

“INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AS PART OF THE SOLUTION”



Experiences of MPIDO with IPS and the Loita Forest, Kenya.

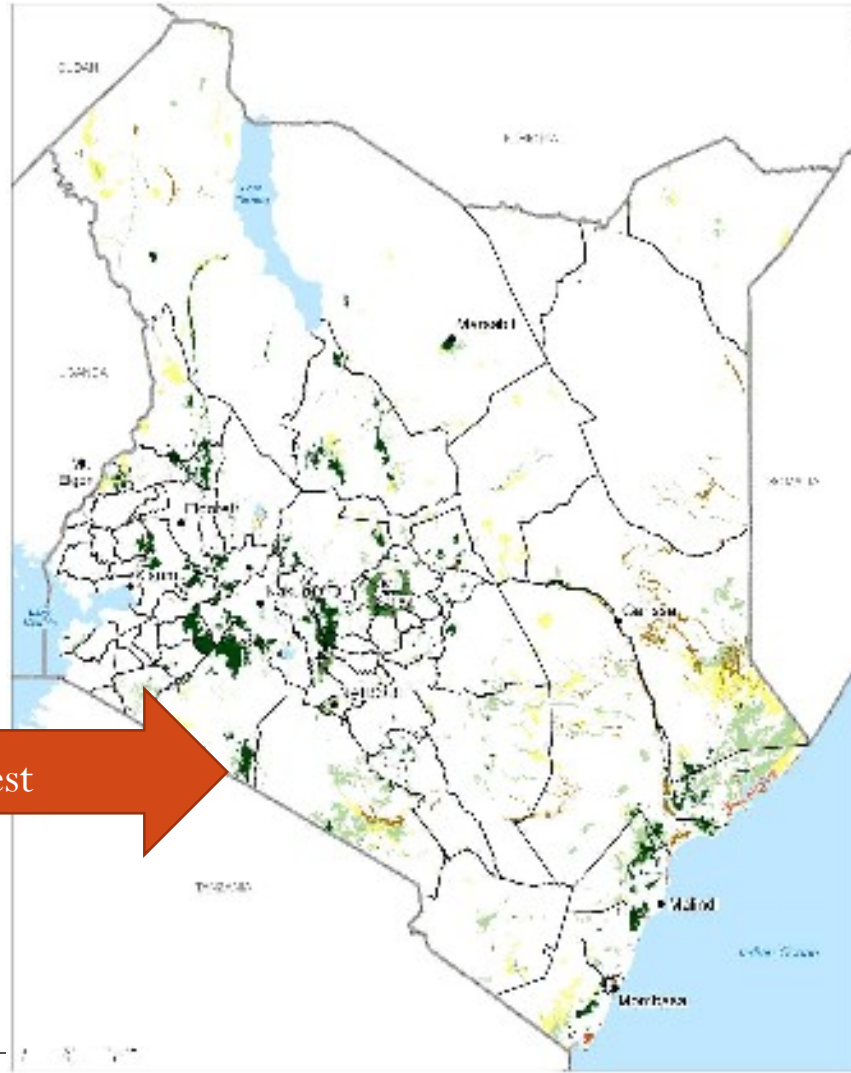
Joseph Ole Simel

Mainyoito Pastoralist Integrated Development Organization
(MPIDO)

www.mpido.org

mpido@mpido.org

The Loita forest



Loita Forest



Part of the Loita forest



- The Loita Naimina Enkiyio forest is one of the last remaining tropical indigenous forest in Kenya
- It is managed, controlled and conserved by Loita section of the Maasai indigenous peoples
- Deforestation rate in Kenya is at 1,200 ha/yr resulting in national forest cover of less than 2%, but the Loita forest remains largely undisturbed

Deforestation in Mau:

Section of Loita Forest



Section of Mau forest



IPs' Contribution to Forest Conservation:

- IPs worldview/belief that views environment as an integrated whole: ecosystem
- Existence of rules and regulations (taboos and social sanctions)
- Strong link between indigenous peoples' social cultural practices with the forest: age-set leader selection, women fertility ceremonies, (all rites of passage), connection with the supernatural (spiritual cathedral)
- Indigenous institutions - Oloiboni, (spiritual guardian), Council of elders, specific roles for Men/warriors, women, Youth

IPs' contr



- Role of forest as store of indigenous knowledge - herbal medicine, knowledge of flora and fauna that is transmitted across generations
- Ecological interrelatedness between forest as extreme dry season grazing area and the rangelands as the main livestock grazing area regulated under collective rights land

Pastoral Mobility



Over the years Pastoralist have been adapting to climate change traditionally managing their land.

Mobility has been key factor that has been employed as a survival technique, though faced by numerous challenges in the face of climate change.



Challenges:

- Ownership and benefits
 - Influence of the state/NCC – legal and policy issues
 - Conservationist, Tourism
- Changing livelihoods dynamics
 - Agriculture; Construction needs; Population pressure
 - Christianity – institution of Oloiboni (the Seer)
 - Role of markets/money economy
- Climate change: Droughts, Fires (minimal)
- Land privatization and fragmentation - Individual rights



Local IPs' livelihoods and the forest



Looking ahead with forest & REDD+

- Ensuring security of Land tenure to guarantee ownership, use and control
- Resource mapping including Carbon stocks and Reference emissions levels, dry season grazing and cultural/sacred sites (non-economic uses)
- Recognition of and strengthen of indigenous institutions for negotiations and MRV e.g. Council of elders, Oloiboni & codification of Customary laws and regulation
- Consider the place of women – indigenous medicine, fuel, water

Looking a head ...

- Benefit sharing - Focus on a rights based approach (UNDRIP framework) guard against exploitative carbon contracts & possible elite capture,
- Translating gains under the new Kenyan constitution to realities - Land tenure, Marginalized communities Culture- for example art. 69: obligates the State to ensure sustainable exploitation, utilization, management and conservation of the environment and natural resources while

Conclusion



Indigenous peoples are therefore not only first victims of negative impacts of Climate change, but they are also part of the solution. A REDD Plus regime that incorporates principles of human rights approaches, full and effective participation including free, prior and informed consent would be a win-win situation for both IPs and the global community.



Any REDD mechanism should therefore beyond recognizing and addressing the general concerns of indigenous peoples in the country, take into account the unique vulnerability of women in local communities or indigenous women to avoid further entrenchment of marginalization.

Ashe Oleng'! Thank you!

