

IDF Press Release



Scientific expertise for the dairy sector worldwide

A NEW FAO REPORT ASSESSES THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

Brussels, 27 September 2013 – IDF welcomes a new report released by The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) "Tackling Climate Change through Livestock, a Global Assessment of Emissions and Mitigation Opportunities", an update to the 2006 report, "Livestock's Long Shadow". This report provides a broader view of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for all livestock sectors, including dairy. It will also guide the sustainable development of the sector through concrete mitigation recommendations.

The report states a reduced contribution by the global livestock sector to GHG emissions: 14.5% of global emissions, compared to 18% in the 2006 report. It also assesses the environmental impact of the dairy sector, currently estimated to be less than 3%.

"This new study is based on the same methodology developed by FAO at IDF request when the interim report "Greenhouse Gas Emissions from the Dairy Sector, a Lifecycle Assessment" was produced in 2010. As we did in 2010, we submitted comments to FAO as we recognize the importance of collecting statistical data to improve the performance of our sector. We value the fact that this new study identifies the share of the different livestock sectors in the total GHG emissions, and highlights the high variability of emissions intensities between regions and farming systems. More importantly, this report provides a lot of information on the different mitigation strategies possible," explained Sophie Bertrand, Chair of the IDF Standing Committee on Environment.

Building global consensus

In recent years, IDF has placed environment and sustainability among its top priorities. *"Our sector is responsibly focused on providing consumers with the nutritious dairy products they want, in a way that is economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible. That's why IDF has been involved in key initiatives such as the Global Agenda of Action and the LEAP - Livestock Environmental Assessment and Performance - Project driven by FAO. Given the important contribution of the nutrients from dairy to a balanced diet, it is instrumental for us to continue to work with FAO and stakeholders of the dairy chain to build consensus on the path towards sustainable food security through dialogue, consultation, and joint concerted global action programs,"* stressed Jeremy Hill, IDF President.

The dairy sector has already implemented a significant number of initiatives to mitigate GHG emissions through the Global Dairy Agenda for Action*. [The IDF Dairy Sustainability Website](#) features the Green Paper that captures best practices and actions taken by the global dairy sector in a number of key areas to address the environmental impact on climate change.

Environmental sustainability

The results of this new FAO study provide the global dairy sector with a robust benchmark for future targeted actions. *"The FAO recommendations will guide the continuous improvement of our sector practices towards more efficient, safe and responsible use of natural resources. The livestock sector is extremely diverse and the path to sustainability requires different solutions across production systems, climatic areas and species,"* explained Sophie Bertrand.

Improving the environmental impact of our sector goes beyond mitigating GHG emissions. The Common Carbon Footprint Methodology developed by IDF has been updated with the latest Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) science and feedback from users. Using the same methodology, a guide on water footprinting is being developed. By providing harmonized metrics and methodologies, results are globally comparable, mitigation options more easily identified, and progress more easily measured. Both the update of the carbon footprint guide and the new water guide will be presented at the upcoming IDF World Dairy Summit and are expected to be released soon.

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Notes to editors

***Global Dairy Agenda for Action**

The Global Dairy Agenda for Action (GDAA) is the industry's commitment to making a positive contribution to the global action in addressing climate change. The GDAA brings together the global dairy industry and its partners, who are committed to working together to improve the environmental performance of the dairy sector for a more sustainable future. Further information available at www.dairy-sustainability-initiative.org

Tackling Climate Change through Livestock, a Global Assessment of Emissions and Mitigation Opportunities

The full FAO Report can be downloaded at:

www.fao.org/ag/againfo/resources/en/publications/tackling_climate_change/index.htm

Related FAO Reports

'Greenhouse gas emissions from ruminant supply chains: A global lifecycle assessment' – www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3461e/i3461e.pdf

'Greenhouse gas emissions from pig and chicken supply chains: A global lifecycle assessment' – www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3460e/i3460e.pdf

A common carbon footprint approach for dairy - The IDF guide to standard lifecycle assessment methodology for the dairy sector

An update of the IDF carbon footprint guide, as well as the new water guide will be presented by Sophie Bertrand at the Environment Conference on 1 November 2013 at the upcoming IDF World Dairy Summit in Yokohama, Japan. Full conference programme available here: www.wds2013.com/eng/p_conference9.html

IDF World Dairy Summit 2013: www.wds2013.com

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