

008 Conservation and sustainable management of rangelands and pastoralism

AWARE that rangelands, covering more than half of the global terrestrial surface, are among the most imperilled, least protected ecosystems;

RECOGNISING that sustainable pastoralism plays a key role in conserving and restoring rangelands;

RECOGNISING ALSO that rangelands and sustainable pastoralism provide critical benefits for biodiversity conservation, climate action and the socio-economic well-being of hundreds of millions of people;

CONCERNED that rangelands and pastoralism are under significant threat from multiple pressures and that, when pastoralist systems cannot adapt to externally imposed conditions, this often leads to abandonment or diversification of livelihoods which may result in loss of biodiversity;

NOTING that the establishment of protected areas with exclusive approaches has historically undermined sustainable pastoralism by violating pastoralists' rights – including customary rights – to land, territories and resources;

RECALLING Resolution 76/253 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, proclaiming 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP), calling upon Member States and stakeholders to observe the year by raising awareness of the importance of rangelands and pastoralism for achieving sustainable development;

RECALLING ALSO IUCN Resolution 7.009 *Protecting and restoring endangered grassland and savannah ecosystems* (Marseille, 2020), which requests IUCN to support the process “to designate a ‘United Nations International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists’”;

APPRECIATING the IYRP Global Alliance's key role in mobilising global support to secure the proclamation and fostering collaboration between pastoralists and conservation organisations worldwide; and

WELCOMING Decision 14.179 *Pastoralism and Migratory Species* adopted at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and Decision 29/COP.16 *Rangelands and pastoralists* adopted at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), which recognises the socio-ecological benefits of rangelands and sustainable pastoralism;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates:

1. DECLARES its support and commitment for the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP);

2. REQUESTS the Director General to observe the IYRP by:

a. raising awareness of the importance of the conservation and sustainable management of rangelands and pastoralism for achieving sustainable development; and

b. developing collaboration between the IYRP Global Alliance and the IUCN Secretariat;

3. FURTHER REQUESTS the Director General:

a. to integrate conservation and sustainable management of rangelands and pastoralism into the IUCN Programme, including formal and informal cooperation, enabling policies and mechanisms, and public and private sector engagement; and

b. to ensure that IUCN policies and projects are in full compliance with the rights of pastoralists, including their customary rights, over their lands and natural resources; and

4. CALLS UPON all State Members and all other government agency Members to:

- a. observe IYRP2026 through activities aimed at raising awareness of the importance of the conservation and sustainable management of rangelands and pastoralism for achieving sustainable development;
- b. include the conservation and restoration of rangelands as a priority objective in their national strategies and plans;
- c. recognise and secure the rights of pastoralists, including customary rights, over their lands and natural resources; and
- d. adopt policies and legal measures contributing to socio-ecological and economic resilience of pastoralists.