
Preface

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The 33rd session of ICAR and Interbull meeting were held in Interlaken, Switzerland from May 26 to 31, 2002. In this connection a joint ICAR/FAO Seminar was held to discuss how sustainable livestock development can be enhanced in developing and transition countries through efficient organization of animal recording and skills development. This was a logical sequence to the several other meetings which ICAR, FAO and EAAP have sponsored and organised in recent years in Anand, India (1997), Warsaw, Poland (1998), Bella, Italy (1999) and two workshops in Bled, Slovenia (2000) to promote animal recording in developing regions of the world.

Several trends in livestock production have an impact on the organization of animal recording. Rapid increase of demand for animal products is taking place in developing and transition countries along with the increase in commercialization and intensification of animal production. This happens both in the rural family based systems as well as in private sector industrial type of dairy, pig and poultry production systems in many CEE and CIS countries and peri-urban areas in the developing countries.

This coincides time wise with the withdrawal of the public sector from the animal production and processing and limiting itself to policy, legal, regulatory and other similar public functions. Decision making power on animal resource planning and management is being increasingly decentralised to local level stakeholders which necessitates major transitions and adjustments in the institutions involved in livestock and related skills developments. Favourable enabling environment exists to enhance private sector initiatives to develop decision support tools like animal recording at farm, community and national level and growing awareness regarding the sustainable use of animal and plant bio-diversity.

The focus of the workshop was on the capitalization and sharing of experiences of the successful use of animal recording systems in livestock development in the transition and developing countries. The workshop particularly aimed at addressing the issues of adaptation of animal recording organizations in the transitory changes resulting from major shifts in the livestock sector. It also discussed how ICAR and its member countries or potential new members in the developing world could benefit from attracting greater participation in animal recording of livestock farms; farms at different levels of production intensity or scale of operation regardless of the breeds or species of animals they keep.