

# TANZANIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

## POLICY BRIEF

Climate Change Mitigation Strategies and Eviction of Indigenous Peoples from their ancestral lands: The Case of Tanzania



### Introduction

Despite the pre-and post colonial alienation of indigenous peoples land, the current climate mitigation interventions poses new threats of push and dispossession of indigenous peoples land and shooting blames to indigenous peoples as a cause of environment degradation and visible climate change.

Eviction of Indigenous Peoples from their ancestral lands is one of the most destructive and degrading mitigation strategy performed by modern governments in developing countries to address climate change. Armed police and even soldiers are used to evict indigenous peoples forcefully, to pave the way for investors and conservation hiding in the rubric of climate change mitigation. The advent of climate change in Tanzania has seen increased rates of eviction of Indigenous Peoples from their ancestral lands for reasons ranging from land based investments to enlargement of protected areas. This info brief examines the problem and offers some recommendations.





- **Punished for protecting our natural resources?**

There is no doubt that anthropogenic activities are to blame for the current state of the world environment in general and climate change in particular. Adverse effects of climate change are evident everywhere and governments worldwide are taking various steps be it for mitigation or adaptation to climate change. Protection of forest resources has always been on the top of climate change negotiations and Tanzania's national agendas. The unfortunate part however is that such forests and other natural surroundings happen to be ancestral lands of indigenous peoples. As a matter of facts, the lands are "forests" because indigenous peoples conserved from time immemorial. What can visibly be seen in such forests are the landscapes, vegetation and water but for indigenous peoples there is more to be appreciated including their livelihood, culture, identity and their co-existence with biodiversity. Their land and forest remain as such as a result of the role they play in conserving it and making remain as such through their indigenous knowledge of co existence with natural resources.

### **Land based Investment**

Forest resources act as "carbon sinks" and thus an important part of the climate change equation. It should be noted however that forests cannot be there without land. Land is the most important natural resource and indigenous peoples worldwide have special attachment to land. Moreover, land is unquestionably the mother of all resources. From land we get everything that we use of value whether it be for food, clothing, fuel, shelter, metal or precious stones.

Indigenous Peoples of Tanzania as elsewhere in the world, happen to live in areas rich in natural resources. These include but not limited to wildlife, forests, minerals and water catchments. If care is not taken, indigenous peoples of Tanzania will continue to be evicted not only for the so called climate change mitigation and adaptation programs to be established but also other state sanctioned land-based investment. What can be done to rectify the situation? The next subsection expounds.



- **Social and Environmental Safeguards.**

Safeguards are very important at international and national level to set standard for protection of indigenous peoples and their right to livelihood and other human rights. Violations of rights of indigenous peoples have been matters of concern given historical marginalization that goes back to the colonial era. In the current climate change negotiations as we approach agreements during the COP21, it is very important to indigenous peoples of Tanzania and globally that human rights is made an integral part of the negotiated agreements as a mean of safeguard to the right of indigenous peoples. In 2014 it came to the attention of Tanzania Indigenous Peoples Organizations that the World Bank was revising its social and environmental safeguards policies by bringing all its safeguard policies into one set of standards. In a statement made on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2014 the 13 Indigenous Peoples Organizations in Tanzania, were concerned with the overall weakening of World Bank's policy requirements for indigenous peoples. As a trendsetter, World Bank must take the lead to ensure that Indigenous Peoples rights to land and other natural resources are respected.



- Environmental Procedural Rights

“Environmental procedural rights” is an umbrella concept encompassing the right to access to information, the right to public participation and access to justice. The right to access to information is included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights among other human rights instruments. It refers to; “the right of individuals and non-governmental organizations to be informed of environmental problems relevant to them, to have the necessary access to information, and to participate in the formulation and implementation of decisions likely to affect their environment.”

The right to public participation is provided for by article 25 of the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania and article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In conservation circles, it entails replacement of the traditional “command and control” approach by giving people a voice and a say in major decision making bodies. Meaningful participation requires that respective representatives of the local people their capacity are built to be able to contribute meaningfully to issues affecting their rights.



The right to access to justice is one of the most important rights. To appreciate this, one needs only to consider the fact that even governments, in whose custody environmental matters are entrusted can abuse this power and cause untold impact in the ecosystems. It is imperative for pressure groups, NGOs and individuals to get access to courts of law in order to restrain government actions, which may destroy the environment.

### What do climate change agreements need to safeguard for indigenous peoples nationally and internationally

- Indigenous peoples need Participation in governance and Management of their resources. We need application of the international human rights standard in anything that affects our land and natural resources.
- Proper land use plans that takes into account our security of land tenure and that support our livelihood based on our indigenous knowledge system that takes into account our co-existence with our biodiversity
- Modern technology Improvement of their natural resources management to complement our existing indigenous knowledge
- Indigenous peoples need to be part of monitoring, reporting and verification of any climate change related initiative that is to be established in their territory.
- Indigenous peoples demand a human rights based approach to any development program or intervention to be established in their territories and that must apply for free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).
- Capacity to understand issues and negotiate with any body affecting their livelihood.
- Indigenous people demand transparency in all climate change deals and programmes through good governance foundation and safeguard standard that protect them.



- Indigenous peoples demand more finance for adaptation as a key priority element and capacity to improve their indigenous knowledge adaptive strategies as an important aspect of addressing climate change impacts.



PINGOs Forum (**The Pastoralists Indigenous Non-Governmental Organizations' Forum**) is an advocacy coalition of indigenous peoples' organizations who are currently 53, working in Tanzania for the rights of the marginalized indigenous pastoralists and Hunter-gatherers communities since 1994. As a human rights and development network PINGOs Forum seeks to advocate and support development of competencies on sustainable livelihoods of Pastoralists and hunter-gatherers communities in Tanzania. It endeavors to amplify the voices and foster the interests of pastoralists and hunter-gatherers by advocating for change on good governance and human rights. Furthermore, PINGO's Forum addresses issues of Gender, HIV/AIDS, Environment, and Climate Change ([www.pingosforum.or.tz](http://www.pingosforum.or.tz)).

IWGIA is an international human rights organization staffed by specialists and advisers on indigenous affairs. IWGIA supports indigenous peoples' struggle for human rights, self-determination, right to territory, control of land and resources, cultural integrity, and the right to development. IWGIA was founded in 1968 with the aim of establishing a network of concerned researchers and human right activists to document the situation of indigenous peoples and advocate for an improvement of their rights. Today indigenous peoples from all over the world are involved in IWGIA's global network ([www.iwgia.org](http://www.iwgia.org)).

TIPTCC was formed in 2013 by a committee consisting of seven key indigenous organizations<sup>1</sup> with the goal of creating a mechanism to raise awareness on climate change and its effects on indigenous peoples' livelihoods in Tanzania and to promote the integration of indigenous peoples' livelihoods and rights in climate change policies and initiatives. TIPTCC has since its formation provided a forum for discussing indigenous peoples' positions on different climate change and REDD+ related policies and initiatives, including the draft REDD+ policy, REDD+ safeguards, and REDD+ Information and communication system and World Bank Environmental and social Framework.

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<sup>1</sup> *PINGOs Forum, the Association for Law and Advocacy for Pastoralists (ALAPA), Community Research and Development Services (CORDS), Parakuiyo Pastoralists Indigenous Community Development Organization (PAICODEO), Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT), Sunya, Lengatei and Dongo (SULEDO), and the Hadzabe Survival Council (HSC),*