

HOHHOT DECLARATION

**XXI International Grasslands Congress/VIII International Rangeland Congress
June 2008, Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China**

We, the participants of the World Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative, recognize that:

*C*onsidering that temperate indigenous grasslands provide environmental services essential for life on earth as a source of food, fibre, human livelihoods and well-being, cultural and biological diversity, the recharge of aquifers and the sequestration of carbon, particularly in the face of global climate change;

*A*greeing that temperate indigenous grasslands are terrestrial ecosystems dominated by herbaceous and shrub vegetation, maintained by grazing, fire, drought and/or low temperatures and that all of these processes are dynamic and display great variability in terms of time, extent, intensity and place;

*R*ecognizing the opportunities that temperate indigenous grasslands provide in feeding people, it is imperative to maintain the genetic diversity of grassland systems;

*R*ealizing the importance of temperate indigenous grasslands to the life and cultural survival of mobile indigenous peoples and the value of indigenous knowledge as well as the accumulated experience of traditional indigenous temperate grasslands users;

*A*cknowledging that temperate indigenous grasslands are currently considered among the most imperiled ecosystems on the planet, having been modified by human activity to such a degree that most grasslands have been transformed and very little remains in a natural state;

*R*ecognizing that the remaining areas of natural grassland continue to be threatened by inappropriate policies that lead to loss of grassland, as well as unsustainable land use and management practices;

*A*cknowledging that success will require participatory management approaches and partnerships among all sectors to ensure the integration of production and biodiversity conservation outcomes for the continued provision of grassland ecological goods and services;

*R*ecognizing the importance of strengthening indigenous territories, community conserved areas and the establishment of new protected areas;

*R*ecognizing that one of the most important opportunities for collaboration is ensuring worldwide societal recognition of the enduring value of natural grasslands;

*D*eveloping and implementing incentives for good land stewardship, restoration and the sustainable management of indigenous temperate grasslands is essential to guaranteeing their sustainable use as healthy working environments.

Therefore, we the participants of the Hohhot World Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative Workshop from five continents and 14 countries, declare that temperate indigenous grasslands are critically endangered and urgent action is required to protect and maintain the services they provide to sustain human life. We call upon all sectors of society to collaborate towards this goal.

Signatories to the HOHHOT DECLARATION

The World Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative Workshop

XXI International Grasslands Congress/VIII International Rangeland Congress

June 28-29, 2008

Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China

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