



PRESS RELEASE

Empowering Pastoralism: Regional Pastoralism Day and Expo to Showcase Livelihood Resilience and Sustainable Development

Addis Ababa, January 26, 2024 – The Horn of Africa, renowned for its vast arid and semi-arid landscapes, is set to host the Regional Pastoralism Day and Expo, an event dedicated to celebrate the rich heritage of pastoralism, address the challenges faced by pastoral communities and explore opportunities for sustainable pastoral development in the IGAD region.

The week-long event is organized by IGAD's Center for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (CPALD) in collaboration with Ethiopia's Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands (MILLs). The Expo will be held from January 26 – February 1, 2024, preceded by the Pastoralism Day on the first day. During the Expo, IGAD will hold several panel sessions from January 26 – 28, 2024.

The Expo aims to bring together stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue and propose actionable strategies to enhance resilience and sustainable development in the region's arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL). It will shed light on the untapped potential for sustainable development in the region and celebrate the cultural richness of pastoralism.

“The IGAD region is endowed with livestock resources due to its diverse agro-ecology and livestock rearing is deep-rooted in communities' socio-culture”, says Dr. Dereje Wakjira, ICPALD Director.

Household livelihood and asset analysis of pastoral and agro-pastoral communities shows that livestock constitutes more than 75% of their annual income. The African Union estimates the continent has 250 million pastoralists. Approximately 70% of the land area in IGAD countries is arid and semi-arid, making pastoralism a vital socio-economic activity, contributing significantly to national incomes. Pastoralism is a traditional socio-economic way of life deeply embedded in the cultural identity of communities across the IGAD region and involves livestock production in free-range environments.

IGAD region is endowed with about 480 million ruminants—cattle, sheep, goats and camels. This significant portion of transhumant population moves from one area to another, including across borders in search of water and pasture. However, pastoralism faces threats such as insecurity, mobility restrictions, inadequate grazing land access, and the impacts of climate change. ICPALD has played a pivotal role in supporting sustainable pastoralist livelihoods through various initiatives and frameworks.

The Expo will feature panel discussions in thematic areas such as transforming the livestock sector for climate-resilient development, supporting pastoral land governance and indigenous practices, cross-border mobility and trade policy coherence, and pastoral security in the face of governance, conflict, and climate change.



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About the Regional Pastoralism Day and Expo:

The Regional Pastoralism Day and Expo is a collaborative initiative between IGAD and Ethiopia's Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands (MILLs) to promote awareness, collaboration, and policy advocacy for the well-being of pastoral communities in the region. The event will take place from January 26 – February 1, 2024 at the Millennium Hall in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.