



Brussels, 31/07/2024

SUPPORT LETTER

International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026

Dear organisers,

Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Belgium (VSF-B) wishes to reconfirm its support to the organisation of the International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) in 2026. As an organization committed to the well-being of livestock-dependant communities, we recognize the crucial role these communities play in the conservation and sustainable management of rangelands. Our work spans across ten African countries — Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, and Uganda — where we develop animal health care activities in partnership with the local population to enhance their livelihoods and resilience.

In support of the IYRP, VSF-B plans to undertake a comprehensive set of activities both within Belgium and in the African countries where we are active. Our goal is to highlight the significant contributions of pastoralists to sustainable rangeland management and biodiversity conservation and to deepen the understanding of how diverse peoples across the world gain their livelihoods from extensive livestock production. One of our key initiatives includes our continued support to the 'Perspectives on Pastoralism Film Festival' by CELEP (www.pastoralistfilmfestival.com). We are currently involved in the selection process for the 'Conservation and Ecosystem Services' theme of the festival's third edition, which will launch in September 2024. Screenings of these films will continue in 2025 and throughout the IYRP in 2026, reaching audiences in Belgium and around the world.

Beyond the film festival, VSF-B will engage in various activities to support the IYRP objectives. These include guest lectures at Belgian universities on pastoralism, the production of own video materials and short documentaries on pastoralism, and press coverage, in Belgium and the African countries where we are active. We are committed to aligning our communications with the monthly themes identified in the IYRP agenda, ensuring that our efforts contribute meaningfully to raising awareness and promoting the sustainable practices of pastoralist communities.

We believe that the IYRP presents an invaluable opportunity to shed light on the challenges faced by pastoralists and to showcase successful strategies for sustainable rangeland management. VSF-B is eager to share its experiences and collaborate with partners globally to advance the goals of the IYRP.

Sincerely,

Joep van Mierlo
General Director

Vétérinaires
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