

# Declaration on the Need for Grasslands Conservation

Kosewo, 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2024

## Preamble:

Recognizing that grasslands are one of the Earth's most vital ecosystems, providing essential services such as carbon sequestration, water regulation, soil fertility, and habitats for diverse species,

Acknowledging that grasslands support the livelihoods of millions of people globally through agriculture, pastoralism, and tourism, while playing a critical role in maintaining cultural heritage and traditional land management practices,

Understanding that grasslands are under increasing threat from factors such as urban expansion, industrial agriculture, overgrazing, climate change, and soil degradation, leading to loss of biodiversity, reduced ecosystem functionality, and greater vulnerability to environmental disturbances,

We, the undersigned, call upon governments, organizations, and all stakeholders to commit to the protection and sustainable management of grasslands around the world.

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## Principles of Grassland Conservation

### 1. Protection of Biodiversity:

Grasslands harbor unique species of flora and fauna, many of which are endemic and cannot be found elsewhere. We emphasize the need for measures to protect these species from extinction and maintain the integrity of grassland ecosystems.

### 2. Promotion of Sustainable Land Management:

Sustainable grazing practices, controlled agricultural expansion, and restoration initiatives are crucial for maintaining the health and productivity of grasslands. We encourage the adoption of traditional and innovative land management techniques that balance human needs with ecological health.

### 3. Mitigation of Climate Change:

Grasslands serve as significant carbon sinks, absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in their soils. To combat climate change, it is imperative to conserve existing grasslands and restore degraded areas, helping to mitigate global warming while building resilience to climate impacts.

### 4. Support for Local Communities:

Grassland conservation must involve and benefit local communities, including indigenous peoples, pastoralists, and farmers. Their knowledge, practices, and livelihoods are intertwined with the health of grassland ecosystems. We advocate for policies that empower these communities as stewards of their landscapes.

### 5. Restoration of Degraded Grasslands:

Restoration activities, such as reseedling, erosion control, and the removal of invasive

species, are necessary to revive degraded grasslands. We call for greater investment in restoration projects that rebuild ecosystem services and enhance biodiversity.

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## Commitments

### 1. **Strengthening Policy Frameworks:**

We urge governments at all levels to integrate grassland conservation into national policies, creating incentives for sustainable practices and enforcing regulations that prevent land conversion and degradation.

### 2. **International Collaboration:**

Grasslands span across borders, making international cooperation essential. We call on countries, international organizations, and research institutions to share knowledge, resources, and best practices for grassland conservation.

### 3. **Awareness and Education:**

Raising awareness about the ecological and economic importance of grasslands is essential to garnering public support. We encourage educational programs and campaigns that highlight the role of grasslands in maintaining environmental stability and community wellbeing.

### 4. **Investment in Research and Innovation:**

We recognize the need for continued research into the ecology of grasslands, the impacts of climate change, and effective restoration methods. Investments in science and technology will aid in developing sustainable solutions and informing policy decisions.

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## Conclusion:

We, the undersigned, affirm our commitment to the conservation of the world's grasslands as a critical step toward a sustainable future. By protecting these ecosystems, we safeguard the planet's biodiversity, combat climate change, and ensure the wellbeing of generations to come.

Together, let us take bold and urgent action to conserve our grasslands, recognizing that the health of our planet and our communities depends on the vitality of these irreplaceable landscapes.

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