



## Livestock policy and trade issues in SADC

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### ABSTRACT

HULMAN, B. 2009. Livestock policy and trade issues in SADC. *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Research*, 76:147–153

As from 2001, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has embarked on a course to deepen regional integration through restructuring. Under the new structure SADC has centralised the coordination of its activities to the Secretariat in Gaborone. The former Sector Coordinating Units have been merged into four directorates, one of which is the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) Directorate, which comprises, amongst others, the Livestock Development Unit (LDU).

The LDU, under the aegis of the FANR, formulates policies for regional livestock development in order to respond to the objectives of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), and which are mainly to:

- Contribute to improved food security.
- Promote wealth creation.
- Enhance rural livelihood.
- Enhance livestock as a tradable and consumable commodity.

Following the launch of the SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations, the eight SADC EPA member states identified sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to trade to be major trade barriers for access to international markets, especially the EU market where standards are normally set beyond international standards. SADC has already brought some of the issues related to beef exports to the OIE Regional Commission for Africa as SADC member states feel that a few of the present requirements do not have a scientific basis.

The paper discusses the process that the LDU follows in the formulation of policies and strategies in regional livestock development with the objective of bolstering intra and extra regional trade in livestock and livestock products.

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### INTRODUCTION

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) was established in 1980 as a regional economic community now comprising 15 member states (including the Republic of Seychelles) in the Southern African region with headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana.

The SADC vision is one of a common future, a future in a regional community that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of standards of liv-

ing and quality of life, freedom and social justice, peace and security for the peoples of Southern Africa. This shared vision is anchored on the common values, principles and historical and cultural affinities that exist between the peoples of Southern Africa.

As from 2001, SADC has embarked on a course to deepen regional integration through restructuring, a process which involves mainly reforms of institutions and management systems. Under this new structure, SADC has centralised the coordination of

its activities to the Secretariat in Gaborone. Centralisation has meant merging the former 21 sectors into four directorates, one of which is the Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR), which includes the Livestock Development Unit (LDU).

The role of the LDU is to contribute to the promotion of regional integration and sustainable livestock production through the coordination of animal disease control strategies, human resource development, marketing and utilisation of livestock products in order to create employment, improve the standard of living of the people and to meet regional food security objectives.

The LDU works with member states through the Livestock Technical Committee and its four sub-committees, which are task forces meeting regularly to consult member states on issues related to:

- Epidemiology of animal diseases
- Diagnostics and testing facilities including development of quality assurance and harmonization of standard operating procedures
- Productivity of farm animals and natural resources (rangelands) and production and marketing of processed products of animal origin
- Ensuring that products of livestock origin conform to food safety standards

The recommendations of the sub-committees form the basis of policy formulations for regional livestock development which are enshrined in the objectives of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

The RISDP has the following priorities under the intervention area of sustainable food security:

- Ensuring food security
- Ensuring access to food
- Improving safety and nutritional value of food
- Ensuring disaster preparedness for food security
- Ensuring equitable and sustainable use of the environment and natural resources
- Strengthening institutional frameworks and capacity building.

The RISDP will provide SADC member states, including SADC institutions, with a coherent and comprehensive development agenda on social and economic policies for the next 15 years.

## POLICY ISSUES

Livestock plays an important role in the livelihoods of the farmers of the region as it contributes to more than 30% of the agricultural GDP. Seventy percent of the livestock farmers are smallholders and it is befitting that during policy formulations special attention be devoted to the problems faced by the smallholder farming community. A workshop organised by SADC in July 2000 provided an opportunity for key stakeholders to deliberate and reach consensus on priority issues for regional integration and protocol development in the SADC sectors of crops, livestock and agricultural research and training. The expected output was to clearly identify issues where integration is needed, articulate why this was an area for integration, i.e. what are the objectives to be achieved through integration; and formulate strategies, mechanisms and structures that could be put in place to implement integration. The priority issues for regional integration in the livestock sector were, and still are, deemed to be:

- The control of transboundary animal diseases and disease vectors
- Quality assurance of veterinary drugs, vaccines and animal feed ingredients, imported from outside the SADC region as well as those produced within the region
- Sanitary standards and regulations for animals and their products, including risk assessment
- Optimal use of animal genetic resources in the region
- Information exchange on aspects relating to the above with special reference to “best practice” technology, and to early warning systems
- Capacity development to implement policies and strategies in the livestock sector
- Research that is specifically oriented towards problem solving.

The workshop came up with a set of guidelines for protocol development and issues for policy formulations in livestock with the overall objective to achieve regional integration, and sustainable use of animal resources. Member states undertook to assist in the development of the protocols and strategies for the regional development of the livestock sector. The overall objective would be achieved by addressing the following issues.

### Farm animal genetic resources (FAnGR)

Ensure regional commitment to good management practices, conservation of and sustainable use of

FAnGR to ensure their long-term availability and accessibility in order to optimise benefits for all users of FAnGR in SADC member states:

- Develop and harmonise common policies.
- Share information on the availability, use and characteristics of FAnGR in the region and beyond.
- Create a user-friendly and accessible regional database.
- Characterise FAnGR.

### **Livestock census**

The objective is to develop sustainable management and utilisation of natural resources and to generate an essential planning tool. As a strategy it would be useful to undertake annual censuses by using the most cost-effective method. The data will assist to establish a regional database.

### **Livestock identification**

It is expected that livestock identification will help to achieve better security against cross-border stock theft and will ensure better disease surveillance monitoring. With the need nowadays to comply with food safety requirements it has become essential to develop and promote national legislations for animal identification, especially for trade.

### **Animal feeds**

Introduce and maintain regional statutory controls for the production and use of animal feeds and develop regional standards for quality assurance. In order to achieve this, it is essential to establish:

- Minimum standards for premises, operational procedures, hygiene, storage and transport
- Independent statutory quality control bodies at national level
- Registration and licensing protocols.

### **Transboundary disease control**

The objective is to facilitate the co-ordination and control of transboundary animal diseases (TADs) through the development of the following strategies:

- Harmonise disease control strategies in accordance with the OIE recommended guidelines.
- Share information and establish an early warning information system.

- Strengthen collaboration between the SADC livestock sector and international organisations such as AU-IBAR, FAO, OIE, IAEA, AfDB, UNDP, etc.
- Facilitate the establishment of national epidemiological units, databases and information exchange.

### **Registration of veterinary biologicals and medicinal products**

There is a need to regulate the importation, distribution and use of veterinary biologicals and medicinal products and for this it is essential to:

- Create or strengthen national databases on biologicals and medicinal products.
- Establish national registration and licensing bodies.
- Identify regional institutions with the capacity to produce veterinary biologicals and drugs.
- Identify a regional body to assist with the registration of veterinary biologicals and drugs.

### **Information management system**

The development of a standardised and harmonised livestock and animal health information management system for the region was also felt to be a priority so as to facilitate timeous risk assessment, especially for trading purposes. For this, it is necessary to identify suitable software and hardware for regional use and undertake regional training on information management systems and risk assessment.

### **Quality assurance and standardisation**

Standardise and improve diagnostic capabilities of veterinary laboratories in the region by the following strategies:

- Harmonise the quality assurance procedures of member states.
- Identify independent quality assurance auditors.
- Establish a regional accreditation system for diagnostic laboratories.

### **Abattoir hygiene standards and meat inspection**

Establishment of minimum standards for abattoirs and meat processing facilities for the region through the development of the following strategies:

- Set and harmonise minimum training standards for meat inspection personnel.

- Set and harmonise minimum standards for abattoirs and meat inspection facilities.
- Establish and harmonise operational procedures for abattoirs and processing plants for trade in the region.

### **Hygiene standards for milk and dairy processing and manufacturing**

Establish, set and harmonise minimum standards for milk processing and dairy manufacturing plants bearing in mind the existing international standards.

### **Private sector engagement**

Create an enabling policy environment for the development of a vibrant private sector in the livestock industry by:

- Promoting the commissioning of core function analysis studies by member states
- Promoting the commercialisation of government services, where possible, as a first step towards privatisation such as artificial insemination, feed production and vaccine production
- Encouraging smart partnerships between the government, private sector and the farming community
- Providing specific support to enhance competition and accountability in the private sector.

### **Import and export of animals and animal products**

The overall objective is to promote intra and extra regional trade in animals and animal products in the SADC countries and for this to be achievable there is need to:

- Establish port health authorities at national level.
- Harmonise import requirements into the SADC region.
- Harmonise import/export certification system to facilitate trade in the region.
- Build national and regional capacity to ensure compliance.
- Harmonise import/export certification for movement of companion animals and racehorses.

### **Animal welfare**

With the aim to promote humane handling, use and transportation of animals, it is essential to develop a

code of conduct for the use, handling and slaughter of animals and to promote civic education on animal welfare.

### **ADDRESSING THE POLICY ISSUES**

The importance of agriculture for the region cannot be overemphasised. Regardless of their economic base, there is overwhelming evidence that all economies in SADC tend to be driven by agricultural conditions when it comes to growth rate, stability, control of inflation, particularly food prices, and overall reduction of poverty. The key principles underlying regional integration are:

- That each country takes the regional dimension into account, and should therefore be prepared to accept compromises and trade-offs.
- The principle of balance equity and mutual benefit agreed upon continues. Since it recognises the significant physical, economic and social disparities that exist among the SADC countries.
- The free movement of factors of production (capital, labour, goods and services) is central to economic integration.
- The facilitation and promotion of investments and trade in goods and services are at the core of the integration process.
- The twin pillars of real political commitment by governments and the effective participation by stakeholders are fundamental to the process.

The above have served as guidelines for the formulation of certain policy issues in the livestock sector. The FANR Directorate has recently embarked on the formulation of a regional agricultural policy, which will include a livestock development component, to further assist in the consolidation of regional integration. The LDU of the FANR Directorate of the SADC Secretariat has implemented projects and programmes which have assisted member states to develop strategies which can result in enhancing production and productivity in the livestock sector.

The SADC farm animal genetic resources project has enabled SADC countries to characterise and evaluate the production potential of indigenous livestock breeds as well as the need to conserve and utilise these invaluable animal resources which are well adapted to the environment prevailing in the region. The outcome of this first intervention should now be extended to the farming community so that there can be a community-based approach to the conservation and utilisation of farm animal genetic

resources, with special reference to indigenous breeds. With the restructuring of SADC, this issue which was kept in abeyance has come to the forefront and will be taken on board through the regional agricultural policy.

The promotion of integration in the livestock sector is another project which has addressed the issues of information management in the livestock sector. The core objective of this project is to develop a livestock information management system (LIMS) for livestock in the region. LIMS has developed modules to receive data on animal health, animal production, marketing and trade, and to analyse these data so as to generate reports for dissemination in member states in order to enable decision makers to take informed decision on livestock development in the region. The project has also provided opportunities to foster public/private partnerships which are essential to further develop the livestock sector. The project has an important component of capacity building in the fields of animal health, animal production and marketing with the collaboration of regional training institutions.

SADC Secretariat is implementing another project which involves strengthening of institutions, such as veterinary services and veterinary laboratories, for the risk management of TADs in the SADC region. The overall objective of this project is to make livestock a tradable commodity and to enhance the credibility of the veterinary services of the participating member states.

The SADC foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) project is addressing issues related to the control of FMD in three SADC member states, but the results will be shared with all the member states.

The SADC FMD and SADC TADs projects are expected to establish the Southern African Commission for the Control of TADs (SACCT) with inputs from international organisations such as FAO and OIE so that the region can develop long term solutions for the control of TADs.

Another SADC project, viz. food safety—capacity building on residue control, is expected to have the following outcomes:

- Food safety regulatory frameworks at national and SADC regional level strengthened
- Regulatory framework for harmonized registration and quality control of livestock protection products and veterinary drugs at national and SADC regional level strengthened

- Analytical capability of national and regional laboratories strengthened and assistance towards accreditation provided
- Coordination and communication between national and regional authorities involved in the regulatory frameworks on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) relevant issues enhanced
- A network of SPS subject matter specialists established and public awareness on, and knowledge of SPS issues in the SADC region, improved.

SADC fully endorses the recommendations of the OIE Conference on Veterinary Medicinal Products in Africa held in Dakar and recommends that the above project implements the activities as per its work plan. SADC will endeavour to establish or identify a centre of excellence for the registration, quality control and safe disposal of veterinary drugs, biologicals and chemicals, with a view to harmonisation and regional recognition.

#### **LIVESTOCK TRADE ISSUES IN THE SADC**

SADC is working in close collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the OIE in the development of guidelines to help member states to formulate national and regional norms and standards with regards to food of animal origin. The PRINT livestock project has recently launched two regional studies; a first one on “Value Added Information Management Systems (VAIMS)” and the second one on “Zoning, Animal Identification and Traceability Study (ZAITS)”, which will be able to focus on commodity-based approaches and improve the qualitative and quantitative assessment of value chains in order to foster trade. The commodity and value chain focus to regional and international trade in livestock and livestock products is recognised by SADC as an option for livestock development. SADC has recommended that member states promote debate on this approach to foster its adoption by relevant standard setting bodies, such as the OIE.

SADC welcomes the OIE debate on compartmentalisation in relation to FMD control and trade in beef and is confident that the recommendations will bolster trade. SADC has finished the revision of the SPS annexes to the SADC trade protocol and reaffirms the OIE standards in the trading of livestock products. SADC advocates the promotion of improved marketing of livestock products through a commodity approach which includes attainment of international food safety standards. In this respect

particular emphasis should be devoted to facilitating better access to international markets for de-boned and processed beef.

The objectives of the SADC trade protocol signed in August 1996 lay down the foundation for regional trade development and access to regional as well as to international markets. The objectives are to:

- Further liberalise intra-regional trade in goods and services on the basis of fair, mutually equitable and beneficial trade arrangements, complemented by protocols in other areas.
- Ensure efficient production within SADC reflecting the current and dynamic comparative advantages of its members.
- Contribute towards the improvement of the climate for domestic, cross-border and foreign investments.
- Enhance the economic development, diversification and industrialisation of the region
- Establish a free trade area in the SADC region.

The free trade area (FTA) was established during the recent summit of heads of SADC member states held in August, 2008. Twelve member states are establishing the FTA under the protocol on trade. In the near future, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Seychelles are set to join. SADC is also negotiating an economic partnership agreement (EPA) with the European Commission. The main objective of the EPA is to consolidate the regional integration process and to foster growth and development in the region, as well as to establish a new and WTO-compliant legal basis for governing bi-regional trade relations. It is expected that the full EPA will be concluded by 31 December 2008 in order to consolidate even further the regional and development dimension of the EPA.

There is no secret, the 'globalisation' which implies that from now onwards to the year 2020, most (if not all) the economies will have to converge towards total market liberalisation. This 'globalisation' is an irreversible process which is already confirmed at the level of the relations between the European Union and the ACP countries, with EPA that are being discussed. The ACP economies must use the EPA as an opportunity to enhance business competitiveness that will contribute to economic growth. The ACP countries must regard the EPA as another opportunity to modernise their economies to face the irreversible globalisation process.

Finally, SADC in collaboration and synergy with member states is gradually improving the establish-

ment of its regional agricultural information management system (AIMS) to provide quality analysis of data collected in member states on the major agricultural and the livestock sector' trends, using recognized methods.

SADC has submitted the following for consideration by the OIE Regional Commission for Africa and the OIE Scientific Commission so as to allow increased trade in beef between beef exporting SADC member states and the European Union:

- The 30 months age limit of bovines specified for the safety of de-boned muscle meat for freedom from the BSE agent be reconsidered by the OIE Scientific Commission and be removed as this age limit is not based on science.
- The necessity for extremely costly and logistically difficult surveillance to be conducted when a satisfactory risk assessment has shown that the risk of BSE being present in a country is negligible (e.g. through the use of the geographical BSE risk [GBR] assessment method), to be reconsidered by the OIE.
- The OIE Scientific Commission reconsiders the freedom from FMD of de-boned beef derived from animals that have undergone ante and post mortem inspection, the carcass matured at +2 and 4 °C for a minimum of 24 h to ensure that the pH of the meat is 6 and below, and the removal of the major lymph nodes.
- SADC recognises the threat to transboundary animal disease control posed by the creation of transfrontier conservation areas (TFCA). However, the TFCA movement is a reality and ways need to be found to accommodate the conflicting objectives of more effective TADs control on the one hand and the TFCA movement on the other.

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