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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### LAND RIGHTS: A PREREQUISITE FOR COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADVANCING PEACE AND GENDER EQUALITY

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon**  
**Sida, Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm (Oasen), Sweden**

*Editor's Note: A press briefing will be held prior to the event. To attend the press briefing or the event, or to request interviews and embargoed press materials and reports, please contact: (US) Ellen Wilson at [ewilson@burness.com](mailto:ewilson@burness.com) / +1 301 466 3205 or (Europe) Susan Tonassi at [stonassi@burness.com](mailto:stonassi@burness.com) / +49 160 9327 9327.*

**In Lead-up to Climate Talks at COP23 in Bonn, Indigenous Leaders,  
Forestry Experts and Investors to Join Swedish Aid Officials and Ford  
Foundation President in Stockholm to Tackle Major Cause of Climate Change,  
Violence and Costly Conflicts in the Global South**

***New research will underline urgent need to end toxic land disputes in the tropics,  
where Indigenous Peoples and local communities risk their lives to resist forest-  
razing development projects that supply Europe with cheap goods***

As concern mounts that the world will fail to meet its targets to reduce carbon emissions, the Swedish government, the Ford Foundation and other funders will throw their weight behind a proven, yet underutilized, climate solution: recognizing the land rights of the indigenous and forest peoples of Africa, Latin America and Asia, who have emerged as the globe's most effective tropical forest protectors.

At least one quarter—or 54,546 million metric tons—of the carbon stored above ground in the world's tropical forests is found in the collectively managed territories of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. This is equivalent to almost four times the world's greenhouse gas emissions in 2014. Research has shown that where rights are secure, deforestation rates are lower and carbon storage and biodiversity higher.

Leaders attending the *Development Talks* will call on international climate negotiators to act on a growing body of evidence demonstrating the role that secure land rights for Indigenous Peoples and local communities can play in protecting the tropical forests that are crucial to keeping global warming below two degrees. Secure land rights are also central for ending land conflicts that erupt when palm oil plantations, mines and massive dams drive Indigenous Peoples and local communities from their homes and destroy the tropical forests.

The event will formally launch the International Land and Forest Tenure Facility, a new institution dedicated to scaling up recognition of collective land and forest rights globally, thereby reducing conflict and furthering achievement of global goals on human rights, equality, the environment and development. **An analysis of Tenure Facility pilot projects in Mali, Peru and Indonesia, to be released in Stockholm, will demonstrate significant**

**progress, as local peoples use innovative legal tactics and GPS systems to map and monitor their territories and secure legal rights to their lands.**

A new study released alongside these results will examine community-company conflicts in Southeast Asia, the latest in a series of papers documenting the significant cost of conflict to investors and companies that fail to address insecure land rights. **An earlier paper by the same authors concludes that land conflict with local peoples can increase companies' operating costs by [as much as 29 times the baseline](#)—often leading to outright abandonment of up-and-running operations.**

**WHO:** Civil society, public and private sector, and indigenous and rural tropical forest communities, including the following speakers:

- Silvana Baldovino, Program Director, La Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental (SPDA) (Peru)
- Othello Brandy, Chairman of the Liberia Land Commission (Liberia)
- Julio Cusurichi Palacios, President, Federación Nativa del Río Madre de Dios y Afluentes (FENAMAD) (Peru)
- Boubacar Diarra, Coordinateur Projet Pilote tenure foncière et forestières, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation (Mali)
- Daouda Diarra, head of rural tenure at Mali's Ministry of Agriculture (Mali)
- Peter Holmgren, Director General of CIFOR (Indonesia)
- Carin Jämtin, Director General of Sida (Sweden)
- Eleni Kyrou, Senior Social Development Specialist at the European Investment Bank (Luxembourg)
- Ulrika Modéer, State Secretary to the Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate (Sweden)
- Rukka Sombolinggi, Secretary General of the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN) (Indonesia)
- Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Philippines)
- Mikhail Tarasov, Global Forestry Manager at IKEA (Sweden)
- Rachel Turner, Director for International Finance at DfID (UK)
- Darren Walker, CEO of the Ford Foundation and Board Member of PepsiCo (US)
- Andy White, Coordinator of the Rights and Resources Initiative (US)

Ending deforestation, allowing damaged forests to grow back, and leaving mature forests undisturbed would allow tropical forests to absorb about 27 to 37 percent of current annual greenhouse gas emissions, buying additional time for the needed energy transition to take place before planetary boundaries are breached.

Forests are the only carbon capture and storage “technology” that is safe, proven, cost-effective, immediately available at scale and capable of providing broader societal benefits. These broader benefits include non-carbon climate benefits that regulate rainfall patterns and are critical for mitigating poverty and ensuring food security worldwide.

Sweden is playing a growing role in supporting the global movement for secure land tenure as a tool for supporting the economic empowerment of women, as well as advancing the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

## LAUNCH OF NEW INSTITUTION:

Launched by the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), the initial, promising results of the **International Land and Forest Tenure Facility**'s first round of pilot projects will be unveiled in Stockholm with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Ford Foundation. The Tenure Facility will be based in Stockholm, and is the world's first international mechanism dedicated solely to helping Indigenous Peoples and rural communities secure their land and forest rights, while improving their ability to care for their lands sustainably. The institution is unique as it provides funding and technical assistance directly to Indigenous Peoples who are leading the struggle to secure their lands. It helps them break through bureaucratic, political and economic obstacles that block their ability to secure their land and forest rights.

## RESEARCH TO BE RELEASED:

- New research by RRI and TMP Systems examines and assesses social conflicts generated by development projects in Southeast Asia that seek to produce hydropower and agricultural commodities like palm oil, and to extract natural resources;
- A study by RRI will update data on the strength and number of new legislative reforms that recognize indigenous and community land rights; and
- A brief released by RRI and the Interlaken Group detailing several cases where companies such as Portucel (Mozambique), Illovo (Malawi/Zambia) and New Forests (Malaysia) successfully worked with rural communities and local authorities to improve respect for land rights on the ground. The Interlaken Group is an informal network of actors from civil society, government and the private sector that develops actionable solutions for investors and companies to respect land rights.

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