

**COUNTRY REPORT
FOR 2008-2009 of**

FINLAND

Reported by

Asko Mäki-Tanila

MTT Agrifood Research Finland, Jokioinen

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 1: CHARACTERIZATION, INVENTORY AND
MONITORING OF TRENDS AND ASSOCIATED RISKS**

Actions undertaken during the past year

- tasks according to the National Action Plan (databases for landrace chicken, cattle jointly with Faba Breeding; sheep and horse maintained by respective breeding organisation)
- questionnaire to farmers keeping Finnish Ayrshire cattle – for comparing the results of respective questionnaires (EURECA project) done amongs keepers of Eastern and Western Finncattle within
- installation of EFABIS node and CryoWEB database system
- Finnish sheep populations in Science publication in April on domestication
- cf research projects under Area 4

Actions planned for the next year

- National Action Plan tasks
- analysis of the questionnaire results
- utilisation of EFABIS databases

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: SUSTAINABLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Actions undertaken during the past year

- animal breeding organisations are responsible also for following the sustainability principles (selection goals, maintenance of variation, cryopreservation) in the breeding programmes – monitoring done via the advisory board for animal breeding within Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- project on creating a brand name for landrace cattle breeds
- EURECA work package on recommendations for maintenance of genetic variation in local cattle populations

Actions planned for the next year

- EURECA work package (cf above)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: CONSERVATION

Actions undertaken during the past year

- national action plan carried under MTT's coordination (advisory board within Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)
- running *in situ* programme for Eastern, Northern and Western Finncattle (mating planning done in collaboration with Faba Breeding, semen banking with AI co-operatives, embryo banking with Embryocentre) and for Landrace chicken
- semen storing from Finnsheep rams
- The Finnish agri-environmental programme 2007-13 with increased subsidies for the most endangered cattle breeds (Eastern and Northern Finncattle)
- move of Eastern and Western Finncattle animals from a prison farm to agricultural colleges
- one agricultural college joined the chicken *in situ* programme
- 10th anniversary of *in situ* programme for Landrace chicken

Actions planned for the next year

- *in situ* programmes, semen/embryo storing within the national action plan

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Actions undertaken during the past year

- Ministry subgroup for strengthening the long-term funding for genetic resources activities (together with plant and forestry experts)
- participation in Nordic and FAO work
- several appearances in the main newspapers and on radio and TV
- new issue of the magazine on national programme of animal genetic resources
- international research collaboration
 - EURECA on local cattle breeds
 - EFABISNET on databases
 - GLOBALDIV on meta-analysis of cattle and sheep breeds
- project on molecular archaeogenetics of indigenous cattle and sheep in Finland
- European Science Foundation seminar 'Integrating population genetics and conservation biology: Merging theoretical, experimental and applied approaches' (coord. Armando Caballero, Vigo, Spain)

Actions planned for the next year

- publicity and courses
- book on interdisciplinary project on Yakutian cattle (Russian farm animal genetic resources) Nordic and FAO work
- continued work in the present projects
- preparation of new EU funded project
- project promoting the native Finncattle breeds (including development of unique food products) (Finnish Cultural Foundation)