LIFE ShepForBio 3rd International Conference “Pastoral Landscapes 2026”

Palazzo Bastogi, Florence (Tuscany, IT)
23 & 24 September 2026

Welcome words

Introducing the Global Declaration of Young Pastoralists of the IYRP 2026

Tamara Mitrofanenko
(UNEP Vienna Programme Office, Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention)

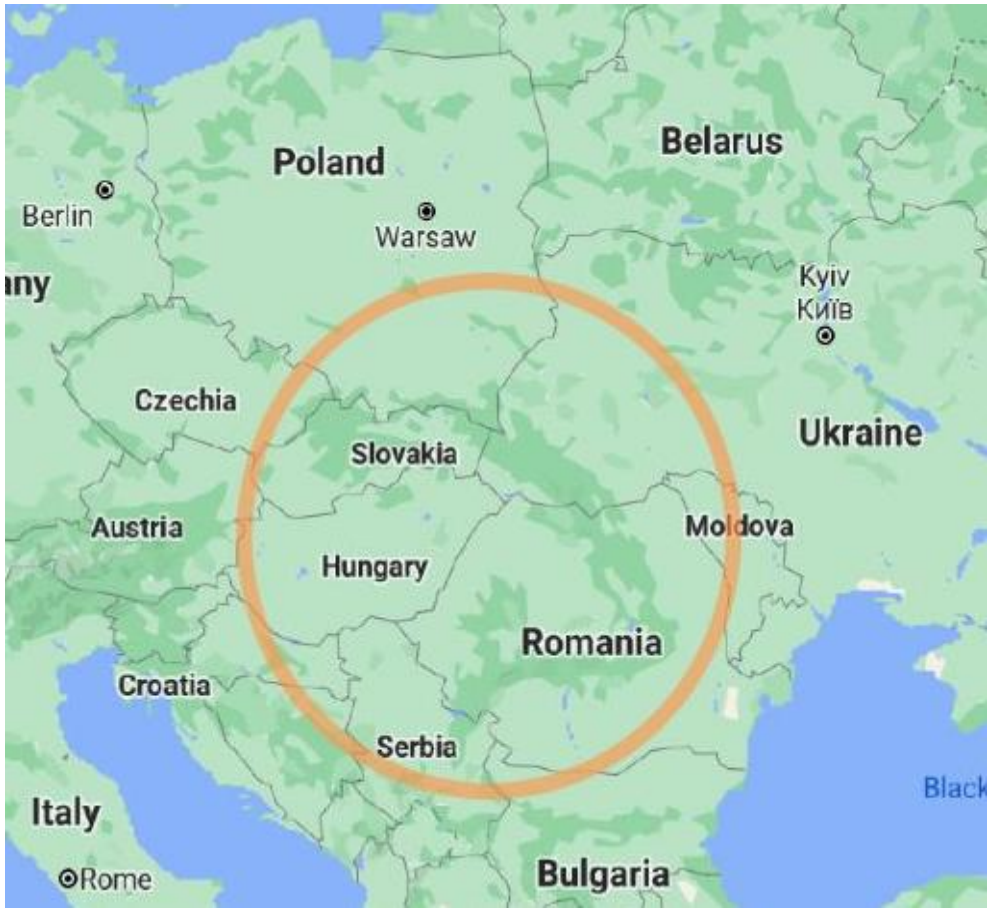
Global Declaration of Young Pastoralists IYRP 2026

and Safeguarding Pastoralism in the Carpathian Region

Tamara Mitrofanenko
UNEP Vienna Programme Office - Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention



Carpathian Convention







Partnership with IYRP 2026 - MOC Signed at COP 7





IYRP 2026 — CARPATHIAN CONVENTION

- to promote exchange of data and information relevant for sustainable pastoralism with a particular focus on best practices from other global regions that can be adapted and applied in the Carpathian region.
- to promote networks of professional experts in fields related to sustainable pastoralism.
- to improve the dialogue with and between the pastoralists in the Carpathian Mountains and elsewhere in Europe such as via supporting/organising/hosting regional and international level experience- and knowledge-sharing events.

Except the above points, the Signatories shall not use in any press release, memo, report, website or other published disclosure related to this MoC any of the other Signatories' name and logo without prior written consent by the Signatory concerned.

III – TERM AND TERMINATION

The term of this MoC will commence from the date of the signature and will remain in effect until 31 December 2026. This MoC can be revised at any point through mutual written agreement. Either party may terminate the MoC by providing a written notice six months in advance.

IV – Non-Binding Memorandum of Cooperation

Nothing in this MoC will legally bind any of the Signatories. Any dispute about the interpretation or application of this Memorandum will be resolved by consultations between the Signatories and will not be referred to any national or international tribunal or third party for settlement.

Signed in duplicate on 12.10.23 in English.

For the Global International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026 Coalition

Igshaan Samuels
Co-chair on behalf
Date 12 October 2023

For the Secretariat of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

Harald Egerer
Head of the Secretariat
Date 12 October 2023

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR RANGELANDS & PASTORALISTS

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS 2026

GLOBAL DECLARATION OF YOUNG PASTORALISTS

Global Gathering of Young Pastoralists · Madrid, 9–11 April 2026

International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026

Madrid Call to Action





GLOBAL DECLARATION OF YOUNG PASTORALISTS

Final consultations





I. YOUTH GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP & REPRESENTATION

1. Establish mandatory, dedicated **seats for young pastoralists**, taking into consideration gender balance, in all national and regional relevant governance bodies, that are representative and with real decision-making power.

2. Protect young pastoralist **human rights defenders** from criminalization, harassment, and violence, especially those working on land, environmental, and cultural rights.

3. Develop and fund **youth leadership and advocacy programs** co-designed with pastoralist youth, covering governance, negotiation, knowledge sharing, and digital literacy.

4. Establish **a permanent youth agenda item in the FAO Committee on Agriculture Sub-Committee on Livestock (COAG Li)** and the committee on Forestry Working Group on Drylands to facilitate recurrent youth dialogues and support the creation of a formal Global Pastoralist Youth Network.

5**. Formally recognize the Global Alliance for Rangelands and Pastoralists** as an official structured body and ensure its adequate and sustained financing.



II. LAND RIGHTS & THE COMMONS

6. Enact and strengthen national laws **protecting communal pastoralist lands** from enclosure, conversion, or dispossession by any actor (state, corporate, or conservation), following consented guidelines, ensuring direct community participation, and explicitly recognizing customary and communal land tenure systems as legally valid.

7. Make free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) legally binding for any land-use, infrastructure, or investment on rangeland commons, and implement immediate reform of policies that fragment pastoral lands.

8. Legally guarantee pastoral mobility as a fundamental right by protecting and reclaiming seasonal migration routes and transhumance corridors, both national and cross-border.

9. Recognize and guarantee the land rights of pastoralist women and youth in both legal frameworks and traditional governance systems, ensuring that customary institutions do not undermine but enforce these rights.



III. CLIMATE JUSTICE, BIODIVERSITY & ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

10. Formally recognize ecosystem services of pastoralism and financially compensate pastoralists for contributions to biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem sustainability and other ecosystem services, taking into account local ecosystem conditions.

11. Ensure direct access to climate finance for youth-led pastoral initiatives

12. Prohibit carbon credit schemes and monoculture plantations that dispossess communities of their rangelands.

13. Guarantee pastoralist youth seats in all relevant international processes on climate, biodiversity and desertification as well as regional conventions and processes; and support accreditation of more pastoralist youth organizations in these spaces.

14. Establish accessible compensation mechanisms for losses from climate-induced disasters and assist pastoralist youth-led enterprises to develop green livelihoods and sustain local economies.





IV. CULTURE, KNOWLEDGE & IDENTITY

15. Recognise, document, and protect traditional pastoralist knowledge — rangeland management, ethnoveterinary knowledge, local breeds, genetic resources, medicinal plants, seasonal forecasting — through community-led processes as well as policies at national and regional level, with intellectual property rights vested in pastoral communities.

16. Reform national education systems and policies to incorporate pastoralist culture, history, and ecological knowledge, with flexible, mobile, and culturally grounded curricula and formal vocational accreditation of pastoral skills.

17. Design and fund equitable, accessible, and adaptive education systems and methods specifically tailored for pastoralist youth, serving as the long-term guardians of rangelands, including structured intergenerational mentorship programs. Adapt materials to various levels of literacy and local languages.

18. Establish formal 'reverse extension' programs that bring policymakers directly into pastoral landscapes to be trained by communities, inverting the top-down development model and ensuring that land-use decisions are technically informed by those who have managed these ecosystems for generations.



V. LIVELIHOODS, ECONOMY & SOCIAL PROTECTION

19. Direct investments and interventions towards enabling pastoralists to continue practising pastoralism, secure pastoralist livelihoods, and improve access to livestock markets and other enabling infrastructure.

20. Extend social protection programs, healthcare, livestock insurance, veterinary services, and disaster compensation to fully cover pastoralist communities, with dedicated provisions for youth.

21. Design and fund entrepreneurship programs for pastoral youth on value chains, agribusiness, and digital tools; expand mobile connectivity in pastoral areas; and develop financial systems—including insurance and credit—adapted to mobile livelihoods.

22. Recognize and support pastoralist women, guaranteeing equal access to social and financial services.

23. Implement policies to counter growing stratification in pastoral communities, including programs that facilitate livestock ownership and economic access for young pastoralists, and incentivize resident, community-based herd management over absentee ownership models.



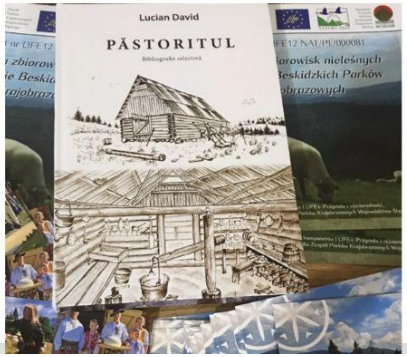
Addressing Pastoralism via the Carpathian Convention



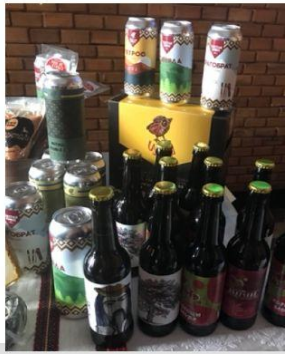












Zsolt Molnar, Ibolya Sáfián

Project: Linking biodiversity, pastoralism, cultural heritage via education for sustainable development (ESD) in the Carpathian Region

- **Implementation period**: December 2024 – May 2027
- **Funding**: German Federal Environment Ministry's Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP)

- **Key activities:**
  - Connecting Carpathian Pastoralism practitioners and experts
  - Support the inscription process of Carpathian pastoral-related practices to the UNESCO ICH List
  - Create a stock-take of existing schools and informational resources for Carpathian pastoralists
  - Create an initial overview of educational curricula on how pastoralism and traditional ecological knowledge is portrayed

Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

Umwelt Bundesamt

Carpathian Convention

UN environment programme

eurac research



Extension of the Multinational File: "Transhumance - the seasonal droving of livestock"

UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- **Countries Inscribed previously**: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Romania and Spain
- **New countries joining:** Bulgaria, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Türkiye and Ukraine





The Safeguarding Plan

1. Awareness-raising and recognition of pastoralists:	**2. Integration into international Environmental and Cultural Frameworks**	**3. Biodiversity protection and climate resilience**
4. Strengthening the economic dimension: e.g. product valorisation	**5. Vocational education and generational renewal**	**6. Carpathian Collaboration Framework**

CARPATHIAN DAY



Photo: Lucia Cušnir

26 of September

2026 Theme:

CARPATHIAN PASTORALISM: WHERE NATURE AND CULTURE MEET

Challenges faced by young pastoralists in the Carpathian region

- Land Fragmentation and Resource Privatization restrict access to historic communal pastures.
- Policy Bottlenecks: Complex administration
- Generational Disconnect: Youth increasingly lack interest in complex herding skills.
- Traditional knowledge is disappearing.
- Social Stereotypes: Modern education often frames pastoralism as outdated or backward.
- Gender Disparities: Young pastoralist women face higher barriers to land ownership and leadership roles



Towards a Carpathian Pastoralist Declaration



Interactive workshop Proposals for the future of European pastoral schools

Beatrice Bellavia (Euromontana & LIFE ShepForBio Project)

Why are we here?

- Pastoral schools are often discussed in relation to the **technical and practical skills** they transmit.
- But their role can go **much further** than education and training alone.

→Reflect on a series of functions identified

→Make this part of what we advocate for at EU level

We advocate for:

→ Maximise the schools' **impact**,

→ Stronger policy **recognition**,

→ Stable **funding**,

→ European **network** of pastoral schools, and

→ Development of a **common European training framework** and professional qualification for shepherds.

Why are we here?

→ Results will be part of a Technical Dossier on European Pastoral Schools, and help reinforce the network



Insights on pastoral schools

- Pastoral training in Europe is highly **uneven**: not many shepherd schools, specialised programmes + informal knowledge transfer
- **France** & **Spain** lead the development of pastoral schools, with training combining traditional skills and modern topics



© Marco Buratti

- Most pastoral knowledge is still learned through **practice and mentoring**
- Many programmes face **challenges**, including low enrolment, ageing shepherd populations & limited long-term institutional support.
- Shepherd schools are increasingly recognised as **strategic tools** for generational renewal and rural vitality.



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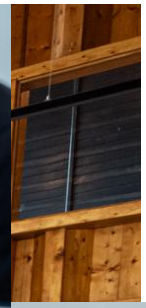
In the last episodes



In the last episodes









Who's in the room?

First Round of introduction

4 minutes to tell:

1. Who are you in relation to pastoral education?
2. What brings you here?
3. What is one thing you would like others in this room to understand?

LIFE SHEP FOR BIO

Shepherd School of Alvão

EUROMONTANA D.R.E.AM. ITALIA Regione Toscana RETE APPIA INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS 2026

Terra Maronesa





Visit:

- https://lifemaronesa.eu
- https://terramaronesa.pt
- https://climamaispositivo.pt



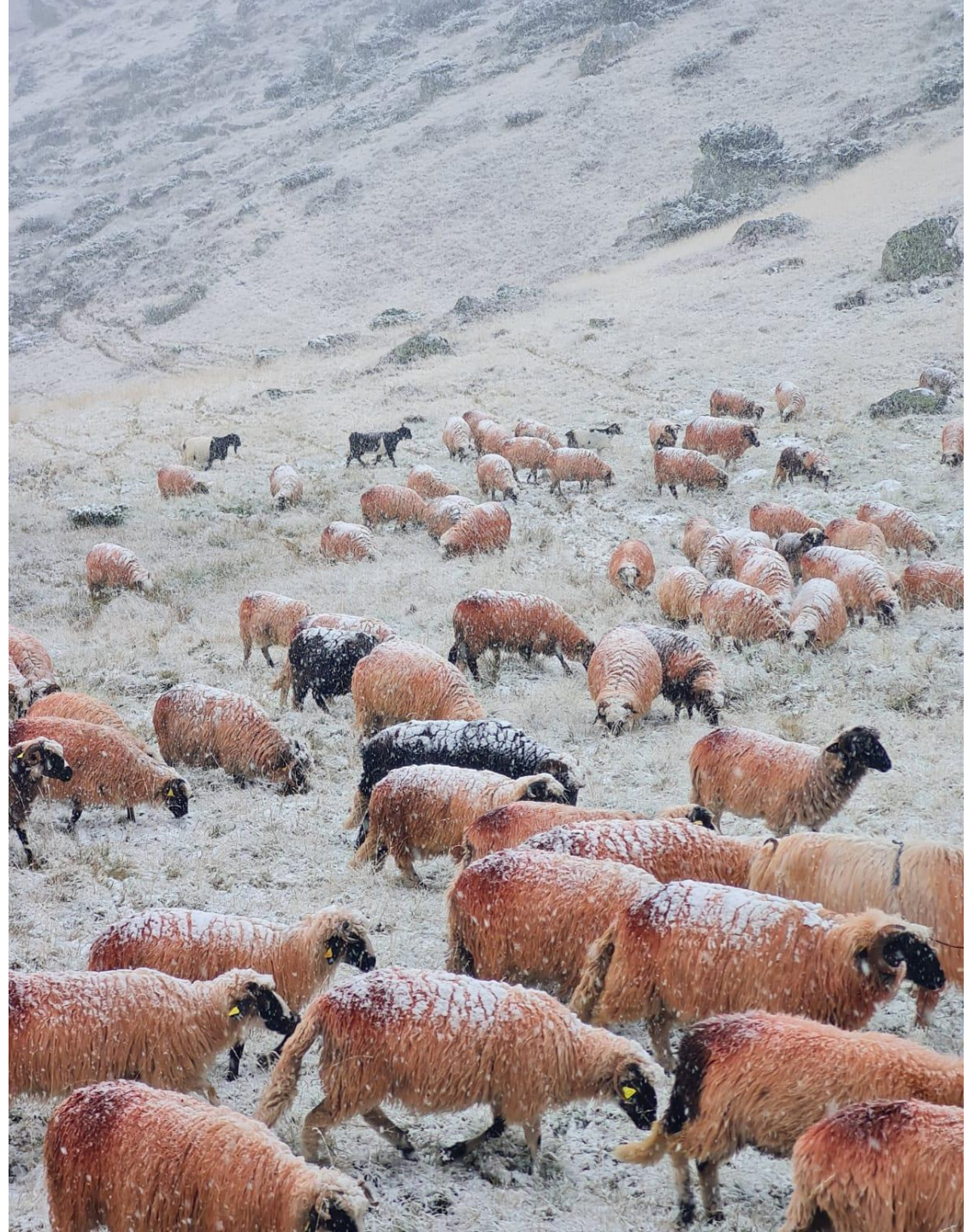
Hyrdeskolen på Lystbækgaard





LIFE SHEP FOR BIO

Lucia Cușnir (Retezat National Park)



Delegation from Albania (Martine Wolff, Selman Voka, Meshrik Hoxha)

LIFE SHEP FOR BIO

Escuela de Pastores de Andalucía

(Veronica Cruz, Davinia Gonzalez, Francisco Javier Castro)

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adidas

LIFE ShepForBio & Calascio Shepherd School

LIFE SHEP FOR BIO

DEAFAL

(Delegazione Europea per l'Agricoltura Familiare)



The role of schools beyond education

1. Contribute to addressing **issues that go beyond purely pastoral matters** (e.g. biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, wildfires prevention, etc.)
2. Contribute to **innovation** by testing new technologies and operating methods, including in collaboration with research centres.

3. Carry out **advocacy** work on behalf of pastoralism on various issues: better working conditions, stronger professional recognition, adequate remuneration and supportive public policies.

4. Promote **networks**.

5. Promote accurate **communication** about the work of shepherds and pastoralism in general.

6. Contribute to **retaining the population** in rural areas (students who decide to remain in the School's region/move to other mountain areas) and can also facilitate **generational renewal** in existing farms.

7. Act as **mediators** between various stakeholders and users in mountain areas → management of challenges coming from different land uses eg. Tourism, conflicts, interactions with broader community

8. Can develop or improve **services** and support for businesses (access to land, professional integration, ...).

9. Emotional support for difficult situations, solidarity

10. Facilitation and interpretation between languages and practices

11. Peer exchange and support

12. Valorisation and transmission of indigenous knowledge

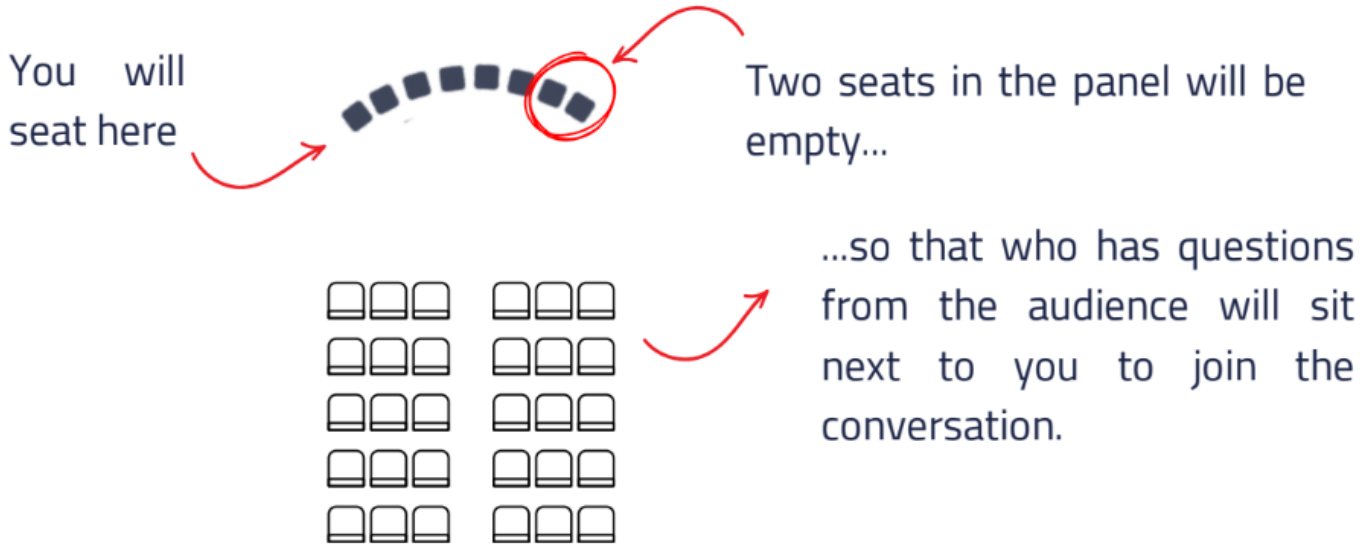
13. Antidote to polarisation of society

14. Supporting the opening up process to the external world

15. Employment and protection of local breeds

Interactive workshop: how?

- Row of chairs in front
- 2 open chairs
- Anyone can come to an open chair to contribute
- After contributing, they leave the chair for somebody else



10:30 – 11:00
Coffee break

The role of schools beyond education: is anything missing? Why?

12:30 – 13:30
Lunch break

LIFE SHEP FOR BIO

Building effective representation of the pastoral sector's concerns, promoting a consistent involvement of shepherds in decision-making processes and advocacy activities

Greta Semplici & Tommaso Campedelli (Rete Appia)

EUROMONTANA D.R.E.AM. ITALIA Regione Toscana RETE APPIA INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF RANGELANDS AND PASTORALISTS 2026

Opening Keynote by Pablo Manzano (BC3 Basque Centre for Climate Change, Spain)

Perché oggi i pastori/e fanno fatica a far pesare la propria voce?

- Mancanza di unione nel settore
- Pochi numeri
- Impossibilità a lasciare gli animali
- Intensità del lavoro/mancanza di tempo
- Mancanza di giovani
- Disgregazione della famiglia/sociale/comunità/solitudine
- Isolamento
- Invidia
- Frammentazione/divisione/settorializzazione
- Mancanza di autostima
- Mancanza di fiducia/sfiducia nella politica
- Stanchezza
- Stigmatizzazione
- Strumentalizzazione
- Perdita di peso economico/invisibilità
- Patrimonializzazione della grande distribuzione
- Veterinaria e sanità uniti
- Tempo della burocrazia
- Interferenze da chi non conosce il lavoro

Why do pastors today find it difficult to make their voices heard?

- Lack of unity within the sector
- Low numbers
- Inability to leave the animals behind
- Intense workload/lack of time
- Lack of young people
- Breakdown of the family/society/community/loneliness
- Isolation
- Envy
- Fragmentation/division/sectoralisation
- Lack of self-esteem
- Lack of trust/distrust in politics
- Fatigue
- Stigmatisation
- Exploitation
- Loss of economic clout/invisibility
- The dominance of large-scale retail
- Veterinary and healthcare sectors united
- Bureaucratic delays
- Interference from those unfamiliar with the work

Chi e come dovrebbe rappresentare i pastori?

- Le autorità centrali e/o regionali tramite le organizzazioni professionali: piano strategico per la pastorizia
- Solidarietà/collaborazione con le organizzazioni ambientalistiche
- Gruppi di pressione (ma il coordinamento è difficile)
- Azioni locali
- Rappresentanza qualificata multi-scala
- I pastori/le pastore stessi/e
- Gruppi di lavoro tra pastori/e dinamici/rotazione
- Associazione regionale di pastori, pastori poco a poco, non tutti insieme, fiera come strumento di socializzazione
- Reti tra associazioni
- Comunicazione
- Strumenti per lasciare un po' di tempo ai pastori (reti di supporto)
- Regionalizzazione

Who should represent the shepherds, and how?

- Central and/or regional authorities, through professional organisations: strategic plan for sheep farming
- Solidarity/collaboration with environmental organisations
- Lobby groups (though coordination is difficult)
- Local initiatives
- Qualified multi-level representation
- The shepherds themselves
- Dynamic working groups of shepherds with rotating membership
- Regional association of shepherds, involving shepherds gradually rather than all at once; a trade fair as a means of socialising
- Networks between associations
- Communication
- Tools to give pastors some breathing space (support networks)
- Regionalisation

Ci proviamo? 1-2 temi prioritari e come strutturare un'azione collettiva

- Piano strategico della pastorizia in Italia, tramite conferenza stato regioni/ministero
- Flessibilizzazione
- Gestione carcasse
- Comunicazione: sagre/fiera > verso l'esterno; verso l'interno; fare cassa

- Associazioni pastorali locali/regionali + supporto ricercatori/professionisti del settore/facilitatori
- Gruppo WhatsApp/lavoro tra pastori
- Associazione nazionale della pastorizia, rappresentante di associazioni pastorali regionali

Il caso lombardo:

- Predazioni, risarcimento carcasse e perdite
- Sanità, divieti di circolazione delle greggi
- Parchi, divieti di pascolo

1. Chi? Associazione nazionale, regionale, ….definizione working groups
2. Come?
3. Cosa?

Shall we give it a go? 1–2 priority issues and how to organise collective action

- Strategic plan for sheep farming in Italy, via a conference between the State and the Regions and the Ministry
- Greater flexibility
- Carcass management
- Communication: festivals/fairs > external; internal; raising funds

The Lombardy case:
Predation, compensation for carcasses and losses
Healthcare, restrictions on the movement of flocks
Parks, grazing bans

- Local/regional shepherds' associations + support from researchers, industry professionals and facilitators
- WhatsApp group/collaboration amongst shepherds
- National Shepherds' Association, representing regional shepherds' associations

1. Who? National, regional associations, … working groups to be set up
2. How?
3. What?