

**Ethiopian Society of Animal Production
(ESAP)**

P. O. Box 80019
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Tel. +251-11515 83 39

E-mail: esap@ethionet.et

Website: www.esap-ethiopia.org

ESAP recommendations series– No. 1

**Policy Recommendations and
Final Declarations of
the 14th Annual Conference of the
Ethiopian Society of Animal Production
(ESAP)**



ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION

5-7 September 2006

EIAR, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Executive summary

This report on policy recommendations and final declarations of the 14th Annual conference of the Ethiopian Society of Animal Production (ESAP) provides a summary of major issues discussed and resolutions arrived at.

This document was produced based on the following methods and procedures. A format for questions/comments and answers was prepared before commencement of the conference, based on the TOR given by the executive committee of ESAP. The format was distributed to whoever raised questions or provided comments or responded during the plenary sessions. This enabled the accurate capture of the comments and ideas of contributors/speakers. Individual session reports were gathered from rapporteurs. General observations, major issues raised and discussed during the plenary sessions, and proceedings of the brownbag sessions were collated and documented.

General observations

His Excellency Dr Aberra Deressa and the Director General of EIAR Dr Tsedeke Abate and other speakers have commended the following theme of the 14th Annual Conference of ESAP as being timely: "Institutional Arrangements and Challenges in Development of Market Oriented Livestock Agriculture in Ethiopia". The turnout to the conference (hereafter taken to mean the 14th Annual Conference of ESAP) has been very encouraging reaching up to about 600 participants. Attendance remained almost the same during the opening and subsequent sessions and throughout the following days and 80 new members joined ESAP at the same time. In comparison to past ESAP Annual Conferences the brownbag sessions during which many invited speakers presented their findings, and the plenary sessions with many relevant papers presented, made the conference very lively. This, however, had a spill-over effect on the time planned for the conference as it took two full days instead of the originally planned one-and-half days. Surprisingly, during the present ESAP conference, a pastoralist and a farmer were invited and were also given the opportunity to address the conference. Methods of documenting the conference were also very innovative as various means (including audio-video filming, photographs, electronic copies, commissioning the summarising of the outcomes) were used.

ESAP could take a lead in coordinating the synthesis of these technologies. Therefore, ESAP requests the Government of Ethiopia to recognize this role as one of ESAP's mandate.

- The conference noted that there is a need to re-define the role of the livestock sector and to re-orient the livestock production system in response to current challenges and opportunities. In this regard, the conference noted that educational institutions need to address this dynamic paradigm shift in preparing their students for sustainable development.
- The conference also noted that whilst considering market-orientation of the livestock sub-sector, indigenous knowledge, cultural norms and traditional practices have to be taken into consideration. Infrastructure or marketing functions are of paramount importance in fostering market orientation.
- The conference observed that a high calibre of Development Agents (DAs) is needed to bring about impact and that the training and refreshing of this group of staff is important to achieve the desired goal.
- Finally the conference noted that special attention needed to be given to urban and peri-urban livestock keeping from economic, social and environmental (public health) perspectives (policy and institutional support).

Recommendations for ESAP to accomplish

- It was recommended that ESAP should do a synthesis of what has been done in the past. The next theme for ESAP was proposed as being on "Policy issues for livestock".
- It was also recommended that ESAP should review all recommendations forwarded during the previous conferences of ESAP as appropriate.
- It was further recommended that ESAP should coordinate and organize debates on livestock and related policies on mass media and tailored panel discussions (e.g. on quality milk production, processing and consumption and work on a school milk feeding initiatives with other partners including SNV-BOAM and TetraPak /deLaval).
- It was finally recommended that ESAP should serve as a common denominator in bringing the different organizations and institutions together and to serve as a gateway for information sharing.

coming out of the conference. Therefore, the conference noted the need for Government support for such initiatives and recommended the commissioning of a hub where such information could be stored, retrieved, etc.

- The conference further observed that livestock species from the highland regions are underutilized by the export abattoirs leading to an overall inefficiency – working in under-capacity. The conference recommends that this untapped potential should be used through linking the products to processors and markets.
- ESAP believes that there is an urgent need for re-organizing institutions to address the challenges of the livestock sector and opportunities exist for transforming current subsistence livestock production system into market-oriented livestock agriculture.
- The conference also noted that livestock policies have been inadequate and non-specific whereby even the existing ones have not been implemented but have simply become good wishes.
- The conference further observed that accurate knowledge on the resource base is lacking and discrepancies between the FAO's database and that of the CSA (2004) on livestock population size for Ethiopia have been eminent. The conference requests the Government of Ethiopia particularly MoARD to write a letter indicating the current CSA census report to the FAO office in Rome to amend and settle this issue once and for all. The conference also recommends that the government of Ethiopia should consider establishing a national livestock database centrally controlled as a reference.
- The conference believes that cooperatives can be instrumental in bringing about change – paradigm shift. Commercializing the livestock sector through smallholder cooperatives is necessary to boost market-orientation. The conference therefore recommends that policies and directives which support collective entrepreneurship and at the same time do not limit individual entrepreneurship should be put in place. ESAP can play a role in bringing expertise together and contribute in policy formulations and technically assist the government as much as possible.
- The conference noted that there have been technologies that have been variously generated but further observed that what was lacking was the coordination of all these efforts in a concerted manner to bring about progressive development in the sub-sector. ESAP members believe that

Major issues discussed

The conference reminded that Ethiopia has huge domestic livestock resources. The conference further noted that despite these resources, livestock productivity levels have been low and markets have been largely inaccessible. In addition, past livestock development initiatives have resulted in limited impact, and sustainable development in the sub-sector remains elusive. This situation has been further aggravated by factors such as: lack of dependable cross-sectional or time-series data; high livestock disease incidences (low reporting rate) and inadequate vet services; market fragmentation mainly due to high transport costs; inadequate understanding of production objectives and development options; and, lack of policy or institutional arrangements (weak and fragmented services).

The conference noted that the unceasing challenges to the sub-sector have been the following: global competition; stringent requirements of export markets; natural resources degradation (dwindling feed resource base); poverty and lower purchasing power of consumers which limits the use of technologies; lack of overlap of disciplinary boundaries with farming systems; inadequate knowledge about what to change and how to change it, in different farming systems - research and development has been derived from assumed and generic problems. Focus has largely been on technological innovations which assume that these are sufficient. Moreover, production improvement has been treated in isolation from storage, processing/value addition, marketing and consumption/disposal. Institutional innovations have been limited, emphasis on marketing and policy research have been inadequate, services have been weak and fragmented - gaps in the research-extension-farmer-markets linkages – with limited experiences in linking farmers with the private sector/industry. Low emphasis has been given to livestock extension while technologies have been very generic (e.g. crossbreds). Technology transfers have been inadequate and often tend to be incomplete. Studies have been limited with respect to economic feasibility, adoption and adaptation by farmers, continuity in use, and impact of technologies (weak monitoring and evaluation).

The conference further noted down that the technologies generated through research in the past have been generic and targeted technological options have been limited. Information has been limited with respect to identifying institutional failures and policy loopholes making evidence-based policy dialogue difficult. Attempts in the past have been limited on development-oriented action research. Research efforts have been limited in various areas as follows: the opportunities and risks for the different categories of livestock producers and mapping out areas where livestock production has the best

socio-economic returns in relation to other forms of land use (to guide allocation of resources for maximum impact); critical review of the experiences of other developing countries in order to identify critical elements of success for scaling up adoption of technologies; and, ways to improve communications and networking (with stakeholders). Support has been very inadequate, fragmented and limited with respect to market and credit facilities to livestock owners. Livestock policies have been inadequate in many aspects.

The conference also discussed the opportunities for livestock sector development arising from increased demand for livestock and livestock products due to high human population growth rate, increased urbanisation, market opportunities in the Middle East and other African countries, and improvements in infrastructure and services.

The conference made note of these problems associated with the livestock sub-sector and that there is a need to prioritize these problems in order to address the problem of generic technologies and assist in targeting technologies to alleviate specific prioritised problems.



Discussants of the plenary session with the chairperson and rapporteur of the session Drs. Getachew Gebru and Solomon Abegaz in the middle

Resolutions

Preambles

Whereas Ethiopia's potential in the livestock sub-sector is high as the human population growth rate is faster than ever and increased urbanization has increased the demand for livestock and livestock products, shrinking landholdings have affected the sub-sector disproportionately with livestock being pushed away from farming systems – encroachment of cropping land on grazing land. Advances in production have largely been from increases in area under cultivation – further geographical expansion being impractical. The conference notes the urgent need for a National Livestock Breeding Policy as several initiatives going on in the livestock sub-sector particularly that of importing exotic breeds and other donor-tailored programs could end up being a possible threat to the indigenous livestock breeds. Increased total factor productivity & restoration of degraded land & ecosystem services are essential for sustained development and natural resource management.

Policy recommendations

- The conference noted that the extension services have been crop biased and there exists shortage of input supply of different sorts. There is therefore a need for large scale private investors to multiply available (or forthcoming) technologies. Policies are therefore needed that would encourage and attract private investors in this area.
- Whereas there is a definite role for the private sector, the conference noted that the incentive for the private sector to invest is usually geared towards investments that will make money in the short term. The conference therefore recommended that government has to play a role in long term investments, with lower short term returns.
- The conference also noted that extension services require voluntary behavioural change – lack of genuine stakeholder participation has been an inherent problem. The conference therefore noted that in this regard, government support in fostering the process is of paramount importance. Therefore, there is a need to encourage the development of a mechanism that enables these voluntary changes in behaviour.
- The conference noted that knowledge management is crucial for the efficient utilization of existing (and forthcoming) technologies. This improves the way people are informed about ways to implement recommendations