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“Utilisation of diversity in land use systems:  
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## Livestock and Livelihood Systems in the Face of Global Change

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### Abstract

Many drivers of change effect livestock systems. These drivers act at different levels: farming system and livelihood, regional within or across countries and international or global. The challenge for understanding the effects of drivers of change is to study the drivers and response to change at different levels and analyse (in)coherence between levels from the lowest to the highest system level or vice versa.

As global change is a complicated matter numerous questions can be asked. Does the livestock revolution have positive effects for all primary producers? Are the opportunities of international trade agreements creating open borders really positive for developing countries for all agricultural products or is the balance tipping to consumers in the developed countries? How does climate change effect livestock producers and in particular their feed resources? What is happening to soil fertility and feed availability when biomass production for fuel becomes an interesting enterprise? Does the societal demand for better animal welfare in Northwest Europe influence global standards and can farmers adapt to the requirements for housing, health and transportation? Do farmers have sufficient capabilities to respond to the quality standards for retail marketing? The global dynamics cover economic, social, political and ecological aspects of animal production and food chains and influence the sustainable development at all system levels.

At the local level farmers face their endowments like natural resources in terms of land and its fertility, water, crop and animal genetics, and labour availability of the household, capital investment, marketing and infrastructure, farmers associations and social networks. Each of these components of the farming system and the household determine the response to change. Moreover opportunities for better paid work outside the farming system maybe more attractive.

A major problem is to understand the effects of the global drivers in the local situation, but also at the regional, national and international level. Integration of these drivers at these levels is an even more difficult task.

In this paper I will present global drivers and responses and link these to the roles of livestock of smallholders. What is their perspective in response to global drivers?

**Keywords:** Global drivers, smallholders, sustainable development