

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

Actions undertaken during the past year

1. Biodiversity Indicators were produced for Farm Animal Genetic Resources under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan please see the link which gives more information on the indicators <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2009/090403a.htm>
2. The National Standing Committee on Farm Animal Genetic Resources (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/fangr/>) met quarterly to work on the 38 Recommended Actions (RA) from the UK National Action Plan <http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/livestock/strategy/genetic-res/pdf/fangr-actionplan.pdf> A progress log and newsletter are on the FAnGR website. The Committee has conducted a survey on conservation measures in Member States under Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005. The results are being collated.
3. Continued discussions on how to integrate the EFABIS system with data from the UK Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Portal.
4. The Sheep Trust completed study funded by Government of endemism in sheep breeds which are at risk, not because of numerical scarcity, but because of geographical concentration. Carson, A., Elliott, M., Groom, J., Winter, A., Bowles, D. (2009) Geographical isolation of native sheep breeds in the UK - evidence of endemism as a risk factor to genetic resources. *Livestock Science* **123**, 288-299.
5. The Sheep Trust has also co-ordinated Heritage Sheep, a GENRES project, on geographically concentrated sheep breeds across 5 Member States, with respect to risks facing the breeds and strategies to conserve their genetic resources. This will be the first GENRES project to be completed and is being used by the European Commission to illustrate the policy relevance and opportunities offered by FAnGR.
6. National Scrapie Plan (NSP) sheep semen archive was transferred from Defra to the National Sheep Association (NSA) and the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) as a conservation archive.

Actions planned for the next year

1. The National Breed Inventory will be developed to improve the accuracy and frequency of the data input and to populate fields that are currently blank. It will be integrated into the UK GRFA information portal.
2. Guidelines setting parameters for describing the minimum size and content of a nucleus (breeds at risk and herds/flocks of high genetic merit or distinctiveness) will be produced to provide protection to herds and flocks in the event of an exotic disease outbreak. A more detailed project to describe scientifically robust definitions of a nucleus and breeds at risk through geographic isolation is to be commissioned.

3. Development of a toolkit to allow more accurate molecular characterisation of breeds and identification of traits in populations that are of growing significance in more holistic breeding programmes e.g. disease resistance, meat quality, fitness for environmental management and conservation grazing etc.

4. A report on poultry genetic resources will be produced.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: SUSTAINABLE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Actions undertaken during the past year

1. Under the Heritage Sheep project (GENRES), success stories in marketing lamb and other livestock products from heritage sheep breeds from across the EU have been brought together.
2. Payments to support the use of native breeds in conservation grazing under EAFRD have been made through special measures under the Higher Level Agri-environment Scheme.

Actions planned for the next year

1. Ongoing encouragement under Agri-environment schemes to support the use of native breeds in conservation grazing programmes and meat marketing schemes.
2. Commissioning of a project (subject to availability of funding) to determine the cost benefit of FAnGR to the rural economy

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: CONSERVATION

Actions undertaken during the past year

1. The RBST has broadened the scope of its work to incorporate all native breeds in programmes of conservation

Actions planned for the next year

1. Publicising the need for all keepers of at risk breeds to vaccinate their flocks and herds against Bluetongue.
2. Instigation of a programme for prioritising the conservation of rare and at risk native breeds in the UK whilst at the same time monitoring genetic diversity in mainstream breeds

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Actions undertaken during the past year

- 1 The National Standing Committee for FAnGR has continued to advise Government on FAnGR issues.
2. Discussions to develop the Breeds at Risk Register (BARR) to diseases other than Foot and Mouth Disease and all species.

Actions planned for the next year

1. Further work by the National Standing Committee for FAnGR and Government at national level to ensure that FAnGR are properly identified and taken into account in livestock policies
2. Continuing support and development of the work of the ERFP.