

LIVESTOCK, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION PLAYS AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN THE FOOD SYSTEM OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

Livestock in developing countries often use marginal lands, they contribute to **land productivity** and they consume biomass unfit for humans and turn that into nutritious, **protein-rich food**. Keeping livestock also helps poor communities **adapt to climate change** and withstand shocks.

Much work is needed to scale-up **improved production practices** to meet growing demands for meat, milk and eggs in low- and middle-income countries, while simultaneously **reducing greenhouse gas emissions** and the environmental impacts of keeping livestock.

About 1/3

of the world's food supply is produced by small, mostly family-run farms. THESE FARMS ARE ABLE TO GROW CROPS BECAUSE THEY OWN LIVESTOCK

Livestock in these farm systems provide:



Livestock place **less burden** on human food and fresh water supply than previously reported

Feeding and watering livestock in most livestock production systems in Africa **does not reduce food or water for people.**



RAINFED FEED SOURCES
Livestock use large areas of pastures such as drylands and grasslands where nothing else can be produced



CROP RESIDUES
are a key feed resource, comprising up to 50% of cattle, sheep and goat feed in developing countries



Most livestock farmers and herders are stewards of important ecosystem services

These services include:

- **Improved soil health** - using manure as fertilizer
- **Nutrient cycling** - manure returns nutrients back to the soil, reducing waste and leakage
- **Stimulating vegetation growth** when animals move across land surfaces

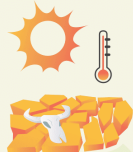


Healthy, well-managed soils are essential in regenerative agriculture and the circular economy.



Pastoralists in Africa are **major contributors** of livestock-derived foods and products on the continent

About 268 MILLION PASTORALISTS graze their animals on lands unsuitable for crops. They provide **75% OF AFRICA'S MILK** and more than **50% OF ITS MEAT**.



Pastoral systems are traditionally resilient but need support to withstand increased weather variability and extreme drought and heat.

They need services in insurance and health, market opportunities and improved governance to restore degraded lands.



Livestock and wildlife maintain the biodiversity of rangelands, providing essential environmental services for vegetation growth.

Without them, termite infestations would occur, emitting massive greenhouse gas emissions.



The climate footprint of most livestock-dependent communities in the developing world is **vastly smaller** compared to intensified systems

While they contribute very little to climate change, they and their animals are suffering its harshest impacts



EMERGING RESEARCH
on overall emissions from African livestock systems shows they are lower than estimated.



MORE MODELS AND DATASETS ARE NEEDED
to identify and break down emissions data for African livestock systems to find the appropriate sustainable solutions for each



ACCURATE NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES ARE NEEDED
so countries can access climate finance to invest in climate smart



Downloadable [here](#)

Resource type

Infographic