

Maasai International Solidarity Alliance (MISA)* Newsletter

September–October 2024

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- **CIDSE and MISA launch policy brief on biodiversity finance and Indigenous Peoples' rights**
- **MISA members speaking at Biodiversity COP 26 in Columbia**
- **Maasai movement victory: Government reinstates deregistered villages in Ngorongoro**
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MISA launches Maasai conservation vision

The Maasai International Solidarity Alliance (MISA) is proud to announce the launch of the Maasai Conservation Vision, a comprehensive document developed by Maasai elders, women and youth from 26 villages across five districts in northern Tanzania (Ngorongoro, Longido, Monduli, Simanjiro and Kiteto). This visionary document represents the collective voices of over 520 Maasai community members who have united to assert their rights to land, pastoralism and peaceful coexistence with wildlife.

The Maasai Conservation Vision provides a powerful alternative to the colonial, fortress-style conservation models that have been imposed on Maasai, leading to displacement of people and land alienation. It outlines the community's demands for an alternative approach to

conservation grounded in the right to communal land, the protection of traditional pastoralist practices and the transfer of wildlife management and tourism into community hands. The document was launched on 11 September at the [Tropentag scientific conference](#) hosted by the [Institute of Development Research, BOKU](#) (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences) in Vienna, Austria, where CELEP also screened a [number of films on pastoralism](#) worldwide as part of its Perspectives on Pastoralism Film Festival.



See the full press release [here](#). The one-page visual summary of the Maasai vision for conservation can be found [here](#) and the full vision document can be found [here](#).



Photo: Joseph Oleshangay presenting the Maasai conservation vision at Tropentag workshop

You can watch the recording of the event [here](#).

While in Austria, a MISA delegation met with Austrian officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Climate Ministry to discuss matters related to landscape-based conservation and the need to push for a conservation agenda that respects human rights and community land-use practices, especially in light of the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework. The international community has committed to conserve 30% of the earth's surface by 2030. Advocates of Indigenous Peoples' rights, including MISA, are concerned that this will lead to more displacement of people.

MISA delegation calls on UNESCO to implement inclusive policies that respect Indigenous Peoples' rights



Photo: MISA delegation in front of UNESCO headquarters in Paris

A MISA delegation met with representatives from the UNESCO World Heritage Site and Global Geopark at UNESCO headquarters in Paris on 16 September. MISA presented the extent to which UNESCO's recommendations have been used by the Tanzanian Government to justify the eviction of Maasai and other communities in Ngorongoro on the pretext that pastoralism is not compatible with World Heritage Site (WHS) policies. MISA also highlighted land dispossession, cultural erasure and exclusion of IPs from decision-making processes about the Ngorongoro WHS, and urged UNESCO to implement inclusive policies that respect IPs' sovereignty, traditions and sustainable stewardship of their ancestral lands. Here is a short [background document on UNESCO's involvement and MISA's demands](#).

MISA rejects the Ngorongoro-Lengai Geopark revalidation report

In July, two experts visited the Ngorongoro-Lengai Geopark to assess the implementation of its past recommendations and decide on its revalidation. The report, which was published ahead of the [UNESCO Global Geoparks Council](#) meeting on 8–9 September in Vietnam, gives a positive assessment (green light). MISA firmly rejects the conclusions of the UNESCO Geopark mission report, which results from a non-transparent process and was undertaken without the full participation and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) living in the Ngorongoro-Lengai Geopark. MISA is concerned about the potential negative impacts of the Geopark on community lands relating to tourism or environmental conservation, which should align with and respect community values, rights and priorities. MISA reached out to the two mission experts while they were in Tanzania, and [sent them a letter to share their concerns](#), but never received a response. Ahead of the UNESCO Global Geopark Council meeting on 8–9 September, [MISA wrote a letter to all the voting members of the Geopark Council, calling on them not to revalidate the Ngorongoro-Lengai Geopark](#), in light of ongoing human rights violations. MISA understands that no decision was taken during that meeting and the decision on Ngorongoro-lengai Geopark has been rescheduled

to December 2024.

The mission report overlooks critical flaws about the Geopark management structure, which claims to involve representatives of the various IPs living in the Geopark. Contrary to what is claimed by the Tanzanian Government, MISA has evidence that the Chairman of the Ngorongoro Pastoral Council (NPC) has not been invited to any meetings of the Geopark management board in the last two years. The main body responsible for ensuring IPs' participation has therefore not been included.

CIDSE and MISA launch policy brief on biodiversity finance and Indigenous Peoples' rights

The policy brief, entitled "[Protecting the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to Halt Biodiversity Loss](#)", takes the cases of the Maasai in Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania, and the Batwa in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo, as key examples of how biodiversity conservation can go wrong and lead to human rights violation. It highlights the importance of indigenous knowledge to respect and protect biodiversity and denounces the negative impacts of the 'fortress' conservation model that separates human inhabitants from nature and leads to displacement.

As the European Union (EU) is planning to allocate more funding to biodiversity conservation, the policy brief insists on the importance of recognising the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to use, own, access and control land and natural resources. It also calls on EU institutions to direct biodiversity finance towards promoting agroecology and pastoralism as efficient and viable biodiversity conservation strategies. The brief will be presented at [2024 United Nations Biodiversity Conference \(CBD COP16\)](#).



Photo: Maasai community meeting in northern Tanzania

For more information on green grabbing in the context of biodiversity conservation, see IPES report:

<https://ipes-food.org/green-grabbing-a-growing-threat-to-biodiversity-and-communities/>

MISA members heading to CBD COP16 in Cali, Colombia

MISA members have prepared three sets of activities in the context of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) from 21 October to 1 November 2024:

First, a critical side event will be organised by fellow members of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA). Titled “Biodiversity 2.0: Protecting Indigenous Rights and Food Sovereignty to Halt Biodiversity Loss”. This event will address the vital role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in preserving biodiversity.

Date: Wednesday, 30 October
Time: 10:10 Cali, 11:10 New York, 15:10 Dakar/Accra/London, 16:10 Brussels/Abuja, 17:10 Cape Town, 18:10 Nairobi.

Venue: Cocora – Subnational and Local Authorities Meeting Room, Plaza One, Blue Zone, and online [here on Zoom](#)

The event will feature the launch of our policy brief, showcasing Indigenous experiences and traditional knowledge as indispensable to global biodiversity efforts. Distinguished speakers, including Edward Porokwa (PINGOS Forum Tanzania), Ruth Kihui (Pastoral Women’s Council Tanzania) and Juan Felipe Martinez (REPAM Colombia), will share insights on sustainable land use and the ethical responsibility to protect biodiversity. For MISA members and allies attending CBD COP16, this is a unique opportunity to engage with leading voices on Indigenous rights and biodiversity. Let’s come together to support a future where biodiversity conservation goes hand in hand with the rights and wisdom of IPs.

Secondly, on the 28 October at 2pm in the COP16 Faith Hub, MISA members together with Maryknoll will present cases of evictions, the Biodiversity Vision and the Policy brief to a wider public. Representatives of the Pan Amazonian Ecclesial Network REPAM will also share their perspectives. Biodiversity conservation can have negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples and local communities if they are excluded.

Date: Monday, 28 October
Time: 2 pm
Venue: Faith Hub, Blue Zone

Thirdly, Survival International has published [a briefing](#) highlighting key issues for CBD COP16. It includes concerns about the threats for Indigenous Peoples’ rights related to the push for [biodiversity credits](#), the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and the implementation of the new global conservation targets.

BIODIVERSITY 2.0: Protecting Indigenous Rights and Food Sovereignty to Halt Biodiversity Loss

Food sovereignty is key to stopping biodiversity loss, with Indigenous and local communities leading the way in protecting ecosystems and sustaining diverse food systems.

Wednesday, 30th October
10:00 AM (Local time)
Cocora - Subnational and Local Authorities Meeting Room, Plaza One, Blue Zone

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:
Launch of Policy Brief: Biodiversity 2.0: Strengthening Indigenous and Local Community Partnerships to Halt Biodiversity Loss.
Key Focus:
• Addressing the shortfalls of current conservation strategies that fail to integrate food sovereignty.
• Promoting sustainable approaches that respect traditional ecological knowledge and Indigenous food systems.
• Securing land and food sovereignty rights for Indigenous communities as the foundation for biodiversity conservation.
• Ensuring that biodiversity finance is directed to support Indigenous-led conservation of both biodiversity and food systems.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:
EDWARD POROKWA
Pastoralists Indigenous NGO Forum, Tanzania
Topic: Arrests, torture and forced evictions of 100,000 Maasai pastoralists from their Ngongoni homelands. "Your conservation areas are a warzone to us."
RUTH KIHUI
Pastoral Women's Council of Tanzania
Topic: The Maasai Vision for the future of land, pastoralism, and co-existence with wildlife.
JUAN FELIPE MARTINEZ
Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network, Colombia
Topic: Moral and ethical responsibility to protect biodiversity through Amazonian Indigenous knowledge.
ANNE WANJIKU MAINA
Biodiversity and Biocultural Association of Kenya
Topic: Threats to Kenya's Food Sovereignty: Pesticides, GMOs and Biodiversity Loss.
FARIS AHMED
Independent Consultant, Sustainable Food Systems
Topic: Introducing new guidance tool by Biovision and partners "Boosting biodiversity action through agroecology" helping countries integrate agroecology and food systems into their NBSAPs.

MODERATOR:
MARIANN BASSE OROVUJE
Food Sovereignty Coordinator, Friends of the Earth Africa
Mission: Protecting the rights of African communities to food sovereignty, justice, and a healthy environment.

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<https://tinyurl.com/26seb2nc>

ORGANIZERS:
AFSA, CIDSE, REPAM, PINGO's Forum

MISA delegation discussion Maasai human rights violations with European External Action Service (EEAS) and Members of the European Parliament

On 20 September, a MISA delegation met with the European External Action Service (EEAS) to discuss the human rights situation in Tanzania and that of the Maasai people in particular. MISA called on EU institutions to use their influence through bilateral relations and international partnerships to ensure Tanzanian authorities respect the human rights of the Maasai. On 24 September, the delegation met with individual Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and urged them to push the EU to condition development aid to the protection of human rights and to stop funding fortress conservation projects.

MEPs were informed that the Tanzanian Government is displacing IPs from their ancestral lands in the name of environmental protection. The discussion revolved around ways to follow up on the European Parliament [resolution](#) adopted in December 2023 that condemned the violations of the human rights of the Maasai. The tour highlighted the critical role that IPs play in sustainable land stewardship and called for the EU to support community-led conservation initiatives that respect IPs' land rights.



Photo: MISA delegation and EEAS delegation

MISA delegation urges German development bank KfW to be more transparent

During the German part of its European lobbying tour, a MISA delegation met with representatives of KfW to emphasise the importance of linking conservation funding to the respect for human rights. MISA called on KfW to reconsider its support to Tanzanian state institutions that undermine fundamental rights and the rule of law, and do not respect democratic principles. To ensure accountability, recipients of KfW funds should transparently publish their budgets and activities, to ensure communities that may be impacted by project implementation can access all relevant information. The MISA delegation insisted that

transparency is essential to prevent any misuse of funds. Transparency can also help ensure that funding does not contribute to the displacement of communities and that conservation does not cover hunting interests such as those of Otterlo Business Corporation, now named Royal Safari Limited.

MISA meets with Volkswagen to discuss potential negative impacts of carbon credits

MISA met with Volkswagen in Germany to discuss the Maasai community's fear around the rapid development of carbon credit agreements pushed by [Soil for the Future Tanzania](#) in different Maasai districts. The study undertaken by MISA in five Maasai districts revealed that communities are deeply concerned about the potential land grabbing and displacement that may arise from the carbon-offset business. Soil carbon agreements are being promoted aggressively by multiple actors in Maasailand and usually require that [communities adopt rapid rotational grazing schemes](#) and commit to enter into contracts for a duration of 30–40 years. It was clear from the research that communities living on the land do not yet fully understand the impacts of the carbon business despite some community members having received some training.

There are a number of carbon-offset organisations operating in Tanzania, including [Carbon Solve](#) in partnership with Soil for the Future, [Carbon Tanzania](#), [The Nature Conservancy](#) and [Net Zero](#), all promoting carbon projects in different and sometimes overlapping areas. The MISA delegation informed [Volkswagen, which is developing climate projects and channeling climate finance](#), of the likelihood that carbon-offset initiatives might inadvertently pave the way for actions by the Tanzanian Government and other actors that could dispossess communities from their ancestral lands. MISA is particularly concerned about how carbon agreements require communities to change their traditional grazing practices and dismiss traditional forms of knowledge. The MISA delegation called for transparent dialogue and for safeguards to ensure that carbon-offset projects fully respect pastoralism as a land use management method and also respect the land rights of communities. It is also crucial that carbon credit projects are consented to by the whole community and are not just approved by a few village members. For more on the community's opinion on carbon credit schemes, see the [Maasai conservation vision](#), which has a section on carbon.

Opposition leader Lissu meets with EU Parliament's Committee



On 17 October, CHADEMA leader Tundu Lissu met with David McAllister, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament. Lissu reports having demanded that the EU does not fund nor support any project or policy that does not contribute to democracy and rule of law in Tanzania.

[Who is Tundu Lissu?](#) Read this article in the Conversation.

Also watch this DW news piece: [Is Tanzania's government trying to silence opposition?](#)

EU in Tanzania urges President to ensure protection of opposition and protect fundamental rights of the people as well as freedom of expression

On 10 September, the EU delegation in Tanzania issued a [joint statement](#) together with the EU Heads of Mission in Tanzania, the High Commission of Canada, the Embassy of Norway, the Embassy of Switzerland and the British High Commission stating they are “deeply concerned about the recent reports of acts of violence, disappearances and deaths of political and human rights activists and call for a thorough inquiry into these events”. They urged the government of Tanzania to “ensure the protection of the opposition, as promised by President Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan’s “4R” plan and for authorities to act as a guardian of fundamental rights of the people, including the freedom of expression”.

A people’s movement victory: Government relists villages in Ngorongoro Division

On 16 September, the Tanzanian Government reversed its illegal decision to deregister 11 wards, 25 villages and 96 hamlets in Ngorongoro Division. This significant shift followed widespread protests and six days of demonstrations by the Maasai community in Ngorongoro, blocking Tanzania's leading tourist road and demanding the reinstatement of their local governments, which had been delisted without due process vide GN No. 796 of 2024. The Government's backtracking is seen as a victory for the grassroots Maasai movement, as it reinstates the legal status of the villages that act as the lowest government machinery touching the daily lives of the community members. As a result, communities in Ngorongoro will participate in local government elections in November, managed by the same ministry that delisted the villages. This decision not only restores local governance but also acknowledges people's power and resilience in fighting for their rights and representation.

Situation in Ngorongoro remains delicate despite Government’s public promises

Despite the Tanzanian Government’s public statements on 23 August promising to reinstate services and stop lawlessness in Ngorongoro, repression and arrests continue unabated. Maasai continue being targeted and several have been arrested on the pretext of having recently built homes, in which some have been living for more than 15 years. In addition, social services such as health and education remain in a dire situation. The Government, so far, has provided funds for a water pump for Ngorongoro Girls School and some cement for Ndian Primary School but denied supply of other building materials for the schools.

No effort has been made to ensure the restoration of all the funds that were transferred as part of the defunding campaign three years ago. The Medical Flying Service, which was grounded in 2022 with the goal of paralysing health services in Ngorongoro, has still not been allowed to operate. The disconnect between the Government's public assurances and the reality on the ground is stark. Health services are overwhelmed, and education systems are in disarray, leaving vulnerable populations without critical care or opportunities. This has led to a climate of fear that, while the Government purports to normalise the situation in Ngorongoro, it is implementing nothing meaningful to realise its promises.

The arrest of NCA residents is ongoing despite Government's promises

In September 2024, four Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) residents were arrested by NCAA rangers and detained for some days. They were alleged to have constructed houses without permits and others were charged for pasturing livestock in restricted areas. One old man was taken to Karatu Court for the offence which is alleged to have been committed in Ngorongoro. The Karatu Court, however, dismissed the case as it has no jurisdiction to entertain it. Other people are still facing different charges at the Primary Court of Ngorongoro. These intimidations and harassments to Maasai of Ngorongoro Division are being executed despite the Government's promises to harmonise the situation.

President Samia's advisors visited Ngorongoro

Following the massive peaceful demonstration by the Maasai community in Ngorongoro between 18 and 23 August, President Samia Suluhu's aides and advisors have been touring Ngorongoro, meeting political leaders and attending Sunday mass. They praise Maasai to be nice people who have protected the state's image and maintained peace despite problems they went through. For the first time in ten years, the Ngorongoro conservator also visited Endulen village on 22 September, attending Thanksgiving Sunday mass, as if the problem facing the community is not attributed to Ngorongoro Conservation Area policies. Mchengerwa, the minister who initially delisted all local authorities in Ngorongoro Division, [now purports to warn](#) all officials targeting the Maasai community and threatening to displace Maasai from their ancestral land. Mchengerwa was briefly the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism in 2023 before being reappointed as Minister in the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government.

Government manipulated judicial system to stop NCA demonstrations

A government-filed case to halt demonstrations in Ngorongoro, using a random name of Isaya Ole Pose, with a view to deceiving Maasai communities who were demonstrating from 18 to 23 August, was set for mention on 26 September. The private legal practitioner Peter Njau, instructed by a state operator to prosecute the case, claimed that his client, Isaya Ole Pose, couldn't attend court and had lost interest in the case, as the Government restored village status on 16 September and requested that the case be withdrawn. Unknown to Peter Njau, however, Isaya Ole Pose was present in court. He denied ever instructing Peter Njau as his lawyer and informed the Court that he has never met him in his life, and this is the reason he was not able to recognise him in Court.

He requested time to consult his actual legal team regarding the misuse of his name in relation to the case. The court rescheduled the case to 10 October, instructing both Peter Njau and Isaya Ole Pose to be present in court to clarify the matter. On 10 October 2024, Ole Pose was present in Court but Peter Njau was not able to bring the person he claimed to be named as Ole Pose, whose residence is similar to that of Ole Pose. He however informed the Court that the mysterious Ole Pose whom he now claims he has never seen but was instructed on the phone to file the case, is not able to attend the Court in the near future. The Judge, relying on Peter Njau's claims, dismissed the case. The Court also dismissed an interested party application filed by Denis Shangai on the basis that, as the Ole Pose case ceased to exist, no interested party application can continue.

Appeal by Ngo'otiek Kokoyo against compounding fine by NCAA awaiting ruling in Arusha High Court

On 19 September, an appeal by Ngo'otiek Kokoyo came before the Arusha High Court for hearing that challenged the compounding fine imposed by the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) for livestock allegedly entered to Ngorongoro on 6 April 2024 through Eyasi/Endamaga gate Endulen Ngorongoro without permission. The State Prosecutor conceded on all grounds, acknowledging that NCAA had wrongfully imposed the fine under the Wildlife Conservation Act, which is applicable only in Game Reserves, Game Controlled Areas and Wildlife Management Areas but not in Ngorongoro, where livestock is recognised lawfully under Section 6 of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Act.

However, in an unexpected turn, the presiding judge disagreed with the position of the Appellants and State Prosecutor's (Respondent's) concession. The Court indicated that it would deliver a ruling based solely on one issue: whether NCAA had properly filed the prescribed form for the compounding of livestock, and whether the receipt for the compounding fine alone presented by the Appellant is sufficient to justify appeal in the absence of a formal written ruling from Ngorongoro to compound livestock. The ruling is scheduled for 31 October.

Msomera residents sue the Government and people relocated from Ngorongoro over land dispossession

Eight Msomera residents (people who were displaced by the recent relocation of NCAA people to Msomera) filed 8 cases at the High Court of Tanzania at Tanga against the Government and people relocated from Ngorongoro. The eight residents are challenging the decision of the Government to acquire their land and allocate it to people relocated from Ngorongoro without compensation. After being supplied with summons to appear in court, the Handeni District Commissioner, [Mr Albert Msando, publicly threatened](#) people who filed cases in court. The District Commissioner assured all people sued in the case that the Government will provide resources to defend them in all cases. All people who were involved in suing the Government were also summoned and interrogated by the police in Handeni.

Pololeti Final Judgement set to be delivered on 22 October

The long-awaited judgement in the landmark legal battle over community rights to access ancestral land is set for 22 October. Initially, the Court issued a preservative ruling suspending operation of Pololeti Game Reserve pending the Final Judgement, but the Government has since refused to respect the Court order. This lawsuit was filed by the community challenging the Government's dispossession of 1502 sq.km for establishment of Pololeti Game Reserve. The community did win another similar case for the establishment of a Pololeti Game Controlled area in the same land.



The outcome of this case will have significant implications for land rights and may determine the future of the community's access to their ancestral lands. As the legal process draws to a close, all eyes are on the upcoming court decision. Communities are planning on attending the court judgement in large numbers.



Photo: Community members in Ngorongoro wearing Stop! the forced evictions of Maasai t-shirt

Representative suit against Thomson Safari, Tanzania Breweries and Tanzanian Government

A class action lawsuit involving 141 Maasai villagers was filed in August 2024 challenging the misappropriation of 10,000 hectares from Sukenya, Mundorosi and Soitsambu villages in Loliondo. The alienated land was sold by Tanzania Breweries to Thomson Safari, an American tourist company, in 2006. The case was filed in Tanzania against Thomson Safari, Tanzania Breweries Limited and the Tanzania Attorney General.

Livestock confiscations continue in Loliondo

In both Ngorongoro and Loliondo, the Tanzanian Government has been burning grasses in dry-season pasture areas (Ngorongoro) and the areas adjacent to the disputed Pololeti area. The Government's practice of burning grasslands to deter pastoralists from accessing pasture is a clear indication of its negative stance towards pastoralism. By burning the grass, it limits the availability of feed, threatening the survival of livestock, especially during drought periods. This deliberate act comes after the confiscation of 36,000 head of livestock between June 2022 and December 2023, further endangering the livelihoods of pastoralist communities. The policy appears punitive, and its actions seem to be aimed at reducing pastoral activity, which could lead to devastating consequences for the pastoralist way of life, as livestock play a critical role in their economy and culture. On 22 August 2023, the High Court of Tanzania had suspended the operation of Pololeti Game Reserve but the Government has openly been violating Court orders.

Government appeal rejected in livestock confiscation case

On 15 October, the High Court in Musoma rejected the appeal by the Tanzanian Government (Director of Public Prosecution) intended to overcome an order of the Resident Magistrate Court that awarded compensation to Maasai pastoralists for livestock illegally auctioned. On 26 October 2023, Serengeti rangers had seized livestock and kept the animals in Serengeti National Park until 31 October 2023, when they secured an order to auction it. On 1 November 2023, the owner of the livestock filed a case to stop the auctioning, which was granted within 24 hours. Despite this, the selling continued. This is clear evidence of the involvement of Serengeti National Park rangers in the seizing of livestock from Loliondo.

Malambo community demonstrates to stop the burning of pasture land by NCAA rangers at Loliondo and Sale

Maasai community in Sale Division (Malambo) demonstrated on 18 September to stop burning pasture land by NCAA rangers. The said rangers used to set fires on places which are outside the 1502 sq.km that were illegally taken in June 2022. The Ngorongoro District Commissioner answered the community's plight and stopped rangers from further burning the pasture land.



Photo: Demonstration at Malambo condemning burning of grasses by NCAA rangers

Ngorongoro councillors request more transparency from KfW/FZS funding in Loliondo division

At a Council meeting held on 18 October, Ngorongoro district councillors called for greater transparency regarding the [activities of the Frankfurt Zoological Society \(FZS\) funded by the German development bank KfW](#) in the Loliondo division. Three issues were raised in the meeting. First, councillors expressed concerns over the delayed implementation of ongoing FZS projects, and about the mismanagement of project funds. Questions were raised about some of the project costs, which appear extraordinarily high. For example, the cost for building a two-in-one master house is reported to be Tsh 270 million, while such a house

usually costs between TZS 50-70 million. Second, councillors discussed the lack of community involvement in project elaboration, implementation and monitoring, saying that citizens are not sufficiently involved and that the council itself lacks information about FZS projects and plans. Third, the councillors expressed concern about the additional €9 million of funding allocated by KfW to its project "[Sustainable Development of the Serengeti Ecosystem](#)". While the main agency in charge of this project is TANAPA, the project description mentions FZS as a key project partner, and the councillors are concerned that the funds could be used to alienate more pastoral land, including the creation of Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and the alienation of community forests such as Enguserosambu, Sariani and Loliondo. The councillors set a deadline of October 30 for KfW-funded projects to be completed, and requested that FZS clearly explain their funding sources and how the monies will be used. They emphasised the importance of community involvement in all projects, threatening that if not, they would reject any future FZS/KfW-funded efforts. [In this video](#), Ngorongoro District Council Chair Hon. Mareakani says KfW should engage citizens while articulating their projects in Ngorongoro.

Sokoine book launch, an opportunity to reflect on his legacy

On 30 September, President Samia launched a book honouring the life and public service of Edward Moringe Sokoine, former Member of Parliament for Maasai District and two-time Prime Minister (1977–1980 and 1984–1984), who passed away 40 years ago. The event was attended by high-ranking leaders in Tanzania, led by the President, celebrating Sokoine's remarkable contributions to the nation. While his legacy is being remembered, the community from which he hailed is grappling with a stark reality of unprecedented land dispossession. Once a thriving region, his former constituency (Maasai District) has since been divided into five districts/constituencies (Ngorongoro, Longido, Monduli, Simanjiro and Kiteto), each facing immense challenges of land alienation. The very land that nurtured his leadership is now at risk, raising questions about social justice and the preservation of his values. This contrast between his legacy and the community's struggles casts a shadow over the commemorative event led by the same people who are instigating the ongoing displacement.



Photo: President Samia with Sokoine family and Maasai traditional elders from different districts

Tanzania cracks down on civic space and reinforces its control over NGO activities

In early October, the Tanzanian Government issued a firm directive requiring that “all NGOs and individuals claiming to be human rights activists obtain prior approval before engaging with community members”. The objective is to “regulate the interaction between nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and local communities”, according to the Daily News. Supposedly “by requiring communication and coordination, the Government aims to create a framework that promotes respectful and constructive engagement, ultimately benefiting both communities and external organisations”. [The newspaper article](#) published on 9 October and entitled “Why Govt enforces regulations on NGOs engagement with communities” argues that “this directive stems from growing concerns over international NGOs and activists allegedly operating clandestinely within local communities, raising questions about their accountability”.

Interestingly, the announcement was made during Barrick Gold Mining Corporation’s quarterly report presentation, where Deputy Minister of Minerals Dr Kiruswa underscored the importance of “respecting Tanzania’s sovereignty”. Recent years have apparently seen “a wave of unsubstantiated allegations regarding human rights abuses at the North Mara mine”. Investigations into these claims, the article continues, revealed a lack of verifiable evidence, particularly at the grassroots level.

By mandating that NGOs consult with the Government before conducting interviews or assessments, Tanzanian authorities aim to “protect community interests and mitigate potential misunderstandings that could arise from external interventions”. For MISA, this directive indicates a shrinking Tanzanian civic space. MISA highlights the importance of independent human monitoring, which requires no state interference in human rights assessments.

UN Special Rapporteur presents report on human rights of mobile Indigenous Peoples

On 15 October, Francisco Calí, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, presented his [report dedicated to the situation of mobile IPs](#). The report covers four main themes: a) legal recognition and political participation, b) mobility and the right to lands, territories, resources and marine areas, c) freedom of movement and the right to security and d) economic, social and cultural rights violations. The report states that pastoralists are often accused of driving climate change by promoting environmental degradation, but that it is well established that seasonal and periodic livestock grazing benefits the environment. Unlike industrial livestock production, pastoralism allows rangelands to regenerate, reducing wildfires, supporting the heterogeneity of plants and enhancing carbon sequestration. Restrictions on movement increase the concentration of livestock and lead to land degradation and lower productivity. Animal movement improves soil moisture, fertility and microbial diversity. Pastoralists are also keepers of animal genetic resources through the rearing of adaptable breeds for the future and livestock at risk of extinction.

The report mentions the specific situation of Tanzania and identifies tourism and the creation of hunting blocks and conservation areas as key drivers of Maasai evictions and criminalisation. The report contains a list of powerful and useful recommendations, a key one being: “(p) **Adopt a moratorium on the carbon market until the establishment of regulations in accordance with international legal standards on mobile Indigenous Peoples’ rights**”; those regulations should govern the trading of carbon credits, thereby ensuring transparency and accountability in certification and implementation”. Noting the

rapid development of the carbon-credit business in Maasai land, MISA welcomes this recommendation. For more, read the press release: UN [urges states to protect mobile Indigenous Peoples' rights, "wherever they go"](#).

Media articles and video materials

Human Rights Watch: Address rights ahead of local elections:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/16/tanzania-address-rights-ahead-local-elections>

6-page interview on the Maasai situation in French magazine *Afrique* (page 50 onwards):

https://issuu.com/afmag1/docs/afriquemagazine_45720241007

Tanzania: "Pastoralism is compatible with the environment", assures a Maasai lawyer (RFI)

<https://www.rfi.fr/fr/environnement/20240917-tanzanie-le-pastoralisme-est-compatible-avec-l-environnement-assure-un-avocat-massa%C3%AF>

Maasai Rise to Defend Ancestral Land ft. Joseph Oleshangay (Oakland institute):

<https://www.oaklandinstitute.org/maasai-rise-defend-ancestral-land-ft-joseph-oleshangay>

IUCN leaders forum discuss "innovative and inclusive" conservation approaches:

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