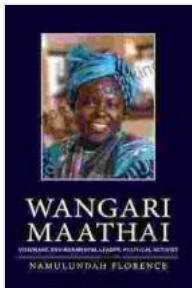


# Wangari Maathai: Visionary Environmental Leader and Political Activist

Wangari Maathai was a Kenyan environmentalist and political activist who founded the Green Belt Movement, an organization that has planted over 51 million trees in Kenya and inspired similar movements in other countries. Maathai was the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, which she was awarded in 2004 for her "contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace." She passed away in 2011 but her legacy continues through her work and the work of her organization.



## Wangari Maathai: Visionary, Environmental Leader, Political Activist by Namulundah Florence

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1564 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 288 pages  
Lending : Enabled



## Early Life and Education

Wangari Maathai was born in Nyeri, Kenya, on April 1, 1940. Her father was a farmer and her mother was a teacher. Maathai was the third of nine children. She grew up in a rural village and attended a local primary school.

She then went on to attend Loreto Girls' High School in Limuru. In 1960, she was one of the first women in Kenya to be admitted to university.

Maathai studied biology at the University of East Africa in Makerere, Uganda. She graduated in 1964 with a bachelor's degree. She then went on to study at the University of Pittsburgh in the United States. In 1969, she became the first woman in East Africa to receive a doctorate degree in biology.

## **Career**

After returning to Kenya, Maathai began teaching at the University of Nairobi. She also started the Green Belt Movement in 1977. The Green Belt Movement is a non-governmental organization that aims to plant trees and promote sustainable development. Maathai founded the movement after she became aware of the environmental degradation that was occurring in Kenya. She believed that planting trees could help to combat deforestation, soil erosion, and water scarcity.

The Green Belt Movement has been very successful. The organization has planted over 51 million trees in Kenya. These trees have helped to improve the environment and provide food and income for local people. The Green Belt Movement has also inspired similar movements in other countries, such as the Billion Tree Campaign in India.

In addition to her work with the Green Belt Movement, Maathai was also a political activist. She was elected to the Kenyan parliament in 2002. She served as the Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources from 2003 to 2005. Maathai was a strong advocate for environmental

protection and human rights. She was also a vocal critic of the Kenyan government.

## **Awards and Honors**

Maathai received numerous awards and honors for her work. In 2004, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her "contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace." She was also awarded the Right Livelihood Award in 1984, the Goldman Environmental Prize in 1991, and the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development in 2005.

## **Legacy**

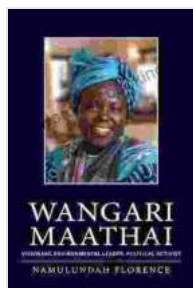
Wangari Maathai died in 2011 but her legacy continues. Her work has helped to improve the environment and promote sustainable development in Kenya and around the world. She is an inspiration to environmentalists and activists around the world.

Wangari Maathai was a visionary environmental leader and political activist. She made a significant contribution to sustainable development, democracy, and peace. Her work continues to inspire people around the world.

## **Additional Resources**

- Green Belt Movement
- Nobel Peace Prize
- Right Livelihood Award
- Goldman Environmental Prize

- Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development

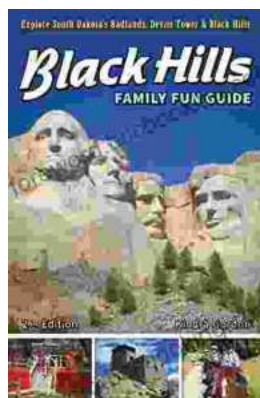


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