**“Rangelands and Pastoralism: Towards a Global Initiative for Pastoralists’ Territories of Life” Workshop**

***A future global initiative hosted by the ICCA Consortium must critically address the realization of pastoral communities’ collective rights to their territories and relevant common resources***

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In November 2022, ICCA Consortium organized a three-day virtual workshop to collectively imagine a global initiative to support pastoralists’ territories of life and their self-determined priorities and plans. The workshop titled [“Rangelands and Pastoralism: Towards a Global Initiative for Pastoralists’ Territories of Life”](https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/2022/11/04/rangelands-pastoralism-territories-of-life-workshop/" \t "_blank) took place on the 14th, 15th, and 18th of November.

It was attended by pastoralist community members from around the world, researchers working on various aspects of pastoralism, representatives from global initiatives supporting pastoralism, and members from several civil society organizations.

The co-organizers of the workshop were the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) ICCA Global Support Initiative (ICCA-GSI), the Global Environment Facility’s (GEF) Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP), and the International Support Group for the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP).

This latest workshop built on the [“Pastoralist Communities’ Territories of Life in Asia”](https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/2021/07/23/pastoral-communities-territories-of-life-in-asia-tales-of-coexistence/" \t "_blank) workshop held in June 2021 to voice the importance of rangelands and pastoral communities for human well-being and nature conservation in Asia and to support the pan-Asia call for the recognition of 2026 as the [International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists](https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/2022/04/30/unga-declares-2026-international-year-of-rangelands-and-pastoralists/" \t "_blank).

The [key outcome of the 2021 workshop](https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/2021/07/23/statement-virtual-workshop-on-rangelands-and-pastoralism-asia/" \t "_blank) was to ensure that advocacy toward the recognition, safeguarding and enhancement of pastoralists’ territories of life is taken up as a lead-up to the IYRP.

The recognition of pastoralists’ critical socioeconomic and ecological contribution to societies and food systems is limited. These communities’ contributions to nature and its conservation and the governance of common resources and shared heritage are not appropriately recognized and respected. Mainstream systems continue to marginalize pastoralists and perpetuate stereotypes, policies, and laws that actively undermine the integrity of their territories and erode their ways of life. At the same time, pastoralists face internal challenges of gender disparity and gradual but sustained migration of youth away from traditional livelihoods.

The UN General Assembly’s unanimous declaration of 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists has provided a welcome opportunity to raise awareness, shift public perception, and build political will and tangible support for these critical issues.

In that context, the ICCA Consortium reached out to the regional coordinators to organize a workshop to hear from pastoral communities beyond Asia and co-envision a global initiative for pastoralists’ territories of life.

The 2022 workshop, therefore, had the following critical objectives:

* To provide a platform for pastoralist communities and their supporting organizations across the globe to share their perspectives on and experiences of conserving, sustaining, and defending territories of life in diverse regions and contexts;
* To identify priority issues that needed to be addressed in a global initiative focused on pastoralists’ territories of life and primary actions and ways to support such priorities;
* To identify key potential donors and supporters to help put the proposed global initiative into practice; and
* To develop the overall framework for the proposed global initiative and appoint a working group to design relevant funding proposals.

Four relevant critical issues were taken up as panel discussions on the first day of the workshop. These issues were initially highlighted by participants of the 2021 workshop as needing attention.

Presentations in these panels included community representatives, researchers, and representatives of civil society organizations from Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America working with pastoralists.

These panels were:

* Sustainable livelihoods, livestock, and socio-economic-ecological aspects of pastoralist communities
* Climate change, rangelands degradation, conservation, and restoration
* Customary governance and tenure, and threats from rangeland and conservation policies and land acquisition
* Issues around youth and women pastoralists

The second day’s primary agenda was to discuss other global organizations and ongoing activities supporting pastoralists and their territories of life and discuss needs and opportunities for coordination. Gregorio Velasco Gil of the FAO Global Hub, Annalisa Mauro of the ILC Rangeland Initiatives, [Ariell Ahearn](https://uk.linkedin.com/in/dr-ariell-ahearn-7a51a06?trk=public_post_feed-actor-name" \t "_blank) of the DANA +20, and Ilse Kohler Rollefson from the League for Pastoral People spoke about the work of their organizations.

They highlighted the gaps and challenges that the ICCA Consortium could cover and address and led a global initiative to make it distinct from other organizations in pastoralism so that it could collaborate and synergize with other ongoing efforts.

The last day summarized the proceedings of the previous two days and opened discussions on the next steps, the process, key roles, and the framework for the global initiative.

From the three days of deliberations at the virtual workshop, it was clear that a future global initiative housed by the ICCA Consortium needs to critically address the realization of pastoral communities’ collective rights to their territories and relevant common resources. To achieve this, the initiative will need to focus on the following:

* Creating mechanisms to amplify the agency of pastoralist communities at national, regional, and international levels through cross-learning dialogues between pastoralists from different regions around the globe;
* Strengthening pastoral community-based organizations to advocate at national and international levels for recognizing and respecting communities’ rights on their territories of life;
* Building multi-stakeholder alliances to promote and understand the IYRP among pastoralists and other stakeholders;
* Identifying and investing in strong advocacy on the socio-economic and ecological values of pastoralists;
* Encouraging pastoral youth in the conservation of their territories of life and their bio-cultural diversity; and
* Supporting relevant documentation of pastoralists’ efforts to protect and manage their territories of life in the current context of climate change and biodiversity loss.

An internal task team comprising regional coordinators of the ICCA Consortium, Community Collaboration for People and Nature, Mongolia (CCPN), Center for Sustainable Development and Environment, Iran (CENESTA), and Kalpavriksh, India, are in the process of designing a framework for the initiative currently named as the “Global Initiative on Pastoralists’ Territories of Life.”