

Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan and the learning experience in the design of pastoral institutions

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Summary

The authors analyse the nature of policy development to understand the reasons for institutional change in pasture management in Kyrgyzstan. They use the concept of intentional institutional change, emphasising its incremental nature and the important relationship between belief systems and institutions. The paper explores the relationship between the perceptions and beliefs of policy-makers, the policy interventions they undertake, and the consequences for pastoral migration and practices. The study reveals the gap between the intentions behind such policies and their outcomes, the persistence and importance of pastoral migration, and the learning process that policy-makers undergo. This close look at the development and institutionalisation of new dominant societal beliefs highlights the possible direction of the future development of formal pastoral institutions in Central Asia. Policy-makers should respond better to changes in pastoral mobility and the unsustainable increase in intensified use of natural pastures. Policy-makers must also respond to the growth in conflict over pasture use by becoming more aware of the need for inter-sectoral cooperation. The authors argue that a crucial test for the new formal institutions still lies ahead. The key questions are: whether policy-makers and pasture users can eventually come to hold the same beliefs about what is needed in their society, and what new effective institutions will emerge to define the future of pastoralism in Central Asia.

Keywords

Belief system – Central Asia – Institutional change – Kyrgyzstan – Pastoral institution – Pastoralism – Pasture management.

Introduction

Herders who once pursued yearly migrations with their flocks, undisturbed, have increasingly found their pastures and livestock becoming the subject of government attention and intervention. For a variety of economic and social reasons, governments of countries with pastoral traditions – from Central Asia to India, from the United States to South America – have sought to regulate or change pastoral patterns by designing new formal institutions.

This article examines the Central Asian nation of Kyrgyzstan as a case study in how and why those institutional designs come about. Since 1991, Kyrgyzstan has seen dynamic changes in pastoral tenure policies. Policy-makers in Kyrgyzstan have designed new formal pastoral institutions, have seen consequences that included the unexpected, have learned from that and put new institutions in place. These policy-makers comprise politicians, international experts, Members of Parliament, and representatives of state organisations, municipalities and non-governmental organisations who have been heavily involved in the design

and implementation of pasture reforms in Kyrgyzstan. Pastoralists on the ground have also made many adaptations to informal pastoral institutions in recent years, and are a key part of future developments and the emergence of new institutions, which will guide and constrain behaviour in this area.

The developments described by the authors illustrate the value of North's (1) cognitive interpretation of incremental institutional change (2). North's innovative approach in studying institutions focuses on the gradual development of belief systems. In his view, humans perceive reality, interpret it, discover societal problems and design institutions to fix them (3), and the process is repeated over time. Those who have been constrained by an historic institutional framework, which makes them somewhat dependent on an existing path, set out intentionally to design new institutions to improve their competitive positions, based on their beliefs and perceptions of reality. Then, as they face changes in the external environment, or the unanticipated and undesired consequences of their decisions, they adapt and modify those institutions.

The impact of policy-makers, of course, includes their effect on the informal institutions created and followed by pastoralists themselves, in the field. Developments here are also driven by intentions and increased efficiency. Individual livestock owners and groups of livestock owners and herders are the most influential in creating the local informal institutions that, along with the formal rules set as national policy, govern what happens on the ground.

This paper, however, focuses on the actions of policy-makers in Kyrgyzstan regarding pastoral tenure. The authors conclude that these policy-makers can and have undertaken a considerable learning process; first creating new pastoral institutions based on past experience and their beliefs and perceptions of current reality, and then changing these institutions in response to unexpected developments. This suggests that, at least in the case of governments dealing with pastoral resources in post-Socialist countries, change is not the process of linear modernisation, from a state-controlled economy towards a capitalist economy, that Western advisors to these governments anticipated. Rather, it is an incremental progression or a process of trial and error, whose results are yet to be seen (4).

Researchers and policy analysts should recognise the value of that learning process and the need for valid data. It is also important to recognise that the existence of this process, and the dynamic nature of pastoral policy-making at the national level, means that pastoralists on the ground must deal with major institutional uncertainties. As scholars have shown elsewhere (4, 5, 6), the existence of such uncertainty leads to legal pluralism (the existence of several institutional

levels, with different sets of rules, within a single population and/or geographic area) on the ground, as people engaged in raising and herding livestock find they must refer to different legal orders – conflicting or overlapping, formal or informal – to better their own positions.

This paper is structured as follows: first, there is a brief summary of the historic evolution of pastoral institutions in Kyrgyzstan and a discussion of the concept of institutions, institutional change and the role of societal beliefs, based primarily on North (1). Secondly, the authors outline pasture reforms during the post-Soviet period. These discussions focus on how policy-makers perceive reality, what their beliefs have been, and what formal institutions they have introduced. The subsequent section analyses how the perceptions and beliefs of policy-makers have changed, how policy-makers have modified institutions, and the consequences of these changes for pastoral migration and practices. Finally, these findings are interpreted within the context of seeking to understand continuing institutional change and projected future trends in pasture management in Central Asia.

Development of pastoral institutions in Kyrgyzstan

Before mid-19th Century Russian colonisation, nomadic Kyrgyz clans set up the rules for moving herds – from spring pastures to high-mountain summer pastures, to autumn and winter pastures on post-harvest fields – all on land nominally held by the state, as represented by the kings (*khans*) (7, 8, cited in 9). The Russian Empire, in order to cut clan authority and raise tax revenue, maintained state ownership of pastureland, leased it out, brought in large numbers of colonists, and succeeded in making nearly one-quarter of the formerly nomadic Kyrgyz pastoralists settle down (9, 10, 11). Under the Soviets, from the 1920s, livestock owners who had accumulated any wealth were driven out, and over 90% of all rural people worked on state farms (*sovkhoz*) or collective farms (*kolkhoz*), which maintained a strict herding pasture rotation system (12). Small private land and livestock holdings were allowed, however, and as the Soviet system deteriorated in the 1970s and 1980s, those private holdings became vital to survival for most, and allowed the accumulation of large herds and wealth for some (often including *kolkhoz* and *sovkhoz* officials) (5, 11, 12). The resulting increase in livestock was too great for the resource: pastures became degraded, with lower and lower productivity (13, 14).

This study focuses on the work done by Kyrgyz policy-makers after the Soviet period ended. The authors draw upon the public choice theory of institutional change, which

assumes that institutions can be intentionally designed by political and economic elites through collective choice or political processes. North (1) describes the intentionality of institutional change, arguing that humans construct beliefs to model reality – how it works and how it should work (1). Beliefs are internal representations of reality, and the institutions that people create are the external manifestation of their beliefs (1), as, over time, political and economic entrepreneurs embed their beliefs in institutions. As Aoki (3) describes it, North sees beliefs and institutions gradually emerging together within the constraints of history and geography; the interplay determines the economic and political performance of societies. Entrepreneurs – the policy-makers, in this case – are constrained by existing institutions, but they also continually adapt the new institutions they make, in response to their changing perceptions of reality and to achieve the best competitive position for themselves and/or their society (1).

North suggests that the ‘normative and ideological beliefs’ of policy-makers, which dominate discourse in society, determine the direction of institutional change. He argues: ‘When conflicting beliefs exist, the institutions will reflect the beliefs of those who are (past, as well as present) in a position to affect their choices’ (1) (p. 50). In this way, the individual beliefs of policy-makers become societal beliefs and have a critical impact on institutional development. Just such a process can be traced in the actions of Kyrgyz policy-makers on pasture management after the break-up of the Soviet Union.

The following description and analysis is empirically based on scientific literature, policy documents and personal communication with experts at the regional and national level in Kyrgyzstan, conducted by the authors between 2011 and 2014. To analyse qualitative empirical data, the qualitative content analysis approach of Mayring (15) was employed. This approach combines basic analytical procedures such as: ‘summarising’ by reducing empirical data; ‘explication’ by reducing the complexity of reality for analytical purposes and the selection of core situations in which actors take individual and collective decisions that, in their own opinions, appear to strongly affect institutional change; and ‘content and evaluative structuring’, in which core situations and their outcomes are structured and evaluated according to a system of categories and sub-categories derived from theories of institutional change.

Since 1991: the post-Socialist transition

After 1991, Kyrgyzstan faced a challenging transition from a centrally planned and managed economy to something new. As Soviet authority collapsed, the status of natural

resources had become *de facto* open access. Policy-makers were motivated to take action in order to: provide some cushioning of food security to the rural population, who were fast becoming impoverished; to ensure equitable access to resources at a time when conflicts between users were growing; and to arrest fast degradation and unsustainable over-exploitation of natural resources. Policy-makers also recognised that there was a severe lack of public financial resources and that it would not be possible to continue the high level of subsidy required by the planned economy of the past. There was sufficient political vision in key national agencies to undertake and implement change, rather than allow the old systems to continue with inadequate funding (7).

In the face of all these factors, the Kyrgyz government felt forced to implement radical reforms. Its status as a recipient country that depended structurally on external funding, and the rapid economic decline that had begun during the pre-independence period, pushed the new government to declare compulsory de-collectivisation of state and collective farms. This step corresponded with neoliberal structural adjustment measures imposed by external donors. Livestock, as well as cultivated land, were privatised (7), and transferred from the state to farmers’ private ownership in 1998. State ownership was retained for pasturelands and other common-pool resources, such as forests and water, and the state undertook to lease pastureland to individuals (16, 17). All this was undertaken quite quickly. The Kyrgyz leadership at the time had seen how land reform in Russia led to corruption and the ‘grabbing’ of land, livestock and other assets by the former Soviet elite (*nomenclatura*). The much faster Kyrgyz process has been seen by many as ‘shock therapy’, which, when compared with other Central Asian countries, was the most ‘aggressive’ in restructuring agricultural enterprises, privatising land, and promoting individual farming (18). As the process was implemented, farmers and local communities were increasingly called upon to make the best of their situations, with only regulatory oversight, often very patchy in nature, by the government. As a result, large numbers of small herders have since emerged (7).

Transitional reforms were, of course, implemented with strong technical and financial backing from international donors. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund conceptually and financially supported the design and implementation of transitional reforms for all post-Soviet countries, including Kyrgyzstan, that promoted rapid reforms towards a free-market economy. The objective of these purely economic-policy-based prescriptions, known as the ‘Washington Consensus’, consisted of four policy interventions:

- i) price liberalisation
- ii) stabilisation

iii) privatisation

iv) minimisation of the state role (5).

The transitional reforms had a powerful impact on pasture management.

In the next section, the authors examine the dynamic process of policy development in pasture management in detail.

1991–2009: initial pastoral reform

Policy interventions in pasture management have struggled to deal with the challenges of the post-Soviet transformation in Kyrgyzstan, to arrest *de facto* open-access use, and to give structure to social interactions by designing new formal institutions for pasture use. The process of developing formal institutions experienced in Kyrgyzstan illustrates the process of learning through ‘trial and error’.

The most important change in pasture law after Kyrgyz independence was that pastures could be leased out on a short-, medium- or long-term lease to private, state and collective users (4). Initially, the maximum lease period was set at 25 years in 1991 (19); this maximum was cut to ten years in 2002 (20). The change was a response of Kyrgyz policy-makers to a rise of asymmetry in pasture access. Equity considerations led to new procedures in 2002, including not only the shorter maximum-lease term but also special provisions for allocating pastures to local, vulnerable people without competition and restricting the lease of pastures which were situated close to villages, allowing only a short-term lease for these (20).

The fundamental decision to create leases on pastureland was clearly related to the policy prescriptions of the ‘Washington Consensus’. Under that influence, policy-makers followed, consciously or unconsciously, Hardin’s analysis of the ‘tragedy of the commons’ (21), assuming that mismanagement was a result of poorly defined property rights, and that securing individual property rights on land could improve resource use. In fact, what Hardin described as a tragedy of ‘the commons’ was indeed a tragedy, but a tragedy of open access, not of ‘the commons’, which are more properly called common property (22, 23). On the other hand, in authorising leases, policy-makers were also responding to what they saw as a necessity to allocate pastures to individual resource-users, who had already begun to emerge in the decades before independence. Notably, in doing so, the policy-makers followed a path set by previous institutions – the state had also retained the

ownership of pasturelands as it leased the lands out, just as the Russian Empire and the Soviets had earlier maintained ownership of the pasturelands.

Another important feature of the new Kyrgyz pasture law was the devolution of pasture-management authority, decreed in 1995 (24). This change anticipated a new line of thinking already developing at the World Bank and publicly endorsed in 1998: ‘minimization of the state role’. By the mid-1990s, a World Bank Development Report (25) had analysed the progress of reforms in post-Socialist countries and admitted that only a few countries had been successful in implementing transitional reforms. The report found that many countries (including Kyrgyzstan) had not implemented the full package of reform interventions, that poverty and socio-economic disparities had increased rapidly, and that the privatisation of state property had fostered corruption. In 1998, the leaders of the World Bank openly admitted the failures of the Washington Consensus (25) and, in response, a more comprehensive approach was created in the Post-Washington Consensus. The new approach acknowledged that governance and policy are important to the economy and that particular institutional and social features are pre-conditions for market development. Under this new approach, decentralisation of decision-making processes became the most important strategy to tackle the problems of poverty and inequality in the public sector (5).

The underlying assumption behind this new strategy was that government institutions are limited in their financial and technical effectiveness to manage natural resources at the local level, because they are too far from users. The assumption is that local government can be more efficient and perform better. Once again, however, in Kyrgyzstan, history affected the new institutional choices being made under devolution in 1995. The distribution of authority among governance structures at the district, regional and national levels remained based on the categorisation of pastures inherited from the Soviet era (near-village, intensive and remote pastures), depending on the distance between pastures and settlements.

1991–2009: institutional outcome

At the end of this decade of actively shaping pasture legislation, policy-makers faced undesired consequences of the reforms and found that their expectations had not been fulfilled (4, 5, 7). It became apparent that policy-makers had just copied legislation used for arable land without considering the environmental needs for pasture rotation and overall mobility, due to climatic and terrain conditions, or the perceptions and preferences of users.

The emergence of pasture-related problems, such as an increase in conflict among herders and pasture users, the degradation of near-village pastures and under-use of remote pastures, and an increase in animal diseases and human exposure to those diseases, showed that the formal institutions were ineffective and that the initial reform policies ‘worked’ mostly on paper. Bonfoh *et al.* (26) state, for instance, that Kyrgyzstan has one of the highest incidences of human brucellosis worldwide. Pasture leases also generated little revenue for the Kyrgyz state and raised concerns over the mismanagement of funds by local authorities. In 2005, a livestock-sector study conducted by the World Bank found that: ‘use rights are provided on a “first come, first served” basis. Only 7% of all pastureland is used according to formal lease agreements. There is widespread avoidance of registering use rights, since this is perceived only to increase the cost without providing any greater security to either party to the agreement’ (7) (p. 4).

The division of management levels (local, district and regional) according to spatial pasture categories (near-village, intensive and remote pastures) proved to be impractical and contributed to confusion among pasture users. The allocation procedure was complicated and created high organisational costs for participants. It had been envisaged that pasture could be allocated via auctions, but they proved impractical and were rarely held, and the procedures for allocating pasture to vulnerable people were seldom applied. Moreover, wealthy and powerful people enjoyed asymmetrical access to pasture (4).

2009–present: learning and adapting in the light of experience

In response to these problems, Kyrgyz policy-makers developed new formal institutions for pasture use (16). Key elements in the modified institutions reflected changed perceptions and beliefs among the policy-makers.

Fundamentally, after the first decade of pasture legislation, there was a shared perception among government officials and experts that the results in pasture management were disappointing and institutional change was needed. ‘The new law [of 2009] was necessary as during the last 20 years we had no pastoral management system,’ stated Ludmila Penkina, the leading expert of the State Institute for Land Use (GIPROZEM) (L. Penkina, personal communication, 22 April 2013).

‘Nobody was against it [the 2009 law] in principle,’ commented the Director of the Pasture Department,

Dr Abdumalik Egemberdiev, in the Ministry of Agriculture (A. Egemberdiev, personal communication, 19 March 2013). To gain some first-hand experience, the Ministry of Agriculture, supported by the World Bank, piloted community-based pasture management in four areas from 2005. The experience gained through this initiative formed the foundation for developing new pasture management law. The World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and other international agencies supported the government in the development and implementation of the new pasture law.

After intensive discussions among experts and responsible organisations at the national level (Fig. 1), the new law, ‘On Pasture’, was adopted in January 2009 by the Kyrgyz Parliament (27). The law introduced radical changes to the pasture management system:

- it abolished the historic, Soviet-style, three-tier system of pasture management in favour of user management intended to encourage herd mobility, environmental sustainability and equity
- it created legal conditions for user management through Pasture User Unions (PUUs), with executive bodies – Pasture Committees (PCs)
- it transferred the authority for pasture management to local self-governance bodies and, further down, to PUUs
- it abolished the area-based pasture lease system and introduced an annual livestock-based pasture fee (‘pasture ticket’)
- it introduced a planning and monitoring system for pasture use and management.



Fig. 1
Policy-makers in Kyrgyzstan discuss pasture reform
 Source: Central Asian Mountain Partnership (CAMP) program archive, Bishkek, May 2007

By 2011, PUUs and PCs had already been created in 454 municipalities (*Aiyl Okrug*) in Kyrgyzstan (Fig. 2). The PUUs and PCs are now taking responsibility for the provision of animal health services to livestock owners as well. This is done through the engagement of Village Health Committees and private veterinarians in PCs.

The new law has changed the principle of regulating pasture use, from serving those who can secure land (through payment based on leased pastureland, in the old legislation) to coordinating overall demand on pastureland (through payment based on livestock numbers, in the new law). Questions about the modern sustainability of Kyrgyzstan's millennia-old identification with livestock-raising led policy-makers to appreciate the interconnections between governance and healthy productivity in natural resources. The perceptions of experts and policy-makers changed significantly, so that they recognised the importance of pastoral migration and the flexibility needed to coordinate such migration at the local level. Undeland's study of 2005, commissioned by the World Bank, illustrates the change of perceptions and beliefs that led to the new law:

'Flexibility must be provided to rural municipalities to manage pastures [...] municipalities will need wide authority with regard to pastures, since there are major differences among jurisdictions. In part these differences relate to terrain and numbers of animals: in some areas' jurisdictions, winter pastures in effect can be used year round while in others, particularly in the south, there is already too much pressure on pastureland' (7).

There is growing evidence today that the decrease of pastoral mobility since 1991 has had serious environmental



Fig. 2
Pasture users in Kyrgyzstan discuss pasture reform

Source: Authors' documentation, Jergetal Municipality, August 2011

and economic consequences. It caused degradation of rangeland by the over-use of near-village pastures and under-use of remote summer pastures (7, 28, 29, 30), and led to a decrease in livestock productivity (31).

Migration between pastures also decreased, compared to traditional transhumant herding during the pre-Soviet era and the regulated vertical transhumance of the Soviet period, but some migration survived by adapting to the realities of this new socio-economic context. After the dissolution of the *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes*, which began before independence, many different informal institutional arrangements to coordinate local herding practices and promote cooperation were developed and have since become institutionalised (5). During the ongoing process of 'social reorganisation', a variety of coping strategies were employed by pasture users: migration was organised by individual families, partnerships, extended family and reorganised herding cooperatives. The most common strategy was extended family herding, which mixed a herder's own livestock together with the livestock from clients. Overall, however, by 2005, it was reported that the strategy of 'ending all nomadic herding practice completely' was on the increase (29) (pp. 171, 178).

To counteract that trend, the intention of the 2009 pastoral reform was to achieve more efficient, equitable and sustainable pasture management by devolving more decision-making power to local communities. The first key assumption on which this reform was grounded is that traditional local organisations and their institutions can be successful in managing pastures and that local communities can take over the state's responsibilities. Undeland (7) noted in 2005, in her study for the World Bank, that: 'Part of the argument for consolidation of pasture management authority in rural municipalities is based on the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. that decisions should be made at the lowest feasible level of government.' The second assumption is that the transfer of authority to local communities can increase the efficiency of pasture management due to a decrease in transaction costs related to the management of resources (32).

This argument relies on the efficiency view of the economic theory of institutional change. Institutional change is explained as the result of opportunities for contracting among economic actors seeking more efficiency (33) – via the deliberations of the PUUs and PCs, or the kinds of informal arrangements already seen developing among herding and livestock families.

The common property resources (CPR) theory provided considerable backing for this approach. CPR theory makes a strong argument against Hardin's 'tragedy of the commons', by showing that local communities can successfully manage

natural resources through a set of locally created rules and regulations (institutions) (21, 34). The theory defines a common-pool resource as 'a natural or man-made resource system that is sufficiently large as to make it costly (but not impossible) to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use' (34). When the common-pool resource (e.g. pasture) has a high value and institutions fail to regulate its use, that creates an open-access situation: resource users may 'free ride' on the collective actions of others unless ways are found to reduce free riding as an attractive strategy. The joint resource users of a common-pool resource are confronted with a classic 'appropriation problem'. They have the incentive to appropriate more resources to their individual use, or they can choose to limit themselves by coordinating their appropriation activities with others. Communities that have made the latter choice have had success in sustainably managing resources for centuries, as Ostrom has shown (34).

Discussion and conclusion

This paper has illustrated the incremental development of formal institutions in pasture management in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. The authors' analysis has relied on North's (1) concept of the intentionality of institutional change. Their study reveals that policy-makers have learned a lot from the unanticipated and undesired consequences of earlier agricultural and pasture reforms. The authors observe how policy-makers' perceptions and beliefs have changed and developed. Moreover, the ecological importance of pastoral mobility and the need for flexibility in the coordination of pasture use at the community level to foster mobility and sustainability have been recognised and institutionalised in the new legislation.

However, the authors also note that the beliefs and choices of policy-makers have been constrained and influenced by many factors: the beliefs and institutions inherited from the Soviet era; the 'blueprint' approaches of the 'Washington Consensus' and 'Post-Washington Consensus' – first for privatisation and decentralisation, and now for the latest globally promoted models of community-based management and inter-sectoral cooperation in healthcare for both humans and animals.

But what does this mean for pasture use and management in Kyrgyzstan? What can we learn from this experience for the future of pastoralism in Central Asia? Kyrgyzstan's experience is important, as Kyrgyzstan was the first country to introduce radical reform in pasture management in this region, and other countries are currently testing a similar approach. In the authors' view, two important aspects can be highlighted here.

First, the change of societal beliefs presented in this article highlights the direction of future institutional changes in formal pastoral institutions in Central Asia. The problematic decrease in pastoral mobility and intensification of pasture use, as well as the need for inter-sectoral cooperation, is recognised by policy-makers as important in pasture use and management and so they must design institutions to promote mobility and coordinate resource use. Policy-makers rely largely, in their perceptions and beliefs, on the efficiency hypothesis of institutional change. This hypothesis has dominated discourse among experts and policy-makers worldwide, and was included in the design of the 2009 reforms. However, as North (1) points out, simple economic efficiency is a static criterion, whereas institutions exist in a changing world (35). That suggests the importance of adopting a dynamic perspective and evaluating an institution based on its 'adaptive efficiency' – its ability to adapt to changing circumstances and develop. In the authors' view, this implies a need to incorporate into any analysis the important characteristics of the post-Soviet pastoral context that have been left out of the standard efficiency hypothesis and its policy prescriptions. It also means that policy analysts should focus on the learning process and strive to provide it with reliable data. Furthermore, as scholars have shown elsewhere (4, 5, 6), the dynamic nature of the national policy-making process also means that pastoralists at the local level must deal with major institutional uncertainties. The existence of such uncertainty will lead to legal pluralism on the ground, as people engaged in raising and herding livestock must deal with different socio-economic conditions and legal orders to maintain and improve their position.

Secondly, there is a discrepancy between the beliefs of policy-makers and formal rules, and the shared beliefs and informal rules of pasture users, which have been generated during actual resource use. For instance, the role of bargaining power is underestimated in policy-makers' societal perceptions, beliefs and formal institutions, but it plays a huge role in access to the resource itself and the creation of informal rules among pasture users. The critical question is, what will the resulting institution generated by this discrepancy be? As Aoki (3) argues, 'if formal rules are violated or ignored, they may be regarded as outcomes of bad policies but not as an institution that guides and constrains people's behavior'. That is a result to be avoided. Working to bring policy-makers and pasture users to a mutual understanding of their society and its needs will be crucial to establishing lasting pastoral institutions in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia.

For future studies, in order to support the learning process and institutional development in pasture use and management in Central Asia, this analysis suggests the need to specifically address the question of how pastoral practices, informal institutions and power relations change

as a result of pastoral reforms, and what impact they, in turn, will have on the adaptive efficiency of the new institutional framework.

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Asie centrale : le Kirghizstan et l'expérience d'apprentissage lors de la création d'institutions pastorales

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Résumé

Les auteurs tentent d'élucider les raisons du changement institutionnel de la gestion des pâturages au Kirghizstan en analysant les modifications apportées dans ce domaine au niveau réglementaire. Ils recourent au concept de changement institutionnel volontariste en soulignant son caractère progressif et l'importance des liens entre les systèmes de croyances et les institutions. Cet article explore les liens entre les perceptions et les croyances des décideurs, leurs interventions en matière réglementaire et les conséquences de ces décisions sur les migrations et les pratiques des pasteurs. L'étude met en lumière le fossé qui sépare les intentions qui animent ces décisions et les résultats concrets obtenus, la persistance et l'ampleur des migrations pastorales et les enseignements que les décideurs en tirent actuellement. Cet examen approfondi de l'élaboration et de l'institutionnalisation de nouvelles croyances sociétales dominantes met en avant des perspectives d'orientations pour le développement futur d'institutions pastorales formelles en Asie centrale. Les décideurs politiques doivent prendre acte du déclin du nomadisme pastoral et de la généralisation d'utilisations intensives et non durables des prairies naturelles, et concevoir des réponses adaptées. Ils doivent également répondre à l'intensification des situations conflictuelles en prenant davantage conscience de la nécessité d'une coopération intersectorielle. Les auteurs estiment que les nouvelles institutions formelles n'ont pas encore pleinement démontré leur efficacité. Il conviendra de répondre à deux questions cruciales, à savoir : les décideurs politiques et les utilisateurs des prairies parviendront-ils à partager une vision commune des besoins de leur société ? Quelles institutions nouvelles et efficaces verront-elles le jour pour définir l'avenir du pastoralisme en Asie centrale ?

Mots-clés

Asie centrale – Changement institutionnel – Gestion des prairies – Institution pastorale – Kirghizstan – Pastoralisme – Système de croyances.



Asia Central: Kirguistán y la experiencia de aprendizaje en la creación de instituciones pastorales

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Resumen

Los autores analizan la naturaleza de la planificación de políticas con el fin de entender las razones del cambio institucional en la gestión de los pastizales de Kirguistán. Para ello emplean el concepto de cambio institucional intencionado, haciendo hincapié en su carácter progresivo y en el importante vínculo que existe entre sistemas de creencias e instituciones. Asimismo, examinan la relación entre las percepciones y convicciones de los planificadores, las intervenciones normativas que impulsan y las consecuencias que ello tiene en la migración y los usos de los grupos de pastores. El estudio evidencia el desfase existente entre las intenciones que animan estas políticas y sus resultados, la persistencia e importancia de la migración pastoral y el proceso de aprendizaje por el que pasan los planificadores de políticas. Este detenido análisis de la aparición e institucionalización de nuevas creencias que arraigan en la sociedad señala la posible dirección que puede seguir en el futuro la creación de instituciones pastorales formales en Asia Central. Los planificadores deben tener más en cuenta la menor movilidad de los pastores y el insostenible incremento del uso intensivo de los pastos naturales y encontrar respuesta a esos fenómenos. También deben responder a un nivel creciente de conflicto, para lo cual deben entender la necesidad de procesos de cooperación intersectorial. Los autores postulan que las nuevas instituciones formales aún deben superar pruebas cruciales. Las cuestiones básicas que se plantean son, por un lado, si a la larga los planificadores de políticas y los usuarios de pastizales pueden llegar a compartir una misma visión de lo que necesita su sociedad y, por el otro, qué tipo de instituciones nuevas y eficaces verán la luz para definir el futuro del pastoreo en Asia Central.

Palabras clave

Asia Central – Cambio institucional – Gestión de pastizales – Institución pastoral – Kirguistán – Pastoreo – Sistema de creencias.



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