



Kick off e-meeting of Regional IYRP Support Group (RISG) for Europe

17 December 2020

Reference documents for this meeting are IYRP Update PPT Presentation; IYRP Global Flyer; Preparatory Plan for RISGs (in English, French and Spanish); 12 Monthly Themes (in English, French and Spanish). You can access these files at this [Kick-off meeting folder](#) on google drive.

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Introduction

Facilitator of the kick-off meeting, Engin Yilmaz explained the objectives of the meeting: to launch our work together as a Regional IYRP Support Group (RISG) in Europe & Arctic and to facilitate the self-organisation/coordination of the group.

Background information of IYRP and approval process thus far

Engin made a presentation with a PPT prepared by International Support Group (ISG) for all RISGs (to be included in annex). The topics covered within the presentation are:

- Why an IYRP?
- Milestones passed on long road to IYRP
- Official Process for approval as United Nations International Year
- Creation of Regional IYRP Support Groups (RISGs) and their objectives
- Immediate actions of RISGs = Self-organisation
- Priority actions: ISG and RISGs generate more support for IYRP by convincing governments and raising attention
- Countries that supported IYRP at FAO Committee on Agriculture Meeting
- Generating support among non-governmental partners
- Priority Action 2: Prepare monthly themes in each region

Self-organisation/coordination of the RISG

Geographical Composition of the RISG

Engin provided background information regarding the geographical composition of the group. This regional support group was planned to cover Europe region including the Arctic part of it. Yet it was suggested by some friends from Arctic countries that Arctic region be separated from Europe and another RISG specifically for Arctic is created. These friends were asked to join the kick off meeting for RISG for Europe and discuss the options including the possibility of establishing RISG for Arctic with identifying the person responsible to lead/facilitate that process. But we haven't received any response. Engin opened the floor for discussion.

Ann: When we were developing the IYRP online booth, the idea was to have nice photographs for nine regional blocs. During this process Arctic was presumed as in Europe region. Yet actually Arctic covers also parts of Asia and it goes far beyond Europe region. If it is their will to separate the group then it makes sense to have a separate RISG for Arctic. They also have quite different animal species and it is quite a different climatic area.

Engin: I totally agree. There are also cultural aspects and the differences are very visible between Europe and Arctic. The commonalities they have are with Arctic parts of Asia. It makes sense to separate the group. Meanwhile we have a list of 33 people (Annex 2) who accepted and/or assumed to be a member of our RISG. Three of these assumed people that we haven't been able to confirm their participation are actually those from the Arctic region: Anders Oskal, Johan Turi and Pole-Ante Turi.

Engin asked if there is anybody opposing the suggestion of separating Arctic from Europe and have one RISG for Europe and another for Arctic.

Emilie Loison: if it makes sense for them to be separated, then it's fine if they feel comfortable to make it like this

Pedro Herrera: Agreed

Letizia Bindi: I agree

Francesca: I agree also

Veronique Ancey : Thank you Ann for explaining why there are 10 groups (layout). given this and the Arctic's specificity it makes sense to be separated

Ann + Wolfgang: Maybe we will later have 12 regions on the website - that fits well too!

Emeric Jouhet: For me it's the same. Maybe to have an arctic regional group make sense

Engin: Excluding the three people from Arctic, we have a list of 30 people who mostly are from Italy, France, Spain, Germany. Yet the idea of the RISGs also aims ensuring representation of each country in their region at least by one person and currently we are missing many countries. That should be one of our aims. As Yolda, we are going to try to reach out to our network in other countries and their presence in the group. Accordingly in order to ensure a higher representation of countries in our region I would like to invite you to reach out to your networks in other countries and convey the message. Do you have any other suggestions?

Letizia: I invited colleagues from different universities in Greece, Romania, Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria to join the group. The wider representation of different ways of dealing with pastoralism is extremely important in regard with biodiversity conservation, knowledge and practices of pastoralism. The geographical coverage of all Europe is important.

Francesca : I see we are only 6 countries actually represented in this group

Engin: IYRP movement has been supported by a diverse group of people and organisations. Some of them were nature conservation organisations, some of them having a background in sustainable development, and of course pastoralists themselves. Accordingly it should be our aim to keep involvement of pastoralists themselves within the group and also reach out to other stakeholders such as nature conservation and sustainable development organisations and utilise the means they can provide. I invite you all to reach out to your networks in your and other countries, to pastoralists and other relevant stakeholders in your countries to be a member of RISG or to support our work considering our various tasks to achieve such as compiling information on pastoralism at country level.

Ann + Wolfgang: I hope also to get a couple of people from Hungary into the group.

Francesca: and Greece, Austria....and all countries actually involved in 2nd phase of Transhumance World Heritage

Gregorio Velasco Gil: and Portugal?

Pedro Herrera: The 4 Spanish people from the Platform are working together in a workgroup, we are already a multi-stakeholder platform. All of us can try to reach others in our neighbouring countries. We can talk to people working on pastoralism in Portugal. PKH can make a call to other European countries to join the RISG. We can all just take this as a duty to try to reach some more people.

Engin: Spain is a good example in terms of pastoralist and other relevant organisations working together and representation of Spain with 5 people in this meeting is good. We also have this network of European Shepherds (ESN) which is the regional chapter of WAMIP. Thus I expect an active participation of ESN through its coordinators: Fernando Garcia Dory and Verdiana Morandi. We currently have Letitia among us from Appia Network that Verdiana is a member of.

Letitia: Verdiana says hi to you all and she is now at another union, festival of pastoralism.

Engin: ESN has a reach-out capability in different countries. If ESN plays a more active role in reaching out to the pastoralists in Europe then higher representation of these communities in our RISG can happen much more easily.

Emilie Loison: I could activate my contact in New Zealand to help their government to join us. What do you suggest me to make it happen in terms of communication?

Ann + Wolfgang: New Zealand people should join the Australasia group.

Fiona Flintan: Also Ireland and UK.

Ann: I will get follow-up for Ireland.

Evelyn Mathias: I will check with Shetland Islands, UK.

Emeric Jouhet: Maybe we can make a call to all countries' members of the international group in 2nd phase of Transhumance World Heritage. We have contacts with all these countries.

Ann + Wolfgang: @ Emilie: Please give me the details for your contact in NZ so that I can send them to the facilitator of the Australasian group.

Pedro Herrera: We are members of the European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism, they are keeping a low profile right now, but I can try to engage some of them

Selection of Chairperson of RISG / criteria

Engin: This person is supposed to coordinate all the efforts and the work that is done by the group. Do you have any suggestions or would you like to suggest any criteria regarding this role?

Ann: I would like to see that pastoralist organisations have a leading role, at least an important role in this. What we did in Eastern and Southern Africa RISG meeting yesterday, we had a

double: somebody from a pastoralist support organisation and somebody from a pastoralist organisation working together.

Sabine : What about Anne?

Engin: I agree with the idea to have 2 coordinators as Ann suggested. This will increase the efficiency of the leadership

Andreas Schenk: That makes sense. The dOUBLE .:D

Letizia Bindi: I agree

Pedro Herrera: I like the idea too:, one from producers and one from supporters

Letizia Bindi: It's very important also the representative in the communication group

Pedro Herrera: That is a Good idea

Letizia Bindi: Very good

Veronique Ancey: I support this

Francesca: very good idea Ann

Ann: I would like to suggest that you do that Engin. Because you are much more involved in European pastoralism than I am.

Fiona: It would be good to have some new people involved. Ann, myself and Engin are already involved. It would be great to have someone else from the group.

Engin: It seems we are not going to be able to make a decision now. At least we can agree on this idea to have two chairs of who are going to be responsible of the work of our RISG: one from a pastoralist organisation and other from a supporting organisation.

Ann: We can send that suggestion around to the entire group and ask people to nominate someone or her/himself keeping in mind that one should be from a supporting organisation and one from a practising pastoralist organisation.

Andreas Schenk: I would very much support that. It would be nice if a small description of the nominee is added and we could do an online voting afterwards. Like two-three lines telling who is the nominator and then the nominee.

Letizia Bindi: We can build a main list with a simple drive and simply use that as a repository for simple presentations of each participants and as a way to have an outline of what are our interests particularly, which way we can contribute etc.

Francesca: each of us will try to contact more people for other countries...and then we hope to have more people as candidates for these positions

Andreas Schenk: If somebody nominates him/herself or another person it would be nice if we had 2 sentences about the nominee ;D

Letizia Bindi: Simple drive repository where to pose brief profiles and eventual presentations or self-presentations

Selection of RISG representative to ISG

Engin: Many of the members to this regional group are also members of the ISG including me, Ann, Fiona etc. I would like to hear your suggestions on identification of the person who will represent our group at ISG. By the way the role of the ISG is to oversee overall management of the activities that we are running for IYRP. And also it is responsible to facilitate the processes of or support the RISGs. This person will assume the role of bringing the needs, concerns, suggestions from our RISG to the agenda of the ISG.

Ann: There are thoughts right now that ISG became bigger and bigger. And there are thoughts now of trying to make it smaller once the regional groups are set up. So that we won't be all of us members of ISG, maybe one or two people from each regional group which is in the ISG. That is a change to come about. I am not sure if we should decide on the person now who from our group will be in that ISG when it is re-structured. Perhaps we'd better wait for the restructure of the ISG.

Engin: We can wait for the restructure for sure. For the time being through the members I referred earlier, we can still bring the messages, concerns of our group at the ISG. In January we will have all the groups established and start working. I assume by the end of January the decision regarding restructuring the ISG will be taken. And based on that we can make the decision on the person to represent us within ISG.

Selection of RISG representative to Communications Team

Engin: Currently two of our members, me and Ann, are members of the global communications team.

Ann: I actually would like to have someone from a pastoralist organisation in Europe joining the comms team.

Engin: I definitely agree. And let me tell the expectations from this role that this person is going to feed the global communications team with ideas, information, materials from the region for promoting the IYRP. These may be data, videos, visuals etc. And based on that this person is also going to manage the regional section of the IYRP online booth. I totally agree with Ann because if this role is assumed by a person from a pastoralist organisation that would be much influential due to better ability of such a person to reach out to the pastoralists and to learn their concerns, needs and problems.

Ann: Also it is important for making the news, information more reader-friendly also for pastoralists and not getting too academic.

Fiona: And probably translating the information into their languages as well. Even in this group we have French, Spanish speakers. English is not necessarily a language that everyone communicates with.

Ann: For instance the German Shepherds Association has translated information into German. They have also been translating the 12 Themes into German. I think each of these pastoralist organisations in different countries could try to do similar things. So it speaks to pastoralists even if they don't call themselves pastoralists and have a completely different term for it in their own languages.

Andreas Schenk: That was Evelyns great work :D

Letizia Bindi: I deeply agree with this. I had an exchange with the FAO Communication group and one of the most important question is about how to join

Engin: There are two issues raised which I was going to address. One of the language issue and the other is the online tools we need for the RISG such as mailing lists etc.

Ann: Regarding that concern, on IYRP online booth there is a place which is called regional news & resources. And if you click on that you will be able to find information about the year in different languages. Not all of them because it depends on the initiative of the people in those countries to make those translations. But some of them have been somewhat adjusted so that it reflects that particular idea without being a word to word translation.

Evelyn: I could do for Germany if there is something like 12 Months Themes. So we could contribute to things like that as much as we can. But I can't assume the role of RISG representative to Communications Team

Pedro: I think that Engin and Ann have been working in this communications tasks already. I agree with the need to have pastoralists there but also we need to keep the momentum going. So I would propose a small task force, a working group about it. But coordinated by both of you. And regarding language we have been talking with some people in Spanish to create also a working group about Spanish. Because we feel the need of translating every document that is produced and doing it in a way not only understandable by pastoralists but also to be enough comprehensive for a lot of people that actually don't define themselves as pastoralists but perhaps as breeders, farmers, or any other relevant name in Spanish. These can be brought together through better use of language. So we are trying to establish this Spanish language commission to address these issue. I am already involved with some people in this. Just for your information.

Engin: It seems we are not going to be able to identify the person for this role now either. So if nobody opposes I suggest we apply the same procedure with the chairs of the group and invite all to (self)nominate somebody later on with emails. Meanwhile in regard with Pedro's suggestion for me and Ann to assume this role, I have many responsibilities already and I have

this worry that I may not meet the needs of this position in terms of compiling information in countries etc. I may not be able to do that efficiently.

Andreas Schenk: One issue might be that the workload is hard to imagine right now. It seems like rather high workload associated with these roles based on the presentation. So that may be one of the reasons why people are a little careful about it.

Operational Issues

Engin: One of the operational issues is language which we already addressed in this meeting. It is important to have at least the major documents translated in other languages. As Yolda, we will do the translation into Turkish. And Evelyn has already volunteered for German and Pedro for Spanish. I assume we can expect someone in our group to volunteer for translation into Italian as well. Yet as it is also our aim to increase the representation level of other countries such Romania, Hungaria etc. we will need active contribution of the partners beyond the communication team for assuming that responsibility regarding these other languages.

Veronique Ancey: Happy to help translating from english/german into french, if it helps

Jean-Francois: Oui, thank you! without translation it's very difficult to understand all and participate

Engin: The second operation issue I want to ask you is that if we need a mailing list or shall we keep it as it is, supported with google drive as a repository.

Andreas Schenk: It is always nice to have some sort of online repository like google drive. The good thing with google drive is that you can rather easily do forms online, feed information from those forms into excel and so on.

Regional Paper on Eastern Africa for Joint IGC/IRC

Engin: The International Congress/ International Rangelands Congress will take place just after United Nations General Assembly, in October 2021. It will be a great occasion to discuss altogether many issues and also make plans. Right now there are papers being prepared for some regions. The leading author of the paper for our region is Pablo Manzano. I have tried to reach out to him and asked its status and if he needed any support from our group. No response yet, I will check again with him and inform you. Meanwhile I would like to ask if any member has updated information on this issue.

Ann: Well I haven't seen any paper yet from Pablo. Michael Odhiambo is the lead author for the paper for Eastern Africa region. He sent an abstract to all members of the RISG so everybody was informed what it was about. And he asked for their particular inputs from their countries mainly related to the issues around policy and data gaps and research priorities. That is what those people are supposed to cover. So it would good to ask Pablo to at least circulate the abstract and pose the same questions.

Engin: I will follow up that with Pablo.

Revisiting the Purpose as an RISG

Engin: The purposes of the RISG are to expand the network of supporting organisations and governments in the regions and at country and local levels by continuing to raise awareness and by lobbying. The other purpose is, by working with the ISG, FAO, Mongolian Government and other global supporters, to prepare suggestions and guidance for IYRP planning and implementation in their respective regions (regional and national action plans). And there are immediate tasks which are expected from the RISGs like the paper, communication work, and adoption of the key documents like IYRP global flyer to our region. I think these adaptation tasks can wait because of the urgency of this task to increase the support and to ensure the continuity of the support, for endorsement of IYRP at the UNGA, of the organisations, countries and governments and regional bodies which is EU in our case.

Ideas for RISG activities in the run-up to the UNGA

Engin: So I would like to ask you ideas, suggestions in terms of what we can do as a RISG in the run-up to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2021

Andreas Schenk: We could see if we can get for example a letter of support co-signed by MEPs or individual letters signed by MEPs. These would be two options. We can develop drafts and then get in contact with MEPs and see if they are interested in signing.

Engin: Just before the COAG meeting, one MEP made a statement on video supporting the proposal which was shared at IYRP online booth. It was a good tool to reach out to the decision makers.

Andreas Schenk: It is a very nice thing because it could be cross fractions, could cross the borders of different parties maybe. I will see which possibilities are open to us for that. Some standing groups within the parliament are already dealing with CAP issue, that might be interesting.

Ann: Also within the parliament we have been working quite a bit as CELEP. We have been working with MEPs. Those could also be an entry point.

Andreas Schenk: Perhaps we should get in contact about that and identify a list of names and then if we can get a short letter done or make some calls and see who would be interested to be our gateway. Due to Covid 19 it is bit complicated unfortunately.

Engin: I am counting on the experience of CELEP and VSF and so Koen. Because they did a great work in Brussels with EC, EP etc. of course regarding the policies related to eastern Africa. They have a great network and great ideas.

Ann: What we need now is countries, ministries of foreign affairs that they are convinced to support the proposal at the UNGA. It would be really great if one EU country co-sponsors the resolution together with Mongolia.

Andreas Schenk: Considering that the pastoralist lobbies in France and Spain are rather strong, those may be the countries to this. Germany would be bit difficult.

Engin: Germany had made a statement that they were not going to support the proposal at the COAG meeting. Then following our campaign on twitter etc. targeting the ambassadors of EU countries to FAO, it was again Germany with their ambassador to FAO responding to us that EU member countries decided to support the proposal due to its contribution to several SDGs.

Evelyn: One of the shepherds from our association, who is good at communication on Twitter, posted a tweet and his followers liked and retweeted it. Before that the perception of the government was that there was not enough support from within Germany. And so after this tweet they couldn't say no anymore.

Pedro: We will reach our government to ask for support for the UN assembly and also the possibility to co-sponsor the resolution. But it is way more difficult to ensure that, as it is another level of involvement with greater responsibility. So I am not confident but we will try.

Ann: You have to do a lot of negotiation. If you are going to co-sponsor, governments need to go through all the decision-making process within their country and also they need to negotiate the issue with the government of Mongolia. So this needs time (months) and, to make it work, the efforts to ensure such a possibility should start now.

Engin: Having a meeting earlier with Koen, one of the ideas he suggested was in regard with the EU presidency. Next presidency of the EU will be in Portugal. Perhaps we may try to utilise this and do something in Portugal. I will chase this idea through our partners in Portugal like WWF Portugal. Koen already tried to get in touch with Anna from VSF Portugal. So we are going to try to reach out to people who may ensure a MEP or somebody from the presidency making a statement or may organise an event under the umbrella of the presidency.

Andreas: To go via presidency is always a good idea as they keep looking for positive messages. And regarding the event, we can always try do that in the parliament of course as soon as we can travel again. It is rather easy, we need to find a MEP who can sponsor the event and then we have an event, room and translators etc.

Engin: It can even be a lunch event.

Andreas: Yes exactly. It doesn't need to be a big thing.

Engin: That something we can communicate. The travel restrictions is a big problem. So regarding the Presidency issue, it would be great if we have somebody representing Portugal within our RISG who can chase this idea. Because for instance I can't go to Portugal due to travel restrictions or Andreas. So I will try to get support from WWF Portugal and Koen is going

to try to do that with VSF Portugal. But VSF Portugal is a small one with 2-3 people. So it would be great if we try to reach out to other people who will become a member of our RISG and who can help us with this specific issue as well.

Andreas: We can always in case of emergency try to go to the Portuguese representation to EU in Brussels and talk to the person in charge of agriculture and/or environmental policy there. And talk about whether they are interested or not. We should do that as soon as possible because they are probably already in the mid of preparation of the presidency.

Jean-Francois Périgné: For Portugal we can make something through ECVC (European Coordination Via Campesina) as Portugal voted yes for the declaration of the rights of peasants. So we have a good chance of finding some partners in Portugal through ECVC.

Engin: That is great. There also some entry points at the level of the EC. Like CELEP and VSF has this experience with working with developmental agencies of the EC. Perhaps we can find an entry point through them and perhaps to include DG Environment and DG Agriculture. And moving those wheels and organising a possible event with support of these stakeholders, we may also invite MEPs to such an event. Something simple but that we can record and communicate and use it to reach out to other decision makers.

Andreas Schenk: We can also try to get in touch with offices of Birdlife and other NGO platforms in Brussels to see if they would support us.

Engin: Being former director of Birdlife Turkey, I have relations with BirdLife office in Brussels. And she is not here with us now but Concha Salguero of Trashumancia y Naturaleza who is our partner in Spain, together with our other partner WWF Spain, are working on EU-level policies in Brussels like trying to influence CAP. They may perhaps also help us with this issue.

Andreas Schenk: There is XXXXXX working at WWF Europe Office in Brussels, who used to work for EFNCP. He may be also a good entry.

Engin: Great. So my suggestion based on all these comments is to ask our network if we can harmonise our lobbying efforts in Brussels and also in Portugal at the presidency level. I suggest to set up a working group on Policy, naturally Andreas being a member.

Andreas: I hate you :)

Engin: I will be a member too. I am also counting on CELEP and VSF through Ann and Koen. Ann you don't need to be active but give us your suggestions and ideas. But of course I would be glad if you choose an active presence. And also Jean-Francois Périgné, particularly for reaching out to possible partners in Portugal. It is open to all members. The group can inform all the RISG members later on regarding their work.

Engin: We also have these other international bodies like UN agencies. And many of the agencies are based in Europe. And we have people like Fiona, Gregorio who work at international level. Perhaps we can also try to get in touch with such bodies in Europe on

behalf of ISG which would be the way to maximise the efficiency of this new governance structure of IYRP movement with RISGs.

Fiona: My opinion is that we shouldn't limit our efforts with only the year but as a group lobbying for more attention to European pastoralism per se . Of course the year is a part of that but I think it is in some ways a bit difficult for people to conceive the idea that we are talking 2026. I think let's not limit our kind of horizons specifically to the year. I think there is a great opportunity here to strengthen across Europe lobbying group that would do much more or has high potential to do much more than lobby only for the year.

Engin: I totally agree.

Andreas: me too

Engin: Due to operational needs in the short term the main message will be IYRP. But this work of course should help, facilitate our overall efforts, for instance efforts to have EU developing an official policy on pastoralism in Europe and beyond.

Andreas: One thing we should not forget is that next year will be the year when national implementation of CAP will be developed. So anything we do next year with regards to IYRP, also in some way support interests of pastoralists in regard with the national implementation of CAP.

Fiona: And yes for the international bodies, I will be looking for links with the ones I am involved with, hoping to find spaces to increase understanding of pastoralism in Europe. Like the idea I mentioned to make films and other things that we can use to do this. For me for sure, this is something that I will be looking to get more involved over the next year and I will certainly be in contact with people in this group to see who would be interested in working on this.

Engin: To my understanding there are three levels in regard with lobbying: EU, EU member countries and non EU member countries like Turkey. So for EU we need to move as a regional group and combine efforts towards our targeted goals. But at the country level we should expect every member of the RISG to take action at the level of their ministry of agriculture and also ministry of foreign affairs to ensure their support and if possible to ensure that they become a co-sponsor to the resolution.

Ann: To do that in some countries we'll have to have a first contact and in other countries there might be one or two people that should build up somewhat a larger group that can work together on trying to lobby the government.

Engin: Based on my experience one way to reach out to the government for lobbying is working through the permanent representative of the countries. Because getting in touch with the right people who has a good level of understanding of the issue at the ministries may be a challenge in some countries. But the relevant diplomatic mission of the countries, which in our case now are the permanent representatives of the countries to UN HQ in New York,

do hold more information and can inform you about the right entry points in your country as they know the process very well.

Engin: In addition to increasing the number of the supporting countries, it is also a goal to increase the number of supporting organisations. So far we have over 150 organisations supporting and/or confirming their commitment for the IYRP. We sure need to reach out to the organisations in our region to become a member of this group. Even if they don't become a member, they may still help us with our work for instance in compiling information from countries. And the only mechanism to ensure increasing the number of the organisations as members of the RISG and/or supporter of IYRP is our individual efforts.

Ann: When the individuals are taking these initiatives for trying to bring on board other organisations, if you need any type of information, look first of all on the website. Look under resources on the website. And if you still need further information you can get in touch with us. Information to make available to these other organisations so that they can understand what this is all about.

Conclusions

Engin: We are going to prepare the minutes of the meeting with Burcu. I am going to follow up every decision we made today, including setting up a policy working group with Andreas and Jean-Francois; selection of the chairs and the representative to the global comms. We, as Yolda, will also work on identifying the most efficient mechanism for internal communication (adapted to google drive) of this other network that we are coordinating. I will inform you about that to see if we, as RISG, can use that.

Engin: When do you suggest the next meeting to take place and how often we should gather?

Ann: With the Eastern & Southern Africa group, we decided to meet again mid January to discuss the regional paper prepared for IRC/IGC. I don't know if this will be the case with the paper for Europe with Pablo or whether we will have a chance to discuss this.

Engin: I am going to check with Pablo. In any case I am going to ask him to share an abstract at least and also overall situation and his plans regarding the paper and I will share it with you. We can then decide a date for a specific meeting on the paper if needed. But for the general meeting, I am going to share a doodle to identify a date in the first week of February.

Leticia Riaguas-Oviaragón: Thanks for all. We'll be in touch with Entretantos (Pedro, María,...) , we'll discuss that in our organisation and will try to collaborate as much as we can.