

Sustained Rangeland Improvement with special reference to the Laikipia controversies

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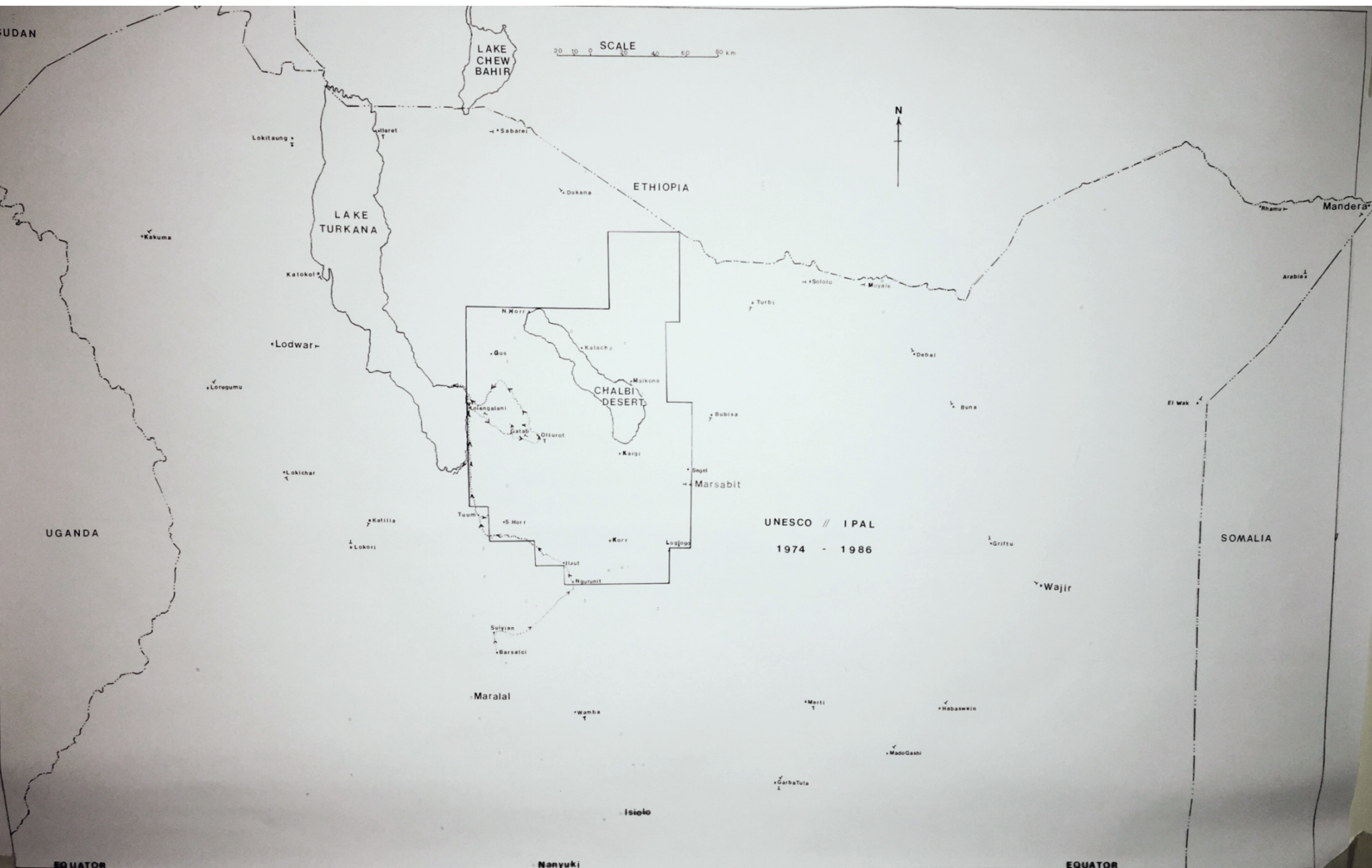
Karen, Nairobi

Dedicated to the memory of the late Gilfrid Powys.

Introduction

During my time in East Africa I have spent >50 years working in rangelands, firstly on wildlife in National Parks in Uganda, then “making the game pay” on ranches in Kenya. Later I helped start and run the UNESCO Integrated Project in Arid Lands based at Mount Kulal in Marsabit County, conducting research on pastoralists, livestock, wildlife and causes of desert encroachment.

IPAL study area in Marsabit County ended with a detailed mgmt. plan. 1976-85



1986-87. Livestock Development Motivator, with
the D.O.M. using the “psycho-social method of
development education”
(p-s m. d. e.)

Our research results had proved too technical
for pastoralists to grasp & apply. The p-s m. d. e.
treats pastoralists as equals by jointly problem
posing and solving.

FARM-Africa 1988-1997

Used the p-s.m.d.e. to help camel nomads from Maralal to Moyale to be self sufficient in food. The Mobile outreach camp(M.O.C.) stayed with >25 nomadic communities, each for 3-6 months, using our own camels for transport and demonstration and *akul* houses.



Gabra nomads passing by showed us the way we should operate our special outreach service (SOS) – see picture below



Our camels carried human and veterinary drugs as well as our tents.



The volcanic terrain was too rough for the large feet of Somali camels so we used the local Gabra breed which have small feet.

Our spontaneous clinic in the Hurri hills had no roof which was quite normal for nomadic life.



1998-2015 Laikipia Ranches incl.

ADC Mutara

Camel agribusiness and ecotourism
incl. Kenya Camel Association (15 Forums
throughout the ASAL's)& Botswana T.O.

The Laikipia controversies 2016-present.
In brief; invasion of privately owned land by
pastoralists and their stock, without owners'
consent.

The Laikipia Controversy.

Death of 23 persons, also wildlife, burning property, cattle theft.

Causes:

1. Drought since 2016
2. Exhaustion of pasture in northern rangelands by rapid increase in human and livestock populations.
3. Expiry of 99 yr leases of land granted >100 yrs ago when Laikipiak were defeated by Purko and other Maasai were moved south of the Uganda railway.
4. Current warrior age sets educated, but lack employment.
5. Weapons more readily available.

Recommended Solutions

for e.g. Samburu, Rendille, Gabbra

1. Use the ps-m. d. e. to agree on key problems and their solutions .

2. Use the UNESCO/IPAL(1983) **Management Plan** where still relevant, as basis for joint proposal of Samburu, Baringo, Marsabit and Isiolo plan.

Additional inputs as follows:

3. Involve GoK , both Central and County, UN and NGO's with resources to restore fertility of northern rangelands.

Collaborate with 4 County consortium to implement original management plan+ key additions:

4. Use p-s m. d. e. to encourage child spacing and herd management.

5. Limit cattle, promote camels (see slide 13).

6. Manage water points to control range damage by stock grazing and trampling



Key Range Vegetation

7. Conduct Research on propagation of dwarf shrub *Indigofera spinosa* & re-establish around rested water points.
8. Repeat with young *Acacia tortilis*, grown from ruminant dung.
- 9 . Minimize use of live trees for *bomas*. Replace with bamboo. Research growing bamboo on northern highlands

Bamboo *bomas* in use in Marsabit & Samburu Districts, 1980-81



10. Wildlife Conservancies to attract tourism revenue:

Ten aerial surveys over the study area showed, during drought, that most livestock move into hills. Wildlife concentrate on sand rivers.

Make Seasonal Conservancies on Balesa, Milgis, & Merille rivers.

Suitable wildlife for Conservancies

Domesticated oryx on Galana ranch 1974

Oryx were the most successful of three domesticants, growing faster than conventional sheep, goats and cattle on poor rangeland and requiring less water (weight for weight)



Other possible wildlife in ASAL's:
formerly Reticulated giraffe, gerenuk, gazelle, Grevy's zebra, kudu, rhino, elephant, cheetah and wild dog were all common. Grevy's are drought resistant and have been hybridized with the horse at Mt. Kenya Safari Club.



11. Evaluate livestock insurance scheme in light of current drought.

12. Use the media in the vernacular languages to promote change of attitude and life style among pastoralists.

Conclusions:

The UN, GoK (Central+ County) and NGO's, should move beyond traditional damage control (famine relief).

The problems and causes are mostly understood and documented.

We will need vision and courage to implement necessary management, however difficult, to avoid even greater disaster in future at untold cost.