

COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

ECOWAS COMMISSION



COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO

Department of Agriculture, the Environment and Water Resources

ADOPTED GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY WITHIN ECOWAS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF LIVESTOCK IN ECOWAS MEMBER STATES

With a population of 290 million in 2008, West Africa makes up 4.6 % of global population and more than 40 % of the population in sub-Saharan Africa. Livestock plays a key role in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In fact, average livestock's contribution to regional agricultural GDP is 44%. With more than 60 million head of cattle and 160 million small ruminants and 400 million poultry, the West Africa region is an exceptional livestock region. Ruminants (cattle, sheep, and goats) are the predominant livestock traditionally managed on 170 million hectares.

Livestock provide livelihood opportunities for millions engaged in the various activities - production, processing, marketing and services - of the livestock value chain. The trade in livestock and animal products is a well known source of income and employment. The dairy product sector in the rural and peri-urban milieu provides real and diversified employment opportunities for many people. In particular, milk and meat marketing and processing operations generate numerous and multiple jobs. With a total of 20.35 million tonnes of meat and 2.05 million tonnes of milk generated annually in the region, animal production directly or indirectly plays a role in improving food and nutritional security.

Livestock is a major form of diversification of the agricultural output that is made up mainly of roots, cereals and cash crops. The crop-livestock association often has a favourable environmental impact as a result of the manure that contributes to the regeneration of the very fragile soils in several countries. If properly promoted, livestock trade has the potential to contribute significantly to foreign exchange earnings by ECOWAS member countries with the comparative advantage.

POTENTIALS AND CONSTRAINTS

The potential for animal production in West Africa is extremely high. In relation to the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, West Africa accounts for about 25% of the cattle, 33% of the sheep, 40% of the goats and 20% of the camels. Added to these are the short life cycle animals (pigs, poultry and micro-livestock), several species used for animal traction (horses and donkeys) as well as non conventional farm animals (such as guinea pigs, giant rats and snails) whose numbers are increasing in the region. The sahelian countries are more endowed with ruminants whilst the coastal countries are more endowed with monogastrics and micro-livestock.

West Africa has diversified agro-ecological systems that are strikingly different in such factors as the density of the human and animal populations, access to land, water and dry season fodder reserves.

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ECOWAS member states have such a high, numeric, genetic and production potential which is in sharp contrast with the low availability of meat and milk in the region. The main reason is the poor development of this potential both in terms of production and productivity as the policies which are implemented most often do not take account of the complementarities between the zones in the region.

With an annual growth rate estimated at 4%, the demand for animal products especially from the coastal countries will increase by more than 250 % between now and 2020. It is estimated that compared with 2000, by 2020, the population in rural areas will have increased by 30% while the urban population will increase by 200%. Meat is produced in the rural pastoral systems of the Sahel and West Africa at a price that is competitive in the international market. However, marketing problems within ECOWAS make it impossible for sahelian livestock to take part in the lucrative international meat market and difficult to capture the urban markets in the region. If properly developed, the regional trade in cattle and meat could meet most of the regional demand in both urban and rural areas but only if the ever growing imports from outside Africa can be effectively reduced.

Regarding dairy products, the low productivity and competitiveness of the regional dairy sector makes it impossible to compete with imports from outside Africa. The imports of dairy products have doubled over the last 20 years. Such imports of animal products continue to drain the economy of ECOWAS member states thereby depriving them of the possibilities of investing in the livestock and other sectors of the economy so as to effectively reduce poverty and food insecurity as required by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

In addition to income losses in the countries that have comparative advantages in animal productions, imports of animal products are one of the development constraints of the agriculture and livestock sub-sectors in the region. This situation reduces the possibilities of developing employment and income opportunities in the region. If this tendency were to continue, it would no doubt worsen the situation in the coming years unless appropriate measures were taken, particularly by enhancing the supply in animal products which is currently at 2% per annum.

In spite of the weak support in public investments with regard to production, processing and marketing infrastructure and the inadequate efforts to develop trade of animal product, livestock has natural comparative advantages among the Member States of the region. The animal production potential is still rarely maximised and the region continues to import large quantities of animal products to satisfy the growing demand of the populations most of whom are living in the urban areas.

In addition to the ecological, technical, socio-economic and institutional constraints and an obvious and sustained lack of consideration in the national and regional agricultural policies, the development of livestock is marked by imbalances of great concern pertaining to enhancement of the regional market. For the three major products (meat, milk and eggs), the past twenty years were marked by deficit, despite the fact that the production of eggs could by and large meet the demand for the same period. The strong trend is that the supply of meat and dairy products in the region cannot meet the regional demand. Moreover, there is need to note that the large deficit of the ECOWAS Member States is due to animal diseases caused, among others by, the weak level of compliance to IOE norms by the veterinary services.


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STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

The major challenge of ECOWAP is to properly feed a fast growing and highly urbanised West African population. In fact, the regional deficit is mainly related to the inability of the regional supply to meet the growing demand in meat and milk. On one hand, there is need to harmonise the regional supply and demand, taking into account the demographic growth, urbanisation and consumer requirements that necessitate the development of productivity and production of animal resources, and the other hand, there is need to develop intra-regional trade of cattle and animal products.

It is necessary to preserve and develop animal resources that are able to produce enough milk, meat and eggs in a cost-effective manner, despite the use of low quality feeding, and resist to diseases and unfavourable climate conditions. It is more than ever necessary to exploit the geographic and agro-ecologic differences within the ECOWAS region.

Therefore, it is strategic for the regional economy that the natural comparative advantages of the sahelian and savanna countries in animal production are sustainably developed into economic advantages. This option should inevitably be based on the implementation of policies that would enhance the regional market of cattle and animal products. It is also strategically important to develop the feeding potentials of the semi-arid and humid zones and the areas that receive the transhumant herds in the coastal countries by promoting activities in animal fattening and cattle feed industry professions.

Each Member State should promote the allocation of human, financial and material resources to the development of its comparative advantages into economic advantages based on a regional vision resulting from the dissemination of animal resources, development of production systems, supply and demand constraints and opportunities in cattle and animal products. Moreover, considering the transhumant mode of livestock, a regional approach should be established to control major diseases within the ECOWAS region. To this end, coherent national policies of regional scope should be implemented.

In order to fully exploit the complementarities between ECOWAS member states, solutions should be provided at regional level to develop production and processing and enhance the current volume of trade to better consolidate regional integration by stimulating the markets of animal products. To this end, regional policies should be implemented in subsidiarity with national policies.

STRATEGIC GUIDELINES

In the framework of the implementation of the ECOWAS Agricultural policy (ECOWAP), it is important to support the optimisation of the regional livestock potentials that could be a determining factor in stimulating the agricultural and food markets and enhancing food and nutritional security, animal health security and poverty eradication to achieve food self-sufficiency.

The development of livestock within the ECOWAS region requires an integrated vision. Such a vision should be expressed through a specific development strategy of livestock in the framework of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) that would also take into account the achievements of the specific policies implemented in West Africa. It should also:

- harmonise the actions undertaken at regional level with national policies in the countries by complying with the principles defined in the framework of ECOWAP;
- enhance the dynamism of the chains by taking into account the aspect relating to production, processing, marketing, storage, distribution and consumption;
- promote and enhance intra-regional trade and exploit the market potentials to acknowledge regional livestock as growth generator and a strategic sector for successful regional integration, fight against poverty and economic growth within the ECOWAS region;
- enhance the productivity and quality of animal products through science, technology and research;
- promote dynamic and conducive private-public partnership to enhance production, processing and marketing, financing, animal health services and veterinary public health.

Considering the foregoing, the Ministers of Livestock, Trade and Security of the ECOWAS Member States, meeting in Niamey on 4th February 2009 on the occasion the Regional Forum on Livestock:

Acknowledging the potentials and constraints of the livestock sector;

Acknowledging the strategic stakes of the livestock sector to enhance food and nutritional security, fight against poverty, employment creation, integration and development of the regional market;

Acknowledging the need to take into account transhumance, cross-border trade flows and rights of cattle farmers to have access to pastoral land and natural resources;

Understanding that the reduction of the region's dependency on imported foods of animal origin can only be achieved by giving priority to animal health, production, processing and marketing of products of animal origin by further developing the advantages and complementarities among the zones;

Reiterating that the implementation of the ECOWAS Agricultural policy (ECOWAP) will strengthen economic integration;

1. Recommend the definition of a specific livestock development strategy in the framework of the implementation of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP);
2. undertake to enhance the capacities of national and regional professional organisations through networking, development of the apex regional organisations of professionals of value-chains, provide institutional support to enhance management and control/governance.
3. undertake to accelerate the harmonisation of regulations to facilitate trade of cattle and animal products, ensure animal health, health security of foods of animal origin, veterinary products and animal genetics resources;
4. undertake to enhance public veterinary services in order to properly carry out their mission and also provide support for the development of private veterinary practice.
5. undertake to protect the pastoral land (pastoral areas and transhumance/trade corridors) through the harmonisation of implementation of pastoral codes and agro-sylvo-pastoral laws by

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making particular reference to the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government Decision A/DEC.5/10/98;

6. undertake to support continuous evolution and intensification of production systems, including peri-urban livestock, through the improvement of feeding systems, health and genetic improvement of indigenous West African breeds;

7. undertake to promote the processing of animal foods, products and by-products through establishment of a conducive environment, research and training in best practices and maintenance of quality of processed products in accordance with international standards;

8. undertake to support dissemination of market information by strengthening institutions for the collection and management of information on livestock markets and statistics;

9. undertake to enhance training and research in regional livestock based on indigenous and modern knowledge, particularly on the impact of national and regional policies as well as natural and social changes on the livestock sector and the competent institutions within the ECOWAS region.

Considering the need to articulate the regional policies and programmes for an integrated development of livestock within ECOWAS;

Considering the importance of harmonising implementation approaches and resources within ECOWAS;

The Ministers of Livestock, Trade and Security of the ECOWAS Member States:

10. recommend that the definition of the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET) should promote the regional livestock sub-sector and enable the regional supply to replace imports from outside Africa;

11. recommend the implementation of measures aimed at facilitating cross-border commercial transactions through harmonisation of intra-community transit conditions, re-definition of a taxation system on commercial transactions relating to cattle and strict implementation by all parties of the community regulation on free movement of persons, goods, capitals and services, the rights of entry, residence and establishment and also through monitoring, denunciation and sanction of administrative harassments, abuse of power and corruption cases along the cross-border roads;

12. recommend an improvement in cross-border public security to control cattle thefts and passage of stolen cattle at the borders, prevention and management of border conflicts and post-crisis interventions to restore the means of livelihood of the animal farmers;

13. recommend that actions be taken to enhance education, health, registration of births and deaths, access to water and sanitation in transhumant and pastoral areas;

14. recommend that all actors in the livestock chains be taken into account in national and regional agricultural investment programmes and make regional financial systems more accessible to producers and economic operators by specifically putting in place instruments to facilitate cross-border commercial transactions and support the implementation of financing and credit systems adapted to livestock, marketing of cattle and animal products and agro-food processing; and,

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15. recommend that livestock be taken into consideration in the regional and national investment programmes for the development of pastoral and marketing infrastructure (stockyards, pastoral boreholes, abattoir, animal feed stores, etc.) and equipment in the frame work of Regional Agricultural Investment Policy (RAIP), and National Agricultural Investment Policy (NAIP).

The Ministers of Livestock, Trade and Security of the ECOWAS Member States recommend to the ECOWAS President to translate the prepared strategic guidelines into an Action Plan not later than 2010 and implement it by 2020 for the development of Livestock in the ECOWAS region.

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