Community-based tenure and efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from forestry and agriculture: A global perspective

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Washington, DC
October 26, 2015
Climate change and the Global Baseline

• Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Uses can have a strong impact on climate change, and community-based systems of land use management can frequently provide significant carbon sequestration benefits.

• For these benefits to be realized, however, communities must have robust rights to their lands.

• This presentation summarizes the results of RRI’s global baseline study of formally recognized community-based tenure regimes, which examines how much land is owned or controlled by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in 64 countries.

• It also identifies how many of these countries have included community-based land use and natural resource management within their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs).
Emissions from Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU)

- As of 2010, the AFOLU sector was responsible for **24 percent of manmade GHG emissions**.
- Some of the largest sources of AFOLU emissions are:
  - Deforestation
  - Agricultural emissions from livestock
  - Soil and nutrient management
  - Forest degradation
  - Biomass burning on both forest and agricultural lands.
Linking tenure security and AFOLU emissions

- Governments formally recognize community-based land rights to 513 Mha of forests around the world, which contain the carbon equivalent of all the forests of North America (about 37.7 billion tonnes of carbon stock).
- Where Indigenous Peoples and local communities have legal recognition of community forest rights and the government protects those rights, deforestation rates are significantly lower than in forests outside those areas.
Mitigating climate change through community forestry

• Carbon emissions are also significantly lower in recognized community forests.

• A WRI study of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon between 2000 and 2012 found that nonindigenous lands released 27x more CO₂ emissions than indigenous lands.

• In Mexico the sequestration potential of just 5 community-managed forests totaling 375,500 ha was estimated to have the potential to sequester 64.1 million tonnes of CO₂.

• Communities in Nepal even increased the capacity of their forests to store carbon by 3 tonnes annually, between 2004 and 2008.
Mitigating climate change through community management of grasslands

- **30 percent** of the world’s soil carbon is managed in the more than 5000 Mha of **rangelands** globally managed by up to 200 million pastoralists.
- Data on community grassland management is more limited than that for community forests, but individual case studies show that migratory pastoral systems are more suitable and productive than ranching or sedentary models, and have significant carbon storage potential.
- A study evaluating a GIZ project to improve grasslands in Mongolia’s Gobi desert between 2000 and 2009 found that **grasslands managed by communities** contained 15.2% more plant biomass than those that were not managed by communities.
- In the Marsabit Central grazing land in Northern Kenya, communally managed semi-arid pastoral ecosystems were found to store the equivalent of 341.35 tonnes ha$^{-1}$ of carbon dioxide.
- However, when **land tenure models** or other factors restrict pastoralists’ movement, additional land degradation from over-grazing may result.
As countries prepare for the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP21) in Paris this December, many countries have recognized community-based natural resource management as an important element of the strategy to combat climate change.

47 countries included in the Global Baseline Report have submitted an Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC). Of those:

- 26 (55%) did not include community tenure or land management considerations in their INDCs;
- 16 (34%) made passing mention of community tenure or land management in their INDCs; and
- 5 (11%) mentioned community tenure or land management in detail in their INDCs.
Transition slide to Global Baseline Results

• For these carbon sequestration and conservation benefits to be realized, however, communities must have robust rights to their lands.

• This presentation summarizes the results of RRI’s global baseline study, which examines how much land is owned or controlled by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in community-based tenure regimes in 64 countries.

• It also examines how much land area is held under formally recognized community-based ownership or control in the countries that have discussed community-based land use and natural resource management within their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs).
Global Baseline Results
Who owns the world’s land? A global baseline to measure community-based tenure

• Provides an evidence-based context for the analysis of national governments’ formal recognition of community-based tenure around the world.

• This can form the basis for the Dialogue’s discussion of:
  • How to promote tenure recognition as a strategy to combat climate change
  • How to narrow the gap between area where Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities have formal recognition of their lands and the much larger area that they hold in practice.
1. How much land is **formally recognized by national governments** as owned or controlled by Indigenous Peoples and local communities? The study covers:
   - 64 countries
   - 82% of global land area
   - All ecosystems (grasslands, agricultural lands, forests, etc.)

2. RRI’s analytical framework: comparing ownership and control.
   - Tenure regimes establishing **ownership**: Communities’ rights are **unlimited in duration**; include the legal right to **exclude outsiders**; and establish a right to **due process and compensation** in the face of potential extinguishment by the state of some or all of their rights.
   - In tenure regimes that **designate** lands for community **control**: rights-holders have some level of “control” exercised through **use, withdrawal, management, and/or exclusion rights** over land, but they do not have all rights required under the “ownership” designation.
There are an enormous number of communities whose land rights have not yet been recognized.

- Within the area studied, 18% is under indigenous or community ownership or control in community-based tenure regimes.
- Another study estimates that up to 65% of global land area is actually held by Indigenous Peoples and local communities under customary tenure.
Indigenous Peoples or local communities own or control 18 percent of the land area in the 64 countries studied. However, these results are concentrated in a handful of countries. Five countries—China, Canada, Brazil, Australia, and Mexico—make up 67 percent of the total global land area under community-based tenure regimes.
Half of the 64 countries recognize Indigenous Peoples’ and local communities’ rights to own or control less than 5 percent of their national territory.
Breakdown by region

**Figure 3** Breakdown by Region

**Latin America**
- 77%
- 5% Area Designated for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- 18% Area Owned by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

**Asia**
- 74%
- 3% Area Designated for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- 23% Area Owned by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- China’s proportion is 99% of owned land

**Sub-Saharan Africa**
- 84%
- 13% Area Designated for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- 3% Area Owned by Governments or Private Individuals
Figure 4  Regional Comparison of the Number of Countries Recognizing Community Ownership, Control, or Both

- **Latin America**
  - Countries with tenure regimes that only recognize ownership: 3
  - Countries with tenure regimes that only recognize community control: 2
  - Countries with tenure regimes that recognize both ownership and control: 7
  - Countries with no legal framework for community-based tenure regimes: 1

- **Sub-Saharan Africa**
  - Countries with tenure regimes that only recognize ownership: 5
  - Countries with tenure regimes that recognize both ownership and control: 12
  - Countries with no legal framework for community-based tenure regimes: 2

- **Asia**
  - Countries with tenure regimes that only recognize ownership: 2
  - Countries with tenure regimes that recognize both ownership and control: 2
  - Countries with no legal framework for community-based tenure regimes: 9
The countries that acknowledge community-based tenure or land management in their INDCs contain only 29.20% of the land formally recognized as owned or controlled by Indigenous Peoples and local communities globally.

The extent to which countries recognize community-based management as part of their climate change strategy also differs by region.
# Community tenure and land management considerations in the INDCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Tenure/Land Management included in INDCs?</th>
<th>Africa (15)</th>
<th>Asia (12)</th>
<th>Asia without China (11)</th>
<th>Latin America (11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Countries</td>
<td>% of Community Owned or Controlled Land</td>
<td>Number of Countries</td>
<td>% of Community Owned or Controlled Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mention</td>
<td>7 / 15</td>
<td>13.67%</td>
<td>7 / 12</td>
<td>32.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing Mention</td>
<td>7 / 15</td>
<td>20.82%</td>
<td>2 / 12</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed Mention</td>
<td>1 / 15</td>
<td>52.74%</td>
<td>3 / 12</td>
<td>0.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing or Detailed Mention</td>
<td>8 / 15</td>
<td>24.84%</td>
<td>5 / 12</td>
<td>0.44%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The rush to issue commercial concessions is immense, and it is placing pressure on community-based tenure.

Concessions often overlap with indigenous and community lands:

- In Argentina almost 6 million hectares of soy concessions;
- In Mozambique over 1.2 million hectares of biofuels concessions; and
- In part of West Kalimantan, Indonesia, oil palm concessions overlap with 59 percent of community forests.

For example, commercial concessions have been issued over 40% of Peru’s land area.
Key Messages

• Community-based tenure has the potential to play a significant role in combating climate change. However, more needs to be done to close the gap between lands held by Indigenous Peoples and local communities and those formally recognized as such.

• Countries must recognize a robust set of rights in order to effectively mitigate climate change. Where governments only recognize community management rights for a short period of time, communities have greater incentive to disregard sustainable management practices—resulting in adverse ecosystem impacts.

• INDCs that already recognize the importance of community-based natural resource management represent a window of opportunity to promote greater recognition of community-based tenure.

• Finally, moving forward, community-based tenure should be incorporated into more countries’ climate change plans as a carbon sequestration strategy.
THANK YOU

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