

## Invitation letter for the Fourth International Grassland Agriculture Conference (4th IGAC)

Dear Friends of Grasslands,

It is my great pleasure to invite you to attend the 4th International Grassland Agriculture Conference (4th IGAC) that will be held in September 25 to 27, 2018, Lanzhou, China.

Grasslands are the largest terrestrial ecosystems on Earth. Grassland-based agriculture is one of the major production systems worldwide, which consists of pre-plant production (e.g. nature conservation, water catchment areas, turf and sporting facilities, tourism), plant production, animal production and post-biological production (e.g. farm service, herbage and animal product processing, marketing activities). Grassland agriculture plays a critical role in contributing to food security to nations, conservation of nature, providing ecological services to people and mitigation of greenhouse gases emission. However, the global grassland agriculture currently faces a range of growing and emerging challenges including degradation of natural grassland and arable land, environmental pollution, food security and safety, limitation of water resource supply, global climate change, and unbalanced rural development among regions and countries. The solution to these challenges requires international collaboration through innovative scientific research to improve the sustainable development of grassland agriculture.

The 4th IGAC will be co-hosted by Lanzhou University, State Key Laboratory of Grassland Agro-ecosystems, and Key Laboratory of Grassland Livestock Industry Innovation of Ministry of Agriculture. The theme of the conference is “Sustainable Development of Grassland and Agriculture”. The five sub-themes are:

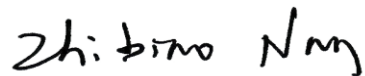
1. Utilization and innovation of forage germplasm resource;
2. Grassland biodiversity and ecosystem multi-functionality;
3. Grassland agriculture and ecological security;
4. Grassland-livestock interaction and food security;

5. Sustainability of global grassland agriculture and social development in the Belt and Road initiative of the Chinese Government.

The conference will provide a platform for scientists, farmers and land managers, policy makers, and post-graduate students worldwide to share their expertise and experience in the sustainable development of grassland agriculture and the livelihood of people living in rural areas.

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the beautiful city of Lanzhou, which locates at the bank of the Yellow River with headwaters in the heartlands of China's grassland.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zhibiao Nan". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Dr Zhibiao Nan

Professor, Grassland Science, Lanzhou University, China

Academician, Chinese Academy of Engineering

Chairman, 4th IGAC Organizing Committee

March 28, 2018