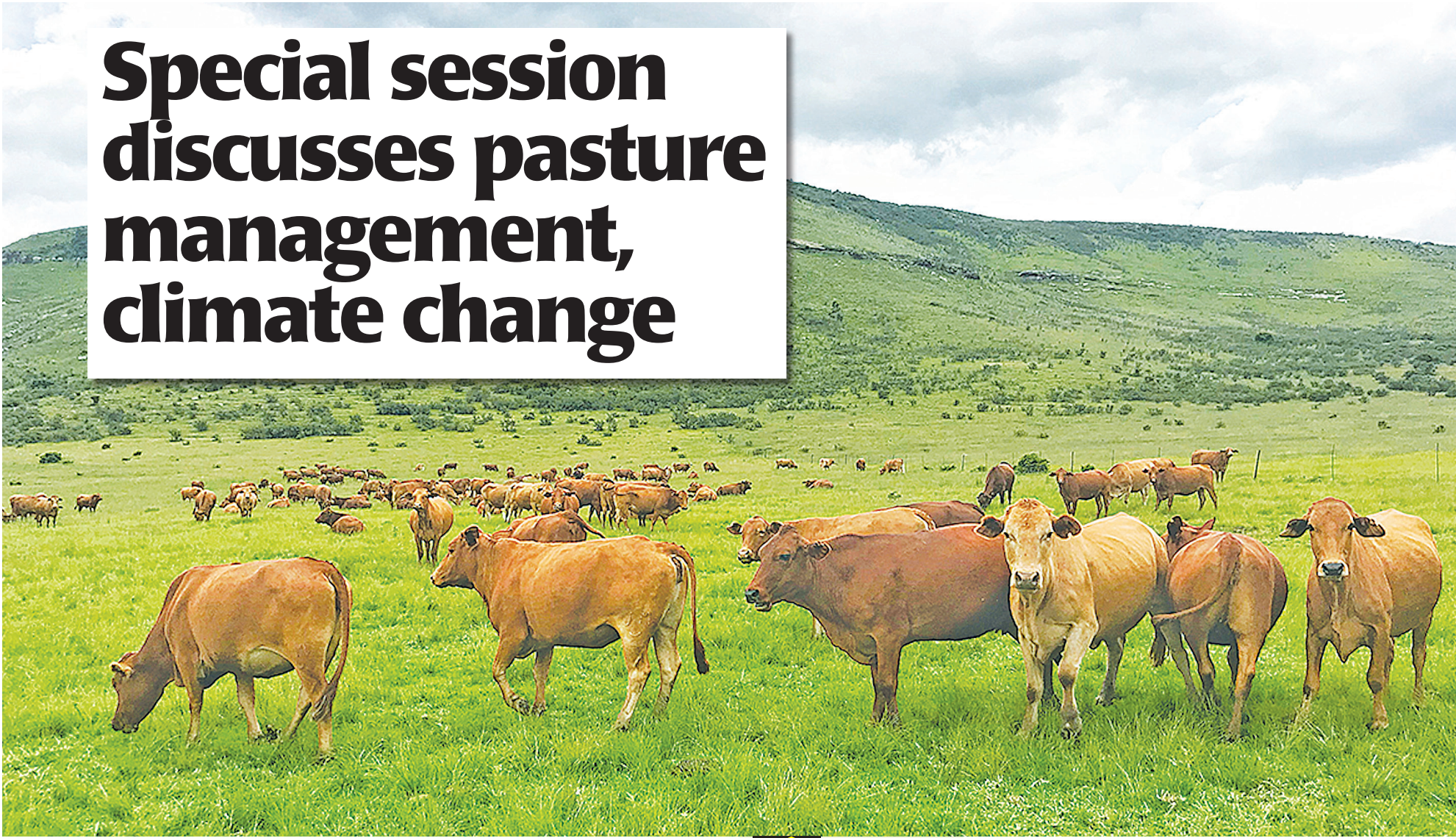


FEATURES

Special session discusses pasture management, climate change



By SUNDAY NEWS Reporter

A special session brought together traditional leaders from pastoral communities in Longido district and government leaders from different ministries, for in-depth discussion on pasture management issues.

The meeting also saw the leaders and ministries' officials who are based in Arusha engage in deliberating on effects of climate change and the means to mitigate the same.

The meeting of its own kind was organised by conservation stakeholders from the Tanzania People & Wildlife (TPW) through a Land for Life Project that is being implemented in the district.

Speaking during opening of the session before start of the discussion, TPW Director of Conservation and Environment,

Mr Novatus Sianga, said the deliberations are about the best practices in pasture management, as well as addressing how to deal with climate change effect. Mr Sianga said the discussion would also dwell on coming up with effective strategies that would enable local communities get rid of effects of climate change.

"However, the session concentrated on preparations for the next pasture feeding for cattle, bearing in mind when it will start raining in the area. Both parties will set strategies on how best to manage the pastures, by observing the respective whether conditions," Sianga said later.

Traditional leaders expressed the important role in giving their indigenous and cultural contributions in dialogues and amply advised on the way forward in managing the pastures and mitigating climate change effects.

Pasture management is key

to grazing because livestock productivity during a respective season depends on pasture efficiency. It depends on many factors: quality and quantity of forage, grazing, natural conditions, etc. Competent pasture management systems help to optimize the complex process.

A proper pasture management should be performed for reducing the risk of soil erosion, weakening of the grass cover and pathogens infestation.

**Why is pasture management important**

Pasture management is a practice for profitable livestock production providing the animals with forage grasses and legumes and keeping the soil healthy. It defines strategies to improve grass health and forage production, maintain a healthy ecosystem, and reduce production costs. Success depends on knowing how all the elements are interconnected. For example,



Cattle grazing

cattle grazing in pasture affects the growth of grass, which in turn affects the number of weeds. Water flow for farm production affects the environment and animal health.

Thus, pasture improvement depends on the effective control of each aspect . The importance of pasture management is that it improves the health and sustainability of the ecosystem.

At the same time, a poorly organized system causes weed invasions, slows the recovery of forage grass, and reduces quality. Pasture renewal may solve these problems temporarily, but for the long-term development of the farm, it is much more effective to optimize grassland management practices.

**How to benefit from pasture management**

A sound strategy ensures better farm profitability, ecosystem, and animal health. Here are

just several advantages of well-organized pasture maintenance: reduced weeds, enhanced soil drainage, improved water quality, good distribution of nutrients (manure), decreasing the use of supplementary nutrition (silage and hay), overall, pasture care and maintenance are very beneficial economically.

This practice reduces labor costs, strengthens the soil tilth, reduces erosion risk, and gives an economical feed source. Moreover, grazing provides the physical exercise necessary for the animals' health.

At the same time, pasture management should be a permanent process. It is the only way farmers can maintain the area's optimal condition. For example, there is always the risk of overdevelopment of forage grass.

Consequently, grazings accumulate too much water, which reduces the amount of fiber and deteriorates the quality

of livestock nutrition. Grassland maintenance implies regular monitoring and timely eradication of noxious plants, as well as forecasting weather changes to avoid negative consequences.

The problems of pasture management contain the complexity of organizing the process: it requires careful planning, usually a year in advance. However, such a system's advantages are indeed more significant.

**Pasture management plan importance**

A grazing plan is the first you need to establish pasture care management. It identifies solidities and frailties in the system so adjustments can be made in time. Furthermore, with a good plan, farmers can better use limited resources, primarily forage grass. The results of the implemented plan allow them to think about the following year's strategy.

A pasture management plan requires mapping software. Farmers draw the field's borders to be grazed on it. Such a map allows for better monitoring of grassland conditions and adjusting activities to changing conditions.

When mapping, it is necessary to divide the area into a land that is owned and leased, for which not all pasture management methods are suitable. It is also essential to determine acres in use.

These steps will allow you to detect the presence of additional lots for grazing, for example, by converting arable land to pasture.

**Soil nutrient control**

The most critical farm pasture management step is pH control. It ensures the stable growth of forage grasses and clover, alfalfa, and other legumes. You can also apply lime: this is usually done in the fall, but the period of this practice can vary depending on weather conditions.

**Weed control and forage managing**

Spring is a time for many weeds to emerge. So, it is essential to identify and kill them in time. Note that some weeds are more effectively sprayed. In this case, choose herbicides for pasture weed control with special care. Such chemicals may include restrictions on grazing and reseeding.

**Grazing management**

Grassland productivity is highly dependent on the quality of animal grazing. The optimum height allows the plants to compete with weeds and stay healthy in the summertime. Also, with spring grazing management, farmers can distribute manure evenly over the entire area, controlling grazing.

Summer is an excellent time to analyze grazing conditions. Nitrogen fertilizer can be added as needed to encourage plant growth. The key is to control the amount of such fertilizer according to rainfall.

If you did not add lime and other substances in the spring, you could also do this in the summer.

At this time of year, it is almost impossible to fight weeds: the only way is to mow them. However, you can analyze them to take action next season, including thinking about herbicide pasture management.

**Winter grassland managing**

Winter is the soundest time to create cattle grazing management plan. With the help of a farm map, owners can calculate the price of the coming season's activities and design grasslands.

Grazing at this time of year is dangerous, as animals can destroy perennial plants and

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 75: Our shared values and path to solutions

ON 10 December 1948, a fledgling United Nations took a momentous step. In adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it laid down a promise of a world to be rebuilt—after the horrors of global war, the Holocaust, economic depression and the atomic bomb—on the firm foundations of our inherent rights.

While the community of States was fewer in number, the drafters of the Declaration came from every region and, in turn, drew on wisdom and experience across cultures and eras to set out our freedoms. The rights to live free from discrimination and from torture, the rights to education and to adequate food, and so much more.

The influence of the Declaration in the decades since has been remarkable, playing a unique role in strides forward on women's equality; in progress on education and health; in the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa; and, indeed, in the victories of independence over colonial rule. The Declaration also inspired a glorious flourishing of civil society, itself hugely instrumental in both developing and advancing the rights agenda. This landmark document is also the point of origin for our rich tapestry of international human rights treaties, laws, instruments and mechanisms.

Despite so much progress, we are still far from the world envisaged by the Declaration's framers and find ourselves contending with a determined pushback on rights. It would be a mistake, though, to dismiss the Declaration as a relic from a more benign and optimistic time. Its drafters emerged from an era ravaged by vicious cycles

of destruction, terror and poverty, and in the face of a deepening ideological divide, remained undaunted in laying down a map towards a world more peaceful and just, in recognition of our shared humanity and our equal worth.

Today, this map is more relevant than ever. As so horrifically illustrated by the unbearable suffering in recent weeks in Gaza and Israel, conflicts are raging at their highest level since 1945 with scant regard for the protection of civilians.

We face skyrocketing inequalities, corrosive polarization within and between States, ongoing curbs on civic space and ungoverned acceleration in digital technology. All of these destabilizing and destructive trends fuel the triple planetary crisis, one that is truly existential in nature.

As we navigate these fractious and uncertain times, the Declaration's enduring power lies in its promise of rights as solutions. Non-ideological and deeply rooted in the shared values of our "human family", its principles can transcend geopolitical and social divides, drawing instead on our deepest reflexes—solidarity, empathy and connection.

Comprehensive in its scope, it encourages solutions that are complementary—essential given the multitude of challenges we face. Its call for free and meaningful participation is the key to the broad engagement necessary for solutions to be both effective and legitimate.

Advancing the rights of every person, everywhere, is the only way to address the root causes of conflict.

Human rights approaches are the only way to make devel-



The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, at the Rafah crossing, Egypt, November 2023.

opment inclusive, participatory and sustainable; to shape laws that are just and, therefore, trusted to resolve disputes; to make our societies equitable; and to ensure accountability and promote reconciliation.

Human rights are also the ultimate tool of prevention, a

simple truth brought home to me repeatedly in my decades working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on situations of failed prevention.

In a world changing at a frenetic pace, failure to uphold rights will not result in stasis.

On the contrary, it will lead to escalating grievance, pain and violence, alongside a loss of our ability to work together to solve problems. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the Declaration is, therefore, a moment that calls for concerted action: first, through establishing a renewed

worldwide commitment to the values embodied in the Declaration; second, by capitalizing on this momentum to drive transformative progress on rights, drawing on innovative approaches along with a willingness to interrogate the very way we think about the future

landscape for rights.

With one quarter of humanity currently living in places affected by conflict, we risk a future that perpetuates these convulsive cycles of suffering and destruction, along with the prospect of declining respect for the laws of war—the very guarantors of our humanity, our collective red lines.

So much loss, so much pain that is all too preventable. Repression, injustice, discrimination, extreme inequality, lack of accountability—all seed the malign conditions from which violence erupts. It is clear that the path to enduring peace lies through human rights. Advancing the rights of every person, everywhere, is the only way to address the root causes of conflict. And this means all rights.

One of the priority areas for United Nations Human Rights is a significant step-up in our work on economic, social and cultural rights, which have been for too long artificially, and unhelpfully, sidelined in human rights discourse and action.

The reality is that, today, most economies are human rights-free zones with disastrous outcomes for people and planet. Our concept of the Human Rights Economy advocates, instead, for economic, trade, industrial, social and environmental policies to be guided by human rights standards, with their success measured by the degree to which rights are enjoyed by everyone. This applies equally for business models, investment decisions and consumer choices.

This kind of fundamental shift has the potential to unlock progress on all rights; not least, because it encourages meaningful civic participation in decision-making, particularly for women and others rou-

tinely marginalized. This helps tackle the underlying causes of inequalities and grievances, rebuild trust in government and each other, and target policies to actual need.

We also urgently need to develop human rights guardrails for international financial and development institutions. Governments should not be corralled into choosing between investing in rights and repaying foreign debt. They should be able to ring-fence investments in measurable improvements in levels of respect for the rights, for example, to education and health, ahead of debt repayment.

Our planetary crisis is another area in which it is painfully evident that we need to shift course decisively and immediately. Otherwise, no one will escape the terrible consequences. In the meantime, those who have the least—and are least responsible—pay the heaviest cost, including with their lives.

Human rights, such as the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, offer a road map for preventing and remedying the harms caused by environmental crises in a more effective, inclusive and sustainable way. This includes ensuring that the transition away from fossil fuel dependency is a just one, placing the voices and needs of affected individuals and communities at the heart of policymaking.

Human rights also offer us a resilient pathway for responding to accelerating advances in digital technology. This is the case even in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), where extraordinary opportunities, including for the stalled 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, sit alongside unprecedented risks that are far from theoretical.

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