The world map of pastoralists, prepared for the 2026 International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, currently has information on over 800 groups of pastoralists worldwide.

A pastoralist group is a community that manages animals in a pastoralist system (one where the animals walk to their feed). They may be a particular ethnic group or caste, have a specific cultural identity and traditions, use a particular management system, raise specific species or breeds, or occupy a particular region.

Pastoralism includes a wide range of management approaches. These, and the species kept, differ from one region to another. Many pastoralists are location-bound: they stay in one place all year, allowing their animals to feed on nearby pasture and fallow fields. In mountainous areas, they practise vertical transhumance: taking their livestock up the mountains in spring and down to the snow-free valleys in autumn. In drylands they use horizontal transhumance: moving between two or more fixed locations to follow the seasonal rainfall. Or they may be nomadic: moving frequently in search of grazing and water.

In parts of the Americas, Australia and southern Africa, ranchers keep large herds of cattle and sheep on land that is privately owned or leased from the government. In subhumid parts of Africa, South Asia and Europe, agropastoralists grow crops as well as herding livestock. Urban pastoralists use sheep and goats to control weeds and prevent fires in cities.

Visit www.pastoralpeoples.org/pastoralist-map/ to see the full map with details of each group. The map is a work in progress. Contact mapping@pastoralpeoples.org with corrections and additions.