

euRONATUR FOUNDATION

EUROPEAN LIVESTOCK BREEDS ARK AND RESCUE NET

AGRI GEN RES action 066 (ELBARN 2007 - 2010)

Co-founded by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, under Council Regulation (EC) No 870/2004¹



[EXECUTIVE SUMMARY]

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 870/2004 of 24 April 2004 establishing a Community programme on the conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in agriculture. Official Journal L 162 , 30/04/2004 P. 0018 - 0028

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO ELBARN 2007-2010

ELBARN is the European Livestock Breeds Ark and Rescue Net (ELBARN). The origin of ELBARN lies in rescue actions undertaken in Switzerland in the 1980s. From these early rescue actions a vision emerged of a pan-European network to ensure that valuable livestock can be protected from slaughter in times of crisis. Additionally, a pilot project began, in the German-speaking area of Europe, to create an online 'guidebook' of all centres with rare livestock breeds that are open to the public. This took the form of the Arca-Net website, promoting a network of 'Ark Centres'. In 2006, these two ideas were combined to create the concept of the European Livestock Breeds Ark and Rescue Net.

ELBARN began in 2007 with a three year project funded by the European Commission under the work programme of **Council Regulation (EC) No 870/2004**. This project (AGRI GENRES action 066 or ELBARN 2007-2010) was completed in 2010. The three year concerted action has resulted – among other things – in a well-networked and motivated group of people; this resource is an asset to the future work on conservation of indigenous animal breeds in Europe. ELBARN 2007-2010 was the start of the European network for livestock breeds. It will be continued under the leadership of the SAVE Foundation and by using the now well-established label ELBARN.

The following executive summary outlines ELBARN 2007-2010.

1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project objectives were presented at the Central Workshop held in Kutna Hora, Czech Republic in February 2008. Within the framework of the workshop, four work groups discussed these themes, with the aim of producing a set of guidelines to be used for shaping the rest of the project.



1.2.1 RESCUE:

The ability to act rapidly to protect endangered livestock breeds in emergencies or unforeseen circumstances is the central theme of ELBARN. For this to be possible, much prior planning is required. A review of existing laws and regulations is required to make sure that they are compatible with this idea. It is also necessary to raise awareness of the importance of animal genetic diversity amongst veterinaries and official bodies. The ELBARN Ark and Rescue Centres (A&RCs) can provide a framework for successful rescue actions – but this has to be supported by adequate national law and knowledgeable practitioners.

1.2.2 ARK AND RESCUE CENTRES:

The primary goal of ELBARN is to network existing “Ark Centres” and to provide a policy framework within which they can provide a professional service for conservation of the breeds through breed management. This service also includes the promotion of the products and services of rare breeds along with raising awareness within the public sphere of the importance of animal genetic diversity. Awareness raising and the inclusion of endangered traditional livestock breeds into agricultural production are important tools for safeguarding their future. Discussions showed that a “Rescue Centre” needs to be capable of saving herds of endangered farm animals from slaughter or, in the case of political unrest, military conflicts, flooding, etc. Suitable facilities are acquainted with caring for animals and have room, time and personnel available to welcome additional animals. Furthermore, they should have a suitable sanitary status and contingency plans for accepting animals at short notice and also be able to provide isolation of incoming animals.

1.2.3 BREEDING:

Managing the breeding of endangered traditional livestock breeds is the most important tool for safeguarding genetic variety, especially if the population is a small one. The ELBARN A&RCs can provide a framework for this management where there is none already in place. By keeping nucleus herds and coordinating breeding with other farms and A&RCs, an essential part of the work for in-situ conservation will be achieved.

1.2.4 MARKETING:

Marketing is an important part of the process to find ways to finance A&RCs. They should be as self-sufficient as possible, as dependence on state subsidies can be dangerous in times of cutback. Besides marketing the actual products from rare breeds like milk, meat and wool, it is possible to market services such as landscape management, promoting tourism and

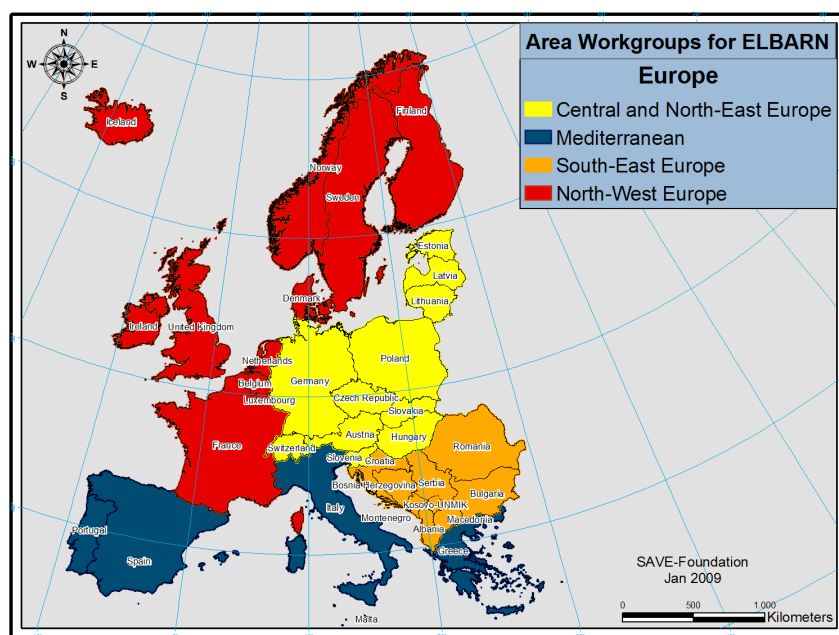


education. The marketing strategies strongly depend on the type of A&RC, its location and market potential, end customers and outlets. The various European countries have vast differences in marketing, culture, income, purchasing parity and consumer behaviour, which results in a complex and diverse starting point for setting out generally accepted guidelines.

In spite of this it is possible to isolate general consumer requirements and general marketing tools for the producer.

1.3 ELBARN AREAS

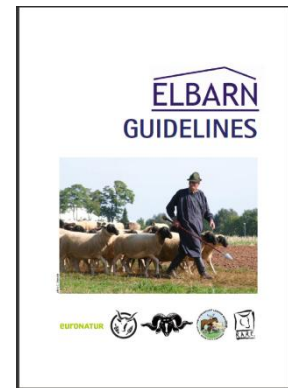
In early 2009, four 'Area Workshops' were held in Ghent (Belgium), in Roznov (Czech Republic), in Legnaro (Italy) and in Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria). Each workshop was a meeting of a wide range of stakeholders from the area, all of whom has special interest and expertise in the field of in situ conservation of agrobiodiversity. For each area an 'Area Action Plan' has been developed, tailored to perceived local needs. The Action Plans have been developed together with local partners and, therefore, can be seen as a representation of the views of the current participants in the ELBARN project.



1.4 OUTCOMES

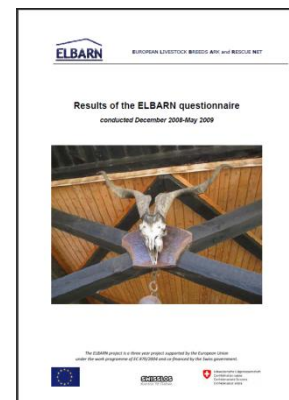
The main outcomes of ELBARN 2007-2010 are publications, the database and the website.

ELBARN Guidelines: a set of guidelines that can be used by Ark and Rescue Centres. The guidelines cover the subjects of Rescue and Disease, Ark and Rescue Centres, Conservation Breeding and Marketing of Products and Services.

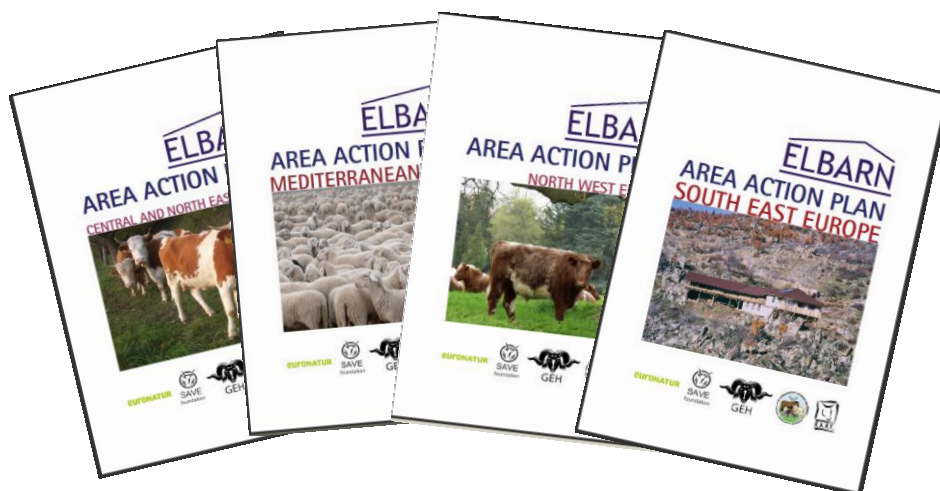


Workshop Results: all the presentations plus photos and other documents from all workshops held. These are all to be found on the website www.elbarn.net

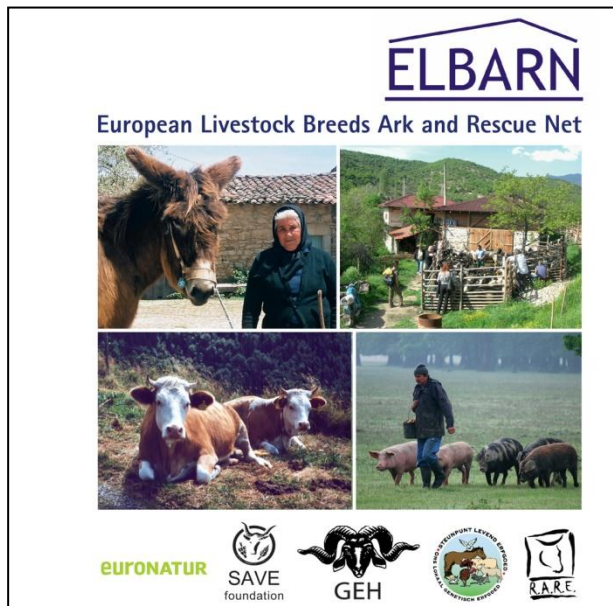
Questionnaire Report: a short report which sets out the main results of the ELBARN fact-finding questionnaire.



Area Action Plans: for four areas of Europe, setting out the needs and requirements to continue the ELBARN project into the future.

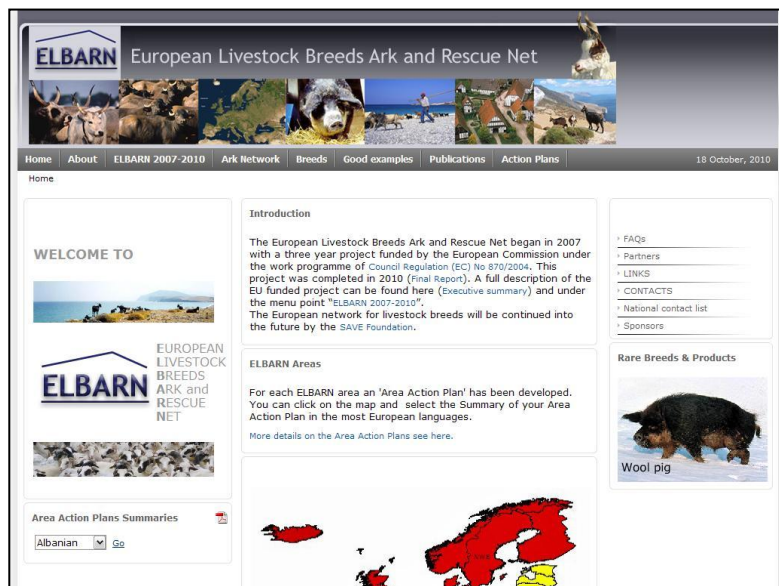


ELBARN Book: The final publication – a highly illustrated short book outlining the project and the importance of agrobiodiversity. It is comprehensive and explains what agrobiodiversity is and why it is endangered. It is complete with many examples, case studies, pictures, maps and contact points.



Database with breed descriptions: Descriptions of currently 505 different animal breeds typical for Europe related to 13 farm animal species: ass (4), buffalo (6), cattle (113), chicken (26), dog (5), duck (3), goat (60), goose (7), horse (61), pig (39), rabbit (2), sheep (176) and turkey (3). www.elbarn.net/elbarn/Breeds/tabid/123/Default.aspx

www.elbarn.net: A website presenting all the above mentioned outcomes, plus a fully searchable database of over 500 arc farms and rescue centres in more than 40 European countries, which makes this a unique collection of farms, open air museums, nature reserves etc., all conserving the traditional breeds of their region.



2. COMMUNICATION VALUE

ELBARN 2007-2010 has resulted in a well-networked and motivated group of people; this resource is an asset to the future work on conservation of indigenous animal breeds in Europe.

Over 400 Ark Centres from 43 European countries are now presented in a searchable, online database. Each listing includes a short description of the Centre, its opening times, directions of how to find it, which animals can be seen there and if there are farm products available. This function is available on the website www.elbarn.net and the list of Ark Centres is continually growing.

Tours through Eastern Europe have identified a number of potential Rescue Centres and, where the owner is in agreement, an inventory sheet has been completed. This information will be made available to the relevant National Contact points.

The Area Workshops emphasised the need for a pan-European group who would communicate the national and area interests of stakeholders up to a governmental level. This is required to gain recognition for problems and needs on a national level and also act as a lobbying instrument to improve legislation in Europe, on all levels, affecting native breeds. The ELBARN project partners decided to already create a small but effective Task Force to tackle some of the most pressing needs. This Task Force made up of ELBARN partner organisations and other people who have shown interest and commitment to the project.

It is the opinion of the ELBARN Task Force that this type of coordination work – collaborative, cross-border, inclusive of all stakeholder levels – is essential for the long-term success of conservation in general and ELBARN in particular.

Therefore, we will be striving towards a sustainable future based on the good work started under the current Community programme on genetic resources in agriculture so that it can continue at a European level.



3. The Action and Partners

3.1 ACTION DETAILS

ELBARN 2007-2010 was awarded round 398,000 € by the EU towards a total project budget of 497'550 €. The project started on 1st June 2007. The project ended on 31st May 2010. The project was coordinated by EuroNatur Foundation and managed by SAVE Foundation. The three further partners (RARE; SLE, GEH) provided technical in-put as well as playing a major role in the organisation of the Area Workshops and the subsequent publication of the Area Action Plans.

3.2 PARTNER DETAILS

NGOs have played an important part in both international discussions and local action for over two centuries¹. European NGOs, adapted to local needs and structures, have been working successfully to achieve on-farm conservation of agrobiodiversity for over 30 years.

NGOs do not enjoy vast power or resources, but are generally small, fast moving, innovative and unbureaucratic. This leads to decisions that are based on the probability of success, the resources available for implementation and are clearly based on agreed goals.

The ELBARN 2007-2010 project - a partnership of five NGOs:



The ELBARN 2007-2010 Team l-r: Martin Schneider-Jacoby (EuroNatur), Antje Feldmann (GEH), Markus Dressnandt (EuroNatur), Laura Milone (RARE), Hans-Peter Grünenfelder (SAVE), Elli Broxham (SAVE), Riccardo Fortina (RARE), Gabriel Schwaderer (EuroNatur), Staf Van den Bergh (SLE), Jef Aerts (SLE). Missing from picture are Ulrich Donath (SAVE) and Anja Zimmermann (GEH).



euronatur FOUNDATION

Coordinator – EuroNatur Foundation (The European Nature Heritage Fund): EuroNatur is a non-profit foundation which stands up for the conservation of the European nature heritage on many different levels, e.g. via special species protection projects, renaturation measures, and site protection as well as political lobbying activities or environmental education. EuroNatur projects are long-term and often cross-border projects aiming not only at the protection of nature, but also at an ecological development of the respective rural areas. Without considering the needs of the people, long-term protection of natural resources is not possible. Therefore, EuroNatur always cooperates closely with regional partner organisations and local residents.

**Konstanzer Str. 22
78315 Radolfzell
Germany
Fon: +49 (0) 7732 - 92 72 - 0
Fax: +49 (0) 7732 - 92 72 -22
info@euronatur.org
www.euronatur.org**



SAVE Foundation (Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe): In many countries in Europe, there are organisations supporting and promoting the conservation of Agro-Biodiversity. The SAVE Foundation acts as a European umbrella organisation for these organisations. It promotes and coordinates activities to conserve endangered breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties. The SAVE Foundation

also acts practically, in areas where there is, as yet, no national organisation in existence. The SAVE Foundation and its Partners make up the European SAVE Network.

**Head Office
Joseph-Belli-Weg 5
78467 Konstanz
Germany
Fon: +49 (0) 7531 – 802 73 74
Fax: +49 (0) 7531 – 819 98 07
office@save-foundation.net
www.save-foundation.net**

euronatur





GEH (The Society for the Conservation of Old and Endangered Livestock Breeds):

GEH was formed in 1981 out of a group of breeders, keepers and idealists. It now has over 2000 members throughout Germany. GEH works practically for the conservation of traditional breeds in Germany. Alongside a quarterly magazine, they also run a “red list” of endangered breeds as well as working closely together with state institutes to promote conservation in Germany. GEH also owns a number of animals from genetically important animal breeds, which are in the hands of members of the organisation. Together with agricultural scientists, they work to find optimal strategies for conserving these breeds. GEH is a founding member of the SAVE network.

**Walburger Straße 2
37213 Witzenhausen
Germany**

Fon: +49 (0) 5542 – 1864

Fax: +49 (0) 5542 – 72560

info@g-e-h.de

www.g-e-h.de



SLE (Living Heritage Centre): SLE has been dedicated for almost twenty years to the preservation of the original and now often rare local breeds of agricultural animals and poultry. SLE is the only organisation in Flanders that works for the preservation of our old and local breeds in all species, and for the retention of variety in our genetic legacy.

SLE members receive the quarterly magazine de ARK. The SLE website is a treasure trove of information on our living heritage and an important medium for the exchange of ideas. Members can also take part in the herd book scheme for our local breeds of sheep and goats and call on the services of SLE in the areas of animal-keeping and breeding. In partnership with the Province of East Flanders, SLE is developing the Levend Erfgoed Park (Living Heritage Park) in the Puyenbroeck provincial domain in Wachtebeke. All the local breeds will be found there. The Levend Erfgoed Expo (Living Heritage Expo) takes place in the second half of August every year. It is a festival day for Living Heritage and draws thousands of visitors.

Rotselaarsebaan 45

3220 Holsbeek

Belgium

Fon: +32 (0) 16 – 44 31 67

staf.vandenbergh@sle.be

www.sle.be

euronatur





RARE (Razze Autoctone a Rischio di Estinzione): RARE is the first private association for conservation of local and endangered Italian domestic breeds for their scientific, cultural, economic and environmental value. Founded in 2002, RARE is partner of the European SAVE Foundation and operates in cooperation with breeders, universities, regional administrations and other existing associations to promote educational activities and give information on the status of endangered breeds. The members of RARE are currently working on specific conservation projects for many breeds and, to continue this work, one of the main objectives of RARE is the establishment of an Italian network of breeders of local and endangered breeds, the so called "allevatori custodi" (caretakers), serving as a centre point for the exchange of animals, information, and know-how.

Corso G. Agnelli, 32

10137 Torino

Italy

Fon: +39 011 – 670 85 80

Fax: +39 011 – 437 39 44

info@associazionerare.it

www.associazionerare.it

4. Links

www.elbarn.net

www.euronatur.org

www.save-foundation.net

www.g-e-h.de

www.SLE.be

www.associazionerare.it



http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/genetic-resources/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/genetic-resources/actions/f-066/index_en.htm

¹ Charnovitz, S., *Two Centuries of Participation: NGOs and International Governance*, Michigan Journal of International Law Vol 18:183