



LEAGUE FOR
PASTORAL
PEOPLES AND
ENDOGENOUS
LIVESTOCK
DEVELOPMENT



INVITATION TO A WORKSHOP

on

BIOCULTURAL PROTOCOLS: AN EMERGING APPROACH TO STRENGTHENING LIVESTOCK KEEPING COMMUNITIES

Nairobi, 28-30 November, 2011

LIFE Network, in collaboration with the League for Pastoral Peoples and Endogenous Livestock Development (LPP), is pleased to announce the above workshop which will take place at the Kenya School of Law in Nairobi, Kenya. LIFE Network is a network of organisations and individuals involved in the conservation and sustainable use of local livestock for the empowerment of rural people. LPP is an advocacy and support group for pastoralists who depend on common property resources. Together with the South Africa based NGO Natural Justice, LIFE Network and LPP have pioneered the use of Bio-cultural protocols as a means of implementing livestock keepers' rights to the conservation and sustainable use of local livestock breeds for their livelihoods and wellbeing.

The goal of this workshop is to introduce Biocultural Community Protocols (BCPs), to a wider audience, especially pastoralist communities, but also policy makers, NGOs, bureaucrats and donors. Biocultural Protocols are a new approach and tool to strengthen awareness and control of traditional and indigenous communities over their knowledge and resources. They are a response to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which commits its parties in Article 8j *to respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity*. The CBD also protects and encourages *the customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation and sustainable use requirements.*"

Pastoralist communities are "Keepers of Genes": They have a rich heritage of livestock breeds that are ideally suited for production in areas with harsh environments, that are crucial for food security, and that are carriers of what scientists call adaptive traits. These breeds and the traditional knowledge of their keepers are key resources in the adaptation to

climate change. The genetic information that pastoralist breeds embody is also the subject of much research by scientists. Nevertheless, the value of pastoralist breeds often remains ignored, so that some of them hover at the verge of extinction. In some cases we have the paradox situation where breeds are the subject of intense scientific research, but at the same time disappearing from the production system.

Biocultural protocols are a means of changing this situation: they entail a facilitated process in which a community documents its genetic resources and associated knowledge and result in a printed document that puts a community's contribution to the conservation of biological diversity, including its traditional breeds, on record. They are thus also an important strategy for implementing a number of Strategic Priorities for Action of the Global Plan of Action on Animal Genetic Resources (GPA).

The significance of Biocultural Community Protocols lies both in the process of establishing the protocol and in the product, which makes visible a community's stewardship of the environment as well as its rights. An important component of the process is awareness building among the community about its rights under existing national and international legal frameworks.

BCPs can not only empower communities, but also have advantages from the perspective of other stakeholders in the livestock sector, such as policy makers, scientists, and donors. For instance, they

- Make visible indigenous livestock breeds and the social networks that sustain them.
- Take stock of the current situation and identify the factors that act as constraint on community and livestock development.
- Motivate livestock keepers to conserve and develop their resources
- Zero in on the special characteristics of livestock breeds and their potential for specialty products
- Comply with the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Some examples of pastoralist communities that have developed such protocols include the Raika camel breeders and the Banni buffalo keepers in India, as well as the Pashtoon of Pakistan and the Samburu of Kenya. These existing experiences indicate that BCPs are a potent tool for communities to become aware of their rights, to reflect on their priorities for development and to take an active interest in the protection of resources.

During this workshop, legal and animal genetic resource experts will set the scene and describe the legal and institutional context for BCPs while community representatives will share their experiences with this approach.

CONTACT AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- Dr. Jacob Wanyama, LIFE Network Africa, mobile: +254.736520043; e-mail jacob_wanyama@yahoo.com
- Dr. Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, League for Pastoral Peoples and Endogenous Livestock Development, www.pastoralpeoples.org. E-mail: ilse@pastoralpeoples.org

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 15th November, 2011

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT BCPS

www.pastoralpeoples.org/docs/BCP_for_livestock_keepers_web.pdf
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sguYu_mVlhg
www.unep.org/communityprotocols/PDF/Case%20Study-RaikaBCP.pdf

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