# Terms of Reference

# Support Group for the

# International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists

# June 2019

A growing worldwide network acknowledges that the condition and productivity of the world’s rangelands and grasslands are critical to a sustainable future for people everywhere. Unhealthy and unproductive rangelands and grasslands destabilise countries, endanger national security, compromise economic productivity, and rob our youngest generation of opportunities for a prosperous future. The world’s rangelands are rapidly disappearing to crop agriculture, mining, urban development and infrastructure, whilst those that are left are rapidly degrading due to climate change and other pressures. At the same time, pastoralists remain marginalised in terms of secure tenure and access to basic services. In a response to draw attention to these issues and a move to positive change, there is a call to gain a United Nations resolution to designate an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP). The Government of Mongolia is leading this call.

To support this process, an IYRP Support Group (or ISG for short) has been established of representatives from organisations working in rangelands and/or with pastoralists.

**Objective**

The immediate objective of the ISG is to support the process to achieve the designation of an IYRP by the United Nations General Assembly, a process led by the Government of Mongolia. Once the designation is achieved, the objective of the ISG is to contribute in all manners possible to the successful implementation of the IY.

**Immediate Goals**

* To provide an entry point for the Mongolian Government to engage with international organisations and civil society committed to support their call for an IYRP,
* To assist the Mongolian Government to mobilise support for the call from other countries,
* To raise global awareness for the call for the IYRP through organising awareness-raising events at key forums or meetings,
* To assist the Government of Mongolia to raise funding for the IYRP from Governments, civil society and international organisations,
* To develop supporting publicity and outreach material on the IYRP including developing and maintaining a website,
* To assist the Mongolian Government technically in the development of a proposal and draft resolution to be submitted to FAO-COAG (Committee on Agriculture), and
* Once approved, to assist the Government of Mongolia and other governments to further develop the proposal and other activities for a successful designation process.

**Long-term goals (once the IYRP is designated)**

* Provide representation of the ISG partnership to the International Steering Committee that is expected to be established for the IYRP by the lead UN institutions
* Contribute with ideas, resources, networks and other means to a strategy and planning for the implementation of the IY
* Engage fully in implementing the activities of the IY
* Provide third-party independent monitoring of the success of the implementation of the IY.

**More specific immediate actions to take:**

* Support Mongolia and other countries to build up support for such a designation through the assemblies of UN agencies, such as FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN), UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) and IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development).
* Hold awareness-raising events at COAG, UNEA, UNCCD CRIC, COPs etc. (list of key events available on the IYRP website in the section Upcoming & Past Events: <https://globalrangelands.org/international-year-rangelands-and-pastoralists-initiative> ).
* Develop posters, leaflets and other supporting materials for the call for the IYRP.
* Develop an international media campaign for IYRP.
* Establish and maintain a webpage/site on the IYRP, with input of the Government of Mongolia and other Governments – needs to be translated into Mongolian, Russian and other languages: <https://globalrangelands.org/international-year-rangelands-and-pastoralists-initiative>.
* Engage with other government ministries of agriculture and environment to support the IYRP and particularly at COAG – this will require in-country meetings and events.
* Mobilise funding to support the Government of Mongolia, and other Governments, as above.
* Assist the Government of Mongolia to organise meetings with other Member States to gain support for the COAG proposal and draft resolution.
* Support NGO/CSOs to raise the call for an IYRP with pastoralist communities through their work, projects etc.
* Produce a factual position/background paper on why an IYRP is important.
* Regularly review the impacts of the activities it helps to organise or undertake, including monitoring “hits” on network websites, number of UN resolutions passed related to the IYRP, and obtaining views of pastoralists.
* Hold regular virtual (and where possible face-to-face) meetings to ensure the ISG is coordinated and working together.

**Means of operation**

The group will meet virtually once a month, or as needed, to discuss progress and challenges and to develop workplans etc.

Correspondence will normally be made through the listserv, but smaller groups may be established for specific tasks and to enable more targeted conversations.

In the absence of a designated central budget for this effort, each member of the ISG is expected to help mobilise and leverage resources necessary to carry out all activities agreed upon.

The membership of the ISG is voluntary. The list of members is found on the IYRP website: <https://globalrangelands.org/international-year-rangelands-and-pastoralists-initiative>