

Editorial

Animal Genetic Resources celebrates its fiftieth volume

More than 400 papers were published in 50 volumes of *Animal Genetic Resources* over a period of nearly 30 years. The journal began in 1983 as *Animal Genetic Resources Information* and was renamed *Animal Genetic Resources* in 2010 – the International Year of Biodiversity. The journal was launched and initially published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) “with the aim of facilitating the spread of knowledge on animal genetic resources”. Since 2009, FAO publishes the journal jointly with Cambridge University Press. Since mid 2011, papers have been published on the Cambridge University Press web site about eight weeks after they have been accepted (*FirstView*) independently of the completion of the next print volume. This allows readers to access newly published papers earlier.

The editors endeavor to publish the journal regularly twice a year in June and December, and increasingly encourage submission of high-quality papers with the aim of being indexed in Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports, which would include the journal’s *Impact Factor*.

The original aim of the journal still remains valid but the objectives became more structured in 2007 following the adoption of the first internationally agreed framework for the management of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture – the *Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*.¹ Papers are published related to the four strategic priority areas of the Global Plan: 1. Characterization, inventory and monitoring of trends and associated risks; 2. Sustainable use and development; 3. Conservation; and 4. Policies, institutions and capacity-building. *Animal Genetic Resources* has provided a forum for nearly 1 000 authors from 81 countries (see figure 1).

Animal Genetic Resources is a trilingual journal. Main papers are published in English, French or Spanish, with a summary in all three languages. Papers have mainly been published in English (77%) with the remaining papers divided equally between Spanish (12%) and French (11%). In the period from July 2009 to February 2012, 109 manuscripts were submitted of which 25 were rejected.

An analysis of more than 400 papers reveals that the majority focused on large ruminants (38% of the papers), followed by small ruminants (33%), poultry and mini

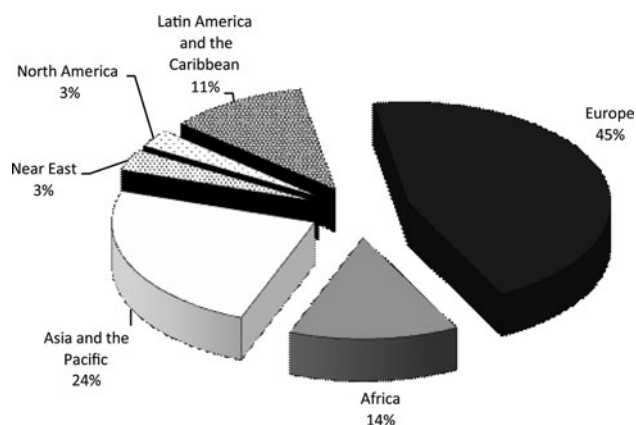


Figure 1. Regional distribution of authors

livestock (13%), equines (8%), pigs (5%) and camelidae (3%). Classifying the papers according to the four strategic priority areas of the Global Plan shows that the majority of papers addressed characterization, inventory and monitoring of trends and associated risks (63%); sustainable use and development (11%); conservation (17%); and policies, institutions and capacity-building (9%). The high percentage of papers falling within the strategic priority area 1 can be explained by the fact that *Animal Genetic Resources* is the main forum for this topic. Competing and high-ranking specialized journals exist particularly for strategic priority areas 2 and 3. This is not the case for strategic priority area 4. However, the number of publications falling within this category is only slowly increasing.

Two special issues of the journal have been produced – *Animal Genetic Resources Information* 45² in 2009 dedicated to the International Year of Natural Fibres and *Animal Genetic Resources* 47³ in 2010 dedicated to the International Year of Biodiversity.

The way in which the journal is accessed by its readers has also changed drastically over the years. The early volumes were printed and physically distributed; today all volumes are accessible online in the FAO document repository⁴, in library of the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System⁵ and paper by paper on the web site of Cambridge University Press.⁶ In addition to individual downloads, 1 700 institutions subscribe to *Animal Genetic Resources* (see figure 2), and 3 200 copies of the journal are printed and distributed to readers in 187 countries (see figure 3). In 2007, a CD-Rom was produced containing

¹ www.fao.org/docrep/010/a1404e/a1404e00.htm

² <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i11102/i11102t00.htm>

³ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1823t/i1823t00.htm>

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/documents/en/search/advanced?%20forward=advanced&%20titleOfJournal=Animal+genetic+resources+information&%20connector=1>

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/dad-is/>

⁶ <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=AGR>

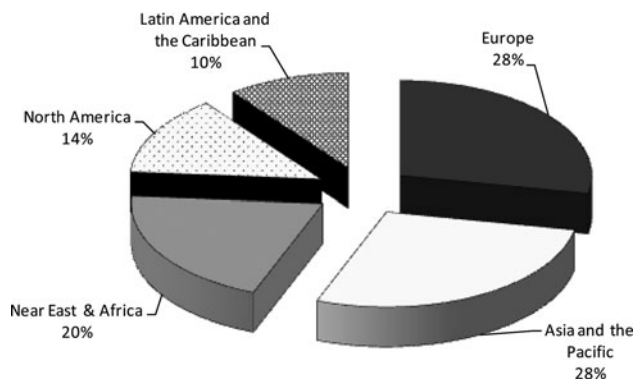


Figure 2. Regional distribution of the readership of *Animal Genetic Resources* (institutional electronic subscriptions)

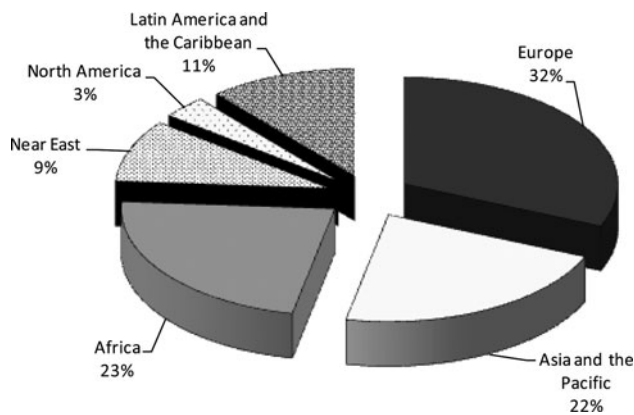


Figure 3. Regional distribution of the readership of *Animal Genetic Resources* (hard-copy subscriptions)

volumes 1 to 41, with a search engine providing easy access to individual papers.

The figures show that printed volumes are still in high demand, particularly in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific. In North America, relatively few individuals are

interested in receiving *Animal Genetic Resources* in printed form, but this is compensated by the relatively high institutional electronic subscription rate.

Reporting on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action

Countries, regional networks and international organizations have been asked to report on their implementation of the Global Plan of Action. The questionnaire forms and reports have been published online.⁷

Forthcoming Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

The Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group will be held at FAO headquarters in Rome from 24 to 26 October 2012. Issues to be addressed include:

- review of the progress made in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources;
- implementation and review of the Funding Strategy for the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action;
- preparation of The Second Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; and
- indicators to measure progress made in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, and the further development of the headline indicator of the Convention on Biological Diversity for trends in genetic diversity of domesticated animal species of major socio-economic importance.

Documentation for this meeting will be uploaded over the coming months to the web site.⁸

⁷ http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/genetics/Reporting_system.html

⁸ <http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/genetics/angrvent.html>