



Indigenous people in Kenya reject attempts to re-start troubled carbon credit project

Description

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Indigenous people in Kenya reject carbon credit project

A carbon credit project which Meta and Netflix have used stands accused of coercion of Indigenous people.

Indigenous people in Northern Kenya have accused the controversial conservation organisation Northern Rangelands Trust of “tricks and dishonest dealings”. And they’ve denounced its attempt to revive its notorious and twice-suspended Northern Kenya Grassland Carbon Project.

Northern Rangelands Trust is pushing Indigenous communities in the project area to sign agreements that it presents as a solution to the project’s crisis but could in fact further reduce community control over their ability to graze their livestock, and to manage their own lands

Maasai and Rendille people living in the Leparua and Melako conservancies say Northern Rangelands Trust is coercing them into signing the agreements.

Northern Kenya Grassland Carbon Project has sold carbon credits to Meta, Netflix and other multinationals. But the project severely curtails the traditional grazing practices of the Maasai, Borana, Samburu and other cattle-herding peoples whose lands are used to generate credits.

Rose Orguba, a human rights defender and member of the Melako Conservancy community land management committee, told Survival:

Many felt they were being pressured, intimidated, or rushed through this process, which should be transparent, inclusive, and based on free, prior, and informed consent.

The people that were transported in buses to the [meeting] venue were coached to agree to sign without reading the document.

Ninety per cent of the community are illiterate. Hence propaganda was used, saying that they have to sign today, it's only today that they sign or carbon money will be lost forever.

Carbon credits worth millions

Northern Rangelands Trust has sold more than six million carbon credits. The *Wall Street Journal* values these between \$42m and \$90m. Yet many people living within the project area never received proper information about the carbon project or its impact on their lands. Without their [free, prior and informed consent](#) there is no legal basis for the carbon project.

In recent years several crises have hit the project. The certification body Verra has [twice suspended its verification of the project](#)

In 2019 a court ruled that one of the key conservancies taking part in the project was created illegally. Kenya's parliament impose new obligations on those behind the booming carbon credit industry.

International media reports and several civil society investigations documented involvement by Northern Rangelands Trust rangers in violence, killings, forced disappearances and intimidation. These allegations were borne out in a 2025 court case of community members against Northern Rangelands Trust.

Jackson Lokadelio from Leparua Conservancy said:

As the Leparua Conservancy community, we do not understand this Northern Rangelands Trust carbon project agreement. We also cannot accept being called just to sign a document without knowing what is inside it. Because if we sign the document without understanding what is inside, it will be like we have agreed to give away our land. I also ask everyone not to be misled by money.

Caroline Pearce, director of Survival International said:

The brave resistance to these new agreements shows that Indigenous people are not going to simply rubber-stamp a project that is making profit off their lands without respecting their lives and rights.

Northern Rangelands Trust's carbon project has also been discredited by court rulings and carbon market suspensions. It's high time the certifier Verra finally scraps the project and ends this shameful farce.

Featured image via Survival International / Leparua Community member

By [The Canary](#)

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