



Elephants Walking. Photograph. From Elevate Destinations. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.

# The Reality of Conservation

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# What's the Problem?

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# Indigenous People and Conservation

- Conservation has been long been promoted to maintain and grow biodiversity, however, national parks, protected areas, and reserves disproportionately placed on indigenous lands
  - 50% of the protected areas created by conservationists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were located on indigenous lands (Dowie 2009 in Domínguez and Luoma 6)
- Most conserved areas do not adhere to indigenous rights or standards because of discrimination, absence of laws, and denied land rights (Colchester 2004, 149-150)
  - This leads to Indigenous people being at the mercy of conservationists who deny participation and compensation (Domínguez and Luoma 2020, 5,9)
- This type of conservation is called fortress conservation (Fortress Conservation in Domínguez and Luoma 2)
  - Local people excluded
  - Enforcement by park rangers
  - Only tourism, hunting, and research allowed

## Protected Areas of the world



Source: IUCN and UNEP-WCMC (2016). The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) [On-line], April 2016, Cambridge, UK: UNEP-WCMC. Available at [www.protectedplanet.net](http://www.protectedplanet.net)



Terrestrial protected areas Marine and coastal protected areas



IUCN and UNEP-WCMC. *Protected Areas of the World*. Map. Cambridge. April 2016. From IUCN. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.



# Effects of Conservation

- The Placing of Parks and Protected areas on Indigenous lands has caused many harmful mental, physical, and cultural effects
- Mental Effects
  - Anxiety/fear
  - Powerlessness
- Physical Effects
  - Land Disposition
    - 1 million km of forests, pasture, and farmlands seized in Africa (Nelson and Hossack 2003 in Colchester 2004, 146)
  - Limited Access to Resources
    - Bans on hunting and farming (Gonzalo Oviedo in Vidal 2016)
  - Crop Raiding



Anupam Nath/AP, Photographer. "A Woman Sits with her Belongings After Forest Officers Demolished her House During an Eviction Drive on the Outskirts of Gauhati, India in August 2017." Photograph. From the Guardian. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.

# Effects of Conservation Cont.

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## ○ Cultural Effects

- Cultural identity weakened
- Kinship disrupted
- Ties to nature broken

## ○ Enforcement

- If indigenous people were to try to break the rules so they could live their lives as they wish, they are met with extreme force
- Enforced illegality is put on people so they become poachers, encroachers, and squatters on their own land (Colchester 2004, 147)



The South African National Roads Agency. Man standing next to a sign. Photograph. KwaZulu-Natal. From Highways Today. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used under Fair Use.

# So What?

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# Why You Should Care

- You should care about conservation's effect on indigenous people because it is a human rights crisis that is actively depriving indigenous peoples of their livelihoods and communities
  - Fortress conservation is continuing the legacy of colonialism where strong Western powers evict indigenous communities in the fight for more land and resources (Cernea 2006 in Domínguez and Luomo 2020, 6)- this discrimination and racism must end
  - Conservation has caused many people immense suffering (Adams 2003 in Colchester 2004, 145), sometimes even in the form of poverty, malnourishment, and despair (Colchester 2004, 146)
- The negative effects of conservation constitute an environmental justice struggle, where indigenous peoples are taken from their homes and denied access to the environment

# Activism

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# Framing of the Issue

- Activists, scholars, and indigenous people have framed this issue as a violation of human rights, with people being abused in the name of conservation (Vidal 2016)
  - Scholars explain that the practice of fortress conservation denies indigenous people of their rightful claim to land while also directly harming individuals and communities
  - One Activist stated, "It is a racist, socially unjust concept which alienates local people from conservation"- Noga Shanee (Hance 2016)
  - A scholar mentioned that by denying rights and expelling indigenous people from their land, conservation is just a way to exterminate indigenous populations (Hance 2016)

# How Have People Tried to Address This?

- The most common remedy for fortress conservation stated by activists, scholars, and indigenous peoples seems to be community-based conservation
- Community-based conservation is when local communities are involved with the conservation of their own lands while benefitting from compensation and natural resources (Hulme and Murphee 2001; Rihoy et al. 2010 in Hitchcock 2019, 219)
  - This type of conservation allows people to participate in decisions, have ownership over resources, and receive economic and material benefits (Hackel 1998 in Bajracharya, Furley, and Newton 2005, 2767)
- This method is popular to promote because of indigenous communities' effectiveness at cultivating biodiversity
  - Decline of species happens at a much lower rate on indigenous land (Sneed 2019)
  - Forests are better protected from deforestation and degradation on indigenous lands (Selibas 2021)
  - Indigenous land encompasses 80% of the world's biodiversity (Tauli-Corpuz in Dominguez and Luoma 2020, 6)



“Planting Mangrove Trees in Ghana.” Photograph. From A Rocha. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.



# The Want for Community-Based Conservation

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- Community-based conservation is broad, with several different approaches
  - Many groups wish to have the government grant land titles in exchange for protecting the forest (Coria and Calfucura 2012, 51)
  - Some wish to just have access to their traditional land and resources
  - Others wish to have customary laws recognized as an effective conservation strategy (Langat 2020)
  - Most scholars, however, argue in favor of getting land titles when trying to introduce community-based conservation so individuals can have more freedom (Hance 2016; Dominguez and Luoma 2020, 2)

A Tour Guide Leads People Through a Forest. Photograph. From Community Conservation. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.



# Pros and Cons of Community-Based Conservation

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## ○ Pros

- Indigenous people are often granted land rights
- Ability to use own land
- Involved in decision making
- Compensation

## ○ Cons

- Indigenous groups are often not actively involved (Metcalfe 1994; Wainwright and Wehr-Meyer 1998; Songorwa et al. 2000 in Bajracharya, Furley, and Newton 2005, 2767)
- Uneven distribution of economic benefits (Coria and Calfucura 2012, 50)
- People's lives are rarely improved (Wainwright and Wehrmeyer 1998 in Bajracharya, Furley, and Newton 2005, 2767) and many communities never benefit financially (Nepal et al. 2002 in Bajracharya, Furley, and Newton 2005, 2779)



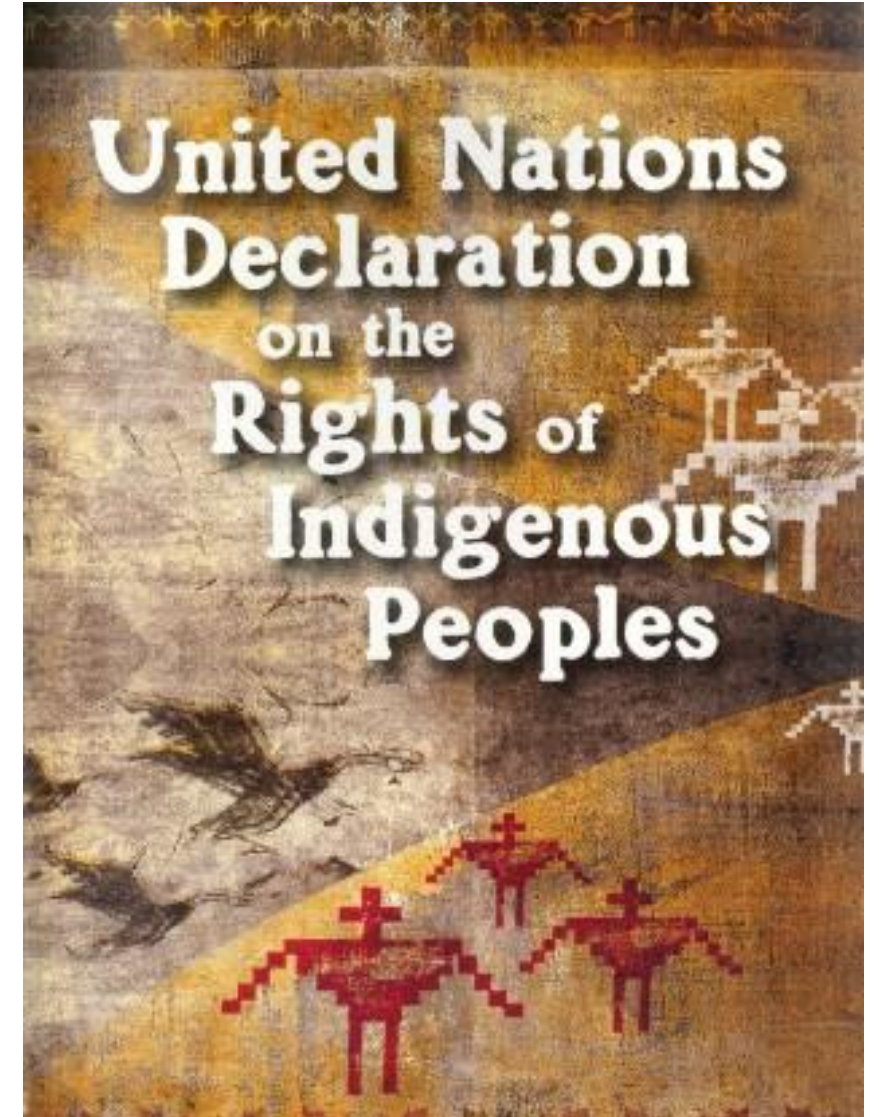
USAID/ Riccardo Gangale, Photographer. "Cattle Bunching Promotes Healthier Pastures and Attracts Grazing Wildlife." Photograph. From Yali. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.



# What Strategies and Tactics do Activists Use?

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- Interested and affected parties have acted through laws and resolutions, legal remedies, protests, everyday activism, and complaints
- Laws and Resolutions
  - Indigenous people and others have taken their demands to big organizations like the UN, where they have gained a number of successes, such as the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Colchester 2004, 148)
- Legal Remedies
  - Specific tribes have gone to court for rights, fighting for access to land, land ownership, and a recognized method of community-based conservation



United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Image. From Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.

# What Strategies and Tactics do Activists Use?

## ○ Protest

- Protests are a popular method to get people's attention
- Hundreds of Jenu Karuba launched a protest to demand authorities stop trying to evict them and recognize their rights to land (Survival 2021)

## ○ Everyday Activism

- People employ everyday activism when they fear overt action will be met with violence (Holmes 2007, 186)
- Forms of resistance include continuation of banned practices, destroying of resources, and fire burning (Holmes 2007)

## ○ Complaints

- Some groups have launched formal complaints in order to get projects suspended (Milko 2020)
- Others have written letters to organizations like the WWF, documenting abuses and demanding an ending to park plans (Survival 2018)



"Jenu Kuruba Protest Against the Forest Department and Say "Stop Violating Our Rights." Photograph. Survival. From Survival International. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.



# What Audiences Have People Appealed to?

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- Indigenous peoples, scholars, and activists have mainly appealed to the broad publics, traditional media, state, and organizations
- Broad Public and Traditional Media
  - Groups have appealed to the public by holding protests which not only get peoples attention, but also spread useful information about conservation
  - Traditional media seems to pick up a lot of these protest stories, showing that indigenous activists are appealing to them as well



Brian Hioe, Photographer. Indigenous Activists Gather in Protest. Photograph. From New Bloom. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.



# What Audiences Have People Appealed To?

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## ○State

- Different groups are appealing to the state through going to the courtroom

## ○Organizations

- People have appealed to different organizations like the UN when demanding resolutions
- People also mounted resistance campaigns against the UN and organizations like WWF by lodging complaints and beginning letter writing campaigns

World Wildlife Foundation Mascot Standing with a Gun. Image. From BuzzFeed News. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.



# What's Happening Now?

- As of right now, it seems that NGOs, the state, and conservationists continue to have all of the power with protected areas still being erected on indigenous people's land
- Indigenous people continue to fight back by mounting protests and other resistance campaigns, with many already occurring this year



# What Can You Do?

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- There are several ways you can help support indigenous people and promote justice
- Get informed
  - Many people aren't aware of the devastating effects of fortress conservation
  - It is important to further educate yourself so you fully understand the extreme extent of this human rights crisis
- Spread the Word
  - Make sure to educate your friends and family so more people are informed
  - Always center indigenous voices and look for their POV first when sharing articles or media



1. Utamaru/Getty, Photographer. Stacked Books. Photograph. From Longreads. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.

2. Phone Communicating Through Social Media Apps. Image. From Spread the Word Media. [URL](#). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.

# What Can You Do?

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- Only Support Community-Based Conservation initiatives

- Before traveling, make sure you look into what protected areas or national parks you are going to- Who owns this? Who is benefitting? Whose land is this?
- A good thing to look out for is if the website says they work with indigenous communities or if the area is indigenous owned Look into or donate to these organizations
  - [https://www.accafrica.org/our\\_work/kenya-conservation-safari/](https://www.accafrica.org/our_work/kenya-conservation-safari/)
  - <https://naboisho.com/about-us-2/>

- Pressure Biden Administration

- President Biden made a promise to provide tribes with a greater role of care and management of public lands that are significant to tribal nations (Doshi 2021)
- Make sure he stays true to his promise



Maasai Man Posing. Photograph. From Naboisho. [URL](https://naboisho.com/about-us-2/). (Accessed April 22, 2021). Used Under Fair Use.

# Links

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- Link to Works Cited Page:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/15alp5kelbQXRasCQ85VIWoByFBWD21VV0YjyGqHAO3w/edit?usp=sharing>

- My TikTok: Emmavdh17
- My Instagram: Emmagvanderheyden