
EDITORIAL

What a big issue: 178 pages! The flow of manuscripts submitted for publication in AGRI is increasing, and although not all future issues will be this big, we receive now enough material to produce regularly three issues per year. We want to thank all those involved with the bulletin: finances permitting it is now in good shape to continue.

There are discussions about the type of publication AGRI should be. These address both content and physical support. You the reader have not reacted enough to our request for comments. What do you think of the content of the last eight issues? Is AGRI covering important elements of animal genetic resources management? Are there topics being neglected? Are there topics included which are not relevant to the scope of AGRI?

Then comes the all important question: how to produce AGRI? Hard copies are expensive to produce and mail. But they are accessible to all. New possibilities are now available. We have in mind two new approaches, obviously not mutually exclusive. The first is to make AGRI available on diskette. This would lower mailing costs, but it would be difficult to include as many photos as we do now (if one issue = one diskette), and we feel that quality photos of animals and their environment are an essential part of breed description. The second possibility is to use electronic networks. The Animal Genetic Resources Group is now designing and developing, with the necessary consulting expertise, a global system which will be launched on the World Wide Web in early 1996 to form the information axis for FAO's Global Programme for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources. The system is known as DAD-IS. DAD-IS will comprise a set of Information Resources, such as those contributing to the Global Databank for Animal Genetic Resources, guidelines for the range of management elements, the World Watch List for Domestic Animal Diversity, a work planner, lists of functionaries, and so on. In addition, the second phase will incorporate a number of activity resources, training, research and conferencing modules. DAD-IS will also be in English, French and Spanish.

As not everyone has access yet to the more sophisticated equipment, it may be necessary, at least during a transitory phase of a few years, to maintain all three systems. We would like some feedback from you to help define the relative importance that should be given to the three forms of AGRI release, hard copy, on disc and via electronic mail, the Internet and World Wide Web. A relevant questionnaire will be included in one of the next issues.

Meanwhile we have succeeded in producing the second edition of the World Watch List for Domestic Animal Diversity (in English) in time to be distributed during the FAO 50th Anniversary ceremonies. This second edition, greatly expanded, since it now includes also yaks, all camels and 14 poultry species, together with a section on wild relatives of the common livestock species. The list will be published in English, French and Spanish, within one year.