

Nouakchott Declaration on Pastoralism

Mobilizing Jointly an Ambitious Effort to Ensure Pastoralism without Borders

October 29, 2013

WE, the representatives of the governments of the six countries of the Sahel (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal) gathered in Nouakchott by invitation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), and the World Bank in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and in the presence of representatives of international and regional research organizations, civil society organizations, producers' organizations, the private sector, and technical and financial partners, for the purpose of strengthening the resilience of Sahelo-Saharan pastoral societies.

WHEREAS:

- The practice of pastoralism combines the productive use of natural resources in marginal areas, the sustainable management of these resources, soil conservation, the preservation of biodiversity, and adaptation to climate variability.
- Pastoralism is a driver of growth, security, peace, stability, and job creation, and contributes to reducing food insecurity, malnutrition, and poverty in regions to which it brings life and structure.
- Pastoral populations have until now benefited little from national and regional development policies while their need for infrastructure, agricultural services (such as advisory support, veterinary services, credit, and zotechnical input), basic services (including human health, education, and drinking water), and security are far from being covered.
- Public policies, including those involving decentralization, have rarely taken account of the specificities of these populations such that for the most part their political inclusion remains largely unrealized.
- Over the last 50 years, pastoral spaces have experienced highly unfavorable conditions, due in particular to reduced plant cover, soil erosion, and the steady expansion of the agricultural front into natural rangelands.

RECALLING THE EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS AND COALITIONS, NAMELY:

- The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP/NEPAD), under which the six countries developed sector policies and strategies, which are embodied in their National Agricultural Investment Programs (NAIP) and in the Regional Agricultural Investment Program (RAIP), which defines strategic options and regional activities for pastoral development.
- The African Union Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa (2001), as the first political initiative on the continent aiming to ensure, protect, and improve life, subsistence, and the rights of African pastoralists.
- The Global Alliance for Resilience – AGIR Sahel and West Africa which places pastoralism among its top priorities, as well as the national and international strategies for regional stabilization and long-term development of the Sahelo-Saharan areas.
- The N'Djamena Declaration adopted in May 2013, a major reference that summarizes the existing frameworks and defines the priorities for a policy of support for regional pastoralism closely linking development and security issues.

UNANIMOUSLY AFFIRM:

- **That the context is conducive to action.** Today, there is broad national, regional, and international consensus on the diagnosis as well as the need to take measures in support of Sahelo-Saharan pastoral societies.

- **That viewpoints have changed and pastoralism is now recognized as an effective practice and lifestyle suited to the Sahelo-Saharan conditions.** In fact, the intervention strategies of the various actors have been drastically redefined over the last 18 months, thereby opening up new opportunities.
- **That the increasing demand for animal products is a major economic opportunity for Sahelian pastoral communities** within the context of increasing regional economic integration.
- **Thus, faced with these challenges, we must work to improve resilience.** The series of crises (climatic, food-related, health-related, political, economic, and security-related) affecting Sahelo-Saharan populations encourage us to consider these recurrences as a new context for action.
- **That considerable relevant experience and knowledge has been accumulated** over the last 30 years, resulting in solutions that ought to be implemented as a matter of urgency.
- **That consequently, pastoralism should be placed at the center of strategies and policies promoting stabilization, sustainable development, and national and regional agricultural development,** while incorporating issues relating to the sustainable management and equitable sharing of natural resources, political inclusion, security, access to markets, health, education, and gender.
- **That we need to act differently by changing scale, being committed to dealing with difficult issues collectively, and endorsing long-term actions** to reverse the trend and sustainably strengthen the resilience of pastoral societies.

SET THE OBJECTIVE OF: Securing the lifestyle and means of production of pastoral populations and increasing the gross output of livestock production by at least 30% in the 6 concerned countries over the next 5 years with a view to significantly increasing the incomes of pastoralists within a period of 5 to 10 years.

CALL FOR AN AMBITIOUS COMMITMENT OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS:

- To our own countries: To develop national programs promoting pastoralism, including political reforms, strategic investments, and actions aiming to strengthen the abilities of their institutions and actors, thus increasing the portion of the national budget allocated to the support of pastoral activities.
- To regional economic and technical integration organizations (ECOWAS, WAEMU, CILSS): (i) to accelerate the implementation of policies and instruments promoting trade of goods and services; (ii) to facilitate the coordination of national strategies and policies; and (iii) to support regional investments producing public goods, which are indispensable to the development of pastoralism and which facilitate cross-border transhumance (including infrastructure, telecommunications, animal health, trade, hydraulic infrastructure, and equipment).
- To civil society, including associations of agricultural producers, pastoralists, and livestock producers: to organize themselves in order to strengthen their representativeness such that their needs are better taken into account by decision-making bodies.
- To the private sector: to contribute to the investment effort with a view to developing solid value chains so as to take full advantage of commercial opportunities.
- To technical and financial partners: to respond to our requests to mobilize their resources at the appropriate level and for the required period of time in support of Sahelian pastoralism and, more generally, of livestock production in the sub-region.
- Finally, we call upon all concerned parties to recognize the magnitude of the challenges and opportunities they face in providing new momentum to pastoralism by way of their respective actions by participating in the relevant programs in a responsible manner and in compliance with the commitments undertaken.

WE TOGETHER DECLARE OUR COMMITMENT TO:

- **Progress toward a medium-term program action framework** encompassing institutional supports, political reforms, and investments, managed by the CILSS for the six countries concerned and under the political leadership of WAEMU/ECOWAS (plus Chad and Mauritania).

- **Build a solid alliance** around pastoralism by pooling the expertise and resources of each actor (bilateral and multilateral technical and financial partners, governments, the private sector, and pastoral civil society). This support will complement and be aligned with the participatory and inclusive priorities of the concerned countries while taking into account in a participatory and inclusive manner the regional dimension of the actions to be carried out in priority and in compliance with the subsidiarity principle.
- **Enhance the existing frameworks for concerted action in order to create a multi-actor platform** enabling sustainable actions promoting pastoralism.
- **To accelerate the formulation, financing, and implementation of national, multi-country, and cross-border programs** in order to meet the objective of making rapid progress in securing pastoral activities, increasing the economic weight of the livestock sector, and sustainably raising the incomes of Sahelo-Saharan pastoral and agro-pastoral communities.

Following the N'Djamena Declaration on Pastoralism, in compliance with these countries' NAIPs, the RAIP, and the AGIR roadmap, these initiatives aim to create an environment conducive to the sustainable development of pastoralism and to make the most of the economic opportunities offered by the expansion of agricultural and food markets in West Africa.

The main pillars and scope of these programs may include:

- 1 – Enhancing production services:** This includes accelerating reforms to ensure improved governance of basic services to producers (including improving cost recovery and strengthening the role of the private sector). Organizations involved in providing services will be strengthened in their ability to meet producer demand in terms of quality and quantity. In particular, this program may seek to improve:
 - (i) Animal health services by: (a) strengthening public veterinary services (in particular, the organization and operationalization of cross-border services) and private veterinary services (through investment, training, and structuring assistance); (b) promoting sub-regional cooperation with regard to animal health and animal welfare; (c) gradually bringing national veterinary standards up to the standards of the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health); (d) strengthening the mandates and capabilities of the permanent veterinary committees of WAEMU and ECOWAS (plus Chad and Mauritania). The OIE and the Regional Animal Health Center (RAHC) in Bamako will be partners in these activities.
 - (ii) Advisory support and action-research, which should rely on existing public structures while making the most of the potential of private structures. Strengthened extension services will make it possible to disseminate advice about the sustainable management of pastoral resources, improve livestock breeding practices (including animal genetics, food, and behavior), and enhance the complementarity between the pastoral systems and the more input intensive livestock fattening systems. Research will focus on developing technical itineraries, in particular as concerns innovative rangeland management.
 - (iii) Access to credit, by strengthening the decentralized cooperative structures (such as micro-finance institutions and rural banks) and providing aid for economic investment in local production (through improved temporary shelter for transhumant livestock breeders, for example).
 - (iv) Access to water, via significant investments in pastoral hydraulics based on locally negotiated projects while ensuring the strengthened management and coverage of the maintenance costs for the equipment.
- 2 – Improving the competitiveness of the livestock sector and market access:** To take full advantage of the increased demand for animal products, the program will make use of the productivity gains and encourage the fair and equitable sharing of the added value within the animal value chains. In particular, this will involve:
 - (i) Strengthening all actors along the value chains, including farmers' organizations and their umbrella organizations, traders' associations, market managers, butchers' and tanners' associations, etc.) as well as coordination among actors, in particular by establishing or

strengthening inter-professional organizations with the common goal of increasing the efficiency of every actor and improving the quality of the end products.

- (ii) Assistance in making structural investments in infrastructure all along the value chains, in particular as concerns the transport of animals and animal products, updating sanitary standards and processing methods for slaughter, butchering, and the cold chain. Private sector commitment (through co-financing and management) will be systematically sought, with the same common goal of increasing profit margins and improving product quality.
- (iii) Developing regional cooperation to facilitate trade in animals and animal products, monitoring cross-border movements, issuing health certificates, establishing a suitable and regionally harmonized fiscal system, facilitating trade of goods and services (through mobility rights), and national compliance with regional legislation.
- (iv) Re-launching the technical and organizational dynamics of collecting, processing, and preserving animal products by means of private investment assistance, in particular for the purpose of creating downstream value chain jobs.
- (v) Facilitating access to new remunerative markets by promoting awareness of these markets (by conducting research, monitoring flows, observing prices, developing information systems, and encouraging mobile phone operators to cover the entire pastoral area), and by supporting stakeholders' training in order to reach new export markets (increased awareness of trade norms and rules related to the export of animal products, etc.).

3 – Strengthening the security of the assets, rights, and lifestyles of pastoral people, access to basic services, and political inclusion. To this end, the program will focus on activities aiming to:

- (i) Operationalize warning and rapid intervention systems by (a) improving existing information and early warning systems; (b) creating indicators specific to pastoralism; and (c) preparing emergency intervention plans (including monetary reserves and food stocks).
- (ii) Promote the diversification of income sources for pastoral populations, in particular by implementing specific measures promoting women and the youth through training programs, micro-investment, and access to credit.
- (iii) Strengthen the management (through prevention and resolution) of conflicts related to access to resources (including rangelands, water, and land tenure), not only by acknowledging local authorities and local negotiation but also by speeding up development and enforcement of legal frameworks (such as pastoral codes and land tenure reform).
- (iv) Promote approaches based on rights, in particular for access to land tenure, the management of rangelands, and mobility but also social services so as to ensure pastoral mobility and the sustainable use of natural resources for pastoral purposes.
- (v) Accelerate the political inclusion of pastoral communities through: (a) mainstreaming of pastoralism in development policies, projects, and programs; (b) recognition of the legitimacy of traditional pastoral institutions; (c) the inclusion of pastoralists in participatory and collaborative decision-making processes set up by the decentralized local authorities.
- (vi) Increase the access of pastoral populations to basic social services (including human health, education, and drinking water) via an ambitious program technically adapted to mobile populations (in particular through mobile services) and by taking account of the needs of pastoral communities and in particular of those of women and children.
- (vii) Promote the cultural heritage of pastoralists.