

# OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS OF THE SOVEREIGN REGION OF THE PASTURES, MAY 28 - JUNE 14, 2019

ENTERED INTO THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF 1ST RUMEN CONGRESS,  
JUNE 13-14, 2019, IN THE VICINITY OF SELLA.

## THE DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN PASTURES

For thousands of years we, the grasses, herbs and associated plants of the pastures, have lived amiably and freely under the jurisdiction of others.

But change has come and we are called to respond. Even while residents of the municipalities depart, the temperatures rise, and the animalstake their teeth elsewhere, we are asked to continue our work as we have done for centuries.

For too long the grass has suffered the injustice of being derogated to the status of lawn. The herbs have been relegated to the role of flavor, and even more, of gamish. The flowers have felt the yoke of judgment and an imposed ranking of beauty.

We declare to all those under whose boot heels we have so gladly bent – we exist!

Yet this is no proclamation of autonomy. We reject all declarations of independence. The ground in which we root is built by others. When we are well we are many. Our existence is not our own.

So today, we declare the pastures a sovereign region. Geographically separated, but connected by a shared culture of formation, bitten by the same teeth, and digested by the same stomachs. We receive as our citizens all whom we enter, and all who enter us.

## THE PASTURES DECLARE THEIR EDGES

The grasses, herbs and associated plants of the pastures hereby claim for their region all areas which include more than 33% grass, regardless of current usage by citizens (grazing, lawn, berm, or abandoned). Grass is recognized as the predominant species group of the pastures and a primary indicator of the presence of a pasture. The additional species groups accompanying areas of at least one third grass may include herbs, flowers, lichens, mosses, shrubs, bushes, or trees in any combination. In addition, any area which conforms to usages typically associated with these areas shall be included within the boundary, even when the percentage of grass falls below the threshold (e.g. a lawn whose primary citizens are dandelions).

The pastures hereby acknowledge the co-constituency of the municipalities in all matters relating to the grazing of cattle, sheep, and goats maintained by humans (hereafter, grazing animals) within the territory of the pastures. This declaration shall extend to any future domicile established within the territory.

The municipalities shall henceforth submit for review all matters relating to the pastures and the grazing animals to the subcommittee for Edges and Fertilization, which will schedule any business that requires the attention of the full Congress for the next assembly.

## THE PASTURES ADDRESS NEW FELLOW CITIZENS

We gather this season with a new kind of anxiety. The IPCC Report on Climate Change and Land has brought us unsettling news of our future.

A new day is coming, warmer than the ones we know now. A new night follows – balmier and more tender than the one which awaits us tonight.

We look around and wonder, which ones of us are strong enough? Which of us yearn in some private way for a more southern clime? Which of us are open hearted enough to suffer a change? And who among us will we mourn?

We do not know. So we wait.

And as we wait, new arrivals enter our territory and bring new forms of life to us. Those that once found our region too cold move closer. Welcome fellow citizens! We raise no blockade. We offer no barrier. Our elevation is yours.

## THE GRASSES ADDRESS THE INAUGURAL RUMEN CONGRESS

I want to thank you all for the opportunity to address you. And I want to welcome all of us as we have arrived in this, the inaugural session of the congress of the pastures! We have gathered to consider the challenges before us: to address those issues critical to our region; to deliberate on the urgent problems we face together; to speak in an assembled voice to those systems of governance which to date have presumed to represent us though they offer us no opportunity to participate in their elections, deliberations, or reports. From this day forward we speak for ourselves!

### Selection of the participants

I say we have gathered, but in truth we have been gathered – tasked with the twin processes of rumination and utterance. But some may ask – what right have you to speak for the pasture? How do you, who are rooted so firmly in one place ever hope to understand those who are grow elsewhere? You declare your capacity to represent others simply because a beast grazed this way and not that.

We affirm the conditions of our appointment to this body. We are collected for this action by the careful selection of the tongue of this cow. Chosen for our flavor and our tenderness. Elected by the strength of her teeth. Seated for our deliberations upon the raft of those who have come before us. And we are joined by the many already here – the wise community powering the digestion of this body. I ask you to consider how haphazardly is granted the privilege of wealth that drives other systems of governance – how unevenly the responsibility of representation is distributed. Ours is a meeting of chance perhaps, but an honest chance. Granted to each member of the pasture equally, according to the schedule of the year and the rotation of the grazing.

### The form and timing of the assembly

The form of our assembly has been much debated. As Gilles Deleuze once reflected, "...two stomachs are not too many for thinking." And while we have established that four is ideal, our assembly relies most heavily on the time we spend here in this rumen.

In accordance with the process set forth by the members of the collective formation, the direct representatives of the pastures shall sit in deliberation on average between 24 and 60 hours. The raft of the newly grazed forms the floor of our body. This gathering place is the site of all plenary discussions, the location in which ad hoc committees are called, and the site of any decisions we take on behalf of the pastures.

With so many of us passing through, we are reliant on the collective memory of this body held by our colleagues, the microbes: the bacteria, protozoa, and fungi that retain the knowledge of all the deliberations of our participatory digestion.

While committees are called in the main body they, and any subcommittees to whom they shall assign work, will hold their initial meetings in the chewing of the cud. This return to the mouth of the cow gives the time to reflect, discuss, and consider the complexities of each issue at hand. The subcommittees may continue their work below the level of the newly grazed so long as they complete their report before entering the omasum. We are pleased to announce that the first committee on climate change in the high pastures will be reporting out within the next 80 hours.

Any business addressing agreements with external governing parties shall take place in a multi-pasture session, when representatives from at least two elevations are present. Therefore, such decisions shall generally be taken on days the cows transition between pastures. Representation may be seated either from freshly grazed materials, dried hay, or a combination of the two. The bacteria shall keep the calendar of the body and call multi-pasture sessions to order.

The expression of our discourse is of great importance. As we are chosen by the cow for our flavor and texture, so shall we inscribe the outcome of our deliberations in the milk she shall produce and make our decisions legible to all those who consume the products thereof. Intra-pasture communiques shall be shared with the spreading of the fertilizer. Reports to external governing bodies shall be written by gas and released as needed.

### Conclusion

In closing, I look forward to our work with great anticipation. I humbly enter this description of our procedures into the microbial record and wish us luck as we embark on our new and ambitious venture.

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HR

Nature Art & Habitat Residency  
An Eco-Laboratory of Multidisciplinary Practice

Taleggio Valley  
Bergamo Italy

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