# Centre for Pastoralism report

NOVEMBER 2022



Centre for Pastoralism

आओ बे लोको जंगल अंदर गुज्जर किक्कन रए मेस्सा नो पत्त खलावे, गायों नो का चराए नाले मेस्सा दा दुद्दां ते शहरा बेचन जावां सारी आमदानी वो अपनी ओदे ऊपर चलावें।

Come, Oh People! Look how the Gujjars dwell in the forest. How they feed leaves to the buffaloes and graze their cows, and go to the city to sell buffalo milk, which is their sole source of subsistence!

Van Gujjar Beyt translated by Manya

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### **Centre for Pastoralism**

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FOREWORD

### Sandeep Virmani

Chairperson, Sahjeevan & Governing Board, Founding Member, CfP

Pashu Mela at the Living Lightly Exhibition Gujjaran go Kaarj: Journeys with Pastoralists (March 2022, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand) PC: Living Lightly Archive In 2016, for the first time, pastoralists from 15 states congregated at the 'Living Lightly – Journeys with Pastoralists' exhibition in Delhi. Accompanied by researchers and civil society organisations, a decision was taken that a Centre for Pastoralism be established with the objective of bringing the contributions of this invisible force to a field of constructive engagement and national recognition.

In spite of pastoral economies being generally robust, there is a danger that the new generation will abandon this lifestyle for the sheer hardships it faces. It is also important to safeguard pastoralism simply because it represents a potent example of how economy and ecology can prosper, in times when the world struggles with climate change and intense biodiversity loss. Then, our objective to address the sustained contributions of pastoralism to the nation's economy and well-being becomes all the more important.

Since its inauguration, CfP has systematically worked

with the newly established Department of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry and Dairying to first define pastoralism and count the pastoralists and their assets. And second, to economically assess their contribution and potential to the Indian economy.

CfP has opened a host of collaborations with businesses, markets and CBOs to strengthen the pastoral economies of wool and milk.

- In Rajasthan and Gujarat, efforts are being made with RCDF and NDDB and some private players to collect and market camel, goat and even donkey milk.
- In Saurashtra, Gujarat, a pastoral youth group is making and marketing a host of goat and sheep cheeses, under the brand name, 'Panchal Dairy.'
- A network of 13 CBOs from across the country is working to conserve local sheep breeds by developing value-added textiles from wool under a common brand 'Desi Oon.'

CfP is successfully bringing Indian pastoralism into the consciousness of the mainstream, and it seems to be a global trend with the UN declaring 2024 the International Year for Camels and 2026 The International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralism.

> Research has been completed to develop and market sheep wool as insulation for buildings, industrial use and packaging.

Probably the most pressing concern for pastoralists is access to their traditional grazing resources. With the assistance of several CBOs, a program has been put in place across five states for pastoralists to file and claim Community Forest Rights under the Forest Rights Act. A big achievement has been the acceptance of 58 claims in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, a first for pastoralists.

Information, knowledge, and understanding of pastoralism in India are woefully abysmal. A continuous process of research has been initiated on documenting the pastoral routes, their ecological connections, livelihoods, and cultural practices. This is ongoing with pastoral communities in the five states of the Deccan and three states in the Himalayas. Additionally, this research provides the content to develop the Living Lightly exhibitions. A series of exhibitions and consultations have been initiated in the Himalayas with pastoral communities.

Besides networking, CfP also works directly with the Van Gujjar community in Uttarakhand to help them form a *yuva sangathan* (youth organisation), file their FRA claims, develop connections with the animal husbandry department of Uttarakhand, document their routes and practices and organise a Living Lightly exhibition in the Rajaji National Park.

Even as CfP successfully brings pastoralism into mainstream consciousness, the UN has declared 2024 as the International Year for Camels and 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralism. It will be interesting to see if these and other developments lead the world and India to accord pastoralism its due.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

### Vasant Saberwal

Director, Centre for Pastoralism We last reported on our activities in November 2019, almost three years ago. Much has happened during the period that coincided so heavily with the multiple lockdowns, restricted travel and work from home that accompanied the Covid-19 pandemic. Somewhat counterintuitively, we have grown substantially over this period, and, in many ways, are quite a different organisation from before.

Working from home, we quickly realised that virtual technologies, such as Zoom, Google Meet and the like enabled us to meet frequently and in small groups to tackle specific tasks. We focused on building a group to oversee our communication efforts, an area that had received little attention in our early years. Another group began meeting to develop a multi-state project that aimed to facilitate pastoralists in staking claim to traditionally grazed areas, through the Forest Rights Act. We hired dedicated individuals as anchors for Wool, Living Lightly and Research, each of which now comprise small teams.

Picture Credit: Ishaan Raghunandan

We were a team of 12 people 3 years ago, many serving in part-time capacities. CfP now has a staff of over 30, the vast majority newly hired, young professionals with an interest in grasslands, pastoralism, cheese, wool, music and the like! While we continue to be a somewhat dispersed organisation, with staff in multiple locations, there is a growing concentration of people working out of the Delhi office in Lado Sarai.

Over these past three years, our work has consolidated around four key areas. We believe that one, improved returns from pastoralism, via improved access to milk and wool markets, and two, more secure access to forage, possible through the Forest Rights Act, could slow the pace of sedentarisation among pastoralists in the country. At the end of the day, for pastoralism to survive, it needs to work from a production standpoint (via access to forage) and a financial standpoint (via better economic returns).

Our research efforts aim to deepen the field of pastoral studies in the country, improve our understanding of pastoral systems and inform our livelihoods and access related work

Thirdly, our research efforts aim to deepen the field of pastoral studies in the country, improve our understanding of pastoral systems and inform our livelihoods and access related work. And lastly, centred around the Living Lightly exhibitions, aims to engage with the widest possible audiences to enhance mainstream appreciation of pastoral philosophies and their many contributions, and also facilitate sometimes difficult conversations amongst policy makers, pastoral communities and civil society.

While our field presence is limited, we continue to see ourselves as a collaborative space, working with partners from academia, the government, the private sector and civil society. Through these collaborations, we hope to identify market and policy bottlenecks and pilot solutions or develop prototypes that might apply in various contexts. We welcome feedback on this Report. Even more, we welcome discussions on how we may work together. Picture Credit: Raj

# **The Big Picture**

## The Big Picture

Policymakers and society in general simply cannot fathom why pastoralists might choose mobility over a sedentary lifestyle, with all the benefits the latter may offer. Nor are they sympathetic to what they see as unproductive, degrading use of the landscape. Centre for Pastoralism is now 5 years old. The big difference between this report, and our last one, three years ago, is that the latter was a largely aspirational document, outlining the directions we hoped to move in. This report showcases our progress in advancing those lines of work.

A little context may help frame the rationale for our work. For the most part, mainstream society sees pastoral mobility as an outdated, unproductive lifestyle eking an existence from undernourished animals that overgraze fragile landscapes; a livelihood choice that surely must give way to a more secure settled existence, capable of accessing education and health services.

Interestingly enough, this collage of images - the simpleton, unproductive, environmentally damaging herder – began to surface close to 200 years ago, and in a wide range of contexts. The colonial state saw itself as a civilising influence, and in line with that objective, pressured mobile communities to settle. It was also an extractive state and settled agrarian communities could be taxed more easily, and at far higher rates, than mobile herding communities with less established metrics of production. And finally, from a conservation perspective, the fledgling Forest Department saw itself as the guardian of natural

resources, deeply opposed to what it saw as the over-stocking, irrational herding practices of mobile communities.

All three impulses – civilizational, extractive, and conservation-oriented – continue to influence our current thinking and policy. Policymakers and society in general simply cannot fathom why pastoralists might choose mobility over a sedentary lifestyle, with all the benefits the latter may offer. Nor are they sympathetic to what they see as unproductive, degrading use of the landscape.

Despite an unsupportive policy environment, over a very long timeframe pastoralism has survived and even flourished. This is testimony to the resilience of these communities, and of a remarkable capacity to adapt – to changing social and physical landscapes, changing market dynamics, and, fundamentally, to changes brought about by an increasingly variable climate.

There is growing evidence, however, that despite the potential financial rewards of pastoralism, it is at a point of inflexion, with an accelerating pace of sedentarisation. Some of this derives from the aspirations of a younger generation that resists embarking upon a profession that is enormously demanding physically and socially isolated for large parts of the year. But some of this settling is also rooted in the growing challenges of accessing forage and of changing market dynamics.

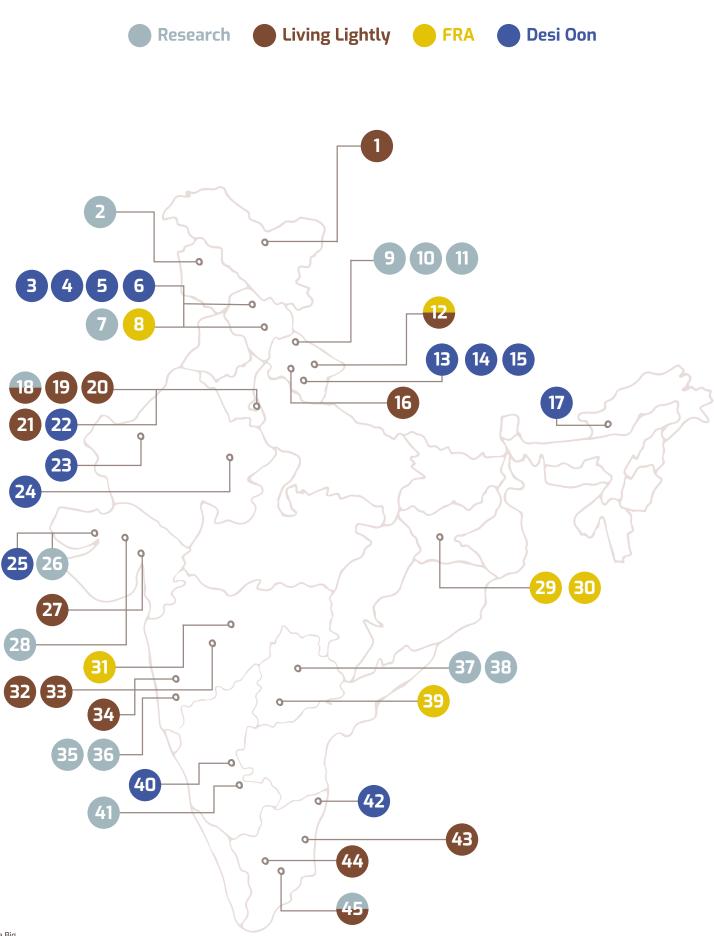
CfP's work is premised on the idea that while individual herders should have the option of settling, they should be doing this as a choice, rather than being forced to settle owing to curtailed access to grazing lands or due to the poverty of policy support for pastoralist mobility.

We see pastoralism as an adaptive response to harsh climatic conditions, in the Himalayas, in the arid lands of Gujarat and Rajasthan, and in the semi-arid lands of the Deccan. Agriculture is a suboptimal response in each of these contexts – either on account of water scarcity or given the smallholder agriculture on sloping, relatively infertile, mountain terrain. But even in such landscapes, pastoralism will only survive where herders can access grazing lands and where financial returns might be of an order of magnitude that incentivizes a continuation with such mobile animal husbandry.

Accordingly, CfP's work is aimed at both **visibilising** and **enabling** pastoralism. The scope of visibilisation, undertaken by research, outreach, and advocacy, is to demonstrate to the state and to the private sector that such animal husbandry is not taking place on the margins, rather it is of a geographic and economic scale that warrants investment in the sector. The second part of our work is aimed at **enabling** pastoralism, by securing title to grazing lands, via the Forest Rights Act, and by improving pastoralist access to markets for surplus commodities that currently find poor traction in the mainstream.

It is important to understand how we function. We have tried to remain small, and to build partnerships with state institutions, civil society organisations, the private sector, and professionals from similar areas of work. We do not wish to build large teams in every part of the country. Rather we hope to collaborate, facilitate, support, commission, encourage, AND, in some instances, anchor our own work. But principally, we see our role as stirring the pot and seeing what comes of it!

We believe pastoralism is receiving greater attention today than any time in its past – within the media, civil society and government and amongst academics. Much of this is an outcome of myriad partnerships that we are a part of – partnerships that have chosen to push the envelope in all manner of directions! Our salaam to the many people and organisations that have been a part of this journey, for their energy, ideas, and commitment.



The Big Picture

- 1. Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation
- 2. Ovee Thorat
- 3. Kullvi Whims
- 🔵 4. Anna Janna
- 5. The Color Caravan
- 6. Miyar Muffler
- 7. Satya Prasanna
- 😑 8. Himachal Ghumantu Pashupalak Mahasabha
- 9. Amish Dua
- 10. GS Rawat
- 11. Zanskar Singh
- 🗕 12. Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan
  - 13. Himmotthan
  - 🔵 14. Avani
  - 🔵 15. Peoli
  - 16. Nikita Naik, All India Fellow
  - 17. It's All Folk
- 18. Shiv Nadar University
  - 19. Teamwork Arts
  - 20. Dustyfoot Productions
  - 21. Legal Resource Centre
  - 22. Rangsutra
  - 23. Urmul Setu
  - 24. Cotton Rack

- 25. Khamir
- 26. Hunnarshala
- 27. CEPT
- 28. Panchal Dairy
- 9. LIVE Foundation
- 9 30. Manthan
- 31. Centre for People's Collective
- 32. Centre for Peoples Social Forum
- 33. Kalpavriksh
- 34. Anthra
- 35. Iravatee Majgaonkar
- 36. Pragati Abhiyan
- 37. Indian School of Business
- 38. WASSAN
- 9. Conservation of Nature through Rural Awakening
- 40. Dakhni Diaries
- 41. Shristi Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Architecture
- 42. Earthen Tunes
- 43. Dustudio
- 44. Kabilan
- 45. Mathivanan

Picture Credit: Kalyan Varma





### Overview of Our Work

**Research:** Our research effort is geared toward establishing the economic and ecological importance of pastoralism, or countering, where appropriate, mainstream positions on pastoralism and grasslands.



PC: Aniruddh Sheth

Currently undertaking an Atlas Project to map pastoral migratory routes in India. Access to Forage: We are now working with partners to support pastoralists in their efforts to secure access to forage, via provisions of the Forest Rights Act. This is unfolding in 5 states – Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Telangana, and Maharashtra – with a target of submitting 200 Community Forest Claims (CFR) over 3 years.



PC: Sahjeevan Archive

57 CFR claims have recently been approved in Himachal Pradesh and 1 in Uttarakhand, the first instances of pastoralist communities receiving titles to traditionally grazed lands. **Livelihoods:** We support the procurement of the two surplus commodities produced across pastoral communities in the country – milk and wool. We hope that enhanced returns from these commodities will lead to a reimagining of pastoralism as a viable livelihood.



PC: Käse Cheese

Recently launched pastoral cheeses in partnership with Käse Cheese and helped set up the Panchal Dairy in Sayla, Gujarat. We have also formalised the Desi Oon Hub, a platform of partners working on indigenous wool. **Outreach:** We connect with a range of audiences to build greater awareness about pastoralism. Our exhibition, **Living Lightly**, has been our principal platform of outreach.



PC: Shivam

Hosted a localised Living Lightly Utsav with the Van Gujjar community in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand.



Strengthening Milk-Based Livelihoods

AN WALL HIL

MAL

SURPLUS MILK | PASTORAL CHEESES

### Strengthening milk-based livelihoods

ऊंटनी के दूध की कोई कीमत नहीं होती, इसलिए जरूरत से ज्यादा होने पर हम इसे गाय के दूध में मिला देते हैं।

There is no value for camel milk, so we just mix it with regular milk when there's an excess

### ••• **RAIKA HERDER** Rajasthan

An estimated 40% of India's domesticated breeds have been bred by and are managed in extensive, mobile pastoral systems. These systems are in decline for multiple reasons but a key factor is the reduced livelihood opportunities for pastoral communities. In the process, we stand to lose a major portion of our animal diversity. A likely opportunity for sustaining pastoral economies lies in the procurement, processing and sale of milk and value-added dairy products. While milk as a commodity has historically been a surplus in these communities, neither the government nor the private sector has explored means by which such surplus might be leveraged to sustain pastoralist livelihoods.

There is considerable potential for entrepreneurship linked to artisanal value-added products. The value-added dairy market in India is growing at over 20% annually, with significant urban interest in niche products such as cheeses. Some estimates suggest that the global market for camel milk and associated products could reach USD 10.07 billion by 2027 (Grand View Research), with camel cheese accounting for nearly a billion dollars. India, however, does not feature in these

figures owing to insufficient domestic demand. As a result Indian producers like Aadvik end up exporting the bulk of their camel milk powder to the Middle East. In response to the need for milk-based livelihoods. CfP works to connect pastoralists with mainstream markets through the procurement of milk and by facilitating the production of specialised dairy products. We are also interested in facilitating domestic demand for value-added milk products by exploring state-led welfare schemes related to child nutrition and midday meals.

## Pioneering the idea of pastoral cheeses

The European traditions of cheese making almost certainly have their roots in pastoralism. Converting milk into cheese was a means by which one could extend milk's shelf life, a necessity for animals grazed on the move, isolated from all markets. Unsurprisingly, cheese making continues to serve this purpose where pastoralism survives, including in India.

CfP has embarked on the production of a range of artisanal pastoral cheeses using milk from the wide range of animals that are managed by pastoral communities, including CfP has embarked on the production of a range of artisanal pastoral cheeses using milk from the wide range of animals that are managed by pastoral communities, including goats, sheep, cows, buffaloes, camels, and, potentially, yak.

> goats, sheep, cows, buffaloes, camels, and, potentially, yak. Unlike stall-fed cattle, the source of most milk used in Indian cheese, pastoral animals are free-ranging animals that derive the bulk of their nutrition from forests and grasslands, making their milk largely organic. Additionally, since these populations are foraging on a wide variety of plant species, there is a nutrient richness with corresponding health benefits associated with pastoral milk.

> But from a cheese maker's perspective, the real value in working with pastoralists is the sheer variety in the taste and qualities of milk associated with the range of animals managed by these communities and the range of geographies – the terroir that cheese makers refer to that their animals are grazed in: thorn forests, mangroves, grasslands, alpine meadows and so on. This diversity of animals and landscapes results in the potential production of endless varieties of milk, which is a bonanza for cheese makers!

CfP currently partners with Käse, a Chennai-based artisan cheese brand, to procure sheep and goat milk from Saurashtra, Gujarat, and to produce and market specialised pastoral cheeses. As part of this initiative, Käse trained two young Bharwad pastoralists in Sayla, Gujarat who now produce and sell a range of pastoral cheeses through Panchal Dairy Private Limited. Both the community cheesemakers and 57 members of the pastoral community are key stakeholders by virtue of their financial contributions to the enterprise.

In March 2022, we collaborated with Käse to host a buyer-seller meet on pastoral cheeses. The event welcomed the country's finest food writers, food scholars, and nutritionists who participated in panel discussions and a cheese tasting session. The event became a significant avenue to discuss the prospects of developing a pastoral cheese market based on the nutritional and ethical values of pastoral dairy. Pastoral cheeses from Panchal Dairy, including Feta, Cheddar, Halloumi, Chevre and others, were launched on Käse's website in May of this year, accompanied by a social media campaign on the benefits of the cheeses for both consumers and pastoralists.

Over the coming years, we anticipate working with camel, cow and buffalo herders in Gujarat, and with herders in other parts of the country, to produce a range of pastoral cheeses. Our ultimate goal is to support the marketing of a Pastoral Cheese brand, and highlighting the pastoral systems that have enabled the production of these very highquality cheeses.

## Procuring camel and goat milk in Rajasthan

Rajasthan houses the highest number of goats in the country and has a notable (albeit declining) population of camels. Yet, there has been a lack of substantial investments in procuring and marketing the surplus camel and goat milk by both the government and the private sector, leading to an absence of organised markets for milk as well as other dairy products.

We partner with Urmul Seemant Samiti in Rajasthan to explore the development of camel and goat milk markets. With over three decades of working in Western Rajasthan, the heartland of the state's pastoral communities, Urmul has rolled out a range of activities to improve the overall support ecosystem for camel husbandry. These include (i) the mobilisation of camel herders into 3 separate federations that are expected to conceptualise a collective agenda and embark on the necessary advocacy with both the state government and the private sector; (ii) the installation



Discussing the potential of camel milk cold chains with Raika herders in Rajasthan

PC: Anurag Kushwaha

Strengthening milk-based livelihoods



Raika pastoralists in a consultation on marketing camel milk



Urmul staff distributing camel milk



Conference to address the challenges of goat milk procurement

of relevant infrastructure including Bulk Milk Chillers and a Freeze-Drying Plant for the manufacture of camel milk powder; (iii) the initiation of camel milk procurement in collaboration with Lotus Dairy; and (iv) the training of two pastoral youth in the production of camel cheese, in collaboration with Käse Cheese.

**Top left & bottom photo by** Anurag Kushwaha Camel milk procurement has steadily increased since the

setting up of the milk chillers and processing units. Cheese and ghee production has also commenced in Urmul's Bajju campus. We are now looking to work with potential investors and entrepreneurs to further market camel milk to more consumers and to develop value-added products such as ghee and cheese. We are pursuing the same model of procurement and processing of goat milk in Rajasthan.



# Enhancing Wool-Based Livelihoods

TEXTILES | INSULATION | PACKAGING



### Enhancing Wool-based Livelihoods

हम अपने आसपास के बुनकरों के साथ अपने संबंधों को करीब से जोड़ कर रखते हैं।

We wrap our relationship with the weavers closely around us.

**•••** HARKUBEN RABARI

A sheep and goat herder from Kachchh, Gujarat

Facing page photo: Rabari herders and their flock PC: Ramesh Bhatti India is home to 74 million sheep and boasts a rich diversity of indigenous wool and woollen products. The sheep and the wool have been nurtured by herders, hand spinners, weavers, felters, knitters and dyers for centuries. This painstaking work, done by both men and women, is what has created such a rich variety.

The Desi Oon story begins with the wool fibre, and through the journey of the fibre, traces the movement of the sheep; the uniqueness of each breed; the gorgeous diversity of traditional products, and the wonderful skill of our wool artisans. The harsh reality today is that most shepherds in India discard wool along their migratory routes, for want of a market. Despite having the third largest sheep population in the world, India's wool requirements are met largely by imported wool. As a result, the wool procurement from shepherds has dropped dramatically, with an accompanying drop in revenues from the sale of wool.

#### CfP's Desi Oon Initiative has

been working with sheep wool for over 5 years to enhance the procurement and consumption of indigenous wool, as a means of diversifying and enhancing revenues for sheep herding communities and the associated artisans. It has been engaging through programs aimed at pastoral livelihoods, rights, conservation of native breeds, communication and outreach.

In working towards this, CfP has been undertaking the following activities:

- • Working towards increasing the use of indigenous coarse wool in the *textiles and crafts* sector via the Desi Oon Hub
- •• Exploring the potential of wool as *insulation* across a range of industrial applications
- Exploring the potential of wool as a *packaging* material that is both insulating and eco-friendly.

In all these areas, CfP collaborates with partner organisations towards reviving different elements of the wool economy.

### Desi Oon Hub - working with the textile and crafts industry

Indigenous wool in India is rarely used for textiles as the fibre is inherently coarse, but because of its beauty and utility, textiles do lend themselves to creating a unique identity and attracting consumer attention towards indigenous wool. To



These organisations have come together to form a loose collaborative called the Desi Oon Hub (anchored by CfP) which works on indigenous wool textiles with shepherds, knitters, felters, spinners, weavers and other wool artisans.



enhance the visibility of Desi Oon, CfP is currently working with organisations that engage with wool textile crafts across the Semi-Arid West, the Deccan Plateau, and the Himalayan regions. These organisations have come together to form a loose collaborative called the **Desi Oon Hub** (anchored by CfP) which works on indigenous wool textiles with shepherds, knitters, felters, spinners, weavers and other wool artisans.

Khamir and Rangsutra initiated the Desi Oon Hub activities in 2019 with support from CfP. The Hub has now grown to include 13 organisations - Aana Jaana, Avani, Cotton Rack, Dakhni Diaries (MITAN), Earthen Tunes, Khamir, Kullvi Whims, Miyar Mufflers, Peoli, RangSutra, Shepherds of Himalaya, The Color Caravan and URMUL. These collaborators have a long history of pioneering work in design, communication, use of natural dyes, indigenous wool blending and organising migrating herders. The Desi Oon Hub works across different wool regions to revitalise fibre value chains in their local ecosystems.

Partner organisations draw support from the Hub at various levels. Online knowledgesharing sessions were organised in 2021 which enabled crosslearning and partnerships. It is also working to build a shared resource pool of designers, trainers, researchers and technical specialists for the Hub.

Desi Oon Hub collaborators work with the common goal of reviving the pastoral and indigenous wool economy. The Hub is growing into an autonomous body with an Advisory Committee (including Jaya Jaitly, Sumita Ghose and Sushma lyengar) to steer and guide it. It is expanding as a space for collaborative action, research, experimentation, learning and marketing. The richness and unique qualities of indigenous wool are communicated and celebrated through a range of promotional campaigns and events.

Facing page photo: Unused indigenous wool at Bikaner PC: Suyash Srivastava

Bottom photo: Carding machine presented by RuTAG IIT Delhi

**Research and advocacy** On the research front, CfP

embarked on and completed a nationwide study of the wool



economy of India. The study has led to comprehending macro patterns across India: the diminishing value of wool, the decision by herders to move towards non-native meatproducing breeds, easing of import duties leading to foreign wool flooding our markets and craftsmen exiting their trade. That said, the study also observed proud wool artisans, passionate practitioners, a variety of crafting techniques, resilient wool economies, and vibrant trade in pockets of India. The study has given a platform to enable constructive discussions and collaborations with ministries, government bodies and institutional partners for fund generation, policy discussions and overall support for the indigenous wool work.

RUTAG IITD, after 2 years of technical R&D with Khamir and CfP, has developed a carding machine optimised for small-scale village production systems. A regional workshop was organised in April 2022 at Khamir (Gujarat) to take stock of the technological solutions available for processing wool and to demonstrate, discuss and analyse the carding machine designed by IITD. This workshop enabled effective solutions for the carding process and helped develop a roadmap for similar technological interventions and partnerships. CfP is currently

working with all the stakeholders involved to make necessary changes to the prototype and facilitate the development of an updated version that can be adapted for use in different wool regions of the country.

### Outreach

In the past two years, CfP has developed a range of communication material around Desi Oon – online narratives, papers and media articles, blogs, exhibition material, marketing campaigns, a social media presence and the Desi Oon website – www.desioonhub.org.

Since 2020, the Desi Oon Hub and Living Lightly have organised five exhibitions (both online and offline), sparking a buzz around indigenous wool and triggering an interest in the pastoral wool narrative, the fibre and the products. Going forward, the Hub will organise 3-4 promotional events and consultations every year, along with a large-scale annual event at a prominent location in Delhi. The collaborators have also been working to create a new range of ethical woollen products for domestic and international markets, promoting the Desi Oon identity, and working towards developing the Desi Oon mark.

### Insulation

Wool is an excellent insulator of heat and sound and is also fire resistant. Insulation solutions



can potentially absorb large amounts of unprocessed/semiprocessed wool, making it a promising wool application. CfP aims to promote the innovative non-textile uses of wool - as a thermal and sound insulator for buildings. It has partnered with Hunnarshala, a not-for-profit organisation based in Bhuj, Gujarat, to test the efficacy of wool as an insulation material in buildings under construction. Under this partnership, Hunnarshala has tested wool for thermal insulation, created prototypes such as mattresses, air-blown solutions, and baked panels and installed prototypes for testing at Bhuj (Gujarat) and Leh (Ladakh). The testing has shown promising results for wool as an eco-friendly alternative to the currently used materials such as rock and glass wool. To test market viability and implement wool insulation

Enhancing wool-based livelihoods

Prototype of a wool insulation panel developed by Hunnarshala PC: Chamba Tsetan



solutions, CfP has partnered with Delhi-based Environment Design Solutions, a sustainability advisory firm focusing on the built environment.

#### Packaging

Similar to insulation in buildings, CfP aims to promote the use of wool in insulation packaging for the transportation of temperaturesensitive perishable goods. CfP has forged a partnership with Earthen Tunes, a design consultancy based in Hyderabad and the Wool Research Association, Thane - established by the Woollen Textile Industry and the Union Govt of India – to develop, pilot and test the efficacy of such packaging solutions for cold chain supply of perishable foods. This could serve as a sustainable. natural alternative to more commonly used

insulation packaging materials like expanded polystyrene (EPS). The project also aims to look at the viability of wool as a shock-resistant packaging material.

To support all these initiatives, we are trying to set up central wool service stations to procure indigenous wool from herders and to semi-process this wool by cleaning, carding and so on. This will not only provide authentic, native wool for applications in textiles, insulation and packaging but also enable the standardisation of wool processes such as shearing, carding washing, etc. The ultimate hope is that these various interventions will create a uniform system of fair pricing for native wool and will help generate sustained livelihoods for sheep herding communities across the country.

Autumn sheep shearing in Kumaon, Uttarakhand PC: Emmanuel Theophilus



#### VARSO

The beitage section presents a small glimpte into the cultural tapeetry and craft choices made by some of the shepheeds, weavers and feiters of Kutch. Their sertorial vecabularies, in particular, base evolved through relative isolation and reveal a distinct ability to speak through their material culture - the key to their fearlessness and sure-fostedness. They have developed a diverse range of garments and objects, all firmly embedded within their cultural norms and practices with every artical leaving burleninous inspirite through the many surface ensamentation of embroidery bandhani, prints, mutifs and colours.

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# Securing Herder Access to Forage Through The FRA

GUJARAT | HIMACHAL PRADESH UTTARAKHAND | TELANGANA | MAHARASHTRA



## Securing Herder Access to Forage Through the FRA

## भैंस हमारी माँ है और जंगल हमारे पिता हैं |

The buffalo is our mother, and the forest is our father.

#### **ooo SHAFI LODHA**

Pastoralists depend for their grazing on forests and grasslands across a range of tenurial categories – village commons, privately held agricultural land (for crop residues), protected forests and National Parks/Wildlife Sanctuaries/Tiger Reserves and the like managed by the Forest Department. Access to these lands is becoming increasingly difficult for herders to obtain forage, as village commons are encroached upon, agriculture is intensified, "wastelands" grazed by pastoralists are converted to Special Economic Zones for industry and a hardening conservation ethic is leading to a more rigid exclusion of communities from the lands managed by the Forest Department. Securing access to traditionally grazed lands is becoming increasingly tenuous. Despite clear provisions for grazing in the Forest Rights Act (2006), pastoralists have largely been unable to access the act to secure legal recognition of their grazing rights. A major reason for this is the complex nature of pastoralist mobility. They are dependent on resources that extend over vast geographical landscapes and across administrative boundaries. They also tend to have lesser influence and decision-making abilities over village commons and are often missing from

contested spaces for more than half the year. There is a clear lack of awareness regarding pastoral community forest rights (CFR) among both pastoralists and government functionaries.

Recognising the above challenges, in 2019 CfP explored the potential of utilising claims under the FRA to ensure legal access to grazing for the Van Gujjars in Uttarakhand. In 2020, a similar effort was initiated in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat, in partnership with Himachal Ghumantu Pashupalak Mahasabha and Sahjeevan respectively. In 2021 CfP initiated a programme to expand this effort across five states to secure herder access to grazing lands under the FRA. The programme has a threepoint approach:

- Building a cadre of pastoral youth as paralegals to support the work undertaken with communities
- • Working with communities to facilitate the preparation and submission of CFR claims
- Undertaking advocacy with key stakeholders to resolve problems/bottlenecks linked to the processing of CFR claims and towards advancing such work outside of these five states.

Top photo: Paralegal training in Nagpur

#### PC: Viyona Mohan

Bottom photo: Sub Divisional Level Committee meeting in Banni, Kachchh

PC: Sahjeevan Archives

We work across five states – Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand — to facilitate the preparation and submission of Community Forest Right claims by varied pastoralist communities. This work is being undertaken by CfP staff (Uttarakhand) and by partners





(HGPM in Himachal), CONARE (Telangana), Sahjeevan (Gujarat) and CPC (Maharashtra) and is expected to lead to the submission of close to 200 CFR claims over 3 years.

#### Awareness and Advocacy

A core element of our work is to build the capacities of local communities to embark on the preparation of CFR claims. This involves orientation meetings where the elements of the FRA are discussed, including the potential for using the act to secure herder grazing rights. Training is also provided on the preparation of claims, with a particular focus on the collation of evidence in support of these claims. Pastoral youth from each community are provided training on the legal provisions of the FRA, with the expectation that they will work with CfP staff or partners in facilitating the preparation and submission of claims. The presence of these paralegals is also expected to enable a deepening of this work to areas beyond the more limited area we are able to work in.

We also work towards building greater capacity within governments on the specific provisions of the FRA. In response to requests from the Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh governments, we or our partners have organised training sessions with a variety









of government officials charged with overseeing some aspects of the FRA process. In Himachal, training has been organised by HGPM to build an understanding of the provisions of the FRA for members of the Sub-District Level Committees (SDLC), the District Level Committees (DLC) and the State Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC). These training sessions have resulted in faster claim processing in Chamba, Mandi and Kangra. In Gujarat as well, several training events have been organised with district officials on pastoral CFR. Similar engagement with state officials is planned for Uttarakhand, Telangana and Maharashtra.

In August last year, recognising a lack of relevant pastoral Community Forest Rights (CFR)process guidance material, we developed an FRA Facilitator Guidebook. It is written and structured to act as a reference for our field coordinators in processing claims. This has been translated into four languages and has received positive feedback from all our partners, who are using the document for both training and advocacy in their respective locations. We are working towards producing more such material\* to help simplify the process of claim preparation and follow-up.

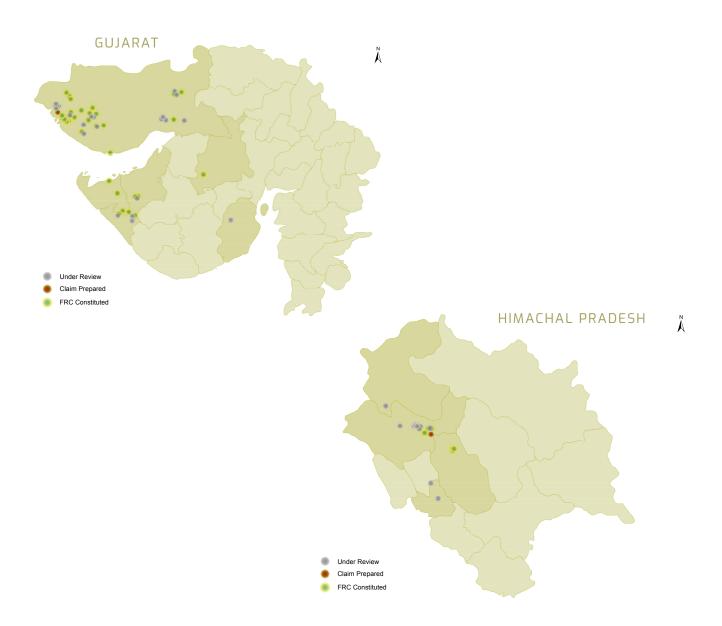
Despite the programme suffering an initial setback due to COVID lockdowns, in the later part of last year, we are beginning to see some impact of our work, including the approval of 57 claims in Himachal Pradesh and one in Uttarakhand. These are the first instances of CFR claims submitted by pastoral communities being approved under the FRA.

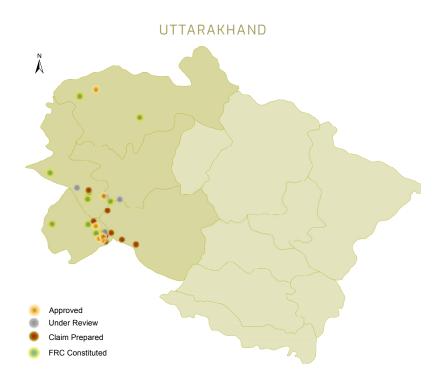
Securing herder access to forage through the FRA

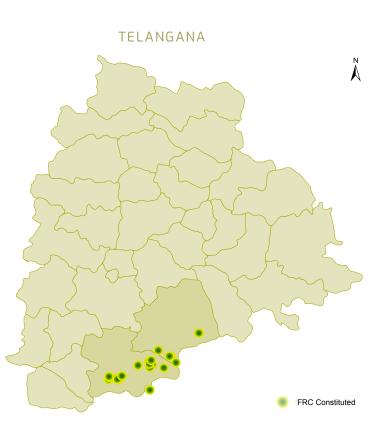
Left photo: FRA training in Kachchh Right photo: FRA training in Kangra PC: Viyona Mohan

	FRCs Constituted	CFR CLAIMS UNDER REVIEW	CFR CLAIMS APPROVED
GUJARAT	54	23	0
НР	29	23	0
UK	29	11	1
TELANGANA	21	0	0
MAHARASHTRA	6	2	0
TOTAL 2021-22	105	47	1

FRC: Forest Rights Committees CFR: Community Forest Rights HP: Himachal Pradesh UK: Uttarakhand



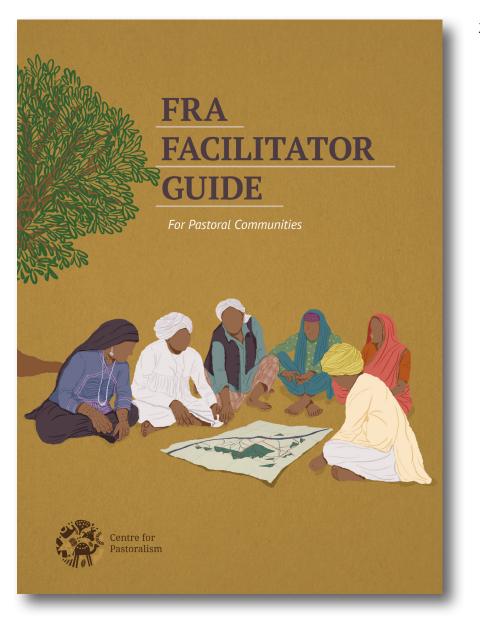




Securing herder access to forage through the FRA In the coming year, we plan on addressing two of the key challenges we faced last year:

 The lack of women's participation in FRC meetings and training programmes. Women's participation in the FRA process is essential as they are typically at the forefront of accessing

Overleaf photo: Sahjeevan Archive



forest resources. It is mandated by the Act that one-third of the members of the FRC should be women. In response to the lack of sufficient participation, we are attempting to organise meetings and training programmes closer to their home locations so that they do not have to travel far.

2. The poor response of the state administration in the processing of claims. There are undue and prolonged delays in the time taken by the SDLC and DLC to respond to claims. To address this issue, we have placed a greater emphasis on advocacy work in the coming year. We will attempt to regularly engage with district and state-level authorities through meetings and consultations. We are also planning on holding a national-level consultation with government officials from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and various civil society organisations that are currently engaged in pastoral CFR work. We will hold multiple training sessions with government officials to address the lack of awareness regarding FRA within the administration.



# Undertaking and Facilitating Research

MOBILITY | MARKETS | LANDSCAPES

## Undertaking and Facilitating Research

जब से हमने अल्पाइन क्षेत्रों में जाना बंद किया है, हमारी भैंसों ने अपनी विशेषताओं को खो दिया है। भेंसो के दूध में अब दम नहीं रहा

Ever since we stopped our annual migration to the alpine areas, our buffaloes have lost their unique characteristics. Buffalo milk has lost its essence

#### ••• AFTAB

a Van Gujjar from Kunaon-Rishikesh, Uttarakhand Research on Indian pastoralism has tended to be isolated and often heavily theoretical. Research has rarely added up to a significant body of work that could have policy implications or the ability to attract the attention of civil society, government and industry. Our research unit has three overarching goals:

- Deepening the field of pastoral studies in India
- Facilitating big-picture research aimed at interrogating mainstream positions on grassland management and pastoral mobility
- Undertaking applied research that feeds into Sahjeevan's and CfP's programmatic interventions.

Towards furthering this agenda, we undertake or commission research or partner with a wide range of researchers, universities and NGOs to facilitate research on pastoral systems across the country.

#### 1. DEEPENING THE FIELD OF PASTORALISM STUDIES

Fellowships: Along with a number of academic collaborators, we developed a fellowship programme, overseen by the Forum for Research on Grasslands and Pastoralism (FRGP). The goal of the FRGP is to incentivise research on a range of issues we are interested in. The FRGP offers research funding to students pursuing a PhD or working on a Master's thesis and a grant for civil society researchers interested in pastoralism and grasslands. We are currently supporting one PhD student (working on pastoral mobility in Maharashtra) and one independent researcher (working on questions of pastoralist access to grazing in Jammu & Kashmir).

#### Repository on pastoralism:

There isn't much written about and published on pastoralism, and whatever little does exist is often difficult to find. In particular, specific topics related to pastoral commodity production, economics, mobility, language, culture and politics are hard to find and access. We are reviewing existing work on pastoralism in India and cataloguing it in our repository to create a publicly accessed resource. This catalogue and an archive will contain a wide range of materials including academic publications,

We undertake or commission research or partner with a wide range of researchers, universities and NGOs to facilitate research on pastoral systems across the country.

> audio-visual recordings, films, popular articles, policy and legal documents and so on.

### 2. FACILITATING BIG-PICTURE RESEARCH TO COUNTER MACRO NARRATIVES

We have a specific interest in facilitating and undertaking research that will feed into policy processes or will interrogate mainstream positions on pastoralism and grasslands. Mainstream perception has pastoralism as a relict livelihood strategy, sorely out of touch with modernday realities. Pastoralists are seen as simple folks, herding unproductive animals across marginal lands. Their simplicity and poverty are associated with an inevitable over-stocking of grazing lands and they are routinely held accountable for degrading large parts of the Indian landscape. An overarching narrative is one of small numbers of unproductive pastoralists

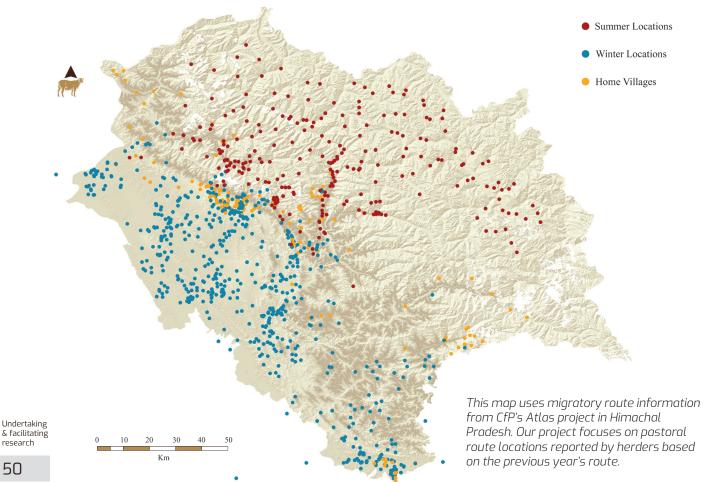
eking out a subsistence living by compromising the quality of our forests and rangelands. Following this is the fundamental assumption that pastoralists need to settle, to merge with the mainstream, and in the process secure improved access to government services, education and the job market. Our research efforts are geared at interrogating the elements of each of these narratives.

Our work establishes that 40% of India's 197 recognized animal breeds have been bred and are still managed by pastoral communities. Our report on the Pastoral Breeds of India details this remarkable contribution to India's domesticated genetic diversity, one that is rarely recognised. It also makes the point that our collective failure to support these pastoral systems will necessarily lead to a drastic erosion of our genetic stock, an outcome that should be of widespread concern. We are mapping pastoral communities and grazing routes nationwide to counter the idea that these are marginal communities in low numbers across limited regions. We believe

that in Western India, the Deccan and the Himalayas, these communities move through large parts of the agricultural, forest and grassland systems and our mapping is beginning to substantiate this broad argument. The map of Himachal Pradesh, where we are piloting this effort, demonstrates precisely this point – with herders using the entire state in the course of their migratory cycle. We hope to complete a fuller mapping of the remainder of the country over the coming two years. Without such data, we believe pastoralism

is destined to remain on the margins– both physically and in the minds of policymakers. A cartographic representation across the country will be a more effective mode of capturing the scale of pastoralist presence than a simple listing of districts they are found in. Mapped routes presented in the atlas will be overlayed with remotely sensed data on vegetation, moisture, fire, land use and tenure spread over thirty years, as a means of documenting the magnitude of climate change, development and conservation-related policies





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Our work establishes that 40% of India's 197 recognized animal breeds have been bred and are still managed by pastoral communities that have negatively affected pastoralist ability to access traditionally grazed areas.

The magnitude of the pastoralist economy - encompassing the meat, wool, milk, dung and leather markets — is woefully underestimated. Our work on quantifying the pastoral economy is aimed at demonstrating (i) that pastoral households derive profitable incomes from this form of animal management, a rarity in rural India; (ii) that its contribution at the level of regional economies is many orders of magnitude greater than commonly assumed (iii) that such quantification is fundamental to generating both government and market investment in what are ultimately productive, dynamic systems.

And finally, We are part of a collaborative effort to deepen our understanding of the impacts of pastoralist grazing on a wide range of "open" ecosystemsgrasslands, wastelands and the like. Here too we are fundamentally interested in building a more nuanced understanding of both the functioning of grasslands (including their historical dependence on grazing as a means of their being sustained as open systems) and the relationship between pastoralist animal

management and a wide variety of ecological variables, including biodiversity, productivity, soil erosion and the like.

### 3. APPLIED RESEARCH THAT FEEDS INTO CFP'S PROGRAMMES

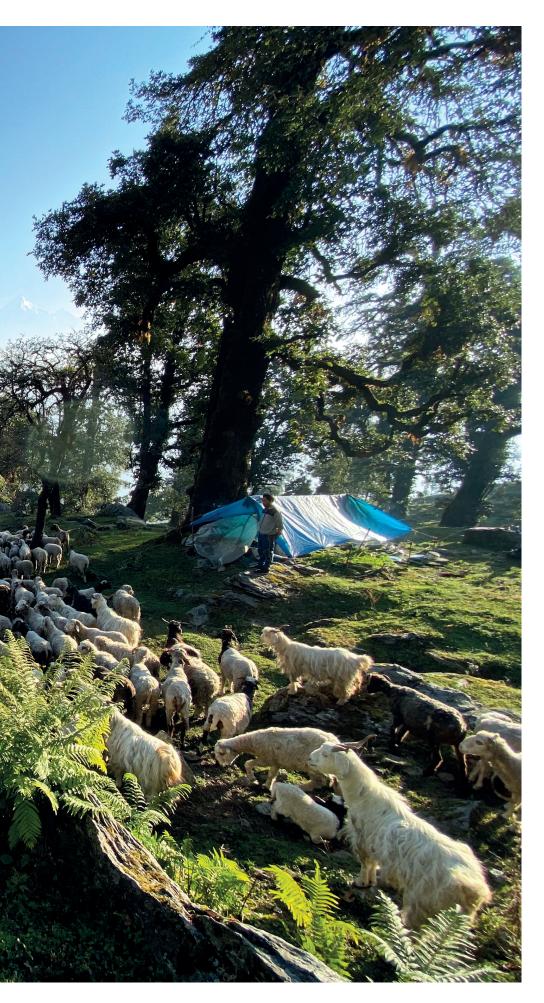
CfP undertakes and commissions applied research that is expected to feed directly into its own or Sahjeevan's programmes. Our research projects include the following.

- Desi Oon An assessment of India's indigenous wool economy: In 2018-20, CfP undertook a study to better understand value chains associated with indigenous wool across seven states. Our survey documents largescale changes in herd composition maintained by pastoral communities, a deterioration in the state of woollen textiles and artisans and a fall in the value of indigenous wool. The report feeds into our work on wool-based livelihoods and the Desi Oon Hub.
- Dung in the Deccan

   A study of pastoral
   penning on agricultural
   lands: This study was a
   commissioned project
   to examine the penning
   of livestock (small and
   large ruminants) under



Jimdar pastoralists in the Khalia Range Reserve Forest near Munsiari PC: Emmanuel Theophilus



mobile pastoralism in the Deccan Plateau. The study attempts to understand the scale at which penning continues in Maharashtra and Telangana, the economics of penning and the factors that influence a herder's interest in continuing with the tradition. We expect to publish the report in the winter of 2022, and use the data to inform our penning and dung economy-based interventions. These studies on penning and wool are part of a series of national reports we hope to produce to better understand these value chains and feed into our advocacy efforts.

Community action and research on conservation of alpine rangelands and the strengthening of pastoral livelihoods in the High Himalaya: This project began in 2019 and is led by research team member Emmanuel Theophilus. It combines research and community interventions to arrive at a common understanding of drivers affecting pastoral practices in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. The project also has an applied dimension that initiates community action to address critical problems across the landscape.



The main activities:

Helping shepherds revive traditional indigenous breeds (the Gharia in particular) in their herds. Adapted to and coevolved with this alpine ecosystem, Gharia are more predator-wary, have greater immunity to diseases, are more suited to steep terrain and harsh weather and are safer grazers in pastures with toxic plants. It is the crash in demand for local wool that has led to a move away from indigenous breeds, a process we hope to reverse.

The project also aims to reduce predation

by snow leopards and associated losses and conflicts by bringing back the traditional protectors, Tibetan Mastiff sheep dogs progressively lost to epidemic disease and the demand for other showy dog breeds. The procurement of predatordeterrent strobe lights (Fox-lights) has also greatly reduced predation. Trials of indigenously manufactured lights are underway. We have, further, helped build bear-proof community foodgrain storage caches, since herders migrate out of alpine areas in winter.

The extensive rangelands in the Gori basin form a

Undertaking & facilitating research

Snapshot from the indigenous wool assessment project PC: Desi Oon Archive We work to revive and strengthen traditional commons governance, evolve an evidence-driven understanding of the dimensions of alpine rangelands degradation and strategize with shepherds and alpine communities to reverse it. critical livelihood supportbase. We work to revive and strengthen traditional commons governance, evolve an evidencedriven understanding of the dimensions of alpine rangelands degradation, and strategize with shepherds and alpine communities to reverse it. This includes measuring and understanding the rangelands' current status, mapping domestic livestock grazing, current trophic status (snow leopard populations, wild prey-base populations and vegetation mapping), as well as historical predation incidences and trends. Much of this is necessarily long-term work, done seasonally every year. We have partnered with the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF-India) in snow leopard population estimation, and our data is currently used in the **Snow Leopard Population** Assessment of India (SPAI) by the MoEF&CC for the Himalaya, and by the Wildlife Institute of India for Uttarakhand in particular.

To conserve traditional wool weaving artisanal skills using the coarse wool from indigenous sheep and ensuring its production and marketing, we train women in the now-rare skill of weaving with back-strap looms and conserving indigenous tweeds and other fabrics by securing remunerative prices.

### 4. COVID: A TEST OF RESILIENCE - HOW HAVE HERDERS IN INDIA FARED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

This Report captures some of the core problems that pastoral communities experienced during and following the COVID-19induced national lockdown imposed in March 2020. The survey suggested that pastoralists experienced many of the difficulties that farming communities have spoken of. However, some impacts were specific to pastoralists and were a function of their mobile lifestyle and, in some instances, their identities. The survey was conducted in nine Indian states and two union territories: Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Ladakh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Uttarakhand. The report on the impact of Covid-19 on pastoralists was published in 2021 and its data is used in our advocacy and FRArelated work.



Top left photo: Reviving the indigenous Gharia ram breed

Top right photo: Himalayan snow leopard

PC: Emmanuel Theophilus

Bottom photo: Understanding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on herders

Undertaking & facilitating research

PC: Mathivanan M

Overleaf photo: Living Lightly Archive The report on the impact of Covid-19 on pastoralists was published in 2021 and its data is used in our advocacy and FRA-related work.

### 5. DOCUMENTING TRADITIONAL USES OF BIODIVERSITY BY VAN GUJJARS:

We commissioned Zanskar T. Singh to work with the Van Gujjars in Uttarakhand to document the range of plant species their livestock depend upon. The year-long documentation will cover the entire migratory route used by these pastoralists, with the objective of engaging with pastoralists on their understanding of these forests, the impact of their grazing on these systems and the varied uses they make of these plant

complexes. Results from the study of Van Gujjars' uses of biodiversity were presented at the Van Utsav in Rajaji Nation Park in 2022.

In the coming years, we hope to expand our research on the following key issues:

- Sedentarisation amongst pastoral communitiesscale, drivers and impacts of sedentarisation with a particular focus on gender dynamics, education, jobs and job security and the ecological consequences of sedentarisation
- Emerging economic sectors- new economic opportunities, competition, financial risk, commodification, enhanced livelihoods, public-private partnerships
- Access to grazing- claims and titles, ownership and access, pastoral routes and mobility, intellectual property/heritage/lineage/ inheritance
- Climate change- health of grasslands, afforestation, restoration, conservation, variable climatic conditions, becoming climate adaptable, state intervention.



# Outreach

LIVING LIGHTLY | ONLINE PLATFORMS PASTORAL TIMES

## Outreach

सरकारी अधिकारियों ने हमारे समाज की संस्कृति का उत्सव देखा और हमारे प्रति उनकी सोच में बदलाव होना शुरू हुआ है।

Government officials witnessed a celebration of Van Gujjar culture. This has begun to change their perceptions about us.

#### ••• AMEER HAMJA

Founder, Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan The lack of awareness about pastoralism has made it difficult to generate support for this way of life. Acknowledging this, we host various events and publish reports geared toward making pastoralism more visible across the country. Through our outreach initiatives, we hope to reach a variety of audiences including, but not limited to, students, academics, policy-makers, designers and even pastoralists themselves. Outreach at CfP is structured around three major initiativesthe 'Living Lightly- Journeys with Pastoralists' exhibition, our guarterly broadsheet Pastoral Times and our social media presence.

## Living Lightly- Journeys with Pastoralists

Living Lightly- Journeys with Pastoralists is a travelling exhibition on the land, lives and livelihoods of Indian pastoralists. It captures their remarkable history of mobility, the ecosystems that nurture their life-worlds, their culture, science, art, politics, spiritual moorings and the economics and challenges of herding. Living Lightly exhibitions have been successful in bringing muchneeded attention, investment, legitimacy and appreciation for Indian pastoralism. It has served as a platform for a range of conversations amongst pastoralists themselves, between pastoralists and the external environment, and amongst a range of actors influencing the sphere of pastoralism.

Over the past two years, having gone through a long pause owing to Covid, the Living Lightly team is beginning to rebuild momentum. We are transitioning to a mode that includes a virtual exhibition, to allow us to leverage our existing installations to reach much larger online audiences. A dedicated website for Living Lightly is in its final stages of development. Besides this, to ensure the existing physical exhibits can travel to rural and urban locations across the country to generate necessary discussion, these have been redesigned to be light and travelfriendly.

There has been significant progress in the development of the Deccan edition of Living Lightly and installations for this exhibition are entering the production stage. Simultaneously, work has begun on the Himalayan edition, covering pastoralism across 5 states - Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh.

In addition, a series of regional Utsavs have been planned over a 3-year period, the first



of which took place between March 24-27th, 2022. CfP organised 'Gujjaran go Kaarj: A Living Lightly Exhibition and Utsav' at the Rajaji National Park in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand in collaboration with the Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan. The Utsav was a celebration of the pastoral culture, ecology and economy of the Van Gujjars. A condensed version of the Living Lightly exhibition on the pastoralists of Kachchh was on display, alongside a smaller exhibit put together by Van Gujjar youth on their narratives. Apart from over 500 men, women and children from the Van Gujjar community that participated in the Utsav, the local MLA, various government department functionaries, civil society representatives, academics, members of the media, artists and students attended the event.

Under a beautiful thatched shed, community members and guests gathered to listen to and participate in discussions about their historical roots and their deep knowledge of biodiversity, sharing experiences



Top photo: Visitors learning about local biodiversity at the Utsav

Bottom photo: Avdhash Kaushal, who fought tirelessly for the rights of Van Gujjars throughout his life

PC: Shivam Rastogi





Top photo: Van Guijars singing a Beyt in the Gojri language

PC; Shivam Rastogi

Bottom photo: Presentation on different buffalo breeds at the Pashu Mela

PC: Sanghamitra Ghosh

and challenges of claiming grazing rights under the FRA, the economics of milk from the Gojri buffaloes and the role women played in migration and the maintenance of herds. Finally, a Pashu Mela held on the final day celebrated the indigenous Gojri buffalo. The event spotlighted Van Gujjars' issues within the local administration. It also opened up opportunities for Van Gujjar women to participate more actively with the Yuva Tribal Sangathan, which had thus far engaged only with men. As an immediate outcome of the Gujjaran go Kaarj event, the Uttarakhand government set up

Outreach

the 'One Health Programme' to integrate human, environmental and animal health. Amit Rathi from CfP and a member from the Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan have been appointed as members of the advisory committee of this Programme.

Over the coming years, Living Lightly is gearing up for an ambitious schedule of Utsavs and exhibitions spotlighting pastoralism of the Deccan and Himalayas, across five Indian cities, culminating in an international exhibition in 2026 to coincide with the UN celebration of the 'International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists'. In addition to this, three regional Utsavs in



Aamna is from the Van gujjar community and she travels to meet and interact with the women, girls and

elders of her community. She was awarded the Tata Steel Foundation Samvaad 2021 Fellowship Award and was the first girl from Uttarakhand and her community to receive the award. As part of her work under the award, she documents stories of women from the Van Gujjar community - their life, experience and struggles. She dreams of a day when each girl makes her own decisions. collaboration with pastoralists have been planned in Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.

#### **Pastoral Times**

Pastoral Times is a broadsheet that started as a venue publication during the first Living Lightly exhibition in Delhi. Under the stewardship of Chhani Bungsut, Pastoral Times has now grown into a regular publication, released quarterly. Pastoral Times is intended to be a current source of information on pastoralism. Articles are either sourced from other publications or are commissioned for PT and are intended to address the diverse contexts that define pastoral lives- their crafts and foods, breeding practices, their struggles and any number of other facets of pastoralism.

#### **Online platforms**

The Pastoral Times quarterly broadsheet, our presence on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, have allowed us to reach new audiences. We have also developed a new Desi Oon Hub website to spread awareness about indigenous wool and a Living Lightly website to present an online version of the travelling exhibition. These platforms have allowed us to reach new audiences and serve as a promising means for raising awareness about pastoralism.



# **Our Team**

## **Our Team**

Over the past few years, CfP has grown to a sizeable oragnisation with both full-time staff and some part-time consultants. We have a presence, either through our staff or partnerships, in 14 states – Ladakh, Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu.

We collaborate with close to 50 NGOs and with academics, the government and the private sector.

Our team members, past and present, who have kept CfP running for the past three years:



#### **ADITI THACKER**

is a Chartered Accountant who completed her CA in 2008. She has been CfP's Chief Financial Officer since its inception.



#### AFTAB

is an active member of the Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sanghatan. Previously, he has been involved in the documentation of migratory routes of Van Gujjar families and has experience in filing claims under the FRA in the state of Uttarakhand. He now works with CfP to coordinate all field-related activities in Uttarakhand for the research thematic.



#### AMANAT ALI

is a member of the Van Gujjar community and has been actively involved in Haridwar to expedite the FRA process. He is also involved in the work with the Animal Husbandry Department, Uttarakhand.



#### AMEER HAMJA

is a member of the Van Gujjar community and has been actively involved in Uttarakhand for many years to expedite the FRA process, and works on issues of the Van Gujjar community, assisting them with legal processes. He is also a co-founder of the Van Gujjar Yuva Tribal Sangathan.

#### AMIT RATHI



completed his Master's in Law with a focus on Access to Justice from TISS, Mumbai in 2015. He currently anchors the Centre's work with the Van Gujjars, focused specifically on using the Forest Rights Act towards securing herder rights to summer and winter grazing.



#### AMIYA WALLIA

has a Bachelor's in Psychology with a Minor in Environmental Studies from Ashoka University. She is passionate about environmental justice and her research experience includes topics such as forest rights, manual scavenging and waste management. Currently, Amiya is part of CfP's research team as a research associate.



#### ANIRUDDH SHETH

has a Master's in Environment and Development from Ambedkar University, Delhi, and has worked on the political ecology of camel milk production in the Banni grasslands. Aniruddh coordinates CfP's research agenda.



#### ANURAG KUSHWAHA

has professional experience in Corporate and Government work, helping build capacities and local institutions in connection with livelihood projects. He is the Rajasthan State Coordinator for CfP's milk-based livelihood interventions.



#### **BRIJ BHUSHAN YADAV**

has a Master's in Development from Azim Premji University, Bangalore. He works with the CfP research team as a Field Researcher.



CHAMBA TSETAN

has worked at the Himalayan Institute of Alternatives, Ladakh as an Academic Coordinator and works closely with his community as a founding member of the Youth Association, Kargyam. He anchors CfP's work on wool insulation.



#### **CHHANI BUNGSUT**

studied Sociology and Anthropology at Ashoka University. Until recently, she led the Communications Team and was the Editor of Pastoral Times. She recently moved to Oxford to start a Master's in Social Anthropology.



#### DHANUSH RAMASUBRAMANIAN

has a Master of Technology degree in Remote Sensing and GIS with a specialisation in Forest Resources and Ecosystem analysis from the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, Dehradun. He works with the CfP research team as a Cartographer.



#### DHANYA

has a Master's in English literature from Manipal Centre for Humanities and based her final thesis on the LGBTQIA+ community of India. Dhanya is a part of CfP's Communications team as a Content Writer.



#### EMMANUEL THEOPHILUS

is an ecologist based in the High Himalayas of Pithoragarh, Kumaon. His research interests include alpine and river ecosystems, as well as snow leopard conservation, yak breeding (he also co-owns an annual migratory herd of sheep and horses), pastoralist livelihoods, and the commons. Theo leads this work in Kumaon, Himalaya.



#### **GUNJAN SATIJA**

studied economics and has worked in the handicraft/ handloom sector for the past 6 years. She anchored CfP's indigenous wool programme. She recently left CfP to start her own enterprise.

#### **KHYATI VINOD**



Khyati Vinod is an artist and a trained architect from CEPT University, Ahmedabad. She is an integral part of the crafts based education program at Khamir, and is currently part of the Living Lightly team as a Visual Artist, holds Living Lightly's archives and supports the documentation team.



#### LEO GEORGE

specialises in Disaster Management and is an expert in assessing multi-hazard risks using methods in Geographical Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing. He works with the CfP research team as a Cartographer.

#### MADHU RAMASWAMY



is a communications expert with three decades of experience as a documentary script writer, researcher, print media writer, designer and graphic artist working on a wide range of issues including ecology, sustainable livelihoods, climate change, social justice and environmental and rural governance. He is the author of Sahjeevan's Metamorphosis Report and is currently a part of CfP's Communication's team.



#### MANOJ MISHRA

has over two decades of experience in the development sector, having worked initially with civil society organisations and subsequently served as faculty at the Entrepreneurship Institute of Development, Gujarat. He anchors CfP's work on livelihoods.



#### MAHENDAR SINGH

has worked as an agro-pastoralist, a woodsman and a herbs collector. He is an expert in high altitude plants and animals, with observation skills and experience of a high order.



#### **MATHEWS MORRIS**

has an MBA in Finance and HR Management, and completed his Bachelors of Commerce from Agra University. He currently works with CfP as an administrator and acts as the interface between Sahjeevan and CfP.



#### MOHAMMAD SHAMSHAD

is a member of the Van Gujjar community and has been involved in Dehradun, Tehri & Pauri to expedite the FRA process.



#### **MUNNA NITWAL**

has worked across the Himalaya on infrastructure projects, but brings to the team his application and hard work on all matters.



#### NARAIN NITWAL

known amongst us as Nabbu, has worked as a herb collector at high altitudes. His experience, familiarity with and knowledge of the high-altitude terrain is unmatched in the region.

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## NIKITA NAIK

is an architecture graduate from Pune University with an internship in sustainable architecture from Raman Construction, Auroville. She currently works with Living Lightly in association with the India Fellow Social Leadership Program to document cultural narratives in collaboration with the Van Gujjar community.



## PREM RANA

has worked as a shepherd in the past, and is also an agro-pastoralist. He is the backstop on all matters related to food and logistics for our ongoing work in Kumaon.



## PRIYASHRI MANI

has worked in the development sector with marginalised communities - in the areas of livelihoods, women's empowerment and Adivasi rights. She anchors the Living Lightly team.



## **PRONITA BHADURI**

is an architect with over ten years of experience. She completed her degree in B. Arch from Sir J.J. College of Architecture, Mumbai, and specialises in Exhibit and Interactive Design. She currently works as a Design Manager for the Living Lightly exhibition team.



### **RAMESH BHATTI**

has been a part of Sahjeevan since 2000 and over this time, he has led the organisation's work on pastoralism, including work on livelihoods and local institution building. He is a part of CfP's team working on the FRA and its use in securing pastoralist access to forage.



## RADHIKA CHATTERJEE

has a background in public policy and did her doctoral studies at the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance at Jawaharlal Nehru University. She coordinated CfP's research team up until August 2021. She now works as a Field Research Lead for Land Conflict Watch.

has a keen interest in ecology and

**RIYA SEQUEIRA SHETTY** 

sustainability and has worked in different areas of conservation. She is both the coordinator with CfP, providing administrative and managerial support to the team, and the anchor in our work on wool packaging.



## SYED KASHIF RAZA

is a postgraduate from Aligarh Muslim University and has over 10 years of experience in accounting, auditing, taxation and payroll both in India and places abroad. He has worked with manufacturing companies, trading companies and NGOs and has currently joined CfP as an Accountant.



## SHOURYAMOY DAS

is an engineer and certified financial risk manager by training but left his corporate work in 2014 to pursue his interests in ecological conservation and crafts. Shourya consults with CfP's initiative on sheep wool fibre and Living Lightly.



## SHRUTI JAIN

is a Communication Designer with a background in graphics, film making and illustration. She has been a member of the Communication team, assisting with visual design, and currently freelances as a graphic designer.

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## SUSHMA IYENGAR



is a social worker and educator. She is the lead curator of the 'Living Lightly -Journeys with Pastoralists' exhibition - an outcome of her long-standing interest in and experience with indigenous communities, including nomadic pastoralists. Sushma is also a founder of CfP and is involved in a wide range of its activities.



## SUYASH SRIVASTAVA

is an alumnus of the National Institute of Design, Andhra Pradesh, and has previously worked with different communities, with research, mapping & documentation. He is a part of the communications team as a Graphic Designer.



## **TRILOK RANA**

comes from an agricultural family, and has built his knowledge about bird flora that makes him the most sought-after birding guide in Kumaon. He assists in paperwork for the team.



### **TUSHAR DASH**

is a researcher who has worked on forest rights and forest governance issues for over two decades. He is actively involved in a national initiative for research and advocacy focusing on Community Forest Rights provisions of the Forest Rights Act (CFR Learning & Advocacy Process). Tushar is a member of the FRA team.



## **VASANT SABERWAL**

did a Master's degree in Wildlife Biology from the Wildlife Institute of India and his PhD from Yale University was on the politics of shepherd access to grazing resources in the Himalaya. He is the Director of CfP.



VIYONA MOHAN

completed her graduation in Public Policy and Environmental Studies at FLAME University and finished her post-graduation in Public Policy and Governance at Azim Premji University. Viyona coordinates the Forest Rights and Governance Programme at CfP.



## **VISHNU GOR**

has four years of experience in HR and Administration at Divya Bhaskar Corp. Ltd, and at Mother Dairy, Bhuj, Kachchh. He now works with CfP as an administrator and acts as the interface between Sahjeevan and CfP.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

#### JAYA JAITLY

is the Founder of Dastkari Haat Samiti, the remarkable space in Central Delhi that hosts and showcases the work of craftspeople from across the country. She has been a passionate advocate for craftspeople and has spent many decades working to enhance their visibility and identify means by which they might have improved access to mainstream markets. She has authored numerous books on Indian crafts and has curated shows all over the world. Jayaji was the former President of the Samata Party.

#### SUNIL PAREKH

is an author, an empanelled arbiter, and senior strategy advisor with Zydus Life Sciences Group and Jubilant Bhartia Group. He has 45 years of work experience with corporates in India, Africa and the USA. He is a Member of the National Executive Committee FICCI, and Chair, FICCI Gujarat since 2010. He currently Chairs FICCI Gujarat's Social Compact Committee (2021-22) for improving labour standards. He is also involved with two global organisations- WEF Geneva's Shapers Initiative and The Value Web and serves on the board of several organisations within and outside India. He is the recipient of several awards, including the Outstanding Contribution to National Development in 2014.

#### **DR AMRITA PATEL**

is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Padmabhushan for her contribution to India's dairy sector. She headed the National Dairy Development Board, which led the world's biggest dairy development program - Operation Flood, from 1998 to 2014. She is the founder of the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) and is currently a member of its Governing Board. She is also the Former Chairperson of Shree Krishna Hospital, Anand.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

## DR JAYASHREE RATNAM

is currently at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research where she serves as Director of the Wildlife Biology and Conservation Program. She is particularly interested in the history, ecology, function and conservation of tropical savannas, forests and grasslands. Current work includes paleo-history and functional ecology of Asian savannas and grasslands and long-term monitoring of Asian tropical forests and savannas.

#### SANDEEP VIRMANI

is an architect, conservationist and institution builder who has spent the last 3 decades in Kachchh, Gujarat, working with communities to enhance their livelihoods and improve the quality of their environments. Over the years he has helped set up four organisations in the region, including Sahjeevan; Arid Communities and Technologies, which focuses on water in all its dimensions; Satvik, for ecological farming; and the Hunnarshala Foundation, a non-profit working towards sustainable human habitation. Sandeep is on the board of a large number of organisations; he is CfP's founder mentor and is actively involved in all of the organisation's work.

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# OUR SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to our supporters for enabling us to accomplish all that we have in the past three years and for their continued support. We are fortunate on many counts, for our donors have provided us flexibility in the use of funds, while also engaging with us on the specifics of our work. These have been partnerships in the widest possible sense of the term, and we are grateful for the faith shown in us.

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Our life is to keep moving, where there is grass and water, we travel with our livestock! We take care of them and they take care of us."

- Mayaben Bharwad, Saurashtra



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