



## For Immediate Release

### **PRESS RELEASE: KENYANS MOURN THE LOSS OF LAND FROM NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK.**

**8<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

Today, Kenyans come together to mourn the loss of land from Nairobi National Park.

This park is Kenya's first, gazetted in 1946. It stands as a beacon of conservation, a unique symbol of this great city, and the pride of Nairobians.

The only national park in the world found in a capital city, this 80<sup>th</sup> year of its founding should have been one of celebration. Instead, we come together to mourn yet another assault on this public treasure. In the last ten years, Nairobi National Park has lost almost 4% of its land area to infrastructure development such as the Standard Gauge Railway, the Southern Bypass, and the Internal Container Depot Road. This is not accounting for other losses due to encroachment, land grabs, and other developments.

The Kenya Wildlife Service now proposes to relocate the Nairobi Animal Orphanage to this new site within the Nairobi National Park, which will also include a huge new parking lot that will also serve the Bomas International Conference Centre. We oppose this not on ideological grounds, but because it doesn't follow the law and will lead to more loss of natural habitat from this iconic park.

This massive development flouts KWS' own management plan for the park which designates this area a low use zone because of the ecological fragility of the area. Public participation for this proposed development did not meet legal thresholds, with the draft impact assessment never released for public comment or hearing. The Environmental Impact Assessment contains significant inconsistencies on the size and

scope of the project, varying from 26 acres to 76 acres, and last week KWS claimed in the media it was 89 acres. The size of the parking lot also inexplicably increases from 150 vehicles to 1,300 vehicles. If the scope of this proposed development isn't clear, how can its environmental impact be accurately assessed and then approved by NEMA?

A new facility for captive wildlife created by taking away natural habitat in a national park seems to follow the same logic as cutting down parts of indigenous Karura Forest to set up a tree nursery. Or to grab land from Ololua Forest for housing. Or to build a road, hotel and resort city through the Ngong Road Forest. Or to have mining operations in Meru National Park. Or to build a golf course, state lodge and airstrip in Imenti Forest.

Indeed, it is clear what is going in Nairobi National Park is part of a greater systemic assault not just on our natural heritage across this country, but also on the laws and regulations that protect this natural heritage, and on the rights of Kenyans more broadly.

We therefore call on KWS to immediately shelve the construction of this new animal orphanage and parking lot within the park. We demand greater transparency and integrity from the government in the management of our natural heritage and resources. We expect fidelity to the law and a greater respect for the rights of Kenyans.

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