

Threats to pastoralism

Mapping the global crisis facing
pastoral communities

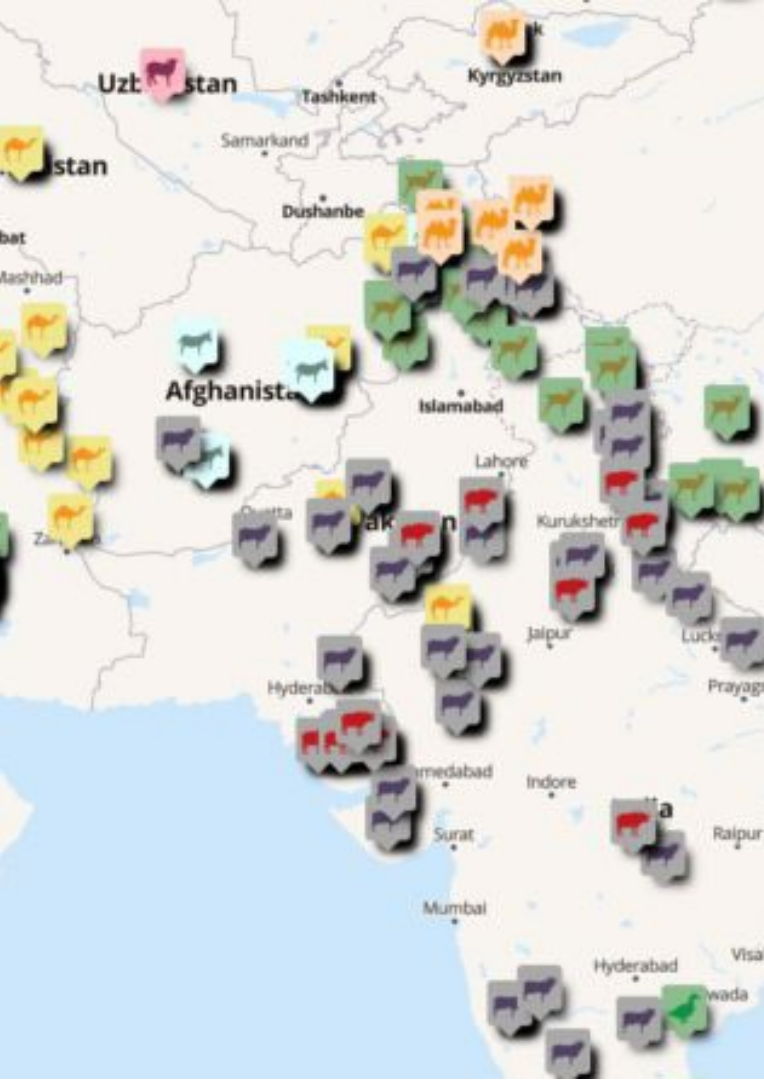
Paul Mundy

League for Pastoral Peoples

Photo: safaritravélplus



LEAGUE FOR
PASTORAL PEOPLES
AND ENDOGENOUS
LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT



League for Pastoral Peoples maps

www.pastoralpeoples.org/maps/

World map of pastoralists

- 1000+ groups of pastoralists worldwide
- Brief descriptions of pastoralist groups and their livestock management systems
- Does not address threats to their livelihoods

Videos on pastoralism

- 200+ videos

Pastoralists' migration routes

- 600 route maps

Camelids

- 220+ groups who keep camelids

Pastoralism in Germany

Threats to pastoralism
 by paulmundy
 created at 10/01/2026 - modified at 04/05/2026

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Why this map?

Pastoralists face many threats, mainly because of land conversion that restricts their access to their customary grazing areas and water points, as well as hinders their movements. These make it difficult for them to continue livestock herding. Many pastoralists live in remote areas, so the problems they face are often invisible to the outside world. This map aims to document these threats and make them more visible.

What types of threats?

Pastoralists depend on access to their customary grazing lands and water sources for managing their herds. They also need to be able to move their animals from place to place - to take advantage of the grazing and water in particular areas. This map focuses on those threats that restrict herders' access land and water, or that limit their mobility. These threats include:

- Afforestation:** the expansion of forests and bush, including for carbon offsets.
- Agriculture and irrigation:** the expansion of cropping into grazing areas.
- Conflict:** violent conflict making it dangerous for herders to use certain areas.
- Dams:** the building of dams that flood grazing areas or cut off access to them.
- Green energy:** the expropriation of land for plantations or for solar and wind farms.
- Military:** the expropriation of land for training or other military purposes.
- Mining:** the expropriation of land for mineral or oil exploitation.



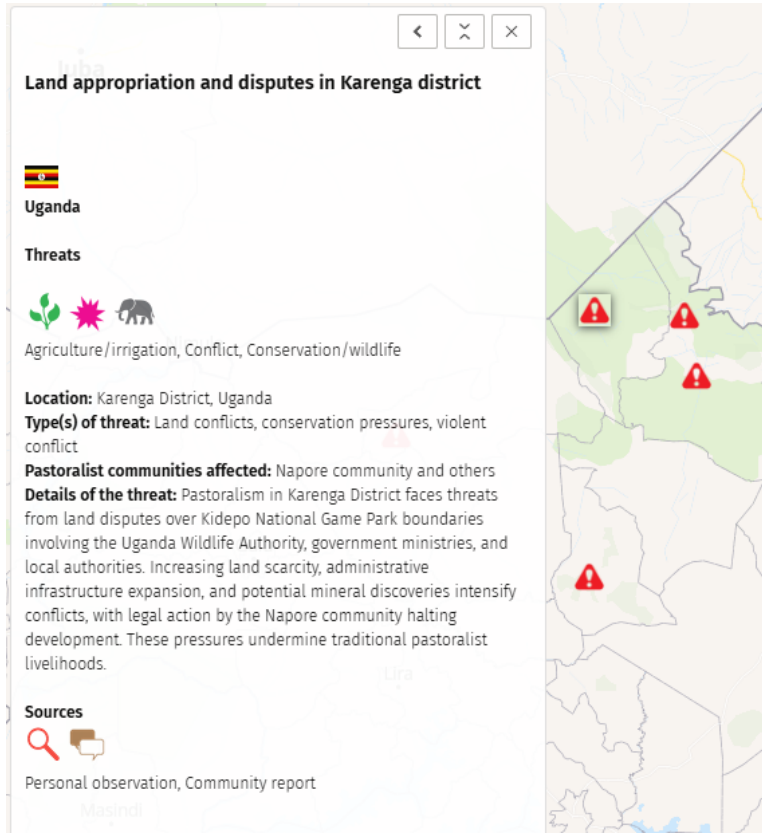
Threats to pastoralism map

Our new mapping initiative

Interactive, crowdsourced map to document long-term, land-related threats affecting pastoral communities worldwide.

www.pastoralpeoples.org/threats-to-pastoralism/





Why a map?

- Everything happens somewhere – we often don't know where.
- A map makes things visible, gives them context, helps you find things easily.

What we want to show on the map

- Long-term, widespread threats that restrict herders' access to land, water, and mobility routes.
- Not temporary incidents or individual events.

Why land?

- Land is the most important basis for pastoralism.
- Without grazing access, the entire production system collapses.
- Once lost, land is nearly impossible to recover.



Help us fill the map!


We are just starting...
Currently only 19 cases

- Argentina
- Angola
- India
- Pakistan
- Spain
- Tanzania
- Uganda

Types of land-related threats

 **Afforestation**

 **Agriculture** and irrigation

 **Violent conflict**

 **Dams**

 **Green energy**

 **Military**

 **Mining**

 **Barriers to movement**

 **Access to water**

 **Wildlife**

Agriculture and irrigation



Expansion of cropping into traditional grazing areas.

- Large-scale land acquisitions convert rangelands to monocultures.
- Privatization and subdivision interrupt grazing corridors.
- Smallholders establish farms in areas used by pastoralists during drought.
- Governments prioritize intensified agriculture over pastoral land use.



Irrigation canal in Kenya
Photo: Paul Mundy

Violent conflict



Violent conflict making it dangerous for herders to use certain areas.

- State-on-state conflict.
- Insurgencies.
- Disputes among herder groups.
- Disputes between herders and settled farmers.



Soldiers on foot patrol in Baardheere, Somalia
Photo: AMISOM/Ilyas Ahmed

Green energy



Expropriation of land for plantations or for solar and wind farms.

- ✓ Power generation
- ✓ Green energy
- ✓ Jobs

But often deprive pastoralists of their grazing lands.

Those who have done least to cause climate change are suffering most from it – and from efforts to mitigate it.



Bhadla Solar Park, Rajasthan, India
Photo: jableh Jableh/Google Maps

Mining



Expropriation of pastoral lands for mineral, oil, and gas exploitation

- Displaces communities with little or no compensation or consultation.
- Destroys rangeland ecosystems and contaminates water sources.
- Cost-benefit assessments undervalue pastoral livelihoods.



Open cast mine

Photo: Diego Delso CC BY-SA 4.0

Barriers to movement



Physical barriers or rules that restrict the movement of pastoralists.

- Physical barriers: fences, walls, roads and railways.
- Administrative rules such as transport bans and veterinary cordons.
- National and subnational borders.
- Pastoralists' mobility criminalized in many jurisdictions.

Wall, Alborz, Iran
Photo: Wim Giesen



Access to water



Livestock and humans need to drink. In the dry season, they may depend on just a few water sources.

- Walls and fences around water sources or blocking routes.
- Irrigation boreholes or mining lower water table.



Wall around water source, Kenya
Photo: Paul Mundy

Wildlife



The designation of grazing land as nature, tourism or hunting reserves.

- **Fortress conservation** excludes pastoralists.
- **Green grabbing**: conservation used to justify dispossession of pastoral lands.
- Pastoralists evicted from their homes or excluded from traditional grazing lands.
- Pastoralists framed as threat to biodiversity despite evidence of ecological stewardship.

But:

- Periodic grazing improves soil health, prevents degradation, and enhances biodiversity.
- Co-existence with wildlife is possible.

Nairobi National Park, Kenya
Photo: Peter Gildemacher



How about other problems?

Pastoralists face many other challenges...

Access to services

Health, education,
markets, veterinary care

Economic pressures

Lack of profitability, high
costs, low product prices,
labour shortages

Threats to production

Pests, diseases,
predators, breeding, feed

Climate change

Rainfall, heat, drought

Adverse policies

Enforced sedentarization,
bureaucracy, taxation

Succession

Attracting young people
to become pastoralists

→ We include such threats only if they directly
affect the pastoralists' **access to land**.

Photo: pxhere.com CC0



Types of land-related threats



Afforestation



Agriculture and irrigation



Violent conflict



Dams



Green energy



Military



Mining



Barriers to movement



Access to water



Wildlife

Any other types of threats
we should include?

Many well-intentioned and necessary development activities have side-effects that harm pastoralists

- 
-  Afforestation
 -  Agriculture
 -  Dams
 -  Green energy
 -  Mining
 -  Wildlife conservation

Need to:

- Take pastoralists' interests into account
- Involve them in planning
- Establish consultation mechanisms
- Ensure pastoralists benefit
- Provide compensation
- Find joint benefits
- ...



Help us fill the map!

Please submit information on threats you know about.

Either...

- Fill in the form at <https://tinyurl.com/pastoralist-threats>

Or...

- Send an email with details to mapping@pastoralpeoples.org



What next?

Gather
information

What types of problems
exist? Where?



Analyse

What are the causes?



Campaign

Raise awareness
Seek solutions



Take action

Explore the maps

- www.pastoralpeoples.org/maps/

Submit a threat (or threats)

- Form: <https://tinyurl.com/pastoralist-threats>
- Or email to: mapping@pastoralpeoples.org

Raise awareness, spread the word



Rajasthan, India

Photo: Ilse Köhler-Rollefson



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Please get in touch

mapping@pastoralpeoples.org

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Mongolia. Photo: Paul Mundy



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Thank you

Mali. Photo: Paul Mundy