



BSA 2018/2019

To

1 June 2019

Secretariat of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) of the
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Urgent need for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists

Greetings from SEVA, NGO, India. We understand that the Government of Mongolia requested FAO of United Nations Organisation for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

We believe that the designation of an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists would provide an good opportunity for the conservation of ecosystem, local breeds of livestock, grass species and help poor people who depend upon them for sustaining their livelihoods through rearing livestock and also practice seasonal migration at regional or local level.

In India we realized very late when we lost many grasslands by converting them into plantations like tea, Eucalyptus, Pinus species in mountain areas or converting common lands (*Revenue Pramboke or Oran lands*) in plains meant for animal grazing in the name of development or joint forest management which results in loss of agro-biodiversity, invasion of exotic species leading to depletion of ground water, climate change etc.

To site an example can be the population of Toda buffalo is less than 2000 is due to converting the grasslands into Eucalyptus plantation to in 1970s in Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India. We understand animal breed cannot be conserved without conservation of local ecosystem. Now our Government is considering a Bill for "Community based Conservation of Local Livestock breeds and Livestock Keepers Rights". Copy of draft bill can be obtained by sending e-mail: vivekseva@gmail.com

We SEVA and our NGO Network volunteers across the country involved in community based conservation of local breeds (www.sevango.in) therefore support for the request of the Government of Mongolia for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

Yours sincerely,

P. Vivekanandan,
Executive Director