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“Development on the margin”

Conservation, Promotion and Utilisation of Indigenous Lulu Cattle (*Bos taurus*) for the Sustainable Development on the Marginalized Area of High Altitude of Nepal

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Abstract

Livestock is an integral part of nearly all rural livelihoods in Nepal. A very high proportion of poor and marginalised farmers depends on livestock as their main or supplementary source of income. Cattle and buffalo contribute more than 70 % to the livestock sector. In addition, because of the religion, cattle are perceived as the holy animal by the Hindus whose percentage is more than 75 in Nepal.

Only about 12% of the total cattle of Nepal are improved. The rest of the cattle are non-descript type indigenous breeds. These indigenous cattle can withstand even in a very harsh climatic condition. Lulu is one of the very efficient indigenous breeds suitable to raise at an altitude of 7,500 to 14,000 feet asl. It is very important to eradicate the extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1), to improve the nutritional status (MDG 2), environmental sustainability (MDG 7) and to develop global partnership (MDG 8) in these marginalised areas of Nepal. However, a detailed study of this breed, especially on milk production potentiality, nutritional requirement, present status to sustain the breed is not done yet in Nepal.

A survey conducted in November 2010 to February 2011 revealed that Lulu breed is the symbol of high altitude cattle farming especially of Mustang and Manang districts of Nepal. However, because of unmanaged forage pasture and range land, out migration (especially youth migration from rural to urban areas) and global warming, their number is declining day by day. The study concluded that the number, production and productivity of the breed can be improved if the direct custodians (principally farmers) get appropriate incentives as stated in Article 11 for the Conservation and Sustainable use of the Agrobiodiversity in Nepal. Furthermore, the value chain and organic product production approaches would also be very useful for the conservation, promotion and utilisation of these vulnerable species of the cattle.

Keywords: Conservation, high altitude, incentives, indigenous cattle, marginal people, Nepal