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**The Honourable Mendsaikhan Zagdjav**  
**The Minister of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia**  
**Ulaanbaatar MONGOLIA**  
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**Subject: Support letter for 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 together with other countries in support of the designation of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) has been endorsed by the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the FAO Conference which was held from 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> of June, 2021.

Local communities all over the world basin still engage in many traditional cultural practices, which together with mobile pastoralism contribute to the ecological integrity and diversity of landscapes. In North Macedonia, semi-nomadic seasonal migration of livestock has historically been practiced and continues to be a source of economic revenue for rural livelihoods to this very day. However, the threats of 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 have 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, there are many activities we would like to work on such as:

- Enhancing and demonstrating the links between pastoralism and biodiversity in North Macedonia
- Assessing and demonstrating the benefits of pastoralism for the human wellbeing
- Developing and supporting new economic revenues, such as rural tourism, for shepherds that still practice traditional forms of pastoralism
- Advocating policies that support pastoralism
- Raising public awareness of the history and importance of pastoralism in North Macedonia for rural livelihoods and biodiversity

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