



Brussels, 20 June 2019

From:

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To the:

Secretariat of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) of the
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Email: fao-hq@fao.org

Re: Support to the request from the Government of Mongolia for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP)

We in the Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism (CELEP) send this letter to you as an expression of our support for the request being made by the Government of Mongolia to designate an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP).

CELEP is a coalition of European organisations, groups and specialists in pastoralist development who work in partnership with pastoralist organisations, groups and specialists in Eastern Africa. We collaborate to encourage our national governments in Europe and Africa, the European Union, the African Union and other regional and international bodies to explicitly recognise and support pastoralism and pastoralists in the drylands of Eastern Africa. As shown on the opening page of our website (www.celep.info), we form part of the international movement to support designation of an IYRP.

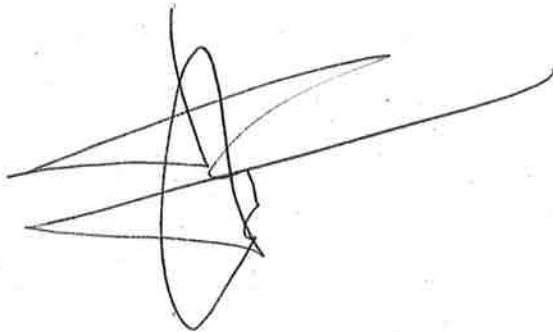
As the recent study on gaps in data and information on rangelands and pastoralism has shown (see <https://www.grida.no/publications/428>), there is need for much more knowledge and wider understanding about rangeland ecosystems and the pastoralist peoples who know how to use these systems to produce food and other products in an economically efficient and environmentally sustainable way. The rangelands and pastoralists are facing increasing challenges related to human population growth and migration, competition over land – including land acquisition for unsustainable land uses – and climate

change. Yet there are many opportunities and potentials in the rangelands and pastoral production systems for low-external-input food production, biodiversity conservation including wildlife, climate-change mitigation, and harmonious multistakeholder and multipurpose land use (including tourism and generation of renewable energy). In view of the fact that about half of the Earth's land surface consists of rangelands, it is high time that people around the globe gain a greater appreciation of the value of rangelands and pastoralism and especially of the capacity of pastoralists to use livestock mobility to deal with uncertainty and to maintain healthy rangelands.

An IYRP would draw attention to the value and potential of rangelands and pastoralists at national, regional and global level and would stimulate analyses and better insights into their importance for world food security and environmental health. We envisage that an IYRP will lead to policies and other framework conditions that can unleash the potentials of this large part of the globe and of the people who live there – and thus contribute to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CELEP therefore strongly supports the Government of Mongolia in its call for an IYRP and hope that the United Nations will proclaim this as soon as possible.

Koen Vantroos
Focal Point, CELEP

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.