



**USAID**  
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SECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

# LIVESTOCK

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**Cover Photo:** USAID/Afghanistan has supported and provided veterinary health programs to improve livestock production. Photo dated February 5, 2008. M. Lueders.

# About this document and the *Sector Environmental Guidelines*

**This document presents one sector of the *Sector Environmental Guidelines*** prepared for USAID under the Agency's Global Environmental Management Support Project (GEMS). All sectors are accessible at [www.usaidgems.org/bestPractice.htm](http://www.usaidgems.org/bestPractice.htm).

**Purpose.** The purpose of this document and the *Sector Environmental Guidelines* overall is to support environmentally sound design and management (ESDM) of common USAID sectoral development activities by providing concise, plain-language information regarding:

- the typical, potential adverse impacts of activities in these sectors;
- how to prevent or otherwise mitigate these impacts, both in the form of general activity design guidance and specific design, construction and operating measures;
- how to minimize vulnerability of activities to climate change; and
- more detailed resources for further exploration of these issues.

**Environmental Compliance Applications.** USAID's mandatory life-of-project environmental procedures require that the potential adverse impacts of USAID-funded and managed activities be assessed prior to implementation via the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process defined by 22 CFR 216 (Reg. 216). They also require that the environmental management/mitigation measures ("conditions") identified by this process be written into award documents, implemented over life of project, and monitored for compliance and sufficiency.

The procedures are USAID's principal mechanism to assure ESDM of USAID-funded Activities—and thus to protect environmental resources, ecosystems, and the health and livelihoods of beneficiaries and other groups. They strengthen development outcomes and help safeguard the good name and reputation of USAID.

The Sector Environmental Guidelines directly support environmental compliance by providing: information essential to assessing the potential impacts of activities, and to the identification and detailed design of appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures.

*However, the Sector Environmental Guidelines are **not** specific to USAID's environmental procedures. They are generally written, and are intended to support ESDM of these activities by all actors, regardless of the specific environmental requirements, regulations, or processes that apply, if any.*

**Region-Specific Guidelines Superseded.** The *Sector Environmental Guidelines* replace the following region-specific guidance: (1) *Environmental Guidelines for Small Scale Activities in Africa*; (2) *Environmental Guidelines for Development Activities in Latin America and the Caribbean*; and (3) *Asia/Middle East: Sectoral Environmental Guidelines*. With the exception of some more recent Africa sectors, all were developed over 1999–2004.

**Development Process & Limitations.** In developing this document, regional-specific content in these predecessor guidelines has been retained. Statistics have been updated, and

references verified and some new references added. However, this document is not the result of a comprehensive technical update.

Further, *The Guidelines* are not a substitute for detailed sources of technical information or design manuals. Users are expected to refer to the accompanying list of references for additional information.

**Comments and corrections.** Each sector of these guidelines is a work in progress.

Comments, corrections, and suggested additions are welcome. Email:

[gems@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:gems@cadmusgroup.com).

**Advisory.** *The Guidelines are advisory only. They are not official USAID regulatory guidance or policy. Following the practices and approaches outlined in the Guidelines does not necessarily assure compliance with USAID Environmental Procedures or host country environmental requirements.*

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# LIVESTOCK



More than a quarter of the world's land area is used for livestock as part of grazing or mixed farming systems. Another fifth of the world's arable land is used to grow grains for livestock feed, primarily for industrial systems.

A student of animal husbandry at the University Catholique du Graben in Butembo. L. Rose

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SECTOR

The use of cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry, and other livestock offer many benefits to the growing global population and millions of farmers in the developing world. These animals are integral to rural livelihoods and local cultures, providing food (meat, eggs and other dairy products), materials (wool, hide, horns, etc.), income, and mechanical power for pulling carts, drawing water or plowing fields. Asia has been identified as the developing region in which the demand for livestock products is expected to rise most rapidly.<sup>1</sup> Livestock manure can serve as a source of fertilizer. Grazing can help sustain vegetation and promote biodiversity by dispersing seeds, controlling shrub growth, breaking soil crusts, stimulating grass growth and improving seed germination. Livestock may also represent savings and currency or have cultural value. For example, gifts of livestock may serve to resolve conflicts or cement marriages.

Livestock production can be categorized under three main systems: grazing, mixed farming and industrial.

- **Grazing** systems generally rely on native grassland, forests for fodder, with little or no use of crops or imported inputs, and are traditionally managed by pastoralist communities.
- **Mixed farming** systems integrate livestock and crop production. Adding livestock to their farms helps farmers to minimize risk through more diversified production systems risk and extract value from otherwise valueless or low-value by-products of each activity: crop residue becomes feed, manure becomes fertilizer. Soil nutrients can be further replenished by rotating leguminous (nitrogen-fixing) fodder crops with food crops. These systems are managed by settled farmers.

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<sup>1</sup> Livestock Issues in Asia. FAO. 1998. <http://www.fao.org/ag/magazine/9812sp1.htm>



- **Industrial production** systems concentrate livestock populations in special facilities and separate their feeding and waste processing from the land on which they live. Feed is provided directly instead of being acquired through grazing, and manure is transported off-site. Generally, these systems are owned by relatively wealthy individuals and managed by local employees.

Grazing systems are most favored in arid, semi-arid, or other areas of marginal value for crop-based agricultural production, and occupy 26% of the earth's ice-free land surface. Extensive grazing systems cover the dry areas of Africa, Asia, Australia, and North America, and are characterized by grazing livestock in communal, sparsely populated areas, while the high-quality grassland temperate zones of Europe, North America, and South America support intensive grazing systems. In intensive grazing systems, large groups of cattle graze smaller areas amongst a medium to high population density.<sup>2</sup> Mixed farming systems flourish in temperate, subhumid, humid, and some highland climates and can be rain-fed (mainly in Europe and the Americas) or irrigated (eastern and southern Asia). Industrial production, because it does not depend on local fodder supplies, can be conducted in any climate and generally occurs near the urban centers it supplies. Industrial systems are common in Europe, North America, southeast Asia, and Latin America and are becoming more prevalent as a response to growing livestock demand.

In response to growing demand for livestock products, livestock production is increasing throughout the developing world, with highest production growth exhibited in China and Brazil between 1980 and 2007.<sup>3</sup> This increase is driven by growing population, increasing urbanization and rising incomes. This situation is expected to continue throughout the next decade. A shift towards industrial production—farming of monogastric species (pigs, poultry) fed with grain—may be an unavoidable trend in areas with rapidly growing demand for animal food products.

Properly managed, livestock production can enhance land and water quality, biodiversity, and social and economic well-being. However, when improperly managed, livestock production may cause significant economic, social and environmental damage. Increasing livestock production has the potential to increase environmental harm. This guideline will help identify potential adverse environmental impacts and suggest mitigation and monitoring options, as well as “best management practices,” to address them.



A boy watches over a small herd of cattle. Livestock can enhance land quality and socio-economic well-being, but producers must guard against potential environmental and economic damage.

Photograph: K. Burns

<sup>2</sup> The State of Food and Agriculture. Part 1: Livestock in the Balance. 2009. FAO. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i0680e/i0680e02.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The State of Food and Agriculture. Part 1: Livestock in the Balance. 2009. FAO. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i0680e/i0680e02.pdf>

# POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IN THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR AND THEIR CAUSES

## LARGE AREAS OF LAND DEGRADED

### OVERGRAZING

Overgrazing of rangeland—including cleared or converted land—reduces the density of vegetation and the amount of organic matter generated. This, in turn, increases soil erosion from wind and water and decreases soil fertility through loss of nutrients. In arid and semi-arid areas these impacts may also contribute to desertification. Fortunately, ecosystems in these areas demonstrate considerable resilience and often recover when grazing pressure is reduced, either through traditional methods or through modern management practices.

### USE OF MARGINAL LANDS

Growing population pressures have led many smallholder farm families to eke out a subsistence livelihood on more and more marginal lands, such as the uplands of Latin America and Caribbean. There are some indications that the trend is beginning to reverse itself in the region as a result of more robust economies and off-farm employment opportunities, but land degradation is perhaps the most widespread example of an environmental issue having a direct impact on human beings. Livestock grazing on environmentally fragile sites causes soil erosion and disrupts the hydrological cycle, contributing to a decline in productivity and undermining food security. As land degradation becomes more severe, farmers often have few options other than to seek another piece of land on which they can earn a livelihood. When marginal land is no longer available, they may have to migrate to tropical lowlands or to already overburdened urban areas. The consequences of degrading marginal lands include—flooding, siltation—that undermine other promising water-related development initiatives in irrigation, potable water supply, hydropower, and river transport. Likewise, the predominant land-use mosaic of small farms practicing unsustainable agriculture where erosion and run-off are commonplace heightens their vulnerability to severe weather, such as hurricanes.

### POLICY AND LEGAL ISSUES

National Government policies or donor interventions have the potential to disrupt or discourage these practices and may become a root cause of degradation. For example, some government policies may restrict the movement of livestock within a range area or prevent livestock managers from moving stock from areas that have been depleted of fodder to better supplied areas. The health of rangelands are generally best maintained by traditional pastoralist practices which regulate grazing location and herd size in accordance with drought cycles and the supply of fodder. Regardless of the ownership system livestock owners seek assurance that they will be able to conduct their activities without disruptions. Therefore, successful implementation of livestock projects should begin with a clear understanding of land tenure security in the region.

Two particular policy-based problems are:

**Land tenure insecurity.** In many developing countries across the globe, lack of confidence in secure title to rangeland (especially on communal lands) has been shown to reduce the incentive to manage the land sustainably. Often, pastoralists who have lost land to the government or degradation will clear forests in order to acquire new pastures or land for growing



feed contributing to deforestation. Many national governments have either implicitly or explicitly claimed ownership of range and wildlands and ignored traditional or customary claims.

**Privatization of communal resources.** Where national governments have privatized, or are privatizing, formerly state-owned or communal lands, new owners may erect fencing or prevent herds from crossing or grazing on their property.

## WELLS AND BOREHOLES

Traditionally, access to water on critical grazing lands has been controlled to limit livestock populations and prevent herds from outgrowing the forage supply in dry areas. Thus, new wells or boreholes, , may undermine traditional livestock management systems practices by allowing herds to grow beyond sustainable levels for surrounding areas. Overgrazing and degradation are most noticeable in the immediate vicinity of the boreholes or wells, but their effects can extend (in gradually decreasing severity) over a considerable radius. Boreholes also reduce pressure on livestock owners to decrease herd size during drought and may discourage movement of herds to other rangelands, disrupting historic wet season/dry season grazing patterns. Larger herd sizes and reductions in pastoral movement may prove to be a recipe for severe degradation of soil and vegetation.

## WET-SEASON GRAZING

Poor timing in the use of rangeland can also damage the soil. Wet-season grazing can compact the moist earth, reducing its ability to absorb moisture. This increases erosion from water runoff.

## POOR BALANCE OF LIVESTOCK SPECIES

Each species or breed of livestock has foraging preferences and will graze favored areas and plants while neglecting others. Browsing animals, such as goats, prefer the leafy tops of shrubs. By contrast, grazers tend to consume ground-level grasses and leafy plants. A poor balance between browsers and grazers can change the mix of plants in ways that significantly alters the ecosystem dynamics in the area. For example, too many grazers can diminish the number and populations of herbaceous plant species and allow woody plants to become dominant, changing, possibly irreversibly, the character and utility of the ecosystem.

## DAMAGED HABITAT AND REDUCED BIODIVERSITY

Livestock production can damage habitats and reduce biodiversity of wildlife and domestic stock, vegetation, and aquatic and wetland ecosystems.

## HARM TO WILDLIFE AND DOMESTIC STOCK AND LOSS OF WILDLIFE HABITAT

The loss of habitat caused by livestock production in grazing and mixed farming systems may be one of the greatest threats to wildlife. Human population growth and density, and the accompanying increase in livestock, often leads producers to expand livestock grazing ranges into wild lands and convert wild lands to mixed farming use.

These habitat losses occur most frequently through overgrazing, the installation of fencing that impedes or prevents migration and conversion of wild lands or forests to fodder crops. Fencing can exclude a species' subpopulations from their traditional range, thereby reducing their habitat, increasing their vulnerability, and potentially leading to local "extinctions" of species or subspecies. In addition, when livestock and wildlife share the use of rangeland and forests, the potential exists for competition over water and fodder, depending on their fodder preferences. Research suggests, however, that in some cases the fodder preference overlap may be small and that coexistence is possible if livestock managers restrict herd size to some degree.

## SLAUGHTER OF WILDLIFE BY LIVESTOCK MANAGERS

Another danger to wildlife is intentional slaughter by livestock managers. Fear that the wildlife will prey on livestock and damage crops is a common motivation, as is the belief that the wildlife are competing with livestock for fodder, the desire to prevent spread of disease to livestock, and concern for human safety.

For decades thousands of wild animals in Africa were killed to prevent contact with livestock, under the belief that they served as reservoirs for diseases deadly to livestock. This practice has diminished as the tourist value of wildlife has grown. However, the rationale was correct in principle—wildlife do serve as reservoirs for some of the most harmful diseases that affect cattle: malignant catarrhal fever, theileriosis/East Coast fever, and trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness). Now livestock themselves are reservoirs for these diseases, and obliteration of wild species would be pointless. Nevertheless, wildlife remain at risk from farmers anxious to protect their livestock and farming investments.

## POTENTIAL SPREAD OF DISEASE TO WILDLIFE

Wildlife contribute significantly to the economies of many countries, particularly those with an eco-tourism industry. Wildlife may be at risk of contracting diseases from imported livestock. The controlled or uncontrolled movements of livestock within countries or across national borders in search of grazing lands or markets may result in frequent contact between livestock and wildlife, and create opportunities for pathogen transmission and transboundary diseases,

## EXTINCTION OF LOCAL LIVESTOCK BREEDS

Systematic livestock production may result in loss of genetic diversity in livestock species. This is unfortunate because genetic diversity is a measure of a species' robustness. Local breeds may have traits conferring resistance to emergent or future pathogens, or have other favorable adaptations to local environments. The consistent replacement of local breeds with more productive imported ones can contribute to the extinction of that breed and of all the genetic diversity harbored within its population. Livestock practices are currently resulting in a loss of livestock breeds that are essential to the overall wellbeing of the sector. In just the last 15 years, 190 breeds listed in FAO's Global Databank for Farm Animal Genetic Resources have disappeared from a total of 7,600 breeds. Since 2002, it is believed that 60 breeds of cattle, goats, horses, pigs, and poultry have become extinct. The increasing demand for livestock meat products favours high-output breeds over local species.<sup>4</sup>

## HARM TO VEGETATION

### CLEARING OF FOREST AND WILD LANDS

(See "Large Areas of Land Degraded" above.) Vegetation is typically altered or destroyed when forests/wild lands are cleared or are burned to promote new growth. This changes local ecosystems and contributes to the loss of biodiversity and the loss of ecosystem function and associated ecosystem services, including water and climate regulation services. Fires to burn vegetation are dangerous and degrade air quality.

## LOSS OF RANGELAND FERTILITY

Ironically, mixed farming systems may reduce the fertility of rangeland while helping to solve a farmland problem. Traditional farming practices cause a net loss of nutrients in farm soils; that is, when crops are harvested and sold nutrients that make the soil fertile may be lost. Mixed farming reduces the extent of this loss, by transferring nutrients from the range to the farm in the form of manure. The gain in fertility for the farm is, of course, a net loss for rangeland. Over

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5128>

time, the altered nutrient balance can reduce the productive capacity of the range and/or lead to changes in the composition and density of plant species.

## DAMAGE TO RIPARIAN SOIL AND VEGETATION

Livestock in grazing and mixed farming systems often graze very heavily in riparian areas along streams and lakes. Results include trampling, loss of vegetation, soil disturbance, soil compaction, erosion and/or sedimentation which can severely damage riparian habitats, increase siltation and adversely affect watersheds.

Pesticide contamination from treatments to protect livestock from insect-borne infections (e.g., livestock “dipping”) may ultimately reach the aquatic environment. Here it can be toxic to aquatic organisms, as well as people or animals that depend on these sources for drinking water.



Livestock can cause serious harm to a variety of environments by overgrazing vegetation and compacting soil.

## INTRODUCTION OF INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

New breeds or fodder crops can introduce invasive non-native plants into a region. The manure, coats and hooves of newly introduced breeds can carry plant seeds. Most non-native plants are not invasive and will not cause environmental or economic harm, but when they are, the results can be devastating.

## DECREASED WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

### CONTAMINATION FROM MANURE

Livestock manure contains relatively high concentrations of nutrients, solids, enteric bacteria and other microorganisms, and organic material. The manure from industrial livestock operations is often discharged or “leaked” into lakes or streams, because it cannot be economically transported to replenish crop fields. When this occurs, the nutrients can cause eutrophication (rapid plant growth in water bodies), solids can create sedimentation, and organic material leads to oxygen depletion (BOD) of the water. Manure from mixed farming, if applied in a concentrated fashion, can lead to similar problems. The absence of regulation and/or effective enforcement increases the likelihood of these impacts.

### DEGRADE WATER QUALITY AND REDUCE WATER SUPPLIES

Where water is scarce, either chronically or seasonally, the diversion of water to sustain livestock potentially limits its availability for other purposes. This is of particular concern in arid and semi-arid regions, where the construction of boreholes to supply livestock can lead to unsustainable withdrawal rates and the dangerous depletion of aquifer reserves.

As noted above, stockpiled manure can contaminate bodies of water, causing myriad adverse effects. These include eutrophication, oxygen depletion, sedimentation, contamination with enteric bacteria and possibly other pathogenic organisms, toxic pollution from pesticides, and contamination of groundwater and aquifers with both nitrates and pesticides. Moreover, high concentrations of nitrate in potable water supplies represent a potential health hazard, especially for children.

One of the most common examples of unsustainable agriculture is over-grazing on sloping lands, which leads to soil erosion and uncontrolled rainfall run-off. These consequences can be far-reaching, leading to both minor and major environmental impacts, including landslides, earth slumps, gully formation, siltation and sedimentation of water courses, and downstream flooding with significant loss of life and property. Slope, topsoil depth, and soil type all affect the potential for erosion and dictate the appropriate conservation measures essential for controlling it.

## HARM TO HUMAN HEALTH

Excessive contamination by enteric microorganisms, toxic pesticides or nitrates may render water unfit for human consumption and may be especially dangerous to children. Pesticides or other vector control treatments used on livestock represent threats to the health of livestock managers, their families, and others exposed directly or through water use. These substances may be toxic, cause birth defects, alter children's proper development, promote cancer, or slowly poison one or more organ systems.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

The agriculture and livestock sectors contribute 14% of total global greenhouse gas emissions, mostly in the forms of methane and nitrous oxide. Methane in particular has 20 times more global warming potential than carbon dioxide over a 100-year time horizon, and manure management contributes approximately 8% of global methane emissions. Nitrous oxide has a global warming potential that is 300 times that of carbon dioxide on a 100-year time horizon, and agricultural soil management contributes 68% of total nitrous oxide emissions.<sup>5</sup> Global population is expected to increase 40% by 2050, and climate change is projected to impact meat and dairy productivity in some regions. For example, temperature and rainfall changes, or drought may impact the ability of livestock farmers to keep livestock.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, clearing of wilderness or forests for new fields reduces the land's ability to act as a carbon sink and thus may contribute to climate change. Livestock projects should take into account the projected impacts of climate change for the region and minimize land degradation where possible.

## ODOR

Concentrated manure stored at industrial livestock facilities can generate strong and unpleasant odors, damaging the quality of life of nearby residents. This problem is most evident when facilities are located in densely populated areas.

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Greenhouse Gas Emissions. <http://epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/>

<sup>6</sup> McMichael, A. J., J. W. Powles, C. D. Butler, and R. Uauy. Energy and Health. Chapter 5: Food, Livestock Production, Energy, Climate Change, and Health. *Epidemiology and Population Health*. The Australian National University. 2007. [http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/mcmichael\\_etal\\_meat\\_heat.pdf](http://www.gci.org.uk/Documents/mcmichael_etal_meat_heat.pdf) and Mandleni, B., and F.D.K. Anim. Climate Change and Adaptation of Small-Scale Cattle and Sheep Farmers. *African Journal of Agricultural Research*. 2012. <http://www.academicjournals.org/ajar/PDF/pdf2012/5%20May/Mandleni%20and%20Anim.pdf>

# SECTOR PROGRAM DESIGN— SOME SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

The following questions and suggestions are intended to help project designers and managers identify factors and practices that may cause—or prevent—adverse environmental impacts. Bear in mind that the first priority of most livestock managers and farmers is household food security and family welfare. Sustainable practices must always be balanced against these immediate demands.

## CONSIDER CLIMATE, TERRAIN, AND ECOSYSTEM

Since environmental impacts from livestock production vary, depending on the specific climates, terrains and ecosystems involved, project designers need to address these characteristics during the initial design phase:

- What is the climate in the project area (arid, semi-arid, temperate, subhumid, humid)? What is the recent history regarding rainfall patterns and flooding patterns? Is the proposed livestock management practice compatible with the climatic trends?
- What terrains are found in the project area(s) (alluvial plain, highland, rocky desert, wetland, etc.)? Do they have any known vulnerabilities to livestock grazing? For example, are there many unprotected streams or rivers? Are there slopes with limited topsoil sensitive to erosion?
- Will the project encompass or border on protected or ecologically sensitive areas? Are there any threatened or endangered species in the area? Would the proposed project directly or indirectly threaten wildlife or native vegetation? For example, does the project require expansion of grazing into protected areas or make livestock more vulnerable to wildlife predators, triggering reprisals by farmers?



Soil and climate must be considered when planning livestock management projects. Semi-arid lands, for example, pose unique challenges and problems for program designers.



## EVALUATE POLICY, LEGAL, CUSTOMARY AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

The policy, legal, and cultural contexts of a project merit attention, since, as illustrated above, these factors may limit program options or erect substantial barriers to success.

### POLICY/LEGAL

- Do livestock owners and managers have legal and recognized ownership and responsibility for land and grazing resources? Are local land tenure practices and traditions respected through relevant land tenure policies including at a national level? Are they effective in reassuring farmers and encouraging sustainable management of grazing land and resources?
- What is the tenure status of current or proposed rangeland—Is it owned by individuals or the community? Does the government have claims?
- What wildlife protection laws exist and how does spell out what farmers can and cannot do in terms of protecting livestock from the threat of wildlife?

### CULTURE/CUSTOM

- What role does livestock play in local culture and customs, and how might the proposed project affect these practices? Would the proposed project disrupt traditional grazing patterns?
- If there are customary land tenure arrangements, what are they and how would the proposed livestock management system work within these arrangements? For example, will livestock herders—who often come into conflict with farmers, particularly during droughts—have a means of working out disputes with farmers?
- If livestock management arrangements are communal, how would these be affected by and/or affect the proposed development activities?

### LIVESTOCK PROJECT CAPACITY AND ONGOING SUPPORT

- Is capacity in the livestock sector a concern? What is the project able to do to ameliorate this situation?
- Is the project assuring adequate technical support for livestock herders? Can this support be provided by the project's technical team, or a third party such as the local agricultural extension service?
- Are appropriate veterinary services available?
- Will the project have an effective follow up system in place to monitor the well-being of livestock and impacts on the local environment?

## ASSESS CURRENT AND PROPOSED SPECIES AND BREEDS

Introduction of a new breed into an area should be approached with caution. The new breed may bring with it diseases that can decimate local livestock herds and wildlife. In addition, the foraging habits of a new breed may disrupt available forage and biodiversity. A new breed's reproductive habits can lead to a herd's uncontrolled growth. Weeds can be accidentally introduced along with a new animal species, and they may displace desirable vegetation.



The long term full costs and benefits of introducing a given new livestock species into a particular environment should be assessed. For example, large animals who roam over extensive areas in search of food often require a greater financial investment, can be more difficult to control, and have lower reproductive potential than small animals. Selecting breeds that are well adapted to the environment is vital to successful livestock management—the value of appropriate breed selection should not be underestimated.

Livestock tend to overgraze favored areas and plants while neglecting others. Native plants may not be able to survive heavy grazing while unforaged plants tend to lose vigor and nutritional value as they mature. Heavily grazed native plants may be additionally impacted by transfer of invasive species, as discussed above. The introduction of new plant species (whether accidentally or intentionally) may quickly result in replacement of native plants. Even when grazing pressure is reduced, exotic plant species sometimes retain their dominance.

Ask the following questions when introduction of a new breed or species is proposed:

### ABOUT CURRENT SPECIES AND BREEDS

- Which wild and domestic species are already present in the area and are there concerns regarding the interaction of different breeds? ,
- How have they been used in local farming systems and traditions?
- What are the feeding preferences of local livestock and wildlife? What is the balance between browsers and grazers? Do domestic species compete for resources with one another and with wildlife?
- Have population sizes of wild or domestic species changed recently?
- Could local breeds satisfy the project's needs?

### ABOUT PROPOSED SPECIES AND BREEDS

- If new species or breeds are being considered, how will their production complement or conflict with local species or breeds, wildlife, and other local resource users?
- How would they fit in local herding systems?
- Are they well suited to the local climate and environment?
- Are they resistant to local livestock diseases?
- Have alternative species or breeds been considered for possible introduction?

## EVALUATE CURRENT AND PROPOSED LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

To maximize forage productivity, it is best to combine or alternate various livestock breeds on a range. Their differing food preferences can help to keep plants productive by minimizing overgrazing of a particular favored area and allowing less preferred plant species time to mature. It is prudent to make superior forage available to those animals with the highest needs. When forage is limited, livestock managers may decide that young and milk-producing animals must have first access to new pastures and ranges with a wide variety of abundant forage.

Within reason, managers should investigate the value of different systems of rotating livestock. Rotation allows land to be grazed continuously throughout the year. Livestock can be rotated

between fields or ranges to prevent the buildup of disease and to vary grazing pressures. Through either fencing or herding, they can be relocated into croplands to consume crop residues.

Assessment of seasonal grazing patterns should include potential impact on soils. Dry-season grazing can benefit the land by breaking up crusted soil and working seeds into the ground. By contrast, as mentioned above, grazing on moist soil can cause considerable soil compaction, which reduces the soils ability to absorb moisture and can result in increased erosion from runoff during the rainy season.

Many of the environmental impacts from livestock production are associated with particular practices of livestock management. Thus it is critical to understand current practices and how the proposed project might alter these practices or promote new ones.

- Who are the local community's livestock managers?
- What practices do a family or community use to control the size and composition of livestock herds?
- How do livestock managers currently control livestock movement? Will the proposed project change these movements in a way that might harm the environment?
- Does the proposed project require the construction of fences? If so, will they interfere with wildlife migration or transit of livestock belonging to other communities? Could the fences lead to overgrazing and land degradation? Will the fences be built with local materials? Would living fencing be practical? Would solar-powered electric fencing be technically and economically feasible?
- Are streams and riverbanks currently protected from livestock damage? If the proposed project will open new areas to grazing, will water supplies need to be protected?
- Must steps be taken to prevent new livestock and associated animals (e.g., dogs) from transmitting disease to wildlife? Is there a vaccination/animal disease control program available for this purpose?
- Will the project involve construction of improvements (e.g., boreholes or other infrastructure)? Could these lead to unplanned changes in herding patterns and overgrazing?

## ASSESS DEMAND AND USE OF LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS

- Who is marketing livestock and livestock products?
- Is the demand for livestock products coming from local or outside populations? How rapidly is it increasing or decreasing? How stable is the demand?
- In preparing livestock products, are people using technologies which reduce impacts on the environment, open additional markets, or improve health and nutrition (of people and animals.)

## DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Epidemic and endemic diseases continue to be a major constraint to livestock productivity in large parts of the developing world. Although vaccines have controlled many of the epidemic diseases, they continue to cause severe economic losses through morbidity and mortality. These diseases include the infections caused by vector-borne haemoparasites and helminths. Existing technologies, such as chemotherapeutic agents and live vaccines that were previously successful in controlling these diseases, are no longer effective—because of acquired resistance or weakened delivery services.

Appropriately designed alternatives are often lacking.

### Bloodsucking ticks and flies

Bloodsucking ticks and flies transmit several fatal or seriously debilitating diseases to cattle. In Africa, examples include tick-borne East Coast fever and African animal trypanosomiasis (nagana), transmitted by the tsetse fly. Cattle dipping and area treatment with pesticides are often used to control the carriers of such diseases. Although drugs have been used to prevent and treat trypanosomiasis, they are expensive, effective for only a few months, and trypanosomes rapidly develop resistance to them. Promising alternatives to such control methods are being researched, including vaccines for tick-borne diseases and highly effective tsetse traps using baits.

## CONSIDER POPULATION PRESSURE AND DISEASE BURDEN

Two factors that may affect the outcome and impact of livestock projects worldwide—but particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Near East—are population growth and fatal or debilitating epidemic diseases. Population growth increases pressure on herds and may lead to conflict over grazing lands, reduction of the size of individual farms or rangelands so that they cannot sustain livestock, severe immobility of the herd, and environmental degradation. Fatal or debilitating epidemic diseases may weaken effective dissemination or replication of proper livestock management techniques. HIV/AIDS is a particular concern, but so are geographically restricted diseases such as sleeping sickness and malaria.

- What is the current and projected population growth rate in the project area? How might this affect project sustainability in the future?
- What is the current extent of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region? How might this affect the composition of the population (size, ethnic makeup, age/gender distribution) and family structures necessary for project sustainability? How will development and livestock technical support services be affected?
- Are there other epidemic diseases in the region, such as sleeping sickness, that might adversely affect project implementation?

## MITIGATION AND MONITORING ISSUES

| ACTIVITY   | IMPACT<br><i>The activity may. . .</i>  | MITIGATION   |
|--|---|--|
| Introduction of a new grazing livestock production or of mixed farming | <p>Degrade large areas by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overgrazing</li> <li>• imbalanced foraging</li> <li>• dominance by low-utility plant species</li> <li>• soil compaction</li> <li>• soil erosion</li> </ul> <p>Damage habitat and reduce biodiversity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overgrazing</li> <li>• imbalanced foraging</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prevent overgrazing and soil compaction, ensure that pastoralists and livestock managers/farmers have secure tenure rights. Monitor implementation of tenure policy.</li> <li>• Develop decision-makers' awareness of the long-term economic importance of maintaining balanced ecosystems and resilience, including maintenance of biodiversity and wildlife. Provide similar knowledge to pastoralists and livestock managers/farmers.</li> <li>• For grazing systems, guarantee managers and pastoralists sufficient mobility and flexibility to manage grazing areas sustainably, use water and biomass efficiently, destock rapidly in times of drought and restock when rains return.</li> </ul>   |
|  | <p>Damage habitat and reduce biodiversity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• competition with wildlife for fodder or water</li> <li>• increased killing of wildlife to "protect herds"</li> <li>• spreading disease to wildlife</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For mixed farming systems, determine farmer/livestock manager's ability to match livestock requirements to available rangeland and fodder crops for long-term sustainability. Strengthen capabilities through education and incentives where needed.</li> <li>• To maintain rangeland and mixed farming system sustainability, ensure a balanced mix of foraging and grazing species, including wildlife where appropriate. Determine fodder preferences of domestic and wildlife species.</li> <li>• To ensure balanced use of fodder and water, determine baseline carrying capacity for livestock and wildlife (where appropriate). Establish quota systems for domestic species and wildlife to ensure that carrying capacity is not exceeded. Change domestic species and breeds to minimize overlap between their preferred fodder and that of local wildlife, and/or ensure a sufficient supply of fodder for domestic species and wildlife. Monitor management of the quota system.</li> <li>• Establish historical baselines for climate and precipitation, taking into account seasonal and geographic variations. Establish historical baselines for soils, water quality</li> </ul> |

| ACTIVITY   | IMPACT<br><i>The activity may. . .</i>   | MITIGATION   |
|--|--|--|
| Introduction of a new grazing livestock production or of mixed farming (continued) | <p>Damage habitat and reduce biodiversity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• competition with wildlife for fodder or water</li> <li>• increased killing of wildlife to “protect herds”</li> <li>• spreading disease to wildlife (continued)</li> </ul> | <p>and quantity, flora and fauna, and select indicators to measure deviation from baseline. Monitor indicators to gauge whether long-term resilience of range and mixed farming systems is being maintained. Train herders, pastoralists and farmers as resource monitors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure pastoralists’ access to seasonal grazing and water.</li> <li>• Strengthen systems for wildlife management and for control of problem animals to minimize adverse interactions with pastoral and mixed farming systems (such as disease transmission, predation and crop damage).</li> <li>• To avoid killing of wildlife that is thought to be infecting or preying on livestock, provide livestock managers with financial incentives to maintain ecosystem balance. Explore possible community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) approaches. (See “Community-based Natural Resource Management” in this volume for more information), or other successful integrated wildlife and livestock management methods, such as combined wildlife and livestock ranching.</li> <li>• To prevent the spread of disease from livestock to wildlife, carefully research any new breeds and associated diseases.</li> </ul> |
|  | <p>Generate conflict between livestock managers and other groups, such as farmers</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prevent conflict between livestock managers, farmers, pastoralists and other groups:</li> <li>• Ensure that the customary or legal rights and responsibilities of all parties are harmonized and accepted. Agreements should cover how each resource will be used, who will use it, when it is to be used, utilization rates and quotas, management costs, and monitoring responsibilities.</li> <li>• If such rights and responsibilities are not yet established, work with policymakers to create a respected legal framework.</li> </ul>   |

| ACTIVITY   | IMPACT<br><i>The activity may. . .</i>   | MITIGATION  |
|--|--|---|
| Introduction of a new grazing livestock production or of mixed farming in highland areas or marginal lands | Cause erosion  | <p>To minimize erosion caused by livestock raised in highland areas or marginal lands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid overgrazing through the use of quota systems matched to carrying capacity.</li> <li>• Construct side hill ditches or similar diversion structures—Very typically separating higher, non-arable land from cultivated land below.</li> <li>• Construct terraces—radical conversion of sloped land into a series of graded steps approximating flat conditions.</li> <li>• Plant living barriers—planted along the contour to trap or filter run-off and retain soil, such as contour hedgerows or grass strips. In some circumstances, fencing is necessary to keep animals and waste out of riparian areas.</li> <li>• Ensure that terracing and paths are well constructed, and</li> <li>• Reduce soil compaction by providing incentives to avoid wet season grazing.</li> </ul> |
| Introduction of a new grazing livestock production or of mixed farming near rivers and streams             | <p>Cause erosion and sedimentation, thereby potentially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damaging riparian habitat</li> <li>• Degrading water quality</li> <li>• Damaging aquatic and wetland habitat and biodiversity</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect stream and riverbanks from browsing or grazing through fencing or herding techniques.</li> </ul>   |
| Introduction of industrial livestock production  | <p>Improper management and/or treatment of manure from industrial facilities may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degrade water quality</li> <li>• Damage aquatic and wetland habitat and biodiversity</li> <li>• Harm human health</li> <li>• Create odor</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferably, apply manure to crop fields.</li> <li>• If the expense of transport makes this uneconomical, treat the manure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Options for treating animal manure are like those for treating human waste. These include construction of artificial wetlands, detention ponds, composting, and biogas generation.</li> <li>○ Site these treatment systems with care to minimize adverse impacts on water bodies and communities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>See section on “Water Supply and Sanitation” in this volume for more information.</p>  |



| ACTIVITY                                  | IMPACT<br><i>The activity may. . .</i>  | MITIGATION   |
|---|---|--|
| Introduction of new livestock and breeds  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degrade land</li> <li>• Reduce biodiversity and harm habitat</li> <li>• Reduce genetic diversity of domestic species</li> <li>• Transmit disease to wildlife</li> <li>• Introduce invasive non-native plant species</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoroughly research new species of livestock. Determine their grazing/browsing preferences and compare them to those of current livestock species/breeds and wildlife to minimize overlap and prevent unbalanced feeding. Pilot-test new breeds and species before introducing them in a broad program, and monitor their impacts over time.</li> <li>• If local breeds can meet specified needs, strongly consider their use. Even if a local breed is a relatively low producer, weigh this drawback against the breed's disease resistance and hardiness in the local environment.</li> <li>• Introduce entirely new species or breeds to a region with great care. Evaluate the risks of introducing new diseases that might be transferred to wildlife.</li> <li>• If breeds or species from other parts of the country, region, or world are to be introduced, wash and comb their hooves and coats to remove plant seeds. Feed livestock on grain or other crop feed in transit to minimize the risk of accidentally introducing new plant species.</li> </ul> |
| Installation of new/improved water supply | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degrade large land areas from overgrazing</li> <li>• Compact soil</li> <li>• Reduce biodiversity and harm ecosystem and habitat</li> <li>• Reduce water availability</li> <li>• Degrade water quality</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When installing new water supplies, consider how access to water will affect geographical and seasonal grazing patterns. In some cases, such as in a semi-arid climate, it may be best not to construct water supply improvements for livestock, since these will almost certainly lead to environmental degradation.</li> <li>• If the improvements are essential, ensure that a mechanism for regulating water use is in place to prevent exhaustion of the water resources and to help restrict the number of livestock dependent on these sources. Water supply improvements should also be designed so that they minimize the risks of water supply contamination by animals and humans.</li> <li>• Monitor water supply quantity and quality.</li> </ul> <p>See section on "Water Supply and Sanitation" in this volume for more information.</p>   |

| ACTIVITY                                 | IMPACT<br><i>The activity may. . .</i> | MITIGATION  |
|--|--|---|
| Increased population and disease burdens |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design projects with attention to mechanisms to maintain human and livestock populations at sustainable levels below the upper limits of the ecosystem's carrying capacity, including the provision of health and family planning services and incentives. Consider use of permits and quota systems to limit in-migration and population growth in sensitive or threatened rangelands or mixed farming areas, as well as other areas of special value. Use pollution permits to control pollution from industrial livestock operations, especially near communities and water resources. Monitor growth in population against a historical baseline.</li> <li>• Assess the medium- to long-term implications of epidemic diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDs, tuberculosis, sleeping sickness) on livestock managers, pastoralists and farmers, as well as on provision of technical assistance and support. Institute local health and HIV/AIDs education programs in conjunction with technical assistance and training in livestock management</li> </ul> |

# RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

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## DOCUMENTS

- Boyd, C., R. Blench, D. Bourn, E. Drake, and P. Stevenson (1999). *Reconciling Interests among Wildlife, Livestock and People in Eastern Africa: A Sustainable Livelihood Approach*. Overseas Development Institute, Natural Resource Perspectives Number 45. :London, UK. <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/details.asp?id=2109&title=reconciling-interests-wildlife-livestock-people-eastern-africa-sustainable-livelihoods-approach>

From the perspective of local livelihoods this paper explores the complex interactions between wildlife, livestock and people, and options for integrated wildlife and livestock management in the semi-arid rangelands of eastern Africa. The paper draws on the sustainable livelihoods approach which explicitly considers whether households have access to the assets required to engage in an activity, and how that activity fits with existing livelihood activities.

- *The State of Food and Agriculture. Part 1: Livestock in the Balance*. FAO. 2009. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i0680e/i0680e00.htm>

This report is part of a comprehensive study on 'Interactions between Livestock Production Systems and the Environment - Global Perspectives and Prospects'. The study examines management of waste from animal product processing, and environmental impact of animal manure management, landless monogastric production systems, landless livestock ruminant systems, and mixed irrigated systems in the (sub-) humid zones.

- *CGIAR Annual Report 2008: Global Recommitment to Agriculture*. Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. [http://library.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/5262/2008\\_CGIAR\\_Annual\\_Report\\_low\\_res.pdf?sequence=1](http://library.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10947/5262/2008_CGIAR_Annual_Report_low_res.pdf?sequence=1)

This annual report highlights communities adopting new ways of doing livestock business that are creating pathways out of poverty. The main chapters of this document present three case studies of how livestock systems are helping poor people meet the challenges of agricultural intensification in developing countries. The research activities in China, India and Nigeria outlined in this annual report is providing ILRI and partners and donor agencies with lessons for producing global public goods.

- de Haan, C. et al (2001). *Livestock Development: Implications on Rural Poverty, the Environment, and Global Food Security*. World Bank, Washington D.C.  
<http://www.ruta.org:8180/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/523/RN62.pdf?sequence=1>

This book argues for a people-focused approach to livestock development, giving high priority to the public-goods aspect of poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, food security and safety, and animal welfare. It outlines the primary policy/technology framework for the main production systems and concludes with an eleven-point action plan for the sector.

- Heffernan, C. (1998). *Livestock, Destitution and Drought: The impact of restocking on food security post-disaster*. Pastoral Development Network, Overseas Development Network, FAO. Rome, Italy. <http://www.odi.org.uk/pdn/drought/heffernan.html>

This paper examines concepts of food security in relation to pastoralists and attempts to quantify the impact of restocking on pastoralist households in Northern Kenya. The first section of the paper, analysis how food security can be both theoretically defined and practically applied. Whereas, the second section examines the impact of restocking projects on food security at both the household and project level. Food security parameters such as capital, investments and stores were evaluated. Household economic conditions were utilised as a proxy to measure food security. At the project level, the influence of the size of the restocking package on present and future food security was evaluated.

- ILRI and USAID (2000). *Livestock Strategy to 2010: Making the Livestock Revolution Work for the Poor*. Nairobi, Kenya.  
<http://mahider.ilri.org/bitstream/handle/10568/587/ILRIStrategy2010.pdf?sequence=1>

Major implications for livestock research are identified from analysis of the major factors expected to influence livestock development over the next decade. This framework is based on ex ante, or preventive, assessment of probable economic surplus from different research investments, taking into account five criteria: contribution to poverty reduction; expected economic impact; expected environmental impact; international relevance of recommendations under consideration; and expected impact on research capacity in developing countries.

- Jabbar, M.A., J. Pender and S.K. Ehui (eds), 2000. *Policies for Sustainable Land Management in the Highlands of Ethiopia: Summary of Papers and Proceedings of a Seminar Held at ILRI, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22-23 May 2000*. International Livestock Research Institute, Nairobi, Socio-economics and Policy Research Working Paper 30.  
<http://www.ifpri.org/divs/eptd/ws/papers/eptws09.pdf>

The papers presented at this seminar provided information about the interrelated problems of land degradation, low agricultural productivity and poverty in the Ethiopian highlands (emphasizing the administrative regions of Tigray, Amhara and Oromiya); the proximate and underlying causes of those problems; the responses of individuals, communities and governments to the problems; the impacts of some of those responses; and the constraints and opportunities affecting the potential in the future for more productive, sustainable and poverty-reducing development pathways in the Ethiopian highlands.

- Osofsky, Steve (ed) (2005). *Proceedings of the Southern and East African Experts Panel on Designing Successful Conservation and Development Interventions at the Wildlife/Livestock Interface: Implications for Wildlife, Livestock and Human Health, AHEAD (Animal Health for the Environment And Development) Forum, IUCN Vth World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa, 14th and 15th September, 2003*. IUCN Occasional Paper 30, IUCN - The World Conservation Union, UK. <http://ilrinet.ilri.cgiar.org/inrm/InvestingFeb2006.pdf>

The "Southern and East African Experts Panel on Designing Successful Conservation and Development Interventions at the Wildlife/Livestock Interface: Implications for Wildlife, Livestock and Human Health" forum brought together nearly 80 veterinarians, ecologists, economists, wildlife managers, and other experts from Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, France, the United States, and the United Kingdom to develop ways to tackle the immense health-related conservation and development challenges at the wildlife/domestic animal/human interface facing Africa today, and tomorrow. This volume attempts to capture invitees' uniquely grounded insights, and their ideas for making the long-overdue "one health" perspective a reality in practice.

- Peden, D., A. Freeman, A. Astatke, A. Notenbaert (2006). *Investment Options for Integrated Water-Livestockcrop Production in sub-Saharan Africa*. Working Paper 1, International Livestock Research Institute, Kenya. ISBN 92-9146-183-0  
<http://ilrinet.ilri.cgiar.org/inrm/InvestingFeb2006.pdf>

This paper focuses on opportunities to enhance investment returns in agricultural water through integration of livestock into production systems by considering three issues. The first is the development context of the dynamic livestock sector including the anticipated rapid growth in demand for animal products that are transforming the livestock sector and placing increased demand on agricultural water resources. The second is a continent-wide spatial analysis of the current and projected distribution of livestock with implications for related pressure on water resources and investment options that better integrate agricultural water and livestock development. Thirdly, this paper suggests a set of water-livestock investment strategies and options that can help guide planners toward more effective use of water and more beneficial animal production.

- Pratt, D. J., F. Le Gall and C. de Haan (1997). *Investing in Pastoralism: Sustainable Natural Resource Use in Arid Africa and the Middle East*. World Bank Technical Paper No. 365. World Bank, Washington D.C. [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSIBankServlet?pcont=details&id=000009265\\_3971110141434](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSIBankServlet?pcont=details&id=000009265_3971110141434)

This document offers guidelines for development in arid lands where pastoralism is practiced. It focuses on natural resource management (NRM) on arid rangelands used by pastoralists in Africa and Middle East. Part One provides advice on preparing for project interventions. Part Two provides guidelines for specific project components, addressing five essentials of pastoral development projects: herder organizations, support systems, drought management, phasing of technical inputs, and process monitoring.

- Ramisch, Joshua (1999). *The Long Dry Season: Crop-livestock Linkages in Southern Mali*. Agricultural Ecosystems Research Group, Agronomy Department, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI. <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/7413IIED.pdf>

This article discusses agro-pastoralist exchanges in Mali. This has increase following the Sahelian droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, in which pastoralists have moved southwards with their herds, into wetter, more productive environments; cultivators are increasingly investing in livestock as the plough replaces the hoe. This paper investigates the interactions brought about by the co-existence of herds and agriculture in a village setting.

- Sheng, T.C. 1989. “*Soil Conservation for Small Farmers in the Humid Tropics.*” FAO Soils Bulletin 60: 104.

Although somewhat dated, considered by many as the most useful guide for a practical understanding and application of soil and water conservation practices.

- Williams, Timothy O (1998). *Multiple Uses of Common Pool Resources in Semi-arid West Africa: A Survey of Existing Practices and Options for Sustainable Resource Management.* Overseas Development Institute, Natural Resources Perspectives Number 38. London, UK. <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/2885.pdf>;

Common pool resources such as rangeland, forests, fallow fields and ponds provide an array of social and economic benefits for a wide variety of users in semi-arid West Africa. However, poor definition and enforcement of the institutional arrangements governing the use of these resources sometimes lead to social conflicts and resource degradation. This paper examines why institutional arrangements are at times weak, and suggests what action can be taken.

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