

**Launch Conference:****“Centering African Voices, Scholarship, Research and Advocacy for Resilient Livestock Production on the African continent”**

**School of Agriculture, Policy and Development,
University of Reading
24-25 March 2026**

[To join the conference online on MS Teams: see page 5 of this programme]

Programme:**Day One, Tuesday 24 March:**

8:30-9:00am: Registration (Frank Parkinson Room, School of Agriculture, Policy and Development – SAPD)

9:00am: Welcome by **Prof. Simon Mortimer**, Head of School, SAPD, University of Reading (6mins)

Introduction by **Dr. Caroline Rymer**, Co-Head of the Department of Animal Sciences, SAPD, University of Reading (4mins)

9:10am: An introduction to the IYRP: **Dr. Igshaan Samuels**, Agricultural Research Council (ARC), South Africa and Co-Chair of the recently launched **2026 International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) Global Alliance**: “The IYRP Global Alliance” (online presentation, 10mins)

9:20am: Introducing the African Livestock Observatory, **Dr. Andrew Ainslie** (7 mins)

9:27am: Introducing the keynote speaker, **Prof. Mizeck Chagunda**, University of Edinburgh see here: <https://edwebprofiles.ed.ac.uk/profile/mizeck-chagunda> (3mins)

SESSION #1: 9:30am: Session chair: **Dr. Andrew Ainslie**: “THE BIG PICTURE ON LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION ACROSS AFRICA”

9:30-10:10am: Keynote by **Prof. Mizeck Chagunda**, University of Edinburgh, “Making African Livestock Production Systems Work in the Face of Global Challenges”. (40mins)

10:10-10:30am: **Dr. Fiona Flintan**, ILRI: “Pastoralism and integrating rangelands health seen as One health” see <https://www.oh4heal.org/> (FF will join online). (20mins)



10:30-10:55am: Dr. Zeremariam Fre, past Director of PENHA “Close on 40years of work among pastoralists in the Horn of Africa”. See <https://www.penhainetwork.org/> (25mins)

10:55am – 11:15am: Tea/coffee break

SESSION #2: 11:15-12:15: facilitated by **Ms. Bola Mosuro**, Journalist | Broadcaster | Documentary Maker | Podcast Host | Moderator | Development Advocate, see her recent (2026) programme for the BBC World Service, ‘Shepherd’s Eye in the Sky’ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct8xs1>

Roundtable discussion of the four presentations with **M. Chagunda and Z. Fre** in person and **F. Flintan** and **I. Samuels** online)

SESSION #3: 12:15 – 1pm: Session Chair: **Dr. James Bennett** “ENGAGING WITH UK/EU-FOCUSSED INITIATIVES”

12:15: Dr. Atenchong Talleh Nkobou, Royal Agricultural University, UK see <https://www.rau.ac.uk/about-rau/our-staff/dr-atenchong-talleh-nkobou> ‘*Cellular Agriculture: the ‘new agrarian question’ and the case of cultivated meat.*’ (20mins)

12:35: Dr. Tom Staton, University of Reading: the PATHWAYS programme: A Bright Future for the EU Livestock Sector? See <https://pathways-project.com/> (20mins)

12:55: Short discussion that will take us to lunch at 1pm (5mins)

1:00-2:00pm: Lunch (in Room GL22)

SESSION #4: 2:00-3:30pm: Session Chair: **Dr. Andiswa Finca** “MULTI-SPECIES MILK, MEAT and FORAGE PRODUCTION”

2:00-2:20pm: Dr JC Niala, Oxford University and **Dr. Joanna Zetterstrom-Sharp**, University College London, “Dairying/Milk in colonial Kenya and the UK”, see <https://www.milkingit.org/> (20mins)

2:20-2:40pm: Dr. Lovemore Gwiriri, University of Coventry: “Research into rangelands and livestock development in Botswana” (20mins)

2:40- 3pm: Mr. Khalif Abey, President of the Kenyan Camel Association and **Prof. George Gitao**, University of Nairobi: “Experience with camel milk value chains in Isiolo County, Kenya and beyond” (joining online) (20mins)

3:00- 3:20pm: Mr. Loupa Pius, Co-Chair IYRP Eastern Africa, and member of Rangelands Community Initiative (RCIA) – Livestock and Rangeland management in Karamoja, Uganda (joining online) (20mins)

3:20pm: Roundtable discussion to take us to tea (10mins)



3:30-4:00pm: Tea/coffee break

SESSION #5: 4:00 -5:40pm: Session Chair: **Dr. Atenchong Talleh Nkobou**, Royal Agricultural University, UK “TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES: METEOROLOGICAL PREDICTION, RANGELAND AND LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT AND BEYOND”,

4:00-4:20pm: Dr. Ross Maidment, Dept of Meteorology, University of Reading: “TAMSAT: Satellite-derived climate monitoring for Africa” see <https://research.reading.ac.uk/tamsat/> (TAMSAT stands for Tropical Applications of Meteorology using SATellite data and ground-based observations.) (20mins)

4:20-4:40pm: Mr. Chidike Ude, Senior Research Officer, National Biotechnology Research and Development Agency (NBRDA), Abuja, Nigeria. “Technologies for Tracing livestock across space and time” (20mins)

4:40-5pm: Dr. Andiswa Finca, Agricultural Research Council (ARC), South Africa: “South African action plans and key messages in celebration of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists” (20mins)

5:00-5:20pm: Prof. (emerita) Carolyn Palmer: “Learnings from leading an ARUA research programme” (20mins)

5:20-5:40pm: Roundtable discussion facilitated by **Dr. Andrew Ainslie** to close the day– including key insights from the day’s deliberations by participants asked to provide these (20mins)

EVENING CONFERENCE DINNER: Tutu’s Kitchen in Palmer Park, near the University campus (Ethiopian café/restaurant) **from 6:30pm – 9pm. [Directions: take the no.17 bus from opposite the Three Tuns pub on Wokingham road and alight opposite Palmer Park]**

Day Two, Wednesday 25 March:

9:20-9:30am: Short introduction/recap by **Dr. Andrew Ainslie** (10mins)

SESSION #6: 9:30-10:30am: Session chair: **Prof. Mizeck Chagunda** “EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN CASE-STUDIES OF RESILIENT LIVESTOCK AND RANGELAND PRODUCTION Part 1”

9:30-9:50: Dr. James Hanks, PAN-Livestock Services Ltd, “Recording performance of Jersey cross cattle in smallholder systems.” (20mins)

9:50-10:10am: Prof. Julius Tjelele, University of South Africa, “Consequences and benefits of woody plant encroachment - a multidisciplinary approach.”(20mins)



10:10-10:30am: Dr. Andiswa Finca, Agricultural Research Council (ARC), South Africa: “Rehabilitation of degraded communal and commonage rangelands: Implications for improved livestock production and rural economy in selected LandCare sites” (20mins)

10:30-11:00am – Tea/coffee break

SESSION #7: 11:00 to 12:30pm: Session chair: **Dr. Zere Fre** “EAST AND Sn AFRICAN CASE-STUDIES OF RESILIENT LIVESTOCK AND RANGELAND PRODUCTION Part 2”

11:00-11:20am: Dr. Lensa Jotte, University of Birmingham: “In Vitro Meat: Food for Utopia, Contested in Ethiopia” (20mins)

11:20-11:40am: Mr. Taruvinga Magwiroto, University of Zimbabwe: “Towards better marketing opportunities for small-holder livestock farming in Zimbabwe” (20mins)

11:40-12:00noon: Prof (emeritus) Anthony Palmer, Rhodes University, South Africa and **Dr. Andrew Ainslie**: “Understanding drivers of changes in cattle numbers in southern and East Africa” (20mins)

12:00-12:20: Dr. Kgantjie Moloto, Agricultural Research Council (ARC), South Africa: “The National Goat Value Chain Development Programme in South Africa” (20mins)

12:20 – 1pm: Final plenary discussion facilitated by **Andrew Ainslie** and **Atenchong Talleh Nkobou**. Close of the conference, including online participation.

1-2:15pm: Lunch

2:15 – 3pm: Optional brainstorming session for developing specific, urgent joint research and advocacy actions

3:00 – 3:30pm: Tea/coffee and close.

See next page for link to join the conference remotely!



For Day One (Tue 24 Mar 2026): to join the conference online via MS Teams, click on:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/31638991038660?p=AqLRsADmzNp7GukSLP>

Meeting ID: 316 389 910 386 60

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Microsoft Teams meeting

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/3154330255237?p=gQFfjtd9QSriGGJfE3>

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