



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

FAO Global Conference on
**Sustainable Livestock
Transformation**

Better production, better nutrition,
better environment, better life



FAO Headquarters, Rome (Italy)
25-27 September 2023

CONCEPT NOTE



PROPOSAL

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is organizing the first ever **Global Conference on Sustainable Livestock Transformation (GC-SLT)** with the theme “*Better production, better nutrition, better environment, better life*”, on 25 to 27 September 2023. The GC-SLT will provide a neutral forum for FAO Members, producers, scientists, development agencies, policy makers, civil society, opinion leaders and the private sector to engage in dialogues on innovations and pathways to efficiently produce more nutritious, safe and accessible animal source foods with a reduced environmental footprint, and contribute to vibrant local and diversified livestock systems that are more resilient to shocks and disruptions.

RATIONAL

FAO supports its Members to strengthen the contribution of livestock systems towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). FAO's work on sustainable livestock systems is at the interface of the four betters of the [FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31](#): better production, better nutrition, better environment and a better life. Sustainable livestock systems play important roles in achieving each of these aspirations.

Better production in livestock systems is an important aspiration and underpins the other three betters. In many parts of the world, technical and organizational innovations – such as improved feeding, genetics, animal health, husbandry practices and information technology – are driving up productivity of livestock, feed crops and pastures. In the Global South, extensive and semi-extensive livestock production systems still generate the largest share of animal source foods while highly intensive, industrial systems dominate in the North. Within-livestock system comparisons reveal large variations in productivity, suggesting considerable scope to improve efficiency through adoption of context-specific best practices. Sustainable transformation of livestock systems should ensure that natural resources are used efficiently to minimize environmental externalities, negative social impacts are avoided, and the best possible health and welfare of the animals raised are safeguarded.

SDG 2 aims to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. However, approximately one in nine people suffer from hunger or are undernourished, mostly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Micronutrient deficiencies affect some two billion people globally. Countries are off track to achieve zero hunger and different crises (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic, extreme climate events, conflicts) are exacerbating difficulties. Animal source foods (ASF) are nutrient-dense and provide energy and many essential nutrients such as proteins, fatty acids and micronutrients, contributing greatly to **better nutrition**. However, consumption of ASF is not equitably distributed across regions, groups or income levels. Many groups do not consume sufficient quantities of ASF to meet their nutritional needs, while others consume more than their dietary needs. That said, globally, the demand for milk, meat and eggs is projected to continue to increase in the future, driven by population growth, urbanization and rising incomes in developing countries.

Livestock systems draw heavily on natural resources, emit greenhouse gases and, if not managed in a sustainable way, can contribute to detrimental land-use change, land degradation and environmental pollution. Sustainable livestock transformation should optimize the contribution of livestock systems to a **better environment**. Livestock systems will need to contribute to the

conservation of biodiversity and to ecosystem services, including nutrient cycling, soil organic carbon sequestration and maintenance of agricultural landscapes.

Livestock are a key element of the livelihoods of over one billion people. In addition to nutritious food, they provide employment, income, insurance, fertilizer and draught power, and constitute an important asset for small-scale producers including pastoralists. Livestock production is increasing to meet demand, but small-scale producers are failing to participate fully in sector growth and are increasingly facing difficulties to stay in business. Large numbers of low-income livestock producers are women, yet they often have less access to productive resources and markets than men, preventing them from deriving significant benefits from their livestock. Sustainable livestock transformation should ensure that the diversity of livestock systems is acknowledged and builds upon the multiple contributions livestock play towards a **better life**, while being fully integrated into rural development policy.

The GC-SLT will comprehensively assess the contribution of livestock to food security and nutrition using latest scientific findings. It will provide evidence for policy making on how best to increase the productivity of all livestock systems through innovations for improved feeding, genetics and husbandry practices. Attention will be given to animal health and welfare due to their links with improved productivity, human health and environmental health. Information technology and digitalization will generate evidence for the promotion of precision livestock farming as a means to both increase production efficiencies and create decent jobs. The environment theme will be a means to identify good practices to make optimal use of natural resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Opportunities to better integrate livestock systems into the bioeconomy will be explored. Small-scale farmers' perspectives will be maintained as a continuous thread across all sessions.

We trust that the event will generate evidence for actions towards the realization of the goals of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 for the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind, thus contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDGs 1, 2 and 12.

OBJECTIVES

The GC-SLT will convene a wide spectrum of relevant stakeholders to debate and synthesize evidence on innovative solutions for sustainable livestock transformation, for possible scaling and adoption, with focus on food insecure countries. In particular, the objectives of the GC-SLT are:

- i) Raise awareness of the contribution of sustainable livestock production to implementing the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, to attain the SDGs at global, regional and national levels.
- ii) Share information and knowledge on the strategic direction and technical developments in sustainable livestock production worldwide.
- iii) Demonstrate FAO's technical leadership and convening power to support its Members for sustainable livestock production.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The GC-SLT will bring about three expected outcomes:

- i) Priorities established for the mobilization and pooling of scientific, technical and financial resources to achieve global sustainable livestock transformation.
- ii) Proceedings published as an evidence-based guide to promote Sustainable Livestock Production through the adoption of appropriate practices, partnerships and policies.
- iii) A set of recommendations proposed to guide active innovation for sustainable livestock production worldwide.

THEMES

Better livestock production systems: encompassing management and use of feed and animal genetic resources, animal health and welfare, digitalization and precision livestock farming.

Animal source food for better nutrition: presenting the state-of-the-art knowledge on the contribution of animal source food to food security and nutrition and healthy diets.

Livestock solutions for better environment: sharing information about good practices and initiatives to make optimal use of natural resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Better life: including how to support small-scale livestock producers to improve their livelihoods and income through inclusive services and policies, fostering more efficient and resilient livestock production.

PROGRAMME LAYOUT

It is currently envisaged that the programme will include an opening plenary session with keynote addresses, a series of four plenary sessions with presentations and moderated discussions dedicated to the themes of better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life respectively and a final plenary session including a high-level ministerial segment. Simultaneous interpretation in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish will be available for the 3-day meeting. It is expected that there will be about 400 participants at the event, which will also be webstreamed. A GC-SLT website will be launched in the near future. For more information, please contact Livestock-Conference@fao.org