

**COUNTRY REPORT  
FOR 2007-2008 of**

**Estonia**

**Reported by**

**Haldja Viinalass**

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

**Actions undertaken during the past year**

- The number of pigs, sheep and goats is increasing, the number of cattle, incl cows and poultry is decreasing. However, the number of animals of endangered breeds is stable.
- Updating the national farm animal data bank, improving quality of data in the international databanks.
- The Estonian cattle breeds (Estonian Native, Estonian Red and Estonian Holstein) are characterised by microsatellite (25 loci), 3 milk proteins (3 loci), blood groups (10 systems) and blood proteins (4 systems).

**Associated risks:**

Coming from the economical situation there is a tendency to finish farming in small dairy farms as they are not competitive with large ones. The production is concentrating into large dairy farms.

**Actions planned for the next year**

- Updating the decree of Minister of Agriculture about list of endangered farm animal breeds in Estonia.
- Further development of the national farm animal data bank, improving quality of data in the international databanks
- Continue research collaboration between Nordic and Baltic countries to characterise the breeds by using molecular markers

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: SUSTAINABLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Actions undertaken during the past year**

- Upgrading of breeding and conservation programmes of all farm animal breeds in Estonia
- 111 dairy farms for 35 728 cows were built or reconstructed during years 2003 to 2007. More than 1/3 of all dairy cows in Estonia were housed in new or reconstructed farms for the end of 2007.

**Actions planned for the next year**

- Upgrading of breeding and conservation programmes of all farm animal breeds in Estonia
- Development of international collaboration with Nordic and Baltic countries for sustainable use and development of farm animal genetic resources

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: CONSERVATION**

**Actions undertaken during the past year**

- The subsidies paid within Agri-environment programme have promoted rising of animals of endangered breeds (Estonian Native cattle, Estonian Native horse, Estonian Heavy Draught horse, Tori horse).
- A lot of attention has been paid for raising public awareness and for pointing attention to the problems connected with management and conservation of genetic resources:
  - o Brochure of endangered breeds in Estonia was compiled and released
  - o Several publications were issued in newspapers and journals
  - o The AnGR issues have been considered in several meetings and round-tables
  - o TV and radio has been invited to participate in actions (meetings, round-tables, animal shows and exhibitions) for raising public awareness
- The Czech Republic experience in the field of conservation and management of animal genetic resources was introduced by Dr. Vera Matlova in Tallinn on October 31, 2007 to the representatives of government institutions, breeding and conservation organisations and university.

#### Actions planned for the next year

- Apply the EVA programme for the management of Estonian Heavy Draught horse
- International collaboration in the field of conservation of AnGR
- The Slovenian experience in the field of conservation and management of animal genetic resources will be introduced to stakeholders in Estonia

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

#### Actions undertaken during the past year

- The Farm Animals Breeding Act (launched on the January 1, 2003) was updated and adopted by the Parliament on December 5, 2007. The updated Act was launched on the January 1, 2008. Most of the updates made considered the conservation issues.
- The International Day for Biological Diversity on the May 22, 2008 was denoted with conference “Agriculture and Biological Diversity” in Tartu. The state of endangered breeds in Estonia was introduced to the participants of the conference and to public through media channels.

#### Actions planned for the next year

- Develop the national policy regarding farm animal genetic resources and strengthen institutions involved.