

RRI Dialogue Bulletin

A Summary Report of the Seventeenth Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate Change Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) ONLINE AT WWW.IISD.CA/RRI/17TH-DIALOGUE-FORESTS-GOVERNANCE-CLIMATE-CHANGE/ VOLUME 173, NUMBER 9, SUNDAY, 21 JUNE 2015



SUMMARY OF THE SEVENTEENTH RIGHTS AND RESOURCES INITIATIVE DIALOGUE ON FORESTS, GOVERNANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE – FOREST TENURE, RESTORATION AND GREEN GROWTH: 18 JUNE 2015

On 18 June 2015, the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) hosted its 17th Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate Change in Washington, DC, US, in partnership with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Over 100 participants took part in four separate panel-led discussions, featuring key representatives from governmental, non-governmental, intergovernmental, Indigenous Peoples, and research organizations. Dialogue proceedings were made available via live webcast.

The Dialogue was focused around the theme of "Forest Tenure, Restoration and Green Growth." Participants discussed national and global challenges and opportunities associated with forest landscape restoration (FLR) commitments, such as those under the Bonn Challenge, calling for the restoration of 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded lands by 2020, and forest restoration commitments in the New York Declaration on Forests.

In the morning, participants engaged in a panel-led discussion on linkages and opportunities of forest tenure, restoration and green growth. A presentation on the current global status of FLR was followed by presentations on indigenous perspectives, national strategies, and financing. A second panel focused on forest tenure and restoration, where participants heard about activities in Nepal, Mali and Nicaragua.

In the afternoon, panelists discussed forest restoration and green growth, with examples presented from Mexico and China. The final panel examined opportunities for mainstreaming forest restoration into policy, and recent developments in international climate negotiations.

In concluding remarks, Arvind Khare, RRI, noted the Dialogue's convergence on the centrality of tenure and rights, while pointing out divergent viewpoints on the role of the private sector. Gernot Brodnig, IUCN, thanked participants and urged them to keep "hammering away" at efforts to restore forest landscapes.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RRI DIALOGUES

RRI is a coalition of 14 Partners and over 140 collaborator organizations who are working to advance forest tenure, policy and market reforms. The initiative aims to promote greater global action on pro-poor forest policy and market reforms to increase indigenous and community ownership of, control of and benefits from forests and land. The Rights and Resources Group (RRG), a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC, is the secretariat of this global initiative. The series of RRI Dialogues on Forests, Governance and Climate Change is designed to foster critical reflection and learning on forest governance, the rights of forest communities and Indigenous Peoples, and forest tenure in the context of global action to combat climate change, including REDD+. This series builds on the discussions of the International Conference on Rights, Forests and Climate Change, convened by RRI and Rainforest Foundation-Norway in October 2008.

Previous dialogues have focused on topics such as: the role of forest governance in achieving reduced emissions from deforestation; the status of forests in the global negotiations on climate change; the implications of negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change for forest communities and Indigenous Peoples; common approaches to dealing with the challenges of food security and climate change in forests and agriculture; scaling-up strategies to reduce emissions and advance development in forest areas; and risks and opportunities associated with large-scale, land-based investments. For more information on all of these events, visit: http://www.rightsandresources.org/

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Frédéric Doré, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of France in the US, opened the Dialogue, highlighting US and French collaboration in the lead-up to the 21st Session of the Conference on Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 21) and France's intent to secure a sustainable, universal and ambitious agreement. Adding that France recognizes the role of both state and nonstate actors, he noted the importance of an inclusive approach to the challenges and opportunities of forest restoration.

Arvind Khare, Executive Director, Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), welcomed participants, saying events like these are building knowledge and momentum as the world moves toward COP 21. He recalled lessons from experience with international agreements and forest restoration in developing countries, noting that: forest restoration will not be successful if it is approached as only a technical matter, without taking into account the rights and participation of forest communities; focus must be placed on societies, not just trees; and cross-sectoral strategies that reach beyond the forest sector are essential.

Thomas Tidwell, Chief, US Forest Service, focused his keynote address on building economic opportunities from forests to encourage sustainable management, and on collaborative approaches to forest management. He stated that 13-29 jobs and US\$2 million in economic activity are generated from every US\$1 million invested in restoration. He described efforts to disseminate knowledge to private landowners on forest management and ways to generate economic activity from their lands, including using revenues from biomass sales to pay for restoration. He described partnerships with diverse communities, including Indigenous Peoples, in the US and globally, focused on building capacity, mobilizing communities and promoting forest management for climate change resilience and economic viability.

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FOREST TENURE, RESTORATION AND GREEN GROWTH: LINKAGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Gernot Brodnig, Director, Global Economics and Social Science Program, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), chaired this session.

Miguel Antonio de Goes Calmon, Senior Manager of Forest and Landscape Restoration, IUCN, presented the current state of play of forest landscape restoration (FLR). He stated that, globally, two billion hectares of degraded and deforested land could benefit from FLR, noting that countries have already committed to the restoration of 60 million hectares. He highlighted key principles of restoration, including stakeholder engagement, tailoring to local contexts, restoring functionality, producing multiple benefits, and avoiding leakage. He said that US\$85 billion per year could be accrued to local and national economies through FLR, and brought attention to IUCN's work towards creating Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM), a tool to help countries identify restoration opportunities.

Estebancio Castro Diaz, Advisor, International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical forests, highlighted the lack of enforcement of legal frameworks for indigenous rights, making it difficult for Indigenous Peoples to protect their forests. He emphasized the importance of bringing traditional knowledge to FLR discussions, noting that forced integration of Indigenous Peoples into national cultures is destroying indigenous social and cultural structures. He underlined concerns regarding the use of tree monocultures in FLR efforts, and called for further recognition and implementation of Indigenous Peoples' rights to selfdetermination and free, prior and informed consent.

Silvia Anaité López, Coordinator, Strategic Forest Ecosystems Unit, National Forest Institute, Guatemala, outlined FLR efforts in Guatemala, including a commitment to restore 1.2 million hectares nationally over 30 years through a highly participatory process. Highlighting economic development through FLR, she noted FLR would make local economies more dynamic and create rural jobs. She stated that secure tenure was needed to improve the investment climate in these areas.

James Bond, Senior Advisor, Green Climate Fund (GCF), stated that, as of April 2015, the GCF is ready to start funding mitigation and adaptation projects in developing countries. He emphasized that, given the US\$450 billion in climate finance that will be required annually in developing countries, the GCF will leverage private sector finance through a range of tools designed to reduce the investment risk associated with projects.

During discussions, attendees focused on Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' participation. In response to a comment that Indigenous Peoples' cannot directly participate in the GCF, Bond explained that the "direct access" modality to accessing funds means a wide range of entities, whether private banks, Indigenous Peoples' organizations, NGOs or government agencies, can become accredited partners of the GCF and tap its resources. He added that there are two Active Observers on the GCF Board that are meant to represent civil society, including Indigenous Peoples. In response to a suggestion that land titling to Indigenous Peoples be part of the Guatemalan national strategy, López emphasized the government's efforts to make the process participatory and take into account land tenure. Highlighting lessons from successful FLR, Calmon underlined the need to first show national governments benefits from FLR, then work at the district level to convince landowners of these benefits.

FOREST TENURE AND RESTORATION

Jenny Springer, Director, Global Programs, RRI, chaired the panel. She highlighted that secure community tenure is necessary both to provide a foundation for successful forest restoration efforts, in keeping with traditional knowledge and forest management systems, and to ensure that restoration itself does not result in increased conflict or infringement on community rights. She added that, despite increased global awareness of the centrality of community tenure recognition to forest sustainability, the 2014 RRI assessment, "What Future for Reform?" showed that recognition of rights on the ground has slowed in recent years, and fewer and weaker laws have been enacted.

Peter Veit, Director, Land and Resource Rights Initiative, World Resources Institute, discussed links between tenure and restoration, noting that recent literature has used sophisticated statistical techniques to "tease out" variables on the linkages between tenure and forest outcomes, bordering on being able to demonstrate cause and effect. He reported correlations between: weak tenure and poor forest cover and high deforestation rates; legal recognition and protection of rights and low deforestation rates and better forest cover; and secure community tenure and agricultural productivity and investment. Exemplifying Niger, he recounted how, after shifting from centralized state control of forests to recognition of local rights, 200 million trees were regenerated on five million hectares of farmland, sequestering 30 million tons of carbon.

Ghanshyam Pandey, Coordinator, Global Alliance of Community Forestry, shared the story of Nepal, which experienced the conversion of 2.2 million hectares of forest to agricultural land, high deforestation rates and conflict during government nationalization of forests. He described the transition to community forestry, or "forestry for the people, by the people," with the 1993 Forest Act. He said the result has been community resilience and the protection and management of 1.7 million hectares of forest. Noting their provision of broader social functions in rural areas, he highlighted that local community forest organizations were instrumental in dealing with the aftermath of the recent earthquake.

Célestin Dembélé, Deputy Program Director for Mali, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, discussed efforts towards forest restoration in Mali. He traced the evolution of forest reforms, outlining the legacy of colonization on forest legislation, a period of increased sanctioning and repression that complicated restoration efforts by disengaging communities, and recent decentralization. He spoke about reforestation efforts in the last five years, highlighting farmers' efforts in natural assisted restoration, and underscored that restoration will take place at the community level, not the state level.

Melibea Gallo, Senior Land Use Specialist, Forest Governance and Economy Unit, IUCN – Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and Caribbean, presented on restoration in the Autonomous Region of the North Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua (RACCN). She drew attention to the recognized rights to land of Afro-Caribbean descendants and Indigenous Peoples, noting continuing territorial disputes due to in-migration and timber and mining activities. She noted that a loss of principles of solidarity and reciprocity, favoring individual over collective ownership and immediate use of land rather than sustainable use, were limiting landscape restoration efforts. She outlined use of ROAM in identifying key restoration areas based on: level of degradation; and importance in supplying water, reducing impacts of national disasters and increasing biodiversity. She underscored the use of indigenous management practices in restoration efforts.

During the discussion, participants raised questions on: the link between decentralization and tenure security in Mali; using restoration for poverty reduction in Nepal; why, with such compelling evidence worldwide on the benefits of land tenure, the message is not trickling down to governments; the need to analyze laws' potential impacts to ensure they do not exacerbate problems; and the role of women in restoration.

Pandey commented on the need to "move from green to green growth" by developing small- and medium-sized forest enterprises at the community level. Veit urged recognizing that land and forest tenure reform is highly politicized, and noted that companies are beginning to shy away from acquiring contested lands, as recognition of the costs of doing so have risen.

FOREST RESTORATION AND GREEN GROWTH

James Close, Director, Climate Change Group, World Bank, chaired this session.

Michael Verdone, Independent Consultant, presented on contributions of restoration activities to the green economy. He said that valuing natural capital can help internalize externalities, and this value can be used to create markets for restoration-related goods and services. He stated that payments for ecosystem services (PES) can make FLR more financially attractive, listed examples of watershed restoration investments, and highlighted creative business models to show how restoration can contribute to the green economy. He cited a study entitled "Oregon's Restoration Economy" that looked at direct, indirect and induced effects of restoration on job creation, noting how restoration investments greatly contribute to local economies. He listed remaining challenges, including: making restoration financially competitive; difficulties in financing and maintaining post-restoration landscapes due to imperfect property rights, information asymmetry, externalities, and the public good nature of ecosystem services; high transaction costs; and creating perverse incentives through PES

Xu Jintao, Director, China Center for Energy and Development at Peking University, Peking University, recapped a World Bank study on China's economic growth model, which found that China's current high-pollution, highconsumption model is no longer sustainable. He stated that there are many opportunities for China to reap the benefits of switching to a green growth model, including building on progress on forest tenure reform and forest expansion. Noting that the forest sector's role in the country's climate and green growth strategies remains murky, he called for removing subsidies to heavy industries and described a range of economic and climate benefits that could be generated by redirecting funds to forest production, supporting research and development, and promoting a forest-based economy.

Iván Zuñiga, Coordinator of Public Policy, Mexican Civil Council for Sustainable Forestry (CCMSS), commented on the contributions of community forestry to forest restoration and green growth in Mexico. Noting the number of communities in Mexico that own and manage their forests legally and sustainably, he cautioned that overregulation of forestry and a narrow focus on carbon sequestration has resulted in disincentivizing communities to manage and restore forests. He highlighted government funding through National Forestry Commission programs that resulted in the restoration of 3.95 million hectares from 2000 to 2013, as well as creating jobs and positively impacting local economies. He underscored the importance of designing restoration programs from the bottom up, and urged thinking of forest restoration as not only incomecreating, but also as a form of natural heritage and culture, fostering social organization around forests.

Klas Sander, Senior Environmental Economist, World Bank, questioned the assumed opposing relationship between population growth and maintaining forest cover. Describing the forest transition theory, he demonstrated that the correlation between population growth and forest loss shifts after 1850 in the "Old Developed World" as forest ownership rights were transferred to the private level, large-scale management of short rotation forests took hold, and forest policing gave way to forest service agencies.

In the ensuing discussion, participants questioned the green growth approach to monetizing forest values, particularly considering that this counters the worldview of Indigenous Peoples. One participant noted that this signals that monetization has to enter into economic calculations of people who would otherwise value forests non-monetarily. Verdone noted that the private sector, which is needed to overcome the budget shortfall for restoration, responds to price signals in this capitalist system, and PES can be used to do so. Participants also discussed: externalities in the forestry sector that cause a disconnect between economic and financial analysis in forestry; differences between state and collective land ownership in China; and powerful groups in many countries that dominate wood energy markets and practice rent-seeking behavior.

POLICY OPPORTUNITIES AND MESSAGES

Sally Collins, Co-Chair, MegaFlorestais, introduced the final panel, saying it would provide a chance to see how opportunities in tenure, restoration and green growth identified throughout the day can be translated into global policies.

Ulrich Apel, Senior Environmental Specialist, Global Environment Facility (GEF), said the GEF has championed a holistic approach to forest management since its inception, but is a new player in the restoration agenda. He explained that the focus historically has been on preventing deforestation, but as the world realizes that planetary boundaries are being crossed, restoration has been recognized as a key part of sustainable development. Recapping examples from the day's discussions, he identified several building blocks to scaling restoration, including capacity building at different levels, supportive policies including forest tenure reforms, generating multiple benefits, financial instruments and engagement with the private sector.

Josefina Braña-Varela, Policy Director, Global Forest and Climate Programme, WWF International, reported on the REDD+ outcomes from the 42nd session of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). Explaining that three technical issues remained on SBSTA's agenda after the adoption of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ at COP 19, she said SBSTA had concluded its work on safeguards information systems, non-carbon benefits and joint mitigation and adaptation approaches. She reflected that, while the draft decisions to be forwarded to the COP were diluted in the interest of compromise, they do give the signal that now is the time for implementation. Commenting on translating international discussions into national policies, she highlighted Mexico's intended nationally determined contribution (INDC) to the anticipated 2015 climate agreement, which provides concrete details on its climate action plan, including restoration. She also highlighted the dedicated grant mechanism being developed in Peru under the World Bank Climate Investment Funds' (CIF) Forest Investment Program (FIP), which will allocate US\$5 million to directly support specific activities of Indigenous Peoples.

Niranjali Amerasinghe, Director, Climate Change Program, Center for International Environmental Law, presented human rights aspects of the UNFCCC developments and the GCF. She highlighted one paragraph in the negotiating text for the anticipated 2015 climate agreement, on respecting human rights, gender equality, a just transition, Indigenous Peoples' rights and integrity of Mother Earth. She noted that land use is mentioned a few times in the agreement juxtaposed with markets and accounting, with some groups pushing to decouple these, and cautioned that the push for net zero emissions may incentivize actions like mass land grabbing for activities such as palm oil development. She added that the GCF's interim safeguards were borrowed from the International Finance Corporation rather than from the REDD+ safeguards, and were not very robust on tenure issues.

In the ensuing discussion, participants and panelists brought up the tensions between developed and developing countries on safeguards and reporting requirements, with one participant giving the example that developed countries were not being asked to report on their Indigenous Peoples. Amerasinghe underscored the importance of readiness and capacity building, and the lack of financing for these. On a question regarding specific REDD+ text on tenure rights, Braña-Varela opined that different country contexts have made very specific language on rights difficult to agree upon, but this language should be elaborated in the national REDD+ strategies. Participants also discussed the need for integration and articulation of the different initiatives and commitments internationally and on the ground, with Apel noting that the Sustainable Development Goals are an entry point to bringing together targets from different conventions.

When asked to point to one thing that could be put into international policy dialogues that would make a real difference on the ground: Amerasinghe called for a human rights "hook" in international law that would force implementation at national level; Braña-Varela urged equity and fairness in the agreement; and Apel appealed for pragmatism and simplicity.

CLOSING SESSION

Khare prefaced his closing remarks by noting the challenge of delivering a "neutral" conclusion. While underscoring that the diverse presentations had converged on the centrality of tenure and rights to forest restoration, he pointed to divergences, for example: some see the private sector's role as essential while others find private capital has never been used to advance the public's objectives. He added that people have differing perceptions of the same reality, noting opposing views on potential for Indigenous Peoples' participation in the GCF, and on valuing or monetizing nature.

Brodnig commended the panelists for fascinating insights, factual details and novel angles. He emphasized that the common refrains heard reminded us that "we know what needs to be done" and must continue "hammering away." He said IUCN will participate in documenting successes and failures to persuade decision makers. He thanked participants and closed the Dialogue at 5:35 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

World Forum on Ecosystem Governance: The World Forum on Ecosystem Governance is modeled after the World Economic Forum, but with a focus on the planet's natural capital. The Forum will periodically bring together world specialists and leaders to promote more effective governance to respond to ecosystem threats. The first event is the High Level Consultations from 25-27 June 2015 in Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, China, followed by the Young Professionals' Academy on 27 October 2015 in Beijing, China. The Technical Roundtable Discussions will be held 28-30 October 2015 in Beijing, China and will build upon the guidance provided by the High Level Consultations. The World Forum on Ecosystem Governance is a partnership of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management, the Chinese State Forestry Administration, and the Beijing Municipal Government. dates: 25-27 June 2015 location: Guizhou, China additional: Guiyang City contact: Steve Edwards e-mail: prxs@me.com www: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/ downloads/announcement 1st world ecosystem forum final. pdf

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples: The UN organizes International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples annually. The theme of the 2015 event is, 'Indigenous Peoples as Custodians of the Land and its Ecosystems.' date: 9 August 2015 location: US (worldwide) contact: Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues e-mail: indigenous_ un@un.org www: http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples/ InternationalDay/2014.aspx

http://www.unccd.int/en/media-center/Pages/CalendarDetail. aspx?calID=262

Fourteenth World Forestry Congress: The 2015 World Forestry Congress, the first to be held in Africa, will come together under the theme, 'Forests and People – Investing in a Sustainable Future.' The Congress, convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the Government of South Africa, will consider how forests can be mainstreamed into global discussions on sustainable development and will facilitate the development of partnerships to address global forestry issues. **dates:** 7-11 September 2015 **location:** Durban, South Africa **contact:** South Africa Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries **e-mail:**WFC-XIV-Info@fao.org **www:** http://www.fao.org/forestry/wfc/en/ From Rhetoric to Action: Scaling Up Community and Indigenous Peoples' Land and Resource Rights: Following up on the 2013 Interlaken conference on scaling up land and resource rights, this conference aims to take stock of current efforts, and identify new goals, strategies, and priority next steps. dates: 30 September - 1 October 2015 location: Bern, Switzerland contact: RRI e-mail: info@rightsandresources.org www: http://www.rightsandresources.org/event/scaling-up-toadvance-recognition-of-community-land-and-resource-rights/

CBD 19th Meeting of SBSTTA and 9th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* **Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention:** The nineteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 19) and the ninth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will be held back-to-back. **dates:** 1-7 November 2015 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **e-mail:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** http://www.cbd.int/doc/ notifications/2015/ntf-2015-003-cop13-en.pdf

18th RRI Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate Change: This dialogue will explore implications for the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities of two key developments in international efforts to combat climate change in 2015: the negotiations towards a global climate agreement in Paris in December 2015 and the further development of international climate and REDD+ funding frameworks and proposals. date: 26 October 2015 location: Washington, DC, US contact: RRI e-mail: info@ rightsandresources.org www: http://www.rightsandresources. org/event/eighteenth-rri-dialogue-on-forests-governance-andclimate-change/

51st Session of the International Tropical Timber Council: The meeting of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC) will consider recommendations for tropical forestrelated policies and approve financing for field-level projects. The ITTC serves as the governing body for the International Tropical Timber Organization. **dates:** 16-21 November 2015 **location:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia **contact:** Emmanuel Ze Meka **e-mail:** itto@itto.int **www:** http://www.itto.int/ workshop_detail/id=4240

First Annual FLARE Network Conference: In the lead up to the UNFCCC COP21, the First Annual Conference of the Forests and Livelihoods: Assessment, Research and Engagement (FLARE) Network will take place. FLARE aims to advance cutting edge knowledge and practices regarding forest-based livelihoods, biodiversity, and climate change. Conference themes include: governance and landscapes; agricultural commodities; social and biological aspects of forest dependence; impact evaluations; pathways to prosperity; and climate. The conference is organized by International Forestry Resources and Institutions (IFRI), PROFOR, and Musée de L'Homme. **dates:** 27-30 November 2015 **location:** Paris, France **contact:** Cristy Watkins **e-mail:** IFRI@umich.edu **www:** http://www. ifriresearch.net/category/events

UNFCCC COP 21: The 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is expected to take place in December 2015, in Paris, France. **dates:** 30 November - 11 December 2015 **location:** Paris, France **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228 815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **e-mail:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** http://www.unfccc.int

Global Landscapes Forum 2015: The third annual Global Landscapes Forum will take place on 6 December 2015, in Paris, France, coinciding with UNFCCC COP 21. A successor to past Forest Days and Agriculture and Rural Development Days, the Forum focuses on land use as a key sector for achieving global climate and sustainability goals, and brings together stakeholders from different land-use sectors. dates: 5-6 December 2015 venue: Palais des Congrès location: Paris, France contact: Ann-Kathrin Neureuther, Global Landscapes Forum e-mail: a.neureuther@cgiar.org www: http://www.landscapes.org/setting-stage-2015-global-landscapes-forum/

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