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**Global Diversity Foundation
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17 August 2020

**The Honourable Mendsaikhan Zagdjav
The Minister of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia
Ulaanbaatar MONGOLIA
ariunbayar@mofa.gov.mn**

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

Your Excellency,

We are glad to learn that the resolution proposal submitted by the Government of Mongolia with other supporting countries in support of the designation of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) is included in the agenda of the 27th session of Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in September-October 2020.

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 the modern era that these communities are facing today challenge their capability to maintain their traditional lifestyles. Abandonment of pastoralism as a beneficial land use practice that has shaped the landscapes of the world, its food, and its culture as a whole for thousands of years of interaction, can result in massive biodiversity loss, particularly in rangelands. This calls for urgent action.

In order to conserve such traditional cultural practices in Mediterranean Basin, we have joined forces with 12 organisations at the landscape and regional levels with the support of the MAVA Foundation. Pastoralism being present in all the landscapes identified within this partnership, 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
- Carrying out community-based research with pastoralists in the Moroccan High Atlas and beyond to identify challenges and develop actions that can support these communities

As an [organisation](#) that works for halting the loss of such beneficial traditional land-use practices in Morocco, North Africa and the broader Mediterranean, and that demonstrates their valuable role supporting both biodiversity conservation and welfare of communities, we firmly believe that the designation of IYRP will be very critical towards addressing this urgent call.

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

Yours sincerely,

Pommélien
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