

The World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism: Economic valuations

Building capacities for enhanced policy dialogue based on sound knowledge management in the economic valuation of pastoralism.

Pastoralism is widely acknowledged to be the most effective and economically rational way of sustainably managing the drylands, yet this recognition seldom influences national policies. Alternative dryland uses are often proposed on the basis of weak valuation of the pastoral system they are supplanting or on the basis of no comparative economic valuation at all. The data available for valuing pastoral systems is often poor or difficult to adapt: national census data is not disaggregated to allow calculation of pastoral-specific figures; weak assumptions are used to value the pastoral system; inappropriate comparisons are made between drylands systems and non-drylands systems; elements of the value of pastoralism are usually entirely overlooked.

WISP has recently carried out a global desk review on the economics of pastoralism (currently under going final editing) which highlights some important commonalities in economic valuation. Efforts have been made in several countries to disaggregate national agricultural data for the sake of producing information on pastoralism, with varying degrees of success. Such efforts have typically focussed on live animal sales and overlook many other important values. For example, few efforts have been made to value the subsistence economy of pastoral systems. Even fewer examples have been found of the valuation of environmental services provided by pastoralism.

To address this important knowledge gap, WISP will support a number of partners to conduct economic valuations of pastoralism within their country. This is primarily a knowledge management exercise: gathering knowledge; highlighting gaps; organising the knowledge and; using it to influence policy. WISP hopes to find partners that have already made progress in closing some of the important gaps in valuing pastoralist systems, thus enabling global learning from more localised experiences.

Outline of the economic valuations

This work will be carried out in at least six countries, in different regions of the world, by local partners that are either pastoralist institutions or that play a role in advocating on behalf of pastoralists. Where the institution is not a pastoralist representative structure, the project will contribute to strengthening linkages with pastoral populations and to bringing their voice into national policy debates. The valuations will be carried out with a specific objective of accomplishing local level advocacy in those countries. WISP will provide technical support for implementing the valuations and, where requested, nominal funds to facilitate the project and for publishing policy briefs.

These valuations should be used to create space for pastoralists to voice their concerns and recommendations over national policy. Partners should demonstrate their ability to contribute to pastoralist empowerment and they should provide details of how pastoralists will be consulted over the policy messages that emanate from the project and how pastoralists will use the final products to engage in policy dialogue directly.

WISP is contracting an international specialist in pastoralist economics to mentor the national partners through the various stages of this project. The key stages will include the preparation of terms of reference for the studies, reporting on the analyses and lessons learned and preparation of policy briefs. The international consultant will then use the national studies to develop global learning documents and global policy briefs, which will be presented at a range of international and regional fora. WISP will also discuss with partners how best to bring pastoralists to such global/regional fora to articulate their own arguments and policy recommendations.

Outputs of the study

1. Increased capacity in knowledge management and economic valuation
2. National economic valuation report, developed on the basis of strong consultation with pastoralist communities.

3. Published policy briefs, presented at appropriate public events by pastoralists
4. Contribution to Global Learning on the economics of pastoralism
5. Engagement in global advocacy by pastoralists from some of the partner countries
6. Regional sharing of skills and experience in economic valuation

Timing

The national partners will be identified during October 2006. WISP will work with the partners to develop terms of reference during November and the work will be carried out between December and February. The final reports and policy briefs will be prepared by partners during March and advocacy activities will therefore be carried out from April 2007. An initial consultative workshop may be held during November/December 2006 in Kenya, which each partner would be expected to attend.

Contact

Prospective partners in this project should submit a brief proposal (no more than two pages of writing) by email to WISP at Florence.Njiriri@iucn.org before September 30th 2006.