

Promoting sustainable development in pastoral areas by innovating institutions of economic organizations

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Introduction Household Production Responsibility System (HPRS) , which was initiated at the beginning of 1980s , has brought great impacts on grassland ecology , herders' livelihood and Mongolian traditional culture . Confronted with the challenges of grassland degradation , population explosion , frequent disasters , market competition and decline of traditional culture , government and herders are trying to find solutions by establishing herders' cooperation to achieve sustainable development .

Materials and methods The data are coming from field study in six villages , covering topics on cooperation , grassland degradation and its reasons , and change of pastoral population . Moreover , statistical data on cooperation and other related regulations and policies are also analyzed in this article .

Results Since the first cooperation was established Xilingol Prefecture in the year of 2000 , there are 263 cooperation in Inner Mongolia now , including 16 ,024 households and 35 823 persons , which account for 9 .9 % and 6 .1 % of the total number of Inner Mongolia respectively . There are different reasons for establishing cooperation , such as facilitating projects implementation and government support and achieving high efficient management through cooperation . However , there are some herders look on it and then decide if they join in the cooperation . Seeing from the kinds of business , most cooperations are depending on production and marketing with little profit , which are managed according to herders' shares of livestock , grassland and funds and under the guidance of some elite . The trend of cooperation development is united marketing—united production—united processing .

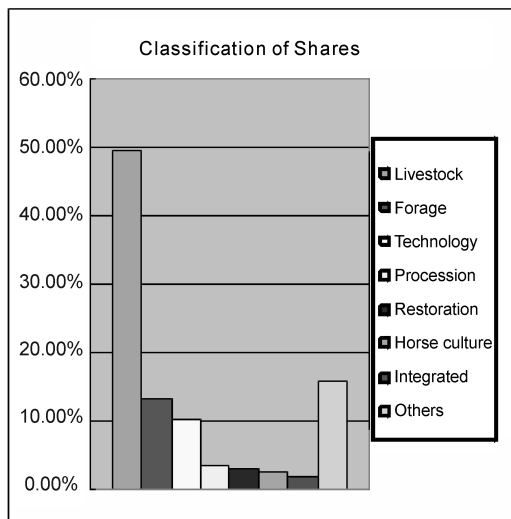


Figure 1 Classification of cooperation Business

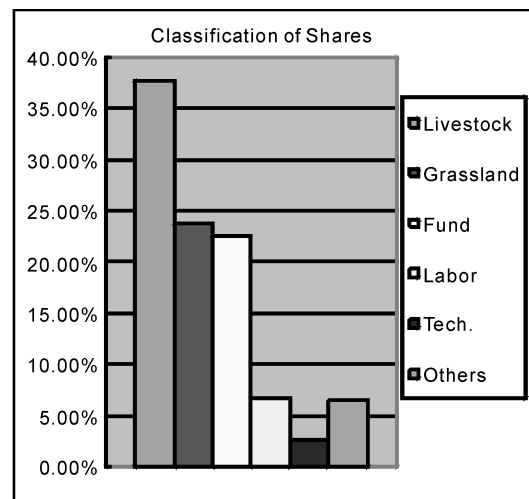


Figure 2 Classification of cooperation shares

Conclusion Even though herders' cooperation is comparatively new and having many problems , it has played important roles in co-managing grassland resources , dividing work and cooperating , decreasing productive cost , connecting herders and market , protecting herders' rights , transmitting culture and establishing harmony society . It should be supported by government continuously to achieve further success .