



Concept Note
International Year of Camelids 2024
Opening Ceremony
Sheikh Zayed Centre – Hybrid meeting
4 December 2023, 12:30 – 14:00 CET

I. BACKGROUND

Following resolution 7/2017 of the 40th Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations General Assembly, at its 72nd session, declared 2024 as the International Year of Camelids (IYC). FAO was nominated to facilitate the implementation of the IYC in collaboration with governments, relevant organizations, non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders.

The International Year aims to raise awareness of the contribution of camelids to livelihoods, food security and nutrition. Camelids have huge potential to support food security and nutrition and reduce levels of extreme poverty. By optimizing their multiple produces (meat, milk, fibre, means of transport), camelids can also help increase income and resources therefore supporting sustainable livelihoods. In addition, it encourages all stakeholders, including national governments to work towards recognizing and valuing the economic, social and cultural importance of camelids in the lives of communities, especially those that are highly vulnerable to extreme poverty.

Camelids include Bactrian camels, dromedary camels and wild camels as well as South American camelids, namely domesticated llamas and alpacas, and wild vicuñas and guanacos. South American camelids were the main livestock in pre-Hispanic times and are considered as unique indigenous mammals on the continent. Bactrian camels and dromedaries are crucial for nomadic life and communities living in drylands. They are sometimes called “ships of the desert” because of their capacity for survival in challenging circumstances, travelling vast distances often through extreme conditions, and surviving long periods without water. Camelids play a key role in the culture, economy, food security and livelihoods of communities across the world, including Indigenous Peoples. Even in extreme climatic conditions they continue to produce fibre for clothing, nutritious animal source food and organic fertilizer. They can play a key role in addressing the impacts of climate change, particularly in arid and semi-arid lands.

II. RATIONALE

As the custodian agency, FAO will facilitate the implementation of the IYC 2024 with governments, organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations and relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and research and academia.

III. OBJECTIVES

The IYC launch event aims to raise awareness and create momentum for the IYC 2024 by engaging Members, United Nations organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders for the implementation of the IYC 2024.

In particular, the objectives of the event are:

- inform the global audience on the importance of camelids to livelihoods, food security and nutrition, supporting the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- highlight the activities planned for the International Year; and
- attract voluntary contributions from donors, governments and institutions willing to support the implementation of the IYC Global Action Plan.

IV. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased awareness on the importance of camelids, their economic, social and cultural importance in the lives of communities, especially those that are highly vulnerable to extreme poverty, and potentials to improve livelihoods, nutrition, and food security.
- Increased engagement of Members, United Nations organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to celebrate the IYC 2024 with global, regional, national or local events and initiatives.