

Second meeting of the Regional IYRP Support Group (RISG) for Eastern & Southern African 22/01/2021

Participants

Abdulkadir Mah, Ethiopia; Ahanda Sosthène Nicaise, Cameroon; Ann Waters-Bayer, Germany; Anthony Denayer, Belgium; Babo Fadlala, Sudan; Benjamin Mutambukha, Uganda; Bernadette Shalumbu, Namibia; Bukho Gusha, South Africa; Elly Sabiiti, Uganda; Emmanuel Emaruk, Uganda; Emmanuel Sulle, Tanzania; Fiona Flintan, Italy; Godfrey Massay, Tanzania; Hannah Longole, Uganda; Igshaan Samuels, South Africa; Kedibone Chueu, South Africa; Ken Otieno, Kenya; Koen Vantroos, Belgium; Loupa Pius, Uganda; Monicah Yator, Kenya; Nyang'ori Ohenjo, CEMIRIDE; Peter Ekiru Ochepe, Uganda; Prisca Mugabe, Zimbabwe; Sikhalazo Dube, Zimbabwe; Tezera Getahun, Ethiopia; Tim Njagi, Kenya; Tony Palmer (South Africa)

See Annex 1 for more details about institutional affiliations and email addresses.

Minutes

As facilitator, Ann welcomed all participants, both those from the previous meeting and those who have joined the RISG in the meantime. As it would take too long to do a round of spoken introductions, Ann asked each participant to use the Chat box to write his/her name, institutional affiliation and country where based. After the meeting, she will circulate a list of ESA RISG members.

The RISG is an informal group of volunteers with a common aim to promote rangelands and pastoralism and specifically the campaign for the International Year of Rangelands & Pastoralists (IYRP). We are working with our own resources, above all, our time. This will not be conducted like a meeting of an official body (calling to order, approving minutes etc), but we will – at the appropriate point in the agenda – refer to what we agreed, during the previous meeting, to do.

The file with the revised Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the RISGs, formulated primarily by Maryam Niamir, Vice-Chair of the IYRP International Support Group (ISG), was sent around earlier this week.

1. ESA RISG Core Team and Communications Team

Core Team: A team composed of Ken Otieno & Loupa Pius from Eastern Africa and Igshaan Samuels and Tony Palmer from Southern Africa was proposed during the first meeting. Participants in this second meeting saw a need to include at least one woman. Several women were nominated to be part of the Core Team:

1. Prisca Mugabe (Zimbabwe)
2. Saadia Ahmed (Somalia)
3. Monica Yator (Kenya)
4. Hannah Longole (Uganda)

Tony also suggested that (Ms) Kedibone Chueu (South Africa) could take his place in the Core Team.

Ann suggested that the people who nominated these women should send a short justification as to why they would be suitable for Core Team. The women will be asked if they agree to the nomination. Then Ann will send the information on all candidates to all members of the ESA RISG, and a vote will decide who will join the Core Team.

The tasks of the Core Team are explained in the terms of reference. These are also listed in Annex 2 (ToRs for the RISG Core Team, Communications Team and members).

Main tasks of the members of the RISG are to inform their wider networks about the IYRP, generate support of their national governments and of other organisations in their countries and volunteer to carry out tasks agreed within the RISG, e.g. if there is an advocacy event being held in their country.

Communications Team: The Comms Team is now composed of Ann and Loupa. After the first RISG meeting, Ann asked for self-nominations to the Comms Team, but received none. **Volunteers are welcome. The team will decide who will represent it in the Global Comms Team.**

Igshaan confirmed that they have colleagues in Southern Africa who might be interested in joining the Comms Team. Ann suggested that **they be linked up directly with Loupa and her.**

Ann also suggested that one or more of the women nominated who do not join the Core Team could join the Comms Team. Prisca was suggested as a possible member of the Comms Team.

Fiona Flintan explained that ILRI offered to provide in-kind support to the IYRP Global Comms Team and, through this, to the regional Comms Teams. Iain Wright will follow up on this; Fiona and Michael Victor will also be involved. ILRI will provide expertise and other resources, e.g. for blogs, press releases, posters, awareness-raising (side) events at regional and global level. Mireille Ferrara will be the ILRI representative in the Global Comms Team. Each regional Comms Team will have at least one representative in the Global Comms Team. Requests from the ESA RISG for ILRI communications support should go through the Global Comms Team.

Wolfgang Bayer asked if ILRI Board members could help in gaining support from national governments. Fiona explained that the CGIAR centres would no longer have boards because of the move towards One CGIAR. However, ILRI is very much involved in the UN Food Systems Summit and the Biodiversity Conference of Parties (COP), advocating for the IYRP. Fiona also explained that she supported the development of a global communications strategy by ILRI on rangelands/pastoralism. The FSS will be held together with the United National General Assembly (UNGA) meeting in September 2021 in New York, where the decision about the IYRP will be made.

Ann highlighted the importance of the IYRP “online booth”, which serves to inform and inspire the people voting on the Mongolian proposal for an IYRP during UNGA. She asked **all members of the RISG to send video films, testimonials, photos and other information to be added to the ESA webpage on the “online booth”** (<https://www.iyrp.info/eastern-southern-africa>).

Policy Working Group: A suggestion was made to set up a Policy Working Group to influence national and regional policymakers to create a favourable environment for sustainable pastoralism and rangelands. Loupa asked whether ILRI could join this group. Fiona replied that ILRI’s involvement in this would depend on the involvement of its country or regional reps. In the RISG, we already have Iain Wright as ILRI’s Deputy Director General and Sikhalazo Dube as ILRI’s rep in Southern Africa. **They could help the RISG in identifying other ILRI reps that would like to join the policy group.**

Ann requested that **all members interested in joining the policy group inform the Core Team.** She can also circulate information about the policy group that has already been set up by the RISG in Europe.

2. Review of paper on Eastern Africa for IGC/IRC 2021/posters for IYRP sessions

The abstract of Michael’s paper was circulated shortly after the first ESA RISG meeting. Michael has now circulated a draft of his full paper for the Joint International Grassland & Rangeland Congress (IGC/IRC) in Nairobi in October 2021.

Comments and suggestions made (spoken and Chat) by participants in the meeting were:

- Give more emphasis to how traditional land-management mechanisms are undermined by governments (Hannah)
- Give more emphasis to the potential of pastoralism in terms of productivity as compared to other land-use systems and provide more evidence (inputs vs outputs, low external input, low use of fossil fuels) (Abdulkadir and Ann)
- In the introduction, include more recent literature references on management of the commons (Tony Palmer; he will also share his comments directly with Michael)

- Link with climate change and its relation to mobility; how climate change affects traditional land-tenure systems; also how climate change is having consequences from an economic perspective (Anthony and Ken)
- Add something on role/potential contribution of pastoralism and pastoral customary governance systems to climate change mitigation, in the light of maintaining/increasing rangeland productivity and ecosystem health (Anthony)
- Include economics of pastoralism in terms of trade, exports... Also relationship with national parks and wildlife (in particular, in Southern Africa) and how this relationship has impact on diseases and how pastoralists' stewardship is challenged because of this; in addition, more emphasis on human nutrition provided by pastoralist systems (Sikhalazo)
- Regarding conflict in rangelands, give more emphasis to interplay of pastoral conflicts in context of traditional governance systems and climate change and how best they can be dealt with, particularly through a review of the current policies (Nyang'ori Ohenjo)
- It's also critical to take note of empowering pastoralists' indigenous knowledge systems, innovation and skills (Hannah).
- Focus on insecure land tenure and marginalisation of pastoralist livelihoods: conversion of grazing land to private use; also more attention to agro-pastoralists, bringing in organic farming and agroecology (TECNO SPARK 2).

Ann suggested that points raised about traditional land management by pastoralists, the commons and co-existence with wildlife could also be addressed in separate papers written by members of the RISG.

Emmanuel Sulle informed the group that he had inserted his comments in the file and sent it to Michael. Ann suggested that **all RISG members who want to make further comments on the current draft of the paper could send their comments directly to Michael as soon as possible.**

Loupa proposed that a small group assist Michael in finalising the paper or commenting on his next version. However, time is tight, as the paper is to be submitted by 31 January. Ann asked **those interested in giving final comments a day or two before the deadline to indicate this in the Chat or send a message directly to Michael about this. Prisca volunteered to look at the final draft.**

Ann informed the group that, in addition to the paper on Eastern Africa being presented by Michael, there would be several sessions during the IGC/IRC focused on the IYRP. During these sessions, it will be possible to show and possibly present posters about key gaps and issues to be addressed in other regions. **Igshaan and Tony intend to prepare a poster on the topic and possibly also a paper along the lines of what Michael has prepared but focused on Southern Africa.**

3. Regional adaptations of IYRP flyer to make it more attractive for people in ESA

Ann explained that the original idea of the ISG had been to tailor the global flyer to different regional contexts. Ken was to suggest adaptations, if needed, for Eastern Africa and Igshaan for Southern Africa. Igshaan chose to work on the information for pastoralist organisations, which was already in a simpler language than the flyer. He explained that the use of language is important and we should avoid complicated words and translate the information into local languages and terminology.

Igshaan's version of the information for pastoralist organisations in Southern Africa was circulated to the entire RISG together with the agenda for today's meeting. There were no comments from the participants. Ann suggested that the **members from Southern Africa take another look at Igshaan's draft and, if all agree that this would be understandable by pastoralists and other people in Southern Africa, it should be posted on the ESA webpage and disseminated by the Southern African members to raise the interest of others, particularly pastoralist groups, to join the IYRP effort.**

Ken and Loupa will check if any adaptation is needed of the materials to suit readers in Eastern Africa.

4. Generating support / co-sponsorship from other countries in ESA

Our priority now is to increase the number of supporting governments and organisations and concrete commitments for support (financial and in kind), possible also co-sponsorship of the Mongolian proposal by other national governments, in order to ensure endorsement of the IYRP at UNGA.

According to Gregorio Velasco, FAO Pastoralist Knowledge Hub, in a mail sent earlier this week, there is no need for major advocacy activities before the FAO Conference mid-July 2021, as the proposal will not be discussed in detail there, because it has already been endorsed by the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and the FAO Council. We should focus on getting country support for UNGA.

The status of country support expressed thus far is as follows:

- Countries that wrote support letters before the COAG meeting: Ethiopia, Kenya
- Additional country that expressed support during the COAG meeting: Sudan
- Countries from which support letters need to be sought: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Ruanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Building on actions points from the first RISG meeting, it was agreed that the following people would coordinate exploration of government's openness to the IYRP idea and identify suitable contacts:

Eastern Africa (coordination by Loupa & Ken)

- Loupa & Benjamin: Uganda
- Ken & Wanyama: Kenya (with a view of getting the Government of Kenya to co-sponsor the IYRP proposal with the Government of Mongolia)
- Abdulkadir & Tezera: Ethiopia (also exploring possibility of co-sponsorship of the proposal)
- Loupa will reach out to his contacts in Somalia
- Babo Fadlala: Sudan (will contact also CELEP member Salih El Douma, SOS Sahel, about this)
- CELEP Focal Point (now Anthony Denayer at VSFB) to ask Edward Lekaita (newly elected MP in Tanzania) as entry point to support from the Tanzanian Government
- CELEP Focal Point will contact its partner organisation in South Sudan AMA.

Southern Africa (coordination by Igshaan & Tony)

- Igshaan, Tony & Kedibone: South Africa (Kedibone reported that they are already in touch with a South African Government Minister who will very likely sign a support letter)
- Other RISG members in Southern African will need to be approached and new ones identified to generate support from other countries in Southern Africa.

5. Gaining support from more organisations in ESA

Ann reported that, since the last meeting, Loupa and Igshaan have been very active in attracting new people and organisations to join the RISG from Eastern and Southern Africa, respectively. The group has grown tremendously. The ESA countries currently represented in the RISG are: in Eastern Africa, Kenya (19 persons), Uganda (19), Ethiopia (4), Tanzania (3), Somalia (1) and Sudan (1); and in Southern Africa, Zimbabwe (5), South Africa (4), Namibia (2) and Botswana (1). ESA countries not yet represented in the RISG are: Angola, Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Ruanda, South Sudan and Zambia.

It is important to have RISG members in the different countries who can lobby their governments. Ann asked all RISG members to continue to inform and bring on board more people from other countries in ESA, including more women and more people from pastoralist organisations, also including women.

Moreover, in addition to more letters of support, commitment or co-sponsorship from governments, we need more letters of support from organisations – civil society, research, academia etc. Ann can provide examples of support letters to anyone who needs them.

Prisca pointed out the importance of including organisations working with rangeland users besides pastoralists. In Southern Africa, for instance, many people make a livelihood related to wildlife; there are also indigenous peoples who do not keep livestock. We need a multistakeholder approach. Ann urged **RISG members to bring organisations concerned with indigenous peoples and wildlife on board.**

6. Generating support from regional bodies / international organisations

At the first meeting, we agreed that Loupa would explore interest within IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development), EAC (East African Community) and AFSA (Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa) to be involved in the IYRP campaign. **Loupa made contacts with people in AFSA and IGAD and will be following these up.**

The CELEP Focal point will follow up with its African Union contact established for the recent CELEP webinar on pastoralism and policy.

The ESAPN (Eastern & Southern African Pastoralist Network) offered to follow up with IGAD through its links with ICPALD (IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development).

Ann stressed that expressions of support from the AU, EAC and IGAD would strengthen the campaign for an IYRP, and AFSA support would add to the support from civil society.

7. Next meeting

Ken has offered that the next ESA RISG meeting can be hosted via the Zoom account of RECONCILE, who will be sending the invites. **The Core Team will first meet and decide who will chair the meeting and draw up an agenda. Dates and times for the RISG meeting will be proposed to the group.**

Some topics that were suggested by participants were:

- Linking up with national climate change adaptation plans (Monica)
- Impact of COVID-19 + other disasters and hazards on pastoralists.

Ann thanked Koen for taking notes during the meeting. These will be circulated for comments.

She thanked everyone for taking such active part in the meeting, and wished all a good weekend.

The 1.5-hour meeting was closed.