

Technical meeting : National Gene Bank for Animal Genetic Resources

*Strategies for the establishment, organization and
function of the National Gene Bank*

January 30th

ELGO-DIMITRA, Themi, Thessaloniki, Greece



Initiators and Participants

- *Department for Animal Reproduction and Genetic Improvement-Veterinary Research Institute, ELGO-DIMITRA*
- *Geotechnical chamber of Greece*
- *Association of Researchers of the National Agricultural Institute of Greece (ELGO-DIMITRA)*

- *Ministry of Rural Development and Food:*
 - *General Directory for Agriculture*
 - *Directory for AnGR and livestock holdings*
 - *National Centers for Livestock Genetic Resources (Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Karditsa)*
 - *General Directory of Veterinary Services*
 - *Department of Animal Reproduction & Artificial Insemination*
- *"AMALTHIA": Network for the Preservation of Greek Indigenous Farm Animals*



Goals and Objectives

- *Presentation of the actual **goals** and **benefits** of a **National Gene Bank***
- *Presentation of **successful examples***
- *Contribution to the better understanding of:*
 - ***practical, organizational, legal aspects***
 - and **challenges***
 - *establishment/organization and function of the National Gene Bank*
 - *relevant stakeholders?*

- *Ministry of Rural Development and Food (Central Directorates)*
- *Centers for Animal Genetic Resources*
- *Department of Animal Reproduction & Artificial Insemination (Thessaloniki)*
- *Breeders Associations*
- *Networks for the Preservation of endangered breeds*

Presentation 1

Ch. Ligda

- ***What is a NGB?***

layout, function, development

- **Role of a NGB in:**

- ***Designing sustainable management practices in the conservation and utilization of Animal Genetic Resources***
- ***Conservation of the biodiversity of domestic breeds***
- ***Support to breeding programs***

- ***Stakeholders, coordinators, cooperations***

- ***Current situation in Greece today that we can build upon:***

- ✓ *existing infrastructure,*
- ✓ *lack of adapted legislation*
- ✓ *collections*
- ✓ *data*
- ✓ *know-how*

- ***What needs to be done***

Presentation 2

D. Tsiokos

- *European experience – NGB establishment and organization*
- *Modelling of the practical guidelines, subdivided into the 4 priority axes*
- *Adaption to the particularities of each country*
- *Examples of organization and funding of NGBs*

Short presentation of:

- *ERFP Guidelines for the Constitution of National Cryopreservation Programs for Farm Animals (2004)*
- *The common study of ERFP and EURC-EAB: “Guidelines For The Development Of National Animal Health Regulations For Material Intended To Be Kept In Gene Banks (2025)”*



- **Short presentation of the capacity of European NGBs**
- **Examples:**
 - **France**, Cryobanque Nationale (CBN)
 - **The Netherlands**, Gene Bank Foundation (SGL)
 - **Portugal**, (BPGA), (Organizational and funding example)

Presentation 3

K. Saratsi



- ***Legal Framework*** (International, European, National)
- ***Establishment and Administration of the NGB*** from a legal point of view
- ***Competent authority, eligible agencies and structures***
- ***Goals***
- ***Regulations and Guidelines: updating and amendments***

*To enhance the European examples, **short interviews of ERFP participants** were used, that have been recorded in Nicosia, during the ERFP meeting of 2024.*

Discussion

- What we do have:

- *The current legal framework and conservation programs → **in situ conservation** of domestic farm animal breeds*



- ***Agencies, directories and organizations** of the Ministry of rural development and food → infrastructure, equipment and trained personnel*
- *Acceptance of the fact → the establishment of the NGB **cannot and should not** further be delayed for the **support of the existing genetic conservation programs**, especially after the recent recurrent shocks in the Greek farm animal breeding sector*

Discussion & Conclusions

- ***Political commitment*** is needed for the establishment of the *NGB and its integration into a National Action Plan for the management of AnGR:*

→ *coordination*

→ *definition and recognition of the role of each stakeholder*

→ *setting priorities in a long-term perspective*

→ *ensuring adequate funds for long-term function and development*

Major concerns

- **NGB:** *Until today it has never been high on the priority list of the Ministry*
- **No pressure** *from the breeding associations is exercised on the political administration*
- *Breeding associations **do not possess** the financial power to fund Gene Banks*
- **Weaknesses in the organization**, *coupled with the decade-long lack of public investment*
- **Cooperational failure** *among the Directorates, Agencies and Organizations of the Ministry*



Thank you for your attention!