

BITS & SPURS

Zimbabwe, Africa August 17, 2024

CJ, as the only editor of any ranching magazine who ever devoted the time to visit and see the work here (and attend one of my courses in Nevada 30 years ago), I know this will interest you. As you will remember, we have four months rain and eight months dry with average rainfall of 24 inches.

We have gone through more than 20 years of rainfall well below that average and

have improved the land far beyond the state you photographed when here. We did that by increasing cattle about 400 percent using the Holistic Planned Grazing process you have often written about. This year we ended the rains with the worst season, or drought, on record and when last here at end of rains the staff were almost panicking and wanting to destock.

Before destocking I insisted that they first follow the grazing planning process to make that decision. They took an hour to follow the planning process and that indicated no need to destock. Now, with about three months to go till we can expect rain and growth, it is obvious to everyone that we need far more cattle—at least a doubling—to even keep pace with the improved production of the land. The photos show how our main grazing area looks now—not a hope in hell of adequately grazing the grass we have in the months left.

We literally have, since the mid-1960s, never, ever, had a single failure in any country

with this process. What we have is thousands of ranchers *not* do it, and then say it does not work, or academics and ranchers develop derivatives by the dozen that all dropped the planning process in favour of so many rotational and adaptive, or mob grazing systems.

Oh how I wish ranchers weren't so damn stupidly stubborn or listening to bloody academics. To this day not a single cattlemen's organization has ever supported our work despite the tragically dying western ranching culture you so well represent. At least you have been consistent and supportive for which I will always be grateful.

—Allan Savory

And there's more...

Savory says, "Much in the media, academia, etc., about climate change is BS and the carbon trading is evil and being massively exploited corruptly in my view. What is real is this. The greatest danger and problem humans face is global biodiversity loss and desertification fueling mega-fires and increasingly erratic and violent climate. And these inevitably are now feeding on each other in an escalating spiral. And the *only* point at which we can break that cycle is not at atmospheric but ground level on our ranches, and pastoral lands, etc., using millions more cattle, sheep and goats (as we are so effectively showing here). And it is not going to be solved by whining about fossil fuels and focusing on how many parts per million of carbon are in the air and how much cows burp or whether we should make plastic meat and all be vegan.

"Desertification is real—as many failed civilizations under sand testify—and as we see even in research protected plots and national parks managed by bureaucrats, greens and academics in the United States. See picture at left of land managed by the National Park Service with full support of all the big environmental organizations." ■

Allan Savory is an ecologist, farmer, rancher, teacher of international reputation, plus president and co-founder of the Savory Institute operating in 30 countries. He originated holistic management, a systems thinking approach to managing resources. Part of his extraordinary successes and life can be found online via savory.global and he should have won a Nobel Prize before Al Gore and Barack Obama. Dozens of stories related to holistic management and Allan Savory can be found via rangedex.com. Don't miss "Saving the World," "The Power of New Thinking," and "Saving the Culture" in RANGE magazine's Spring 2001 issue.



ABOVE: Allan Savory often walks in the bush with a few of his cattle, always analyzing production. BELOW LEFT: One of Dimbangombe's farm fields shows that there is too much grass. BELOW RIGHT: This is National Park Service land in Chaco Canyon, N.M., and a good example of desertification. "While ecologically illiterate people call for artificial meat and veganism," Savory says, "reality is that ONLY millions more cattle can reverse the real threat." Savory has been teaching holistic planned grazing for more than 50 years and just celebrated his 89th birthday. He and his wife Jody Butterfield live in Zimbabwe and Florida. For more information, go to savory.global and—if you care about the future and don't want to live through the Green New Deal—consider supporting the Savory Institute in Boulder, Colo., and the Africa Centre for Holistic Management in Zimbabwe. Right now they are trying to restock in Africa and need to buy a thousand head of cattle. Maybe Hans Wyss, the Packard Foundation or George Soros' Open Society Foundation will sponsor a few?



PHOTOS COURTESY ALLAN SAVORY

