Why this strategy?

Animal genetic resources (AnGR) include all livestock species, breeds and strains that are of economic, environmental, scientific and cultural interest to agriculture.

The diversity of livestock species and breeds, and the genetic diversity within breeds, are the genetic base for the livestock breeding programs needed to ensure current and future livestock systems.

Preserving the diversity of AnGR is essential for ensuring sustainable livestock development, rural livelihoods, environmental stewardship and food security.

The aim of this strategy is to minimize the loss of livestock genetic diversity, to support breeding, diversification and innovation, and to build resilience in the livestock sector.

Download the Strategy
Animal Genetic Resources Strategy For Europe.

https://www.animalgeneticresources.net/

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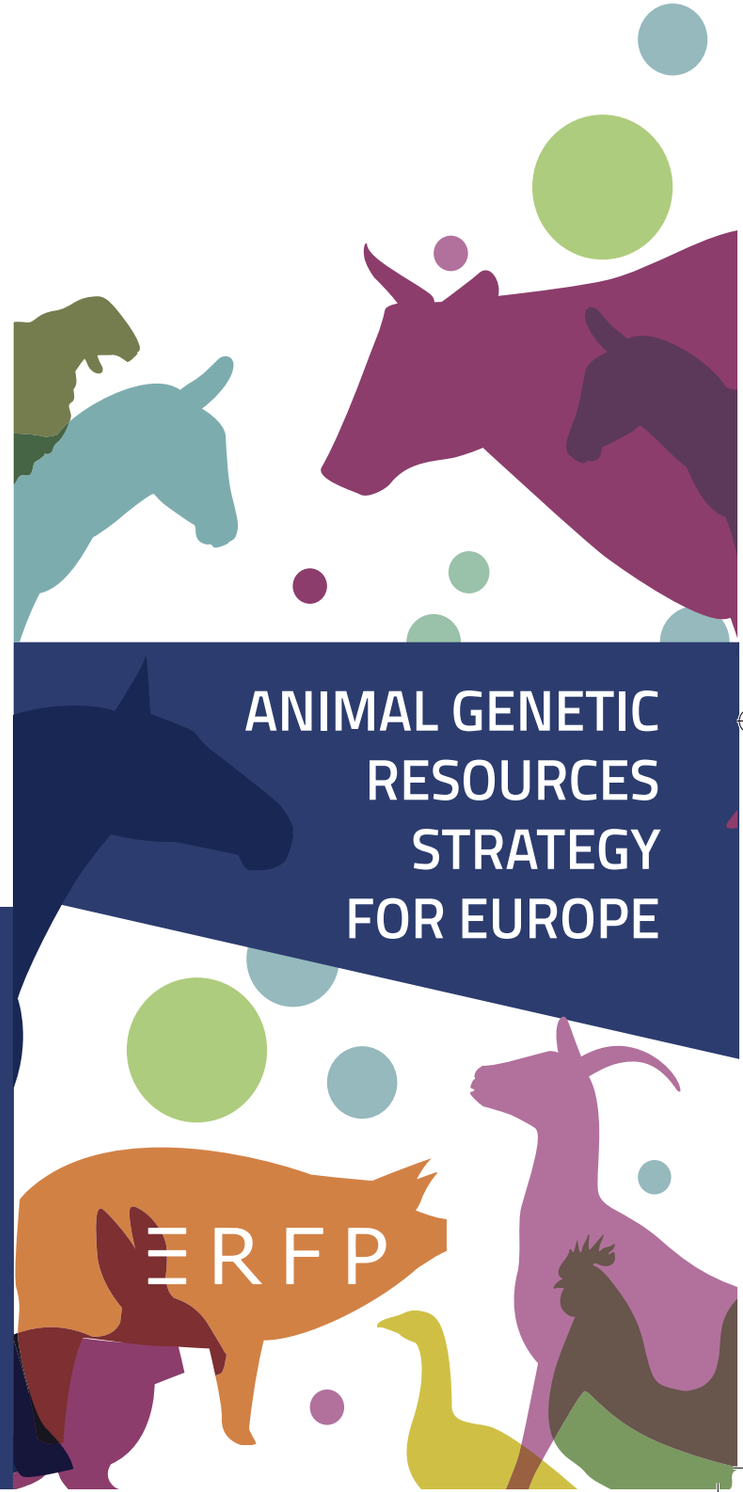

The strategy

Benefits

- Strengthen the implementation of international commitments (CBD, FAO, SDG…).
- Shared responsibility: stronger commitment of all relevant actors to achieve goals.
- Comprehensive policy and legal framework for conservation and sustainable use.
- Valorisation and awareness raising.

Sustainable use

The present genetic base is crucial for genetic improvement of breeding populations and developing new breeds or lines in future.

A variety of local breeds have characteristics that make them valuable in the growing market of niche products and in the provision of a range of ecosystem services. However, many of these local breeds play only a minor role in mainstream livestock production and thus are threatened.

Considering climate change, biodiversity loss and other environmental challenges, the question how to make optimal use of livestock genetic diversity for the transition towards sustainable and resilient food systems should be given high priority.

Conservation

The two main methods used to preserve AnGR are in situ and ex situ conservation, which should be implemented complementary.

In situ involves the use of livestock in the production environment in which the animals evolved or now are kept and bred.

Ex situ conservation implies that animals are not kept under normal farm management conditions. This can be either in vivo, e.g., as live animals kept in zoological parks, governmental farms, etc., or in vitro freezing reproductive material, e.g. semen or embryo's, in liquid nitrogen.

Policy and capacity building

Implementation of the European strategy for AnGR requires a coherent and coordinated policy and legal framework with commitments and instruments at national and pan-European level.

This framework will facilitate and support the implementation of international commitments (CBD, FAO, SDGs) and necessary actions for better conservation and sustainable use of AnGR.

The instruments and measures needed to implement policies and to strengthen national and regional programs have to be sufficiently financed. Opportunities for establishing co-funding mechanisms and integrated investment plans should be explored.

There is a need to strengthen the necessary institutional and human capacities. Novel European infrastructures should be established, including a European Reference Centre for AnGR as foreseen in the EU Animal Breeding Regulation.

International cooperation and coordination will facilitate the implementation of the FAO´s Global Plan of Action for AnGR and the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.