

## CALL FOR ACTION

### **SAVE THE ICCA OF SAKATIA IN MADAGASCAR AGAINST LAND GRABBING**

**We, the Fokonolona guardians of the Indigenous Community Conserved Area (ICCA) from the island of Sakatia in Nosy Be, Madagascar, denounce and oppose the land grabbing project and the displacement of the population to build an infrastructure project by a company called GREEN MADA LAND on our territory. This project is a threat to biodiversity, our livelihood and constitutes a violation of our human rights.**

We have lived on the island of Sakatia for over a century. Our culture and livelihoods are linked to the island, its land, the sea surrounding it and its natural resources. Our community collectively manages the island's natural resources, which are rich in biodiversity and attract many tourists every year. This community management has been legally recognised through a management transfer contract with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (no. 663/22-MEDD/SG/DREDD.DIANA). In addition, Sakatia is an emblematic ICCA recognised by its peers in Madagascar i.e an area managed and governed by local communities whose rules, values and traditional practices contribute to the conservation of island's resources and the well-being of the community.

The 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the Prefect of Nosy Be summoned representatives of our community to discuss the relocation of the population to make way for

a presidential project. The project concerns a 17-hectare plot of land granted by the State to the company called GREEN MADA LAND through a long-term lease ("bail emphytéotique") to build a hotel complex.

It should be noted that a ministerial decision (« Arrêté n°27 227/2019-MAHTP du 29 Novembre 2019 ») was previously adopted to cancel the long-term lease obtained by the company in a dubious manner. Yet, we learned that a lease is currently still in operation. We were neither informed nor involved in the process of issuing these two long-term leases, even though they directly concern us.

The content of the previous lease involved renting the 17 hectares of land for 100 Ariary (around 0,20 euro) per m<sup>2</sup> with an option to convert it into a definitive sales contract. We don't have access to the new lease despite several requests for information made to the administrative authorities at various levels (local and national). No clear information has been shared on this subject.

The Fokonolona of Sakatia island is opposed to this project, which undermines the efforts we made to conserve the island's natural resources and threatens our way of life, our culture and our livelihood. The area where the project is to be built includes a turtle nesting area maintained by local people, which helps to preserve biodiversity. The area also includes rice fields on which the inhabitants depend for their survival.

Regarding this imminent threat we are facing, we are launching this appeal to save the island of Sakatia and its inhabitants.



We call on authorities at different levels to:

- **Demonstrate transparency** regarding the information on the long-term lease granted to GREEN MADA LAND company; and furthermore,
- **Cancel the long-term lease** of the company GREEN MADA LAND which has been named a presidential project by the State;
- **Recognise the right to land ownership of Sakatia's Fokonolona and respect traditional values such as « *teny ierana* » or “free prior informed consent” before taking any decisions** concerning our community and our territory;
- **Avoid any population displacement** and strengthen the protection of human rights linked to Fokonolona's land ownership;
- **Support the community's efforts in the conservation** of the island's biodiversity and promotion of **community-based tourism**;
- **Accelerate the adoption of the draft bill on land with specific status and the draft bill on community land in a sense that respects the fundamental rights of communities**;
- **Take responsibility for ensuring the respect of the individual and collective rights of the Fokonolona of Sakatia.** This includes the responsibilities of the Office of the Presidency, which set up the presidential project, the Judiciary authority, which is examining the current case, the Members of Parliament, who should be the first defender of the people's interests, the various Ministries concerned (particularly the Ministry in charge of land, the Ministry in charge of the environment, and the Ministry of tourism) as well as the local authorities : Municipality, Prefecture and the Region.



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