

BUILDING PASTORALISTS' RESILIENCE: STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS IN TUNISIA. Mounir Louhaichi^{*1}, Jutta Werner², Slim Slim³, Slim Jarradi⁴; ¹International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Amman, Jordan, ²International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, Tunis, Tunisia, ³School of Higher Education in Agriculture of Mateur, University of Carthage, Mateur, Tunisia, ⁴Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Tunis, Tunisia

ABSTRACT

Rangeland resources are among the most important – and almost certainly the most neglected – agro ecosystem component in dry areas. They are the largest land-use category, home to the poorest segment of the population, and crucial for millions of small-scale livestock producers. For many decades, these pastoral areas have been continuously deteriorating, with reductions recorded from 6.1 million hectares in 2005 to 5.5 million hectares in 2012. Managing rangelands sustainably presents a complex challenge for communities that depend on rangelands for their livelihoods, and for local authorities and policymakers who regulate land use. The current civil legislation in Tunisia does not effectively support the needs of the common rangelands. In fact, most rangelands (67 %) are not covered by the current forestry code. In order to tackle the fragile and extremely complex processes of policy change related to common rangelands, a participatory approach involving all concerned stakeholders from pastoralists, local and government authorities to non-governmental organizations and marginal groups was employed to update the current forestry code in Tunisia. The objective is to come up with an updated forestry code that ensure that the management of rangelands through local communities is formalized, regulated and protected by law, and that the roles of all stakeholders are clarified. To meet this objective a series of local and national workshops have been organized where all concerned actors are actively involved. This process may take up to 2 years before a new legislation approved by the general assembly is in place. The new pastoral code will ensure that the entire Tunisian nation benefits by reducing the embedded costs caused by rangeland degradation and through an enhanced negotiation culture related to common natural resources.