

# Start-up meeting of Regional IYRP Support Group (RISG) for Eastern & Southern Africa (16 Dec 2020)

## Agenda

1. Self-introductions
2. Background information on IYRP and approval process this far
3. Main purposes of the RISG
4. Self-organisation/coordination of the RISG
5. Paper on Eastern Africa for Joint IGC/IRC (Oct 2021)
6. First ideas for RISG activities (NB for United Nations General Assembly / UNGA)
7. Next meeting

## Welcome

Ann welcomed the participants and explained that this Zoom meeting is meant to launch our work together as a Regional IYRP Support Group (RISG) in Eastern & Southern Africa (ESA) and facilitate the group's self-organisation. The IYRP International Support Group (ISG) asked her to moderate this first meeting in order to get things started.

## 1. Self-introductions by participants

- Ann Waters-Bayer, Agrecol, Germany, member of CELEP
- Anthony Palmer, Agricultural Research Council (ARC), Grassland Society of South Africa (GSSA), International Rangeland Congress (IRC) Continuing Committee
- Babo Fadlala, Sudan University of Science and Technology, Sudan (at end of meeting)
- Godfrey Massay, Landesa, Tanzania
- Iain Wright, International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya
- Igshaan Samuels, ARC, Vice-President GSSA, South Africa
- Jacob Wanyama, Prolinnova (Promoting local innovation) Subregional Coordinator ESA, Coordinator LIFE Network Africa Region, Kenya
- Ken Otieno, Resource Conflict Institute (RECONCILE), Kenya, CELEP Eastern Africa FP
- Koen Van Troos, Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSB) Belgium, CELEP Europe FP
- Loupa Pius (Dynamic Agro-Pastoralist Development Organisation (DADO), Eastern and Southern African Pastoralist Network (ESAPN), Uganda
- Michael Odhiambo, independent consultant, associate of People, Land and Rural Development, Kenya
- Oliver Wasonga, Range Management Section, Dept of Land Resource Management & Agricultural Technology, University of Nairobi, Kenya
- Sarah Truzzi, VSF Belgium, CELEP (notes)
- Wolfgang Bayer, Agrecol, Germany, member of CELEP

## 2. Background information on IYRP and approval process thus far

Ann presented a PPT prepared by the ISG for all RISGs (see Annex 1).

Suggestion to engage and interact with other international initiatives:

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030
- United Nations (UN) Decade of Family Farming (2019–28)
- UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–30)

We should try to generate support through these initiatives and others, combining efforts to promote recognition of rangelands and pastoralists in science and practice, using personal and professional networks. We need to raise attention in various national/international meetings and try to insert something about the IYRP or at least rangelands and pastoralists into official resolutions.

Now we are forming Regional IYRP Support Groups (RISGs) in 10 regions, meant to create more support and partnerships working together with the Mongolian Government, the ISG and FAO to plan and implement IYRP activities, with a central role to be played by pastoralist organisations.

### 3. Main purposes of the RISG

- To expand the network of supporting organisations and governments in the regions and at country and local levels by continuing to raise awareness
- By working with the ISG, FAO, Mongolian Government and other global supporters, to prepare suggestions and guidance for IYRP planning and implementation in their respective regions (regional and national action plans)

#### Immediate tasks of ESA RISG (shortly after this launching meeting)

- Review and help finalise paper on Eastern Africa being prepared by Michael Odhiambo for IYRP planning sessions at Joint IGC/IRC in Oct 2021 (deadline: 31 Jan 2021)
- Review IYRP global flyer and adapt it to Eastern and Southern Africa
- Manage ESA page of IYRP website (online booth), including identifying and uploading information, and adding more supporting organisations
- Review proposed 12 monthly themes for the IYRP and adapt them to the (sub)regions

Still more tasks are outlined, with timelines, in the preparatory document that the ISG prepared for the RISGs (see Annex 2). The immediate tasks mentioned above (and more mentioned in the preparatory document) should be done in time for the FAO Conference in mid-2021.

### 4. Self-organisation/coordination of the RISG

#### Do we want to remain combined Eastern & Southern Africa group, or do we want to subdivide?

- Michael: Both options are possible, combining effort is good, but sub-groups could be helpful as well for more focused work.
- Igshaan: At the moment, we're too small to split into two groups; we might split later on if the group grows and things get more complicated.
- **Agreement to remain in one group for the time being**

#### What kind of person do we need to be able to coordinate this group (criteria)?

- Iain: The leader/chair should represent the regional pastoralist community (rather than someone from an international organisation who happens to be in the region) and should have a good network.
- Loupa: ESAPN could also coordinate; proposed also by Ken Otieno.
- Michael: There is a difference between coordinating the group and reinforcing pastoralist communities' involvement and ensuring that they have voice.
- Koen: The ESAPN could chair each meeting and then someone else could coordinate.
- Oliver: We need to find a person who can dedicate time to the tasks of a chair.
- Ann: We could define the criteria now, send them out to everybody in the wider group, ask for nominations and then have a vote.
- Iain: We could have co-chairs reflecting the Eastern & Southern African regional dimension/geographical coverage.

- Ann: We could have one person from Eastern and one from Southern Africa.
- Igshaan: A representation of any kind from each region would be good.
- Michael: The ESAPN could be used to identify the pastoralist organisations we could work with in Southern Africa.
- Agreement on two co-chairs, one from Eastern and one from Southern Africa, each working very closely together with someone in a pastoralist organisation of the subregion
- Ken and Loupa to look into their networks and map relevant organisation and person(s) to work with in Eastern Africa; Igshaan and Tony to do the same in Southern Africa; these four people will be the interim coordinators.

### **Representation of ESA RISG in IYRP International Support Group (ISG)**

Who will represent the ESA RISG in the ISG (take part in meetings and by email; bring in views, suggestions and concerns from the region)? The ESA RISG is currently well represented in the ISG: 14 people out of 28 who expressed interest in being part of this group are already in the ISG.

- We will wait until the ISG restructures itself and, if it decides to reduce its size, we can talk about specific linkage persons between the ESA RISG and the ISG, probably the coordinators as mentioned above.

### **Selecting person(s) to link ESA RISG with global Communications Team**

Who will be the link between the ESA RISG and the global IYRP Communications Team? This could be one or more people (i.e. a small team); at least two people would be good who are very much involved with communication about the IYRP in the region.

#### Roles:

- Manage provision of news, information and ideas coming out of ESA about promoting the IYRP to the global communications team
- Coordinate management of regional section of IYRP website (<https://www.iyrp.info/eastern-southern-africa>) including uploading information and adding more supporting organisations.

#### Criteria:

- Michael: communication capacities/experience + good network – proposes Koen
- Koen: CELEP can handle some of this work, at least related to Eastern Africa, but we should also ask if there's anybody else interested.
- Ann: It would be good to have a small team with 1–2 people from Eastern Africa and 1–2 people from Southern Africa, collaborating also with CELEP.
- Loupa: Ann is also good at communication and linkage with RISG and global communication.
- Ann to send an e-mail to the entire group to asking for self-nominations of people who are interested and have the time to do this.
- Igshaan and Tony to also think about someone in Southern Africa who is perhaps not yet in the group but could join in this task.

### **Geographical composition of the group**

A total of 28 people expressed interest thus far to be in the ESA RISG; of these, 11 are in today's Zoom meeting, so less than half. The group consists of:

- 21 people from Eastern Africa: 13 Kenya, 4 Uganda, 1 Ethiopia, 1 Somalia, 1 Sudan, 1 Tanzania
- 3 from Southern Africa: all 3 from South Africa
- 4 from elsewhere: 2 US, 1 Belgium, 1 Germany
- Of the 28 people, only 5 are women (and 2 of these are non-African).

Thus, the group composition is very unbalanced from a geographical and gender point of view.

- We need to attract more people from other countries in Eastern & Southern Africa, including more women and more people from pastoralist organisations, also including women.

#### **We have an IYRP listserv; should we have a regional one as well, or just a mailing list?**

- Tony: We should avoid too many interactive groups; meetings are the best way to collaborate and to organise networking/awareness events; we can still increase the group size and add new people to the mailing list.
- Koen: We already have lots of communication tools with CELEP; it is better to use those, maximising their utility rather than creating new ones (the more tools, the more workload).
- Ann: Everybody here in the meeting should join the CELEP Googlegroup (send an e-mail to Koen or Ann to be included) for exchange of information about pastoralism, rangelands and related policy in ESA, and we could use a mailing list to organise meetings and events.
- Ken: Using CELEP communication tools for some of our work would not make us raise identity questions (IYRP ESA); the advocacy work of CELEP and the Rangeland Initiative and the IYRP support groups are quite overlapping, we are already using these channels to campaign for the IYRP – that it our combined identity to reach this goal.
- Koen: Everything about the IYRP will in any case be replicated in CELEP communication tools.
- For organising meetings and events planned by ESA RISG, we will continue to use the current mailing list; the addresses of new members will be added to this list.
- For more general exchange of information about rangelands and pastoralism in ESA, we will start by using CELEP communication tools and possible revise things in the future.
- Exchange of information can also go through networks in Southern Africa by active communicators there.

## **5. Paper on Eastern Africa for Joint IGC/IRC (Oct 2021)**

At the moment, we have a regional paper being prepared only on Eastern Africa; Michael Odhiambo (Kenya) is writing the paper and seeks support from ESA RISG members to complete the paper.

#### **Michael on status of the paper:**

- Agree that we need to talk more about the issue of gender.
- Identification of priority areas for research to fill gaps in knowledge about pastoralists with regard to development, food security, climate change, etc; linked to UNEP gap analysis on rangelands and pastoralists (<https://www.grida.no/publications/428>).
- These areas will be focus of activities before/during IYRP, so we can truly capitalise from it.
- Not an academic paper but something to trigger policy discussions for advocacy around issues undermining realisation of the full potential of rangelands and pastoralists in national and regional economies.
- Some of the proposed areas to highlight in the paper:
  - Information and data on coverage of rangelands and people depending on rangelands (this information is generally outdated but still referred to; it needs to be updated)
  - Population of pastoralists and agropastoralists in countries and region
  - Population of livestock (either there has been no census, or the figures are very old)
  - Role of rangelands in environmental policies across regions and countries
  - Problematised lack of data on rangelands and pastoralists – lessons learned from areas where data are being collected well – highlight key gaps in research and data collection.

Michael aims to have a draft of the paper ready by mid-January 2021, for comments from the group.

Wanyama: Has been working on methodologies in collecting data about pastoralists; willing to support Michael in this regard.

- Ann to share abstract of paper with all in the group, who should send Michael information about their own country: perspectives on situation of rangelands and pastoralists, progress made with respect to influencing policy in favour of pastoralism, policy and data gaps, priority areas for research related to rangelands and pastoralism.
- Michael to send structure of paper to the group.
- Ann to find out if there will be a regional paper on Southern Africa.

## 6. First ideas for RISG activities

Next hurdles: Endorsement of IYRP resolution/proposal by FAO Conference (Rome, July 2021) and, most importantly, by UNGA in New York in September 2021.

To do:

- Gain support of more governments and organisations, including concrete commitments of support (both financial and in kind)
- Campaign for endorsement of the IYRP proposal through:
  - Lobbying at national level
  - Promotion and communication activities; developing materials such as videos, data, papers, also to share on IYRP website (online booth)
  - Identifying and reaching out to more organisations, especially of pastoralists, and national/regional institutions/governments
  - Online campaign before the UNGA together with the ISG and the other RISGs
  - Physical awareness event in Rome (if possible, otherwise online) and hopefully physical event in New York (e.g. side event, exhibits, seminar for delegates, film screening) – need to evaluate the possibility of allocating resources especially if physical meetings.

In the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), over 50 countries supported the IYRP proposal, but there are almost 200 countries in the UN; we need to get support from more countries. Moreover, the Ministries of Agriculture showed their support at COAG but, for UNGA, we need to get support from the Ministries of Foreign/External Affairs.

The Government of Mongolia welcomes any other national government to co-sponsor the IYRP resolution when it reaches UNGA in New York. In ESA, we can start with countries that already expressed support in COAG – Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan – and quickly start exploring whether Ministries of Agriculture and Foreign Affairs would agree to co-sponsor the resolution.

- Michael: The Joint IGC/IRC Congress will be hosted in Kenya next year; this can be used as leverage. We need to find out what is its resonance at the governmental level and how to actually use this leverage. IGAD has a very strong position on pastoralism; we need to understand their official position on the IYRP. We must talk to governments individually but also get them to talk among each other within the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). We could also try through the East African Community (EAC).
- Wanyama: Kenyan members of RISG could plan how to get Kenyan Government support; we should follow up with a brainstorming session on this.
- Ann: Ken could organise such a brainstorming in Kenya; Loupa could do the same in Uganda, even though chances are maybe not so high of getting Uganda Government support.
- Loupa: Today IGAD, ESAPN, COPASCO and AFSA met to validate the IGAD Transhumance Protocol in Kampala. This is an opportunity for Benjamin and Bridget of COPASCO and AFSA. We can have a meeting with AFSA and IGAD soon.

- Michael: Loupa could explore interest within IGAD, EAC and AFSA to be involved in the IYRP.
- Ann: In all countries in ESA, it is important that we draw up strategies to communicate with and convince Ministries of Foreign Affairs, working through other Ministries such as for agriculture. Ethiopia and Sudan would also be good possibilities if targeted by RISG members in those countries.
- Michael: Are CELEP Eastern African partners aware of what is going on?
- Koen: We could ask partners of Misereor, e.g. Abdulkadir Noor with PPDA (Partnership for Pastoralists Development Association), to follow up in Ethiopia. We have been a bit less active in Tanzania in recent years but Edward Lekaita, who joined our CELEP Annual General Meeting last year, was just elected into the Tanzanian Parliament and may be an entry point. We don't work much in the other countries in Eastern Africa such as South Sudan, Sudan or Eritrea. We do have an active member (Sadiah Ahmed) who could perhaps gain support from Somaliland, but this is not a country recognised by the UN. We could also ask the African Union and IGAD through our contacts established for one of our webinars.
- Loupa to explore interest within IGAD, EAC and AFSA to be involved in the IYRP
- Ken to organise brainstorming session with Kenyan RISG members and plan roadmap to get the Government of Kenya to co-sponsor the IYRP proposal
- Koen to follow up through CELEP Eastern African partners about getting government co-sponsorship or at least support in other countries in Eastern Africa

#### **Entry points in Southern Africa for co-sponsorship / letters of support**

- Igshaan: A lady from South Africa involved in grasslands is working in the Ministry and could be an entry point for this.
- Tony: We have contacts also in Namibia and can seek support there.
- Igshaan and Tony to map organisations in different countries that could join the RISG and lobby their governments

#### **Reviewing the global IYRP flyer to make it usable/attractive for people in ESA**

- Ken to suggest adaptations, if needed, for Eastern Africa and share with the group
- Igshaan to suggest adaptations, if needed for Southern Africa and share with the group

#### **12 monthly themes for 2026 to be adapted to the regions**

It is probably best to consider this during another meeting; it is not so urgent now. UNGA is the priority at the moment.

## **7. Next meeting**

**When:** 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January 2021

- Ann to send out Doodle.

**Content:**

- Revision of IGC/IRC paper on Eastern African – RISG members to send Michael information from their countries as soon as possible; Michael to share draft paper in 2nd week of Jan
- Regional adaptations of IYRP flyer – Ken and Igshaan to share suggestions by mid-January
- Mapping information about level of government's openness & contacts for Kenya (coordinated by Ken), Uganda (coordinated by Loupa), South Africa (coordinated by Igshaan & Tony), possibly Ethiopia, Sudan & other countries (depends on initiative of other members)

**Convenors:** Ann/Koen; by then, we should have clearer idea who will convene future meetings.