Landscapes of Possibilities:
Youth Convening for Sustainable and Resilient Futures

BACKGROUND

Year 2026 marks the **International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists**, a global opportunity to recognise the ecological, cultural, and economic significance of systems that nourish and sustain our world. Rangelands cover roughly half of the Earth's land surface and are central to the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of pastoralists globally. Given their mutual interdependence, IYRP 2026 calls for greater public recognition and responsible investment in rangeland conservation, as well as inclusive governance, and policies to secure pastoralists' access to land, mobility, resources, and equitable value chains.

As is well-established, **pastoral and agropastoral societies are experiencing complex socioecological, economic, and political changes** and many young people find themselves at the centre of these changes. They inhabit **landscapes shaped by environmental uncertainty, cultural transition, vulnerable livelihoods,** and **uneven access to opportunity**. Youth are often encouraged to move away from land-based livelihoods in pursuit of education, employment, and social mobility, whilst being expected to carry forward cultural knowledge, care for land and animals, maintain kinship responsibilities, and uphold community values. These overlapping expectations create a set of **unresolved tensions**: What does it mean to belong to a pastoral landscape when one's future may lie outside of it? How to bridge one's immediate environment and ancestral memories at a time of large-scale changes? What forms of knowledge must be retained, transformed, or newly created? How do questions of gender, mobility, education, and livelihood influence aspirations? And what kinds of alliances are needed for young people to become active participants in shaping the future they see for themselves?

In light of this, we would like to facilitate a **participatory youth convening** that creates a reflexive, grounded and safe space for youth from pastoral, agro-pastoral, rural, urban, and peri-urban contexts to express their thoughts, dilemmas, ideas and optimism. Despite the obvious challenges, the convening resists framing youth experiences merely through the lens of crisis, loss, or uncertainty. It aims to **hold space for the recognition and celebration of what is already working**: the creativity, embodied knowledge, everyday negotiations, and forms of resilience through which young people can continue to balance life, land, and culture. The convening will bring together **visible youth leaders alongside less visible voices that are often absent from such spaces**.

GOAL

To provoke **bold new imaginaries for resilient futures** by treating the youth as active thinkers, rights-holders, cultural mediators, and changemakers.

OBJECTIVES

- **To hold space for exploring socioecological change, aspirations and capabilities:** Enable young people (aged 18–35) to reflect on how ecological and climate change intersect with aspiration, land relations, livelihood transitions and culture.
- **To foster intergenerational and plural forms of knowledge exchange:** Bring youth into dialogue with elders, practitioners, knowledge-holders and facilitators through storytelling, mapping, music, poetry, theatre, embodied practice, visual reflection and multilingual conversation.
- **To nurture pathways for resilient futures:** Identify and support the youth to build peer networks, strengthen locally grounded initiatives, and carry forward conversations beyond the convening.

WHO IS ORGANISING THE CONVENING?

The convening is being anchored by Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment in collaboration with Higher Education Department (UT Ladakh), Katradi Trust, Government Degree College, Kargil, Government Higher Secondary School, Tangtse, Changthang, Ladakh Drayangs Youth Association, Achi Association India. The event is supported by Rural India Supporting Trust and French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development. For further details contact: queries.iyrp@atree.org

About the Lead Facilitator

Sangeeta Isvaran is a dancer-performer, educator, social practitioner, and founder of the Katradi Trust. She uses arts-based approaches such as movement, theatre, storytelling, and reflective practice to support education, empowerment, empathy-building, and social transformation. She has applied this approach with marginalised and underserved communities across more than 30 countries and has taught at over 20 universities and international organisations. She is also an Honorary Associate of the Nature Conservation Foundation, where her work has addressed gender sensitivity, mental health, sexual harassment, and conflict resolution. Sangeeta is a Fellow of the International Institute of Conciliation and a recipient of the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar.

PROGRAMME DETAILS

ACTIVITY	DATES	LOCATION
Call for Photos and Reels Open to persons belonging to pastoral/agropastoral communities from across the world	1–14 October	Virtual Further details regarding this event can be found here
Youth Workshop I Open to youth primarily from Changthang and nearby regions, as well as youth from across India. Maximum participants: 30	25–27 October	GHSS, Tharuk (Tangtse) Indicative flow pasted below
Public Event I Open to all	28 October	GHSS, Tharuk (Tangtse) Indicative flow pasted below
Youth Workshop II Open to youth primarily from Kargil and nearby regions, as well as youth from across India. Maximum participants: 30	31 October–2 November	GDC, Kargil Indicative flow pasted below
Public Event II Open to all	3 November	GDC, Kargil Indicative flow pasted below

Indicative Workshop Flow

DAY 1 — Connecting Young People to Each Other and the Landscape	
Time	**Session**
8:00–9:30 am	Breakfast, then head to workshop venue
9:45–10:00 am	Welcome & Introductions
10:00–11:00 am	Bridging the Gaps — Bonding, Icebreakers & Games
11:00–11:30 am	Tea Break
11:30 am–12:00 pm	Ground Rules Through Play & Consent (Note on respectful interactions, POSH, and restoring system for the workshop)

12:00–1:00 pm	Bonding with the Landscape — Participants share their best memories and experiences of their landscapes, creating a collective tapestry of how different communities live in and relate to their surroundings.
1:00–2:00 pm	Lunch
2:00–2:30 pm	Energy Boosters — Icebreakers, Games & Dance
2:30–3:30 pm	Deeper Understanding of the Landscape
3:30–4:00 pm	Tea Break
4:00–4:30 pm	Machine Infernal — A game using local story lines to trigger discussion around challenges in the landscape.
4:30–5:30 pm	Beginning a shared story - Starting the collective art process — Sharing different aspects of the cultures represented by participants from across Ladakh, then starting to build eco collages collectively based on stories, challenges, aspirations of the participants.
5:30–7:00 pm	Down time: Tea, Games, Play
7:00–8:00 pm	Head back to the hotels
8:30 pm onwards	Dinner
DAY 2 — Understanding Divides, Opportunities and Challenges	
Time	**Session**
8:00–9:30 am	Breakfast, then head to workshop venue
9:30–11:00 am	Gender, Caste, Community & All the Things That Separate Us — Exploring how young people experience and are affected by social divisions and polarisation
11:00–11:30 am	Tea Break
11:30 am–12:30 pm	Science and Tradition: Sahil Nijhawan and Aito Miwu will take us to the tropical mountains of Eastern Arunachal in the Dibang Valley, the ancestral land of the Idu Mishmi people. Their team is experimenting with a new model that combines scientific knowledge with traditional knowledge to manage, protect and govern wildlife in community owned forests.
12:30–1:00 pm	Group Art Project
1:00–2:00 pm	Lunch
2:00–2:30 pm	Continuing Group Art project
2:30–4:00 pm	Panel Discussion — Opportunities young people have & the challenges they face. Including pastoralism and the landscape today.
4:00–4:30 pm	Tea Break
4:30–5:30 pm	Mental Health — Exploring challenges faced by young people, followed by meditation and visualisation as strategies for wellbeing
5:30–7:00 pm	Film Screenings with Tea
7:00–8:00 pm	Head back to hotels
8:30 pm onwards	Dinner

DAY 3 — Creating, Reflecting and Looking Forward	
Time	**Session**
8:00–9:30 am	Breakfast, then head to workshop venue
9:30 am–10:30 pm	Dreaming About the Future — What do young people need and how can they be supported? Writing a letter to future self.
10:30am–1:00 pm	Circle Time — What did we learn? What did we love? What was new for us? What are we taking away from the experience? What next? (including tea)
1:00–2:00 pm	Lunch
3:00–4:00 pm	Creating Festival Working Groups — Participants work in groups based on their interests, including finishing community art project, making performance, audience interaction, presenting and other areas that emerge from the discussions. The session remains flexible and is interspersed with games and bonding activities.
4:00–4:30 pm	Tea Break
4:30–5:30 pm	Festival Preparation & Finalising the Flow — Organisers and young people work together to finalise the festival flow and set up the space.
5:30–7:30 pm	Festival Prep continues/ Free Time / Optional Frisbee
7.30 pm	Head back to hotels
8:30 pm onwards	Dinner

Indicative Public Event Flow

Time	Activity
10:30–11:00 am	Welcome Address and Introduction — Address by Organisers and Chief Guest
11:00–11:30 am	Performance — Developed by youth workshop participants
11:30 am–12:15 pm	Local Cultural Performances — Cultural presentations by local artists, youth and community groups
12:15–1:00 pm	Film Screening/ Showcase of materials shot during the virtual event
1:00–1:15 pm	Closing Reflections and Acknowledgements
1:15–2.15 pm	Lunch
2:15 pm onwards	Open Exhibition on wool and creative outputs that participants or community groups/SHGs/NGOs wish to showcase
Note: The Public Event is scheduled on 28th October, 2026 in GHSS,Tharuk (Tangtse) and on 3rd November, 2026 in GDC, Kargil	