

**THE ROLE OF THE ACT IN PRESERVATION OF  
THREATENED DOMESTIC ANIMAL BREEDS  
(MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES IN HUNGARY)**

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In this paper some important points of the present Hungarian conservation policy of indigenous and other endangered domestic animal breeds are discussed. Special attention is paid to the role of different institutions and organizations, as well as to the importance of regulations at different levels in the management of animal genetic resources in Hungary.

*The Ministry of Agriculture*

The leading role of the Ministry of Agriculture in working out and completing the conservation programme of animal genetic resources can be characterised briefly by:

- working out the Act on Animal Breeding, and the subsequent departmental orders, in co-operation with the Ministry of Environment Protection,
- managing the Fund for Agriculture and Forestry,
- supervising the breeding authority,
- supervising and financing agricultural research concerning the conservation programme at universities and research institutes,
- controlling and managing the whole conservation programme.

*The Fund for Agriculture and Forestry*

The Fund (originally called: Fund for Agricultural Development) was established by law in 1992. Among its activities in different fields of agriculture, reasonable part of the Fund is spent on the maintenance of animal genetic resources including indigenous breeds. Applications for grants can be made yearly by registered breeders (institutions, breeding organisations or farmers) of breeding stocks (line or breed collections) temporarily or permanently endangered because of commercial reasons. The breeds as well as

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the number of individuals and the minimum number of offspring in a stock are determined by the Fund, which enables the regulation of the population number. The realisation of the accepted breeding programme is controlled by the breeding authority. By this activity of the Fund practically all registered breeders of Hungarian indigenous breeds as well as other breeds maintained as line or breed collections have been able to get additional financial support since 1993.

### *The Act on Animal Breeding*

At the end of 1993, the Act on Animal Breeding was passed by the Hungarian Parliament. Among many questions concerning different fields of animal breeding the Act contains regulations on conservation of indigenous animal breeds in Hungary. It declares:

1. Preserved indigenous breeds represent important genetic value, their maintenance in original form is of national interest and duty of the state, the realisation of which is arranged by the Ministry of Agriculture with the aid of other institutions, as the Ministry of Environment Protection and *the breeding authority*.

2. Indigenous breeds are those either developed in *the natural geographical surroundings* of Hungary, or rearing and breeding of which is based on historical traditions.

3. Conservation of protected indigenous breeds is supported by the state. The methods and conditions are regulated in law.

Following the Act, departmental orders came out in 1994 determining the rights and duties of the breeding authority, breeding organizations as well as the list of indigenous and other endangered domestic animal breeds protected and supported by the state. Further species can be added to the list by the decision of the Ministry of Agriculture.

### *The Breeding Authority*

According to the Act, the breeding authority in Hungary is the National Institute of Agricultural Quality Control. In the conservation programme of indigenous animal breeds its major task can be summarized as follows:

- evaluate, accept and register the breeding stocks and populations of indigenous breeds,
- determine the appropriate breeding programme for each species, breeds and varieties and control its realisation,
- provide financial support determined by law,
- evaluate applications for the financial support of the Fund for Agriculture and Forestry and control their fulfilment.

By the above mentioned activities the National Institute of Agricultural Quality Control, supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture, plays an outstanding role in organising and controlling the realisation of the conservation programme of indigenous as well as other protected animal breeds of high genetic value in Hungary.

#### *The list of protected breeds*

Departmental orders determine the list of Hungarian protected breeds and the conditions of support. The breeds supported in Hungary by law (and 1994 data of total numbers of females of indigenous breeds) are shown below. It should be mentioned, however, that the numbers of pure bred individuals of the listed breeds can be much higher considering that some of them are involved in special breeding programmes of commercial purposes, and that there are other breeds temporarily supported as line or breed collections.

Indigenous breeds	
Breeds	No of females
Year: 1994	
Hungarian Grey Cattle	2050
Sheep Racka	1660
Cigája	200
Cikta	317
Swine Manglica (3 types)	350
Turkey (2 breeds)	150
Hungarian Frizzled Goose	300
Chicken (6 breeds)	5600
Rabbit Hungarian Giant	300

#### Other threatened breeds of high genetic value

Cattle	Hungarian spotted
Horse	Gidrán
	Hucul
	Kisbéri
	Lipicai
	Furioso-North Star
	Noniusz
	Shagyar arab
Fish	Hungarian carp (C.c. forma hungaricus)

### *The National Parks*

Supervised by the Ministry of Environment Protection, there are five national parks in Hungary, having unique environmental bases, flora and fauna. Two of them - Hortobágy National Park and Kiskunság National Park -, with their pastures are traditional places for breeding indigenous domestic animal breeds of cattle, sheep and swine. The populations, kept partly for tourist shows in their natural environment by traditional way of management, also belong to the conservation programme. They however, are supported by the Fund of Environment Protection of the same Ministry.

### *Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)*

Breeding of many of domestic animal breeds - including endangered ones - in Hungary is organized by NGOs such as breeding associations and unions. They are called by the Act as Breeding Organizations. Their role in the management of animal genetic resources is very important in cattle, horse, pig and sheep breeding, and is getting more and more important in other species.

Experiences gained so far show that regulations and control of the conservation programmes of animal genetic resources assure the long time safe maintenance of indigenous and other endangered domestic animal breeds by the stabilisation of the minimum number of individuals, the permanent control of their breeding programmes and the possible dual financial support either guaranteed by law or obtained from the Fund of Agriculture and Forestry. The latter support is subject to change and determined on the basis of the level of threat of a population.

According to personal communications, foundation of a new fund (Fund for Biological Resources) is planned by the Hungarian Government under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1996, which would be completely spent on the maintenance of plant and animal genetic resources in the country, providing long term and safe financial background for the breeders of endangered domestic animal breeds on national level.

### **ULOGA ZAKONA U OČUVANJU UGROŽENIH DOMAĆIH PASMINA ŽIVOTINJA (UPRAVLJANJE ŽIVOTINJSKIM GENETSKIM IZVORIMA U MAĐARSKOJ)**

#### **Sažetak**

U radu se raspravlja o nekim važnim pitanjima sadašnje mađarske politike očuvanja autohtonih i drugih ugroženih pasmina domaćih životinja. Osobita se pozornost posvećuje ulozi raznih institucija i organizacija kao i važnosti propisa na različitim razinama u upravljanju životinjskim genetičkim izvorima u Mađarskoj.

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