

**Workshop on Rangeland Management for Sustainable Rural Development**  
**July 29-31, 2024,**  
**Venue: SKICC, Srinagar, UT of Jammu & Kashmir, India**

**Concept Note**

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has designated 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP). India has supported this proposal and co-sponsored the UNGA Resolution on IYRP (2022). IYRP addresses creating awareness on the importance of rangelands and pastoralists towards food security, economy, environment, and cultural heritage of nations. The goal is scientific conservation and management of rangelands and sustainable livelihoods of pastoralists through community participation. The member states of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCDD) and other parties have intensified the drive towards accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and turning 2026 into a transformative year for rangelands, pastoralists, and a healthy planet through IYRP 2026.

More than half of the land area on earth is made up of rangelands. In India, the rangelands, pastoralist communities, and livestock are intricately linked to and dependent on each other. Rangelands also contribute to ecosystem services, climatic stability, and biodiversity. About 30% of all agricultural carbon storage occurs in rangelands, which are a large carbon reservoir.

Jammu & Kashmir has rich biodiversity and extensive rangelands, particularly in the alpine and subalpine zones. In Jammu & Kashmir, 4.32% area of the total geographical area is rangeland (3.53% in Jammu and 13.22% in Kashmir) with an area of 9,59,500 ha and it is vital for the livelihoods of local communities, supporting pastoralism, agriculture, harvest of medicinal plants and tourism. They are characterized by diverse flora and fauna, contribute to the region's ecological balance, and support around 6,00,000 nomadic pastoral communities viz. *Gujjars, Bakarwals, Chopans, Gaddis*, etc. The pastoralists practice transhumance migrating from winter plains to high-altitude summer pastures with their goat and sheep herds and contributing to the state's economy by providing milk, meat, manure, and wool. However, numerous challenges such as overgrazing, climate change, and socioeconomic exertion lead to rangeland degradation. It has also been realized that rangeland's afforestation without community participation is not a scientific and practical way to mitigate climate change. Land restoration and climate action programmes must engage local communities and institutions to develop village development plans and implement government programmes like MGNREGA. Adopting such approaches in sustainable grazing land management, biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation measures, and livelihood diversification ensures the ecological health of these pastures while supporting the socio-economic development of local communities. A collaborative approach involving government agencies, scientific institutions, local communities, and NGOs is essential for the successful implementation of these strategies. In this context, the Department of Rural Development, Jammu & Kashmir in association with the IYRP Support Group of South Asia and NABARD is organizing a 3 days workshop from July 29-31, 2024 at Srinagar with the main objective of leveraging ongoing government programmes and schemes of different departments in different states for sustainable rangeland management. The workshop includes an inaugural ceremony, technical sessions (including the participation of experts online), and field visits.

## Agenda

DAY 1: 29 July 2024 Inaugural Session		
Time	Description	Speakers
3:30 pm - 4 pm	Registration of Participants	
4 pm – 4.30 pm	Inauguration Welcome address	Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary Secretary, Dept. of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Jammu & Kashmir
4.30 pm – 4.40 pm	Agenda of the Workshop - Objectives, Priorities, and Expected Outcomes	Dr. Smruti Smita Mohapatra Member, RISG-SA, Jammu
4.40 pm - 4.50 pm	Special address on IYRP 2026	Shri P. Vivekanandan Chair, RISG-SA
4.50 pm – 5 pm	Special address on MGNREGA and Rangeland Development	Dr. Ravindra S. Gavali NIRDPR, Hyderabad
5 pm – 5.30 pm	Special addresses by Representatives of State Departments	Shri Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal Director of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare, Kashmir  Shri Suresh Kumar Gupta, IFS Principal Secretary to the Govt., Dept. of Culture & PCCF & HoFF, J&K
5.30 pm – 5.50 pm	Keynote address (Virtual)	Dr. Pedro M. Herrera Consultant on Drylands and Pastoralism, Author of the UNCCD GLO Thematic Report on Rangelands and Pastoralism
5.50 pm - 6.00 pm	Vote of Thanks	
6.00 pm – 6.30 pm	Tea Break	
7.00 pm -9.30 pm	Cultural Programme followed by Dinner	Dr. Ravia Gupta University of Jammu

<p align="center"><b>DAY 2: 30 July 2024</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Status of Rangelands &amp; Restoration and Management with MGNREGA/CSR Programmes</b></p> <p align="center">Chairman: Dr. Ravindra S. Gavali</p> <p align="center">Centre for Natural Resource Management, Climate Change &amp; Disaster Mitigation</p> <p align="center">National Institute of Rural Development &amp; Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad – 500030</p> <p align="center">Rapporteur: Dr. Smruti Smita Mohapatra, Member, RISG-SA, Jammu</p>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
9:30 am -9:50 am	Enhancing Environmental benefits, and rural livelihood through MGNREGA: Learnings and Future Strategies	Dr. Ravindra S. Gavali NIRDPR, Hyderabad
9:50 am -10:05 am	Scope and challenges in Rural Development through rangeland and pastoral system	Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary Secretary, Dept. of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Jammu & Kashmir
10:05 am–10:20 am	Status of Grasslands and Challenges in Jammu & Kashmir	Prof. (Dr.) S Naseem ul Zafar Geelani SKUAST-K, Srinagar
10:20 am – 10:30 am	Pastoral Census as the first step towards scientific/ concrete planning	Shri Ramesh Bhatti Sahjeevan, Gujarat
10:30 am–10:40 am	Ecological restoration and conservation of land and water resources under MGNREGA and CSR programmes: Experiences from Rajasthan state	Ms. Bandana Sambyal FES, Rajasthan
10.40 am -11.00 am	Tea break	
<p align="center"><b>DAY 2: 30 July 2024</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Community Management of Rangelands</b></p> <p align="center">Chairman: Dr. D.K. Sadana, Principal Scientist (Retd), NBAGR, Karnal</p> <p align="center">Vice-Chairman: Shri S. Senthil Kumar, IFS, Additional PCCF (Planning and Projects), J&amp;K &amp; Nodal Officer (FCA)</p> <p align="center">Rapporteur: Dr. Ravia Gupta, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Journalism &amp; Media Studies, University of Jammu</p>		
11 am -11:10 am	Census is on: Will Shashi be counted as a Pastoralist?	Dr. D. K. Sadana Founder, ILSI & Chair, HimRRA
11:10 am – 11:20 am	Best practices of the South Asia Pastoral Alliance (SAPA)	Ms Megha Sheth SAPA
11:20 am–11:30 am	Documentation of best practices for recognition of communities for management of Pasture land and livestock breeds	Shri P. Vivekanandan Chair, RISG-SA

11:30 am-11:40 am	Community Forest Programmes and FRA 2006	Dr. Shaikh Ghulam Rasool SRDE, FRC-J&K
11:40 am-12:40 pm	<p>Experience sharing by community representatives on rangeland development</p> <p>Protecting Breed, Revitalizing Rangelands - Describing the close relation of Van Gujjar pastoralists, Gojri buffaloes &amp; everyday forest protection</p> <p>Action Plan and Strategy for Regeneration of Rangelands in Lal Marg, Mohand Marg</p>	<p>Shri Ramesh Bhatti and team Sahjeevan, Gujarat &amp; Pastoralist communities from J&amp;K and other states</p> <p>Ameer Hamza van Gujjar Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva, Sangathan, Uttarakhand</p> <p>Shahid Saleem, RISG-SA Team</p>
12.40 pm-1 pm	Seasonal livestock movement and nomadic migration in Jammu & Kashmir – Present scenario and way ahead	Dr. Arshdeep, IFS CF South Kashmir
1 pm – 1:15 pm	Open Discussion	
1:15 pm -2 pm	Lunch break	
<p align="center"><b>DAY 2: 30 July 2024</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Sustainable Rural Development through Rangeland and Pastoral System:</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Group Discussion and Presentations</b></p> <p align="center">Chairman: Dr. Ravinder Yadav, Director, NRAA, New Delhi</p> <p align="center">Rapporteur: Dr. Ovee Thorat, Political Ecologist, Srinagar</p>		
2 pm – 2:30 pm	Learnings from the convergence model developed under the NRAA-FAO TCP	Dr. Ravinder Yadav NRAA, New Delhi
2:30 pm-3:00 pm	Virtual Presentation & Discussion	Burmaa Dashbal, Mongolian National Federation of Pasture User Groups
3 pm - 4.30 pm	<p>Group Discussion and Presentations on Sustainable Rangelands for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Livelihood Diversification &amp; Social Protection</li> <li>2. Biodiversity Conservation</li> <li>3. Govt. Resources, Scope, and coverage of activities under MGNREGA convergence</li> <li>4. Pastoralism and Mobility</li> </ol>	<p>Dr. Ovee Thorat</p> <p>Dr. Smruti Smita Mohapatra RISG-SA</p> <p>P. Vivekanandan, RISG-SA</p>
4.30 pm - 5 pm	Way Forward and Concluding Remarks	Dr. Ravinder Yadav, NRAA Ms Megha Sheth, SAPA

5 pm -5:10 pm	Vote of Thanks	
<b>DAY 3: 31 July 2024</b>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Description</b>	
8 am – 1 pm	Field visit to Rangelands of Kashmir	Coordination by ACD, Pulwama
1 pm – 2 pm	Lunch and return to the destination	