

2023

news letter



European Regional Focal Point for Animal Genetic Resources

Regional platform for the support of management, conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources (AnGR).

Our Key Mission

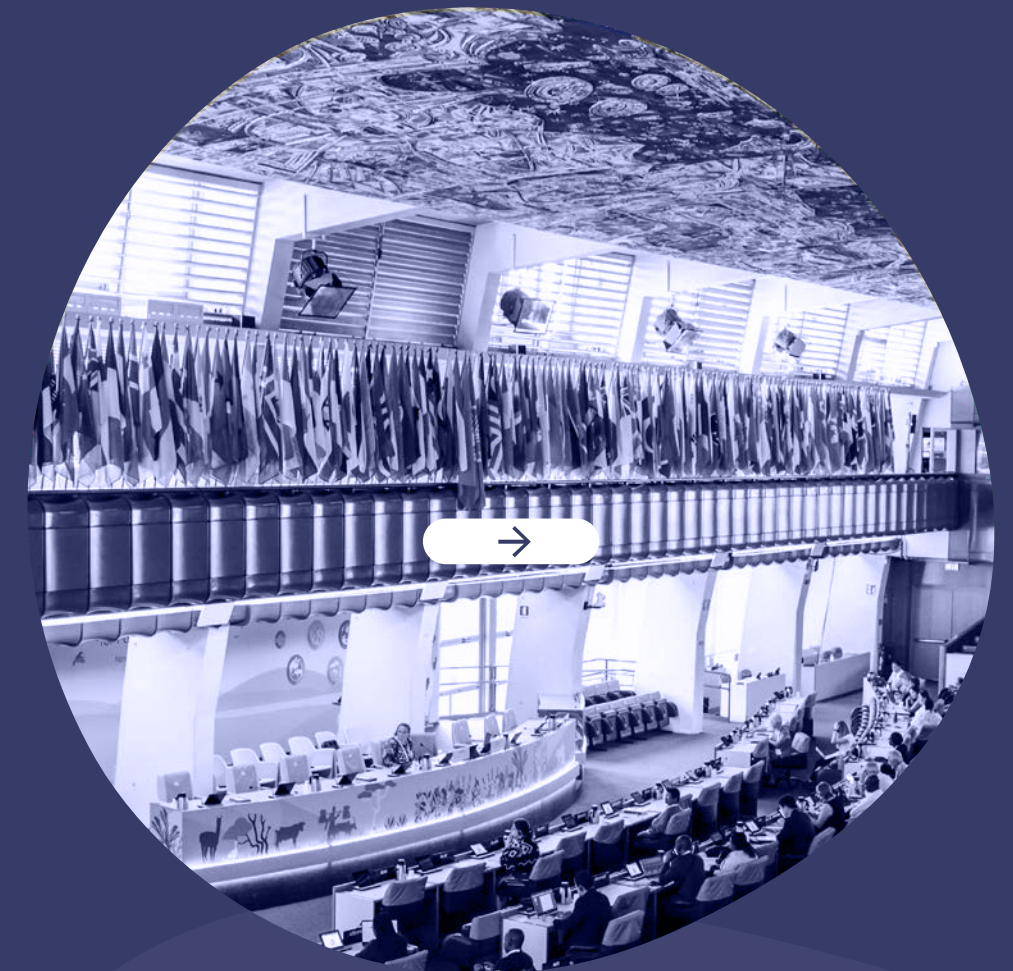
Since 2001, our key mission is to facilitate collaboration, coordinate efforts and exchange information and experiences about AnGR among various European countries and organizations, both governmental and non-governmental. It includes supporting both in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable use of AnGR.



2023:
**A year of
significant
achievements**



**Participation in
ICAR TOLEDO
2023**



**ERFP General
Assembly 2023**
*August 26-27th,
Lyon, France*



**Upcoming Events
in 2024**
*A glimpse into ERFP's
future activities*

2023

A year of
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Ad-Hoc Action on animal health legislation and genebanks

2023 marked a pivotal year for ERFP with the launch of an Ad-Hoc Action aimed at the incorporation of exceptions into the national animal health legal framework for the collection, transformation, and storage of germinal products intended to be kept in a genebank. This initiative was crucial in addressing the challenges faced by genebanks in collecting germinal products, especially from endangered breeds.



The primary goal was to develop pragmatic recommendations for the development of national animal health regulations for genebanks. These recommendations will be described in detail in a guideline, which will serve as the reference framework for national animal health competent authorities.



The successful completion of this action will significantly ease the burden on genebanks, enabling more effective conservation of endangered breeds and preservation of animal genetic diversity. It intends to lay the groundwork for smoother operation of genebanks and set a reference for future legislation adjustments at the national level, enhancing the sustainability of animal genetic resources conservation.

GENEBANK DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES →

Focus on genebank development guidelines

During 2023, ERFP placed a strong emphasis on the Genebank Development Guidelines, a **critical document** designed to support the establishment and expansion of genebanks across Europe.



Recognizing the challenges many countries face in setting up or enhancing their genebank collections, the ERFP network developed these guidelines to offer practical assistance. The document provides comprehensive advice on best practices in ex situ conservation, aiming to train practitioners in effective genebank management.



The guidelines have become an invaluable tool for countries working to preserve their animal genetic resources. By offering practical recommendations and solutions to common problems, these guidelines have facilitated significant advancements in the conservation efforts of genebanks. The implementation of these guidelines across Europe has led to a more systematic and effective approach in managing genetic diversity, ensuring the long-term preservation of various breeds.

MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK →

Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for 2024 – 2027

Our whole team is pleased to announce the approval of the **Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for the period 2024-2027**, a decision taken during our last General Assembly in Lyon. This pivotal document outlines the core activities and strategic direction for ERFP over the next four years.



This MYPoW, following the footsteps of its 2019-2023 predecessor, draws upon outcomes and orientations from the ERFP Working Groups, Task Forces and Ad Hoc Actions of the previous period. It has been formulated considering significant developments such as the publication of the Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe (EGRS) in 2021, the establishment of the Animal Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe (AnGRSE), and the inception of the European Union Reference Centre on Endangered Animal Breeds (EURC-EAB).



Approved at the General Assembly in Lyon, the 2024-2027 YPoW is a testament to ERFP's dedication to advancing the conservation and sustainable use of AnGR. It aligns with recent achievements and policy developments in the field, ensuring that ERFP continues to lead with informed, strategic actions in the ever-evolving landscape of AnGR.conservation.



ACTION PLAN →

Approval of the action plan for AnGR strategy implementation for Europe

Recently we have also seen approved a comprehensive **action plan for the implementation of the Animal Genetic Resources strategy for Europe**. This plan sets a clear and actionable path forward for AnGR conservation and sustainable use.



The action plan is meticulously designed to operationalize the AnGR strategy. It encompasses a suite of recommendations, specific actions to be carried out, measurable indicators, scale range, and clearly identifies responsible actors for each action. This strategic document is tailored to translate the AnGR strategy into tangible results.



The approval of this action plan marks a significant step towards the effective implementation of the AnGR strategy. It provides a structured framework for all stakeholders involved in AnGR conservation, ensuring coordinated efforts, accountability, and progress tracking. This plan is pivotal in guiding ERFP and its partners towards achieving targeted outcomes in the conservation and sustainable utilization of animal genetic resources.

ANALYSIS →

Transboundary breeds Task Force insights

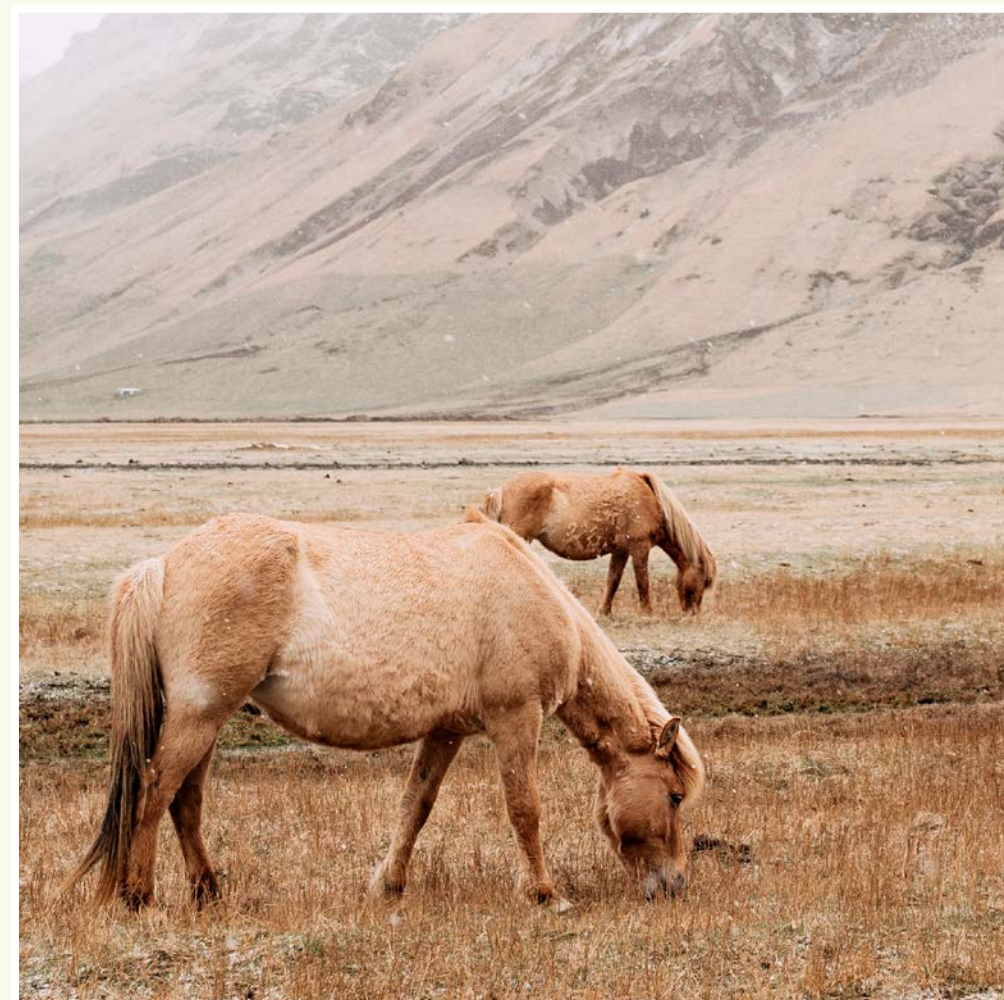
This year, ERFP's transboundary breeds Task Force conducted an in-depth **analysis** of transboundary breeds across Europe.



The team aimed to understand and document the prevalence and conservation status of transboundary breeds in Europe. This involved analyzing the dynamics and challenges of common breeding and conservation programs for these breeds.



The comprehensive study carried out by the Task Force highlighted that 17% of breeds in Europe are transboundary, with a unique 6% existing solely within Europe.



FINDINGS OF THIS SURVEY →

Survey on 'native breed' definitions

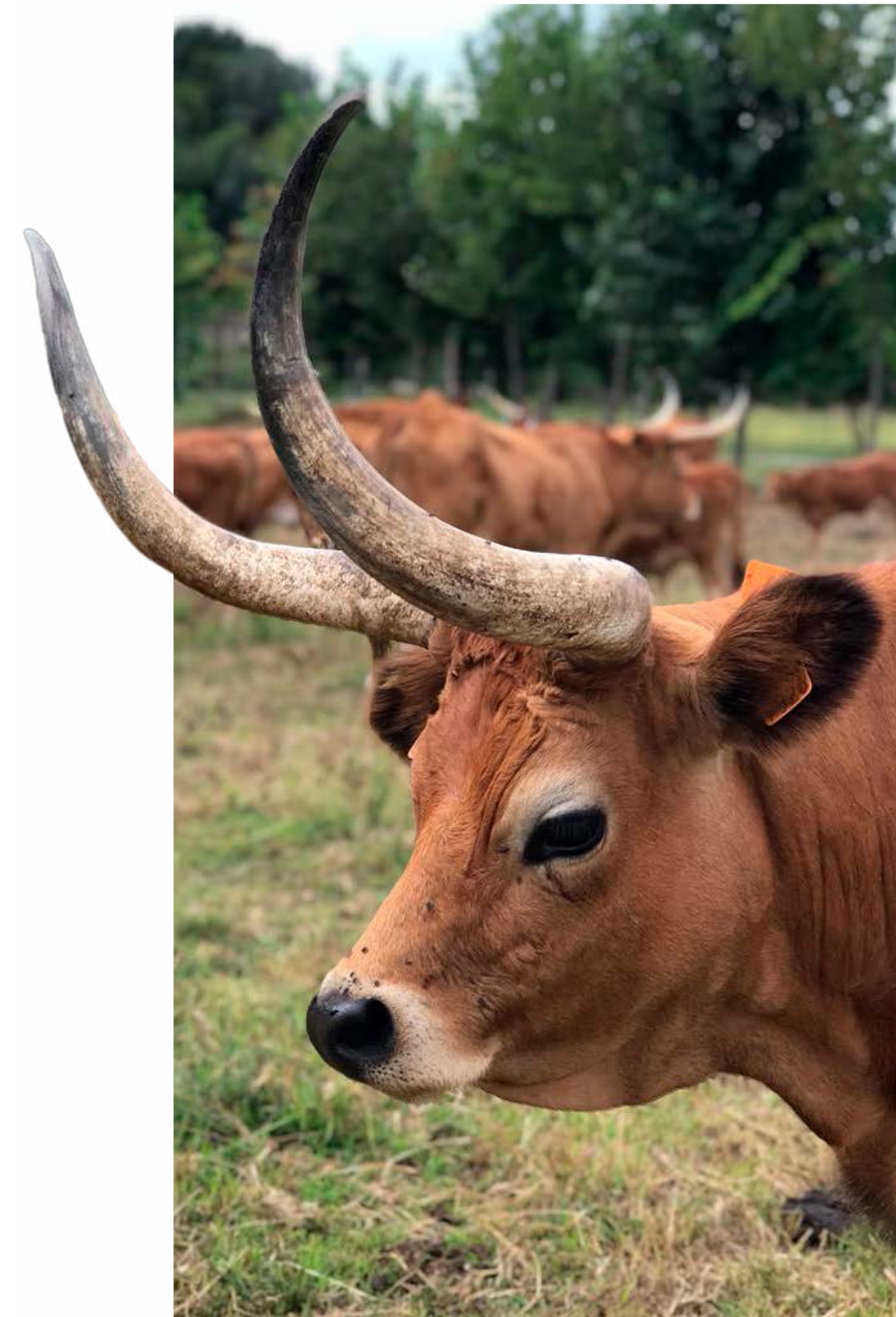
In a very fruitful task this year, ERFP's in situ Working Group, led by Danijela Bojkovski, conducted a comprehensive survey focusing on the diverse definitions of 'native breed' across Europe.



The aim was to understand the varying national perspectives and definitions of what constitutes a 'native breed'. This included exploring criteria in different countries, such as special protection status in Spain, official recognition in Portugal, and historical presence or herdbook criteria in Austria.



Findings of this survey have been instrumental in providing a clearer understanding of the concept of 'native breed' in a European context. This deeper insight assists in tailoring conservation strategies and policies more effectively to the unique characteristics and needs of native breeds in different European regions. The survey results contribute to a more unified approach in the preservation and valorization of animal genetic resources within Europe.



COMPREHENSIVE LIST →

Documentation and databases Ad-Hoc action

This year, ERFP launched a crucial Ad-Hoc action focused on enhancing the documentation and accessibility of key databases in AnGR management.



Spearheaded by Zhivko Duchevev from Bulgaria, the mission was to identify and list the most relevant and useful databases in the field of AnGR management. This initiative led to the compilation of a comprehensive list, which includes vital resources like EUGENA, DAGRIS, and DAD-IS.



The action has significantly improved the accessibility and interoperability of AnGR data across Europe. By providing a centralized list of key databases, ERFP has streamlined information sharing and collaboration among researchers, conservationists, and policymakers. This initiative is a vital step in promoting more effective and coordinated efforts in the conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources.

ERFP’s endorsement of Genetic Resources Journal

In our commitment to fostering knowledge exchange and scientific collaboration, ERFP recommends the **Genetic Resources Journal**, a notable open-access, peer-reviewed platform in the field of genetic resources.

The journal aims to publish a wide array of content, including original research, reviews, and short communications, focusing on both plant and animal genetic resources. It serves a diverse array of stakeholders across multiple domains, offering a unique platform for sharing domain-specific and interdisciplinary knowledge and tools. The journal has become an essential resource for practitioners involved in monitoring, collecting, maintaining, conserving, characterizing, and utilizing genetic resources for food, agriculture, and forestry.

ERFP’s connection

Christina Ligda, a valued ERFP colleague and the Greek National Coordinator, recently joined the editorial board of the journal, enhancing our direct involvement in this influential publication.

The journal has published impactful articles such as **“The Genetic Composition of the Traditional Irish Horse”** and **“Is the Ecosystem Services Concept Relevant to Capture the Multiple Benefits from Farming Systems Using Livestock Biodiversity? A Framework Proposal”**, contributing significantly to the field of animal genetic resources.



ERFP General Assembly 2023

*August 26-27th,
Lyon, France*



The ERFP General Assembly, an annual flagship event, is a crucial forum for experts, practitioners, and policymakers dedicated to AnGR. This year, our great meeting took place on August 26th and 27th in Lyon, France. Scheduled strategically before the EAAP meeting, this assembly offered a vital platform for reflection, planning, and celebration of our collective achievements.

This gathering saw the review of the year's key achievements, including the drafting of the Action Plan and the initiation of a joint Ad Hoc action with EURC on Endangered Animal Breeds. A notable feature of the assembly was the renewal of the Steering Committee, welcoming new members Melissa Raemy (Switzerland), Georgia Hadjipavlou (Cyprus) and Gita Jansone (Latvia), alongside the relaunch of ERFP's newsletter after a decade, marking a significant stride in community engagement.

[ERFP'S NEWSLETTER](#) →

The event concluded with a cultural immersion into France's agricultural heritage, featuring tours of local Ferrandaise cattle and Rava sheep breeds, and tastings of traditional French cheeses and farm products, enriching the experience for all attendees.



Participation in ICAR TOLEDO 2023



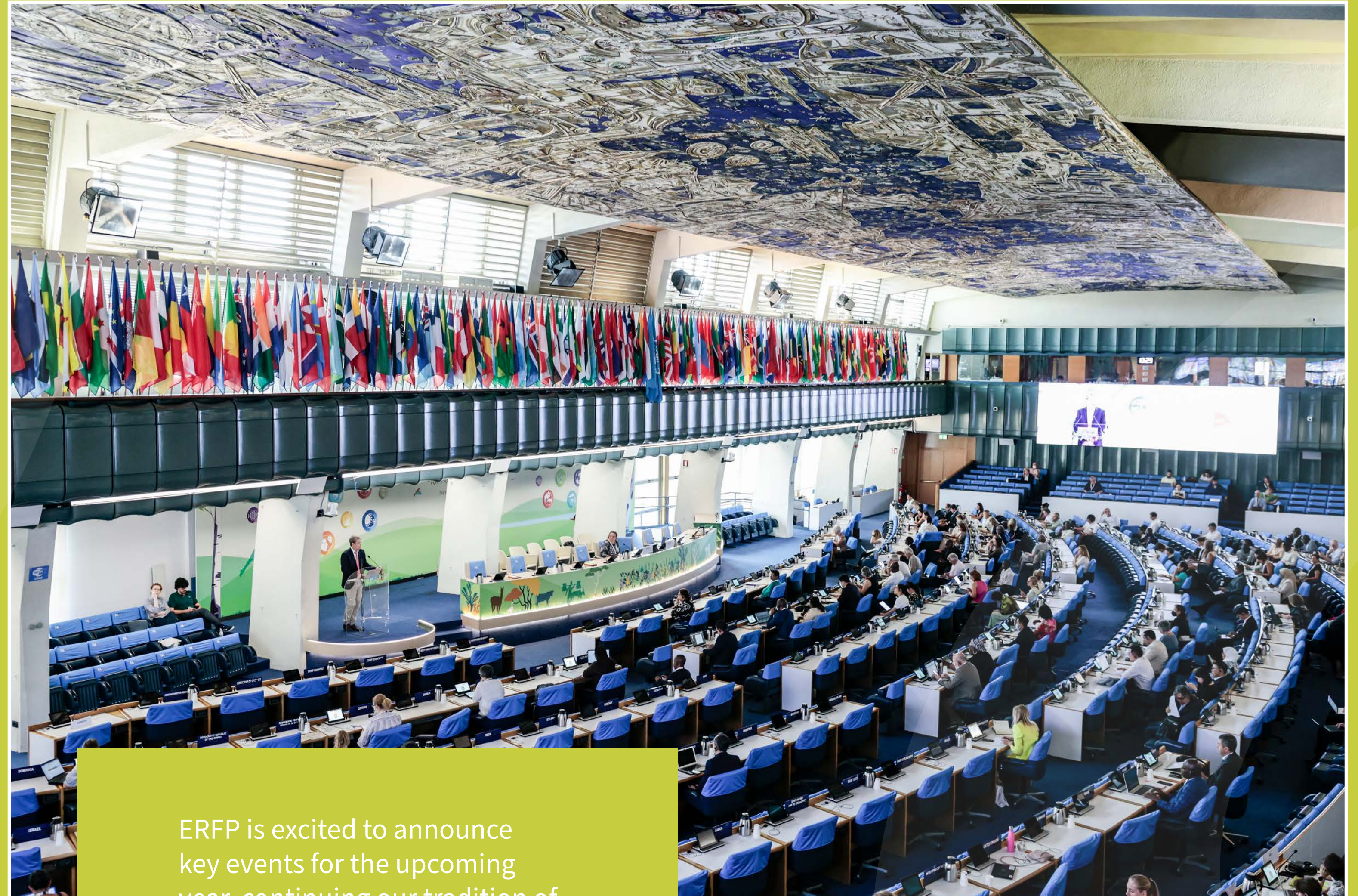
ERFP took an important role during ICAR 2023 congress, which took place in Toledo, Spain, 22nd to 26th of May. Under this forum's main slogan, "Breeding for resilience: transitioning diverse livestock farming systems into the future", our main Working Groups and associates gathered to discuss current projects' status and immediate future actions.

This was the case for the in situ Conservation and Valorisation of AnGR Working Group, led by Danijela Bojkovski, the for Information and Documentation Working Group, chaired by Enrico Sturaro and the ex situ Conservation Working Group, led by Fernando Tejerina.

WORKING GROUP MEETINGS →

Upcoming Events in 2024

*A glimpse into
ERFP's future
activities*



ERFP is excited to announce key events for the upcoming year, continuing our tradition of collaboration and progress in the field of animal genetic resources.

Working Groups to gather in Lefkosia, Cyprus, April 2024

In April 2024, ERFPP will convene its Working Groups in Lefkosia, Cyprus. This gathering will be a pivotal opportunity for our working groups to collaborate, discuss ongoing projects, and strategize for future initiatives.

It's an occasion to deepen our commitment to AnGR and share innovative approaches and best practices.



General Assembly to be held in Firenze, Italy, September 2024

Our next General Assembly is scheduled for September 2024 in the historic city of Firenze, Italy. This annual assembly is a cornerstone event for ERFP, providing a platform for reviewing yearly progress, discussing new challenges and opportunities, and making key decisions for the future.

It also offers a chance for members to network, share insights, and strengthen our collective efforts in conserving and sustainably using animal genetic resources.



Join us in shaping the future of AnGR

As we conclude another eventful year at ERFP, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone in our community for their dedication and contributions.

Your involvement and insights continue to be the driving force behind our mission to conserve and sustainably use Animal Genetic Resources (AnGR).

Contact and participation

If you are actively engaged in AnGR, we encourage you to follow our activities, provide feedback and reach out to join efforts. Ask your National Coordinator! Your participation in task forces or Ad Hoc actions might be crucial for advancing the objectives of each Working Group and the whole organization.

Stay connected with us through our social media channels and our website **www.animalgeneticresources.net** to keep abreast of our latest initiatives and opportunities for collaboration!





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