



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Faced with Climate Challenges and Conflicts: The Sahel and West Africa Commit to Accelerating Livestock Sector Development and Securing Pastoral Systems**

**Nouakchott, November 8, 2024** - On the third day of the High-Level Forum on Pastoralism in the Sahel and West Africa ('Nouakchott+10'), participants – including political decision-makers, representatives of pastoral and agro-pastoral organizations, members of the private sector, regional organizations and civil society, from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo - called for an ambitious commitment to building peace and developing rural, pastoral and agro-pastoral territories in the Sahel and West Africa. Collectively, they emphasized the need to enhance the value of different livestock systems and strengthen the complementarity between agriculture and livestock, which together form the foundation for the inclusive and sustainable development of national and regional economies.

This Forum comes ten years after the first Nouakchott Declaration of 2013, which aimed to secure the livelihoods and means of production of pastoral populations and increase the gross product of livestock activities, with a view to significantly boosting pastoralists' incomes.

*“Counting only the regional projects coordinated by our institution, more than a billion dollars have been invested between 2013 and 2024 in infrastructure, improved animal health, and access to services, thanks to the technical and financial support of the World Bank Group and other partners”,* said **Dr Abdoulaye Mohamadou, Executive Secretary of the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS)**.

Participants gave a generally positive assessment of the progress made. Over the past decade, more than 13 million hectares of pastoral land have been placed under sustainable management, 559 additional water points have been built, and almost 4,200 km of transhumance corridors have been marked out and secured. In terms of animal health, more than 600 million animals have been vaccinated, 137 veterinarians have been trained, and 415 additional vaccination parks have been built. Market infrastructures have been strengthened with the construction of 362 additional livestock markets, and actions have been taken to promote the economic and social inclusion of nearly 56,000 people, over 86% of whom are women, who have been able to strengthen and diversify their economic activities.

However, persistent challenges, notably linked to climate change, insecurity and land pressure, continue to threaten the viability of these production systems, underlining the need for reinforced collective action at scale, particularly to facilitate mobility.

The Nouakchott+10 Forum marks a decisive step for the future of millions of people who depend directly on the vital sector of pastoralism and agropastoralism. In the face of these challenges, participants agreed

to secure agro-pastoral land, improve land governance, and develop sustainable value chains to strengthen the resilience of pastoral and agro-pastoral systems. They also agreed to promote synergies between agriculture and livestock, to strengthen the inclusion of young people and women in pastoral and agricultural activities, and to enhance regional information systems to better inform policy-making. They called for the needs of coastal countries and certain Central African countries to be integrated into development efforts, based on the complementarity between sedentary and mobile livestock systems for the peaceful management of territories.

**Participants in the Nouakchott+10 Forum ask the Chairman-in-Office of the CILSS to convey this Declaration to his peers.**

*“For Mauritania, an agro-pastoral country par excellence, joint African action at all levels is a priority strategic objective. The new Nouakchott Declaration will materialize and reinforce regional solidarity in favor of pastoralism and integrated socio-economic development”*, said **Moctar Al Housseynou LAM, Minister Secretary General of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.**

Country representatives pledged to provide the requisite political support, while mobilizing substantial financial and human resources, both internal and external, to enable the implementation of their commitment. In addition, they affirmed their determination to mobilize private investors to encourage the development of animal value chains, particularly in the feed supply, meat production, and local milk collection and processing segments. They asked the current Chairman of CILSS to convey the new Declaration to his peers in the sub-region.

The partners present expressed their support for the Forum's conclusions, and pledged to continue their technical and financial support for their implementation.

*“Our collective mission is to enhance the strategic role of Sahelian territories in the regional economy, and to promote mobile livestock farming not only for milk, meat and other products, but also for the services it provides to Sahelian and West African society as a whole, particularly with regard to climate change”*, said **Chakib Jenane, Director of Sustainable Development for West and Central Africa at the World Bank.** He concluded on the importance of giving pastoralism a prominent place in continental policies: *“Nouakchott+10 must send strong messages to the African Union Commission, in order to strengthen the place of pastoralism in regional policies and provide significant support to our pastoral communities”*.

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