



Tropentag, September 20-22, 2017, Bonn

“Future Agriculture:
Socio-ecological transitions and bio-cultural shifts”

Breaking Bad? From Mental Enclosures to Rangeland Enclosures, and *vice versa*

JOHN WAIRORE¹, STEPHEN MUREITHI², GERT NYBERG³, ANJA LINSTÄDTER¹

¹*University of Cologne, Botanical Institute: Range Ecology and Management Group, Germany*

²*University of Nairobi, Dept. of Land Resource Management and Agricultural Technology (LARMAT), Kenya*

³*Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Dept. of Forest Ecology and Management, Sweden*

Abstract

Traditional pastoralism is diminishing in some regions today as agro-pastoralists attempt to reconcile their traditional livelihood system with modern influences, progressively adapting to emerging transformations. The results have been an emergence of intensified and diversified agro-pastoralist systems in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The emerging agro-pastoralist systems underline a transition, characterised by among others, changes in pastoral systems, production goals and land tenure and use. In line with this transformation, the practice of enclosing land (enclosures and rangeland enclosures) is an increasingly common feature of land tenure and use change, often described as integrated part of land use management today. In East African drylands, we show two ways in which rangeland enclosure – as an emerging transformation in drylands – have altered pastoral socio-ecological systems (SESs). The first relates to breaking away from long-held pastoral traditions (‘mental enclosures’) and embracing emerging transformations such as rangeland enclosures. Such a paradigm shift has eroded the basic tenet upon which sustainable traditional pastoralism is premised while presenting new opportunities for increased flexibility in land use, pasture, livestock management and income generation: opportunities which did not exist before. In highly sensitive climatic regions, defying convention from mental enclosures to rangeland enclosure has also changed the context of adapting to climate change and variability among pastoral communities in the region. The second way traces the peculiarity of the enclosure movement to highlight the incentives and outcomes of this transformation given the prevalence of ‘mental enclosures’ – land enclosed but not used, claimed but not physically demarcated – in areas where rangeland enclosures predominate.

Keywords: Africa, agro-pastoralists, drylands, emerging transformations, enclosure, pastoralism