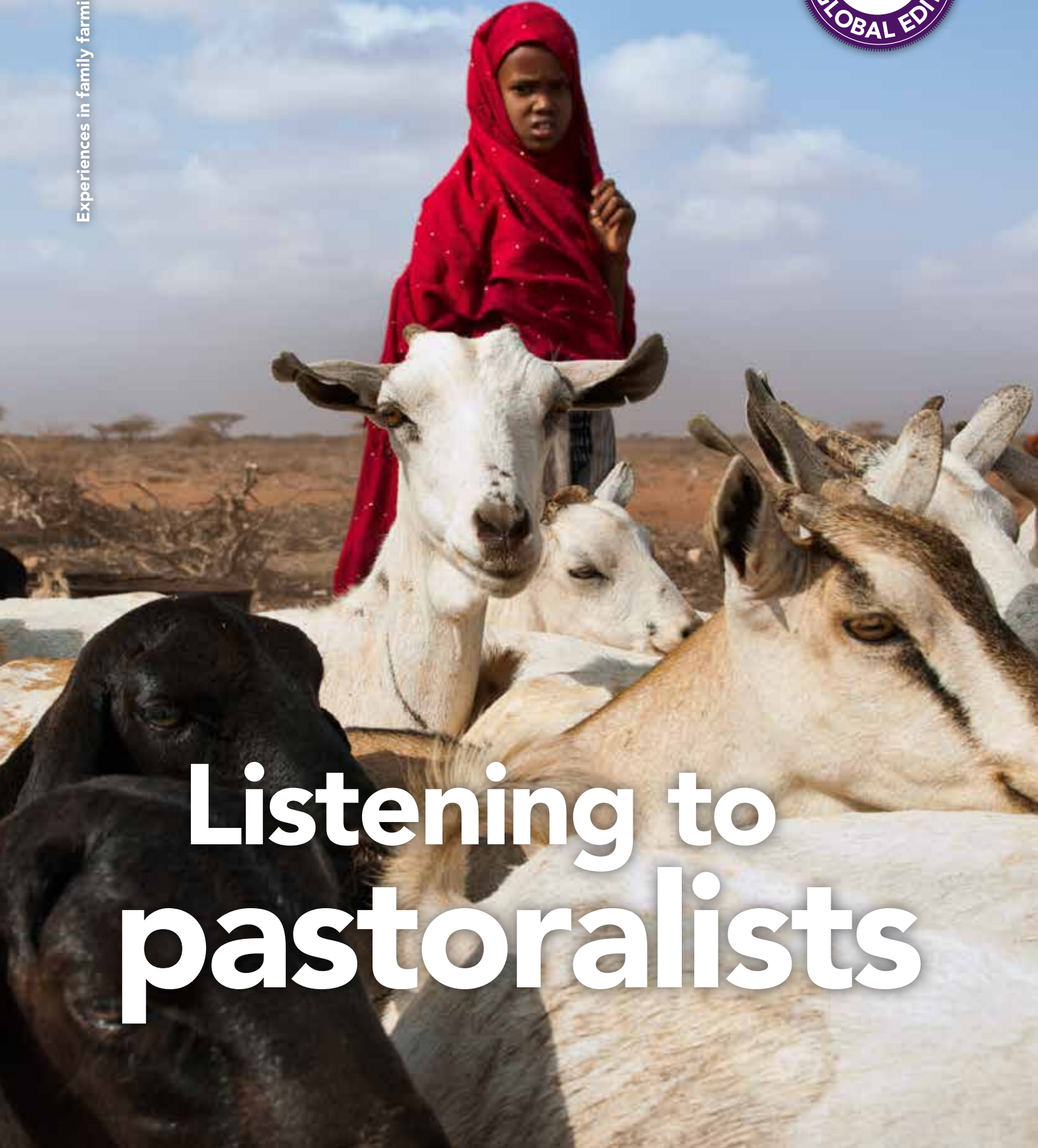


FARMING

MATTERS

Formerly known as LEISA Magazine



Listening to pastoralists



Our
NEW
website
is **LIVE**



Find out what else
ILEIA has to offer

www.ileia.org





Pastoralists will see better days

My name is Pervin Çoban Savran and I am a pastoralist from Turkey. I am a member of Sarkeçililer, which is an association fighting to improve pastoralists' living conditions and to preserve pastoralist culture. In the past, there used to be other pastoralists in this part of the country, but they have long adopted a sedentary life. We Yörüks are the last pastoralists of Anatolia, there are less than 1600 of us today. We lead a lifestyle that is millennia-old. We move constantly with our goats and camels and our movement depends on climatic conditions. But climate change and inadequate water supply increasingly challenge our way of life.

Moreover, we often have conflict with villagers who don't like us using local water and letting our herds graze on local land. If pastoralists were given constitutional rights, we probably would not have these problems. Instead, the authorities make laws that jeopardise our knowledge. For example, they vaccinate our animals regardless of whether or not they're threatened by illness. Vaccinations would be acceptable if the presence of illnesses has been medically diagnosed and if we put our

animals at risk. But vaccinating for the sake of it only benefits pharmaceutical companies.

The authorities tried to coerce us into a sedentary way of life, but we have resisted. Our relatives who accepted to settle can't get used to this lifestyle, they cannot live in apartments. This led us to better understand the importance of claiming our culture. Our culture is rich and represents generations of knowledge. The authorities should be aware of this. We live close to nature and depend on few external inputs.

Every year, our association organises a Nomadic Movement Festival in which we raise public awareness and discuss important issues about pastoralism. For this, we choose a place along our migration route where we face conflict. Our latest achievement was to regain access to water in the Hacı Baba mountains. I am sure we pastoralists will see better days, but before that there is a long way to go.

Interview by **Elçin Turan** (elcinntrn@gmail.com).
Photo: **Elçin Turan**

CONTENTS



8

Pastoral Parliament: a platform to be heard and seen

Monika Agarwal and Jessica Duncan



12

Migrant shepherds sustain pastoralism in the Mediterranean

Michele Nori



15

Pastoralists' breeds represent generations of knowledge

Ilse Köhler-Rollefson



32

“Pastoralist women have the capacity to lead”

Interview with Paine Eulalia Mako

- 3 **Farmers in focus:** Pervin Çoban Savran
- 6 **Editorial:** Pastoralists and agroecology
- 8 Pastoral parliament: a platform to be heard and seen
Monika Agarwal and Jessica Duncan
- 12 Migrant shepherds sustain pastoralism in the Mediterranean
Michele Nori
- 15 **Opinion:** Ilse Köhler-Rollefson
- 16 Who calls the shots? Adapting traditional land governance in Somalia
Sadia Ahmed, John Livingstone, Amsale Shibeshi and Nick Pasiecznik
- 19 **Special section: Pastoralism in the Middle East**
- 20 Preserving our Bedouin heritage
Eaetemad Rafallah Abdallah
- 23 Building the Arab Pastoralist Communities Network
Khalid Khawaldeh
- 26 Working towards a brighter future
Atef Mahmoud Mohammad Beni Odeh
- 29 Local solutions for forcibly confined flocks
Alessandro Cristalli
- 31 **Opinion:** Elizabeth Mpofu
- 32 "Pastoralist women have the capacity to lead"
Interview with Paine Eulalia Mako

- 35 Youth and agriculture: Willis Okumu
- 36 Locally rooted: ideas and initiatives from the field
- 38 **Mind!** New books on pastoral governance
- 40 Yarns from the desert: sustainable guanaco management
Gabriela Lichtenstein
- 43 **Perspectives:** Approaches in support of pastoralism
Margherita Gomasasca and Michele Nori
- 47 **Call for articles:** Climate resilient food systems

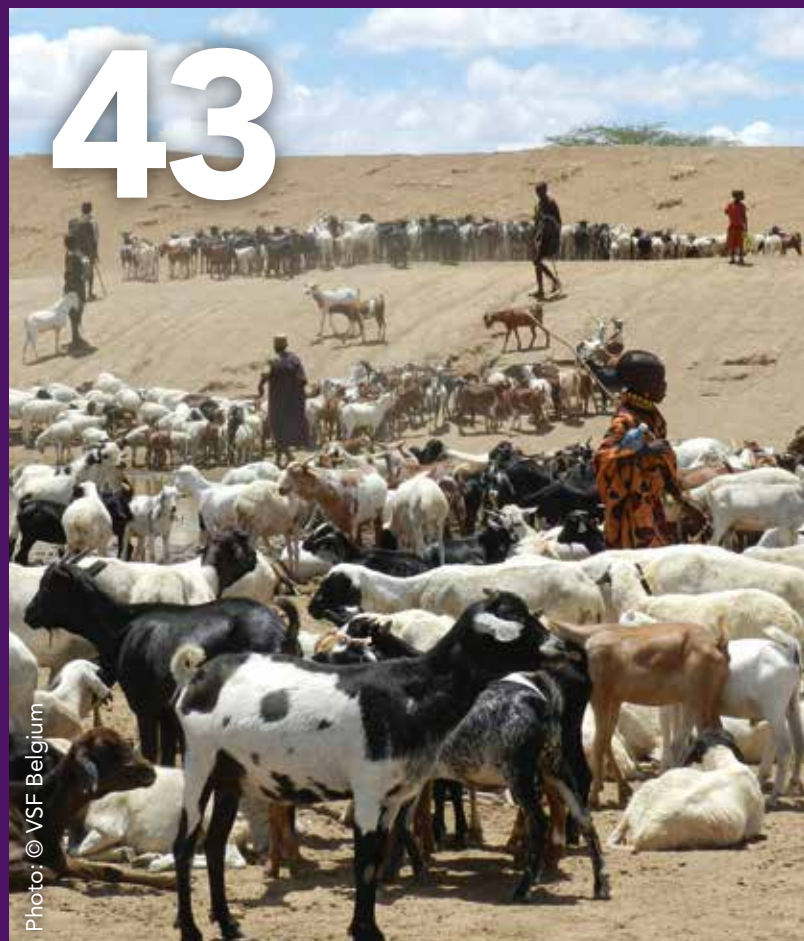


Photo: © VSF Belgium

Pastoralists and agroecology

The intrinsic values of pastoralists' way of life – cultural heritage, their animals and the ecosystems in which they live – are often shunned by today's policy makers. On top of this, the services pastoralists provide to society at large are underestimated. This issue of *Farming Matters* explores the different ways pastoral societies are improving their situations. Notably, a special section focused on pastoralism in the Middle East exemplifies how pastoral societies struggle under challenging circumstances. Joining forces and adapting traditional governance to make their voices heard are some of the strategies of pastoralists fighting to maintain their culture. The experiences and perspectives here highlight the importance of pastoral societies for agroecology and the transformation of entire food systems.

Madeleine Florin and Diana Quiroz

Much like peasants and family farmers, pastoralists' core activity is food production. For millennia, they have been producing milk, meat, fibre and hide, as well as providing ecosystem services in the world's most challenging environments. Pastoralists are mobile or semi-mobile livestock keepers with highly evolved relationships between their breeds and the environment in which they live.

The environmental and cultural diversity of pastoral communities across the world is vast. Yet, there are common struggles that unite pastoral communities – with each other, but also with family farmers, fisher folk, rural workers and others seeking fair food systems. Above all, as producers wishing to maintain their way of life, food sovereignty is a necessity they strive to achieve.

Access and control over land

Survival of pastoral communities and their animals depends on their ability to access land and water. Pastoralists manage extensive tracts of land, including migratory routes, for grazing. This strategy takes advantage of ecological and climatic variability and defies popular belief that certain areas, often arid and mountainous, are uninhabitable and unproductive.

Over centuries, pastoral communities have maintained land as shared property, known as the commons. Use of the commons is usually regulated by customary tenure and enforced through customary law. But today, in many places there is tension between the objectives of customary and statutory (national) law. Moreover, customary law is often undermined or dismantled by national governments facilitating or turning a blind eye to land grabbing. For instance, most national governments pursue privatisation of common land to encourage investment in commodity production (industrial agriculture, mining), nature conservation or hunting reserves. Consultation with pastoral communities in this process is often inadequate or altogether non-existent.

The result is that pastoralists are losing access to and control over their lands. And the implications include livestock death, hunger and conflict between pastoralists and other land users. Besides this, the role pastoralists play as keepers of the land (see box) is becoming less viable and land degradation more prevalent. Other societal issues such as rural exodus emerge as well.

Privatisation of the commons is certainly not happening in a vacuum, and there are other factors contributing to these issues (e.g. climate change, conflict, corruption), but (re)securing pastoral communities' land rights is cross-cutting and particularly illustrative when

it comes to empowerment, the struggle to improve governance, and ultimately achieve food sovereignty.

Local and global voices One way in which pastoralists make themselves heard at the regional and international levels is by forming alliances that participate in policy making fora. The World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP), the Arab Pastoralist Community Network (see page 23 in the special section on the pastoralism in the Middle East) and the pastoralists' constituency in the Food Sovereignty movement are but three examples. Margherita Gomarasca (page 43) reflects on the way a group of pastoralists, representing more than 100 organisations from across the world, is shaping IFAD's agenda through a statement that outlines their specific needs and priorities. These range from recognition of pastoral knowledge and culture to mobile services that suit mobile lifestyles.

Besides representation at the national, regional and international levels, pastoral communities often face another governance challenge at the local level. As Elizabeth Mpofu points out on page 31, traditional governance structures of pastoral societies often exclude women. But this is slowly changing. On page 32, Pain Eulalia Mako explains how pastoral women in Tanzania, when supported with training on empowerment, are proving their capacity to lead their communities' struggles for land. Moreover, the traditional male leaders are recognising women's rights and supporting this kind of change in their communities.

New alliances The example of improved women's rights within pastoral communities shows that traditional governance structures and institutions are not static. In fact, adapting traditional governance is an ongoing strategy of pastoral communities working with other land users. A story from Somaliland illustrates this, showing how hybrid institutions that formally recognise traditional leaders are functioning relatively well when it comes to negotiating conflicting land uses (page 16).

Another aspect of adapting traditional governance relates to forming new alliances with, sometimes unlikely, partners. The Pastoral Parliament in Gujarat



Pastoralists all over the world do find ways to overcome the challenges that undermine their lifestyles (see article on page 36). Photo: Escola de pastores

(page 8) is a good example of how diverse pastoral groups put aside cultural and religious differences to work together for a common cause. And in an article on page 12 from Italy, we see that immigrants with a pastoral background are playing an important role keeping pastoralism alive at a time when most local youth migrate to cities. This in itself raises a whole host of policy questions around support for the integration of a new wave of pastoralists in Mediterranean Europe.

Finding a way A common theme throughout this issue of Farming Matters is the spirit of collective action and cooperation. Pastoralists join forces to be better seen and heard, but also for economic empowerment and environmental sustainability (e.g. see page 40).

Finally, from the stories presented here it is remarkable how, despite political marginalisation, pastoralists do find ways to challenge the policies that undermine their lifestyles. And there is a lot to learn from pastoralists' experiences on the frontline of the struggle for land and their demands for a rights-based approach to achieving food sovereignty. This confirms that pastoralists are a crucial part of the agroecological movement.

Madeleine Florin (m.florin@ileia.org) and **Diana Quiroz** (d.quiroz@ileia.org) both work for ILEIA (www.ileia.org).

Environmental benefits of pastoral systems

The agroecological principle of enhancing crop-animal interactions is usually discussed at the farm level. But when zooming out to the territorial level the interaction between livestock and vegetation (be it cultivated or naturally occurring) is a principle that pastoral communities embody. Extensive livestock grazing is an excellent example of managing biodiversity and soil fertility. For example, through the transport of seeds and insects by livestock, the migration of pastoralists and their flocks supports habitat connectivity and biodiversity.



Yarns from the desert:

sustainable guanaco management

As with most wild ungulates, guanacos compete for pasture with domestic livestock. In Southern Patagonia, Argentina, conflict between guanaco conservation and sheep rearing has increased in recent years due to severe droughts and increased desertification. Ranchers hope to declare guanacos as a 'pest species' and are starting culling programmes. But a group of pastoralists living in a protected area have taken a different approach, thereby successfully combining live guanaco management with economic empowerment.

Gabriela Lichtenstein

La Payunia Provincial Reserve is located in the Malargüe Department, in the south of the Mendoza province in Argentina. The reserve covers approximately 6,540 km² of state-owned and private lands. It was created in the 1980s in order to preserve the rich flora, fauna, archaeological and scenic beauty of the area. As is the case for other protected areas created in that period, the participation of local people in the design and establishment was very limited. Due to the harsh living conditions, limited amenities and lack of basic services, as well as remoteness from markets and schools, La Payunia is sparsely populated, with only about 150 people living in 42 family groups. These families are widely dispersed and separated from each other. The local economy is based on extensive grazing of goats and sheep to a lesser extent. Limited state and private investment in management has led to low animal productivity, adverse selling conditions, low income, and consequently exacerbating economic marginalisation and environmental degradation.

Conflict resolution Under these challenging circumstances, in 2005, some inhabitants of La Payunia and surrounds asked the Provincial Department of Renewable Natural Resources for technical advice in order to develop an alternative source of income, and also to reduce conflicts between domestic livestock and guanaco populations. To put some of the advice in to action, they decided to set up the Payun Matru Cooperative. The goal of the cooperative was to implement live shearing of guanacos in order to link conservation with improving their economic situation. The cooperative also aimed to preserve their local culture and encourage young people in particular to remain in the area, rather than leave for nearby cities.

Environmental authorities saw the initiative as a way of creating incentives for local people to accept and help secure the Payunia Protected Area, and to contribute towards guanaco conservation. Thanks to the active work of the cooperative's president and the technical advisors, the project gained support from several local and international stakeholders, and the cooperative's social capital increased over the years.

A growing network The ability of the cooperative to collaborate with multiple partners contributed towards the shearing project's resilience and created a safety net. As the project developed, collaborations emerged with local and national Departments of Renewable Resources, field biologists and conservation NGOs. This gave the cooperative members more visibility. For example, they participated in conferences and met with government

ministers. This increased their negotiating power with potential clients, and they became more empowered – both politically and economically.

The experience merged community development with scientific research and with time, the guanaco captures became 'open air labs', where IUCN's Animal Welfare Protocol for guanaco captures was developed and many young scientists were trained. Cooperative members improved their management and shearing methods and have become experts on guanaco management with high animal welfare standards. Recently, several members were hired by producers from Patagonia to share their expertise on guanaco management.

Towards value adding The cooperative was always keen to sell processed goods instead of raw guanaco fibre. Given the intensive labour requirements to process the fibre, the next step was to get a semi-industrial mill. In 2012 the Argentinean Ministry of Science and Technology launched a call for proposals targeted at smallholders who could develop camelid fibre value chains. Public-private consortia had to be established in order to apply for this funding so the cooperative formed a consortium with the National Research Council, the National Institute of Industrial Technology and Malargüe Municipality. They were awarded funding to develop the technology needed to support the establishment of a guanaco fibre value chain that would benefit local pastoralists. The project financed some infrastructure for guanaco capture, the installation of a fibre processing plant in a remote village near the protected area, import of specialised machinery from Canada (including the necessary adaptations), capacity building and, the development of guanaco products and by-products.

The guanaco

The guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*) is the largest native herbivore and main consumer of vegetation in arid and semi-arid environments of South America. Because of this, the guanaco plays a fundamental role in the local ecology. For instance, it is the main prey of the largest native carnivore, the puma. From a historic and cultural perspective, this species has been essential for the survival of local populations for 10,000 years. More recently, they were used by Tehuelches, Onas and Yamanas indigenous groups for clothing, food and shelter. Guanaco fibre is amongst the finest animal fibres, yet value chains are rather under-developed.

This collective work has inspired individual pastoralists to dream of new projects such as revegetation



Guanaco shearing. Photo: Federico Biesing

Challenges The processing plant was installed in mid-2015 and since then, cooperative members have learnt how to process guanaco fibre in order to produce different products, such as dehaired fibre, tops and yarns. They also learnt how to process other animal fibres such as vicuña, llama, sheep and cashmere as well as to produce felt. Women tend to work at the mill, whereas most of the guanaco management activities are performed by men. At the moment, all members keep their own economic activities alongside their work with the cooperative because income is still limited.

A challenge, which is shared between the cooperative and other private producers, relates to the lack of an established, transparent market for guanaco fibre and a small overall market demand for the processed products. The similarity between guanaco and vicuña fibre calls for the development of easy methods to help authorities controlling exports and imports to tell them apart.

As in the case of other pastoralists, the Payún Matrú Cooperative faces constraints in realising the economic potential of their system owing to high transaction costs. These include long distances to markets or final consumers, difficulties for marketing and creating distribution channels, limited access to credit facilities and excessive government bureaucracy.

Growth and success Despite these challenges, the cooperative's membership continues to grow. Many of the new members are young people hoping to make a life in the area, and avoid migration. Training opportunities, the high state investment, technical support and the possibility of generating an alternative source of income are attractive to the youth. In the words of cooperative member Eleuterio: "In the town of Malargüe there are a number of job

opportunities, whereas here in the protected area we can only work with the goats. Having a mill here, in the middle of nowhere, has brought job opportunities for many people." But the activities around guanaco management and working at the mill are not only an economic activity, but also a social and cultural event. They provide an opportunity to meet and share experiences with a variety of people and to get organised. This collective work has inspired individual pastoralists to dream of new projects such as revegetation and sheep shearing.

This experience shows that guanacos can be managed collectively and opens new alternatives for guanaco conservation in Argentina and camelid sustainable use in the Andean region. As in the case of vicuña management, the case highlights that the collective management of wild camelids provides more than just economic benefits for local producers. Hopefully the possibility of adding value to wild camelid fibre at the local level will inspire other communities in the Andes to follow this path.

Gabriela Lichtenstein (lichtenstein.g@gmail.com) is coordinator of Proyecto PA.IS, and a researcher of the National Research Council (CONICET) based at the National Institute of Anthropology and Latin American Thought (INAPL) in Argentina.

Cooperative member getting ready to grab guanacos. Photo: Gabriela Lichtenstein



A call for climate resilient food systems

Climate change is real and the impacts are already upon us. Family farmers and peasants, through virtue of their intimate relationship with the natural environment, are amongst the first ones to feel the impacts. They are also on the frontline when it comes to taking actions, to safeguard their way of life and mitigate climate change. Family farmers are not alone in these activities, there are also a growing number of citizens engaging in climate change activism and researchers working with farmers to manage the risks from climate change. For example, researchers and citizens lobby governments to invest in renewable energy and create policy that supports farmers who store carbon in the soil.

What does agroecology – as a science, movement and practice – have to offer here? Certainly agroecology offers ways to cope with and prepare for threats such as increasingly uncertain and extreme weather events. In contrast to ‘climate smart agriculture’ and other top-down approaches, agroecology builds resilience as it is grounded in local and relevant knowledge, low external inputs and both biological and cultural diversity. For example, for peasants, climate variability is an inherent feature of the environment in which they live. This is reflected in their choices and adaptive practices related to combinations of crops, varieties, animals and, to planting, storage and post-harvest techniques.

Moreover, agroecology can contribute to mitigating other threats posed by climate change, such as biodiversity loss through mass extinction. For instance, tran-

sitioning from existing production paradigms, like global commodity markets based on industrial agriculture, to local and regional food systems reduces the carbon footprint of food production and transportation. It also reduces reliance on fossil fuels.

The June 2017 issue of *Farming Matters* will explore the strategies that family farmers and civil society are developing to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. How do these strategies help amplifying agroecology as a practice and a movement, and how do they feed into the science of agroecology? We are particularly interested in hearing about grassroots experiences where family farmers have innovated or revived old farming practices to cope with extreme climatic events and uncertain weather. And what is the greater socio-political relevance of these experiences? Are you working towards climate resilient food systems? Share your story with the *Farming Matters* community.

Articles for the June 2017 issue of *Farming Matters* should be submitted **before 1 March 2017** at www.farmingmatters.org

COLOPHON

Farming Matters

Experiences in family farming and agroecology

Farming Matters is published quarterly by ILEIA

www.farmingmatters.org



Centre for learning on sustainable agriculture

Address

P.O. Box 90, 6700 AB, Wageningen, the Netherlands

Visitors' address

Lawickse Allee 11, 6701 AN Wageningen, the Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)317 760 010
E-mail: ileia@ileia.org
www.ileia.org

Editorial team

This issue has been compiled by Madeleine Florin, Diana Quiroz, Silvia Quarta, Edith van Walsum, Jorge Chavez-Tafur, Laura Eggens.

Subscriptions

Subscription rate for one year (four issues): organisations € 45 individuals € 20.

Online subscriptions are free.

Subscribe at www.farmingmatters.org

The AgriCultures Network

ILEIA is a member of the AgriCultures Network; five organisations that provide information on agroecology and family farming worldwide, and that publish: LEISA revista de agroecología (Latin America in Spanish), LEISA India (in English, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu), AGRIDAPE (West Africa, in French), Agriculturas, Experiências em Agroecologia (Brazil, in Portuguese) and Wegel (Ethiopia, in Amharic).

Layout

Simon van Kessel - Twin Media bv, Culemborg, the Netherlands

Printing

Koninklijke BDU Grafisch Bedrijf B.V., Barneveld, the Netherlands.

Funding

ILEIA is grateful for the support of Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Cover photo

© VSF Germany (see article on page 43)

The editors have taken every care to ensure that the contents of this magazine are as accurate as possible. The authors have ultimate responsibility, however, for the content of individual articles.

Volume 32.4
ISSN: 2210-6499

ILEIA uses the Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 Unported Creative Commons Licence. For details please see www.creativecommons.org.



“OTHERS TRY TO SABOTAGE THE COMMUNITY, BUT THE PARLIAMENT IS BRINGING EVERYONE TOGETHER”

Indian pastoralist, page 8

“A group of women occupied the village council office in order to have their land rights recognised. They slept for five nights on the ground until their claims were heard by the village council”

Paine Eulalia Mako, page 32

“PASTORALIST BREEDS CANNOT BE REDUCED TO ASSEMBLAGES OF GENES. THEY REPRESENT KNOWLEDGE ACCUMULATED OVER GENERATIONS, NOT ONLY OF THEIR KEEPERS, BUT ALSO LEARNT BEHAVIOUR OF ANIMALS”

Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, page 15

“I am convinced of the benefits of keeping our ancestors’ traditions alive, and of involving women in the process”

Eaetemad Rafallah Abdallah, page 20