



IYRP 12 global monthly themes - updated

In 2017, the IYRP International Support Group (now called the IYRP Global Alliance) adopted a global framework of 12 monthly themes for 2026 to a) highlight urgent and topical issues, and b) show how pastoralism and rangelands across the globe share similar issues and concerns. The themes come from many sources including declarations from pastoralist gatherings, UNEA resolutions, FAO and UNEP reports, Rio Conventions, IRC/IGC and others.

Since 2017, a growing network of institutions that support the IYRP has brought forward new ideas, messages and activities. The 10 IYRP Working Groups have deepened our understanding of certain issues.

This is the framework for global advocacy. There is flexibility in how each country and region uses it as long as we remain consistent and coherent to the central message.

The International Days listed can be focus days for dissemination. While each month has a specific theme, we recognise that some International Days (ID) do not fall in the month we have chosen for that theme. To solve this mismatch, our approach will be to focus on a given theme each month, but when an ID comes that is in a different month, we would repeat our key messages that day too.

We note that each country /region might have its own specific messages, annual observance of rituals, celebrations, and cultural activities directly connected IYRP, that occur in specified months, such as those based on activities like harvesting season or sowing season. We recommend that during such local annual events, all 12 themes be celebrated at the same time.

Overview

Revised 12 global themes are:

Month	Title	Corresponding International Days (ID)* *days in bold are directly relevant to the corresponding theme
January	Rangelands and pastoralists: a global overview	24 Jan: ID of Education 26 Jan: ID of Clean Energy
February	Mobility, land and water security	20 Feb: World Justice Day 2 Feb: World Wetlands Day 11 Feb: ID of Women and Girls in Science
March	Livelihoods and economics	20 March: ID of Happiness 3 March: World Wildlife Day

		8 March: International Women's Day 21 March: ID of Forests 21 March: ID of Nowruz 22 March: World Water Day
April	Climate Change and resilience	22 April: ID of Mother Earth 7 April: World Health Day 21 April: World Creativity and Innovation Day
May	Biodiversity and ecosystem services	10 May: ID of Argania (argan tree); 11 May: World Migratory Bird Day 12 May: ID of Plant Health 22 May: ID for Biodiversity 23 May: ID of the Markhor (wild goat) 15 May: ID of Families 21 May: ID for Cultural Diversity and Dialogue 25 May: Africa Day
June	Sustainable rangeland use and restoration	5 June: World Environment Day 7 June: World Food Safety Day 17 June: World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 27 June: Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Day
July	Services and infrastructure for pastoralists	6 July: ID of Cooperatives 11 July: World Population Day 12 July: ID of Combatting Sand and Dust Storms 15 July: Youth Skills Day
August	Indigenous and local knowledge, culture and innovation	9 Aug: ID of the World's Indigenous Peoples 12 Aug: ID Youth Day
September	Benefits to society	29 Sept: International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste 16 Sept: ID of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South 24 Sept: World Rivers Day 28 Sept: World Tourism Day
October	Pastoralist women	11 Oct: ID of the Girl Child 15 Oct: ID of Rural Women 1 Oct: ID of Older Persons 13 Oct: ID of Disaster Risk Reduction 14 Oct: World Migratory Bird Day 16 Oct: World Food Day 17 Oct: ID for the Eradication of Poverty 20 Oct: World Statistics Day
November	Pastoralist youth	20 Nov: Universal Children's Day 1 Nov: World Ecology Day 10 Nov: World Science Day for Peace and Development 20 Nov: Africa Industrialization Day

December	Innovative solutions for a sustainable future	10 Dec: World Human Rights Day 5 Dec: World Soil Day 11 Dec: International Mountains Day
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Key Messages for each Theme

What follows are key messages that have been developed by the IYRP Working Groups and Regional IYRP Support Groups. A few concrete examples are provided for illustration, and many more can be added.

Key messages are written as fact sheets for each month and can be disseminated through social media and other means (e.g. webinars, videos, films, gatherings and conferences).

Repetition is not a problem, because it helps to reinforce a message.

January: Rangelands and Pastoralists: a global overview

Key Messages:

1. Let us celebrate the diversity of rangelands and pastoralists, and recognize all the things they have in common:
 - a. 54% of the earth is rangeland; over 1 billion people are either pastoralists or depend on pastoralism and rangelands (including other statistical highlights)
 - b. Showcasing the diversity of both rangelands and pastoralists: there are many examples of viable and sustainable rangeland and pastoral systems around the world (show IYRP products such as: Diversity of Rangelands of the World graphic; World Map of pastoralism; etc.)
 - c. Overview of commonalities as captured in the 12 global themes; example land tenure is an issue in almost all countries
 - d. Different people use different words around the world (Word clouds of Rangelands and Pastoralists developed by IYRP)
 - e. Livestock mobility has different forms (rotational grazing, transhumance, nomadic pastoralism, agro-silvo-pastoralism, etc.)
 - f. Celebrating diversity of animals (Water buffalo, camel, other camelids, reindeer, Yak, sheep, goat, equine / donkey, pigs, ducks, Cattle and shepherding dogs)
2. Pastoralism is not a nostalgic return to the past, but a way forward towards future sustainability in a changing world
 - a. Pastoralism is a dual food production and environmental management system that can contribute to food security while protecting biodiversity and mitigating climate change while preserving aspects of our shared global cultural heritage
 - b. Pastoralism is the best use of rangelands, not crops or forests
 - c. Pastoralism is a form of land development
 - d. Pastoralists know how to manage livestock on rangelands and are adapted to the variability of rangelands

- e. Livestock mobility is critically important for rangeland health and pastoral livelihoods
 - f. Pastoral people – a sustainable and resilient lifestyle but a livelihood under threat
3. Sustainable and equitable governance and management are key to thriving rangelands and resilient pastoralist communities
 - a. Effective conservation, restoration and use of rangeland ecosystems and integrating them into wider landscapes will ensure ecological diversity and interconnectivity
 - b. Ensure sustainability of pastoralism and secure social, economic and environmental benefits for pastoralists, particularly those related to nutrition, livelihoods, health and well-being
 - c. Recognise and uphold pastoralists' rights including mobility and customary land tenure rights over their land, territories, and other natural resources
 4. Governance and management can take various forms, including:
 - a. Government-led (e.g. Public Lands in the USA)
 - b. Community-led (e.g. Ferlo Pastoralist Associations in Senegal, CM communities, Grassland Territories of Live in Mongolia)
 - c. Producer cooperatives (e.g. Pasture User Groups, Mongolia)
 - d. Private or family-based (e.g. Australian ranchers)
 - e. Shared governance and management (through various ways in which diverse actors including pastoralists themselves and institutions work together)
 - f. Regardless of the governance and management model, it is critical that pastoralists are empowered and have full and effective participation in decision-making for recognition and securing their rights, knowledge, values and cultural institutions
 5. Comprehensive, publicly available, fine-scale, long-term and disaggregated data are urgently needed to support evidence-based policies and decision-making for preserving rangelands and pastoralists
 - a. Reduce significant rangeland and pastoralist knowledge gaps through participatory research and impact assessments; co-creation of knowledge; monitoring and evaluation; modelling of rangeland trends
 - b. Participatory strategic planning to help determine and verify global statistics, to assess the impacts of different land-management practices and to identify, map and monitor changes in land-use and management practices
 - c. Ensure that the LDN Fund (Land Degradation Neutrality) and other global funds should earmark funding for knowledge sharing, awareness raising, evidence-based decision-support work and capacity building of local pastoralist land users and decision-makers.

Evidence 1: Celebrate diversity of pastoralism

Kharai Camels of India live in seaside mangroves, not in deserts (reference: Ramesh Bhatti, SA RISG)

Another example: Several EU financed Projects are highlighting rangelands and the maintenance of mobile pastoralism. EU Financed Projects like: (<https://pastinnova.eu/>), (<https://liveadapt.eu/en/home-2/>), (<https://lifecanadas.es/en/trashumancia-y-canadas/>), (Shep4Bio)

February: Mobility, land and water security

Key Messages:

1. Pastoralists' access to land and water should be secured in statutory law
 - a. Prevent land grabbing; large-scale land acquisitions for commercial agriculture, mining, or nature conservation often displace pastoralist communities without adequate compensation or alternative livelihoods
 - b. Secure rights to land, water and resources for pastoralists provides food and livelihood security. They ensure the economic feasibility and environmental sustainability of pastoralism
 - c. Recognise value of pastoral mobility and accommodate it within land tenure laws as fundamental to the rights of pastoralists
 - i. What livestock mobility looks like around the world: rotational grazing in the USA, nomadism in the Sahara, transhumance in France, etc.
 - ii. Examples of how greater mobility has benefited the environment and the livestock
 - iii. Examples of laws and policies that support greater mobility
 - iv. Recognise and legalise transboundary mobile pastoralism (between nations, between regions or states, between counties); examples of successes
2. Common or collective lands and water in rangelands help sustain livelihoods of many poor peoples in many countries
 - a. Legal frameworks should be expanded to represent the full spectrum of pastoralists' land and water rights, including shared, multifunctional, non-exclusive and transient land use; examples of success can be given
 - b. Legal recognition of pastoralist land rights and effective local land administration and adjudication can lead to lower insecurity and conflict, and increase access to credit and investment
 - c. Pastoralists' customary land and water tenure should be recognised; examples of success can be given
 - d. Strengthen participatory and equitable land and water governance; examples of success can be given
 - e. No land or water project should be undertaken without the participation of traditional users and managers of land and water in their planning (several success stories from GIAHS, for example:
<https://www.fao.org/giahs/giahsaroundtheworld/spain-leon-agro-silvo-pastoral-system/en>)
 - f. Equitable and inalienable pastoralist women's rights to access and use land, water and natural resources; examples of success
3. Pastoralists need stronger opportunities and capabilities to participate in public decision making due to the prevailing insecurity of land and water rights
 - a. Increase pastoral women's participation in governance and policy making
 - b. Large areas with low population tend to have little political influence; develop democratic pastoralist institutions for greater representation
 - c. Traditional institutions and mechanisms ruling land should be recognised and upgraded to ensure pastoralists full participation in all projects of their regions

4. Do's and don'ts of water development for livestock
 - a. Secure water for mobile livestock
 - b. Acknowledge local water bodies associated with rangelands as part of rangeland ecosystem
 - c. Inappropriate water resource development is a threat to rangelands and biodiversity because it encourages sedentarisation and year-round constant grazing of areas leading to land degradation
 - d. Rethink potable water and sanitation to safeguard mobile livestock production systems; examples of success
 - e. Achieve sustainable water management in rangelands. Examples of good water development
 - f. Discourage diversion of community water in drylands away from pastoralist communities, e.g. for fishery enterprises or crop irrigation

Evidence 2: Pastoralists' access to land for their livelihoods need to be secured in statutory law

In Central Asia & Mongolia, IYRP RISG members were highly involved in the drafting and implementation of six land-related policies, including amendments to pasture laws across Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia. These policy developments prompted the recognition of pastoralist and herder community land rights, securing more than 39 million hectares of pasturelands and affecting the livelihoods of over 80,000 households.

March: Livelihoods and economics

Key Messages:

1. Pastoralism is an economic powerhouse that is largely unrecognized:
 - a. A vast workforce of 2 billion people worldwide
 - b. Significant contribution to local, national and regional economies (examples)
 - c. In many countries livestock are the key wealth and risk management systems for pastoralists. Herds of animals act as capital and safety net, just like bank accounts
2. Pastoralists are food security champions:
 - a. Pastoralism helps prevent rural exodus by sustaining viable livelihoods in ecologically fragile and climate-affected regions
 - b. Pastoralists keep 1 billion animals, or about half of world's domesticated animals
 - c. Pastoralists produce significant proportion of world's meat, dairy products, fibre and manure
 - d. Pastoralists are critically important for producing healthy nutrition in harsh environments that are unsuited to crops
 - e. Pastoralist management strategies help cope with climate variability and employ time-tested strategies (rooted in mobility, customary governance, locally adapted livestock breeds, and traditional ecological knowledge) to adapt to the growing impacts of climate change
3. Pastoralism involves both formal and informal value chains
 - a. Informal value chains help with market uncertainties but are vulnerable to competition from large agribusinesses
 - b. In many countries, pastoralists must compete with subsidised imports
 - i. Subsidized imports often evade sustainability safeguards such as animal welfare, banned pesticides, hormone additives, etc., whereas pastoralist products are nature-based and organic
 - c. Local value chains improve local food security
4. Certification and alternative incomes
 - a. Pastoralism should be recognized as a nature-based production system, with high standards of quality, and provider of key ecosystem services
 - b. Certification and traceability systems can help recognise value added of chemical-free pastoralist products
 - c. Alternatives are part of a pastoralist enterprise, such as sustainable ecocultural tourism, pastoralist handicrafts, fodder production from encroaching and invasive shrubs and trees, co-production of livestock and wildlife (examples such as Dehesas agro-forestry in Spain and Portugal)
 - d. Recognise the value of rangeland ecosystem services and apply financial mechanisms to prevent their conversion or abandonment and to incentivise their continuation
5. Policy change can help pastoralists
 - a. Policies with a sedentary logic need to change to a mobility logic (example community land titles, and the Spanish law protecting 125.000 km of national

Transhumance Paths, covering around 400.000 ha, of March 1995, (<https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-1995-7241>, that has renewed what has already existed since the year 1273)

- b. Lift market barriers, encourage animal diversity, good health and locally adapted breeds
- c. Prevent illegal trade of donkeys, cattle rustling, rare plants and other illegal activities
- d. Ensure law enforcement in remote areas
- e. Promote high quality products: local breeds are resistant to diseases and environmental stress

Evidence 3: An economic powerhouse

In Ethiopia, 90% of livestock exports stem from pastoralists' herds. In Chad, the contribution of pastoralism to the national GDP can go up to 27 percent, when self-consumption is monetized and included in the calculation. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/690b1ce3-174b-4e73-99c4-93bea2cfc70d>

April: Climate change and resilience

Key Messages:

1. Pastoralism offers an integrated strategy to simultaneously tackling adaptation to and mitigation of climate change while enhancing the resilience of its communities
 - a. This strategy could be mimicked by other production systems improving the contribution to the global development goals
2. Pastoralism contributes to climate change mitigation
 - a. Pastoral system can be in carbon balance; (e.g. in northern Senegal mobile management of pastoral herds can result in low net greenhouse gas emissions if the potentials for carbon sequestration in rangelands are considered)
 - b. Restoration of rangelands can sequester and store substantial carbon
 - i. In Canada, studies show that carbon storage can be increased if cropland is planted back into perennial pasture
 - ii. improved grazing management of the world's five billion hectares of grassland could sequester 9.8% of anthropogenic emissions
 - c. Need to reverse the dominant negative picture of livestock's impacts on climate change that has been distorted by faulty assumptions that focus on intensive, industrial farming in rich countries
 - i. Intensively produced meat and milk in industrial systems is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, along with other forms of pollution (example: film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbO4EEaH7YM> made by BC3 Basque Centre for Climate Change)
 - d. Debates on the future of food must not ignore the millions of people worldwide who depend on extensive livestock production, with relatively lower climate impacts
 - e. Assessments of carbon emissions from livestock systems must adequately represent pastoral systems across the world
 - i. Most assessments use default emissions settings that do not reflect extensive production conditions
 - ii. Per capita emissions is used in confined/industrial livestock systems, but per land area emissions makes more sense in extensive pastoral systems
3. Local knowledge of rangeland environments offers many opportunities for climate mitigation
 - a. Rotational grazing by pastoralists' mobile herds can result in increased sequestration; dispersed deposition of manure reduces emissions
 - b. Careful and supervised herding, selective breeding, and locally adapted animal training and breeding, can improve feed efficiency and reduce methane emissions
4. Some climate change mitigation strategies have negative consequences for rangelands and pastoralists
 - a. Rangeland afforestation is not a viable climate change mitigation strategy
 - i. Planting trees in grasslands won't save the planet 9see film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9ku3t9JesM>, made by BC3 Basque Center for Climate Change)

- ii. Planting trees in grasslands can harm these ecosystems without delivering meaningful climate benefits.
 - iii. Instead, protecting and enhancing existing rangeland carbon stocks is more effective and sustainable.
 - b. Some large-scale renewable energy projects have not benefited/ or have even hurt pastoralists and rangelands
5. Increase awareness on expected impacts of climate change on rangelands and pastoralists
- a. Increased droughts and floods: examples of current climate impacts (e.g. severity of *dzud* in Mongolia, sand and dust storms)
 - b. Climate change models show increasing risks for rangelands and pastoralists, including heat stress and droughts, yet region-specific projections remain limited and urgently needed
6. Pastoralism plays a key role in climate change adaptation
- a. Mobility is a key adaptation strategy, enabling herders to respond to changing conditions in rainfall, temperature, and vegetation by accessing dispersed water and pasture resources
 - b. Traditional ecological knowledge, including weather forecasting, landscape monitoring, and adaptive herd management, allows pastoralists to make informed decisions in uncertain and variable conditions
 - c. Pastoralist social institutions—such as grazing rights, customary tenure systems, and mutual aid—support community-level adaptation and resilience
 - d. Diverse, locally adapted livestock breeds maintained by pastoralists are often more resilient to drought, disease, and heat stress, ensuring food and livelihood security under shifting climatic conditions
 - e. In many countries, livestock functions as a form of capital and social safety net, providing security during climate-induced shocks such as droughts and floods
 - f. Pastoralism builds resilience in climate-exposed ecosystems, with herds acting as mobile mechanisms for converting scattered natural biomass into protein and livelihoods without degrading the land—if supported by secure access and adaptive governance
 - g. Securing land and water tenure rights is essential to enable mobility and adaptive strategies, and to maintain the environmental, cultural and socio-economic benefits of pastoralism
 - h. National climate policies and global frameworks must recognize and integrate pastoralist knowledge, systems, and priorities to enable equitable and effective climate adaptation

Evidence 4: Pastoralist coping strategies

Based on their long-term history on, and knowledge of, the land they live on, west African pastoralists develop strategies to cope with climate variability and shocks, making their livelihoods remarkably resilient. In many countries, pastoral herds act like capital and safety nets against risks and hazards in the same way a bank account would.

Other examples from FAO's publication "Pastoralists: Making Variability Work"

Examples of climate change modeling: see Behmanesh et al. 2025

May: Biodiversity and ecosystem services

Key Messages:

1. Recognize Rangelands, covering close to 54% of global terrestrial surface, as crucial ecosystem integral to achieving Target 1 of the Global Biodiversity Framework
 - a. Include recognition of the biodiversity of rangelands and the relationship with pastoralist culture and diversity
 - b. Secure pastoral land tenure and recognize pastoralist-managed rangelands as OECMs and ICCAs to achieve Global Biodiversity Goals (30*30)
 - c. Restore pastoral mobility to achieve Target 2 and 8 of GBF (Restoring rangelands and improving Climate Resilience of pastoral communities) and Commitments under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD),
 - d. Acknowledge pastoral knowledge, women's leadership, and youth engagement in biodiversity conservation
2. Pastoral land management preserves biodiversity and safeguards a host of ecosystem services
 - a. Improved soil fertility, wildfire prevention, adapted livestock breeds, and maintaining plant, insects and animal species richness and heterogeneity
 - b. Livestock mobility and rotation helps preserve and conserve ecosystems and waterways; high value ecosystem services from rangelands have been recognized in EU policies
 - c. Mountain pastoralists' role in the provision of key ecosystem services to societies beyond mountain landscapes need to be recognised and protected
 - d. Short-term livestock kraaling can help in restoring degraded patches in the landscape
3. Pastoralism contributes most effectively to biodiversity conservation when mobility is maintained, and landscape remain unfragmented
 - a. Prevent ecosystem fragmentation
 - b. Ensure landscape and biodiversity connectivity
 - c. Protect watersheds
 - d. Enhance livestock and wildlife corridors of movement
 - e. Regulates native vs exotic invasive species
4. Biodiversity contributes to pastoralist livelihoods, through wild foods, medicines, building materials and other resources used domestically and sold in local markets
 - a. Rangelands are multifunctional landscapes with high nature value components that provide goods and services for their communities
 - b. Wild foods can be gathered sustainably in rangelands for food security and better nutrition and health
 - c. Recognize the equitable and inalienable pastoralist women's rights to access and use biodiversity
5. Pastoralism and biodiversity reinforce each other
 - a. Enhance the compatibility and co-habitation of livestock and wildlife (examples of viable conservancies, transfrontier conservation areas, game areas, and public,

community and private conservation areas, livestock/ wildlife health, welfare, and joint management)

- b. Encourage equitable benefit-sharing schemes from conservation and National Parks
- c. Pastoralists lands can qualify as Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas, which are recognised as Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures under the Convention on Biological Diversity
- d. Pastoralism can be supported to enhance biodiversity conservation and strengthen the associated economic benefits to pastoralists
 - i. Protect genetic resources of livestock, wildlife, rangeland plants and soil biota
 - ii. Avoid conversion of rangelands to unsuitable uses
 - iii. Recognize importance of and enhance pastoralism inside conservation and protected areas
- e. Promote tourism and conservation in rangelands and tourism benefits to pastoralists
- f. Address overhunting and poaching

6. Pastoralist water footprints:

- a. Inappropriate water resource development are threats to biodiversity as they encourage sedentarisation and year-round constant grazing in areas leading to land degradation

Evidence 5: Pastoralists and biodiversity can co-exist

Recently, 2022-2023, several local pastoral communities of Mongolia for the first time have registered in the Global ICCA Network of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Use and Conservation Areas, as Territories of Life. This is under the Global Target of 30x30 CBD and contributes to Mongolia's NDC to protect 30% of the territory by 2030.

June: Sustainable rangeland use and restoration

Key Messages:

1. Rangelands are productive landscapes, covering more than half of the earth's land surface
 - a. they are not wastelands,
 - b. but they are threatened with conversion, degradation and abandonment
2. Pastoralists serve as custodians of rangelands and their practices help to conserve and restore them
 - a. Grazing by migratory wild and domesticated herbivores is an integral component of healthy rangeland ecosystems
 - b. In many countries rangelands are managed by customary institutions or new user associations that are primarily overseers of keeping land and water resources healthy
 - c. Strengthening pastoralism can be achieved by:
 - i. Incorporating pastoralists in all decision-making on the use and management of rangelands and ensure they have well-defined legal and customary tenure rights
 - ii. Adopting participatory governance practices that recognise that pastoralists are at the heart of rangeland stewardship
 - iii. Building on traditional pastoralist knowledge and facilitate the participation of marginalised pastoralist groups such as women, youth, elders and indigenous peoples
3. Stop indiscriminate conversion of rangelands to crops and other inappropriate uses
 - a. Indiscriminate conversion of rangelands to croplands, tree plantations, forests, roads and human settlements is hurting rangeland productivity, ecosystem services and rangelands' potential role in mitigating climate change
 - b. Halt indiscriminate rangeland conversion practices until appropriate legislation and monitoring efforts are put into effect
 - c. Planting trees is unsuitable for most rangelands (exceptions: savanna and other wooded grassy biomes)
 - d. Avoid planting non-native and invasive trees in rangelands
4. Prevent the abandonment of rangelands
 - a. Abandoned rangelands quickly lose their benefits for biodiversity (are taken over by invasive species) and ecosystem services especially for watersheds
 - b. Abandonment of rangelands fuels immigration especially to cities and industrialized countries
 - c. Change perceptions about making a living off rangelands, and encourage "back to nature" production and livelihoods
 - d. Provide youth with choices, including organic livestock production
5. Promote integrated, multifunctional land uses
 - a. Move away from mono-culture. Use sustainable rangeland management practices that seek integrated objectives, such as silvopastoralism (livestock grazing under trees that provide products such as Gum Arabic in the Sahel), wildlife-livestock

- integration (such as Dehesas in Spain) and herd diversification to achieve multiple sustainability benefits
 - b. Multifunctionality and diversification increases income security for pastoralists, and enhances nature-positive rangeland restoration
 - c. Promote integrated policies that recognise and leverage the multifunctionality of rangelands
6. Increase sustainable rangeland restoration funding, programmes and projects
- a. The most cost effective restoration management tool is sustainable pastoralism
 - b. Restore pastoral mobility to achieve Target 2 and 8 of GBF (Restoring rangelands and improving Climate Resilience of pastoral communities) and Commitments under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
 - c. Increase awareness on cost-benefits of rangeland restoration, in terms of dollars and carbon
 - d. Successful restorations deliver multiple benefits
 - e. Promote traditional rotational movement, transhumance and other cost-effective and sustainable rangeland management practices
 - f. Increase investments in sustainable rangeland restoration and management using existing funds
 - g. Significantly increase share of pastoralist and rangeland projects and programmes in existing funds, such as the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, the Global Environment Facility, and others
7. Increase ambition of government targets and appropriateness of policies for combatting land degradation
- a. Include rangeland restoration and sustainable pastoralism in UNCCD LDN targets and accelerate work towards them
 - b. Require Parties that have not done so to set LDN targets to avoid, reduce and reverse rangeland degradation and promote sustainable range management and pastoralism
 - c. Ensure such policies benefit pastoralist livelihoods
8. Manage minerals, mining, carbon extraction, renewable energy generation and other uses of rangelands in an equitable way
- a. Require all large-scale industrial investments in rangelands to meet environmental and social safeguards, benefit-sharing and other existing standards
 - b. Review afforestation policies and investments to ensure that they avoid damage to rangeland ecosystems

Evidence 6: Adopt participatory governance practices that recognise that pastoralists are at the heart of rangeland stewardship

Community-based rangeland management models exist. Mongolian model- based on interventions for CBNRM , where focused on local Pasture User Groups, PUG, Forest User Groups, FUG and Communities for NRM ;

-Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan model- based on local governments supported co-management of rangelands with Pasture Committees and Pasture User's Unions, PUU;

-Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan model - based on government lead co-management of pasture land NR, at local village and district level. <https://asia.landcoalition.org/en/newsroom/recognising-role-pastoralists-and-herders-central-asia-and-mongolia/>

Also: The Preservation and Development of Agricultural land Act of South Africa, which provides legal protection for South Africa's vast rangelands could be cited here.

July: Services and infrastructure for pastoralists

Key Messages:

1. Pastoralists need services and infrastructures compatible with and adapted to their ways of life, to support their activities and avoid forced abandonment
 - a. These services and infrastructures need to be equitable and gender-sensitive to support the critical role of the pastoralist communities
2. Innovate and implement beneficial economic policies, services and infrastructure
 - a. Social services for mobile and remote populations need rethinking
 - i. Access to the Internet and telecommunications
 - ii. Access to local government, justice system
 - iii. Representation in voting
 - b. Rethink water development in pastoral areas; accommodate access to water when moving
3. Improve access to education for pastoral peoples:
 - a. Mobile schools, vocational training, online schools
 - b. Develop legal certification of herders
4. Improve access to medical and veterinary services in remote areas and for mobile peoples
 - a. Mobile health clinics and telehealth facilities
 - b. Mobile veterinary clinics, vaccination campaigns, etc.
 - c. Improve livestock nutrition, water, health, hygiene and welfare
5. Improve access to financial services
 - a. Banking and credit
 - b. Risk management and insurance schemes
6. Improve livestock movement and mobility corridors
 - a. Secure them against degradation or conversion (example Himachal Pradesh, India)
 - b. Invest in appropriate infrastructure such as bridges, water points, roads, veterinary and health points, etc., and their governance
 - c. Encourage mobile services for livestock, such as mobile abattoirs

Evidence 7:

Guidelines on how to establish mobile schools for pastoralists in Marsabit County, Kenya

<https://cup.columbia.edu/book/mobile-schools/9783847425120/>

August: Indigenous and local knowledge, culture and innovation

Key Messages:

1. Recognise indigenous and local knowledge as ways of managing land
 - a. Pastoralists connections to land
 - b. Value of local knowledge and worldviews
 - c. All development activities for pastoralists must build on local and indigenous knowledge
 - d. Recognise local breeds as part of indigenous knowledge, and their benefits to society for draught power, genetic conservation, adaptation to climate change, etc.
2. Celebrate cultural diversity and conservation of cultural heritage
 - a. Celebrate pastoral food, art and music
 - b. Highlight rodeos, *Naadam* (Mongolia), Jallikattu (taming of bulls, India), Guerewool (Niger) and similar pastoral festivities around the world
3. Help preserve knowledge and pass it down through generations
 - a. Indigenous knowledge must be understood, respected and used in all activities
 - b. UNESCO recognition of transhumance as Intangible Cultural Heritage
 - c. Recognise the role of customary institutions in managing local waterbodies and hence sustainable rangeland management
 - d. Knowledge held by elders, valuing elders, protection of languages, customs and spiritual traditions
 - e. Prioritize participatory, culturally sensitive methods to document indigenous knowledge, such as intergenerational storytelling, community mapping, and elder-youth mentorship programs
 - f. Ensure pastoralists co-design documentation processes to safeguard intellectual property rights and maintain contextual accuracy
 - i. Document bio-cultural knowledge, including mapping
4. Recognise and respect the specific knowledge that women pastoralists have and their contribution to maintaining healthy rangelands and sustainable pastoralist livelihoods
 - a. Promote gender-sensitive dialogue between traditional and scientific knowledge holders
5. Earmark portions of project and programme funds for knowledge generation, knowledge transmission and capacity building of pastoralists
 - a. Examples of traditional mobility solutions that work
 - b. Promote indigenous and local products, innovation and opportunities for commercialisation while protecting indigenous intellectual property rights

Evidence 8a: Indigenous knowledge must be understood, respected and used

In the Arctic Council, indigenous organisations are permanent participants together with the States. Indigenous knowledge is promoted as foundation for assessments and recommendations, thus shaping policy decisions. Ottawa TK Principles from 2014
(https://pame.is/images/05_Protectec_Area/2014/PAME_II_2014/10_Agenda/Joint_AMAP-PAME_Session_agenda_3e_-_TK_Principles_July_SDWG.pdf)

Evidence 8b: Celebrate cultural diversity and conservation of cultural heritage

In Niger, many tourists are attracted by the Guerewool, an annual festival of the ancestral Peulhs Bororo and Woodabe. It is held on the sidelines of the festivities of the Salty Cure for livestock. It is also called the festival of male beauty where girls can choose the most elegant, sweetest and kind man towards women. During Guerewool, young men wear makeup and dress in the most beautiful traditional clothes.

Evidence 8c: Introduce training on Transhumance (mobile pastoralism) in Agriculture High Education formal and vocational training systems:

This EU Financed international ERASMUS PLUS project, covers 6 countries and 3 continents: France, Italy, Greece, Romania, Morocco, and Mongolia and is part of the implementation of the Transhumance International Safeguarding Plan. It enhances its value and provides young future breeders with the contextualized knowledge and know-how they need to ensure that their practice is viable, sustainable and fair. It raises awareness, trains, exchanges ideas and promotes this practice in countries where agricultural vocational training is, or must become, a major player. Cooperation between students of 6 countries will develop mutual understanding and enable cultural and linguistic enrichment. The use of digital technology will enhance participants' skills and make all the deliverables accessible.

September: Benefits to Society

Key Messages:

1. Rangeland products can contribute to nutrition, health and hygiene
 - a. Products coming from animals raised on natural pastures are relatively healthier (compared to products from intensive systems)
 - b. They have more vitamins, healthy fats, antioxidants, and higher levels of Omega-3 and Conjugated Linoleic Acid, etc.
 - c. Dioxins and other pollutants and harmful chemicals have been found in intensively farmed meat and milk
 - d. Essential minerals such as iron and zinc have lower bioavailability in plant-based foods than in pastoralist products
 - e. Animal-source foods are important for nutrition in vulnerable populations, especially in the first months of life, reducing stunting and wasting and improving cognitive health through providing high-density protein and particular nutrients
 - f. Societies need to better understand and differentiate healthy and sustainable pastoralist products from intensively/factory-farmed livestock
 - g. Enhance healthy and environmentally friendly consumption of meat and meat products
2. Global protein supply:
 - a. Feeding a population of over 9 billion people is placing unsustainable strain on our planetary boundaries. Pastoralism is a unique food production system that makes a significant contribution to global protein supply while contributing to conserving biodiversity and mitigating climate change
 - b. Pastoralist production can meet rising demand for healthy organic food
 - i. Rising demand is due to population increase and rise of middle class in most countries
 - ii. But there is also a rising awareness and demand for healthy, organic meat, milk, fibre and other livestock products that are sustainably traded and respects animal welfare
 - iii. Lift the constraints faced by organic producers including distance to markets; length of time that animals are confined in stock crates; and lack of organically certified pastures along routes to abattoirs
 - iv. Models show likelihood that organic crop and livestock production will be able to adequately feed the projected world population of 9.6 billion by 2050
3. Promote sustainable rangeland food and fibre products
 - a. Celebrate diversity of milk and meat products
 - b. Promote the use of animal fibre (wool, cashmere, leather) in clothing and other uses instead of polyester and other non-biodegradable plastics that damage the environment
 - c. Examples of pastoral foods and regional diversity
 - d. Increase awareness of specialty or novelty foods (e.g. camel's milk and its role in helping diabetics)

- e. Sustainably use hides and skins and other livestock /wild animal products
 - f. Examples of certification schemes that work
4. Pastoralists' water footprint and blue carbon
 - a. Pastoralism is a nature-based enterprise that protects ecosystems and watersheds
 - b. Pastoralists have low water and carbon footprints
 5. Sustainable pastoralism protects biodiversity for all and for future generations
 - a. (repetition of some of the messages from previous months)
 6. Pastoralist traditions have provided many value systems and cultural identities that have contributed to shape most cultures around the world
 - a. For example, Chengis Khan shaped the modern concept of diplomacy by protecting the lives and rights of Ambassadors

Evidence 9: Pastoralist products can improve health

Camel milk contains insulin-like proteins and other compounds that may help manage blood sugar levels and improve diabetes markers, particularly in type 1 diabetes, potentially reducing insulin requirements.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352364624000439#:~:text=CM%20has%20gained%20attention%20recently,natural%20state%20without%20undergoing%20pasteurization.>

October: Pastoralist women

Key Messages:

1. Promote gender-inclusive approaches to all aspects of pastoralism.
 - a. Encourage different thematic groups to address gender issues in their work.
 - b. Call attention to critical issues such as gender identity, gender roles, caregiving and other responsibilities such as family, productive and reproductive work and ask that they be viewed within an equitable framework.
 - c. Educate development actors on gender issues in pastoralism, with sufficient depth of understanding that they can effectively engage in gender-responsive development work.
 - d. Acknowledge and support women's roles in caregiving and peacebuilding in pastoralist families and communities, and encourage men to share in carework, reducing women's triple burden of productive, reproductive and community care work.
2. Recognise and respect pastoralist women's specific knowledge and contributions to maintaining healthy rangelands and livestock, food security, community cohesion, and sustainable pastoralist livelihoods.
 - a. Integrate pastoralist women and girls into action research and build their capacities to carry out their own research on pastoralism and rangeland issues, building on their own specific knowledge, innovations and initiatives.
 - b. Support collaborative action of pastoralist women, including regional and global gatherings of pastoralist women. Such gatherings give pastoralist women the opportunity to exchange experiences and knowledge, promote their rights, amplify their voices and increase representation on the global stage. A global gathering will update the 2010 Mera Declaration (to make a Mera Declaration +16), a key action point for the IYRP.
 - c. Support the UN FAO "WeCan" Initiative's activities for more Pastoralist Women rights and leadership in all areas of IYRP2026 agenda at national, regional and global level
3. Respect the equitable and inalienable rights of pastoralist women to access and use land, natural resources, biodiversity, technology, knowledge and information, and appropriate, pastoralist-adapted health, education and social services.
 - a. Advocate for the equitable and inalienable recognition of pastoralist women's rights to access and use critical pastoral resources and assets, including land, water, forage resources, biodiversity, technology, knowledge and information.
 - b. Recognise and reinforce pastoralist women's contributions to biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation by supporting livestock mobility, protecting women's customary rights to land and other resources, and promoting multifunctionality of rangelands and diversity of pastoralist systems.

- c. Involve pastoralists in land-use and rangeland-management planning using gender-responsive participatory frameworks, protect pastoralists' collective use of land and stop converting pastoral lands to other uses (e.g. mining, protected areas, tourism, intensive crops, energy production) in ways that exclude pastoralists.
 - d. Support women leadership on the management of Rangelands and Pastoralism and encourage their experience sharing and co-learning for People centered land governance in cooperation with all other stakeholders
 - e. Promote and support education, health and other social services adapted to the needs of pastoralist women and girls by developing high-quality mobile services, distance-adapted solutions, pastoralist-friendly schedules and flexible and gender-sensitive approaches to deliver critical services for pastoralist communities
4. Ensure that pastoralist women enjoy the same rights and privileges as men with regard to ownership and inheritance of livestock and other assets.
- a. Focus on the rights of pastoralist groups as well as women pastoralists, by respecting the collective rights of pastoralist communities while building women's capacity to directly manage land, water, enterprises and income, and to access financial and technical assistance and appropriate technology
 - b. Promote economic autonomy of pastoralist women, including their right to market and manage proceeds from sales of livestock and rangeland products they produce
 - c. Facilitate processes which help pastoralist women understand their rights related to inheritance and ownership
5. Ensure safe, non-discriminatory and violence-free workplaces for pastoralist women and for women working on rangelands and pastoralism.
- a. Eliminate gender-based violence and address its drivers through education programmes for men, women, youth and children that ensure that women understand and exercise their rights
 - b. Recognise and encourage women scientists and professionals, and provide safe, non-discriminatory, violence-free and gender-sensitive workplaces in the rangelands and pastoralism sector, including support for parenting and other forms of family care
6. Encourage and support pastoralist women to participate in national parliaments and other forms of political representation.
- a. Recognise and support pastoralist women's social movements and lend voice to their demands
 - b. Advocate for the incorporation of these movements into the IYRP, along with initiatives supporting sustainable pastoralism and rangeland management
 - c. Promote an equitable voice and equal representation for pastoralist women in all fora, institutions and initiatives representing, supporting or advocating for pastoralism and rangelands, including local, regional and national governments

- d. Support gender-responsive leadership training for pastoralist women to develop skills to successfully run/apply for and serve in leadership positions, including elected offices
7. Strengthen the role of pastoralist women in promoting peaceful co-existence of different land users.
- a. Support women-only and women-led groups to strengthen women's confidence and capacities, educating women leaders and creating leadership opportunities for them.
 - b. Prioritise support for pastoralist women's networks and social movements, including
 - c. international gatherings of women pastoralists, and incorporate these movements into all rangelands and pastoralism initiatives, including the IYRP 2026.
8. Recognise the crucial role of pastoralist women in providing highly nutritious food for family and market.
- a. Support events where women gather and share knowledge on value addition, recipes, crafts, food items made from livestock and livestock products including exhibitions, fairs
 - b. Share movies and other audio visual material which has material on this sector,
 - c. Share movies and audiovisuals which have material on support for parenting and other forms of family care in pastoralist situations
 - d. Support women's best practices globally through International Film Festivals

Evidence 10: Recognise the crucial role of pastoralist women

In Mongolia, pastoralists produce 50% of the food, and women contribute 80-90% of that production. State and non-state actors have since 2021 developed and delivered national reports to various branches of the UN on the Women herders land rights in connection with socio-economic issues, including the impacts of mining activities.

November: Pastoralist Youth

Key Messages

1. The future of pastoralism, as a progressive component of a sustainable global food system, will depend on the innovation and inspiration of future generations
2. Encourage and enable dialogue between elders and youth
 - a. Break down inter-generational barriers to knowledge transfer about ethnoveterinary medicine, pastoral land-use management, conflict resolution, and negotiation with other land users
 - b. Encourage young pastoralists to take pride in pastoralist lifestyle and heritage
 - c. Celebrate the cultural heritage, traditional ecological knowledge and build cultural pride
 - d. Succession planning and governance transition from the elder pastoralists to the younger generation, ensuring continuity and the infusion of new ideas into pastoralism
 - e. Establish community hubs where elders train youth in IK while youth contribute digital literacy skills to document practices (e.g., using smartphones to map grazing routes or record medicinal plant uses)
3. Translate documented knowledge into accessible formats, Audiovisual tools (community radio, oral recordings), illustrated guides in local languages, and theatre/art for non-literate communities,
 - a. Mobile apps with offline capabilities, SMS alerts for weather forecasts, and voice-based AI assistants compatible with feature phone
4. Address high entry barriers by implementing solutions that enable pastoralist youth to access land, participate in governance, and maintain their pastoralist mobility and flexibility. These barriers include:
 - a. land tenure insecurity
 - b. climate challenges
 - c. knowledge gaps, including the digital gap (coding and digital skills)
 - d. economic constraints
 - e. legal and bureaucratic hurdles
 - f. Enable inclusion of youth pastoralists' voices in policymaking
5. Improve access to education, mobile schools and vocational training for pastoral youth
 - a. Examples of bright spots: capacity building of herders (e.g. formal schooling, training and certification schools)
 - b. Enhance access to grants and scholarships for pastoral youth
 - c. Enhance access to digital infrastructure, such as high cost of devices, lack of internet access in remote areas

- d. Create open-source platforms to share adaptable, pastoralist-informed models for rangeland management, disaster preparedness, and agroecological practices.
 - i. Partner with universities, tech innovators, and global pastoralist networks to scale solutions while respecting cultural specificity
- 6. Support pastoralist youth entrepreneurship and associations
 - a. Enhance access to financial capital, including digital financial services, while recognizing that many young pastoralists starting businesses do not have collateral for standard loans
 - b. Promote e-commerce platforms and remote employment opportunities for pastoralist youth
 - c. Establish innovation hubs and mentoring opportunities
 - d. Enhance youth entrepreneurship and training in complementary areas such as local processing of animal products, agribusiness and trade, sustainable harvesting of rangeland plants, etc.
 - e. Enhance labour rights of pastoralists
 - f. Improve markets for pastoral products and ensure fair prices and trade to make pastoralism and their products competitively marketable
- 7. Inhibit and reverse outmigration of pastoralist youth
 - a. Increase economic opportunities for youth from pastoralism
 - b. Change perceptions about rangelands and pastoralism to address abandonment of rangelands

Evidence 11: Capacity building of herders

Ongoing (2023-2026) Eco-TransH Erasmus plus project. This project unites agricultural training high schools or universities of 6 countries (France, Italy, Greece, Romania, Morocco and Mongolia) of three continents, to create awareness creation and teaching on Transhumance. Eco-TransH offers activities to help students discover transhumance practices and the challenges of sustainability. Testimonials from young people to raise awareness; debates and solutions around generational renewal; the tools and training needed to properly organize and manage the practice; exchanges to improve knowledge of how to optimize natural resource management; actions to enhance the value of territories and their pastoralists related products. <https://ecotransh.com/>

December: Innovative solutions for a sustainable future

Key Messages:

1. Pastoralism is not a nostalgic return to the past, but a way forward towards future sustainability (repeat of first month)
 - a. *Respect the Roots, Embrace the Future*: Value indigenous traditional knowledge such as herding, ethnoveterinary medicine, weather prediction indicators, conflict management, and land-use negotiation to empower young people to continue and shape a thriving pastoralist heritage
2. Innovate in herd and rangeland management
 - a. Innovative livestock and herd management, tools and techniques (e.g. how to build a robust herd, mixing species, switching herding strategies, etc.)
 - b. Increase innovative sustainable rangeland restoration funding, programmes and projects
 - c. Sustainable water restoration
 - d. Examples of traditional mobility solutions that work
 - e. New/protected livestock mobility corridors
 - f. The use of new technologies for multifunctional multi-benefit grazing, such as grazing under cork and fruit trees and in vineyards
3. Innovate and implement beneficial infrastructure
 - a. Pastoralists combine low-tech and high-tech
 - b. Sustainable technologies such as decentralised renewable energy access
 - c. Renewable energy for water access and security
 - d. Telehealth for pastoralists
 - e. Insurance schemes to manage risk
 - f. Mobile money
 - g. Mobile fencing
 - h. Collaborate with meteorological companies to:
 - i. provide weather forecasting at least 6 months in advance that helps pastoralists chart their movements and reduce risks
 - ii. Adopt AI, satellite data, and machine learning to develop hyper-local early warning systems which may include predictive models for droughts, locust/vector and disease outbreaks, or pasture regeneration that blend traditional indicators with real-time climate data
4. Better data for better management
 - a. Provide open and wide access to global and local data that can help pastoralists to improve the way they manage their lands and herds
 - b. Promote data gathering and modelling at different scales, mixing them with local knowledge to increase the understanding on rangelands and pastoralist systems
 - c. Engage pastoralists in gathering actual data of rangeland use and management
5. Recognise and promote pastoralists, including women and youth, to participate in co-production of knowledge and innovation
 - a. Document, disseminate local innovations and traditional knowledge
 - b. Recognise them through awards and incentives

- c. Celebrate cultural heritage and learn from it for management of the global commons,
- d. Learn from pastoralists about living within system and planetary boundaries,
- e. Embrace cutting edge technology in pasture management, processing, herd management, animal health

6. Where will pastoralism and rangelands be in 30 years?

Evidence 12a: Innovation in herd management

In West Africa, the growing need for monetary resources resulting from modernity has led pastoralists to innovate by diversifying their herds and engaging in the breeding of small ruminants, which represent a source of liquidity. <https://ijias.issr-journals.org/abstract.php?article=IJIAS-21-261-09>

Evidence 12b: Multifunctional land use

[About five years ago we turned to organic production and we had a hard time controlling weeds. We tried mechanical solutions, organic herbicides based on vinagra, things that were very expensive and time consuming. Finally I tried implementing sheep in the fruit orchards. I saw sheep as a solution because it was cheap, and I could earn a second income from its production.” Reports one farmer in rural Spain](https://bichosdecampo.com/es-posible-tener-ovejas-o-cabras-debajo-de-parras-y-frutales-el-uruguayo-martin-guarini-invento-un-bozal-para-que-los-animales-pastoreen-sin-que-correran-peligro-los-cultivos-y-asi-evitar-los-ag/)
<https://bichosdecampo.com/es-posible-tener-ovejas-o-cabras-debajo-de-parras-y-frutales-el-uruguayo-martin-guarini-invento-un-bozal-para-que-los-animales-pastoreen-sin-que-correran-peligro-los-cultivos-y-asi-evitar-los-ag/>