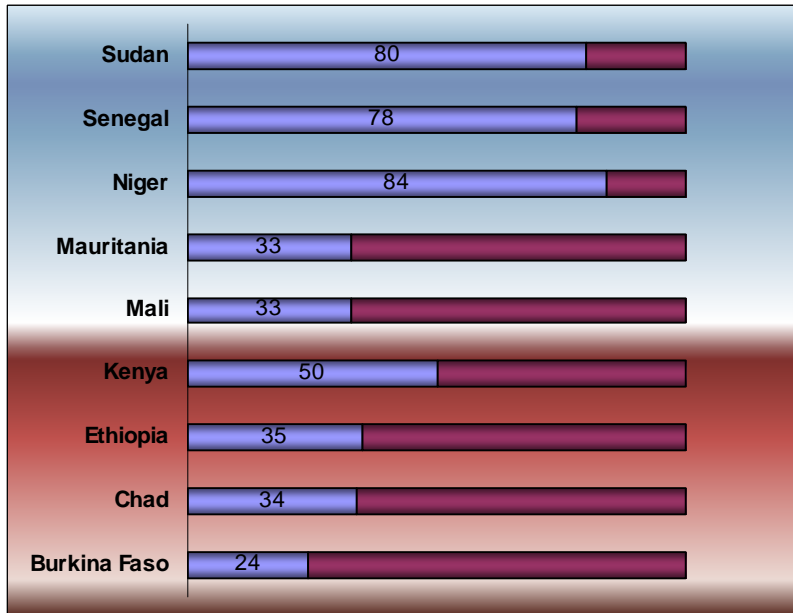




**The (forgotten) value of pastoralism**

Pastoralism is a livelihood system based on extensive livestock keeping practised in drylands in which seasonal livestock mobility is a key strategy used. Pastoralism plays a critical role in the economic prosperity of Africa’s arid/dry lands. Drylands make up 43% of Africa’s inhabited surface and are home to 268 million people. Across East and West Africa, an estimated 200 million (agro-)pastoralists support their families, their communities and a massive meat, skins and hides industry based on animals that are fed primarily on natural pasture.

Crucial in their way of production is the seasonal livestock mobility, which means (the possibility) to move their livestock according to environmental conditions to where forage and water for the herds is available. Pastoralists face increasing challenges because of constraints to moving the herds, enforced settlement, population growth, land grabbing, political marginalisation, new borders between and within countries and – last but not least – climate changes. Nevertheless, where other livelihood production systems are failing in the face of global climate change, pastoralism is still generating substantial national and regional economic benefits. The underneath table for example illustrates the estimated contribution of pastoralism to the agricultural GDP in a range of African countries (*Global review of the economics of pastoralism*; Richard Hatfield and Jonathan Davies; IUCN/WISP, 2006).



New scientific insights into pastoralism, new policies and innovative approaches to supporting pastoralism – including herd mobility – are beginning to take root in many parts of dryland Africa. One major example is the African Union’s groundbreaking “Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa”, which was approved early this year.

**What can the EU do?**

The need for the EU to develop a forward-thinking pastoral policy is not only important in light of further supporting the economic contributions of pastoralism, but all the more important in view of

global climate change and the adaptation and mitigation role that extensive livestock production in the African rangelands can play. Currently, in the EU and its member states' policies, there is no **systematic attention to pastoralism** as a motor of economic development, regional integration and regional trade. Almost all policies pay some form of attention to human rights, development, climate change, rural development, agriculture, food security and regional cooperation, but pastoralists have not been consistently and directly targeted, even though they are at the crossings of these policies.

EU policies are needed to recognise pastoralists (and pastoralism) as **significant economic players**, explore their comparative advantages, reinforce their direct and indirect contributions to national and regional economic development and create or protect the conditions that enable them to be commercial actors (investment in special production niches, cross border trade regulations, marketing support etc) – and this particularly in the drylands of Africa under conditions of evolving market opportunities through increasing (urban) demand for animal products such as meat.

Therefore, CELEP recommends the EU to:

- ❖ Develop a long-term vision and strategy on strengthening the economic development of the arid and semi-arid areas in the EU-Africa cooperation, in the framework of the programmes for regional cross border trade, food security, climate change, the national indicative programmes and other relevant EU policies for international cooperation. Appropriate support to pastoralism should be a key element in such a strategy;
- ❖ Underline the importance to bring back investments in rural development and food production to the future agenda of the EU-Africa cooperation, particularly in the dry lands. This also in relation to the mitigation of the effects of climate change and drought. The EU Rural Development Policy does mention pastoralists but only as vulnerable people, while it should perceive them as significant economic actors and contributors, in need of appropriate support;
- ❖ In view of the EU Land Guidelines' acknowledgement of the importance of indigenous peoples' land rights and the recommendation for new tenure legislation that recognises pastoralists' rights (including mobility of livestock within and between countries), offer assistance towards this end.
- ❖ In the drylands: advise governments in African countries and international donors to enhance the focus on the development of infrastructure, market access and tailor made access to public services, in particular, to health and education.
- ❖ The 'Tool for EC Cooperation with Indigenous Peoples in ACP countries' recommends involving pastoralists in the design and review of the (EU) Country Strategy Papers. Pastoralists' (economic) rights should be part of Art. 8 political dialogues with African countries.

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