains..

- Focus area **Closing the efficiency gap** aims to stimulate the application of existing but not widely used technologies by the bulk of the world’s producers whose use of natural resources is often greatly inefficient. Agenda partners will develop public-private and other forms of partnership to transfer and adapt resource use efficient technologies.
- Focus area **Restoring value to grassland** pursues a better management of grazing land which can contribute to carbon sequestration, protection of water and biodiversity but also enhanced productivity and livelihoods. Agenda partners will explore and promote the financial and institutional innovations required for the delivery of grassland-related ecosystem services.
- Focus area **Waste to worth** aims at recovering and recycling nutrients and energy contained in animal manure, particularly from intensive and confined livestock production operations. Agenda partners will develop planning tools and regulatory and incentive frameworks to support viable manure management and create opportunities for recycling.

INITIAL SET UP

The multi-stakeholder, voluntary, consensus and knowledge-based nature of the Agenda is reflected in its initial set up. It consists of: i) an open Multi-stakeholder Platform for consensus building on priority issues and actions; ii) a Support Group for the building of the Agenda; iii) a Guiding Group for overall direction, and activities guidance and monitoring; and iv) Focus area groups to implement the work programs.

BACKGROUND

Growing populations, income gains and urbanization are translating into increasing demand for livestock products, particularly in developing countries, and have made livestock one of the fastest growing sub-sectors of agriculture. Growth in emerging economies has been particularly impressive and has been associated with a widespread transformation of the livestock sector. While most of the growth in demand is supplied by rapidly growing, modern forms of livestock production, more traditional forms continue to exist in parallel. Pastoralists and smallholders, often poor, depend on livestock products and services for survival and income, but resource and market barriers restrict their access to the growing economic opportunities available to more modern producers.

While the sector provides high value food and many other economic and social functions, its resource use implications are large. The livestock sector is the world's largest user of agricultural land, directly through grazing and indirectly through the use of feed crops, and plays a major role in climate change, management of land and water, and biodiversity. The natural resources that sustain agriculture, such as land and water, are becoming scarcer and are increasingly threatened by degradation and climate change.

Feeding a larger, more affluent population of over 9 billion in 2050 means that agricultural production will have to increase substantially. In the case of livestock food products' contribution to healthy diets, a doubling of demand is expected for developing countries and a 70 percent increase for the world as a whole. Such growth in demand is happening at a time when concerns not only about resource scarcity and climate change but also the need for a more equitable development and the urgency of poverty reduction through agricultural development are assuming ever greater importance.

Studies point to a large untapped potential to reduce the sector's environmental burden, and to enhance its role in climate change mitigation, nutrient recycling and biodiversity protection. Such potential can be mobilized by transferring and adapting existing and proven technology, and relies, among other things, on removing policy and institutional barriers to knowledge, services and markets.

Substantial further gains can be realized by developing pro-active policy frameworks that align regulations and incentives to environmental outcomes. For extensive systems, such policies need to address access to land and water resources, and payment for environmental services such as carbon sequestration and biodiversity protection. For intensive systems, the efficient use and pricing of inputs (e.g. water, feed and energy) through transfer and adaptation of improved practices promise further environmental gains. Sizeable reductions in water use and pollution can be achieved by reconnecting specialized livestock production with crop agriculture.

A PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE

The size and complexity of the task to improve the sector's sustainability has led to the recognition that it can only be tackled effectively through concerted action by all stakeholder groups. Moreover, given the global public good nature of its environmental and social challenges and the increasing global economic integration of the sector, collective global action is needed.

Stakeholders from all relevant parts of the livestock sector have thus formed a partnership to develop a Global Agenda of Action in support of Sustainable Livestock Sector Development (the Agenda) for continuous improvement in natural resource use. The partnership will do so by guiding practice change by all relevant stakeholder groups—the public and private sector, producers, civil society and non-governmental organizations, academia and research, and inter-governmental organizations.

The aim of the Agenda is sustainable development of the livestock sector through improved resource use to support livelihoods, long-term food security and economic development. Land, water, nutrients, and climate change are the initial primary focus.

BUILDING THE AGENDA

Transforming knowledge into practice change to improve the efficiency of natural resource use as the sector grows and transforms, is the main challenge of the Agenda. Changes in livestock sector practices occur where different actors are well connected to markets and knowledge, allowing them to transfer and adopt new technologies and ideas from different sources.

Exploiting the opportunities for resource use improvements requires an enhanced flow of knowledge among actors and countries. It also, critically, needs policy change and investments to end the political and geographical marginalization of many traditional producer groups, to reward efficiency gains and resource stewardship, and to discourage waste and pollution. The absence of a supportive policy and investment framework has thus far stifled technological and institutional change in parts of the sector.

The Agenda is being developed using approaches that motivate and support innovation and investments in sustainable livestock sector development. These include approaches that seek to deploy the expertise and entrepreneurial skills of the private sector in an alliance with the public sector including: participative policy development; national roundtables; technology and knowledge exchange initiatives (e.g. South-South cooperation); and innovative forms of capacity development.

With these approaches in mind, the partnership has committed to undertake the following joint activities:

- **Consult and Network:** to stimulate multi-stakeholder interaction and collaboration; to enhance the access to, and choice of information; and to link demand for knowledge and services to its supply and/or suppliers;
- **Analyze and inform:** to aid joint understanding and consensus building, to develop harmonized metrics and methodologies, livestock sector-related analyses and assessments in the quest for sustainability, and to enhance the access to new information; and
- **Guide and pilot:** to develop strategic sector guidance, inform inter-governmental and other partnership processes, and to catalyze concrete action and investment to be able to translate the concept of livestock sector sustainability into practice change.

The participative decision making processes of the Agenda activities will harness the comparative strengths the various stakeholders. Moreover, stakeholders will benefit from their participation in the Agenda activities through better access to knowledge, technologies, policy processes, and resources (Table 1).

Table 1: Contribution of Agenda partners to, and the value-added obtained from, the Agenda

ACTOR GROUP	WHAT THEY CONTRIBUTE	WHAT THEY GAIN
Public sector	Supporting policies, research and investment; advocacy and awareness building	Knowledge and capacity for informed policy making and effective implementation;
Private sector / producers / producing communities	Innovation and investment; Applied knowledge; Private sector guidelines; Links to markets	Strengthened corporate social responsibility; New business and livelihood opportunities
Civil society / NGOs	Advocacy and awareness building; Links to marginalized sector actors;	Access to policy makers; Shape research and development priorities
Academia/research	Research and analysis for technical and institutional innovation; Methodologies; Foresight	Access to policy makers; Research relevance; Increased opportunities for funding
Inter-governmental organizations	Coordination and brokering; Supporting analysis and investments; Capacity development	Opportunity to deliver global public goods; Enhanced governance and relevance of investments

FOCUS AREAS

Accommodating demand growth for livestock products within the context of finite natural resources requires adjustments in practices from all stakeholders. Consultation and joint analysis among partners identified efficiency of natural resources such as land, water, nutrients, energy, and greenhouse gas emission intensity, as suitable starting points.

In pursuing efficiency gains, the partnership identified three focus areas for initial attention: (i) *Closing the efficiency gap*; (ii) *Restoring value to grasslands*; and (iii) *Waste to worth*. Each presents specific opportunities for large environmental, social and economic gains.

- The focus area **Closing the efficiency gap** proposes that resource use can be largely improved by more widespread use of available technology to close the gap between attainable efficiency and that actually achieved because the bulk of producers apply practices that are often greatly inefficient. Resource scarcities have put natural resource prices on an increasingly volatile long-term upward trend and are steering and accelerating technological change. The Agenda's priority focus is on commodity chains and production systems where the efficiency gap is large and where upgrading of technologies is both technically feasible and economically viable. The rationale is that closing a big efficiency gap of many producers with existing technology brings larger environmental, economic and social gains than incremental advances by a few producers at the technological frontier. Public-private and other forms of partnership play a central role in the transfer and adaptation of technology.
- The focus area **Restoring value to grasslands** proposes that the widespread neglect of grazing land constitutes a missed opportunity. Such neglect expresses itself in a high incidence of poverty in many marginal areas, but also in low productivity of land and livestock, and widespread degradation. Grazing land, if appropriately managed under enabling institutional and policy frameworks, can provide large resource use benefits in the form of carbon sequestration, water services, and biodiversity protection. Carbon finance, and other forms of payment for ecosystem

services, can be key in connecting people and production systems, in areas that have often been neglected, and provide opportunities to raise productivity and enhance livelihoods. A global financial and institutional mechanism initially built around a core coalition of countries with livestock NAMAs, is considered to be critical in fostering coordinated action in this focus area.

- The focus area, **Waste to worth**, aims at recovering and recycling nutrients and energy contained in animal manure, particularly from intensive and confined livestock production operations. Nutrients and energy are only partially converted by the animal, and between 50 and 90 percent of the nutrients, and about 30 percent of the energy are excreted and often discharged to the environment, leading to nutrient overloads and GHG emissions. This combined with an increasing obligation to reduce the environmental impact of production systems, makes the management of livestock manure increasingly important. Recycled nutrients help raise soil fertility and plant productivity and can substitute for mineral fertilizer. Recovered energy reduces GHG gas emissions and can substitute for fossil fuels. Sustainable application of animal manure on crops, the development of viable manure management systems, and public policies such as the development of regulatory frameworks and incentive structures are essential.

The relative emphasis and the approaches for each focus area will vary among geographic regions. Agenda partners have agreed to *respect* socially desirable outcomes that are not the immediate focus of Agenda-related activities. This principle will be safeguarded through the development of broad, practical *due diligence assessments* for outcomes including, but not limited to, public health, animal genetic diversity, and animal welfare.

INITIAL SET UP

A continuous improvement approach to building the Agenda has also been adopted to its operational modalities. Arrangements thus remain open to review, and will be revised, when needed. The various groups and their respective tasks in building the Agenda reflect its multi-stakeholder, voluntary, consensus, and knowledge-based nature.

The following components are proposed:

- An open **Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP)** and network to consult and build consensus on priority issues and actions. The platform is composed of representatives of all relevant sector stakeholder groups including governments, private sector, civil society, academia, research and international organizations involved in building the Agenda. Representatives who have signed the Agenda Consensus can be members of Focus area groups and the Guiding group, others participate in the MSP as observers only.
- A **Support group** (to stay with FAO at least until the next MSP) to support the building of the Agenda by:
 - facilitating stakeholder interaction, coordination and consensus building;
 - providing and coordinating expertise and analysis;
 - assisting in the preparation of guidance for technology and policy development;
 - providing support to the building of Focus areas including the formation of *Ad hoc* expert teams;
 - supporting the development and implementation of an Agenda communication strategy; and
 - providing support to the Guiding group in the further development of the Agenda;
- A **Guiding group** to guide and coordinate Agenda objectives and activities, to ensure linkages and exchange of information among different Agenda partners, and to guide and monitor the Agenda activities. The Guiding group will have a Support Group staff as an *ex-officio* member and its secretary. The Guiding Group will consist of:
 - Up to three (3) donor representatives (if more than 3 – a donor group maybe established to organize their representation on the Guiding group);

- Up to three (3) representatives from inter-governmental organizations;
- Up to three (3) representatives from each of the Focus Areas groups;
- Up to three (3) representatives 'at large', to ensure regional and stakeholder group representation.

Following its constitution, the Guiding Group will elect a Chairperson and a vice-chairperson from its members. Consensus is the basis for decision-making. The Guiding Group meets, at least, twice a year, with meetings organized back-to-back with MSP or focus area meetings, when possible.

Specifically the Guiding Group:

- provides overall direction and guidance;
 - Supports the functioning of the MSP;
 - Refines the future set up of the Agenda for consideration by the MSP - including the further definition of stakeholder groups and mechanisms for functional smallholder representation;
 - Reviews focus area and support group activities, provides advice;
 - Evaluates the overall status of the Agenda;
 - Represents the Agenda in different fora and promotes the Agenda and its objectives;
 - Facilitates the mobilization of resources.
- **Focus area groups** to deal with priority themes of which there are currently three. Focus area groups select up to 3 representatives from different stakeholder groups, including a Chair, to serve on the Agenda's Guiding Group. Focus area groups will be largely autonomous and encouraged to develop the form and operational modalities which best fits their requirements. Ad-hoc *Experts teams* will be formed to respond to specific research or technical advice requests emerging from focus areas.

NB.: The proposed initial set-up will be evaluated up to the next MSP meeting, on the basis of which a refined Agenda set-up will be proposed for endorsement by the MSP.



SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK
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