

Press Release: Launch of the Maasai Conservation Vision

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Contact: maasaiinternationalsolidaritya@gmail.com

Maasai Communities Unveil Groundbreaking Vision for Conservation and Land Sovereignty

Ngorongoro, Tanzania – 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 the displacement and alienation of the community. 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 in community hands.

Key Highlights of the Maasai Conservation Vision:

- **Land as Life:** The Maasai community emphasizes that land is central to their identity, culture, and livelihood. They demand an end to all forced relocations and all their lands back that were turned into protected areas.
- **Pastoralism:** The Vision calls for the protection of pastoralist livelihoods, which have sustained the Maasai ecosystem for generations. This includes lifting all restrictions on access to grazing lands, water sources, medicinal plants, and sacred sites and investing in the pastoralist economy.
- **Coexistence with Wildlife:** The Maasai have long coexisted peacefully with wildlife and reject the current conservation model that separates humans from nature. They call for the abolition of trophy hunting and the end of militarized conservation practices.
- **Cultural Integrity and Continuity:** The Maasai are determined to preserve their cultural heritage, including the traditional age-set system, rites of passage, and the Maa language. The community rejects all forms of discrimination, hate speech and appropriation of its culture.
- **Fair Tourism:** The Maasai are not against tourism in principle but reject the way it is currently operating. Tourism should not negatively impact on traditional land uses including pastoralism, culture and spiritual practices.

- **Carbon credits:** The Maasai community is concerned about this rapid development of the carbon offsetting business and is fearing this will lead to a new wave of land grabbing. Carbon deals should not interfere with pastoralism nor lead to restrictions on land use and natural resources.

A Call to Action

The Maasai Conservation Vision serves as a roadmap for advocacy and dialogue, calling for alliance-building with other pastoralist communities and international partners. MISA invites the international community to support the Maasai in their fight for their land and against all policies that threaten their way of life.

"The land is everything to us," said one Maasai participant in the consultation process. "It is where we live, where our ancestors are buried, and where our future generations must continue to thrive. We cannot be separated from it."

The Maasai Conservation Vision stands as a bold statement of self-determination and resilience. As the Maasai continue their struggle for land and cultural survival, this Vision will help forge a future that honours the past and secures the rights of generations to come.

About MISA

The Maasai International Solidarity Alliance (MISA) is an international coalition dedicated to supporting the Maasai of Northern Tanzania in their fight for the right to land and social justice. MISA brings together faith-based organizations, human rights advocates, and grassroots movements to address the ongoing human rights violations affecting the Maasai.

For a graphic summary of the Maasai Vision, see: <https://t.ly/MOtgk>

For more information, contact: maasaiinternationalsolidaritya@gmail.com

