

Towards a new EU–Africa Strategy: CELEP Position Paper

We, the Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism (CELEP), regard pastoralism as a rational and economically viable land-use system able to generate significant returns in the dryland areas of Eastern Africa. According to the AU Policy Framework on Pastoralism, *the pastoralist population in Africa is estimated at 268 million (over a quarter of the total population), living on about 43% of the continent's total land mass*¹. Pastoralism contributes significantly to the (Eastern) African economies. In Kenya, for instance, the pastoralist sector has an overall estimated value of €750 million and an annual marketed value of €50–80 million. In Uganda, the livestock sector contributes 7.5% to the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 17% to agricultural GDP. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, even in conflict-affected countries like South Sudan, livestock contribution to GDP is as high as 60%, while in Somalia agricultural contribution to GDP is also 60%². Pastoralism also provides employment as well as subsistence and livelihood values for up to 20 million people in Eastern Africa. In Kenya, for instance, pastoralism provides 90% of the employment opportunities and 95% of the family income in the arid and semi-arid lands, and its subsistence and livelihood values are estimated to be the equivalent of €224 million³. Pastoralism provides milk and meat and therefore improves food security and nutrition. It is estimated that pastoralists contribute about 90% of the meat consumed in East Africa and close to 60% of the meat and milk products consumed in West Africa

In addition, crop farming is a key beneficiary of pastoralism, which helps raise crop productivity by providing manure, animals for draught and transport, seasonal labour and technical knowledge for the rising number of farmers now investing in livestock. Animal draught power in Ethiopia, for instance, is estimated to be worth about €870 million and manure production about €430 million⁴. In addition to its socio-economic values, pastoralism also has an important environmental value. Grazing animals eat dead grass and other biomass at the dry season's end, paving the way for new growth in the rains and preventing bushfires and the spread of unpalatable grasses and shrubs. Grazing livestock disperse plant seeds that stick to the animals' bodies, and aid the germination of other seeds by eating and excreting them. Herds break up hard soil crusts, allowing water to filter through and seeds to sprout. In addition, pastoralists are in a better position to accommodate climate change than are livestock keepers tied to sedentary land uses. Through mobility and the maintenance of reciprocal and negotiated forms of access to natural resources, pastoralists are able to exploit increasing variability in the condition of natural resources.

For these reasons, we call upon the EU to explicitly recognise the value of pastoralism and pastoralists in its policies regarding Africa and in particular in its development and humanitarian policies (which require a specific approach to recognise pastoral mobility), security/defence and trade policies (through the EU's obligation regarding policy coherence for development).

Regarding the EU–Africa strategy in particular, CELEP would like to stress the following points from the perspective of pastoralism⁵:

¹ AU-ibar.org/component/jdownloads/viewdownload/117-fish/3069-doc-20171024-special-edition-bahpa-march-2018-fish-trade-fr

² https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/new_fringe_pastoralism_eng1.pdf

³ CELEP (2017) *Recognising the role and value of pastoralism and pastoralists*. Available at <http://www.celep.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Policybrief-CELEP-May-2017-Value-of-pastoralism.pdf>

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ These remarks should be considered as complementary to the remarks already put forward by CONCORD in their joint effort to coordinate CSO reactions on the EU's new Comprehensive Strategy for Africa <https://concordeurope.org/blog/2020/03/10/joint-statement-by-civil-society-groups-on-the-eus-new-comprehensive-strategy-for-africa/>.

1. The strategy as a whole gives very little attention to issues such as **hunger, food insecurity and nutrition**, although this is mentioned under Proposed Action 1: *“maximize the benefits of the green transition and minimize threats to the environment in full compliance with the Paris Agreement”*. CELEP underlines that, in Africa, according to the United Nations⁶, 257 million people are still suffering from hunger, 21.5% of the population lives in a state of severe food insecurity and 20% is undernourished. CELEP therefore argues that addressing hunger, food insecurity and nutrition should be the number one priority in particular for the EU and its Member States, which to date are still the biggest providers of Official Development Aid (ODA). Pastoralists should be part of this, as they provide nutritious foodstuffs such as milk and meat, particularly in areas where it is difficult to grow crops in an ecologically sound and economically efficient way.
2. Under Proposed Action 1, the strategy proposes to *“boost safe and sustainable agri-food systems”*. The way sustainable agri-food systems are described in the draft strategy, however, fails to go beyond a solely environmental interpretation of sustainability, neglecting its **socio-economic pillars**. The new EU–Africa strategy – in particular in its conception of agriculture – would be expected to recognise explicitly the importance of smallholder and family farmers, including pastoralists. As the EU Consensus for Development rightfully puts it, *“Support to smallholders, including family farmers and pastoralists, remains of central importance, contributing substantially to food security and to the fight against soil erosion and biodiversity loss, while providing jobs”*. An EU–Africa strategy would be expected to be in line with this. This was also stressed at the EU–AU inter-ministerial conference on agriculture in June 2019 as well as in the report of the Taskforce Rural Africa prior to this conference. Pastoralism is one of the socially, environmentally and economically sustainable agri-food systems that should be explicitly mentioned in the EU–Africa strategy, especially with a view to dryland areas. Furthermore, if one would use a solely environmental interpretation of sustainability, pastoralism would be the environmentally sustainable way of using drylands to produce food.
3. Under Proposed Action 1, it is mentioned explicitly that *“the EU and Africa should take joint action to protect and reduce pressure on forests, water and marine ecosystems”*. As CELEP, we would like to see **rangelands** included in this, as rangelands and water are the two primary resources for pastoral production systems. Furthermore, rangelands, which cover about 43% of the African land surface, have an important role to play in mitigating climate change, as they are important carbon sinks and allow the capture of carbon that would otherwise go into the atmosphere. Sustainable grazing management through pastoralism can optimise the potential of rangelands to mitigate climate change. In the EU Consensus on Development, the importance of rangelands is explicitly mentioned; the EU–Africa strategy should do likewise.
4. The proposed strategy puts much emphasis on trade: trade for innovation, trade to support opportunities for sustainable food systems, etc. Particularly in the field of agriculture, CELEP would like to see this focus on trade complemented with **specific safeguards for African countries** to determine their own trade regimes (< food sovereignty). In current negotiations regarding Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and the general follow-up to the Cotonou agreement, it would be important for the EU to **support civil society organisations** (CSOs) that actively advocate for the rights of local smallholder producers including pastoralists. This is included under Proposed Action 7 but should be explicitly mentioned with regard to sustainable agri-food systems. Furthermore, **trade regimes and policies should be coherent with the development objectives of the EU**, as defined under the principle of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development. The current situation, where agro-pastoralist dairy producers in West Africa have to compete with subsidised imported milk powder coming from the EU, clearly shows the lack of implementation of this principle. In addition, as the strategy suggests that an

⁶ ONU (Organisation des Nations Unies) “La faim en Afrique poursuit sa progression (ONU)”. Accessed on 13/02/2019 at <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2019/02/1036271>

enabling environment should be created *to boost private sector investment and to facilitate, attract and support investment in Africa*, attention to trade policy coherence would be very important:

- a. to define what type of private sector is meant by this (farmers and pastoralists are also private entrepreneurs)
 - b. to explicitly mention a series of conditions that should be respected by European companies investing in Africa. For instance, those companies investing in extractives in Africa, in particular in pastoralist areas, should adhere to the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). For those companies investing in African agriculture, they should explicitly be obliged to take into account the concerns of African CSOs of farmers, including pastoralists.
 - c. to make sure that trade complements local food production. Though it is obviously still too soon to draw lessons from the current outbreak of COVID-19, globalisation as we know is being put to the test. In a post-COVID-19 era, there may be a need to review the globalised processes that have led to the spreading of the virus. In particular in the area of food, future policies should focus on supporting local food systems and look at how they can be complemented with food trade, instead of the other way around. Pastoralism should be part of these policies.
5. Under Priority 3, the strategy mentions to “*boost regional and continental economic integration*”. In this regard, CELEP wants to stress **the importance of transboundary movements of pastoralists with their herds** in Africa in particular. In 2010, the African Union developed the [African Union Policy Framework for Pastoralism](#), which sets out guidelines and recommendations for its Member States on how to create an enabling policy environment for pastoralists. In addition, the Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS) adopted their transhumance protocol in October 1998, and IGAD Member States have recently done likewise. These protocols and texts are important, and the EU could support ECOWAS, IGAD and the African Union to assure their implementation. In particular, the EU could support the African Governance Architecture (AGA) mechanism. In supporting transboundary pastoral movements, regional and continental integration would be impacted positively.
6. Under Priority 4, **resilience** is mentioned in relation to peace and security. From a pastoralist perspective, this is very important, and the contribution of pastoralism to resilience is also recognised by the European Commission through its SHARE and AGIR programmes, which are ending in 2020. CELEP therefore calls upon the EU to continue recognising the importance of pastoralism in any follow-up on these flagship programmes. The enormous contribution of pastoralists to GDPs of many African countries, the number of people employed in pastoralism as well as the important contribution of pastoralism to food security require not only that pastoralism is part and parcel of resilience policies and programmes but also that the EU has a specific approach and a separate EU policy for pastoralism. In addition, many ongoing African conflicts, including those in the Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Somalia and the Sudan, involve pastoralists. The strained relationship between pastoralists and the State poses serious economic and political security issues for the countries of the Horn of Africa (HoA) and the Sahel, and pastoralists should therefore be considered when developing strategies focusing on security and peace-building.

CELEP would also like to show how some of the ten proposed actions could be implemented through pastoralist programmes and projects, thus illustrating how these actions can be made more specific. The following examples highlight how these actions can benefit pastoralism in Eastern Africa.

1. **Maximize the benefits of the green transition and minimize threats to the environment in full compliance with the Paris Agreement.** Due to the very nature of pastoralism, practically all programmes and projects supporting pastoralism will contribute to this action. [Participatory Rangelands Management](#) (PRM) could be mentioned in this regard. The approach is currently being piloted in Kenya and Tanzania by the CELEP partners and members RECONCILE and Vétérinaires

Sans Frontières–Belgium (VSFB), together with ILRI and TNRF funded by the European Union⁷. PRM is a land-use-planning tool and process to secure rangelands and resources through a participatory approach. It ensures that local-level resource management institutions are empowered and resource management units defined. It guides communities in developing rangeland management plans and a legally binding rangeland management agreement between the local rangeland management institution and responsible government institutions.

- 2. Boost the continent's digital transformation.** CELEP European member [SNV](#) (The Netherlands Development Organisation) facilitated the design of the GARBAL service to improve resilience among pastoralists affected by extreme climate events, by giving them more predictability to decide on their herd migration in search of water and pasture, thanks to a greater access and use of satellite information. Offered over simple mobile phones, pastoralists can access reliable information on biomass availability, biomass quality, surface water availability, herd concentration and market prices for livestock and staple grains along the different transhumance routes. The success of the experimental phase (2015–18) funded by the Netherlands Space Office (NSO) in Mali paved the way for extension to new regions in Mali and to Burkina Faso, where GARBAL is now operating since 2019. Since its launch, the service has recorded 43,778 calls and received 120,339 USSD requests, 72,266 people benefited from face-to-face demonstrations, and 93–98% of the users in the two countries indicated that they are making decisions based on the information provided. Considering the range of needs to be met to improve the conditions for livestock farming in pastoral areas, GARBAL content is now being widened to include advisory services, particularly on animal health, and to offer a digital financial product to improve pastoralists' access to credit and saving and to inputs.

In addition to GARBAL, it is important to mention also the efforts of CELEP member Up4change (www.eeem.org), which is designing multimedia learning tools (ebooks) for pastoralists in Eastern Africa. Currently, within an EU/BMZ-financed GIZ project in Karamoja, Uganda, they are developing – together with pastoralists – four new ebooks so as to enhance efficient and sustainable use of rangelands and water resources and to support food security and nutrition. In the implementation, pastoralist support organisations such as DADO (Dodoth Agro-Pastoralist Development Organization) and KDF (Karamoja Development Forum) are also involved.

- 3. Substantially increase environmentally, socially and financially sustainable investments that are resilient to the impacts of climate change; promote investment opportunities by scaling up the use of innovate financing mechanisms; and boost regional and continental economic integration, particularly through the African Continental Free Trade Agreement.** An innovative and well-proven way to secure financial security for (pastoralist) communities is the introduction of Village Community Banks (VICOBA). A VICOBA group consists of 35–60 people who are trained and meet on a regular basis, and each participant pays a minimum amount of money into the community bank account for a fixed period of time. As soon as the savings have increased sufficiently, the members can take loans from it. The loans serve as starting capital for income-generating activities, e.g. livestock marketing or trading activities. Usually, the loan amount is about €50. On repayment, 10% interest is paid on the borrowed money. At the end of the year, each group member receives a payout in proportion to the amount of his or her original deposit. Thus, in a short period of time, the groups create joint savings that would be difficult for an individual to attain. VICOBA can have another important function: members can pay into a second, smaller common fund, which is intended for financial emergencies. If someone is in need for money, he or she does not have to pay it back. However, they can pay a larger sum back when they have recovered financially. Several CELEP members and partners are using the VICOBA approach in their work in Eastern Africa.

⁷ ILRI = International Livestock Research Institute, VSF = Vétérinaires Sans Frontières, TNRF= Tanzania Natural Resource Forum

- 4. Adapt and deepen EU support to African peace efforts through a more structured and strategic form of cooperation, with a particular focus on regions where vulnerabilities are the highest.** In 2010–12, members and partners of CELEP, including RECONCILE and Practical Action, worked with the Governments of Kenya and Uganda in a peace-building and conflict-management project, supported under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). This project used *peace dividends* as a methodology for building cohesion amongst the Karamoja cluster community, and intelligence sharing between the Kenya and Uganda Governments concretised the intercommunity peace agreements to an inter-State agreement on collaboration to promote peace and development along the Kenya–Uganda border. In addition, the CELEP members and partners DADO, KDF and VSFB and many others have done extensive work to build resilience and co-existence among the cross-border pastoralist groups of Karamoja (Uganda), Turkana (Kenya) and Toposa and Didinga (South Sudan) to reach *localised resource-sharing agreements and resolutions*. The agreements and resolutions have enhanced free access to water and pastures, veterinary and human health services by mobile pastoralists in any of these HoA states (Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan), thus building resilience, favouring co-existence and responding to climate vulnerabilities such as drought. Lessons could be drawn from these approaches/ methodologies to be applied to reduce other ongoing conflicts.
- 5. Integrating good governance, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and gender equality in action and cooperation.** CELEP member Concern Worldwide and the County Government of Marsabit (Kenya) are working together on good governance for livestock services provision in particular, to improve the access to and quality of services for pastoralist communities. Through local-level advocacy and close collaboration, Concern Worldwide has strongly influenced and supported the County Government to increase budget allocation for the livestock sector and improve veterinary services for poor pastoralists through mass animal vaccinations and participatory diseases surveillance. A public-private partnership was also developed to increase access to high-quality veterinary drugs and animal feed through a voucher scheme for poor pastoralists. In addition, through the Deepening Democracy Program (DDP), Concern supported the development of a County Natural Resource Management Policy that puts pastoralists' rights to access natural resources at its centre.