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# **INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING DECLARATIONS AND POLICIES ON PASTORAL TRANSHUMANCE IN RELATION TO PROTECTED AREAS, PEACE/SECURITY, THE PASTORAL ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN COUNTRIES (NIGER, NIGERIA, CAMEROON, CHAD AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC) AND RELATED AREAS**

***N'Djamena – Chad, 24 – 26 september 2025***

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

The regions of Central and West Africa are home to significant livestock populations. Approximately 25 per cent of cattle, 33 per cent of sheep, 40 per cent of goats and 20 per cent of camels in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa are raised in this region (OECD). In the Sahel zone, agro-pastoral systems account for more than 80 per cent of the supply of animal products.

The spatial distribution of pastoral and agricultural systems in these countries was once determined by rainfall patterns. Pastoralism is traditionally practiced in arid and semi-arid areas, where rainfall varies between 100 and 400 mm per year, which does not permit agricultural production.

Transhumant herders move across these climatic zones throughout the year. During the rainy season, they graze in the rich but short-lived pastures of the Sahel, while moving further south as the dry season sets in. After spending most of the dry season in the more humid south, they move back north before the onset of the rainy-season agricultural activities.

For the vast majority of herders, herd mobility (transhumance) remains a necessity to cope with climatic conditions. For herders in the Sahel, transhumance is a means of survival, while for agro-pastoralists further south, it is a useful practice to take advantage of the rich Sahelian pastures during the rainy season and to avoid disturbing agricultural activities in their home areas.

These dynamics have multiplied the number of directions taken during transhumance (North–South, South–North and East–West) as well as the number of transhumance routes. In particular, herders now migrate further south into communities with which they have no traditional ties (Thébaud, 2017). Transhumance serves to maintain livestock productivity, ensure production, and enhance resilience in times of crisis. It also enables herders to avoid outbreaks of human and animal diseases as well as conflict situations.

Mobility also facilitates various exchanges with local populations along the routes and provides access to different livestock markets. It has positive environmental effects, as it prevents overgrazing, provides manure, and stabilizes vegetation by distributing seeds ingested by animals.

Pastoral transhumance systems are generally based on carefully mixed herds, including highly resilient local breeds in arid areas.

## Challenges

Pastoral transhumance is currently facing a number of challenges, including increasing pressure on pastoral resources, the development of unfavourable land tenure systems, the effects of decentralization, insecurity, and contradictory public policies that affect pastoral mobility.

**Pressure on pastoral resources:** Pastoral resources, particularly water, grazing land and grazing routes, are increasingly under pressure. As dry seasons become harsher and tend to last longer, rainfall now begins much later, is more unpredictable and often falls with more destructive intensity. Herders in the northern Sahel respond to these climatic changes by migrating earlier in the year and further south, arriving before crops have been harvested, which complicates coexistence between herders and farmers.

**Conflicts between farmers and herders often escalate into violence.** In countries such as Nigeria, these conflicts have degenerated into communal violence between ethno-religious groups, leading to significant loss of life, destruction of fields and decimation of herds. In response, herders often retreat to protected pastoral areas or grazing reserves where resources essential for herd survival are limited. Moreover, discourse and attitudes that stigmatize herders as “the other”, “the foreigner” or “the invader” further undermine efforts to establish peaceful and productive relations between herders and other groups.

**Decentralization policies and political marginalization of herders:** Since independence, herders have been politically marginalized in Central and West African States. Their level of participation in elections and political processes remains low, mainly due to their non-sedentary lifestyle and limited access to formal education. Since the 1990s, many Central and West African States have embarked on decentralization processes in the context of structural adjustment programmes. Structural adjustment has resulted in drastic reductions in services provided by central government, including many essential to herders, such as veterinary care, extension services, mobile health clinics, and schooling for pastoral communities. Population growth has further reduced access to these basic social services and resources.

**Rapid population growth:** This has led to the expansion and overexploitation of agricultural land. The southern fringe of the Sahel has the highest population density in West and Central Africa and, according to some researchers (Bonnet et al., 2013), has reached saturation point. New agro-pastoralists rely less on the traditional reciprocal exchanges with transhumant herders — exchanges of manure, milk and animals for access to water points and crop residues (straw, cereal husks, etc.). Instead, livestock owned by farmers and herders now compete for the same resources. Pressure on farmland has also led to the encroachment on grazing routes and officially designated pastoral areas.

**Such developments reduce ordinary herders’ access to resources they urgently need.**

The decentralized ministries establish local commissions and management committees whose mandates often overlap, whose objectives are sometimes contradictory, and which frequently lack the capacities required to effectively carry out their tasks. The resulting legal and institutional disorder does not facilitate the adequate representation of livestock producers' interests.

**Insecurity:** Insecurity has become a major obstacle to pastoral transhumance. Herders may be both victims and actors in insecurity. Much of the grazing land in some States is currently controlled by various armed groups, including rebels, jihadists, cattle rustlers and criminal organizations. These groups often infiltrate herds to secure their own subsistence. In the face of armed groups, herders travel in larger groups, alter migration routes, minimize transhumance or arm themselves. These strategies, while offering some protection, have negative consequences for their well-being, their herds, and their relations with sedentary populations. Transhumant herders are also sometimes subjected to abuses related to unofficial taxes they are forced to pay.

**Heavy taxation along transhumance corridors:** Another problem is the heavy taxation imposed by State agents on cross-border transhumance corridors. Herders pay significant sums to secure routes to their destinations, but numerous formal and informal taxes are collected or extorted, forcing them to divert to high-risk areas (livestock disease-prone areas, insecure zones where herders are kidnapped for ransom or government-protected national parks).

**Threats to grazing routes and the economy:** Most of the profound changes currently taking place in Central and West Africa pose serious threats to grazing routes and the strategic mobility of livestock. Large-scale investments in rural land — often referred to as “land grabbing” — result from sudden increases in land demand by investors. Lands targeted by investors generally contain water points traditionally used by local communities for livestock, farming and domestic supply. Once allocated to investors, access to water for transhumant populations and their livestock is usually prohibited or severely restricted.

### **Several international declarations adopted and/or initiatives undertaken to address transhumance-related issues**

Following the 1992 Rio Declaration, a series of regional declarations on transhumance and other initiatives were adopted by States to regulate transhumance movements along cross-border corridors. Some of these regulations include:

**ECOWAS Decision on Transhumance Regulation:** With regard to the regulation of cross-border transhumance, ECOWAS was a pioneer, adopting as early as 1998 a “Decision on Transhumance”. The text specifically covers border crossings for transhumance purposes, explicitly excluding activities related to livestock trade.

The Decision sets out key principles relating to the movement of animals, their retention, and the reception of transhumant livestock in host countries. However, herders engaged in international

transhumance are required to possess an International Transhumance Certificate. In addition, transhumant herders are required to follow designated transhumance routes established for this purpose.

### **ECCAS Community Agreement on Pastoralism and Cross-border Transhumance:**

The CEEAC Community Agreement on Pastoralism and Cross-Border Transhumance was developed in May 2019. The document places significant emphasis on security concerns in the Central African region. The objective of this CEEAC community mechanism is to regulate pastoralism and cross-border transhumance, prevent conflicts, and combat cross-border crime, while ensuring the respect for and promotion of the free movement of people and goods. To this end, a set of commitments is undertaken by States at various levels, including: political, legal, and institutional; economic and social; security; environmental; as well as human rights. The Community Agreement establishes the principle of Member States' commitment to promote pastoralism as a productive economic activity and in its sociocultural dimension. States are also required to ensure the harmonization of legal and institutional frameworks for livestock farming, while CEEAC commits to cooperating with other regional economic communities in the field of transhumance.

Similarly, States commit to strengthening cooperation in the context of transhumance, including cooperation in intelligence gathering.

ECOWAS has developed frameworks, policies and strategies on pastoral transhumance and the livestock sector, including:

- Decision A/DEC.5/10/98 on the regulation of transhumance between ECOWAS Member States. Abuja, 1998.

- Regulation C/REG.3/01/03 on the implementation of regulations on transhumance between ECOWAS Member States. Dakar, 2003.

- Regional Agricultural Policy for West Africa: ECOWAS. Abuja, 2005. ECOWAS Commission, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources, Guidelines adopted for the development of the livestock industry within ECOWAS. Abuja, 2009. ECOWAS/CEDEAO/OECD.

- Formulation and implementation of a Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (RAIP). Component: "Pastoral infrastructure development and organization of cross-border transhumance." Volume 2 – Sub-programme on improved management of other shared natural resources. Abuja, 2009.

**CHAD:** N'Djamena Declaration on the Contribution of Pastoral Livestock to Security and Development in Saharo-Sahelian Areas. N'Djamena, May 2013.

**NIGERIA:** Federal policies on pastoralism — Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, *The Agriculture Promotion Policy (2016–2020): Building on the successes of the ATA, closing key gaps.* Policy and strategy document. Abuja, 2016.

**NIGER:** Decree No. 87-77 of June 1987 on livestock movement in agricultural areas, recognizing the importance of transhumance corridors and related rights, and defining mechanisms for addressing crop damage caused by livestock.

Ordinance No. 2010-029 of 20 May 2010 on pastoralism recognizes the practice of pastoral transhumance and provides for the development of pastoral resources, including water points, transhumance corridors, and grazing areas.

**CAMEROON:** Presidential Decree No. 78/263 of 3 July 1978 establishing procedures for resolving agro-pastoral disputes, and Decree No. 166 of 27 April 1976 setting out conditions for the management of national lands.

It is therefore necessary to conduct a study on the reasons why declarations and regulatory laws on transhumance activities have not been effective in reducing the challenges faced by transhumant herders, despite numerous initiatives. This study will cover the period from 1992, following the Rio Declaration on Environment and Sustainable Development, until the present day. Contributions to this study are expected from the above-mentioned countries in the region and beyond.

**CHAD:** N'Djamena Declaration of 25 January 2019 on the need to steer regional transhumance dynamics with greater consideration of security issues, wildlife and flora management, and the growing degradation of ecosystems resulting from climate change.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE SYMPOSIUM

### a) General Objective

The general objective of this international symposium is to assess and accelerate the implementation of existing declarations and policies aimed at promoting sustainable pastoral transhumance in relation to protected areas, peace and security, the pastoral economy and sustainable development in Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and the Central African Republic. This will be achieved by identifying key gaps, examining the reasons for their inadequate application, and providing suggestions for improvement.

### b) Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this symposium are to:

- Systematically review regional and national declarations, policies and legal frameworks relating to pastoral transhumance in the target countries;
- Assess the extent to which these declarations and policies have been implemented and identify the main obstacles to their implementation;
- Identify opportunities to improve the implementation of transhumance or pastoralism policies, particularly in connection with protected areas, security, the pastoral economy and sustainable development;
- Assess the status of development and/or operationalization of cross-border agreements for the implementation of the 2019 N'Djamena Declaration;
- Assess the level of resource mobilization and implementation of the country investment plans of the 2019 N'Djamena Declaration;

- Highlight the role of the media and community radio in peaceful transhumance or pastoralism more broadly;
- Document and share best practices in the management of transhumance in relation to protected areas, peace/security, the pastoral economy and sustainable development in the targeted regions, including successful models of community-based natural resource management and conflict resolution;
- Propose concrete actions to policymakers, practitioners and civil society organizations to address the identified challenges and harness opportunities;
- Facilitate dialogue and networking within the geographic bloc between officials, researchers, practitioners and pastoral communities;
- Carefully select case studies in the target countries to represent diverse ecological, socio-economic and political contexts.

### 3. EXPECTED RESULTS

The International Symposium on the Implementation of Declarations on Pastoral Transhumance in Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and the Central African Republic, with a nexus on peace/security, protected areas, the pastoral economy and sustainable development, is expected to produce the following results:

- The status of development and/or operationalization of cross-border agreements for the implementation of the N'Djamena Declaration, along with its challenges and prospects, is established;
- The status of resource mobilization and implementation of the country investment plans of the 2019 N'Djamena Declaration, along with its challenges and prospects, is established;
- A deeper understanding is gained of the socio-economic importance, challenges and opportunities facing transhumant herders, and the correlation with the nexus of protected areas, natural resources, peace, security and development in the region;
- A platform, such as geographic blocs (West, East, Central), for researchers, policymakers, partners, herders, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to share experiences, ideas and best practices, and to strengthen implementation strategies, is identified;
- Proposals are developed for national and regional solutions and legal frameworks that support pastoral transhumance in connection with peace/security, protected areas, the pastoral economy and sustainable development;
- Key areas requiring further research and data collection are identified;
- Concrete policy recommendations are formulated to address identified challenges and promote sustainable pastoralism or transhumance in connection with peace/security, protected areas, the economy and sustainable development.

### 4. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES



The expected deliverables of the International Symposium on Pastoral Transhumance are as follows:

- A report on the main conclusions of the workshop;
- A concise briefing note outlining the key outcomes, recommendations and action points for policymakers, partners and practitioners, which could be used as a lobbying and advocacy tool;
- A detailed report with specific recommendations to improve the implementation of transhumance policies in connection with peace/security, protected areas, the pastoral economy and sustainable development;
- A comprehensive review of the existing literature on the themes addressed, including policy declarations, regulatory frameworks, academic papers, government reports and grey literature;
- A general report of the Colloquium (to be produced two weeks at the latest after the colloquium), containing the key points, presentations, and summaries of the discussions from the colloquium.

## 5. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The methodology for organizing the international conference on transhumant pastoralism involves a participatory and inclusive approach.

The general moderation of the conference will be provided by GIZ and CBPF. The said conference will take place around 6 main sessions namely: (i) Introductory session, (ii) Assessment of the implementation of the N'Djamena declarations, (iii) Thematic session, (iv) Knowledge sharing, (v) Next steps, (vi) Final session. These different sessions will be conducted in the form of presentations, round tables, or panels moderated alternately by actors from sub-regional or international organizations, NGOs, or civil society. A knowledge market will allow participants to expand their network while exchanging more on the experiences resulting from the implementation of their initiatives. A technical secretariat will be set up for reporting needs and the drafting of an advocacy document aimed at decision-makers. French – English - French translation facilities and videoconferencing will be installed to enable better participation in the Conference, even remotely. The general supervision will be ensured by the Chadian Ministry responsible for livestock and animal production, which will be responsible for opening and closing the proceedings of the Colloquium.

## 6. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

This conference is organized by CEBEVIRHA (Economic Commission for Livestock, Meat, and Fisheries Resources) and the MBOSCUA Association (Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association), under the coordination of the Western Bloc, CEEAC (Economic Commission of Central African States), COMIFAC (Central African Forests Commission), CEMAC (Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa), the Wildlife Conservation Organization in Africa (WCOA), and the CBPF (Congo Basin Forest Partnership), with technical and financial support from GIZ through its PETRADEP Project (Peace, Transhumance, and Pastoral Economy Development Project in the Lake Chad Region).