MAKING RANGELANDS MORE SECURE

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THE ILC RANGELANDS INITIATIVE

Established in 2010, the International Land Coalition (ILC) Rangelands Initiative is a programme facilitating learning, connecting and mobilising multi-stakeholders and influencing a more enabling environment for making rangelands more tenure secure. The global component is a partnership between ILRI, UNEP, FAO-Pastoralist Knowledge Hub, IFAD, WRI, IUCN, ICARDA and the Rangelands Partnership. Global coordination and technical support is provided by ILRI through a part-time coordinator and technical adviser in the Sustainable Livestock Systems programme. The programme works through ILC members and ILC commitment-based initiatives in Africa led by RECONCILE (Resource Conflict Institute) Kenya, in Latin America led by FUNDAPAZ (Foundation for Development in Justice and Peace) Argentina, and in Asia led by JASIL Mongolia and MARAG (Maldahari Rural Action Group) India.

http://www.landcoalition.org/en/resources/introduction-ilcs-rangelands-initiative

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SUMMARY

Securing rangelands is an important ongoing debate, because of the complex planning needed for their use and the lack of recognition or protection. In an online discussion from January 29th to February 14th 2018, 38 participants from 4 continents debated over the main challenges, solutions and lessons learnt, as well as on pathways for multi-stakeholder platforms. Mining and expansion of crops are the biggest threats to rangelands, which derive into disruption of mobility corridors, land grabbing and marginalization of pastoralists. Well-organized advocacy and collective action, however, can revert such situations, also increasing the profitability of economic activities in rangelands with simple investments and protecting their communities against external threats. Multi-stakeholder platforms can empower civil society action further, increasing cross-fertilizing exchanges, flagging abuses and also reducing conflict. The existing environmental, economic and social arguments for securing rangelands need to be widespread in order to promote global effective advocacy.

INTRODUCTION

The topic of how best to make rangelands secure for local rangeland users is one of ongoing debates. The very nature of rangeland use – the need for landscape level planning incorporating spatially and temporally variable resources, and for recognising the multiple layers of use by multiple actors presents complexity that is not easily accounted for by the often inflexible and simpler land tenure systems that governments prefer to introduce. Hence these lands have been left without formal or statutory recognition or protection and been an easy target for land grabbing, encroachment or fragmentation. Given the mobility needs for peoples that make their livelihoods out of rangeland use, including pastoralists and hunter-gatherers, rangeland occupation structured along poor land use planning has a direct negative effect on them. Improvements in agricultural and mining technology, as well as increased demand for agricultural commodities, have meant that attention has turned to rangelands for large-scale investments. This is despite the fact that the suitability of the land for such purposes and the economic rationale for doing so is questionable. As a result conflicts between land users and over land use in rangelands have increased.

In order to open up space for dialogue on these issues, identify good practice, and to develop some agreement about what should be prioritised and how, the Land Portal Foundation and the Rangelands Initiative of the International Land Coalition agreed to facilitate an online discussion on Making Rangelands Secure. This builds on and links with other ongoing Initiatives including the Pastoralist Knowledge Hub (PKH) of FAO, the World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP) of IUCN, and the Coalition of European Lobbies for East African Pastoralism (CELEP).

The dialogue took place from January 29th to February 14th 2018 – this report summarises the key points raised and conclusions reached.

MAIN DISCUSSION POINTS

QUESTION 1: WHAT LAND-RELATED CHALLENGES ARE RANGELANDS AND RANGELAND USERS FACING GLOBALLY?

a. **What trends of land use change are being seen in different parts of the world? What are the causes of these? What are their impacts on different rangeland users?**
b. **To what degree are local rangelands users including often marginalised groups such as women and pastoralists involved in decisions over these changes.**
c. **Where are the hotspot areas of land use conflicts, and what are the causes of these conflicts?**

The discussion started with an analysis of the main land-related challenges faced by rangelands and their users. General trends worldwide show two main investment threats: i) mining, which is the widest mentioned problem in Central and South Asia and one of the main problems in Africa, and ii) the expansion of industrial (large-scale commercial) crop farming, mainly in Africa[1]. Agriculture expansion also contributes to decrease of water resources due to irrigation, and to loss of pastoralist dry season grazing areas due to occupation of riverine areas by the farms.

Land degradation is an increasing problem that is linked to more frequent hurdles and constraints placed on the mobility of livestock. Livestock routes are blocked by poorly planned investments and other factors. This is particularly the case for Central Asia where the blockage of livestock routes is disrupting traditional use of rangelands far away from villages or service areas. The weakness of extension services for sustaining mobility is also a problem in West Africa[2]. Land degradation is often related to the poorness or food insecurity of pastoralists, who may be compelled to make short-term gains decisions at the expense of a long-term vision – however often it is also influenced by wider factors and political or economic decisions of policy-makers.

Related with land degradation is the increased pressure on natural resources posed by an increasing population, whose growth raised the concerns of

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1   Even if it has not been mentioned in the discussion, mining (in the Highlands) and expansion of industrial agriculture (in the Lowlands) are the main land threats mentioned by pastoralist organizations in Latin America.

2   Also for Latin America, pastoralist networks that did not participate in the discussion (even if they were invited) have noted elsewhere that the disassemblement of extension services is driving livestock transhumance to disappear.

several participants. Climate change was also mentioned as an influencing factor. Another side of the global change people are experiencing is the spread of invasive species in rangelands, which lowers the productive capacity of rangelands and adds to the other problems in terms of livelihood deterioration. Such impacts on the natural resource base can trigger widespread insecurity, as well as the proliferation of arms that is a very worrying issue for rangeland populations.

In a context of competition of land uses for a scarce natural resource base, conflicts of use appear with different land uses such as protected areas (noted in Eastern Africa) and with crop areas (highlighted in West Africa). Such competition explains much of the insecurity and armed conflict observed in and around these areas.

The marginalization of rangeland users translates into different challenges. First, the use of rangelands is often not recognized or fully understood, which is said to diminish the advocacy capacity of pastoralists leaving them more open to corruption and abuses. Good land laws are often missing, but the legal framework is almost invariably better than its implementation. Sometimes such a poor implementation is a consequence of the inability of government officials – which also relates to weak extension services – and an insufficient access to information by pastoralists undermines their capacity to monitor policy processes as well as to alert on such as corruption cases.

Finally, the lack of recognition of women's roles in the countries' legislations or policy formulations was flagged as a concern in both Morocco, Sudan and India, although the need for the wider involvement and recognition of women is cross-cutting.

QUESTION 2: GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES, EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED OF MAKING RANGELANDS MORE SECURE.

a. What are the example of enabling policy and legislation that supports the rights of local land uses to rangelands? Are they successful? And if so, what are the main elements of success?
b. What initiatives exist that have secured rights of local rangeland users to land and resources and why have these succeeded where others have not?
c. What initiatives exist that have improved land use planning processes resulting in more effective use of land and reconciliation of differences between land users?
d. To what degree are these initiatives participatory and inclusive ensuring that all stakeholders are involved including often marginalised groups?
e. What new technology has been used to make the securing of rangelands more effective and efficient?
f. What examples exist of initiatives that have successfully resolved land use conflicts and what lessons can we learn from these for further application?

The participants discussed different good practices based on their own experiences. On the legal aspect, participants highlighted some good examples of legislation that is more facilitating than others in making rangelands more secure. This included the Tanzania Village Act, and laws in India to protect the commons.

Some legal tools have been consequently used by CSOs to secure land tenure, such as the Certificates of the Customary Right of Occupancy, issued to communities across hundreds of thousands of hectares and supported by organisations such as UCRT in Tanzania. The Uganda Land Act has been used to establish Communal Land Associations in Karamoja, in the north of the country. Similarly, the Law on Pastures of Kazakhstan has allowed pastoralists in the country to formulate pasture management plans that have strengthened their tenure rights. In Cameroon, groups of grazers in can address the Land Consultative Boards and Agro-Pastoral Commission to give a land concession, allowing them to gain greater control of their rangeland resources.

In addition, the possibility exists to establish agreements between and across private rangeland owners and their individual landholdings in order to facilitate optimal seasonal use and mobility in areas where communal management and tenure has been lost. Examples of this together with the protection of a network of public stock routes maintained and legally gazetted, can be found in Spain and Australia. Inter-community grazing agreements between Karamajong and Turkana supported by Dodoth Agro-pastoralist Development Organization (DADO) have also shown to be a powerful tool to establish more rational and appropriate pasture management plans as well as to reduce conflict. Planning from the perspective of the community in Kenya has also shown to increase revenues from the wildlife tourism sector that is transferred to the pastoralist community and to reduce overall conflict. Associations of Pasture Users in Kyrgyzstan are a further example of tools used by communities and government to better plan for rangeland use.

These examples show the potential of community initiatives when empowered, coupled with an appropriate a facilitating policy and legislative environment. An improvement of capacity of local communities translates into better management capacities, more resilience towards external influences and better monitoring capacities against such as corruption – a problem that can affect the community governance structures themselves when the rangeland user base is not empowered enough. For this, an adequate delivery of education for nomads is fundamental, but after the experience presented from Nigeria it is clear that such an undertaking must have had its funding secured in the long term if there is a real commitment for its success.

Higher capacities among communities will allow public participation in Environmental Impact Assessments, a strategy that has been used in Mongolia to achieve better planned investments – particularly in the mining sector – whilst also using new technologies to reduced costs such as IT-based tools, and linking to global platforms such as the Land Matrix. Information sources such as the Land Matrix at the global level are powerful tools for documenting the status of large scale investments whilst such as mapping of resources and village lands (e.g. in Tanzania) are important tools for recognising community lands.

Much simpler, less resource-demanding technologies can also improve the livelihoods of rangeland users. Access to water has been upscaled with very simple technology through the One Million Cisterns Program in Brazil, which has allowed not only securing of rangelands for local rangeland users but also led to income diversification and increased resilience among livestock keepers. A simple but conscious use of goats in Kyrgyzstan allows for effective control measures against the invasive Caragana shrub. During the discussion, we have also learnt about the progress of the weed eradication programs in Ethiopia, particularly against the very problematic Prosopis juliflora.

Showcasing and increasing the value of pastoralism is also a powerful tool for securing rangelands. In Jordan, the value of previously degrading lands has been restored through the recovery of good traditional management methods, increasing the value of production 20-fold. In Mongolia, the SDC-funded Greengold project has implemented strategies to add value to pastoralist products in order to alleviate land degradation. The problem of land degradation has also been tackled by pasture committees in Kyrgyzstan and by Pasture User Groups in Mongolia. An improvement in the value of sustainable production by rangeland users protects them against competing land investments and therefore land alienation. However this is still an area where documented good practice is lacking.

QUESTION 3: STRONGER PATHWAYS TO ENGAGE AS A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM

1. **What are the key pathways to securing rangelands for local rangeland users at different levels?**
2. **How can different stakeholders better connect, mobilise and influence in order to make rangelands more secure?**
3. **How can working together add value to working individually? An example being the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.**
4. **What are the key opportunities for working as a multi-stakeholder platform in order to make rangelands more secure?**

There was agreement amongst participants that strongly empowered communities are fundamental to secure rangelands. This way they will be able to efficiently participate in multi-stakeholder discussions to share their viewpoints and achieve a powerful policy advocacy. Joint effort of pastoralist communities can more easily achieve the demarcation of pastures and corridors, but multi-stakeholder platforms can also favour intercommunity dialogue and reduce conflict at wider scales as the good examples reviewed above.

When faced with abuses by private investors or by governments (the latter mentioned in several cases), multi-stakeholder platforms can alert the international community on blatant cases. The Land Matrix was given as an example of a well-organized database to document and monitor large-scale investments at a global level. Examples were provided of coordinated action between local CSOs and international NGOs, combining political legitimacy with technical strengths and combined areas of influence. Examples include the work of the Foundation for Ecological Security in India with local pastoralist communities, and at a wider scale CELEP has been efficiently lobbying both at the European Union and at the level of national East African governments. The International Land Coalition is also developing National Engagement Strategies between members at national levels to encourage a common vision and strategy for engagement with different stakeholders on land issues and to carry out similar advocacy processes. It is noteworthy that a common and agreed positive narrative between stakeholders needs to be established before the launching of an effective advocacy strategy, as mentioned by participants with experience in both East Africa and Latin America.

New technologies offer good opportunities to scale up the influence of multi-stakeholder platforms. The access to smartphones is helping rangeland users in remote areas to access complex communication products and tools, and access to more simpler mobile phone technology has already proven useful in increasing access to weather predictions, alerts, etc. – which invites one to think about further applications of this technology for securing rangelands.

Discussants argued that further effort is required to increase social and economic arguments for protecting rangelands, beyond environmental or natural resource ones. This would not only increase the perceived value of uses of rangelands, but it would improve negative media perceptions that are currently a major barrier to a more nuanced and balanced debate on the future of rangelands. Better networking among rangeland users can also improve the use of multi-government structures and international initiatives to raise their issues. Positive agreements signed by governments should be used widely because they offer extraordinary opportunities for positive dialogue, as is the case with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security, signed by all member countries of the Committee on World Food Security.

DEBATE SUCCESSES AND SHORTCOMINGS

The debate was a success in terms of getting participation and worthwhile contributions from all major rangeland areas in the world, including Central and South Asia, Middle East, Europe, North, West, Central and Eastern Africa, and Latin America. Even if some participants commented only once, the depth of the comments was enough to arrive to a satisfactory global picture.

There was some discussion on the applicability and up-scaling of global lessons. Some participants (Gabriel Seghezzo and Kramer Gillin) argued that it is difficult to do comparisons and to extrapolate lessons, but many others with cross-regional experience (Alhassan Altahiru Jaoji, Elizabeth Daley or Pablo Manzano) argued on the advantages of cross-country comparison and learning and of a global picture and their proven applicability in order to advance the security of rangelands.

A shortcoming for global, representative multi-stakeholder platforms seems to be West Africa lagging behind in terms of technology access by local rangeland users, particularly in terms of mobile phone coverage and skills. The region is nevertheless advanced in getting civil society participation (the example of RBM was given) as well as in the deployment of multi-disciplinary analyses for rangelands.

A general shortcoming in such a type of discussion may be the observed higher number of interventions in Question 1 (see Fig 1), which may be related to challenges being found more easily than solutions. Such e-events also risk to be rather expository and offering less interaction among participants than face-to-face discussions, as have rather been the interventions in this discussion (see Fig 2). It would have been good that wider discussions had taken place on eg. on adoption of tools from successful practices, as well as upscaling. There was also a lack of input from international agencies, donors and governments despite invitations being made to them to contribute.

ANNEX: TECHNICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DISCUSSION

Invitations were shared before the e-discussion with the following listserves:

Name	Coverage	e-mail/web	shared by
Pastoralist Hub	global	pastoralist-hub@dgroups.org	Fiona
ILC	global	http://www.landcoalition.org/en/regions/global/event/discussion-making-rangelands-more-secure	Alex/Ashley
CELEP	Eastern African	celep-eu@googlegroups.com	Fiona
IYR	global	e-mail list	Fiona
Land Portal	global	Undisclosed	Neil
Pastoraméricas	LatAm	pastoramericas@googlegroups.com	Pablo
Extensivos	Spain	extensivos@googlegroups.com	Pablo
ESAPN	Eastern and Southern Africa	e-mail list	Pablo
SAPA	Southern Asia	sapa-communication@googlegroups.com	Pablo
PFCPA	West and Central Africa	PFCPA@googlegroups.com	Pablo
RPPS	West and Central Africa	pasteursdusahel@googlegroups.com	Pablo
RBM, MOPA, WRHA	WAfr, CAsia, Reindeers	e-mail list	Pablo

Pasto-Arabic	Arab countries	Pasto-Arabic@ googlegroups.com	Pablo
AFSA	Africa	afsafrica@ googlegroups.com	Michael Farrelly on behalf of Pablo
African Biodiversity Network	Sub-Saharan Africa	abnsecretariat@ africanbiodiversity.org	Karen Nekesa on behalf of Pablo

The following graph (Fig 1) summarizes the daily patterns of response, according to the question they addressed. It should be noted that Sunday 4th February shows a distortion because 12 of the 15 comments are from one of the facilitators (Fiona) and a further one from Pablo. It should also be noted that the dialogue was originally planned until February 9th but was extended up to February 14th to allow for late comments and answers to other comments.
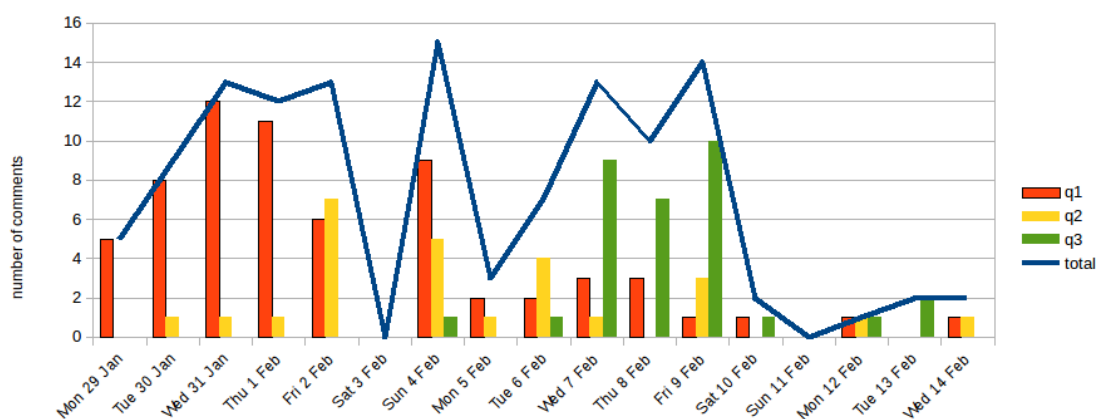
There were comments from 36 different participants and 2 facilitators. 27 participants were English-speaking, 4 were Russian-speaking, 3 French-speaking and 2 Spanish-speaking. The following graph (Fig 2) shows how many of these contributed one time, two times, three times, etc. It can be seen that most commented 1 or 2 times, which limited the overall discussion interaction (see above). In that sense, invitation letters worked well – they are a well-designed tool – but the participants may see themselves committed to one single participation, posing shortcomings to the real discussion character of the event.
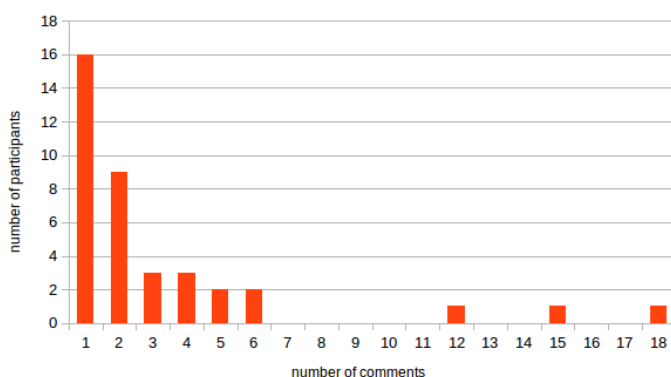
A total of 183 people were pre-contacted in advance, of which 29 participated (15.85%). 12 sent their contribution before the debate, and from them, only 5 participated more than once.

Considering that such events imply a low mobilization from the whole human resource pool, such participation data should be considered acceptable. In spite of the registration troubles experienced by three participants, the tool is a friendly way to promote participation, and pre-contacts definitely increase the representativity of participants. Though the registration process is simple, the fact of having to register to participate did put off a number of potential participants.

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