

Cultural Keystone Species

A case study of the Inclusive Conservation Initiative in northern Kenya

OLTEPES

(VACHELLIA TORTILIS)

Provides a “great cold shade”
for animals and people (good
for meetings)

Pods (sagaram) can help
stimulate milk production
in animals

During droughts,
consumed by many
wild animals and all
livestock

Used to make medicines
and teas

People may be buried under
the tree where it is common

Used in important
cultural ceremonies,
such as lbaa

Appear in many blessings, such as :

“taa oltepes aro oyengiyengareki lenkoitei ”
(may you grow to an old age and get many
children anybody can run to)

“taa aro anaa oltepes” (may you be big
like an acacia)

Important plant in the diet of
endemic and endangered
species, such as reticulated
giraffe and black rhinoceros

Used for fences, ropes,
sewing needles (thorns)
(historically)



By way of example, this poster only depicts Maa words and phrases