



COMMUNITY LAND SUMMIT

PROTECTING THE COMMONS FOR
A SHARED FUTURE

5TH EDITION

**“Enhance mobile indigenous peoples’
livelihoods through secure tenure rights,
executive pastoral policy environment for prosperity”**

Declaration Communique

Dates: 24th to 27th November 2025
Venue: Nairobi-Kenya School of Monetary Studies.

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Preamble:

- We affirm that secure land tenure is the foundation for the cultural survival, economic resilience, and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and pastoralist communities in East Africa.
- We recognize the critical role of robust Community Land Management Committees (CLMCs) and traditional institutions as the legitimate governance structures for managing our ancestral lands and resources.
- We celebrate our Indigenous Knowledge (IK) systems and biocultural protocols, which have sustained the functional ecosystems and biodiversity of our rangelands and forests for generations.
- We affirm our right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and other international instruments, which is non-negotiable for any project affecting our lands, territories, and resources.
- We acknowledge the potential of carbon markets to contribute to global climate goals, but only if they are founded on transparency, equity, and the full respect of our rights.
- We emphasize that harmonized national laws and the full accountability of governments to uphold court rulings on our land rights are essential for justice and peace.
- We believe that joint community-government management models are the most effective path towards sustainable land governance and conflict prevention.

Concerned:

- The slow and ineffective registration of community lands across East Africa, which leaves our territories vulnerable to land grabbing and unsustainable investments, including non-transparent carbon projects.
- The continued existence and creation of conflicting national laws that undermine the land tenure security of IPs and pastoralists, creating legal loopholes for their dispossession.
- The widespread failure to operationalize FPIC and equitable benefit-sharing frameworks reduces our communities to mere beneficiaries rather than rights-holding partners in climate initiatives and other land-based investments.
- The lack of accountability and enforcement mechanisms for national and regional court rulings that affirm IP land rights, rendering legal victories meaningless on the ground.
- The alarming lack of transparency in carbon market projects, leading to secret contracts, inequitable benefit sharing, and a high risk of greenwashing, which exploits our lands and goodwill.
- The persistent marginalization of pastoralist voices in policy forums and the chronic underfunding of research that supports our sustainable livelihoods, such as that focused on climate-adapted livestock breeds.
- The weakness of formal dispute resolution mechanisms and the frequent disregard for our effective traditional systems for resolving land and resource conflicts.
- The absence of a dedicated regional platform to coordinate and advocate for the cross-border rights and interests of pastoralists and IPs, who are essential actors in the East African ecosystem.

We Commit:

- To strengthen our CLMCs and community institutions to enhance their capacity for transparent land governance, negotiation with investors, and sustainable resource management.
- To document and assert our biocultural protocols and Indigenous Knowledge systems as the foundation for our land use plans and climate adaptation strategies.
- To actively participate in the establishment of a Regional Pastoralist & IP Coordination Platform to amplify our collective voice and bargaining power.
- To utilize our traditional dispute resolution mechanisms and engage with formal systems to peacefully resolve land and resource conflicts within and between communities.
- To demand full transparency in all carbon markets and other benefit-sharing projects on our lands, and to build our internal capacity to understand, negotiate, and monitor such agreements.
- To mobilize our own resources and knowledge to champion research and practices that support our adapted livestock breeds and climate-resilient livelihoods.

Call on Governments and development actors to:

- i. Fast-track the documentation and registration of all community lands** to provide the legal foundation for secure tenure, sustainable investment, and the prevention of conflicts.
- ii. Harmonize national laws** to eliminate conflicts and ensure they align with international standards, such as UNDRIP and ILO C169, that protect the rights of IPs and pastoralists.
- iii. Operationalize and enforce mandatory FPIC and equitable benefit-sharing frameworks** for all land-based investments, including carbon projects, ensuring contracts are public and terms are fair.
- iv. Strengthen accountability mechanisms** to ensure the full and timely implementation of court rulings concerning IP and pastoralist land rights.
- v. Promote and legally recognize joint community-government management models** for shared resources, protected areas, and rangelands.
- vi. Establish a transparent and culturally appropriate grievance redress mechanism** at the project, national, and regional levels that IPs and pastoralists can trust.
- vii. Improve transparency in carbon markets** by mandating the public disclosure of project boundaries, contracts, and revenue distribution, and by ensuring independent community-led monitoring.
- viii. Mobilize dedicated resources** to amplify the voices of pastoralists and IPs in policy dialogues at local, national, and regional levels.
- ix. Direct climate finance and research funding** to support community-led initiatives focused on adapted livestock breeds and climate-resilient pastoralism

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