

These glossaries are quite technical and include terms about vegetation, livestock, physical aspects of the land, and techniques for managing livestock and land. They give little attention to the people and institutions managing and governing the use of the land and animals. Practitioners and policymakers who want to comprehend processes of range management need to understand the concepts referring to the people who do this in practice.

A study undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) into gaps in data and information about rangelands and pastoralism (Johnsen *et al.* 2019) found a great variety – and some ambiguity – of definitions of many English terms, including “pastoralist”. It called for a clarification of terminology in order to make data collection about rangelands and pastoralism more efficient and comparable. Some of the authors of the UNEP study, recognising the need to explain social and institutional terms related to the rangelands, formed a “Social Terminology Core Team” to start developing such a glossary. Coordination of this team and of the overall development of the glossary was taken on by the then President of the IRC Continuing Committee.

The glossary is designed primarily for practitioners (including pastoralists), project planners and policymakers in governmental and development organisations working in rangeland areas, but also for contributors to and editors of journals on agriculture and ecology, and staff and students in institutions of higher learning in the fields of agriculture, natural resource management and ecology. It is meant to complement the existing technical glossaries.

The team started with a glossary of socio-institutional terms in the English language because this is the language that is currently most commonly used in international meetings and publications about rangelands and pastoralism. The glossary with definitions of some key “people” terms related to use, management and governance of the rangelands is meant to be a tool to improve communication and understanding in such meetings and publications, as well as in international and interdisciplinary research projects and programmes.

Because the focus is on socio-institutional terms, the glossary team accepted the definitions of grasslands and rangelands proposed by Allen *et al.* (2011: see Box 1), these being still the definitions accepted by the International Grasslands and International Rangelands Continuing Committees.

Box 1: Grasslands and rangelands definitions

“Grasslands” and “rangelands” are partly overlapping terms, as natural grasslands are a type of rangelands. Both rangelands and grasslands are used for grazing livestock, which could be cattle, horses, yaks, buffaloes or smaller species such as sheep, goats, pigs or even ducks. According to Allen *et al.* (2022 p2), grasslands are “lands (and the vegetation growing on it) devoted to the production of introduced or indigenous forage for harvest by grazing, cutting, or both”. Rangelands are lands “on which the indigenous vegetation ... is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs or shrubs that are grazed or have the potential to be grazed, and which is used as a natural ecosystem for the production of grazing livestock and wildlife” (Allen *et al.* p5). The key difference is that rangelands have “indigenous” or “native” pastures, whereas grasslands may be modified with introduced pasture species.

Developing the socio-institutional glossary

The core team of six people from Australia, Germany, Kenya, Mongolia, Norway and USA worked together with a wider group of experts in pastoralism and range management from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Kenya, UK and USA to define the scope of the socio-institutional glossary and draw up criteria for selection of the terms to be included.

The core team collected and defined terms that are related to social, economic, institutional and policy aspects of pastoralism and rangelands and that are in common international use. These included numerous terms to describe people who live in, use and manage the rangelands, such as livestock keepers (not only pastoralists), crop farmers and other local communities. They also included terms about the mobility of animals and people, e.g. transhumance, as well as terms explaining how the local

people organise their use and management of rangeland resources (e.g. common property rights, land tenure, resource access rights, changes in rights to land, governance institutions).

The team clustered the terms into themes and – within each theme – clustered related terms under subheadings, similar to the hierarchy of terms in the technical glossary of Allen *et al.* (2011). The clusters were divided among the team members, who identified and reviewed numerous publications that defined or explained the terms in their respective clusters. Then all team members reviewed and helped to revise all the definitions. The entire draft glossary was then reviewed by the advisory group, who proposed edits and often also new formulations of the definitions. In some cases, a particular cluster of terms, e.g. on land tenure, was reviewed by one or more advisory group members specialised in that field. The core team then jointly discussed the recommendations made by the advisory group and agreed on the final definitions of all terms to be included in the glossary. In order to facilitate interdisciplinary work, the team tried to formulate the definitions in a way that could be understood by non-specialists in social sciences.

Most definitions are 80–140 words long. A few particularly complex terms are discussed at greater length in boxes, e.g. about “pastoralists”, “mobility” and the concept of agroecology as related to pastoralism. Rather than specifying only one term to be used as a standard for a particular concept worldwide, the team sought to highlight the diversity of terms used and to make a first step toward understanding how people in the rangelands see and name themselves. For example, the term “pastoralist” is given a basic definition that could be applied universally (see Box 2), and cultural differentiations are then explained.

Box 2: Pastoralists

Pastoralists keep grazing domesticated and semi-domesticated animals on predominantly natural vegetation in rangelands and grasslands, although other landscapes are sometimes used. Their livestock produce milk, meat and other products and services by applying their knowledge, skills and social organisation to take advantage of highly variable environments (e.g. arid, mountainous, tundra). Their herds are the source of the pastoralists’ cultural, social and economic continuity.

Status of glossary and next steps

The core team has developed over 90 definitions for “people” terms. Some are still being finalised on the basis of feedback from the advisory group, in accordance with the process outlined above.

The core team hopes to publish the glossary of socio-institutional terminology in early 2023, as a contribution to improving communication and outreach about pastoralists and rangelands worldwide in the lead-up to the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) in 2026. This version of the glossary will doubtless be revised if a global assessment of rangelands and pastoralism, as called for by the UNEP study (Johnsen *et al.* 2019), is launched. In this case, a more systematic effort could be made to define socio-institutional terms. In any case, the core team and the advisory group are fully aware that language and, thus, definitions evolve over time and new concepts arise. A revision of this socio-institutional glossary will therefore be needed in a few years.

Although the definitions in the glossary take into consideration English terms from various parts of the world, the glossary clearly reflects a “Western” perception – primarily from Australia, Europe and North America, as also the African and Asian members of the core team and advisory group received a “Western” education. However, this glossary will hopefully stimulate the development of further socio-institutional glossaries in other languages – and particularly in the languages of the diverse people living in the rangelands, to create a better understanding of how they perceive themselves and their environment. This endeavour will be deliberately pursued in the years up to and during the IYRP in 2026.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank Jane Addison and Jocelyn Davies for support in developing the concept for the glossary and thank the advisors who reviewed and helped with the formulation of the definitions: Vivien Allen, Jocelyn Davies, Jonathan Davies, Maria Fernandez-Gimenez, Fiona Flintan, Mark Horney, Bernard Hubert, Saverio Krätli, Natasha Maru, Ernest Mbogo, Jim O'Rourke, Robin Reid, Lance Robinson and Thomas Sommerhalter. Various members of the FAO Pastoralist Knowledge Hub also contributed valuable ideas during their online discussion of the term "pastoralist". The work on this glossary did not receive any external funding. The six authors of this paper, who are in the core team, are responsible for the final definitions included in the glossary.

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