



## **Press release**

**International Parliamentary Network on Tibet, December 14 2009**

### **Parliamentarians call for global action on Tibet climate change crisis**

Thirty-five Parliamentarians from 16 different countries have written to the head of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen urging negotiators to take into account the global implications of climate change in Tibet.

Tibet, the world's largest and highest plateau, is the 'world's third pole' because it contains the biggest ice fields outside of the Arctic and Antarctic. The Tibetan plateau is warming twice as fast as the rest of the world and the impact of the now melting glaciers will be catastrophic. No other area in the world is a water repository of such size, serving as a lifeline for much of a continent and for millions of people downstream.

The Parliamentarians note in their letter that according to scientists, the Chinese government's land-use policies of fast-track urbanization, infrastructure construction and resource exploitation are contributing to the acceleration of global warming and environmental destruction in Tibet. Chinese government policies that settle and displace nomads from the grasslands run counter to the latest scientific research that livestock mobility is critical to the health of the grasslands and that grazing can mitigate the negative warming effects on the rangelands. This means that Tibetans are being deprived of the stewardship of their land at a time of environmental crisis.

Matteo Mecacci, President, Tibet Intergroup of the Italian Parliament, said today: ""The issue of the environmental degradation of the Tibetan plateau and the impact of climate change there should be addressed specifically by the Copenhagen summit. The policies of China toward Tibet are undermining not only the livelihood of Tibetan nomads and stakeholders, but also the preservation of natural resources that matter not only for Tibetans, but for hundreds of million of people in Asia and beyond. Therefore, we urge the negotiators in Copenhagen to address the issue of climate change in Tibet.""

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