



Subject: Concerns and Feedback Regarding IYRP Letter to GEF CEO and Pastoralist Representation in the IYRP

Dear IYRP 2026 International Support Group and Global Coordinating Group,

On behalf of the WAMIP Steering Committee, we appreciate the work you have put into preparing the letter to the Global Environmental Facility's (GEF) CEO in support of the upcoming International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) 2026. We support the need to bring more visibility and resources to rangelands and its communities, including pastoralists, in global environmental agendas. We also appreciate your steps taken toward modifying the letter to highlight the pastoralists on par with rangelands and look forward to reviewing the new version. However, we would like to share some reflections from our members before we agree to endorse the letter.

1. Equal Emphasis on Pastoralists

Several of our members have expressed concerns that the original version of the letter prioritized rangelands while pastoralists, who are also significantly underrepresented in global environmental agendas, did not receive equal attention. We want to emphasise that unlike rangeland science, which is well-organized and funded, pastoralists often lack comparable resources and representation. We believe it is essential that pastoralists be given equal footing in this narrative, especially since IYRP 2026 is also a year dedicated to **pastoralists**. Therefore, we encourage stronger recognition of pastoralists' role and needs in the letter and the wider IYRP 2026 communication strategy.

2. Ensuring Pastoralist Leadership and Participation

Additionally, we feel that pastoralist leadership within IYRP needs to be strengthened, particularly in regional co-chair appointments, which we believe should be determined by the pastoralist movements themselves. This could entail defining a protocol for the selection and confirmation of pastoralist representatives based on actual track record of participation in pastoralist movements. Moreover, if the GEF funding is secured, it would be important to clarify how pastoralist communities will be directly involved in both the planning and implementation of projects, ensuring that initiatives like pastoralist gatherings and rights campaigns are included.

3. Constructive Engagement Moving Forward

We hope to address these concerns from WAMIP members by engaging in a constructive dialogue to explore how we can better balance the representation of both rangelands and pastoralists in this critical initiative, ensuring mutual benefit and a

collaborative approach moving forward. Notably, we propose collaborating with the IYRP International Support Group, Global Coordinating Group and other pastoralist organisations on addressing a joint letter to FAO for the establishment of these governance guidelines in IYRP organisation.

We hope that these points can be taken into consideration, and we remain open to further discussion to strengthen our collective efforts for the success of IYRP 2026.

Warm regards,
WAMIP Steering Committee