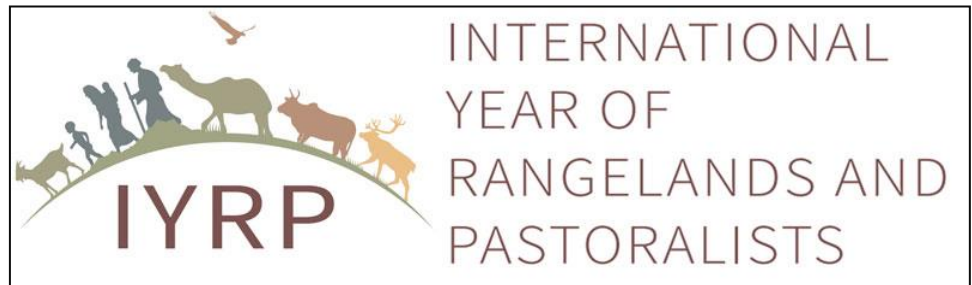


# 2026 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS PROPOSAL FROM THE MONGOLIAN GOVERNMENT

In 2019, the Mongolian Government began to petition the United Nations to declare an [International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists \(IYRP\)](#) to increase global awareness of their importance for food security and ecosystem services.



The IYRP International Support Group invites all interested actors to support Mongolia's proposal for the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, joining the worldwide initiative. Currently 14 countries and 160 organizations from every continent have formally endorsed the proposal to declare an IYRP in 2026.

[As highlighted in the Mongolian Government proposal](#) "More than half of the Earth's land surface is classified as rangeland, those lands on which the indigenous vegetation is predominantly grasses, forbs or shrubs that are or can be grazed, and which are used as a natural ecosystem for raising grazing livestock and wildlife. The health, productivity and environmental sustainability of these lands are directly critical to the livelihoods and cultures of more than 500 million pastoralists, including agro-pastoralists, rangers, and animal keepers around the world. Billions more benefit from these systems for tourism, wildlife and biodiversity, meat and milk and other agricultural products, mining, renewable energy and other uses".

Since 2019, the Mongolian Government's proposal has been following the complex official diplomatic process to be considered and the final approval of the resolution by the UN General Assembly is expected in 2021.

According to the proposal, the objective of celebrating IYRP 2026 is twofold:

- To focus world attention on the role that pastoralists play in food security, poverty eradication, environmental services and sustainable natural resource use, thereby increasing global understanding and action to support pastoralists and deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- To enhance dialogue among different actors and to support pastoralists in collaborating with others and making themselves seen, heard and included in policymaking and decision-making that shape their everyday lives, from the local community level to global fora.

Within the framework of sustainable practices, pastoralism is increasingly recognized as a production system that plays a major role in safeguarding ecosystems and biodiversity and a consistent *IYRP International Support Group* was formed to promote this important initiative of the Mongolian Government.

International Year  
of Rangelands and Pastoralists  
Join the Worldwide Initiative



Mongolian goat herder  
(Photo credit: PRIME/Kelly Lynch)



The IYRP International Support Group includes UN Environment, the Food and Agriculture Organization FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), [International Land Coalition](#) partners, the [International Livestock Research Institute \(ILRI\)](#), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), members of the [Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock \(GASL\)](#). The IYRP Group has coordinated numerous meetings and events, and has worked with members to gain the support of their respective governments for the IYRP.

In this framework, in December 2020, the Committee on Agriculture of the [UN's Food and Agriculture Organization FAO](#) endorsed the proposal to declare 2026 as the International Year of Rangeland and Pastoralism. FAO has been managing for many years the [Pastoralist Knowledge Hub](#) in collaboration with partners working towards sustainable pastoralism, including multilateral agencies, public institutions, academia, and civil society organizations.

The following key facts are highlighted in the Hub's webpage:

- About 1 billion animals worldwide are herded by pastoralists. These include sheep, goats, cattle, camels, yaks, horses and reindeer.
- 65% of meat, and 70% of milk sold on local markets in the Sahel region come from pastoral systems.
- Pastoralists are key to the food security in such areas as drylands, highlands, wetlands, and shrublands where crop production is difficult.
- Pastoralists promote rangeland health by improving soil fertility, conserving biodiversity, managing fires and accelerating nutrient cycling.
- Pastoralists follow customary and community-based rangeland management practices over a range of land tenure types.
- Pastoralists employ strategic mobility to adapt to variable climatic conditions.
- Pastoralism is not just a livelihood, but also a cultural system closely linked to its natural environment. Pastoralists have a treasure of local and indigenous knowledge.
- Pastoralist women have varied roles in the pastoral household, caring for livestock, land and sometimes finances.

[FAO Council resolution points to the link between the IYRP](#), the 20019-2028 UN Decade of Family Farming and the 2021-2030 UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and acknowledges that efforts to achieve sustainable rangelands and pastoralism could help realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the [Resources section of the IYRPG website](#) scientific, educational and outreach materials and information that refer directly to the IYRP initiative are available for all the actors interested to participate. Other documents and articles highlighting the relevance of sustainable practices of pastoralism for not only protecting human, animal and environmental well-being and health, but also helping to overcome some of the greatest global challenges can also be found on the websites of the participants in the IYRP International Support Group.

## To know more

[International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists \(IYRP\)](#)

[Mongolian proposal for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists - 2019](#)



[Partners of IYRP](#)

[IYRPG in ILRI-CGIAR website](#)

[IYRP in globalrangelands.org website](#)

[IYRP in landcoalition.org website](#)

[FAO Council and IYRPG - 2020](#)

[FAO proposal for IYRPG](#)

[FAO Pastoralist Knowledge Hub brochure](#)

[International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in CGIAR website](#)

[IYRP in UN Environment website](#)

[Publication on pastoralism and rangelands 2019 by UN Environment and GRID Arendal in gridarendal website](#)

[Maps in gridarendal website](#)

[Rangelands Collection in globalrangelands.org](#)

[2021 International Rangeland Congress-Kenya](#)

[Rangelands in landportal.org website](#)

[Agroecology in Extensive Rangeland Pastoralism in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia in FAO website](#)

[Transhumance declared by UNESCO in 2019 as Intangible Heritage of Humanity](#)

[IYRP in European Shepherds Network website](#)

