

The Honourable Mendsaikhan Zagdjav
The Minister of Food, Agriculture and
Light Industry of Mongolia
Ulaanbaatar
MONGOLIA

Gabriel Schwaderer
Executive Director
Westendstraße 3
78315 Radolfzell
GERMANY

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Subject: Designation of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP)

Your Excellency,

We are glad to learn that the resolution proposal submitted by Government of Mongolia with other supporting countries in support of the designation of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) has been endorsed by the FAO Conference.

Local communities all over the Mediterranean basin still engage in many traditional cultural practices, which together with mobile pastoralism contribute to the ecological integrity and diversity of Mediterranean landscapes. However, the threats of modern era that these communities are facing today challenge their capability to maintain their traditional lifestyles. Pastoralism as a beneficial land use practice has shaped the landscapes of the world, and determined the food and cultures of communities for thousands of years. Abandonment of pastoralism can result in massive biodiversity loss, particularly in rangelands. This calls for urgent action.

In order to conserve such traditional cultural practices in the Mediterranean Basin, we have joined forces as 13 organisations at landscape and regional levels under the umbrella of the Alliance for Mediterranean Nature and Culture and with the support of the MAVA Foundation. Pastoralism being present in all the landscapes identified within this Alliance, there are many activities we conduct for

- Enhancing and demonstrating the links between pastoralism and biodiversity in Mediterranean cultural landscapes
- Assessing and demonstrating the benefits of pastoralism for the human wellbeing of communities living in the Mediterranean basin
- Ensuring economic and financial sustainability of pastoral economies
- Advocating policies that support pastoralism

As an organisation that works for halting the loss of such beneficial traditional land use practices and demonstrates their valuable role supporting both biodiversity conservation and welfare of communities, we firmly believe that the designation of the IYRP will be very critical towards addressing this urgent call.

Thus with this opportunity we would like express our commitment to continue our work for conserving pastoralism and rangeland biodiversity before and during the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

Yours sincerely,



Gabriel Schwaderer
Executive Director EuroNatur

