

Submission to:

The European Committee of the Regions

DRAFT OPINION

Commission for Natural Resources

The CAP after 2020

by the Old Irish Goat Society

22-Jun-2017



General Comments

Proposed New point 15

15. notes that the export of EU genetic resources, animal breeds in particular, is contributing to the genetic erosion of important indigenous breeds, particularly in 3rd countries, and contradicts UN Sustainable Development Goal 15 to preserve biodiversity, in particular genetic resources with food security implications.

Proposed New Point 18

18. regrets the accelerated loss of genetic resources for agriculture and food, which threatens the resilience of our agricultural food production systems and capacity to adapt to climate change;

Context: points 18, 19, and 20 talk to biodiversity, soil, water and global warming but not agricultural genetic resources. Although the term “biodiversity” technically covers agricultural genetic resources, in reality on the ground it doesn’t and the lack of emphasis in CAP is a major contributor to the lack of priority given to indigenous breeds and varieties, Old Irish Goat Society Opinion.

Reason: CAP needs to place protection of genetic resources for agricultural and food as a strategically important objective. CAP must take primary responsibility to protect these vital resources as they are not protected under directives e.g. habitats / birds. This is a crucially important point, CAP has primary responsibility with regard to genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Policy Recommendations

New point

- b) guaranteeing the survival of European agricultural genetic resources for food and agriculture and guarding against the exportation of genetic erosion to other countries

Reason: reaffirm international commitments to Interlaken Declaration and Agenda 21, “To establish and implement development programmes for indigenous breeds in order to guarantee their survival, avoiding the risk of their being replaced by breed substitution or cross-breeding programmes”.

Reason: Before committing to “guaranteeing the food security of the European population”, we need to first guarantee the EU genetic resources for agriculture and food, that essentially underpin that guarantee. It is important that citizens grasp the significance of genetic resources for agriculture and food to “*their*” food security. And this should be elevated in CAP.

Reason: if there are no agricultural genetic resources there will be no food and no farmers; “Animal genetic resources are among the most valuable and strategically important assets a

country possesses... they are the animal breeder's raw material and among the farmer's most essential inputs" FAO 2009

Amendment to point g):

- g) ensuring that all agricultural production methods are based on practices that take care of the health of both farmers and consumers, ***while also protecting agricultural genetic resources for food and agriculture***, soil and the environment, enhancing biodiversity both in the wild and on farmland, and reducing global warming;

Reason: while acknowledging the supreme importance of biodiversity for survival of mankind and laterally the environment and water, and the huge challenges associated with climate change, these enjoy protection / emphasis under directives, e.g. habitats, birds and water, for this reason it is vitally important that genetic resources for agriculture and food enjoy an elevated position in CAP, as AGR is not well understood or protected outside of the agricultural sphere. Note that AGR is recognised as a vital tool in the Climate Change, speaking to Climate Change, without in the first instance looking to protect those agricultural assets that are strategically important to Climate Change, is a clear policy oversight.

New point

- 38. e support utilisation of indigenous breeds and varieties to support high added value artisan and specialist food products

Reason: while acknowledging the obvious importance of farmers and food producers and the economic development of naturally constrained areas, many indigenous breeds and varieties are suited to farming in these areas. Our native breeds and varieties are under appreciated and are effectively squeezed out in the drive, on the one hand for environmental protection, and on the other for economic development via preferred high input high output farming models. It is imperative, given the significant 'external' pressures, that genetic resources for agriculture and food enjoy an elevated position in CAP, alongside and in tandem with other rural assets and opportunities.

New Point

- 45 a. realising the economic, ecological and cultural value of genetic resources for agriculture and food

Reason: Again genetic resources for agriculture and food are core assets and are almost solely the responsibility of the agricultural community and therefore must be given elevated priority in the CAP.

See References Below

References

Interlaken Declaration 2007, Point 6:

We recognize that existing diversity in animal species is not used to the extent possible for increased food production, improved human nutrition, and to further sustain rural communities, or for more efficient production systems. We note with alarm the significant ongoing loss of livestock breeds. The continuing erosion and loss of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture would compromise efforts to achieve food security, improve human nutritional status and enhance rural development. We acknowledge that efforts to further conserve, develop, improve and sustainably use animal genetic resources should be enhanced.

Interlaken Declaration 2007, Point 10:

We acknowledge that maintaining the diversity of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture is essential to enable farmers, pastoralists and animal breeders to meet current and future production challenges resulting from changes in the environment, including climate change; to enhance resistance to disease and parasites; and to respond to changes in consumer demand for animal products. We also recognize the intrinsic value of biological diversity and the environmental, genetic, social, economic, medicinal, scientific, educational, cultural and spiritual importance of breeds of livestock, and our ethical responsibility to ensure genetic resources are available to future human generations.

Interlaken Declaration 2007, Point 11:

We are aware that the demand for meat, milk and other animal products is dramatically increasing. The sustainable use, development, and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture will make a vital contribution to achieving the goals of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security, the World Food Summit Plan of Action, as well as the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 1: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and Goal 7: ensure environmental sustainability.

Agenda 21, Chapter 14, Section H:

14.64 Some local animal breeds, in addition to their socio-cultural value, have unique attributes for adaptation, disease resistance and specific uses and should be preserved. These local breeds are threatened by extinction as a result of the introduction of exotic breeds and of changes in livestock production systems.

14.65.C establish and implement development programmes for indigenous breeds in order to guarantee their survival, avoiding the risk of their being replaced by breed substitution or cross-breeding programmes.)

UN sustainable development goal 15 'Life on the Land':

Of the 8,300 animal breeds known: 8 per cent are extinct and 22 per cent are at risk of extinction, 6 breeds are lost each month.

United Nations Farm Agricultural Organisation (FAO) 2009:

The flourishing of intensive livestock production systems which utilize a narrow range of breeds has contributed to the degradation of the animal genetic resources and the marginalization of the traditional livestock production ones, leading many breeds to a risk of disappearance (FAO, 2009).

Animal genetic resources are among the most valuable and strategically important assets a country possesses... they are the animal breeder's raw material and among the farmer's most essential inputs.