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The History and Current Direction of Rangeland Management in Turkey

By Ali KOC, Walter H. Schacht, and H. Ibrahim ERKOVAN

Turkey lies like a bridge between Europe and Asia. Anatolia is the Asian part of Turkey and 97% of country's surface area. Thrace is considered the European component and comprises 3% of country's surface area. Turkey borders Greece and Bulgaria in the west (European part), Syria and Iraq in the south, and Iran, Azerbaijan (Naxcivan Autonomous Republic), Armenia, and Georgia in the East (Asian part) (Figure 1). The principal land uses of Turkey's 77.8 million ha are: 21.4 million ha of field crops; 0.8 million ha of vegetables; 2.2 million ha of vine, fruit, olive, hazelnut and other agricultural trees; 22.9 million ha of rangelands (mostly dry grasslands and grass/shrublands); 1.4 million ha of meadows; 15.1 million ha forests; and 14.0 million ha of other areas, mainly water, settlements/cities, and barren areas, including degraded rangelands ¹.

Grazing History of Anatolia

Turkey's gross national income is \$772 billion with \$70 billion coming from agriculture. Animal husbandry accounts for about 30% of agricultural income. The country has 11.4 million large (mostly cattle) and 27.0 million small livestock (mostly sheep and goats) ².

All small livestock and a vast majority of large livestock are raised extensively and depend on rangelands and harvested residues in agricultural areas for feed. Rangelands are critically important to livestock production, especially during the growing season when other sources of forage are scarce. There are intensively-managed livestock enterprises, especially dairy farms, that are not dependent on rangeland and are located near cities in the western and central part of the country.

Rangelands and livestock production on rangelands historically have been at the center of Turkish society, economy, and culture. Roots of many Turkish range management practices

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