Grassland Law of the People’s Republic of China

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Contents

Table of Contents 1

Chapter I — General Provisions 1

Chapter II — Grassland Ownership and Use Rights 2

Chapter III — Grassland Planning 2

Chapter IV — Grassland Construction 3

Chapter V — Grassland Utilization 3

Chapter VI — Grassland Protection 4

Chapter VII — Supervision and Inspection 5

Chapter VIII — Legal Liability 5

Chapter IX — Supplementary Provisions 6

Table of Contents

- Chapter I — General Provisions
- Chapter II — Grassland Ownership and Use Rights
- Chapter III — Grassland Planning
- Chapter IV — Grassland Construction
- Chapter V — Grassland Utilization
- Chapter VI — Grassland Protection
- Chapter VII — Supervision and Inspection
- Chapter VIII — Legal Liability
- Chapter IX — Supplementary Provisions

Chapter I — General Provisions

Article 1 — This Law is enacted for the purposes of protecting, developing and rationally utilizing grassland resources, improving the ecological environment, maintaining biodiversity, developing modern animal husbandry, and promoting sustainable economic and social development.

Article 2 — This Law shall apply to the planning, protection, construction, utilization and management of grasslands within the territory of the People’s Republic of China. Grasslands as referred to in this Law include natural grasslands and artificial grasslands.

Article 3 — The State shall implement the basic operational policy of scientific planning, comprehensive protection, focused construction, and rational utilization of grasslands, and promote the sustainable use of grasslands.

Article 4 — People's governments at all levels shall strengthen leadership over grassland protection, construction and management, and incorporate grassland protection, construction and management into their national economic and social development plans.

Article 5 — The competent department of grassland administration under the State Council shall be responsible for the supervision and administration of grasslands nationwide. The competent departments of grassland administration of local people's governments at or above the county level shall be responsible for the supervision and administration of grasslands within their respective administrative regions.

Article 6 — All organizations and individuals shall have the obligation to protect grasslands and observe grassland laws and regulations. Organizations and individuals that have made outstanding achievements in grassland protection, management, construction and rational utilization shall be commended and rewarded by the people's governments at all levels.

Article 7 — The State shall support grassland science and technology research and the popularization of grassland science and technology, and train scientific and technological talents for grassland development.

Article 8 — Any entity or individual shall have the right to report or bring charges against any act that violates grassland laws and regulations, damages grasslands, or infringes upon the lawful rights and interests of grassland owners and users.

Chapter II — Grassland Ownership and Use Rights

Article 9 — Grasslands shall be owned by the State, except for grasslands that are owned by collectives as provided by law. State-owned grasslands may be used by collective economic organizations in accordance with law.

Article 10 — State-owned grasslands used by collective economic organizations on a long-term basis in accordance with law may be contracted for operation by households within the collective economic organizations.

Article 11 — Contracts for grassland operation shall specify the rights and obligations of both parties. The term of grassland operation contracts shall be thirty to fifty years.

Article 12 — Entities and individuals with grassland use rights shall have the obligation to protect and rationally utilize grasslands.

Article 13 — Grassland contracting and operation rights may be transferred in accordance with law. The transfer of grassland contracting and operation rights shall be subject to the consent of the party awarding the contract and the filing with the relevant department.

Article 14 — Grassland ownership and use rights shall be protected by law. No entity or individual may infringe upon them.

Article 15 — Disputes over grassland ownership or use rights shall be resolved through negotiation between the parties. Where negotiation fails, the dispute shall be handled by the people's government.

Article 16 — During the period when a dispute over grassland ownership or use rights is being resolved, no party may change the status quo of grassland utilization.

Chapter III — Grassland Planning

Article 17 — The State shall implement a grassland zoning and planning system. The competent department of grassland administration under the State Council shall, in conjunction with relevant departments,

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formulate a national grassland protection, construction and utilization plan.

Article 18 — Grassland protection, construction and utilization plans shall be coordinated with national economic and social development plans, ecological and environmental protection plans, and land space plans.

Article 19 — Grassland protection, construction and utilization plans shall include goals, measures, functional zoning and general layout for grassland protection, construction and utilization.

Article 20 — Grassland protection, construction and utilization plans at all levels shall be subject to scientific demonstration and shall solicit opinions from relevant departments, experts, and the public.

Article 21 — An approved grassland protection, construction and utilization plan shall be strictly implemented. No entity or individual may modify it without authorization. Where modification is necessary, approval from the original approving authority shall be obtained.

Article 22 — The State shall establish a grassland survey system. The competent department of grassland administration under the State Council shall, in conjunction with relevant departments, organize a nationwide survey and assessment of grassland resources.

Article 23 — The State shall establish a grassland statistics system. The competent department of grassland administration shall collect and analyze grassland resource data.

Article 24 — The State shall establish a grassland ecological monitoring and early warning system. The competent department of grassland administration shall monitor the status of grassland resources and ecology.

Article 25 — Grasslands shall be classified and managed based on their utilization characteristics and ecological functions. The State shall delineate basic grasslands and implement strict protection.

Chapter IV — Grassland Construction

Article 26 — People’s governments at or above the county level shall increase investment in grassland construction and support the building of artificial grasslands, improved grassland varieties, forage production and processing bases, and grassland water conservancy facilities.

Article 27 — The State encourages and supports grassland construction by entities and individuals. Investments in grassland construction shall be protected by law.

Article 28 — The State shall promote the development of grassland animal husbandry in a manner that balances grass and livestock, supports the construction of forage bases, and develops modern grassland animal husbandry.

Article 29 — The construction of grassland firebreaks, grassland pest and rodent control facilities, and other grassland protection facilities shall be strengthened.

Article 30 — The State encourages and supports the research, development, and promotion of technologies for grassland improvement, artificial grassland establishment, and grassland ecological restoration.

Chapter V — Grassland Utilization

Article 31 — Grassland contracting operators shall rationally utilize grasslands and shall not exceed the approved carrying capacity of the grasslands.

Article 32 — A grazing ban and rotational grazing system shall be implemented on degraded, desertified, and salinized grasslands, as well as on ecologically fragile grasslands.

Article 33 — Grassland contracting operators shall build artificial grasslands, reserve forage and fodder, improve grassland productivity, and implement a grass-livestock balance.

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Article 34 — For grasslands under a grazing ban, no grazing shall be permitted during the grazing ban period. For grasslands under rotational grazing, grazing shall be conducted in accordance with the rotational grazing plan.

Article 35 — Entities and individuals collecting wild plants of economic value on grasslands shall do so with the consent of the grassland user, and shall not dig up plant roots or damage vegetation.

Article 36 — Entities and individuals engaged in mining, quarrying, and sand extraction on grasslands shall obtain approval in accordance with law, and shall adopt measures to protect grasslands.

Article 37 — Temporary occupation of grasslands for construction shall be subject to approval by the competent department of grassland administration. The occupation period shall not exceed two years.

Article 38 — Grassland use fees shall be paid for occupying grasslands for construction or for engaging in other activities on grasslands, as prescribed by the State.

Chapter VI — Grassland Protection

Article 39 — People's governments at or above the county level shall organize relevant departments to carry out grassland fire prevention work, formulate grassland fire prevention plans, and establish a grassland fire prevention responsibility system.

Article 40 — Grassland users shall fulfill their grassland fire prevention obligations and adopt fire prevention measures.

Article 41 — During the grassland fire prevention period, the use of fire in the wild on grasslands is prohibited. Where the use of fire is necessary due to special circumstances, approval shall be obtained from the relevant department.

Article 42 — The State shall implement a grassland pest and rodent monitoring, early warning, and control system. The competent department of grassland administration shall organize grassland pest and rodent monitoring and control.

Article 43 — Grassland users shall take measures to prevent and control grassland pests, rodents, diseases, and toxic and harmful plants.

Article 44 — The introduction of alien species of grasses to grasslands shall be subject to scientific assessment and approval in accordance with law.

Article 45 — The reclamation of grasslands for agricultural use is prohibited. Reclamation that has already caused desertification, salinization, or soil erosion shall be restored to grassland within a prescribed time limit.

Article 46 — The conversion of grasslands to other land uses shall be subject to strict approval procedures.

Article 47 — People's governments at or above the county level shall take measures to restore degraded, desertified, and salinized grasslands and to improve the grassland ecological environment.

Article 48 — The State shall implement a grassland ecological protection subsidy and incentive mechanism. People's governments shall provide subsidies and rewards for grazing bans, grass-livestock balance, and grassland ecological protection.

Article 49 — Motor vehicles shall not leave established roads to travel on grasslands without authorization, except for emergency rescue and disaster relief vehicles.

Article 50 — On grasslands where grazing is prohibited or restricted, livestock shall not be grazed in violation of the prohibition or restriction.

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Article 51 — The State shall support grassland nature reserve construction and protect grassland ecosystems, rare and endangered wild plants and animals, and other natural resources on grasslands.

Article 52 — The State shall establish a grassland ecological compensation mechanism. Those who damage grasslands shall be responsible for restoration or compensation.

Article 53 — People's governments at all levels shall strengthen publicity and education on grassland protection and raise public awareness of grassland protection.

Chapter VII — Supervision and Inspection

Article 54 — The competent department of grassland administration under the State Council and the competent departments of grassland administration of the people's governments of provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the Central Government shall strengthen supervision and inspection of grassland protection, construction and utilization.

Article 55 — Grassland supervisors and inspectors shall produce their credentials when performing inspection duties, and relevant entities and individuals shall provide cooperation.

Article 56 — Grassland supervisors and inspectors shall perform their duties impartially and shall keep confidential the information obtained in the course of performing their duties.

Article 57 — Where a grassland supervisor or inspector neglects his duties, abuses his power, or engages in malpractice, disciplinary action shall be taken; where a crime is constituted, criminal liability shall be pursued.

Chapter VIII — Legal Liability

Article 58 — Where a grassland use right holder fails to fulfill grassland protection obligations, the competent department of grassland administration shall order correction and may impose a fine.

Article 59 — Where grasslands are reclaimed in violation of this Law, the competent department of grassland administration shall order cessation of the illegal act, restoration of the vegetation within a prescribed time limit, and may impose a fine.

Article 60 — Where grasslands are illegally converted to other land uses, the competent department of grassland administration shall order correction and impose a fine.

Article 61 — Where grazing is conducted on grasslands under a grazing ban or grazing is conducted in violation of the rotational grazing plan, the competent department of grassland administration shall order correction and may impose a fine.

Article 62 — Where motor vehicles leave established roads to travel on grasslands without authorization, the competent department of grassland administration shall order cessation of the illegal act and may impose a fine.

Article 63 — Where wild plants are collected on grasslands in violation of regulations, causing damage to grassland vegetation, the competent department of grassland administration shall order cessation of the illegal act and impose a fine.

Article 64 — Where grasslands are occupied without authorization or on a temporary basis without approval, the competent department of grassland administration shall order cessation of the illegal act and may impose a fine.

Article 65 — Where grassland fire prevention regulations are violated, causing a grassland fire, penalties shall be imposed in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.

Article 66 — Where grassland vegetation is damaged due to mining, quarrying, sand extraction, or other activities, the competent department of grassland administration shall order restoration and may impose a

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fine.

Article 67 — Where alien grass species are introduced without approval, the competent department of grassland administration shall order cessation of the illegal act and may impose a fine.

Article 68 — Where grassland use fees and grassland vegetation restoration fees payable under this Law are not paid, the competent department of grassland administration shall order payment within a specified time limit and may impose a fine for late payment.

Article 69 — Where a violation of this Law causes damage to grasslands, the party causing the damage shall bear civil liability for compensation in accordance with law.

Article 70 — Where a grassland administration department or other relevant department fails to perform its supervisory duties in accordance with law, the people's government at the same level or the relevant department at the next higher level shall order correction.

Article 71 — Where a violation of this Law constitutes a violation of public security administration, penalties shall be imposed by the public security authority in accordance with law.

Article 72 — Where a violation of this Law constitutes a crime, criminal liability shall be pursued in accordance with law.

Chapter IX — Supplementary Provisions

Article 73 — For purposes of this Law, grasslands include natural grasslands and artificial grasslands on which herbaceous vegetation is the dominant vegetation type.

Article 74 — The provisions of this Law on grassland contracting and management shall apply to grasslands used for livestock grazing within the territory of China.

Article 75 — This Law shall come into force as of October 1, 1985. The revised version shall come into force as of March 1, 2013.

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