



Press Release

Friends of Karura Forest release Petition calling on Kenya's Environment Cabinet Secretary to save the Forest now

Nairobi 9 September 2025 - The Friends of Karura Forest are urging the public to sign their Petition calling for Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Dr. Deborah Mlongo Barasa to urgently protect Karura Forest.

The Petition addressed to the CS outlines the potentially damaging consequences to the Forest if the unilateral takeover by Kenya Forestry Service (KFS) on 29 August is not reversed.

The Petition describes how Karura was saved from landgrabbers by the community led by Kenya's Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai. It was subsequently transformed from a deadly no go zone into Kenya's most popular green space with over 75,000 visitors monthly. As a direct result of the community involvement, the Forest became a source of income for local people, a haven for biodiversity and a beautiful safe place for visitors.

Friends of Karura Forest is one of over 250 Community Forest Associations (CFAs) in Kenya, which were set up under the Forest Conversation and Management Act and which play a crucial role in managing, protecting, and sustainably using forest resources. The Friends of Karura Forest work jointly with the Kenya Forest Service under a legally binding Joint Management Agreement which runs to 2041.

The Petition explains that the KFS takeover jeopardises the wide ranging results of this Joint Management Agreement under which all revenue generated in Karura should go to an Account jointly managed by KFS and Friends of Karura. For over 15 years the funds have been reinvested directly back into maintaining the forest, protecting wildlife, supporting environmental education, and providing dignified livelihoods to the surrounding communities.

The Petition warns that the decision to remove Friends of Karura from the management will negatively impact a thriving relationship between the Forest and the local community, weaken local accountability and transparency, reduce service quality and forest security and reverse years of community-driven conservation progress.

The Petition calls on the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change & Forestry to:

- **Uphold the terms of the current Joint Management Agreement between FKF and KFS**
- **Ensure Karura Forest retains and reinvests its revenue locally**
- **Guarantee no encroachment or irregular development in the Forest.**

The FKF Petition can be found in full and signed here <https://chng.it/6C89248Zzt>