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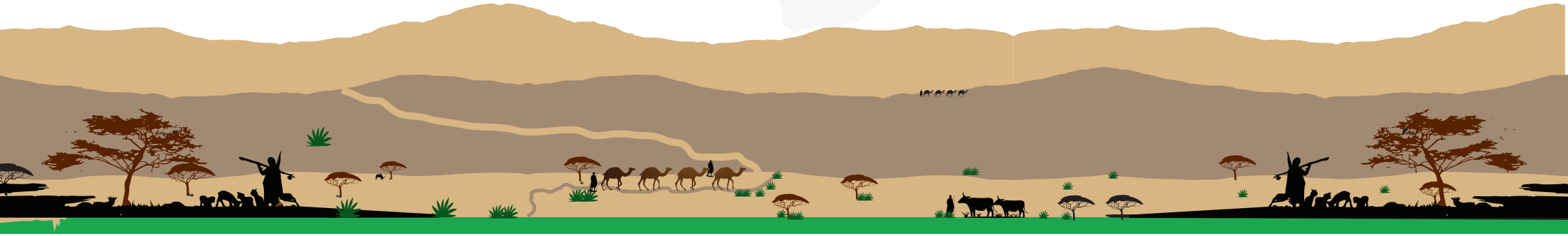
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HIGH-LEVEL BI-ENNIAL REGIONAL POLICY CONFERENCE ON CUSTOMARY TENURE RIGHTS IN EASTERN AFRICA

SECOND EDITION

THEME: "Rangelands and Pastoralism; The Role of Policy, Research and Learning"

29th September - 1st October 2025



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IYRP 2026 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS

HIGH-LEVEL BI-ENNIAL REGIONAL POLICY CONFERENCE ON CUSTOMARY TENURE RIGHTS IN EASTERN AFRICA

Background

In 2023, RECONCILE, in collaboration with UN-FAO, WHH, ILC, and others, convened a high-level regional Conference on Customary Tenure in Eastern Africa themed: Making Land Policy Reforms Work for Communal Tenure Rights in Eastern Africa. A biennial convening was one of the resolutions reached by the 2023 conference to unpack dynamic pastoral tenure issues and track policy implementation across the region. In this context, RECONCILE in partnership with UN-FAO-Kenya, European Union, Mercy Corps, WHH and ILC is organizing the second edition of the regional conference under the theme: Rangelands and Pastoralism: The Role of Policy, Research and Learning. This is happening against the backdrop of the African Policy Framework on Pastoralism, a regional policy whose objectives are yet to be fully realized. The framework explicitly recognizes the rights of pastoralists and the need to provide security, services, infrastructure and economic opportunities in pastoral areas which are comparable to non-pastoral areas. This conference will focus broadly on the role of policy, research and learning in securing pastoralism and rangelands in the region. It is also being convened as East African countries, including Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, are reviewing or have launched their updated National Land Policies, recognizing that there are different regional projects that are targeting rangelands and pastoralism that are being launched or having their initial level implementation.

In an ongoing scoping study by RECONCILE, ICPALD and ILC through the support of UN FAO's regional program on Pastoralism and Livestock Adaptation to Climate Change in Eastern Africa Programme (PLACE), it has emerged that while there is progress about policy development in other areas, including land and pastoralism, a lot remains to be realized in the sector of pastoralism land rights and tenure issues. Pastoralists, particularly in the East African Region, often face marginalization and a lack of political and legal power, which means their land rights and interests are rarely included in policy and legislation, even though they make a significant contribution to the national economy. Due to their low visibility and lack of awareness of their rights, they are often in a weak position. There is a need, therefore, to accelerate the land reforms in the Eastern Africa region for the implementation of the newly adopted and enacted laws and the operationalization of established institutions to strengthen democratic governance of the land sector and secure communal land rights for pastoralism and rangelands.

This conference shall benefit and contribute to regional debate on customary tenure issues through the ongoing initiatives such as the Rangelands and Pastoralist Resilience (RaRe), The East Africa Solidarity Platform's (EASPO) RECONCILE's Community of Practice (CoP) on customary tenure and pastoralist rights, the UN FAO -EU funded Digital Governance Program and the Rangelands Initiative Africa Program. It is expected that, the conference shall create a deeper engagement and visibility on customary tenure debate in the region through the presentation of regional study reports/papers, case studies and strengthening advocacy platforms on land governance as well as create more awareness among different stakeholders including governments, development partners, CSO's and pastoralists intuitions among others on the recognition of the value of rangelands and pastoralism as a sustainable livelihood and food system ahead of the International Year Of Rangelands and Pastoralist(IYRP) in 2026 as designated by UNGA in 2022. It is expected that this conference will establish a body of knowledge that will provide practical, scientific, robust, and reliable information through sharing of experiences to support advocacy based on evidence. The conference is regionally conceptualized to appreciate that rangelands and pastoralism operate on a landscape that is crosscutting at national and territorial boundaries.

About the 2nd Edition of the Regional Conference

This second edition of the biennial Regional Conference on Customary Tenure Rights in Eastern Africa is an initiative for advancing discussions on communal land tenure rights, policy implementation, and regional collaboration. It seeks to create a conducive space for diverse stakeholders including policymakers, international organizations, researchers, practitioners, and representatives from pastoralist and indigenous communities to engage in meaningful dialogues on the dynamic landscape of customary land tenure, particularly concerning rangelands and pastoralism.

This second edition shall be preceded by a youth land governance and climate change annual conference. Being anchored on the larger continental Africa We Want Agenda 2063, it is strategic towards enhancing inclusivity, leadership and intergenerational learning for sustainable development. The youth conference blends well as a precursor to the Conference on Customary Tenure Rights in Eastern Africa. It will be an opportunity to present the outcome of the deliberations to the main plenary of the conference, thereby being part of the final resolution of the 2025 regional conference.

The high-level conference on customary tenure rights

As organized, the conference expectation is to provide an opportunity to take stock of the 2023 first edition outcome document as a basis for kickstarting the conversation. However, it also provides a platform for different institutions, individual researchers, practitioners, and governments to present papers and studies that have been conducted since the last conference in 2023 for regional learning and knowledge sharing. During the conference, participants and presenters will explore how the policies have impacted tenure security and rights over land in the pastoralist set-up. Also included in the conference is a presentation of regional policies in the pastoralists' institutional context within the IGAD countries.

The conference is being held at a time when rangelands and pastoral data are gaining interest due to uncoordinated ways for generating and disseminating the same to different users. Policy formulation and review in these sectors are happening in the region with implications on pastoral land tenure regime and livelihoods. This conference, therefore, will provide an opportunity for Land Matrix and Land Mark to share and disseminate data and other relevant information from different countries.

The conference is also a space for policy dialogue with policymakers, launching and disseminating currently conducted research, studies and reports, outcomes and policy briefs with a bearing on customary tenure and pastoralist rights in the East and Horn of Africa. The conference will stimulate discussion around specific research outputs, synthesis papers and case studies on the status of policy implementation across the region. This will result in three broader Work Packages: 1. Tenurial issues, 2. Research for planning and development, 3. Regional advocacy platforms. The timing of this conference creates an opportunity for awareness building, information sharing, and defining strategic engagement to build on the momentum of the IYRP 2026.

Overall, the conference shall enable participants to achieve the following

- Facilitate multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on the dynamics of communal tenure rights in Eastern Africa and the emerging issues from policy, practice and research;
- Understand the role of knowledge and evidence-based research in informing policy planning and development within the context of rangelands and pastoralism;
- A platform for regional advocacy for advancing policy on land governance, rangelands and pastoralism;

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- A forum for showcasing the application of tools, protocols and guidelines, e.g. VGGT, IGAD Transhumance Protocol, Land Mark and Land Matrix. within the evolving land tenure and land uses space, especially when reaching the rangelands.
- To understand the existing and diverse methodologies and approaches that have been successfully applied in advancing the rangelands/pastoralism agenda while influencing policy across the regions
- Creating more awareness on the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralism (IYRP), develop a joint commitment towards pastoral advocacy and lobby campaign while defining the role of different stakeholders towards 2026
- Develop a joint commitment for policy uptake and further advocacy by CSOs, policymakers, donors, commercial enterprises, UN and development partners in advancing customary tenure and pastoralists' rights in the region.

Key Thematic Areas for this 2nd Edition

1. Rangeland, Pastoralism, and Sustainable Land Use

- The value of pastoralism and rangelands for national, regional and global economies including food and nutrition security.
- Pastoralism as sustainable food system and a climate solution
- Drought resilient practices for long-term impact and cultural significance in the ASALs
- Application of sustainable rangelands management practices: the case of PRM and CBNRM in the regions
- Challenges Facing Rangelands and Pastoral Communities
- Principles of Sustainable Land Use in Rangelands
- ASAL-Specific Policies & Institutional Mechanisms
- Pastoral resilience and nature-based solutions in times of climate change
- Mobility and transhumance for rangeland health and pastoral livelihoods
- Progress made in both policy and legislation within the region
- Large-scale land acquisition and investment

2. Data and Technology

- The role of data in tenure security and land governance (LandMark, Land Matrix); use of geospatial tech./ remote sensing to map land ownership and use
- Data availability and accessibility: collecting, storing and sharing land data –
- Data on land use, resource availability, and customary land rights
- Role of research in informing policy planning and development
- Regional and national institutions linkages in land data access and sharing
- Satellite Imagery & Remote Sensing application of GIS -
- Investments in digital infrastructure, local training, and co-development in pastoral communities

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3. Land Tenure, Conflict, and Governance

- Historical and political collective tenure regime and related mechanisms for resolving land conflict.
- The role of people-centered land governance policies and frameworks in enhancing pastoralists' livelihood and advancing peace and security in the region
- Role of advocacy platforms in advancing the rangeland and pastoralism agenda -
- Policy and legislative gaps in the region
- Operationalizing integrated responses to gendered climate and conflict impacts in the borderlands

4. Women, Youth in Land Governance and Climate Change

- The role of women & youth in advancing food systems transformation and innovation
- Gender and social inclusion in land data
- Land rights as a catalyst for climate change adaptation (from a women and youth perspective)
- Inclusive Governance Models women and youth in mapping and planning.
- Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) that promotes gender evaluation.
- Policy gaps and opportunities in gender responsive land and climate change governance
- Land-based and affordable investment opportunities for women and youth -
- The roles of digital tools, space and technology in advancing land governance

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THEME: "Rangelands and Pastoralism; The Role of Policy, Research and Learning"

DATE: 29th September - 1st October 2025, Nairobi

Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
		Day 1 - Monday 29th September		
8:00-8:40AM	**Registration and badge collection**	Organizing and planning team	Facilitated by the RECONCILE Team, Partners and Hotel	
8:45-10:00 AM	**Opening session and Welcoming remarks**	**Ken Otieno**, RECONCILE **Emmy Auma,** International Alert **Eva Maria Akoth**, ILC **Christian Schniepper,** WHH **Jared Buoga**, Tembea Futures **William Baron**, Mercy Corps **Ms. Mary Mwiti EBS,** CEO Council of Governors **Dr. Nyabenyi Tito Tipo**, FAO Representative in Kenya **Amb. Christian Friedemann,** BMZ **Amb. Henriette Geiger** - EU Ambassador to Kenya **Key Note Speeches** **Justice Samuel Emokor** - High Court Judge, Land Division, Republic of Uganda **Gershom Otachi** - Chairperson, National Land Commission **PS Hon. Nixon Korir, CBS -** Principal Secretary, State Department of Lands and Physical Planning **PS Dr. Raymond Omolo, CBS -** Principal Secretary, State Department for Internal Security and National Administration **H.E FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, EGH,** Chairperson, Council of Governors **CS Hon. Alice Wahome, EGH** - Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development, Republic of Kenya		Husna Mbarak

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Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
10:00-11:00 AM	**High level plenary** Key focus 1. Rangeland, Pastoralism, and Sustainable Land Use 2. Land Tenure, Conflict, and Governance	Session chair - Michael Odhiambo **PANELISTS** **CS Hon. Alice Wahome** - Cabinet Secretary MOLPWHUD **H.E FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, EGH,** Chairperson, Council of Governors **Justice Samuel Emokor** - High Court Judge **Dr. Roba Hassan** - TCF **Dr. Igshaan Samuels** - Global co-chair IYRP Alliance **Dr. Nyabenyi Tito Tipo**, FAO Representative in Kenya **Amb. Henriette Geiger** - EU Ambassador to Kenya **Gershom Otachi - Chairperson,** National Land Commission **Amb. Christian Friedemann**, BMZ **Geoffrey Odundo**, CEO Nation Media Group	• How government systems and structures promote, protects and secures customary tenure rights? • Pastoralism is characterized by conflict which undermines productivity among pastoralists. What mechanisms are in place to minimize this at local, national and regional levels? • How are government and donors positioning themselves to promote and invest in the International Year of rangelands and pastoralists • Investment priorities within the rangelands • The role of IYRP in advancing rangeland and pastoralist tenure rights	Prof. Odote
11-11:30 AM	**Tea Break and photo session**	Case studies/papers		

Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM	**Research and Documentation**	RECONCILE FAO Internation Alert Mercy Corps Tembea Futures ILEPA WHH	• Regional policy case study on customary tenure security (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) • Land-Use planning Study • Gender and land study • Investments in the rangelands • Sustainable rangelands management practices (Case of Participatory Rangelands Management (PRM) in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania) • Conflict management and resolution mechanism in the drylands of the Eastern Africa region. • The role of women & youth in advancing food systems transformation and innovation	Dr. Guyo Roba Dr. Hussein Wario
12:30-1:00 PM	**Plenary session**	Feedback and reactions from the presentations and recommendation		
1:00-2:00 PM	**Lunch Break**			
2:00-3:00 PM	**Breakout sessions and scene setting**	Land for Life Ethiopia RECONCILE WHH SPARC/Mercy Corps AU IBAR	**1. Rangeland, Pastoralism, and Sustainable Land Use** • Principles of land governance (Implementation of VGGT) • Value of pastoralism and rangelands in food and nutrition security. • How to strengthen the pastoral resilience and nature-based solutions in times of climate change • Promoting and supporting mobility and transhumance for rangeland health and pastoral livelihoods • Livestock Value chain & fodder production	Festus Yambu

Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
		Land Matrix Initiative and Land Mark FAO RECONCILE ILRI	**2. Data and Technology** • Uptake of technology by counties • Role of research in informing policy planning and development • Gender and social inclusion in land data • Data on land use, resource availability, and customary land rights	Pascal Adongo
		ILC WHH International Alert FAO	**3. Land Tenure, Conflict, and Governance** • Historical and political collective tenure regime and related mechanisms for resolving land conflict. • Operationalising integrated responses to gendered climate and conflict impacts in the borderlands	Dorina Pretch
3:00-4:00PM	Plenary reporting	Facilitators assigned		Allan Akivaga
4:00-4:30PM	Wrap up and Reflections on Day	FAO		Husna Mbarak

Day 2 - Tuesday 30th September

The role of Justice Systems in Protecting Customary Tenure				
8:30-9:00AM	Registration and Badge collection	Planning committee		
9:00-9:15AM	Recap and Introducing day 2 objectives	RECONCILE		Ken Otieno
9:15-9:45AM	**Keynote address-** Justice for customary land rights: Bridging traditional practice, policy and modern legal systems	Justice Oscar Angote		Husna Mbarak

Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
			Community land cases	
9:45-10:30AM	**Protecting customary tenure and resource rights through the justice system in East Africa**		Ogiek case Kenya Batwa of Uganda Waldaa Community Endorois Northern rangelands case	Dr. Roba Hassan
10:30–10:45AM	**Feedback and Q&A**	ALL		
10:45-11:00AM	**Presentation**	LMI and RCMRD	The role of data and technology in tenure security and land governance (Land-Mark, Land Matrix); Use of geospatial tech./ remote sensing to map land ownership and use	Richard Bett
11:00-11:30AM	**Health Break**			
11:30AM-12:30PM	**Panel discussion**	Justice Millicent Odeny- ILC Michael Ochieng-Practitioner Isaac Tobiko-CLAN Truphosa Achar-State Counsel Rep from Somalia and Ethiopia Prof. Bilal Butt	• Emerging interest on carbon credit and shifting land uses and their impacts on communal lands • The place of courts in addressing customary tenure and land related conflicts • How this impacts pastoralism and rangelands • Emerging conservation models in the rangelands	Dr. Eli Laltai-ka Furaha
12:30-1:00PM	Plenary session			
1:00-2:00PM	**Lunch**			

Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
2:00-3:00PM	**Breakout sessions**	Prof. Oliver Wasonga-UoN Stanely Riamit-ILEPA Malih Ole Kaunga-IMPACT Shadrack Omondi-Landesa Blaise Okinyi- Range department	**Rangeland, Pastoralism, and Sustainable Land Use** • Drought resilient practices for long-term impact and cultural significance in the ASALs • ASAL-Specific Policies & Institutional Mechanisms • Mobility and transhumance for rangeland health and pastoral livelihoods • Progress made in both policy and legislation within the region	Joshua Okoth
		Saalah Maalim- Mandera Evans Kipruto-FAO Jared Buoga Pascal Ogolla-RECONCILE	**Data and Technology** • The roles of digital tools, space and technology in advancing land governance • Data availability and accessibility: collecting, storing and sharing land data – • Satellite Imagery & Remote Sensing application of GIS – • Regional and national institutions' linkages in land data access and sharing • Investments in digital infrastructure, local training, and co-development in pastoral communities	Zembi Odera

Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
		Prof. Kangungulu Mayambala-University of Makerere Truphosa Achar-State Counsel Dorina Prech-International Alert Neema Jaji- Pan- African Lawyers Network	**Land Tenure, Conflict, and Governance** • The role of people-centered land governance policies and frameworks in enhancing pastoralists' livelihood and advancing peace and security in the region • Role of advocacy platforms in advancing the rangeland and pastoralism agenda • Policy and legislative gaps in the region	Ken Otieno
		Nicholas Ngesa-Tembea Future Allan Akivaga-RECONCILE Christopher Sowek-FAO Fozia Noor-OPPD Hannah Longole-ACC	**Women, Youth in Land Governance and Climate Change** • How national and regional gatherings are advancing and protecting customary tenure rights for women, youth and indigenous people • Policy gaps and opportunities in gender responsive land and climate change governance. • The position of IYRP as a global campaign in popularizing women and youth issues in rangelands	Laureen Ongesa
3:00-4:00PM	Plenary reporting	Facilitators assigned		Dr. Roba Hassan
4:00-4:30PM	**Wrap up of day 2**			Carmen Jaquez-Mercy corps

Day 3 - Wednesday 1st October

Time	Activity	Responsible person		Moderator
8:00-8:30AM	**Arrival and registration**			
8:30-9:00AM	Recap of day 2 and Introducing day 3 objectives	Rapporteur		Emmy Auma-International Alert
9:00-9:30AM	Scene setting presentation	Japheth Kasibu - IGAD John Ntabo, ministry of lands	Securing pathways for pastoralists' resilience Participatory Land use planning in Mandera cluster	Dr. Hassan Roba
9:30-10:30AM	Plenary	Salah - Mandera Savia Aya Sylvester Bahr El Arab, Oromo	Sharing of experiences and stories on Mobility and transboundary pastoralism.	
10:30-11:00AM	Q&A			
11-11:30AM	**Health Break**			
11:30AM-12:30PM	Presentation	Rapporteur	Presentation Of The Draft Outcome Document	All planning partners
12:30-1:00PM	Plenary feedback			RECONCILE
1:00-2:00 PM	**Lunch**			
2:00-3:00PM	Validation and adoption of the Communique	The drafting committee rep	Presentation And Adoption Of The Outcome Document.	FAO
3:00-3:30PM	Closing ceremony			Organizers and partners
4:00PM	Joint cocktail	ALL		ALL


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