

# Dairy Asia: Towards Sustainability

## E-consultation on the elements of a strategy for sustainable dairy development in Asia

### Background

Asia region has emerged as a major player in global dairy production and consumption. Aggregate consumption gains in dairy products in Asia over the past decade have exceeded twice the annual global average. Recent OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook estimates that the demand for milk and milk products in the region will touch almost 320 million tonnes by the year 2021. This means the region will need to increase milk availability by another 40 million tonnes within this decade. While dairy prices in 2008 had declined in line with other agricultural commodities, many of the factors prompting higher prices will likely underpin market fundamentals in the dairy sector over the medium term. These market conditions provide an attractive opportunity for developing Asian nations to further consolidate the gains by investing in measures to enhance productivity, quality and market access.

This growth in demand is happening at a time when concerns about resource scarcity, growing pressure on feed resources, climate change and the need for more equitable development are becoming more and more important. Farmers worldwide face the challenge of producing more food with fewer resources while also addressing climate change and impacts on ecosystems. The agriculture sector in general is under pressure to increase the efficiency of natural resource use to meet society's growing food and environmental needs. For the dairy sub-sector, this means that the economic agents along the entire dairy value chain must adopt technologies and management practices that facilitate integration of environmental health, economic profitability and social and economic equity goals.

Further, it is imperative that the transition to a more sustainable path considers sustainability in its full complexity encompassing all its pillars — economic, ecological, and social. Partial solutions will not produce the desired results. For example, any efforts towards conservation that ignore the need for economic development, food security and livelihoods are unlikely to succeed. Conversely, socio-economic development will not be sustainable if it does not maintain the ability of the ecosystem and society to adapt to short and long-term changes. This complexity necessitates consideration of sustainability as a societal issue and requires integrated efforts by a wide range of stakeholders to capitalize on the strength of dairy production systems in Asia and to minimize the potential negative impact of rapid growth in demand and supply of dairy products in the region. It is also imperative that such efforts be realistic, equitable, and conscious of the region's ecological, socio-economic and cultural dimensions.

To discuss and debate these issues and to discover the ways of addressing future challenges, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO-RAP) together with Animal Production and Health Division (AGA) of FAO, the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock (GASL), Dairy Farming Promotion Organization of Thailand (DPO), Department of Livestock Development, Royal Thai Government, (DLD) and other partners, organized a Regional meeting 'Dairy Asia—Towards Sustainability' in Bangkok on 21-23 May 2014. The meeting was attended by about 90 participants from over 20 countries comprising stakeholders from

governments, national and international research agencies, civil society organizations, multilateral institutions, think tanks, private sector and regional and global networks. The meeting provided a platform to share experiences, debate issues of key concern, and provide guidance for the nature of required responses in different countries and growth scenarios.

Among other things, the participants discussed the elements of a strategic framework to guide future development of dairy sector in the region. The purpose of developing such a framework is to provide some strategic guidance to national governments and other stakeholders to help them develop/adjust their own strategies and programs in the light of broader trends and specific national priorities. It was further agreed that a drafting group would elaborate on the framework elements discussed in the meeting and seek the comments and views of stakeholders at large. The draft framework paper as elaborated by the drafting group is now available on [www.dairyasia.org](http://www.dairyasia.org) and [www.aphca.org](http://www.aphca.org) and can be downloaded from the following links.

[http://dairyasia.org/file/Sustainable\\_dairy\\_asia\\_framework\\_paper.pdf](http://dairyasia.org/file/Sustainable_dairy_asia_framework_paper.pdf)  
[cdn.aphca.org/dmdocuments/Sustainable\\_dairy\\_asia\\_framework\\_paper.pdf](http://cdn.aphca.org/dmdocuments/Sustainable_dairy_asia_framework_paper.pdf)

### The e-consultation

**The draft framework paper referred above is a work in progress and this e-consultation seeks to invite comments and feedback on the paper as it stands now.** All stakeholders are welcome to contribute to this consultation: Please comment on the overall coverage, comprehensiveness, recommendations and any other aspect you consider important. We would in particular be interested to receive comments on whether you consider the framework paper to be sufficiently comprehensive to serve as a guide for developing strategies and programs in specific national and sub-national contexts in the region.

### Period of consultation and the next steps

The consultation starts on Oct 15, 2014 and ends on Oct 25, 2014. **Your comments/observations will feed the process towards the finalization of the next draft of the framework paper.** Following the preparation of final strategy paper, the drafting group would seek formal endorsement from the key stakeholder organizations and the final paper would be disseminated widely.

### How to register

Participation in the e-consultation requires membership of Asia Dairy Network. To become a member, please send the message Subscribe FAO-DairyAsia-L to [listserv@listserv.fao.org](mailto:listserv@listserv.fao.org). Leave the subject line blank, type 'Subscribe FAO-DairyAsia-L' in the first line of message body and send to [listserv@listserv.fao.org](mailto:listserv@listserv.fao.org).

Current members of the Asia Dairy Network and the participants of Dairy Asia meeting held in Bangkok in May 2014 will be automatically registered for the consultation.

To unsubscribe, please send message Unsubscribe FAO-DairyAsia-L to [listserv@listserv.fao.org](mailto:listserv@listserv.fao.org) leaving the subject line blank and typing Unsubscribe FAO-DairyAsia-L in the first line of the message body.

Should you have any problem in subscribing/unsubscribing, feel free to contact Team Dairy Asia at [AsiaDairyNetwork@fao.org](mailto:AsiaDairyNetwork@fao.org).

### **How to contribute**

Your contributions or comments on contributions from others may be sent to:

[FAO-DairyAsia-L@listserv.fao.org](mailto:FAO-DairyAsia-L@listserv.fao.org)

When submitting your first message, please introduce yourself briefly by giving full name and country of residence. Please capitalize the last name, so that the message could be properly quoted. You should also provide your full address at the end of the message.

The participants are assumed to be speaking in their personal capacity, unless they explicitly state that their contribution represents the views of their organization.

The consultation will be moderated. The Moderator will read all messages before they are posted to ensure that they relate directly to the strategy paper. The Moderator can refuse to post any message that does not address or relate directly to the issues raised in the paper. This is in no way to censor or limit the views expressed by participants but to ensure the discussion remains focused on the theme of the consultation. We welcome and encourage a diversity of views and opinions, and we want you to speak your mind.

### **A checklist before submitting a message**

Before submitting a message, participants are requested to ensure that:

- The message only considers the issues raised in the paper
- The message is no longer than 600 words
- Each participant includes his/her name and country of residence in any message sent for the discussion. A participant should never represent him/herself as another person
- Participants should not send unfounded, defamatory, obscene, violent, abusive, commercial or promotional messages or materials, or links to such materials
- Each participant is legally responsible, and solely responsible, for any materials, or links to any materials sent
- Participants will be courteous at all times and exercise tolerance and respect toward other participants whose views may differ from their own
- If you want to have a personal discussion on any message, please send a message to the individual only