

PASTORALIST Community Conference

Voices from the Rangelands:
Land, Livelihoods and Resilience

Asia Regional Conference
10-11 September 2026
Virtual/Online



Date	10 - 11 September 2026
Format	Online Conference
Scope/Region	Asia (multi-country)
Co-organizers	International Land Coalition (ILC) Asia, Foundation for Ecological Security (FES), Rainfed Livestock Network (RLN), South Asia Pastoralist Alliance (SAPA), Central Asia Pastoralist Alliance (CAPA), Ecological Restoration Platform (ERP) and National Land Coalition (NLC) India
Participants	Pastoralist Communities, Community Based Organizations
Partners	ILC Asia Members and Partners
Context	International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) 2026

① Background and Rationale

Across Asia, pastoralist communities have sustainably managed vast rangelands, mountains, and semi-arid landscapes for centuries— stewarding biodiversity, maintaining food systems, and preserving rich cultural heritages through mobile pastoralism. Grounded in indigenous knowledge and customary practices, their stewardship and mobility also contributes to the restoration of degraded rangelands, strengthens ecosystem resilience, and sustains essential ecosystem services for future generations.

Today, these communities stand at a critical crossroads. Climate change, land grabbing, green enclosures, legal exclusion, and the erosion of customary governance systems increasingly threaten their way of life, livelihoods, mobility and fundamental rights to land, territory, and resources. These pressures undermine collective land rights, customary governance systems and access to grazing lands, mobility corridors threatening both pastoral livelihoods and long-term health of rangeland ecosystems.

The International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) 2026 presents a strategically important moment for a global call for recognition, solidarity, and action. Across Asia, however, pastoralist communities remain underrepresented in decision-making, and their knowledge and innovations continue to be overlooked in policies and investments affecting rangelands. Pastoralists are critical food producers, frontline environmental defenders, custodians of biodiversity, and key actors in community-led ecosystem restoration and nature-based solutions across diverse landscapes. Their voices, experiences, and knowledge must be placed at the centre of policy dialogue and decision-making processes.

Despite growing international attention, pastoralist communities across Asia remain largely unrepresented in regional and global forums, rangelands are under threat from various developmental initiatives. Despite the pivotal role of pastoralist communities in protecting rangelands and biodiversity, their stories of way of life, innovation, resistance, and stewardship are rarely documented or elevated in ways that generate influential evidence for lasting policy changes towards rights recognition from local to global level.

The Pastoralist Community Conference is designed to amplify pastoralist voices, celebrate community stewardship, generate evidence for advocacy, document and communicate evidences on the ecological and social value of pastoral mobility, and strengthen a solidarity network across Asia in alignment with the objectives of the IYRP 2026 and International Land Coalition's (ILC) Mobility Matters (MM) Campaign. The outcomes of the conference will contribute to the MM campaign that intends to shift narrative on mobility as a nature-based solution, recognise pastoral mobility in legal frameworks and catalyse investments in rangelands.



About the Pastoralist Community Conference

The Pastoralist Community Conference is an inclusive, accessible, and community-centred safe space where pastoralist men, women, and youth from across Asia will converge to share lived experiences, exchange good practices, and strengthen their collective agency. The conference will be held on 10 – 11 September 2026.

What it is:

An international platform for peer-learning, networking and partnership for pastoralist communities and relevant stakeholders across Asia with regards to managing native livestock, protecting biodiversity, governing rangelands, and contributing to food security across Asia.

A celebration of community stewardship of land, water, forests, and culture.

A movement-building space encouraging diversity, facilitating inclusivity, and internalizing empowerment through genuine dialogue on under-represented themes.

What makes it distinctive:

- **Community-led:** Sessions and testimonies are driven by pastoralist communities themselves — not by external experts or institutions.
- **Experiential and knowledge-based:** Grounded in real stories, lived realities, and locally proven practices from the field.
- **Intersectional:** Centering the experiences of women, youth, and marginalized groups within pastoralist communities.
- **Action-oriented:** Generating documented evidence and advocacy momentum that feeds directly into IYRP 2026 processes and beyond.



3 Objectives

Objectives of the Pastoralist Community Conference are:

- 1.To build a regional community of practicing pastoralists and herders across Asia that fosters peer learning, mutual support, intergenerational knowledge exchange, and a shared identity as custodians of rangelands and pastoral livelihoods.
- 2.To reflect (on various community-led initiatives that strengthen tenure security, mobility and community stewardship of pastoralists), document and disseminate community-led practices, traditional knowledge and innovations in rangeland governance, livestock management, conservation, and climate adaptation through a regional case study compendium.
- 3.To deepen collaboration among pastoralist organisations, research institutions, and development partners, while creating stronger pathways for community-generated evidence and pastoralists' voices to inform policies, and investments on rangelands and pastoralism.

4 Thematic Focus

The conference will be organized around four interlocking thematic pillars, each reflecting the multidimensional realities of pastoralist communities in Asia as presented in the table below.

Table 1: Thematic Pillars and possible sub-topics for Pastoralist Community Conference

Thematic Pillar	Sub-topics
Pastoral Culture, Knowledge and Customary Governance Systems, for Rangelands and Livestock	• Traditional restoration practices that regenerate degraded rangelands, maintain ecosystem health and livestock breeds. • Knowledge systems that manage livestock breeding, nutrition and healthcare. • Knowledge systems that govern sustainable grazing practices. • How culture celebrates and sustains pastoral systems and rangelands.

Thematic Pillar	Sub-topics
Livestock Contribution in Food Systems and Markets	• Efforts or initiatives related to livestock and agri-product value chains • Fair trade, branding and accessing markets for pastoralist products
Women's Land Rights & Youth Leadership	• Cases or examples of leadership by women and youth in rangeland management and pastoralism
Initiatives and Struggles of Pastoralist communities for resource access and mobility	• Experiences, struggles and challenges faced by pastoralists in accessing and managing rangelands and indigenous livestock in a mobile system. • Adaptations in response to challenges such as encroachment, grabbing, acquisition of pastoral lands for various infrastructure development activities, biodiversity conservation, green energy transition etc. • Grassroots-level initiatives by pastoralists to secure access to land and natural resources (success stories).

*** Across themes, presenters may include a cultural performance if they choose.*

5 Expected Outcomes

SN	Outcome
1	A connected and empowered regional pastoralist community with stronger solidarity, peer learning, and a shared identity across Asia.
2	A Community Case Story Compendium documenting community-led stories of commons stewardship, rangeland governance, and local innovation from across Asia.
3	Enhanced awareness and visibility of pastoralist realities among policy makers, international organizations, and the broader public through media and communications outreach.
4	Concrete peer-learning exchanges established between pastoralist communities from across Asia.
5	Community-led evidence and recommendations from practicing pastoralists consolidated and linked to national, regional, and global policy and advocacy processes.

⑥ Participants

The conference will bring together a diverse cross-section of actors united by a shared commitment to pastoralist land and resource rights:

- Pastoralist community representatives from across Asian countries.
- People's organizations and grassroots networks rooted in pastoralist and indigenous communities.
- Community organizations implementing breed conservation, ecosystem restoration and sustainable landscape management initiatives.

⑦ Implementation Modality

The conference will be held in an online mode, to ensure maximum inclusion of pastoralist communities from across Asia — including those in remote and cross-border areas. Sessions will be facilitated in participatory, community-friendly formats, in multiple languages.

Guiding Principles:

- **Community leadership:** Pastoralist communities themselves will be at the center of shaping the agenda, facilitating sessions, and leading testimonies.
- **Inclusion and accessibility:** Provisions will be made for language interpretation, accessibility support, and remote participation to ensure no community is excluded.
- **Knowledge sovereignty:** Communities will retain ownership of their stories and innovations; documentation will be undertaken only with full, free, and informed consent.
- **Gender and generational equity:** Active steps will be taken to ensure balanced participation of men and women.

For further information, please contact



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