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PASTURES & PASTORALISM



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Background

Subsistence pastoralism is sustainable strategy of livelihood and ecosystem conservation in the rangelands. By means of changing land use, exclusion of indigenous herder communities, fragmentation of habitats and militarization of territories, the enclosure of rangelands has affected the sustainability of both the rangeland ecosystem services and viable pastoralism and transhumance. Ecological, social and economic impacts on rangeland ecosystems, pastoralists' livelihoods, livestock productivity and, ultimately, national economy are visible in many agrarian countries. Such impacts need to be revisited, reviewed and, to an extent, investigated afresh in order to compare the economic, social and environmental gains obtained from conserved rangeland ecosystems and pastoralism, and from converted/enclosed/fragmented rangelands (including other land use). It is expected to build strong case for pursuing inclusive policies of conserving the landscapes integrating rangelands and pastoralism as sustainable livelihood practice.

Despite awareness of the critical roles of rangelands in sustaining livelihoods of pastoralists and ecological safeguarding, rangelands have felt the pressure of habitat fragmentation, land use change, industrialization, enclosure, privatization, militarization, and ecosystem devastation. Gradually, rangelands are being converted into other land uses or enclosed for exclusive uses under various national laws or policies. Worldwide, there is a common trend of governing bodies increasingly declaring rangelands unproductive, waste or under-productive lands and term the pastoralist lifestyles outdated and obsolete. Thereafter, with the help of weak rangeland or pastures related laws/policies and by using powerful land acquisition or conversion laws/policies, countries either have given up massive rangeland territories to other forms of land uses or enclosed tenures or have restricted/ circumvented the grazing activities of pastoralist herders.

It is believed that subsistence pastoralism is a sustainable strategy of livelihood and ecosystem conservation in the rangelands. Fading fast all over the world, the (most sustainable) livelihoods and lifestyles of nomadic pastoralists can, therefore, only sustain/ conserve the rangeland commons, which are most productive ecosystems on planet (even more productive than forests). Many studies have been undertaken to demonstrate that the nomadic pastoralist way (on rangelands) of livestock production with hardly any economic investment produces some of the most nutritive foods as well as other sustainable products. Unfortunately, such products have not been desirably priced in modern markets, and the nomadic grazing (which is helpful to biodiversity, not detrimental) is perceived by ecologists and policy makers as a threat to conservation. Hence, pastoralists as well as the rangeland ecosystems have suffered as a result.

Resilience of indigenous pastoralist communities to the changing environments – ecological, economic and political – has great potential to protecting and conserving the rangeland landscapes or waterscapes. Such resilience is more talked in context of climate change and its impact on the herder communities surviving in marginal environments. Still the deep understanding of ecological aspects of the impacts of climate change on nomadic pastoralists and their livestock is lacking. Similarly, amid plenty of documentation of adaptation strategies coping the climate variability, the scientific rationale is not established by the scientists and researchers.

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In the view of widespread regional and national policy failures and modernity-catalyzed societal rejection of transhumance and nomadic pastoralism, International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026 declared by the United Nations General Assembly is a grand opportunity for all to revitalize the least-external-input driven systems of livestock raising and mobility across the continents. This international blind peer-review journal, 'Pastures & Pastoralism', will contribute to the science, policy and practice across the world by providing a novel platform to seasoned, budding and young scientists, experts and practitioners, including the pastoral community members.

Scope of the Journal

Any topic having emanated from **biology, geography, agriculture, economics, animal science, anthropology, sociology, ecology, law, policy, political science, public administration, management, or other allied discipline** will be considered for publishing in this journal. However, the topic should fall in the ambit of pasturelands, transhumance and pastoralism, especially in the following broader areas:

- Rangelands and Grasslands
- Pastures & Pasturelands
- Meadows and Alpine Meadows
- Grazing Commons
- Pastoralism and Pastoral Cultures
- Agro-Pastoral Communities
- Nomadic or Mobile Pastoralists
- Transhumance and Heritage
- Shepherds and Ethnic Groups
- Animal Centric Cultures
- Animal Husbandry
- Livestock and Economics
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Animal Based Livelihoods
- Production of Livestock Products
- Climate Change and Landscapes
- Ethnoveterinary Practices

Executive Chief Editor:

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