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Sharing knowledge, feeding the future

Director

Zaragoza, 31 July 2024

H.E. Mr Bolorchuluun Khayangaa

Minister of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry of Mongolia (MoFALI)
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Ref.: Letter of support to the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists- IYRP 2026

H.E. Mr Bolorchuluun Khayangaa,

I am honoured, as director of the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (CIHEAM Zaragoza), to express the support of our Institute to the UN International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP 2026).

CIHEAM Zaragoza is one of the four Institutes of the International Centre for Advanced Agronomic Mediterranean Studies (CIHEAM), together with Bari in Italy, Montpellier in France and Chania in Greece. Founded in 1969, CIHEAM Zaragoza offers quality and excellence in training and promoting international cooperation through research to overcome the challenges faced by Mediterranean agrifood systems.

Mediterranean region landscapes and culture have been shaped by pastoralism. Historically, this herding system has been crucial for the local economy, providing meat, milk, wool, and other products. It has also played a vital role in biodiversity conservation by maintaining open habitats and preventing forest fires. However, climate change, the reduction of available grazing lands due to degradation or competition with other uses, and the low economic profitability, threaten its viability. In addition, the general urbanisation of societies, the scarcity of services in rural areas, the adverse working conditions and a lack of generational succession exacerbate the issues that Mediterranean pastoralism is facing nowadays. To ensure its continuity, it is essential to implement supportive policies, to promote the cultural and environmental value of Mediterranean pastoralism and to encourage innovation on every aspect of pastoralism, from herding and grazing practices including the adaptation of new technologies, to market access and strong pastoral organisations.

Our Institute has been organising and promoting training, knowledge exchange and research activities, networks and projects related to Mediterranean sustainable agriculture and livestock production since its foundation 50 years ago. During this period, we have deployed considerable effort on thematic areas that are perfectly aligned with IYRP 2026, such as extensive and grazing livestock production systems, pastoralism, sheep and goat production,

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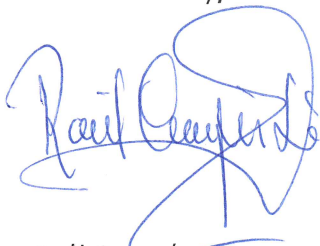
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Mediterranean pastures and rangelands management, or ecosystem services provided by drylands and Mediterranean agroecosystems.

CIHEAM Zaragoza is presently collaborating with the University of Aydin and the FAO in the organisation of the International Seminar "Agrosilvopastoral Futures: Bridging Tradition with Innovation in Mediterranean and Mountain Pastures"; this important Seminar will be held in Kusadasi, Turkey, on 9-11 April 2025. In 2025 we will finish our research project PASTINNOVA supported by the PRIMA programme, focusing on innovations on Mediterranean pastoralism, with a joint conference in the framework of the above mentioned Seminar. And, given the importance of IYRP 2026 and the momentum that Pastoralism and Rangelands are gathering, we expect to organise and participate in other training, capacity building and knowledge transfer activities related to pastoralism, rangelands and extensive livestock during 2026 and beyond, always in coherence with CIHEAM's mission of building more sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean region and with the spirit and objectives of the UN International Year on Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026.

Yours faithfully,



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CC:

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