

2010 Retrospective



Once again it has been an amazing year in which livestock keepers – those people and communities whose identity is based on their association with keeping animals, especially pastoralists - raised their voices, networked, discussed, argued, agreed and disagreed, developed new approaches, stood up to the Forest Department, engaged with the public, called for unity, fought for their rights, brought their products to the markets, took care of their animals and presented their culture, all with the aim of bringing one big message across: our livestock, our knowledge, our commitment are important for rural livelihoods, for the environment and for consumers. The future of socially and ecologically sustainable livestock keeping lies with us and we need Livestock keepers Rights in order to hold on to our family herds and compete with the onslaught of industrial animal production and the loss of common property resources!

Here's a brief review (from my personal perspective) of some of the 2010 events that personify this struggle for Livestock Keepers Rights!

January

Quetta, Pakistan

Due to the initiative of LIFE Network member Dr. Abdul Raziq Kakar, the Pashtoon livestock keepers of Baluchistan develop a Biocultural Protocol in which they document 6 sheep breeds, 2 breeds of goats and donkeys, as well as one breed each of camel and cattle. They also describe community conserved areas called *pargorr* and how they settle their conflicts. They also form an Indigenous Livestock Breeders Association



February

Jaisalmer, Rajasthan (India):

About 300 camel breeders, and 70 international and national livestock professionals congregate in Khabha, a deserted caravan town in the Thar Desert, for a consultation on "Saving the Camel and Rajasthan's Biodiversity", followed by a meeting about Biocultural Protocols and Access and Benefit-Sharing as well as a LIFE Meeting. Local women participate in large numbers and take part in embroidery, drawing, and clay sculpturing competitions. Camel products are served and Dr. T.K.



Gahlot, Prof. of Veterinary Surgery at the Veterinary College in Bikaner is presented with the Camel Saviour Award. There is also a camel race and a dancing camel that once co-starred with Amitabh Bhacchan in a Bollywood movie.



March-April

Tamil Nadu and Kerala (India): Biocultural Experience

LIFE Network members Karthikeya Sivasenapathy, Prof. Kandasamy, P. Vivekanandan and Prof. Sosamma Yipe and her team organize a tour to some of the indigenous breeds and their keepers of South India. These include the Kangayam cattle, Bargur cattle, Vechur cattle, Coimbatore and Mecheri sheep breeds, as well as a local goat and Ankarmali pig. Pictures show the annual pilgrimage of ox-carts and Prof. Sosamma Iype with a calf of the Vechur cattle breed whose survival is due to the dedicated efforts of herself and her students.



May

Berlin and Lichtenberg (Germany): Bridging the gap between the South and the North

Pastoralists from India, Pakistan, and Tanzania, together with Kabir Bavikatte from South Africa travel to Berlin to meet with the agriculture committee of the Bundestag (German parliament)



to discuss their situation and request support for Livestock Keepers Rights. Above is a group photo of herders and parliamentarians, as well as Rudi Buntzel from EED who organized the meeting.

On the next day, they discover commonalities with German shepherds and dairy farmers in a workshop held in Lichtenberg Castle in the Odenwald. Representatives of German ministries also express their sympathies with Livestock Keepers' Rights. The photo shows Raika leader Mrs. Dailibai holding the demonstration experienced cow of farmer Sven Hehn and some of the participants.



June

Berlin: Trek of the German Shepherds



German shepherds start their several month long rally through Germany by driving their sheep through the center of Berlin, smack through the Brandenburg Gate. It is the kick-off of the most astounding publicity exercise by the European shepherds under the slogan "We take care of the landscape that you love" that lasts through the whole summer. As an expression of solidarity by the Indian shepherds, LPPS Director honours one of the initiators,

Günther Czerkus with a turban from Rajasthan.



July

Sadri, Rajasthan:

More than 1200 Raika men, women and children take to the streets to protest the loss of their grazing rights despite the existence of the Forest Rights Act that entitles them to exert their traditional rights of access.



August

Kuttupalayam, Tamil Nadu:

LIFE Network puts on a preparatory meeting for the Convention on Biological Diversity, organized by SEVA and hosted by the Sivasenapathy Kangayam Cattle Research Foundation in Kuttupalayam in the heart of the Kangayam cattle breeding tract. A book summarizing existing experiences with Biocultural protocols for livestock keepers is released by the Tamil Nadu Minister of Animal Husbandry. A number of international experts on breed conservation also attend and all participants agree on the Kuttupalayam Confirmation.

Antje Feldmann, coordinator of the German Society for the Conservation of Old and Endangered Livestock Breeds and Ram Raika, shepherd from Rajasthan.



September

Paris, France: From the sands of the Thar Desert to the catwalk in Paris

The first dromedary wool shawls and bags produced from Rajasthani camels go on show at the Ethical Fashion Fair in Paris as well as the Export Promotion Fair in Noida and receive an overwhelming response. Pictures show Nancy Abdeir Rahmane, founder of the Tiviski camel dairy in Mauretania modeling a camel shawl and Anurag Rana, one of the designers, arranging the exhibit.



October

Nagoya, Japan: Community Protocols become official!

A group of 9 LIFE Network members participates in the COP 10 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya and shares some of their experiences with Biocultural Community Protocols at a side-event during Land Day. Here we see a shot from a meeting about Biocultural protocols organized by United Nations University and some fake Japanese Samurai warriors.



November

Mera, Gujarat, India: Pastoralist women of the world get organised

Global Gathering of Pastoralist Women takes place in Mera (Gujarat), organized by MARAG. Carlo Petrini of Slow Food gives an inspiring speech, pastoralist women discuss constructively for several days and cap it all with a rally in the center of Ahmedabad. The event makes headlines in national newspaper and several TV channels.



December

Wageningen, Netherlands: Livestock Keepers' Rights and Biocultural Protocols recommended

The governments of the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland organize a multi-stakeholder expert meeting about the implications of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing for animal genetic resources. One of the undisputed conclusions: the Global Plan of Action needs to be amended to address Livestock keepers' Rights, and Biocultural Protocols are mentioned together with Material Transfer Agreements as tools for complying with ABS requirements!

This fills us with hope for the future ! Lets continue our mission and **Jai Maldhari!**