

Launch Webinar

Follow with Us the Thread of Yak

18 November 2021 (10.00 – 11.40 hours) CET

The webinar is launching the “**Following the Thread of Yak**” report, a first publication focusing on the **yak hair industry**, combining technical approach with socio-environmental narrative to analyse the untapped potential of yak production in the **High Asia region**, and relevant impact on its indigenous communities, native growers of yak fiber. It aims to provide greater knowledge on the industry outlining the basis to develop a project with long-term and eco-social benefits.

The event will illustrate key findings from the report and the importance of increasing investments in the yak fiber sector of this region. It will be an exchange session to explore best practices and concrete proposals to set up an **innovative industry of yak products** based on ecological production and blending with cashmere, sheep wool, mohair and alpaca wool industries.

Yak herding has succeeded in establishing a kind of pastoral uniqueness that is globally identifiable because of its capacity to perform multiple functions as food, fiber and combustibles supplier and as a means of transport. Furthermore, **yaks are able to provide products and services** to pastoral communities, even under harsh climates, normally prevailing in the High Asia region. Historical and political factors in recent decades affected this area and led yak population to a severe decline, making the activity unprofitable for yak keepers.

However, the benefits from the yak industry, especially yak-fiber, are crucial both for the High Asia communities and for the international markets. Global trends foreshadow that **production of natural fibers (both animal and plant-derived) is expected to reach up to 40 million tons per year** by the middle of the twenty-first century. Compared to other natural fibers, yak production is undoubtedly profitable because of the low costs in terms of both money invested and time devoted.

Against this backdrop, the webinar will highlight the importance of re-increasing the yak industry in the region by fostering the participation of High Asia communities in the value chain as a means to increase their incomes and develop a high-quality yak wool industry for international markets.

The discussion that will be generated seeks to strengthen synergies with relevant stakeholders to join efforts towards a more profitable, labelled and socio-environmentally friendly market of yak fiber.

Objectives

- To introduce findings from the report and raising awareness amongst stakeholders on the greater potential of the yak-fiber industry, by especially focusing on the High Asia region production;
- To promote and facilitate the exchange of best practices from the yak industry, by sharing examples of successful business initiatives;

- To strengthen partnerships with private actors and Organizations to scale up yak industry within the framework of a potential project proposal.

Format

The webinar will have the form of a dynamic discussion between technical specialists, companies, NGOs and International Organizations. During the webinar an interactive platform will enable the submission of live-polls on relevant topics and inputs from the audience will be analyzed in real-time.

<i>Date and venue</i>	November 18 th , 2021, (10.00 CET); Zoom;
<i>Language</i>	English
<i>Reference document</i>	Following the Thread of Yak, Report
<i>Moderator</i>	Antonio Rota (Lead Global Technical Specialist on Livestock Development, IFAD)
<i>List of speakers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anna Heaton (Fiber and Materials Strategy Lead, Animal Materials, Textile Exchange) • Inna Punda (Agribusiness Specialist, FAO) • Nancy Johnston (CEO & Founder, Tengri Ltd) • Ruijun Long (Professor, Lanzhou University) • Santiago José Carralero Benítez (Founder YURTA association) • Tashi Dorji (Programme Coordinator, ICIMOD) • Thouraya Triki (Director, Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division, IFAD) • Uranhimeg Davaajav (Value Chain Development Expert, Agronome Vétérinaires Sans Frontière - Mongolia)