



Draft Terms of Reference for ICAR Sheep, Goat and Small Camelid Working Group

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1 Draft Terms of Reference

The following is the draft Terms of Reference for a new ICAR Sheep, Goats and Small Camelid Working Group (SGC-WG) to supplement and replace the existing and separate Goat Performance Recording, Performance Recording of Dairy Sheep, and Animal Fibres Working Groups.

1.1 Background

The purpose of this paper is to:

- outline the reason for supplementing and replacing the Goat Performance Recording Working Group, the Performance Recording of Dairy Sheep Working Groups and the Animal Fibre Working Group and,
- to provide terms for extending the range of traits covered for sheep, goats, and small camilids to include meat, wool, disease, reproduction and maternal traits.

1.2 Considerations

The main considerations are:

- Sheep and goats are farmed to produce a range of similar products – primarily milk, meat, fibre and leather in varying combinations. The cost of producing these products is determined by common factors including reproductive performance, disease resistance and animal survival.
- To date, the focus of ICAR activities for Sheep and Goats has mainly been on milk production and the existing Working Groups work closely together with most meetings being joint.
- The Animal Fibre Working Group covers a range of small ruminant species including sheep, and goats and a range of small camelids including alpacas, llamas and vicunas.
- The production systems and farming environments for sheep, goats, and small camelids are diverse but with similarities between countries.
- The systems and technologies appropriate for identification and performance recording of sheep, goat, and small camelid are remarkably similar.

- Sheep, goats and small camelid products make an important contribution to world agriculture production especially for environments that are less favourable for arable production for reasons of terrain, altitude and lack of water.
- There is a demand and need for ICAR's guidelines to be extended to include meat and wool production especially from sheep.
- There is a significant administrative overhead for each ICAR Working Group. By consolidating Working Groups and using expert advisory groups this overhead can be reduced while achieving better outputs.
- The Accuracy Task force has recommended a philosophy which links the accuracy of performance recording to the benefits generated by using the resulting information in a range of decisions.

1.3 Consultation Process

This proposal is the result of following discussions:

- Joint meeting of Joint Meeting of the ICAR Working Groups on Performance Recording of Dairy Sheep, and Goat Performance Recording which took place on 25th November 2015. At this meeting consideration was given to how handle the need for guidelines for meat performance recording of small ruminants.
- Requests from existing and potential new members to provide guidelines and a forum for sheep meat performance recording.
- Discussions amongst ICAR staff on the need for a more efficient structure to prepare guidelines for sheep and goats.
- Feedback from the Chairpersons of the existing Sheep, Goat and Fibre Working Groups.

This report is for consideration by the Chairpersons of the existing Sheep, Goat and Fibre Working Groups, the ICAR Executive and eventually the ICAR Board.

The following sections cover the key elements of the proposed Terms of Reference for a new Sheep, Goat & Small Camelid Working Group (SGC-WG).

1.4 Objectives of the SGC-WG

The objectives of the SGC-WG are to:

- a. Provide a forum for members of ICAR to collaborate, exchange information and learn from each other on all aspects of performance recording and genetic evaluation for sheep, goats and small camelid.
- b. Maintain, update, promote and extend universal guidelines for sheep, goats and small camelid performance recording for the full range of traits relevant to decisions on: genetic improvement, farm management, quality assurance, and animal health & welfare worldwide.
- c. Conduct and report the results of periodic international surveys on sheep, goats and small camelid performance recording and genetic evaluation.
- d. Develop and support services relevant to sheep, goats and small camelid that sICAR will provide to members of ICAR on a user-pays basis.

- e. Facilitate and co-ordinate international collaboration in research and development on sheep, goats and small camelid performance recording and genetic evaluation.

1.5 Governance

The SGC-WG will be appointed by the ICAR Board.

The SGC-WG will comprise persons covering:

- a. **Geographical regions:** some or all of Europe (West and East), North America, South & Central America, Asia, Africa & Oceania.
- b. **Technical expertise in:**
 - i. milk, meat, fibre, reproduction and functional trait recording of sheep, goat and small camelid,
 - ii. genetic improvement (breeding objectives, breeding scheme design and genetic evaluation) of sheep, goat and small camelid,
 - iii. farm management, quality assurance and health & welfare related decisions for sheep, goat and small camelid.
- c. **Supporters of ICAR Participation in sheep, goat and small camelid performance recording**

It is envisaged that initially the SGC-WG will comprise the current chairpersons of the Goat Performance Recording Working Group, the Performance Recording of Dairy Sheep Working Groups and the Animal Fibre Working Group plus one other person covering Oceania with particular expertise in sheep meat, reproduction, maternal trait and disease trait performance recording. That is the Chair person of each of the expert advisory groups (see below).

The SGC-WG, may from time to time, create advisory groups to provide specialist and expert advice on topics of relevance to achieving the objectives of the Group.

Initially expert advisory groups will be created for:

- Sheep and Goat milk recording – comprising the current membership of the current Performance Recording of Dairy Sheep Working Group and the Goat Performance Recording Working Group.
- Sheep, Goat and small Camelid fibre recording – comprising the current membership of the Animal Fibre Working Group. Consideration needs to be given to adding wool to the priorities for the expert advisory group.
- Sheep and Goat meat, reproduction and maternal trait recording – this expert group will be formed primarily from interests in those countries with major sheep meat sectors including New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, France and United Kingdom.

1.6 Secretariat & Reporting

Role of SGC-WG Secretariat:

- a. **Business Meetings** - agree dates and venues in consultation with Chairperson, provide notice of meetings to members, agree agenda with

Chairperson, distribute agenda, take minutes, agree minutes with Chairperson, and distribute minutes.

- b. **Group Composition** – maintain list of Group members with up-to-date contact details, in consultation with Chairperson and ICAR Board ensure membership is comprised of interested and enthusiastic members representing active stakeholders.
- c. **Group Meetings** – agree dates and venues in consultation with Chairperson, provide notice of meetings to members, agree agenda with Chairperson, distribute agenda, take minutes, agree minutes with Chairperson, and distribute minutes.
- d. **Website** – maintain website and forum ensuing contents are up-to-date and relevant according to the TOR.

1.7 Communications with the ICAR Board

- a. Annual report of the SGC-WG Chairperson to the Board.
- b. The ICAR Staff support person as identified from time to time by the ICAR Secretary General. All communications for the Group are to be copied to this person.
- c. Participation of the Chairperson in meetings with the Board, normally on an annual basis coinciding with the ICAR Annual Meetings.

1.8 Priorities

Priorities are to be established by the Committee taking account of its terms of reference and any requests from the ICAR Board.

That the priorities for SGC-WG in the next five years include the following:

- a. Develop guidelines for sheep and goat meat performance recording.
- b. Develop guidelines for sheep, goat and small camelid reproduction and maternal trait performance recording.
- c. Maintain and develop the ICAR guidelines for milk recording of sheep and goats.
- d. Maintain and develop the ICAR guidelines for Fibre production from sheep, goats and small camelid.
- e. Genomics?

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