**Notes for June 27, 2017 IYRP SC Conference Calls (combined a.m. and p.m.)**

Attending: Ann Waters-Bayer; Elisabeth Huber-Sannwald; Jeanne Pfander; Jim O’Rourke; Kirk Olson; Louise Baker; Razingrim Ouedraogo; Susana Feldman, Gregorio VelascoGil; Jess Peterson; David Phelps; Dana Kelly; Fiona Flintan; Jurgen Hoth.

Chair: Maryam Niamir-Fuller

1. **Kenyan Resolution Update**

Same resolution that Kenyans sent to Rome was sent to Kenyan embassy in NYC. They may edit it. Waiting to see what the final doc looks like.

Others are waiting to see what next steps. Recommend not to submit new competing resolutions. Should all stand behind the Kenyan resolution. If countries wish to make amendments to the resolution, then the way to do it is through the normal negotiations channels in New York.

Process: Table this fairly soon. Have formal & informal negotiations before August recess. Will go to September U.N. General Assembly for final approval. Don’t know if those will be difficult. Need to try and find out which countries might have reservations/concerns so we can address their concerns. No countries strongly oppose yet.

Most likely that Kenya will take to African countries first and then G77 but if we give early indication that other countries are supportive that will help.

Kenyans will deposit the resolution next week and we should all pursue negotiations/advocacy between July and September. Possible that changes in document wording between now & September.

Louise Baker (UNCCD) described her perspectives. Had some editorial suggestions. NYC staff is ready to help. Sees 2020 as a good date/year. End of desertification decade, etc. and end of Aichi targets (CBD). Will round up enthusiastic European supporters. Don’t see major changes. Only real block would be if there are other “year” proposals but not aware of any. …Helpful if there was some language from the African summit in September. **Bukuru will follow up to confirm whether went through this week or next week.**

Louise suggested to connect with the group of dryland countries in New York and to gain their support at one of their meetings. Maryam wondered whether the IYRP SC could provide technical expertise at such meetings over this summer. **Louise will check about agenda of the dryland countries and will get back to group. Louise will talk w Bukuru**. “One on ones” with countries who might not be supportive are key.

Gregorio updated on the resolutions in FAO. Year of Camelids for 2024 might be seen as a competitor – has passed all the way through. Goes for endorsement at conference level next week.

Gregorio clarified the Council at its 155th Session last December endorsed a draft Conference Resolution requesting that the year 2020 be declared the International Year of Plant Health, and a second draft Conference Resolution supporting the declaration of 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, it is proposed that 2024 be selected to be declared the International Year of Camelids. There is no mention of the IYRP.

Kirk Olson – In **Mongolia, has had conversations with FAO Mongolia**. Personnel changes are posing some challenges. Election period – lot of distractions. Questions/suggestions from Jim O’Rourke about others who might be helpful. **Kirk will follow up.**

Maryam and Louise described good reasons for pushing for 2020 for IYRP, including SDGs, the joint IRC/IGC meeting, end of the UNCCD decade, and the end of the CBD Aichi Targets. **These reasons should be clearly stated in the open flyer.**

**Louise and Maryam will have separate call** to talk about getting **European support**.

Jess confirmed that U.S. govt standard policy/position is to not support but also not oppose IY proposals.

Dana has spoken to contact within Australian Foreign Affairs and others. Will take time to get the letter of support but feels positive about the prospects. (Previously Australian govt wanted this to go through the FAO process so it is not clear that they will support the Foreign Affairs route through U.N. General Assembly.)

Maryam clarified that if we went through the FAO process we would have to wait until 2026, but that is too late to have any impact on the implementation of the SDGs, which is a powerful tool right now for achieving our goals. We should try to go with the New York U.N. General Assembly route as far as possible so as to get the 2020 slot.

Fiona says the Ethiopians are more interested in going with the UN General Assembly foreign affairs route. The government was very interested but it seems that after Kenya submitted the proposal, the interest lagged but it is also end of Ethiopian fiscal year so the focus is elsewhere. **Fiona will follow up with Tezera**.

1. **Side-events**

Maryam introduced the updated list of upcoming events. David asked about purpose for advocating at upcoming meetings. Maryam said depending on outcome of U.N. General Assembly vote, it would mostly be awareness raising. David says the Australian Rangelands Society social media efforts could help promote these efforts. Suggests that **someone onsite in New York in September could be making social media posts about the IYRP resolution when (if) it comes up for vote in September**.

1. UNCCD COP13 – Ordos, China; 4-15th September 2017

COP is the week before the General Assembly vote so country positions will be established already. Host ministry is the state forestry administration.

At least five different types of actions at the UNCCD COP were discussed: A Ministerial breakfast. A side Event. A decision Text. A press release. And informal chats with country delegations. These are further elaborated below.

It is expected that 100 or so ministers will be attending. Could we have a breakfast or lunch meeting with ministers to get their views, concerns? 1-3 experts and/or pastoralists could also be there. The best date for breakfast is already taken. Should probably try for **Sept. 12** for breakfast or lunch. **Louise can help get this arranged.** **Razingrim to explore this with Jonathan Davies**. **Maryam will follow up with UN Environment**. Jim suggests getting panel members from Inner Mongolia for breakfast/lunch. **Need funding** for food & drink.

UN Environment is organizing a Side event for CCD/COP13 Rangelands & Pastoralists & Biodiversity. Louise will be the one to sign off on side-events so she can make sure IYRP is included. Louise says would be **best if a country (such as the Kenyans) present the request for the side event**.

Razingrim described events proposed by IUCN, including one about land degradation, rangelands, at the NGO Pavillion. Participation may be low because it is far from the main venue. Other side events proposed include Great Green Wall which could be venue for promoting IYRP. **Razingrim will find out who is the lead on organizing these events** and connect with them.

Side events don’t necessarily get us very far. Decision texts are more impactful. Countries (**Kenyans or the Chinese) should submit a decision text** during the negotiations of the New UNCCD Strategy. **Text (including justification doc (1 page)) should be provided to this group.** The decision text should include: “IYRP will help achieve land degradation neutrality” and justification as to why IYRP should be in 2020. Jim thinks the monthly theme document might be helpful with these efforts. Jim has contacted both Kenyans and Chinese after the morning SC meeting.

Louise suggests that we **need to get Chinese support for IYRP as a whole**. Jim contacted Chinese but haven’t heard back from them. Good connections in Inner Mongolia. They might take the lead. Jim will contact them on this too. [Update from Jim: Guodong Han from Inner Mongolia University is interested in involving his faculty.]

Jurgen suggests creating a press release and work with the COP13 meeting communications director to get the press release including in the meeting minutes. **Jurgen volunteered to help draft this press release.**

Need to have somebody there who can go and talk with the different ministerial delegations. This needs to be well coordinated. If the IYRP SC gives a green light then a **smaller Sub-committee of the IYRP SC** could be established to coordinate engagement at UNCCD COP 13.

b) AMCEN (African Ministerial Conference on the Environment), 12-16 June, Gabon

Maryam conveyed information from Abdel Kader of UNEP, who says that they are optimistic that the final declaration of AMCEN will include support for the IYRP. **He will send final version soon**. Louise said that if ANCEM supports, this will be very helpful in the political process in New York.

c) 44th FAO Conference, Rome Italy. First week July. And two other FAO events

Gregorio said there will be no Kenyan side event next week at the 44th FAO Conference.

Gregorio is working on a side event proposal for CFS in October ~24th that will focus on women pastoralists. Also, there will be an FAO Animal Health meeting in Bangkok in January 2018, and Gregorio is preparing a side event proposal. He invited interested members of the IYRP SC to get in touch with him for more information.

d) Professional societies: GSSA and Reindeer conference. **Jim will work with Ray on poster for GSSA**. [He has already emailed Ray after this morning’s meeting about this.] [Update from Jim: Tony Palmer will work with GSSA to publicize IYRP at GSSA.]

Maryam spoke with Anders Oskold about including something in the **Reindeer conference** declaration. **Maryam will follow up with Anders**.

1. **Monthly themes**

Maryam introduced the 12-Monthly themes document, describing the changes since the last version: Links to SDGs. Looked at list of International Days and assigned them accordingly. Best to align w International Days rather than conferences. Need input particularly from pastoralist groups. Recognize that the “themes” are very scientific and not catchy enough for the public. David’s suggestions are all welcome. We still need to work on it to finish the list. Perhaps a theme will have several media-savvy messages?

Louise asked what is the outcome desired from IYRP. Need to articulate/make clear. “What bleeds, leads.” Is it just awareness raising, or will we aim to also have some concrete actions.

Jim says raising awareness is top priority and each country will need to solve issues at the country level. So the media-savviness needs to be developed at the country level. He emphasized that this is a skeleton/starting point for countries to customize.

Louise suggested using the year (and the many themes, conferences etc. in it) to arrive at a “manifesto”/plan of action statement outcome – developed during the year. Perhaps could be started at the IGC/IRC 2020 meeting in Nairobi. Kenyans could be asked to leave half-day session for drafting the plan of action.

Maryam - UNEP gap analysis will be coming up with recommendations in 2018 with the aim of having them be launched/initiated perhaps in 2020 (or some of their results to be disseminated in 2020).

Kirk proposed adding emphasis in the **May theme re: wildlife**. **He will provide some text. Jurgen also offered to help.**

Ann suggests we really need to raise awareness with general public which influences politicians (as opposed to scientists-to-scientists). **Monthly themes 4th column will need to be adjusted to be more media-oriented.** Louise says she can help after October. Need communications experts. **Maryam will contact Ian Wright**. **Jim** has contacted SRM who have involved members of Outreach and Communications Committees to assist. Also David in Australia. Elizabeth’s contacts can help but not in English.

Once the media-savvy wording is done by the communications experts, then the **Open Flyer can be revised/updated (or re-written)** so as to incorporate all of these new items. There is a need for a much more catchy “fact sheet” that gives compelling reasons and arguments as to why, how, and what for.

David suggests that we need to articulate clear high-level overarching messages/themes to convey to public (increase awareness and garnering support) and also targeting the policy makers / decision makers. Maryam agrees the 12 themes need further development, but making them “higher strategic level” would risk diluting the messages. David and Maryam agreed we need “key messages” for each month.

Fiona says we also need articulate clear target outcomes to work towards, and that would help decide on key messages. Dana suggested editing the themes and issues columns to make them into an active/verb tense. For example, theme “credit and insurance schemes”. Could change wording to more active statements “Access to credit and insurance”, “Making education available…” etc.

Maryam - The last column on the SDGs could be related to the SDGs targets not just the goals.

Maryam asked - Do these themes (many of which focus on developing world) resonate with countries such as Australia and U.S.? Jim feels that the issues are relevant but each country will need to frame the issue and use media-savvy messaging that speaks to their own people – but don’t get too hung up on this for now. Jim also suggests that each country needs to focus not just on their own country interests but on global issues as well.

David – Important to get buy-in/contributions/sponsorship from groups such as Australian’s organic beef council. Identify organizations that could be targeted for each month. The themes are relevant but need to be tailored to Australia. For example, January theme is to introduce rangelands and establish relevance with the local terminology (outback vs rangelands).

Jim described approach that the American Agronomy Society took for the International Year of Soil – focusing on the U.S. messaging/marketing effort. Didn’t try to develop this for other countries.

Maryam – once the IYRP SC endorses this document, should there be a consultation period within our larger network ? Need to bring in the views of pastoralists/ranchers. Also the larger partnership. [**The next SC meeting to decide how to go about this**].

**IYRP Steering Committee** is encouraged to **provide any final comments in writing by Thursday 29th June. Maryam** will then **finalize the document :** clean up and clarify with focus on the audience at the U.N. General Assembly in New York. Making the column that is currently “issues” more of key messages/action statements. Maybe combine media message column wording with issues column to make more catchy. Take out list of international days at the end of the themes document. In preamble for themes table, need to bring back the definitions of rangelands/pastoralists

Dana will be taking the monthly themes to potential sponsors/funders.

1. **Generic IYRP PowerPoint**

Elisabeth put together a generic PPT based on her PPT at the Cancun CBD Side Event last December. It was agreed that the **information from the 12-monthly themes will be** **incorporated by Elisabeth. Ann will provide a slide** on the economics of pastoralism and comparisons with crops in drylands. **Kirk will provide comments** on slides 8 and 9 regarding wildlife and biodiversity. David commented on logo that it was very “developing nations” focused. Maryam says that Elisabeth is working on a new version of the logo to make it a family, more abstract… **Elisabeth will add a “family” to the logo of the IYRP**. Jim reminded about the urgency of developing this PPT and it was agreed to aim for **end of this week (30th June**). **David and Jim will send Photographs from Australia and U.S.** (other developed countries) will be added.