



UNCCD COP 16: Global actions for sustainable rangelands and pastoralism to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality

A POLICY BRIEF, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNCCD CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP)

Mounir Louhaichi

On behalf of the IYRP Rangelands & Land Degradation



INITIATIVE ON Livestock and Climate

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Prepared by the IYRP Rangelands & Land Degradation Neutrality Working Group

March 2024



SDG 15.3: Land Degradation Neutrality

The UNCCD defines land degradation neutrality as **"a state whereby the amount and quality of resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security remains stable or increases."**

Over 100 countries have set LDN targets, to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation at scale, with one billion hectares promised to be restored through quantitative commitments under the Rio Conventions and the Bonn Challenge.



1. Stop indiscriminate conversion of rangelands

- Continued conversion of rangelands to croplands, tree plantations, forests, mining areas, land for generating renewable energy, infrastructure and human settlements is hurting rangeland productivity, ecosystem services and rangelands' potential role in mitigating climate change.
- Halt indiscriminate rangeland conversion practices until appropriate legislation and monitoring efforts are put into effect.





2. Recognize the importance of pastoral mobility

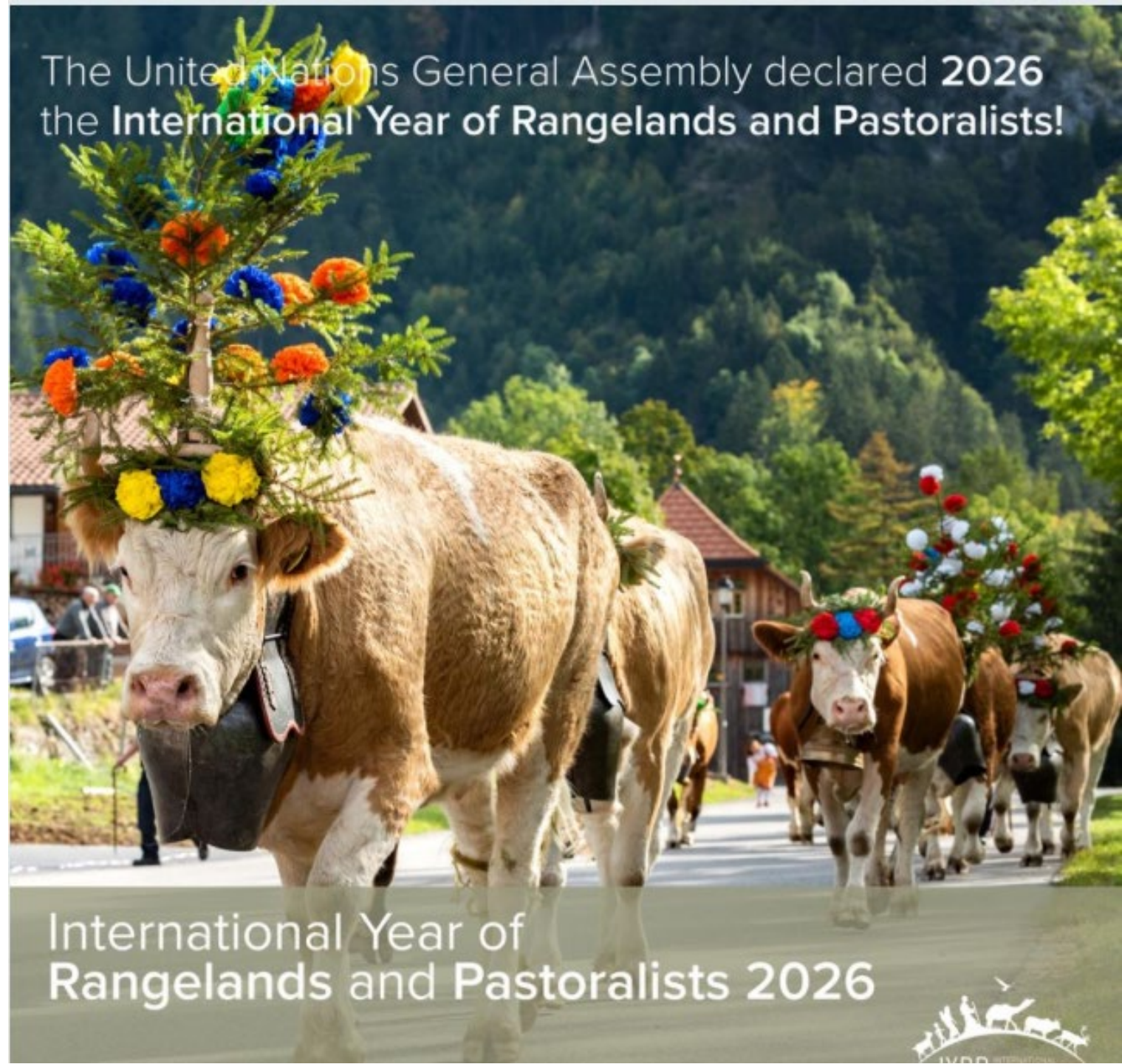
Recognize the importance of pastoral mobility as a **nature-based solution** for sustainably managing and restoring rangeland health.

Provide flexible and secure land-tenure systems, well-planned and provisioned animal corridors, and waterpoints for transhumance systems.

3. Innovate and implement beneficial economic policies & technologies

Re-assess economic policies that harm rangelands and pastoralists. Replace subsidies for supplemental feed that lead to rangeland degradation with economic alternatives, such as support for ecotourism and environmental services, livestock insurance and mobile abattoirs.

Set up legal frameworks for organic certification of pastoral products (STELARR project “value chains”).



4. Promote integrated, multifunctional land use

Employ sustainable rangeland management practices and policies that seek integrated objectives, such as **silvopastoralism** and other agroforestry schemes, wildlife-livestock integration and **eco-tourism** to achieve multiple sustainability benefits through **multifunctional land use**.

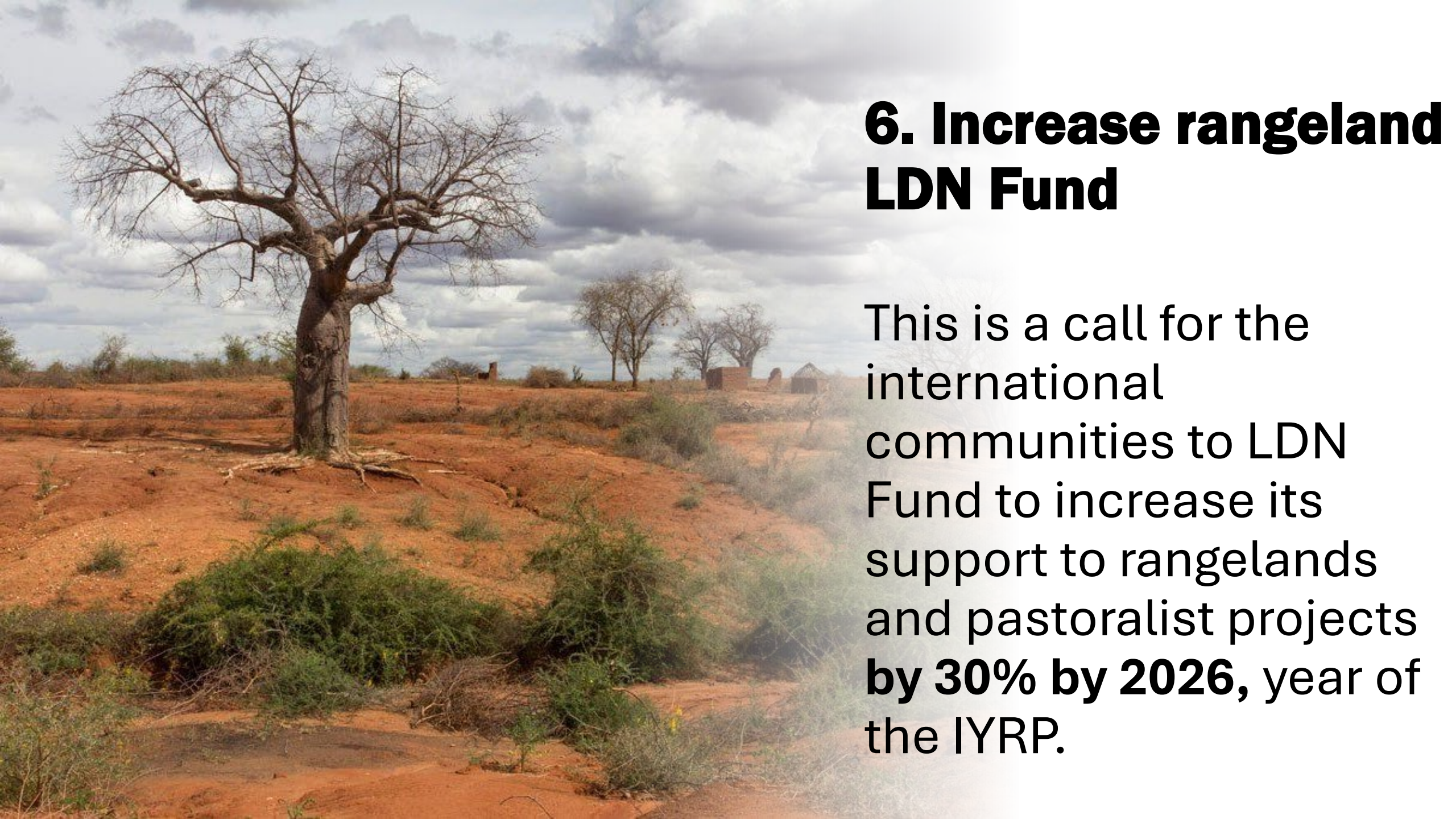
International Year of Rangelands
Silvopastoralists 2026



A group of people, including men and women, are sitting in a field of tall grass, engaged in a discussion. The women are wearing colorful saris, and the men are wearing shirts. The background shows a vast, open landscape with rolling hills and a clear sky.

5. Strengthen governance & equity

- Incorporate pastoralists in all decision-making on the use and management of rangelands
- Ensure they have well-defined legal and customary tenure and access rights.
- Support participatory governance practices that recognize pastoralists are at the heart of rangeland stewardship.
- Build on traditional pastoralist knowledge and promote equity by facilitating the participation of marginalized pastoralist groups such as women, youth, elders and indigenous peoples.



6. Increase rangeland LDN Fund

This is a call for the international communities to LDN Fund to increase its support to rangelands and pastoralist projects **by 30% by 2026**, year of the IYRP.



Figure 1: Community members in Paka, Baringo County participating in bush thinning activities and fencing short resting trial areas.

Photo: Joshua Okoth, RECONCILE

7. Commit LDN targets to rangelands and pastoralism

Include rangeland restoration and sustainable pastoralism in UNCCD LDN targets



8. Earmark knowledge & capacity building

- Reduce significant rangeland and pastoralist knowledge gaps through participatory research and impact assessments; co-creation of knowledge; monitoring, evaluation and modeling.
- Incorporate this knowledge in strategic planning to help determine and verify global statistics, to assess the impacts of different land management practices; and to identify, map and monitor changes in land use and management practices.
- Ensure that the *LDN Fund earmarks 25% of its funding for knowledge sharing, awareness raising, evidence-based decision-support work and capacity building of local pastoralist land users and decision-makers.*

Thank you for your attention



The scientific evidence on which this policy brief is based originates from the working paper 'Global actions for sustainable rangelands and pastoralism to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality – A science-to-policy review, with recommendations for the UNCCD Conference of the Parties', prepared from 2022-2023 by the IYRP Rangelands & Land Degradation Neutrality Working Group, namely: Mounir Louhaichi (ICARDA), Bora Masumbuko (IUCN), Maryam Niamir-Fuller (IYRP ISG), Pedro M. Herrera (Entretantos), Hanspeter Liniger and Rima Mekdaschi-Studer (WOCAT). In collaboration with: Barbara Bendandi (WWF), Cedilla Turin (IYRP ISG), Chris Magero (IUCN), Eric Chavez (FAO), Fidaa Haddad (FAO), Hossein Badripour (FRWO Iran), Jean-Daniel Cesaro (CIRAD), Nahid Naghizadeh (CENESTA), Nicole Harari (WOCAT), and Tezera Getahun (Pastoral Forum Ethiopia).

Peer reviewers: Fiona Flintan (ILRI), Jonathan Davies (BBNP), and P. Vivekanandan (SEVA) members of the IYRP Global Coordinating Group. Main editor: Ann Waters-Bayer (Agrecol/CELEP). Soon to be published on: <https://iyrp.info/working-groups>

Suggested citation: IYRP Rangelands & Land Degradation Neutrality Working Group. 2024. Global actions for sustainable rangelands and pastoralism to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) – A policy brief, with recommendations for the UNCCD Conference of the Parties. IYRP 2026.

For more information contact: iyrp2026@gmail.com

Mounir Louhaichi

On behalf of the IYRP WG - LDN

This Policy Brief was prepared and co-published by: