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From:

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To the:

Secretariat of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) of the
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**Re: Letter of commitment to the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists
(IYRP) proposed by the Government of Mongolia**

We in the Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism (CELEP), through this letter wish to express our support and commitment to the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) proposed by the Government of Mongolia. As it is envisaged that a resolution in support of such a designation will be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at the end of September 2020. We therefore reiterate our support for the designation of an IYRP, expressed in our letter of 20 June 2019, and commit ourselves to actively shaping the 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 the IYRP.



As a coalition focusing exclusively on pastoralism, CELEP would take active part in implementing the IYRP. Already, CELEP is exploring opportunities to set up a global campaign on live-stock mobility, as this is a vital element of pastoralist livelihoods. In addition, we have been organising showings of a pastoralist film festival since 2018 (www.pastoralistfilmfestival.com). The IYRP would give a boost to this film festival, and CELEP would co-organise additional editions in Europe, Eastern Africa and beyond.

Among CELEP's current activities to promote pastoralism and rangelands is a series of webinars devoted to learning and advocacy on these topics. The bi-weekly webinars planned thus far until the end of 2020 will cover a series of issues ranging from participatory rangeland management to climate change and conflict resolution, all related to pastoralism. These webinars are a combined effort of CELEP members and partners, who will join either as speakers or participants, and will be open to all. They will be combined with policy analysis and publication of documents to increase awareness of the importance and value of pastoralism and rangelands.

These are just three examples of the type of activities that CELEP could contribute to the implementation of the IYRP and that would, at the same time, add significantly to CELEP's goals in terms of advocacy, learning and communication on pastoralism in Eastern Africa. An IYRP would increase our outreach in terms of awareness raising and also in terms of the "openness" of policymakers to our requests. 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 hopes that the United Nations will adopt the resolution designating the IYRP at the COAG at the end of September 2020. CELEP is committed to combining forces with like-minded organisations and coalitions in supporting the implementation of the IYRP.

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