



CONFERENCE

Forty-fourth Session

Rome, 28 June – 4 July 2025

Evaluation of the International Year of Camelids 2024

Executive Summary

Following Resolution 7/2017 of the 40th Session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations General Assembly, at its 72nd Session in 2018, declared 2024 the International Year of Camelids (IYC). FAO was invited to facilitate the organization and implementation of the IYC in collaboration with governments and all other relevant stakeholders.

The main objective of the IYC was to raise awareness of the economic, social and cultural importance of camelids and to foster the consumption of the goods they produce to contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

The observance of the IYC has successfully raised global awareness of the vital role camelids play in the lives of millions of people living in challenging environments. FAO and partners have organized numerous events – including conferences, webinars, seminars and training sessions – at global, regional and national levels, and produced a wide range of communication and outreach material to promote the Year.

This document provides a report on the progress made in the implementation of the Global Action Plan as of 15 May 2025. The IYC closing ceremony is scheduled to take place during the 44th Session of the FAO Conference.

Suggested action by the Conference

The Conference is invited to:

- a) endorse the present evaluation report, noting the substantial achievements at all levels in the context of the International Year of Camelids 2024;
- b) highlight the importance of camelids for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and FAO's *four betters*; and
- c) encourage FAO Members and other relevant stakeholders to build on the momentum of the IYC 2024 by formulating and implementing policies and programmes that support the sustainable development of the camelid sector.

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I. Background

1. Following Resolution 7/2017 of the 40th Session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),¹ the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), at its 72nd Session in 2018, declared 2024 the International Year of Camelids (IYC).² FAO was invited to facilitate the organization and implementation of the IYC in collaboration with governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations (UN) system, international and regional organizations, and all other relevant stakeholders.

2. The International Year of Camelids aimed to showcase and raise awareness of the economic, social and cultural importance of camelids and to foster the consumption of the goods they produce. In particular, the IYC objectives were to:

- raise awareness of the contribution of camelids to livelihoods, food security and nutrition;
- encourage 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; and
- highlight the need for enhanced investment in research and development and extension services to achieve the above.

3. In 2023, FAO set up a Secretariat to facilitate the IYC implementation process, under the supervision of an International Steering Committee (ISC) consisting of representatives from FAO Members, international organizations, academia and research institutions, civil society, producer organizations and the private sector. The ISC elected the representatives of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Saudi Arabia as its Co-Chairpersons.

II. Progress in the implementation of the Global Action Plan for the International Year of Camelids

4. The Global Action Plan (GAP) for the IYC was prepared in consultation with members of the ISC to provide a set of guidelines, activities and events to be implemented during the Year.

5. The main activities of the GAP are organized around four key areas:

- a. IYC key events, including the opening and closing ceremonies;
- b. knowledge generation and dissemination;
- c. communication, advocacy and outreach; and
- d. partnerships.

6. The opening ceremony was successfully held on 4 December 2023 at FAO headquarters, on the sidelines of the 174th Session of the FAO Council. The event featured an exhibition of camelid products and gathered around 200 in-person participants. Following the official launch, numerous events have been organized at global, regional and national levels by FAO and its partners to promote the IYC and raise awareness of the vital role camelids play in the lives of millions of people living in challenging environments, especially Indigenous Peoples and local communities. As of 15 May 2025, more than 150 events were posted on the IYC website, including webinars, conferences, training sessions, festivals, seminars and other outreach activities. These include, for example, a Regional Meeting for the Promotion and Sustainable Development of the Camelid Sector in Latin America, organized by Chile with the support of FAO, and a series of FAO training webinars on dromedary camels. In early June 2025, FAO is planning to hold a regional conference on the IYC and Sustainable Livestock Transformation in Africa, in Nairobi, Kenya, featuring high-level sessions and thematic

¹ C 2017/REP, paragraph 60 <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/mu208e>

² A/RES/72/210 <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1471041?ln=en&v=pdf>

discussions. A parade of cardboard camelid models, which aimed to raise awareness of the different species, traveled from FAO headquarters in Rome to other destinations including Chile, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the 16th Session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the King Abdulaziz's Camel Festival in Saudi Arabia, as well as Switzerland.

7. The International Year of Camelids has been intensively promoted through diverse communication channels, reaching broad and varied audiences. The IYC website, available in all UN languages, has served as a gateway to IYC key messages, events and communication and outreach products. Since the Year's official launch, FAO has regularly promoted IYC content across its multilingual social media accounts, reaching ten million followers. As of 15 May 2025, more than 1 150 posts related to the Year were shared via FAO's social media platforms, with over 75 million impressions. Multilingual content about the Year was also shared on all FAO WhatsApp channels, which have a cumulative following of over 700 000, and LinkedIn, which has 1.6 million followers.

8. Within the framework of the IYC, FAO has produced a wide range of multilingual communication and outreach materials, including promotional videos, articles, posters, an interactive story and dedicated webpages. The content was translated into the six UN languages and into up to ten languages. The cultural, social and economic importance of camelids to communities worldwide has also been highlighted through human-interest stories from 11 countries, "local hero" videos, and a photo and video mission to Mauritania with the photographic cooperative Magnum Photos. This mission documented the role of dromedary camels and FAO's work to support the sector, following which a story was published by Magnum Photos and a video, photo albums and reels were produced and shared. The International Year of Camelids photo contest received nearly 700 submissions from almost 70 countries around the world. The very first International Year webpage for children was created to increase target audiences and sensitize the youngest generation on the untapped potential of camelids.

9. The International Year of Camelids Secretariat, in collaboration with over 60 camelid experts from across regions, is developing a comprehensive and evidence-based publication series on camelids to address a significant knowledge gap. The series will address topics such as the history of camelids; camelid biodiversity, population trends and geographical distribution; production systems, products and services of camelids; roles and values of camelids and their products; current challenges facing the sector; and future perspectives.

10. Partnerships have played a pivotal role in the success of the IYC. The Year celebrates and promotes the formation of new regional and international partnerships, while also strengthening existing collaborations. The active engagement of IYC supporters – ranging from organizations to individuals across stakeholder groups – has been instrumental in the achievements of the Year. For example, World Camelids Sports invited the Secretariat to participate in the King Abdulaziz's Camel Festival in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and provided a booth to help raise awareness about the Year; Magnum Photos participated in the mission to Mauritania and the jury of the photo contest. The International Year of Camelids celebrations fostered the development and strengthening of camelid networks, contributing to knowledge dissemination and the exchange of good practices both within and across regions.

11. In line with the UNGA Resolution, the implementation of IYC activities was funded through voluntary contributions. To this end, a multidonor project was established in September 2023 to attract contributions from governments and other donors. The sole donor of the project was Saudi Arabia.

III. Sustaining momentum beyond closure of the International Year of Camelids

12. The closing ceremony is scheduled to take place on the sidelines of the 44th Session of the FAO Conference. The event will highlight the achievements and lessons learnt from the IYC and enhance engagement of relevant stakeholders to build on the legacy of the IYC 2024. It will provide

an opportunity to further strengthen the camelids sector beyond the IYC and into the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists that will be observed in 2026.

13. FAO, governments and all other stakeholders are encouraged to continue promoting the key messages and themes of the IYC and to use and create opportunities and initiatives to follow up on them.

14. FAO will incorporate key camelid themes in the work of the Animal Production and Health Division (NSA) and other divisions and offices, as applicable. FAO will also continue to build on strategic partnerships identified during the IYC.