



**THE DONKEY
SANCTUARY**

DONKEYS: ***PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE*** *(focus on East Africa)*

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7th African Animal Welfare Conference
Kigali, Rwanda

Sep 25, 2023

Content of the talk

- Highlight on **domestication** of donkeys
- Mapping the **changing roles** of donkeys across time
- Exploring Key **drivers of change**
- **Impact on demographic changes,**
- **Case of East Africa:** *Ethiopia in focus*
- A **two-pronged scenario** depicting donkeys future
- **Conclusion with a call for collective action**



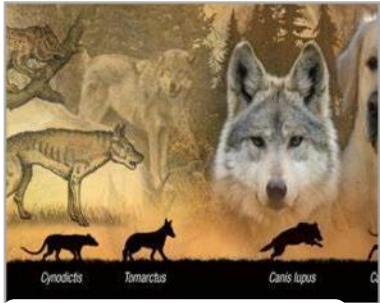
Donkeys 1st working animals domesticated (7000yrs ago)

39 scientists, 37 labs:

Todd et al., *Science* 377, 1172–1180 (2022), Sept 2022



PETS: Companion animals (>10,000yrs)



Dog

LIVESTOCK: Animals Food animals (>8000yrs)



Sheep

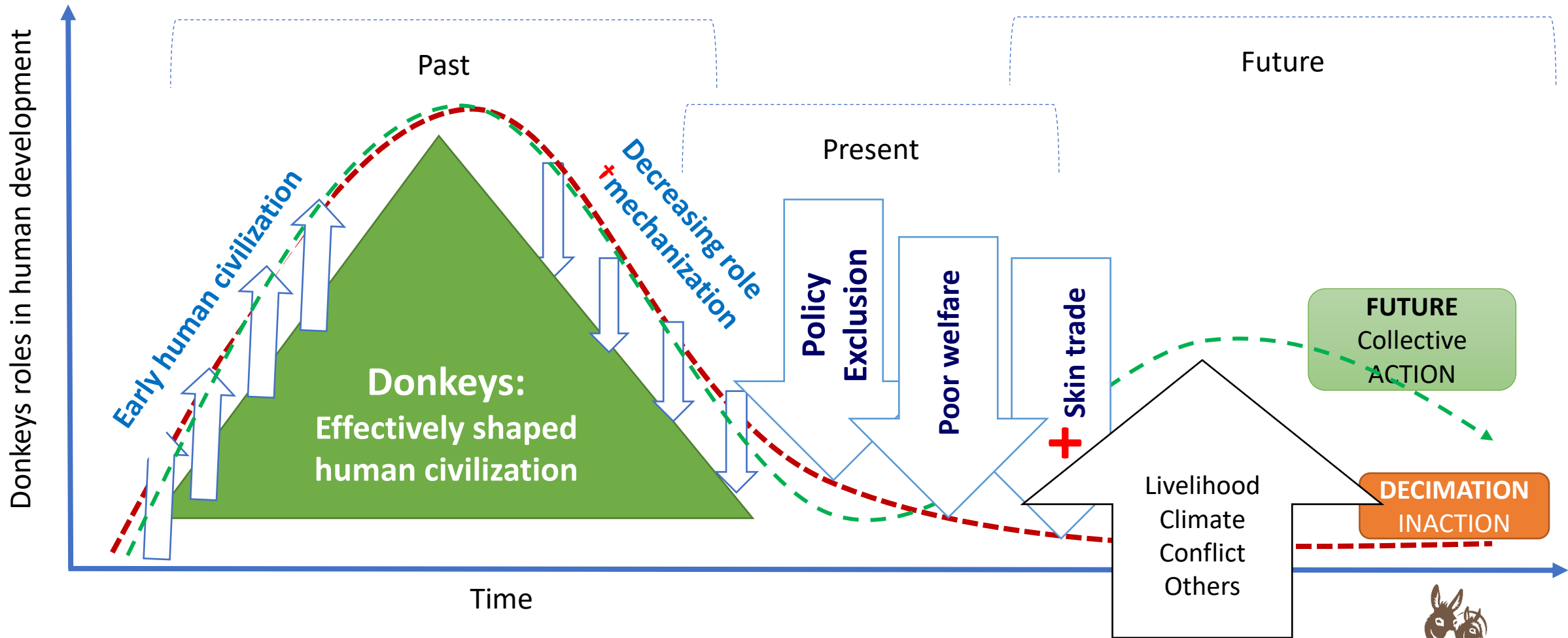
WORK: labor, transport: 7000



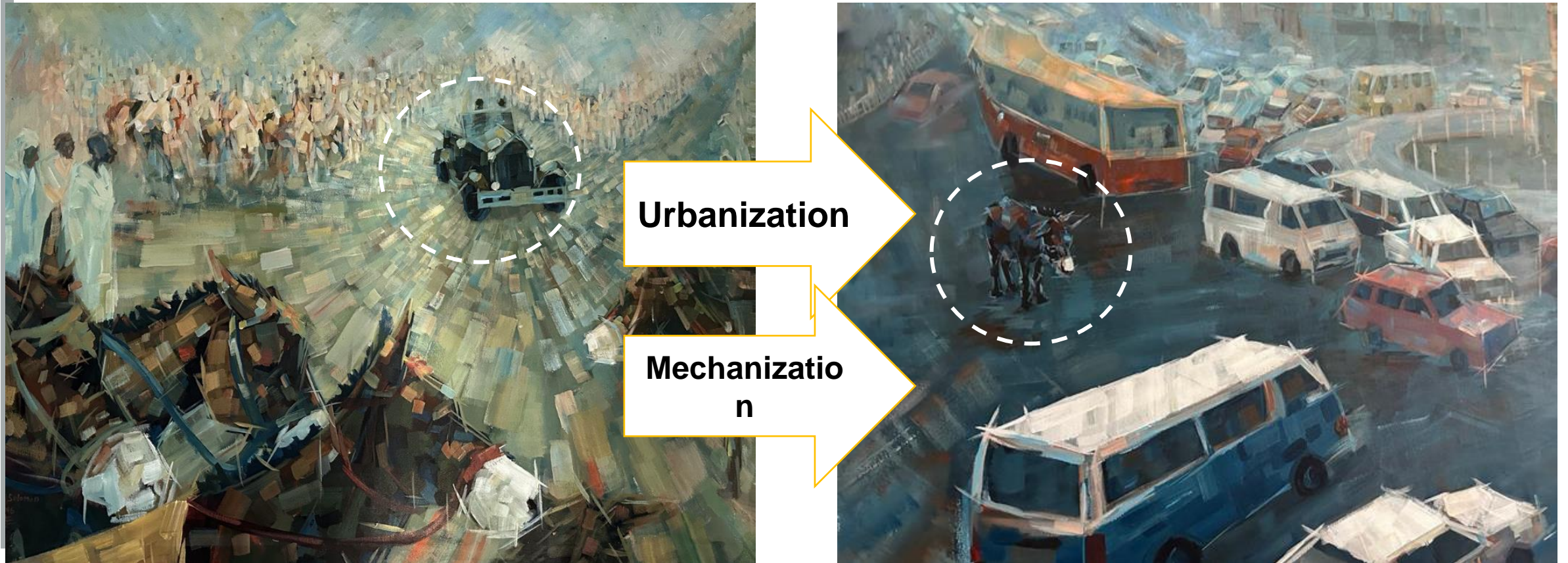
Donkey



Mapping the *changing roles* of donkeys across the millennia



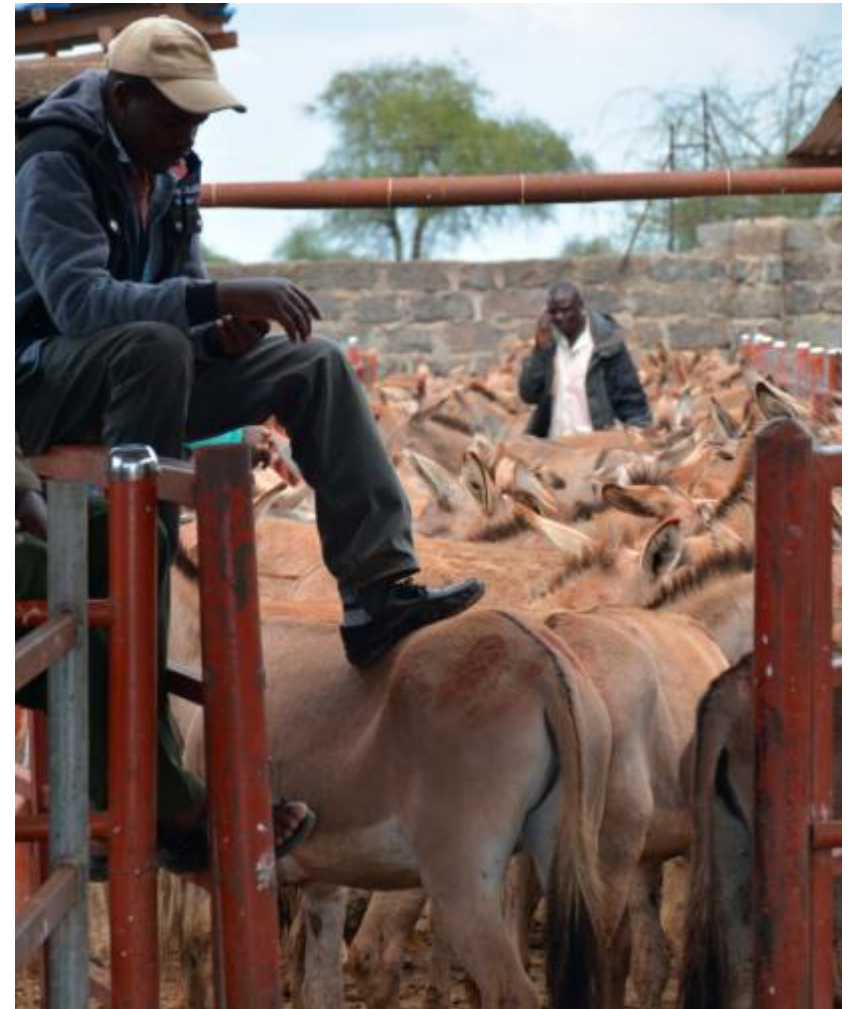
Keys drivers for the change: **global scale**



Mass Slaughtering of Donkeys

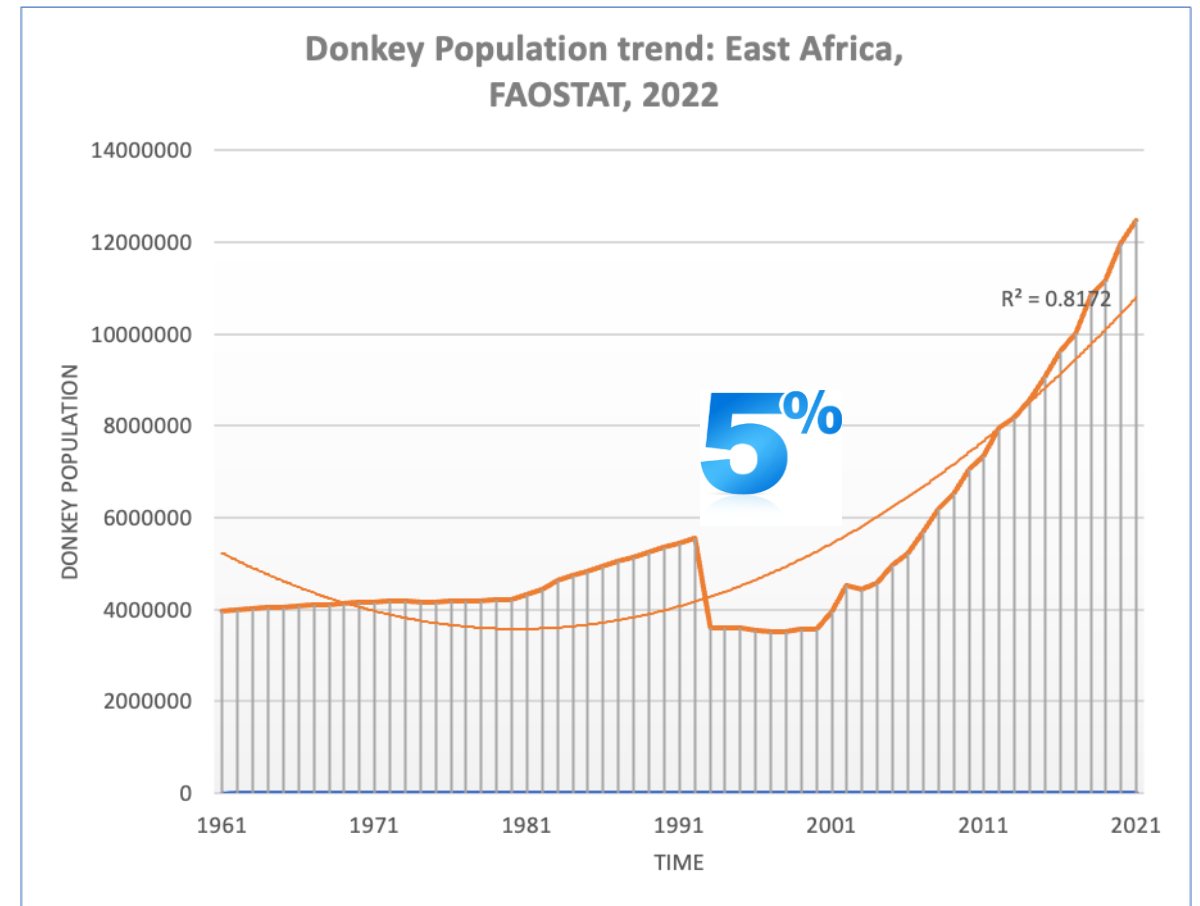
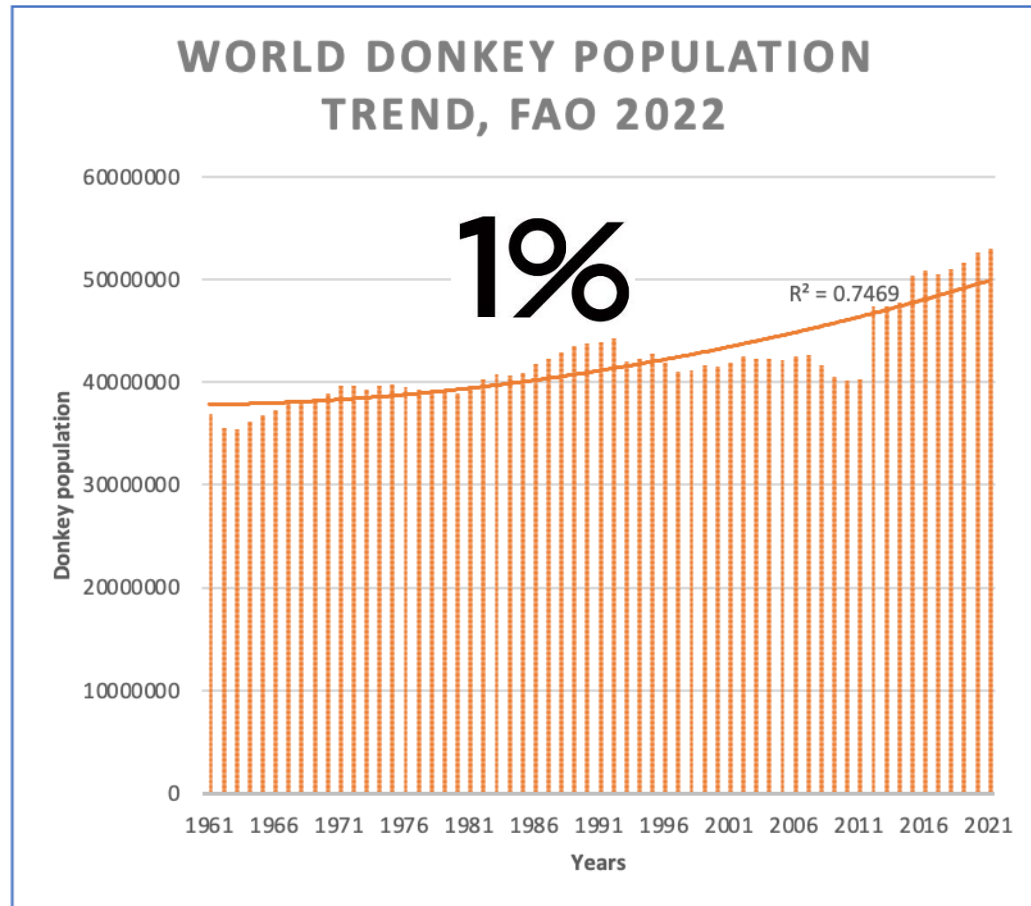
REPORT 1

THE GLOBAL TRADE
IN DONKEY SKINS:
A TICKING TIME BOMB



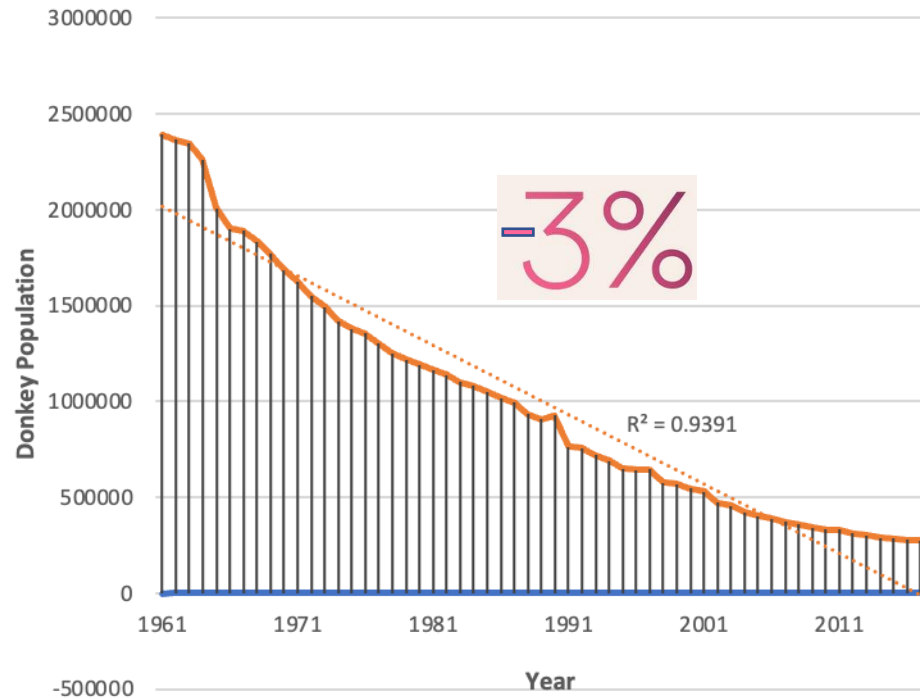
Other factors –
Religious beliefs, Access to modern
science and technology, Access to
services etc

Donkeys demographic changes: Global vs East Africa

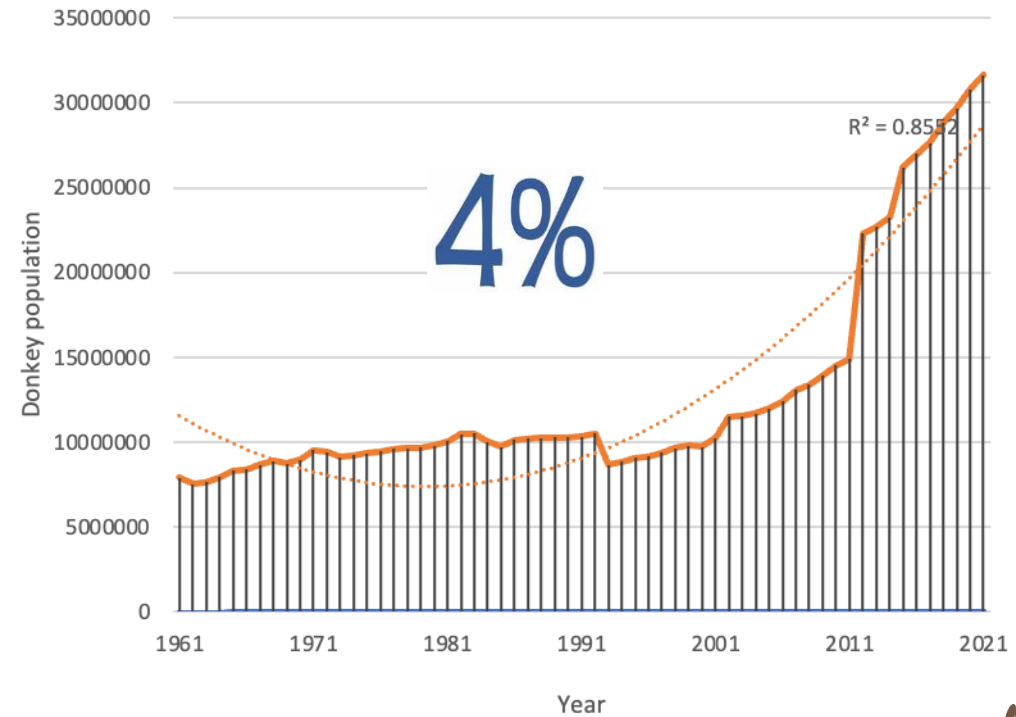


Comparing Donkey Population trend of *The EU Developed Vs Least Developed Countries*

Donkey Pop' Trend: **Europe** Total, FAOSTAT 2022



Donkey population trend: **least Developed countries** (FAOSTAT 2022)

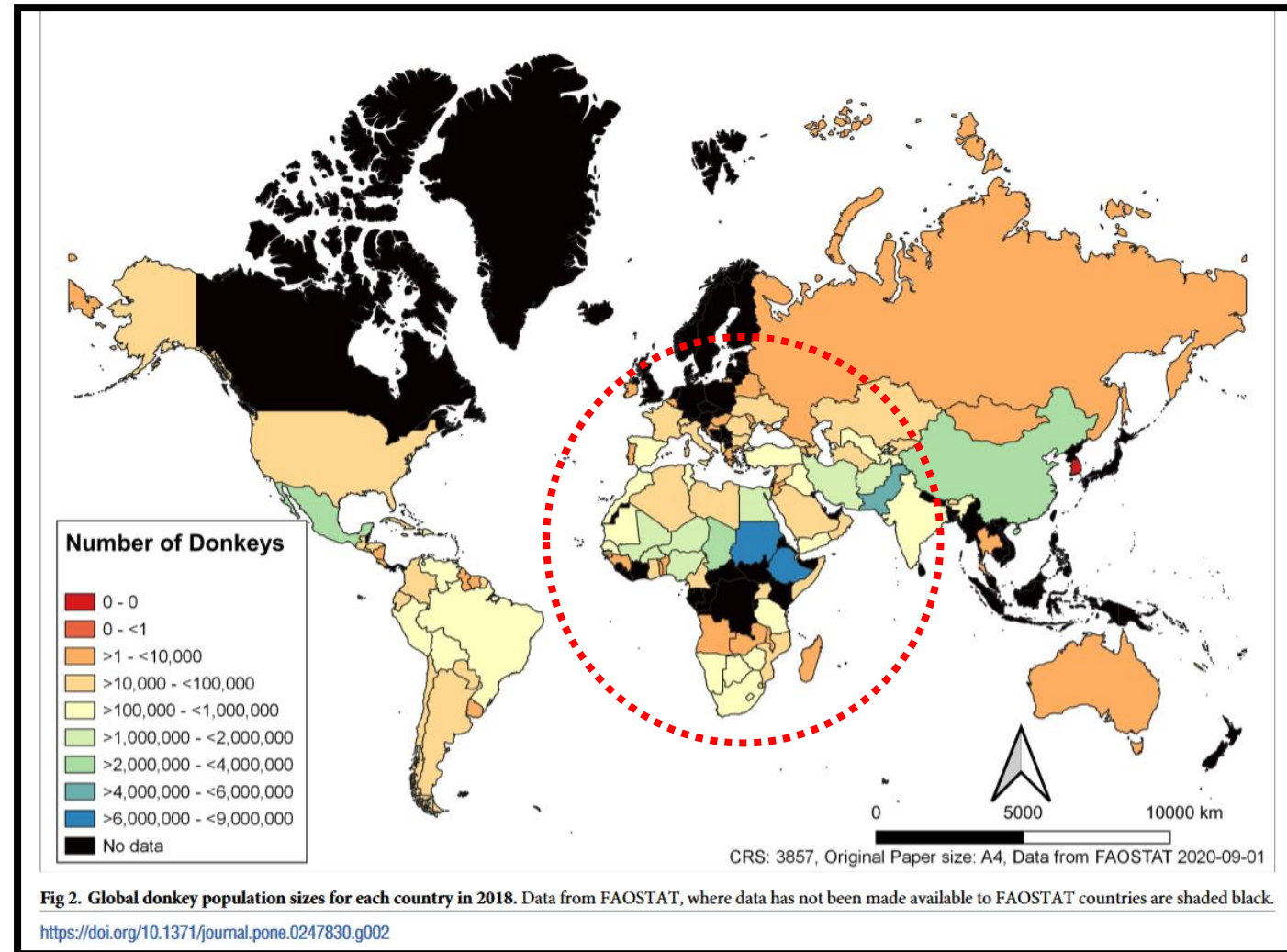


Global distribution of donkey Population

64% (33 million) of world donkeys are on duty in Africa

East Africa accounts for **24% (12.5 million)** of world donkey population,

(37% of African donkeys)

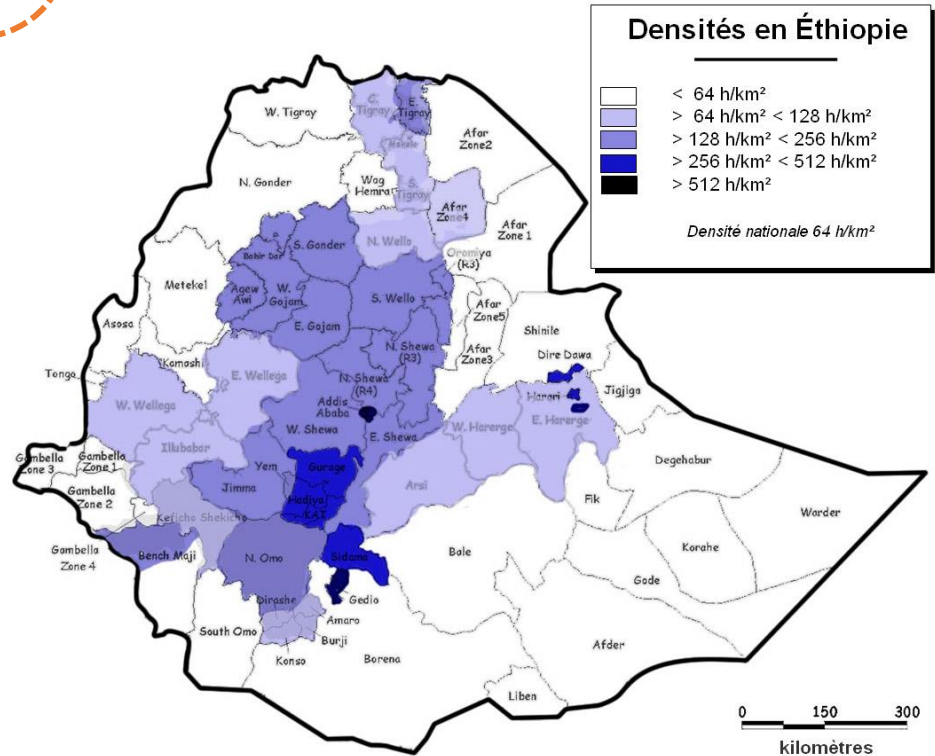


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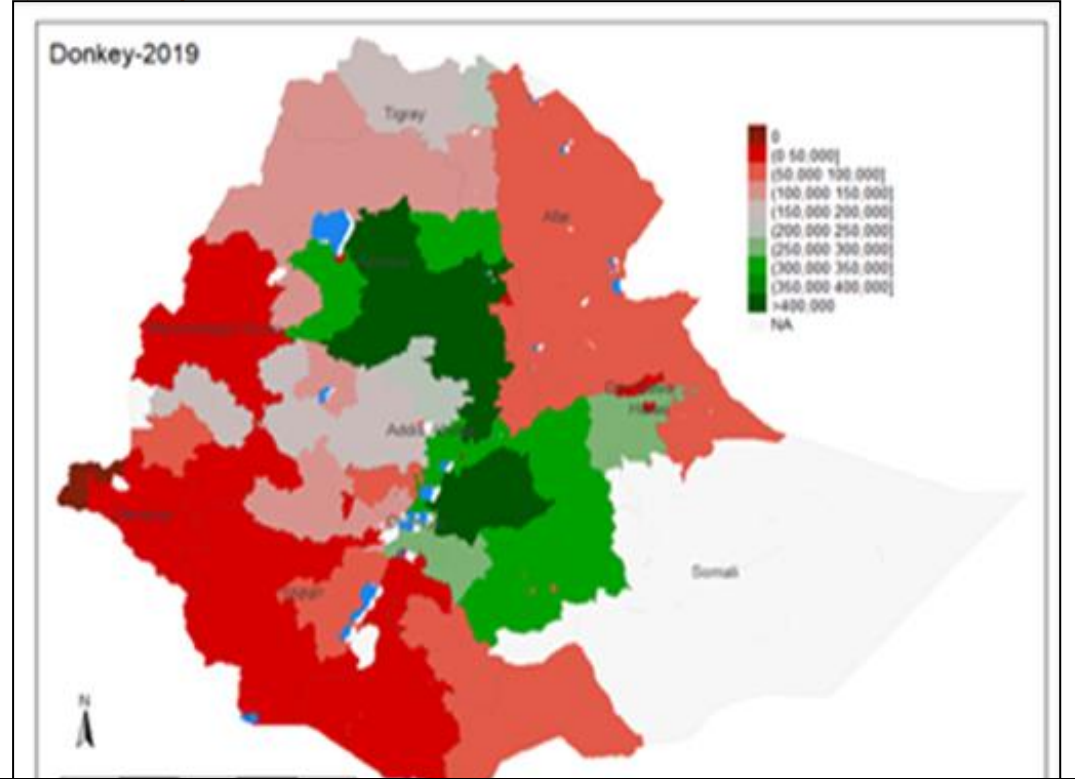
Ethiopia: Donkey population density correlates with human population density

89% of donkeys serve in highland

81% of people live in the highland



Distribution of human population in Ethiopia, CSA, 2022

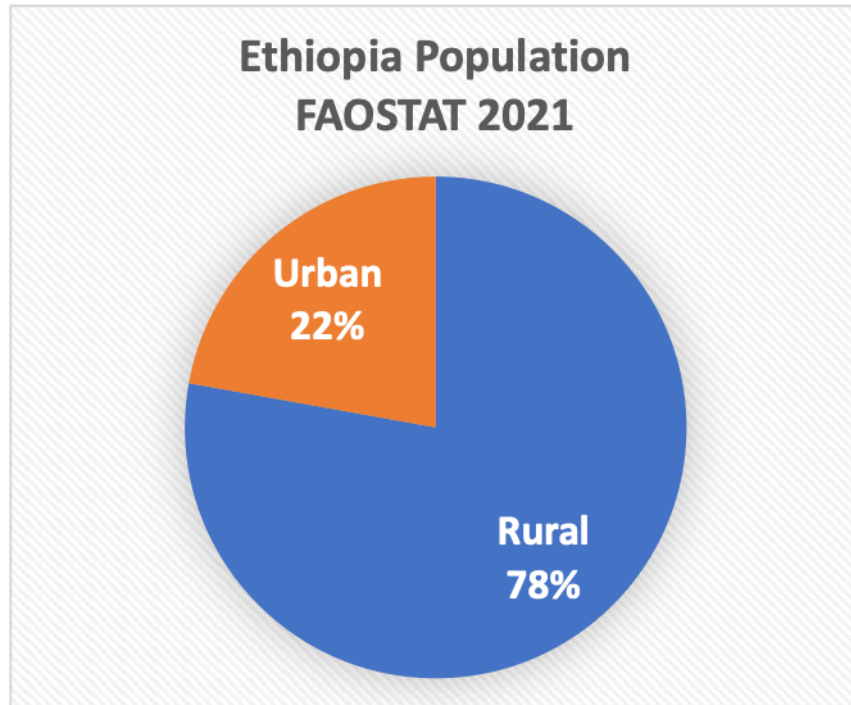


Distribution of Donkey Population in Ethiopia, CSA 2019

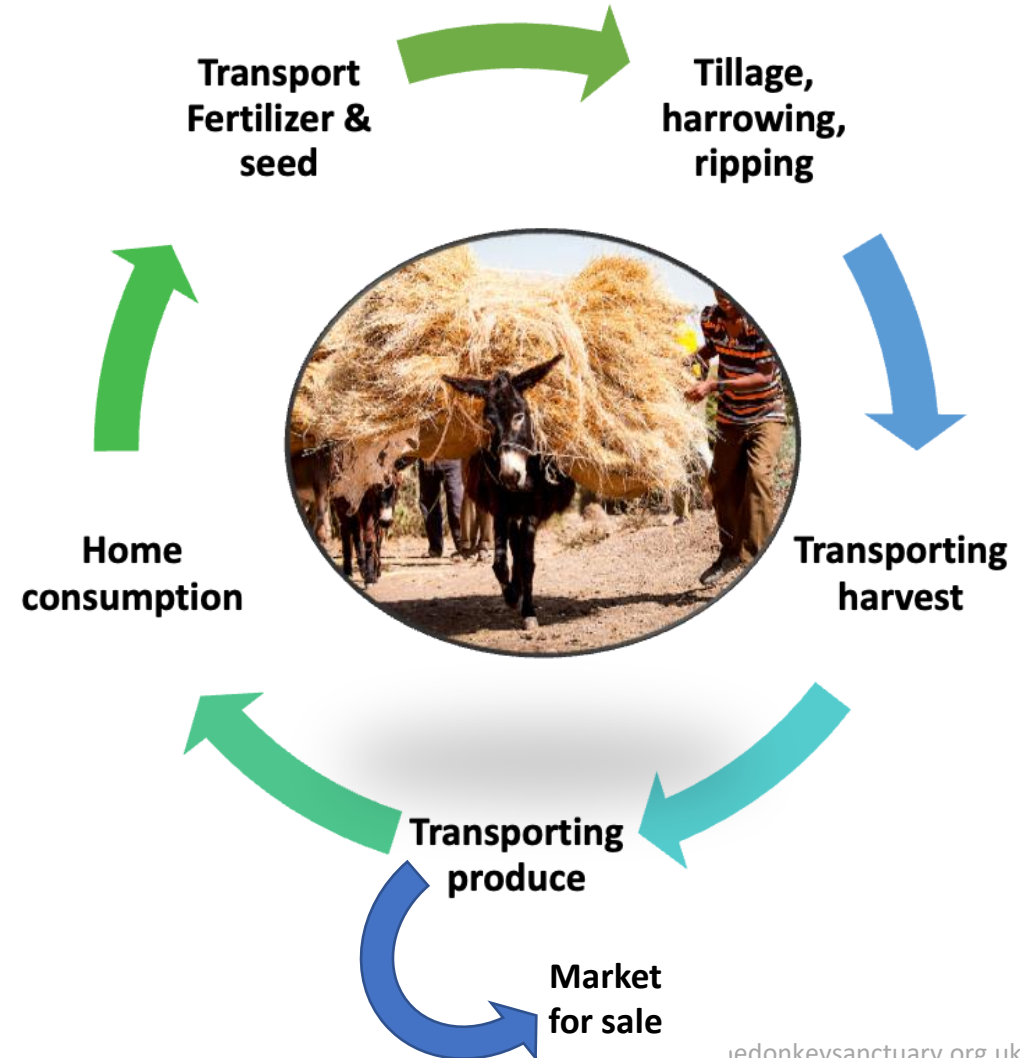


1. Donkeys remain integral to **RURAL LIVELIHOODS**

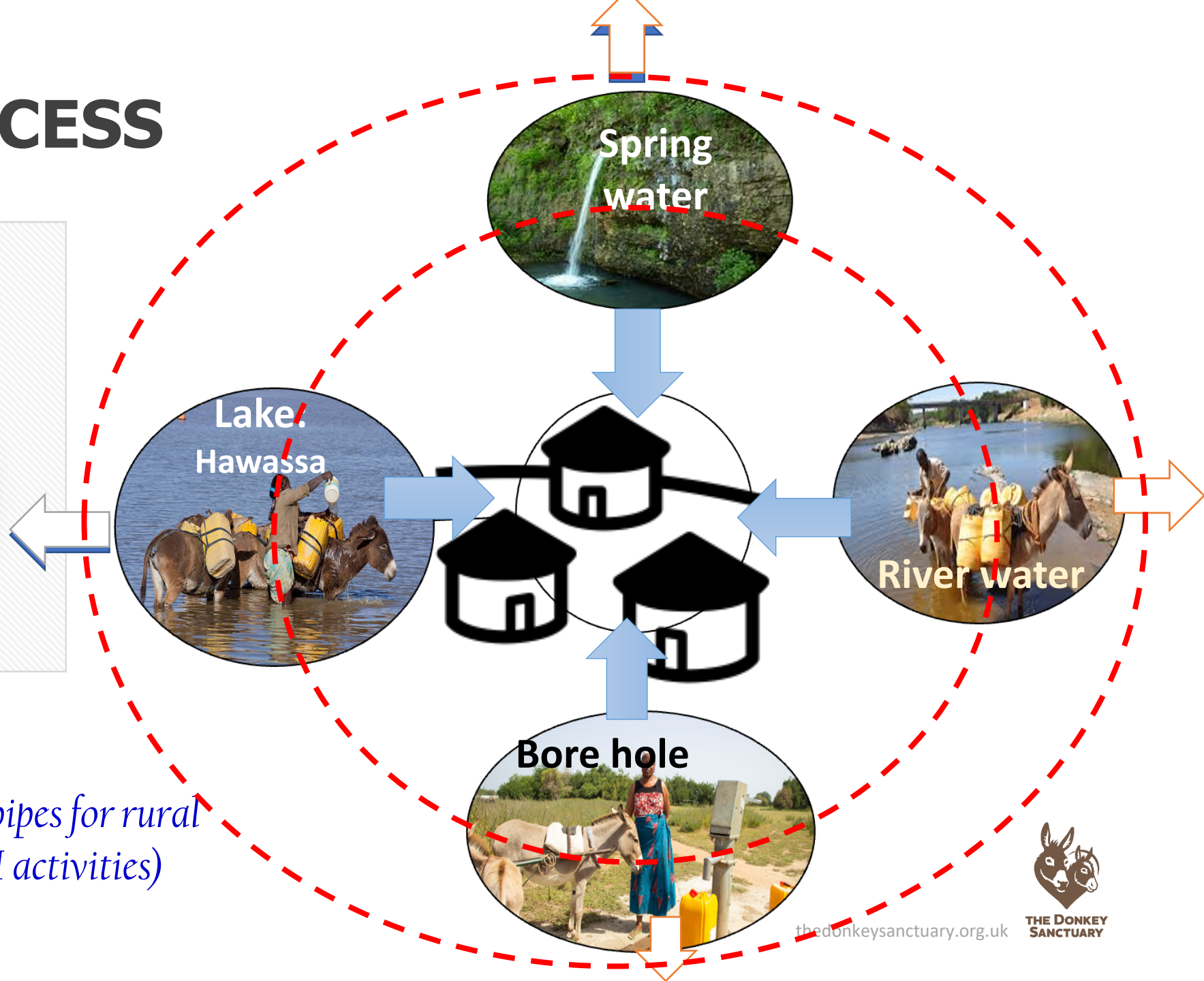
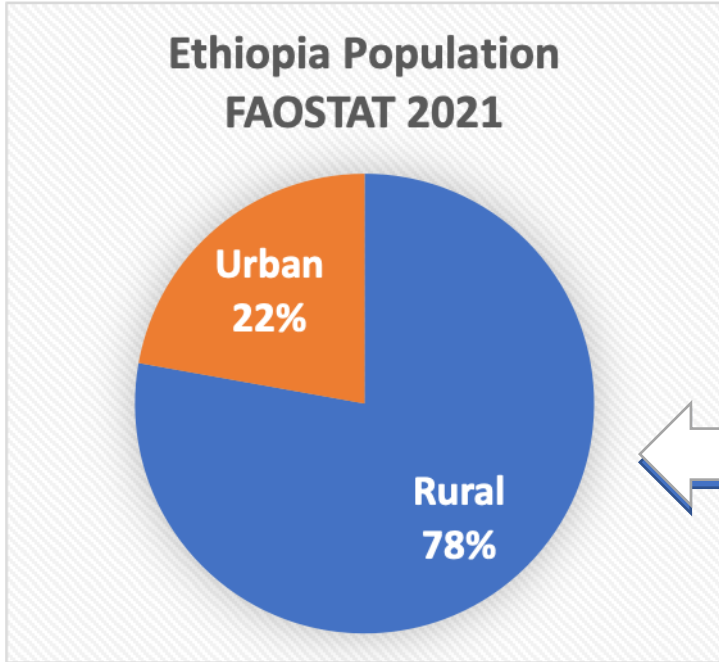
(Donkeys in Crop Production cycle (*farm* → *fork*, 365 days of a donkey))



Donkeys vital role to access primary markets for rural households



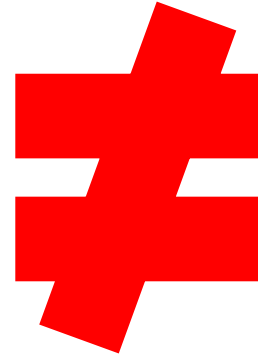
2. WATER ACCESS



Donkeys serve as water pipes for rural villages (HHds WASH activities)



3. Donkey's contribution to **WOMEN QUALITY OF LIFE**



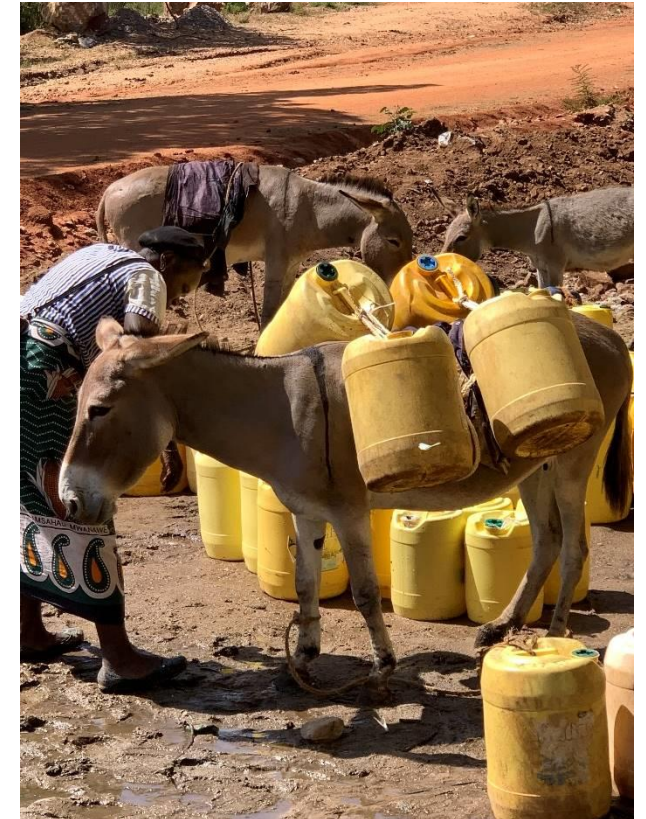
4. Donkeys as SELF – EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

(Migration of the youth from rural → urban for employment)



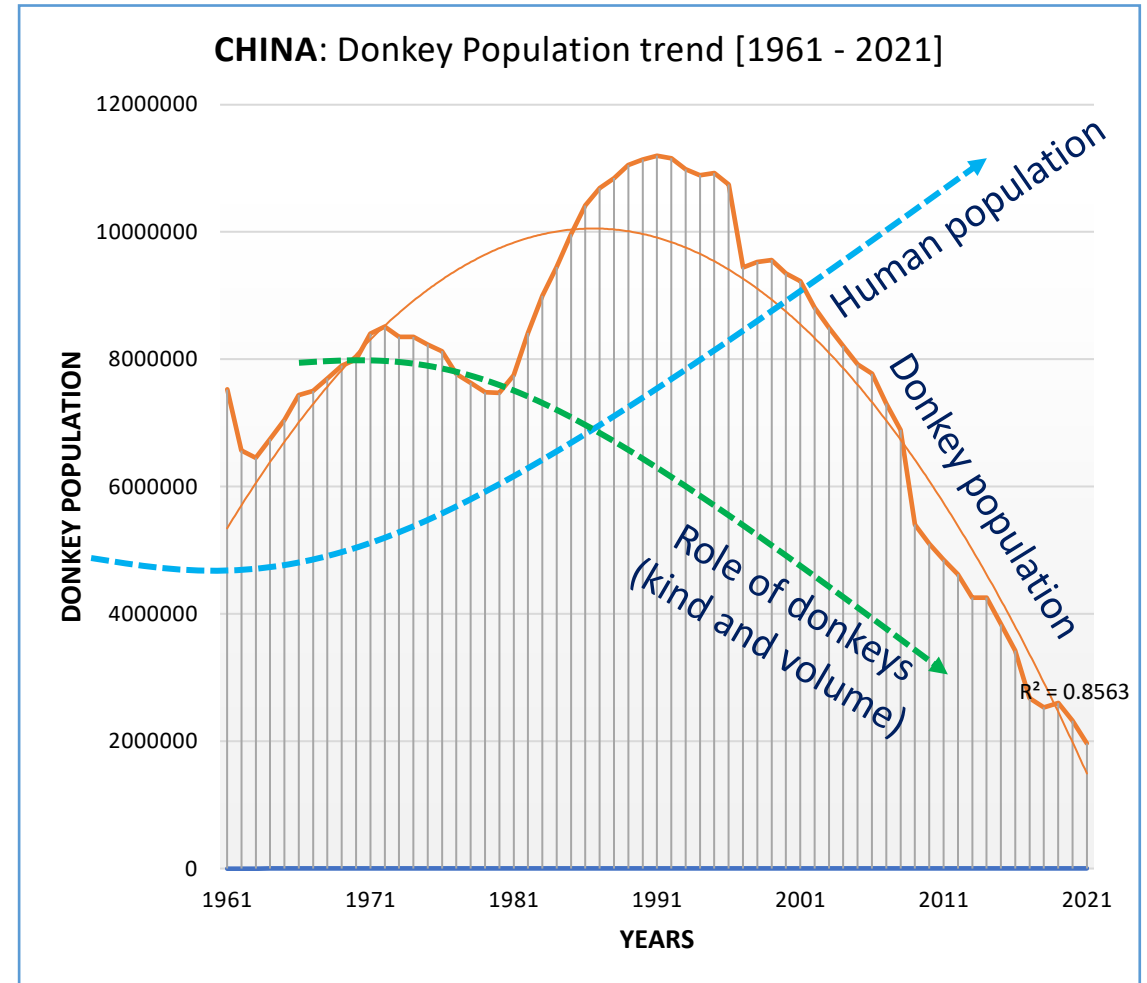
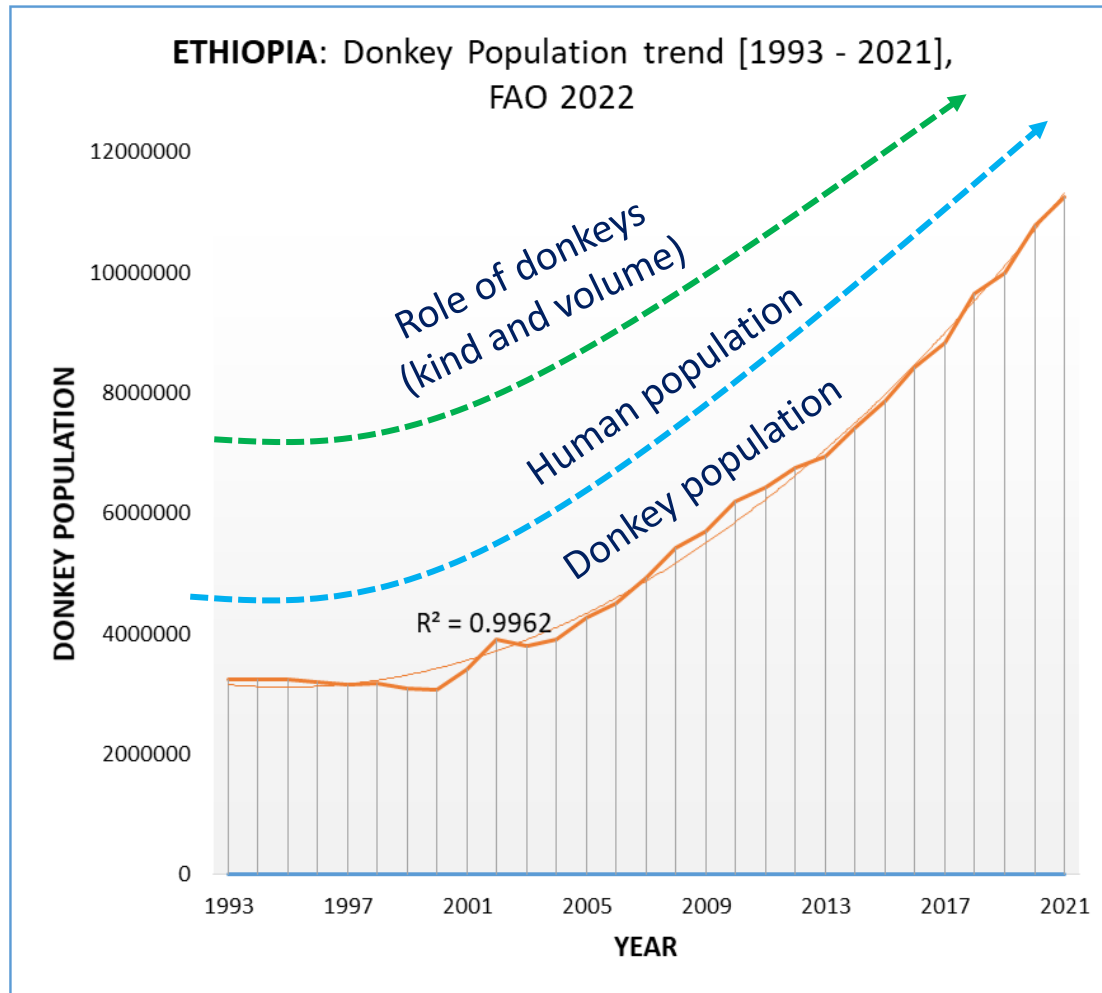
4. Mitigation Role - Conflict and climate extremes

- (Conflict) Donkeys supporting refugees (IDPs)
- Natural Disaster (Climate) (Refugees)



Sudanese refugees from the Tandelti area who crossed into Chad, at Koufroun, near Echbara, are seen on April 30, 2023. (Gueipeur Denis Sassou /AFP via Getty Images)

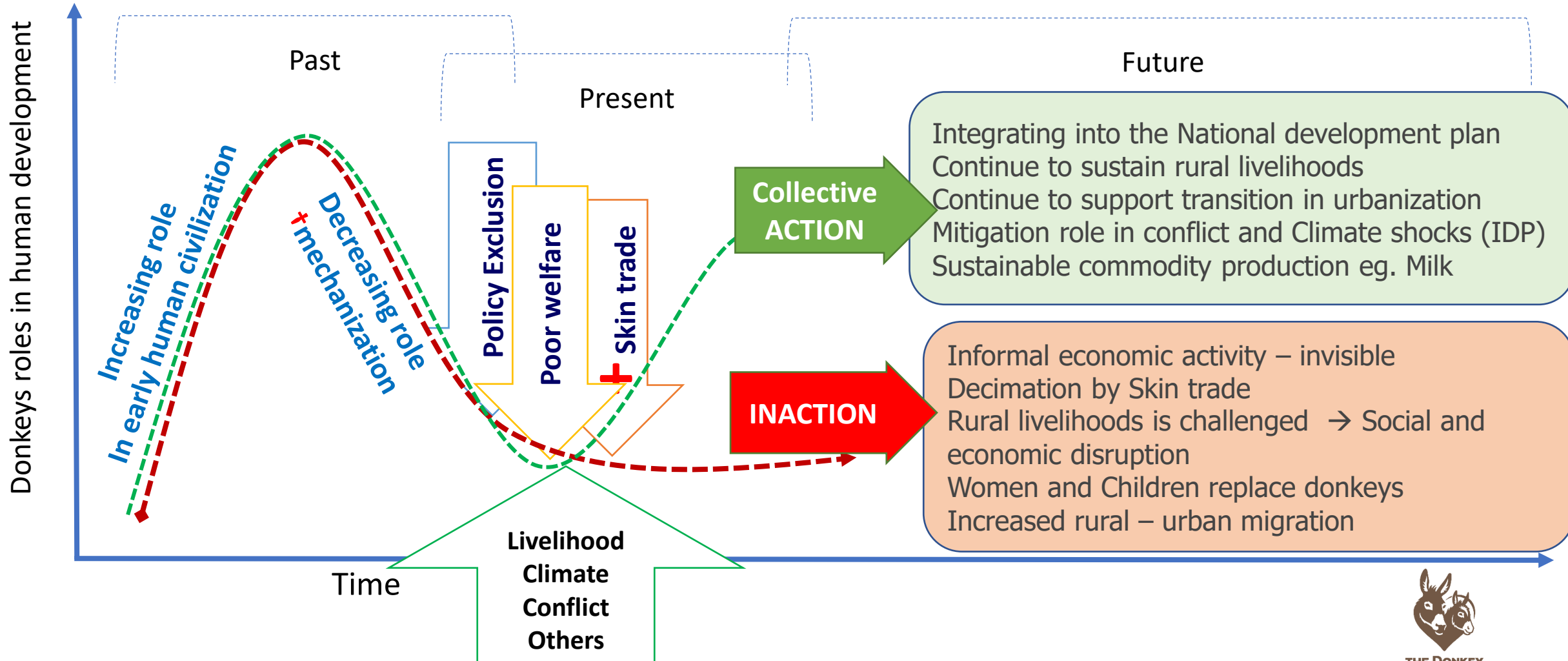
Ethiopia: Roles, donkey population, human population are on the rise



FUTURE **ROLE** OF DONKEYS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

2 – scenarios: No Action → **Decimation**

Collective Action → **Rescued,**



CONCLUSION and WAY FORWARD

- Donkeys had remarkable **foot prints in human civilization**.
- Present a **RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE** and **AFFORDABLE** power source for small holder farmer
- Donkeys remain **integral to resilience building in rural** communities of East Africa
- Donkeys continue to play essential role in **urbanization process**
- Donkeys continue to play crucial role in **disaster relief and emergency**
- **East Africa**, more than any other region, is **not ready for skin trade**: hence the need for a 15 years moratorium
- A call for **integration of efforts**, policies and strategies to recognize role of working animals in national, regional and international development plans and hence the need to improve their welfare



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