



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND
FORESTRY**

Office of the Cabinet Secretary

Public Statement

Illegal Grazing in Public Forests

1. Kenya's public forests are critical to the goal of raising our country's tree cover to 30% by 2032 as envisioned in the 10-year National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration Strategy. The strategy is the anchor framework for the 15B National Tree Growing Programme focused on amplifying our Nature Based Solutions (NBS) interventions to combat the climate change crisis.
2. As Government, we are focused on safeguarding the integrity of our public forests as we work towards enhancing our tree cover. The recent recruitment and deployment of 2,700 forest rangers, 100 cadets and 468 foresters has led to a significant decline in forest related crimes.
3. However, cases of illegal grazing in public forests are on the rise across the country. This undermines the progress we are making towards the 15 billion national tree growing target.
4. The Forest Conservation and Management Act (2016) makes provision for the participation of local communities in the management of our gazetted forests. Section (49)(2)(d) of the Act confers certain user rights to forest adjacent communities including controlled grass harvesting and grazing.

5. In order to ensure that only sustainable participatory forest management activities are undertaken in our gazetted forests including grazing, the public is notified as follows:
- a) That, on matters of forest user rights, the Ministry **shall only** engage with forest adjacent communities that are members of duly registered Community Forest Associations (CFAs) through negotiated Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMPs) and Forest Management Agreements (FMAs) as stipulated in the law.
 - b) That, the Chief Conservator of Forests is hereby directed to ensure that established rules and regulations on grazing and grass harvesting in public forests are implemented to the letter.
 - c) That, the Ministry, working with partners, is deploying technology to enhance forest surveillance; hastening delineation of boundaries; and expanding the fencing programme to cover all gazetted public forests.
6. The Ministry recognizes the immense public support for our environmental conservation efforts and lauds the renewed vigour by Kenyans towards tree growing countrywide. This is our collective responsibility as Kenyans requiring all hands on deck.



Hon. Soipan Tuya, EGH

CABINET SECRETARY

Nairobi, 14th June 2024