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# Roles of pastoral networks for sustainable rangeland management

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**Summary.** Pastoral resources are deteriorating more and more. One of the causes of degradation is the users' perception of collective resources, exploiting them with a disregard for others. The rights of pastoral communities are deteriorating further due to the development policies implemented. Pastoral communities have knowledge of rangeland management and need land security as well as policies that take them into consideration. Pastoral policies should involve pastoral communities in decision-making processes related to the sustainable use, development and conservation of pastoral resources, and in pastoral resource planning and management programmes. Networking is one of the essential tools in sustainable management and in sharing knowledge acquired through learning and experience in the development of natural resources. At an international level networking is a powerful channel to disseminate and generalize information to increase awareness of the value that a common resource has for the sustainable management of natural resources by combining ancestral knowledge and modern forms of organization. Networks also make it possible to advocate for pastoral communities and the sustainable management of natural resources. The Arab Network of Pastoral Communities, which was initiated by IUCN West Asia in Amman 2016, brings together civil society organizations, researchers, experts, policymakers and other stakeholders.

**Keywords.** Pastoralism – Networks – Pastoral Communities.

## **Rôles des réseaux de pasteurs pour une gestion durable des parcours**

**Résumé.** Les ressources pastorales se dégradent de plus en plus ; parmi les causes de dégradation, la perception des usagers des ressources collectives, chacun veut en tirer le maximum sans se soucier des autres. Les droits des communautés pastorales se dégradent de plus en plus à cause des politiques de développement mises en œuvre. Les communautés pastorales ont des savoirs concernant la gestion des parcours, ont besoin d'une sécurisation des terres et de politiques qui les prennent en compte. Les politiques pastorales doivent faire participer les communautés pastorales à la prise de décisions sur les questions concernant l'utilisation durable, la mise en valeur et la conservation de ces ressources pastorales et aux programmes de planification et de gestion des ressources pastorales. Le réseautage est un des outils essentiels à la fois dans la gestion durable, et dans le partage des connaissances de l'apprentissage et l'expérience dans le développement des ressources naturelles. Au niveau international, le réseautage constitue une voie considérable dans la diffusion, la généralisation de l'information pour le développement de la perception de l'intérêt de la chose collective ce qui permet la gestion durable des ressources naturelles en combinant le savoir ancestral et les modes d'organisation modernes. Les réseaux permettent aussi de plaider en faveur des communautés pastorales et de la gestion durable des ressources naturelles. Le Réseau Arabe des Communautés Pastorales qui a été initié par l'IUCN Asie de l'Ouest à Amman 2016, regroupe les organisations de la société civile, des chercheurs, des experts, des décideurs et d'autres parties prenantes.

**Mots-clés.** Pastoralisme – Réseaux – Communautés Pastorales.

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## **I – Introduction**

Networking is one of the essential tools in both sustainable management and sharing knowledge acquired through learning and experience in natural resource development.

A professional network is about getting information, increasing visibility and making connections and building relationships with others. The network allows us to benefit from the experience of others.

At the international level, networking constitutes a powerful channel in the dissemination and generalization of information.

## **II – Role of communication with the pastoral communities for policy development**

Local pastoral communities, whether they are grouped within professional organizations or not, know how to manage land well and contribute enormously, but they need land security and policies that take them into account. It is necessary to ensure the participation of pastoral communities and all decision-makers at national level on issues related to the sustainable use, development and conservation of these pastoral resources.

There is a need for management approaches that combine the best of traditional knowledge of pastoralist communities with modern technologies and for integrated management practices to be applied.

Making pastoral communities accountable for the resources they use is the foundation for sound management and use of land-related resources (WISP, 2008).

## **III – Benefits of consulting all stakeholders in the planning, development and management of pastoral resources**

Local communities and pastoralist associations own and manage pastoral resources and their livestock. As such they have made a significant contribution in the past. It is these same modalities that must be preserved so that society can derive better benefits.

Pastoral communities can derive three benefits from active participation in pastoral and animal genetic resource planning and management programmes:

- They receive a fair share of the benefits arising from the use of pastoral resources.
- They benefit from training programmes, technology transfer, generation and dissemination of information on pastoral resources.
- They accept the establishment of pastoral laws and codes of conduct and good management practice of pastoral resources (Davies *et al.*, 2016).

## **IV – Case of the rangelands in eastern Morocco**

Eastern Morocco covers an area of 32 million hectares of which 3.7 million hectares are rangelands, with about 9 000 herders who maintain a population of 1 million sheep, goats and camels. Livestock production is pastoral and mobility depends on good and bad years and on the economic situation of families. The rangelands contribute greatly to the feeding of the herds and they are collective for several tribes (Mahdi, 2009). A farmer can freely use a pasture, whatever his cooperative and community.

## 1. Main problems of the rangelands and adopted solutions

Key issues that involve the sustainable and conservative management of pastoral resources are:

- Inter and intra-tribal conflicts over pastoral resources.
- Clearing and cultivation of rangelands.
- Enclosure and appropriation of pastoral areas (Zniga) (Bourbouze *et al.*, 2009).

The solutions adopted include the transfer of rangeland management to pastoral cooperatives and the establishment of partnership contracts with these pastoral cooperatives. These contract agreements with the population have several objectives (Davies *et al.*, 2016):

- Empowerment of pastoral communities in the sustainable management of pastoral heritage in a partnership framework.
- Development and management of the rangelands.
- Involvement and engagement of the population in local sustainable development.
- To establish the conditions of transfer of competence to professional organizations.
- To determine the financing conditions.
- To introduce management bonuses to avoid overstocking rangelands.

## 2. The organization of pastoral communities in pastoral cooperatives

The organization of pastoral communities in cooperatives is based on the pastoral populations who collectively hold the rights of use of the rangeland. The tribe or the pastoral communities are replaced by the pastoral cooperative called ethno-lineage with clear statutes. In order to belong to a cooperative it is necessary to be a member of the local ethnic group. The cooperative is a “grafting” of an institution governed by modern laws onto traditional and tribal social structures governed by customary law.

Representativeness in the cooperative office follows the principle of respect for the tribal balance, namely one representative per lineage.

The organization of pastoralists in the pastoral cooperative transforms their status of trustee on the customary pastoral lands of the tribe governed by custom to the status of full right members of a cooperative. But the two logics confront one other and give rise to conflicts of interest.

34 pastoral cooperatives were created by the PDPEO: There are 17 in the northern zone and each pastoral cooperative corresponds to an ethnic community in the southern zone. (Mahdi, 2009).

## 3. Networking cooperatives in cooperative unions

The creation of a “Mahmia” or “Hima” protection zone and the definition of access rules are handled by a new institution: the Union of Cooperatives, the Union is the modern form of the fusion of lineages. through their cooperative, around the management of the rangelands. Representation within the Union follows the principle of respect for the tribal balance, i.e. one representative per cooperative.

The Union of Cooperatives is established as a space for representation and consultation of the pastoral communities. It is also illustrated by the active role it plays in the supply of livestock feeds, rest management, collection of grazing fees and fines, etc.

The Union has proved to be an effective organ for the mobilization and supervision of pastoralists and an active stakeholder in civil society. The activities of the Union of Cooperatives went beyond the pastoral framework to extend to the social framework, such as the vaccination of children (Mahdi, 2009).

## V – The Arab Network of Pastoral Communities

The Arab Network of Pastoral Communities brings together civil society organizations, researchers, experts, policymakers and other stakeholders, it was initiated by IUCN West Asia whose leaders were aware of the importance of networking as essential tools in the sustainable management of natural resources in the region and the sharing of knowledge, learning and experience in development.

The network of pastoral communities was created by the representatives of 8 countries, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia. 3 other countries joined the network, Mauritania, Bahrain and Libya

The Arab Network of Pastoral Communities was established in Amman, Jordan in September 2016 (Agaroual and Asfour, 2016).

The Arab Network of Pastoral Communities was launched on the occasion of the second Regional Forum on HIMA which took place in Amman on October 17th and 18th, 2016.

### 1. The main objective of the Arab Network of Pastoral Communities

The main objective of the Arab Network of Pastoral Communities is to revive, document and develop traditional knowledge in the Arab region to effectively involve the pastoral communities in the rehabilitation and improvement of sustainable pasture management.

### 2. Objectives of the Arab Network of Pastoral Communities

The Arab Network of Pastoral Communities aims to:

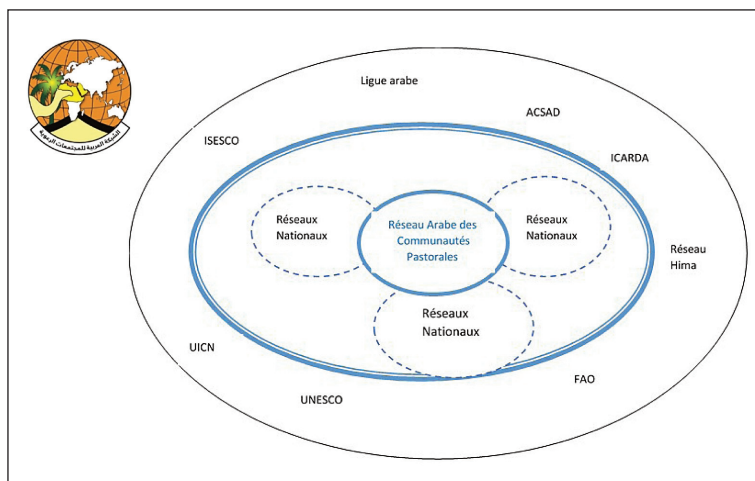
- Promote capacity building, shared learning, networking and exchange of experiences of indigenous peoples (local communities) in the region, sharing a deep concern for the respect of cultural rights and land rights and natural resources.
- Promote and develop traditional knowledge in the Arab region with a view to investing in the development of pastoral communities' FOs and strengthen their capacities for effective participation in the rehabilitation and improvement of participatory sustainable rangeland management.
- Encourage the application of systemic approaches to rangeland management.
- Increase knowledge, ideas and awareness of systemic approaches to sustainable natural resource management in the region. This will be made possible through the collection of available knowledge on systemic approaches to integrated natural resource management and sharing it with targeted experts; which will reflect positively on the governance of natural resources.
- Develop and disseminate documents on traditional knowledge of the Arab region.

### 3. General structure of the Arab Network of Pastoral Communities

The Network of Pastoral Communities has been structured according to the proposal of IUCN West Asia officials (see Fig.1 below). (IUCN West Asia Amman, Jordan)

The main body is made up of representatives of pastoral communities belonging to the Network from countries' national networks (the inner circle).

A body of regional institutions (Membership Support Network) that, through their mandate and interest, could support the network and activities of the Network of Pastoral Communities (the outer circle).



**Fig. 1. General structure of the Arab Network of Pastoral Communities.**

#### **4. Functions of the Arab Network of Pastoral Communities**

The main functions of the Network are:

- To ensure the representation and defence of pastoral communities in local and international forums.
- To strengthen the role of pastoral style in economic and social development, food security and nature conservation.
- To strengthen the role of youth and women in the sustainable development of pastoral style use as a productive approach.
- To document local knowledge that takes into account and disseminates gender.
- To strengthen the participatory approach taking into account the integration of pastoral communities in the management of natural resources.
- To ensure the integration of traditional knowledge and culture that is associated with pastoral communities in national education and awareness programmes.
- To integrate regional and global networks.
- To share and disseminate what is learned and experiences.
- To provide a platform for exchange, consultation and cooperation among network members and the exchange of experiences between Arab countries.
- To encourage the implementation of pilot projects to disseminate local knowledge in natural resource management such as the Hima / Agdal approach, which reinforces the role of pastoral communities.

#### **VI – Conclusion**

Pastoral resources are deteriorating more and more. One of the causes of degradation is the users' perception of collective resources, exploiting them with disregard for others.

Also, the law of pastoral communities is deteriorating further because of the development policies implemented.

Networking is a powerful channel to disseminate and generalize information to increase awareness of the value that a common resource has for the sustainable management of natural resources by combining ancestral knowledge and modern forms of organization.

The Networks also make it possible to advocate for pastoral communities and the sustainable management of natural resources.

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## Abbreviations

**CIHEAM:** International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies.

**FAO:** Food & Agriculture Organization.

**IUCN ROWA:** The International Union for Nature Conservation Regional Office for West Asia Amman.

**WISP:** The World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism.