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## Eating from the Same Pie: Co-Existence in the Face of Resource Competition in Pastoral Areas of Ethiopia

GIRUM GETACHEW ALEMU, GETACHEW GEBRU

*International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Global Livestock CRSP Pastoral Risk Management  
Project, Ethiopia*

### Abstract

Driven by synergetic factor combinations of resource scarcity leading to an increase in the pressure of production on resources, changing opportunities created by markets, outside policy intervention, loss of adaptive capacity, and changes in social organisation and attitudes, the Karrayu pastoralists are in a state of gradual transformation in their livelihood system. Like many pastoral areas of the country, the Karrayu pastoral and agro-pastoral land has been a hub for resource competition since the land can be used for different purposes by different interest groups. The conservation scheme by the Awash National Park, the state-driven commercial farms and the mushrooming of small-scale cultivators are the main contenders for the ever shrinking pasture land of the Karrayu pastoralists. Under these compelling or changing circumstances, the Karrayu pastoralists started to carry out farm activities on a joint basis with other partners. In the process, an informal land market has emerged in which land is temporarily or permanently transferred between households within the pastoral group or outside it through sales or mortgages. There are indications that there will be an increasing conversion of the pasture land into arable land, given the present high demand for cultivable land. These are manifested from the commercial farm and the small cultivators side as well. Particularly, the state farm has a plan to boost its sugarcane production in response to the growing demand for sugar. These changes signify the fact that land is assuming a commodity value as a means of production and exchanges which attribute it did not possess prior to the advent of cultivation. In the final analysis, all the different arrangements by the Karrayu communities are adopted to maintain the continuity of the pastoral practice while simultaneously searching for an alternative to cope with adversities.

**Keywords:** Adaptation, resource use co-existence, new arrangements, transformation