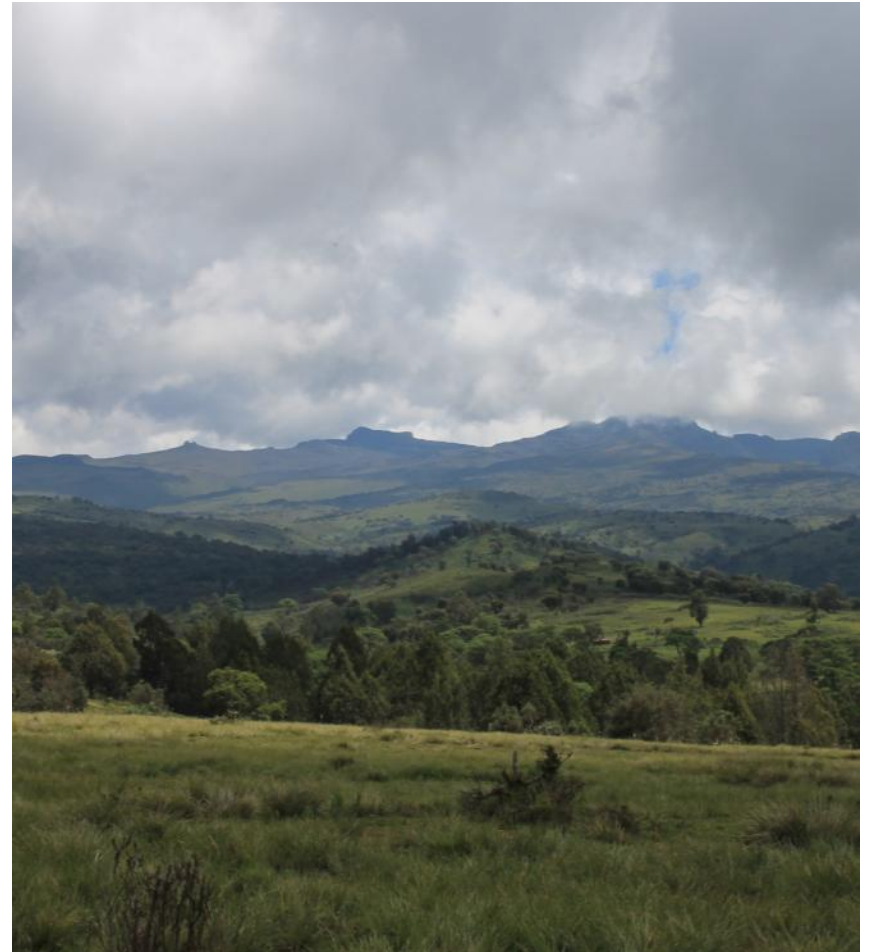


Ogiek at Chepkitale, Mt Elgon, Kenya

- There's a problem in reducing a way of life to being a conservation project.
- We the Ogiek at Chepkitale, Mt Elgon, have sustained our lands through how we live.
- When the “conservation approach” arrives it separates people from their lands.



The “Conservation Approach” destroys our lands / culture / society through:

- **Forced evictions** of our community by conservation agencies: leaving our forests and elephants “free for all” to destroy, including loggers and poachers
- **Destruction of culture:** By being encouraged to live in the unsustainable cultures that have contributed to the destruction of environment
- **Accelerating a compensation/ dispossession dynamic (CDD):** local forest adjacent communities are offered benefits from our lands (undermining our capacity to protect and sustain our lands) making them part of the land dispossession machine, while the government claims that “local communities” are being involved in the management of conservations areas.

Despite all this “conservation destruction”

- We have written down our community bylaws, and
- We have mandated our community scouts to arrest intruders who are charcoal burning and elephant poaching.
- We have temporarily managed to stop the conservationists destroying indigenous forest through ‘conservation’ schemes that empower local forest adjacent communities to extract resources from our lands.



What we need is for our rights to our land to be recognised

so that we can continue to sustain and be sustained by our lands

- Instead of recognising our rights, mainstream conservation continues to dispossess us of our lands – whether by forcing us off our lands, or by co-option and marginalisation.
- We need our community bylaws recognised by the government, and we need conservation agencies to support us to regain our right to sustain our lands

