

# POLICY BRIEF SERIES



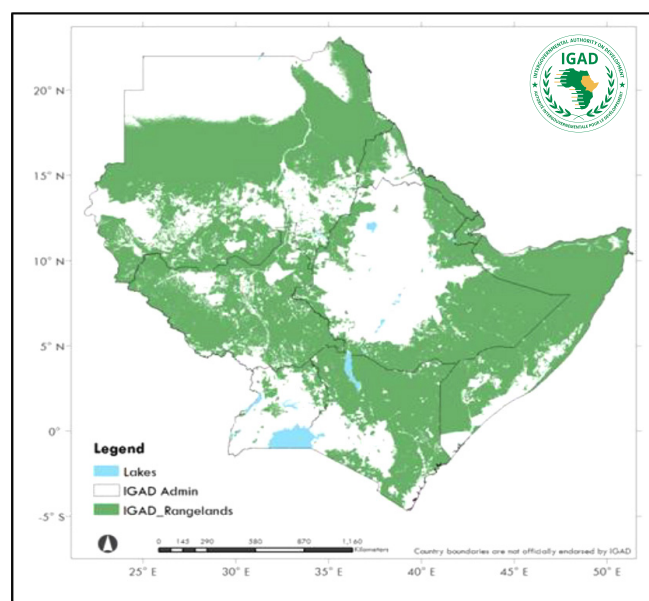
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PEACE, PROSPERITY AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

## Towards Sustainable Rangeland Management in IGAD Region

### Introduction

About 60-70% of the terrestrial land surface in IGAD region is arid and semi-arid, and is classified as rangelands<sup>1,2,3</sup>. The rangelands are home to pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities whose livelihoods mainly depend on extensive livestock production.



### Extent of Rangelands in the IGAD Region

<sup>1</sup> IGAD (2017). *IGAD Drought Resilience Summit: Visioning A Transformational Agenda for The Next 5 Years*. Convened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 29 to 31 August 2017.

<sup>2</sup> IGAD. (2015). *IGAD Centre for Pastoralist Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) Strategic Plan, 2016-2020*.

<sup>3</sup> FAO. (2008). *Managing East African for Better Response to Feed Crisis. Proceedings of Sub-Regional Workshop held on 9-12 November 2008, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, FAO Sub Regional Office for East Africa (SFE)*.

### Why Rangelands?

In IGAD region, rangelands are the backbone of livestock industry that provides various economic opportunities along the value chain, therefore contributing significantly to the member countries' national GDPs. About 53% of the region's cattle (51 million), 71% of the goats (58 million) and 68% of the sheep (58 million) are found in the rangelands<sup>3</sup>. The livestock sector in the region contributes 10% - 50% of the individual countries' agricultural GDP<sup>4,5,6</sup>.



### Camel Rearing in the Rangelands

<sup>4</sup> Behnke R. and Muthami D. (2011). *The Contribution of Livestock to the Kenyan Economy (IGAD LPI Working Paper No. 03 -11) 2011. An ICPALD working paper, IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD)*. Nairobi, Kenya.

<sup>5</sup> IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) (2013). *The contribution of Livestock to the Kenyan Economy. Policy Brief Series No: ICPALD 4/CLE/8/2013*. ICPALD.

<sup>6</sup> IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) (2017). *Policies and Proclamations Relevant to Pastoral Areas Land Management for Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project (RPLRP)*.

In addition to livestock production, rangelands in the region are habitats for a diversity of flora and fauna of socio-cultural, environmental and economic significance. These are a source of various goods such as timber and non-timber products e.g. fibre, gum and resins, honey, medicinal and food plants. In addition, the rangelands provide various ecosystem services that include water catchment, scenic beauty, as well as habitat for wildlife that form the basis of ecotourism in respective countries. Rangelands also host sacred sites that are valued for spiritual and religious purposes.



**Gum Arabic from Northern Kenya**

## Why Regional Rangeland Management Strategic Framework?

The social, cultural, ecological and economic importance of rangelands transcend national boundaries. Therefore, sustainable management of rangelands in the IGAD region requires a regional strategic framework that is cognizant of the shared rangeland resources; interconnectedness of issues and shared responsibilities amongst the countries and communities. The strategic framework is therefore particularly required to address the problem of weak linkages and coordination of policies on rangeland development and actions by stakeholders. Harmonisation of the policies and practices is necessary for synergy and specifically for the purpose of minimising overlaps and enhancing efficiency of development programmes, has developed a Regional Rangeland Management Strategic

Framework (RRMSF) through;

- a) Comprehensive Literature Review
- b) Direct Observations through Field Visits
- c) Consultations with stakeholders in IGAD Member States, validated through a workshop.

This Policy Brief therefore highlights the key challenges facing rangelands in IGAD region, proposed interventions and policy recommendations for consideration by IGAD Member States (MS) in domestication of RRMSF.

## Challenges Facing Rangelands

Despite enormous social, cultural, ecological and economic importance of rangelands, they face a myriad of challenges. The worst being degradation of the resource base partly linked to land use and land tenure changes, breakdown of traditional institutions of natural resource management and lastly, low institutional, organisational and human resource capacity. These challenges are exacerbated by the advent of climate change and weak policy and legal framework for Rangeland Management. The key challenges facing rangelands in IGAD region are highlighted below.

1. **Inadequate policy and legal framework:** Lack of requisite national policies and ineffective implementation of existing ones, and domestication of continental and regional policies.
2. **Low institutional and organisational capacity:** Poor organisational structures, infrastructure and staffing of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies charged with the responsibility of rangeland management, coupled with low budgetary allocations.
3. **Rangeland degradation:** Deterioration of soil and vegetation and spread of invasive plant species leading to pasture and water scarcity. The trend is linked to, among others, fragmentation of rangelands leading to confinement of livestock in smaller and drier areas thereby putting pressure on pasture and water resources.



### Loss of Vegetation Cover Along Livestock Tracks and Congregation Areas

4. **Poor governance of rangeland resources:** Weak statutory and customary institutions partly due to failure to recognise and mainstream traditional institutions and practices owing to lack of legislation.
5. **Insecure land rights and tenure in the rangelands:** Unclear land rights and tenure changes; dual application of communal and statutory land rights due to lack of relevant land laws.
6. **Rangeland encroachment and fragmentation:** Increased privatisation and conversion of communal rangeland due to land tenure and land use change driven by demand for agriculture, conservation, settlement, infrastructure development and extractive industries.



### Maize Plantation in the Rangelands

7. **Restricted transboundary and inter-community resource sharing:** Curtailed livestock mobility due to non-operationalisation of transboundary agreements and the regional transhumance protocol, as well as little recognition of inter-community negotiated resource sharing agreements and conflict resolution

mechanisms.

8. **Inadequate research, extension, technical training and poor knowledge management:** Limited and unreliable research and training funding, partly due to lack of appreciation of the value of rangeland ecosystems; and inadequate rangeland extension services due to lack of skilled staff, limited knowledge sharing and technology transfer.
9. **Inadequate investment in sustainable rangeland management:** Low budgetary allocations and lack of incentive partly due to misconceptions about arid and semi-arid lands and the pastoral production system, as well as systemic undervaluation of rangelands due to lack of reliable data on economic value of rangeland ecosystems.
10. **Frequent droughts and climate change:** Recurrent extreme climatic conditions, especially drought and increasingly scarce, variable and unpredictable rainfall. This is exacerbated by low adaptation capacity, poor meteorological infrastructure, inadequate access and use of climate information and services.



### *Prosopis juliflora* Invasion of Awash River Banks

## Policy Recommendations

The following policy actions are recommended for IGAD Member States and stakeholders to ensure domestication of the RRMSF:

1. Develop supportive policy and legal frameworks for rangeland management by domesticating regional policies and implementing existing national policies while formulating new ones where they don't exist.

2. Streamline institutional and organisational structure and improve infrastructure, staffing and budgetary allocation of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies charged with the responsibility of rangeland management to enable them to effectively discharge their mandates.
3. Facilitate restoration of rangeland health and productivity through reseedling, pasture production, invasive species control, grazing management, participatory rangeland management and Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices.



### Pasture Production in Dubti, Afar Region of Ethiopia

4. Strengthen governance of rangeland resources by integrating customary and statutory institutions and developing legislation to enable enforcement of by-laws for effective regulation of access and management of rangeland resources.
5. Formulate land use policies and enact relevant land laws on the basis of existing traditional land laws to ensure secure land rights and tenure through regulation of rangeland use and harmonisation of multiple uses for optimisation of benefits from the rangelands.

6. Domesticate regional cross-border transhumance protocol by establishing and implementing bilateral and multilateral transboundary agreements, recognising and supporting inter-community negotiated resource sharing mechanisms within Member States to ensure peaceful and equitable access to rangeland resources by communities in times of need.
7. Support research activities, training of rangeland management personnel, knowledge sharing and technology uptake, awareness raising by deepening understanding of rangeland ecosystems as well as pastoral production systems among experts and decision makers.
8. Provide incentives for investment in sustainable rangeland management by revealing total economic value of rangeland ecosystems and creating opportunities for value addition of rangeland products to attract private investors, justify supportive policies and budget allocation to support sustainable rangeland management.
9. Build capacity for drought risk management, climate change adaptation and mitigation by mainstreaming climate risk management into development planning; promoting livelihood diversification and ecosystem based adaption; strengthening existing regional drought early warning systems and contingency fund.

### Further Reading

IGAD (2019): *Regional Rangeland Management Strategic Framework for Arid and Semi-Arid Lands in The IGAD Region*. IGAD Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project (RPLRP).

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