

Session 4.2: Climate Change Mitigation Strategies.

S04.O-11

ICAR HARMONISATION OF SUSTAINABILITY RELATED MILK TRAITS

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Abstract

ICAR has the role of developing and providing animal recording guidelines to support the dairy industry and farmers in their efforts to collect quality data for use in herd management decision making, and to deliver proven and validated information for genetic evaluations.

Policy, science, consumer expectations and farmer practices all point to the same paradigm: optimisation not productivity, for land, animals and energy. Taking on this challenge, we need to reset and take ecology and the ecological boundaries as our starting point. This means a paradigm shift towards circularity, as part of a larger bio-based economy. Following the successful ICAR 2021 conference in Leeuwarden, where 'Circularity in Agriculture' was the main theme, the ICAR Board appointed Board Member Tone Roalkvam and their CE, Martin Burke to form a Sustainability Task Force (STF) with the goal of developing a coordinated approach to Sustainability across ICAR Working Groups and Sub Committees.

As well as ICAR Board and staff being represented, the Sustainability Task Force also includes ICAR's key Working Chairs ; Birgit Gredler-Grandl (Feed & Gas WG) and Christa Egger-Danner (Functional Traits WG).

In subsequent meetings in 2022 and 2023, the STF worked to develop a '**Table of Sustainability Related Traits currently recorded in Member Milk Recording Organisations**'. Traits were identified, grouped based on herd management area, and assessed based mainly on their 'Impact' on Sustainability as well as to their 'Ease' of implementation. This exercise identified over 35+ traits currently being recorded by ICAR Members. As ICAR's key role is harmonisation of recording guidelines we recommend the next steps;

- a. ICAR provides **Standard Definitions** of the key Milk Recording Traits
- b. ICAR provides a standard comparable reference on **how to Measure important sustainability-related traits**.

This presentation offers a progress report including an overview of the recommendations of the ICAR Sustainability Task Force.

Keywords: ICAR, Sustainability, Milk Recording Traits, Trait Harmonisation, Collaboration.

