



# A Background Reader on Pastoralism



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## About CELEP

CELEP (Coalition of European Lobbies on Eastern African Pastoralism) is an informal policy-influencing coalition of European organisations, groups and experts working in partnership with pastoralist organisations, groups and experts in Eastern Africa. CELEP seeks to influence policymaking in Europe to explicitly recognise and support pastoralism (and the people who practise pastoralism: pastoralists) in the drylands of Eastern Africa. The members of the Coalition work together to lobby their national governments, European Union (EU) bodies as well as other policy-formulating bodies/agencies in Europe (e.g. the European Headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva and the FAO in Rome). Currently, CELEP is composed of 25 European member organisations and 7 Eastern African partner organisations. This close collaboration with pastoralist networks, experts, partners and organisations working in Eastern Africa is pivotal, since they provide grassroots information and are able to formulate the problems/needs of pastoralists. The Eastern African partner organisations lobby their own governments, the African Union (AU) and other regional African bodies.

### CELEP focuses on four priorities:

1. Recognition of the role of pastoralism and pastoralists. Pastoralism should be recognised as a sustainable viable livelihood system that positively contributes to national/regional economies, food security, employment and sustainable management of natural resources;
2. Mobility as a crucial condition for sustainable pastoralism and for community security in (cross-border) conflict areas;
3. Access to and management of key natural resources, an aspect that among others will contribute to community security in (cross-border) conflict areas;
4. Climate change: the effects of climate change on pastoralism/ists and the (positive) contributions of pastoralism/ists on climate change.

### European Members

ACORD  
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## 1. About Pastoralism

Pastoral systems support the livelihoods of millions of people living in harsh environments where alternative land use systems are highly risky or simply not possible. Livestock reared in pastoral systems also contribute significantly to national and regional economies and provide important environmental services such as carbon sequestration, fire prevention, and biodiversity conservation. Extensive pastoral production is practised on 25% of the global land area, from the drylands of Africa (66% of the total



continent land area) and the Arabian Peninsula, to the highlands of Asia and Latin America. It provides 10% of the world's meat production, and supports some 200 million pastoral households who raise nearly 1 billion head of camel, cattle and smaller livestock, about a third of which are found in sub-Saharan Africa, where it accounts for about 20% of national GDPs. Apart from African regions, an increased and renewed interest in pastoral production systems is reported in the Mediterranean, western and central Asian regions. With a few notable exceptions (e.g. Somalia and Mongolia), pastoralists are usually a minority in their countries occupying marginal land along national borders, and ruled by a political elite often representing an agricultural majority who live in higher rainfall zones.

Other important economic benefits of pastoral livestock include: carbon sequestration, maintenance of biodiversity, dairy and meat production and consumption, skins and fibers, use of animals for transport and ploughing, use of manure as fertilizer

and fuel, use of livestock as insurance, inputs to tourism. Pastoral areas also host a large variety of wildlife, often not in conflict with domestic animals, offering important source of livelihoods to pastoral communities in the form of tourism and other non-consumptive use of wild animals.

## 2. Significant contribution of pastoralism to economic growth

Statistics from African Union's policy framework for pastoralism show that there are 268 million pastoralists. They live and move on 43 % of Africa's land mass and contribute between 10 to 44 % of the GDP in the countries that they live in. Pastoralism has immense potential for reducing poverty, generating economic growth, managing the environment, promoting sustainable development, and building climate resilience. A study by IIED shows that pastoralists, who feed their animals solely on natural dryland pastures, can achieve high rates of productivity than on modern ranches built on the Western model.

In Western Africa, the contribution of the livestock sector to agricultural GDP, ranges from 5 % in Cote d'Ivoire to 44 % in Mali and provides employment for about 50 % of the economically active population. Livestock is an important factor of integration in the region as cattle, sheep and goats are major items exported from land-locked Sahelian countries to humid and sub-humid coastal countries. However, the regional supply of meat and dairy products is far lower than demand, resulting in a large net importation livestock products; this trend is expected to increase in future. In Central Africa, the contribution of livestock to the GDP in these countries is estimated at 27 % in Chad, 13 % in Cameroon and 9 % in Central African Republic. Intra-regional trade in livestock and livestock products is a feature of this region, with these three countries having the opportunity to export to the Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Sao Tome and Principe. The multipurpose socioeconomic and cultural features of pastoralism are better exploited in East Africa. Sudan and Somalia are major livestock exporters to the Gulf States, Ethiopia has a substantial informal export trade through Somalia, and a growing formal export trade to the Gulf States, Egypt, Sudan

and other countries. Livestock export facilities along the northern Somali coast and Djibouti continue to grow, often with private sector investment. Eastern Africa is also characterized by exploitation of pastoral areas for wildlife conservation and tourism, especially in Kenya and Tanzania, although the extent to which revenues benefit pastoralists is unclear. In Sudan, the pastoral-dominated livestock sector contributes 80 % of the agricultural GDP. In Ethiopia the livestock-dependant leather industry is the second largest source of foreign currency after coffee. In Uganda, pastoralist and small livestock producers contribute the fourth largest share of foreign currency earnings. In Southern Africa, South Africa pastoralism account for about 60 % of the national cattle herd, where the livestock sector, including pastoralism, is an important meat export market for neighbouring Namibia. In Namibia pastoral-dominated livestock sector contributes 3 % of GDP and 28 % of the agricultural GDP. Namibian pastoralists hold 80 % of the national cattle herd, which contribute about one-third of income in traditional households.

### 3. Key challenges for pastoralists

The mix of a growing population, shrinking and fragmentation of land and climate change are likely to provoke and aggravate conflict over resource access, control and utilisation. Despite considerable progress towards supportive policies, pastoralists continue to suffer from isolation, political marginalization and lack of public services in many African countries. Policies focused on ‘modernising’ the livestock sector, sedentarising pastoralists and privatising land tenure have not been successful. An integrated

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development approach would be more effective in supporting livelihood systems and enabling pastoralists to recover and maintain their inherent resilience and self-reliance.

**Food price increases and financial crises:** Food price increases impacted on pastoralists because they need to buy a substantial proportion of their food needs in the form of cereals. For some poorer pastoralists, up to 85 % of food needs are acquired through direct purchase so food price increases have a direct impact on food security. In some cases, increase in grain prices may trigger parallel increase of values of animal products. In response to the food price crisis, cases of large scale land acquisitions in pastoral zones have been reported in relation to this trend, thereby adding another cause of land loss to problems faced by pastoralists.

**Financial and insurance services:** Although pastoralists can possess substantial financial capital in the form of livestock, often the banking systems in Africa do not classify livestock as insurable, and therefore, pastoralists are excluded from formal credit systems. In some countries there are progressive, alternative credit systems developed by private or government-owned banks that are tailored to the pastoral context.



The causes of **conflict** include poor governance, cultural norms among some pastoral groups such as livestock raiding, or the forced abduction of children from other groups. However, there are also numerous examples of peaceful co-existence and mutually beneficial economic exchanges.

**Women** traditionally play an important role in livestock rearing, processing milk, selling dairy products and maintaining households. Yet, they do not own valuable property, are the least educated, and are excluded from decision making processes and resource management and allocation.

**Protecting pastoral livestock assets:** it is further recognized that in some countries, processes of government decentralization provide opportunities for supporting locally-appropriate land tenure arrangements. However, national legislation also needs to protect pastoral rangelands from commercial ventures in pastoral land. There is a need to acknowledge the legitimate rights of pastoralists to pastoral lands by granting them communal land ownership on a priority basis as well as adequate compensation in case of expropriation of their communal pastoral land for bio-energy production, development of oil and mineral deposits, and construction of infrastructures.

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**Market access:** is a key challenge for pastoralists. The many goods they produce and the way they are marketed depends on a number of factors including distance to markets, types of markets competition.

**Animal health:** Poor animal health services coupled with lack of animal health certification and the sporadic outbreak of economically important diseases (RVF, FMD etc.) remain major constraints for

the marketing of livestock and meat from the Horn of Africa in general. The status of the community-based animal health workers (CAHWs) as main providers of animal health services is not fully recognized by the Departments of veterinary services.

#### 4. New opportunities

Pastoralism is a whole way of life, which utilizes marginal agro-ecological areas while also providing important environmental services – land management, biodiversity, carbon sequestration etc . It is a way of producing nutritious food and animal proteins in harsh, arid environment, thus representing a highly skilled natural resource management system. It will be increasingly important to produce such animal proteins which are increasingly on demand by society (the livestock revolution paradigm), and to produce them in more sustainable ways – which is not the case for other livestock systems with higher impacts on the environment (deforestation, pollution, GHG) as well as, for some, on public health.



There is a potential for expanding **trade in livestock** at regional and global levels as a result of increasing demand for animal proteins all over the world. Standards on food safety and disease control tend to be outweighed by issues of demand and price, with trade proceeding on the basis of bilateral arrangements between countries. There are considerable opportunities for African pastoral producers to export livestock or meat, to the Middle East and other regions. Similarly, urbanization within Africa affords opportunities for greater domestic and regional trade as there is a growing domestic market for meat and milk which is an important opportunity for pastoral producers.

New technologies such as mobile phones as well as improvements in roads are opening up pastoral areas.

Another adaptation strategy regarding pastoralism relates to added value, and where economically viable, the need to retain value locally through more processing of livestock products. There are also new emerging markets for pastoral products such as ethical products, biological products, animal welfare standards, etc

**New technologies** such as mobile phones as well as improvements in roads are opening up pastoral areas. Many pastoralists have also been quick to take advantage of new technology, particularly mobile phones. The growing systems around remittances and migrations are also assisted by mobile phone communication. Increasingly, the private sector is exploring options for delivery financial services, including banking, via mobile phones, with systems already in place in some countries.

**Climate change adaptation and mitigation:** Some experts argue that pastoralists will be among the first groups to lose their livelihoods, as rangelands and water points dry up. Others insist that pastoralists are the best equipped to adapt to climate change, since their livelihood strategies are honed to respond to scarce and variable natural resources, and to cope with uncertain agro-ecological conditions. Pastoralists selectively breed their livestock to emphasize traits such as drought resistance and milk production. They also altered the species composition of their herds in the face of rainfall and other trends, such as market

**The environmental services of pastoralism.** Pastoralists have an intimate and rich knowledge of complex ecosystem dynamics making them one of the best detectors of environmental change. Although the predominant discourse is usually the degradation caused by pastoralists, they provide many environmental services. The challenge in understanding these closely interrelated services—for example, livestock grazing can contribute to

maintaining healthy vegetation, which captures carbon, reduces erosion, maintains soils and facilitates water holding capacity.

**Innovations.** Alongside formal scientific and technological advancements, pastoralists are developing and testing new knowledge and practices to take advantage of emerging opportunities to participate in national and regional markets such as the example of Northern Kenya pastoralists and Ethiopian camel markets, market milk in Kenya or innovations to increase access to high value fodder in Kenya.

**To Increase the access to high value Innovations:** e.g. Ethiopian camel markets, market milk in Kenya or fodder in Kenya.

## 5. Continental and regional policy processes supportive for pastoralists

### 5.1. Regional policy processes in Eastern Africa

The commitment to the African Union Policy Framework for Pastoralism has two objectives: (1) secure and protect the lives, livelihoods and rights of pastoral peoples and ensure continent-wide commitment to political, social and economic development of pastoral communities and pastoral areas; (2) reinforce the contribution of pastoral livestock to national, regional and continent-wide





economies.

In COMESA –Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa- a draft Policy Framework for Food Security in Pastoralist Areas was released in late 2009, under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar 3. CAADP is in fact a process under the guidance of the African Union and forms the general framework for structuring national development policies on agriculture and livestock. According to the CAADP guidelines countries’ national and regional policies must incorporate a more comprehensive understanding of the numerous values of drylands and pastoralism, looking beyond commercial production. In IGAD – Intergovernmental Authority on Development- a Regional Policy Framework on Animal Health was finalized in late 2009 which although not directly focused on pastoralism, was very relevant to the large pastoralist areas of IGAD Member States.

## 5.2. EU policies regarding pastoralism in Eastern Africa

On the whole, the EU has a fairly positive evaluation of pastoralism in Eastern Africa and through its legislation, programmes and projects seems to be committed towards its development. In the “Agenda for Change”. For instance one of the primary goals of the EU development aid mentioned is to reduce development countries vulnerability to global shocks such as climate change and resources degradation and to improve their resilience (European Commission

2011b;4) In order to achieve this goal, EU development policy supports those sectors that have a strong multiplier impact on development countries’ economies and contribute to environmental protection, climate change prevention and adaptation, notably sustainable agriculture and energy (European Commission 2011b;8) Therefore in agriculture, the EU aims to strengthen sustainable initiatives, such as the protection of ecosystem services and prioritise local practices by focusing on smallholder agriculture and rural livelihoods. Though no explicitly mentioned, it is to be assumed that pastoralism is included in this reference to smallholder agriculture.

Several resolutions of the European Parliament – pushed forward by CELEP- and communications of the European Commission are also considered to be clear indicators for the EU’s appreciation for pastoralism as a whole and in Eastern Africa in particular. Though not necessarily binding; parliamentary resolutions provide a much needed space to raise awareness on the importance of pastoralism in the African arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs). One of the most recent resolutions regarding pastoralism was adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) in 2013. The resolution evolves around the social and environmental impact of pastoralism in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and was adopted after a JPA meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It urges ACP and local authorities to modify their national, regional and local policies according to the AU Framework on Pastoralism, with the involvement of pastoral communities, and calls upon the EU to acknowledge pastoralism’s value and support ACP countries in their implementation of the AU Framework (ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly 2013:1-4). In March 2014, the Commission published a follow-up note to this resolution, in which it affirmed its support for the AU framework for pastoralism and elaborated on the implementation strategies. Another important resolution of the European Parliament, adopted in March 2015, strongly condemns issues of land grabbing in Tanzania. Explicit references to pastoralism are included in the resolution: “(...) whereas pastoral communities, which represent about 10 per cent of the population, are in particular strongly affected by the negative consequences of land grabbing in Tanzania; whereas pastoralists, including the Maasai people, continue

to face a massive loss of their land due to the selling out of land without adequate knowledge about the legal and practical consequences, corrupt and illegal allocation of land to foreigners, and the classification of land as trust land, reserve and national park by the authorities; whereas some pastoral communities have reportedly been victims of killing, displacement, detention, the destruction of their villages, and the confiscation of livestock related to land grabbing operations (...)". References to pastoralism in communications of the European Commission are included in recent communications on food security (2011), resilience (2012) and nutrition (2013).

Pastoralism is also included in the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) – the EU's main instrument for providing development aid to ACP countries and to overseas countries and territories (OCTs) – and in the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). In the latter case, explicit references are made to pastoralism under the global goods and challenges programme: "recognising the decisive role of agriculture and livestock-keeping in climate change policies by promoting smallholder agriculture and livestock farming as autonomous adaptation and mitigation strategies in the South due to their sustainable use of natural resources such as water and pasture". The EDF is made operational through National Indicative Programmes (NIP), which define the focus of the development aid under the EDF for each recipient country. In the NIPs of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, pastoralism is either directly or indirectly mentioned in one of the three focal sectors that were identified. In the case of Uganda, pastoralists are explicitly mentioned in the first objective under the sector "Food Security and Agriculture" to promote development and resilience as an incentive for stability in the fragile regions of Northern Uganda and Karamoja. Next to national programmes, the EU has also funded cross-border programmes concerning pastoralism in Eastern Africa such as the "Regional Livestock Initiative in Support of Vulnerable Pastoralists and Agro-Pastoralists in the Horn of

Africa" (RISPA) and the "Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience" (SHARE) programmes. These programmes are also clear indications of the EU's commitment to support pastoralism in Eastern Africa.



Although the EU has a positive evaluation of pastoralism in East Africa, an overall pastoralist' policy within the EU development cooperation seems to be lacking. The European Commission has been working for years now on a technical note on pastoralism, which should become a reference document for the Commission's policies regarding pastoralism. Through its' advocacy work, CELEP will continue to push forward the publication of this important document.

Several resolutions of the European Parliament – pushed forward by CELEP- and communications of the European Commission are also considered.

## 6. Ways Forward

The diversity of pastoralist groups needs to be recognized: not all pastoralists are at the same level of vulnerability. Some are well-off with stable livelihoods. Others, once stable in pastoral production, today find themselves in danger of losing their livelihoods. Still others have fallen out of the pastoral system altogether, own no livestock or land and live in shanties with no access to social amenities,



depending almost entirely on relief agencies. Current policy and practice must accommodate these different categories of pastoralists and their particular needs. There is a need for increased political representation of pastoralists in the decision-making processes and the recognition of the role of traditional institutions. Favorable land tenure policy and legislation as well as land use planning are key tools to improve pastoralists' livelihoods especially in the context of large land acquisition trends. Further support is needed in primary veterinary care in pastoral areas, especially systems which link community-based animal health workers to para-veterinarians and veterinary professionals and the involvement of the private sector, under the regulation and supervision of national veterinary services.

More needs to be done as to capture the benefits at national and regional level of the environmental services that pastoralism provides. Further research includes a better understanding of the complex relationship between livestock and climate change and the importance of the livestock sector to the adaptation strategies of rural poor people in Africa ; the role of pastoral rangelands in carbon sequestration and the possibilities for carbon trading. The development of livestock value chains represent an economic potential but requires improved market access, reducing livestock trade barriers and non-tariff barriers, enhancing market information systems, SPS compliance and financing mechanisms. Support extension services that responds to the needs and interests of pastoralists, and which build upon their extensive indigenous knowledge are needed. There is need to invest in value addition at local level, branding of pastoral products, utilization of livestock products in urban and peri-urban areas. Another major challenge is the limited availability of alternative sources of livelihoods. In order to provide food security and decent living to an increasing number of people, pastoral livelihoods must be on one hand 1) strengthened (access to land, mobility, access to markets – increasingly important to exchange livestock commodities with other staple at favorable caloric terms of trade), while also 2) opportunities should be set to diversify such livelihoods, through adequate investments in human resources (i.e. currently basic services are lowest in pastoral areas) – access to information, education, vocational training, alternative skills, etc.... - so

that parts of pastoral populations get the properly-informed opportunity to choose different patterns, as it is the case for rural livelihoods in general.

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