

****MEDIA ADVISORY— BREAKFAST BRIEFING****
March 14, 9:30 a.m. in Paris (3e)

To RSVP or for more information, contact:
Coimbra Sirica, csirica@burness.com; tel: +1 301 943 3287 (EST)
Susan Tonassi, stonassi@burness.com; tel: +49 160 9327 9327(CET)

New Reports: Global Carbon Markets Risk Uprooting Forests—the Only Large-Scale Solution to Climate Change—and the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Who Protect Them

Multi-million-dollar projects underway in DRC reportedly in chaos, as funds flow away from supposed beneficiaries; second study to reveal need for laws to secure ownership of forest carbon worldwide to prevent massive land conflict

As nations worldwide “take stock” of climate commitments laid out in the Paris Climate Agreement, two new reports analyzing United Nations (UN) and other international efforts to protect forests and mitigate poverty will reveal that multi-million-dollar projects already underway are imperiling the lives and lands of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and rural women, who have been shown to outperform both public and private managers of tropical forests worldwide.

One report examines 20 UN forest protection projects known as REDD+ underway in a province in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that is emerging as a testing ground—and litmus test—for joint developing and developed country efforts to keep forests standing. It finds that the projects, which impact 9.8 million hectares of forest, are careening toward disastrous outcomes for indigenous and local peoples while failing to address the underlying causes of deforestation and conflict over land and resources.

A second report reveals the status of laws on the books in highly forested countries, suggesting that current legal systems in many of these countries are endangering the goals of the global carbon market, which was designed to benefit forest peoples and protect carbon-rich forests in the tropical regions of Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia. Insecure land tenure in forest nations have fueled conflict and deforestation across the Global South.

Both research papers propose solutions for fixing the problems the authors identify.

Scientists estimate that forests and “other natural science solutions” offer up to 37 percent of the solution needed by 2030 to keep a global temperature increase below 2°C —the target stated in the Paris Climate Agreement. A growing body of evidence shows that indigenous and local communities—when their rights are recognized and protected—are peerless guardians of tropical forests; increasingly, forest peoples and the forests they care for are being recognized as vital to addressing climate change, as scientists continue to report the dearth of affordable carbon capture technologies that can safely be scaled up.

WHO:

- **Chouchouna Losale**, Vice-Coordinator, Coalition of Women for the Environment and Sustainable Development, DRC
- **Samuel Nguiffo**, President, Center for Environment and Development, Cameroon
- **Marine Gauthier**, Report Author

- **Lien de Brouckere**, Deputy Director, Africa Program, Rights and Resources Initiative
- **Andy White**, Coordinator, Rights and Resources Initiative
- **Alain Frechette**, Director, Strategic Analysis and Global Engagement, Rights and Resources Initiative

WHAT:

Informal breakfast briefing to launch two new reports focused on the potential impact of UN and other international forest protection efforts on Indigenous Peoples and local communities:

- An examination of 20 REDD+ projects in a province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where US\$ 90 million has been invested.
- An analysis of how “forest carbon” rights are addressed in 24 countries, accounting for 50 percent of tropical and subtropical forests worldwide, that are participating in REDD+ or other market-based forest conservation programs.

WHERE:

[Les Bains Paris](#)

7 Rue du Bourg-l'Abbé
75003 Paris
Tel: +33 1 42 77 07 07

WHEN:

March 14 at 9:30 a.m. CET

WHY:

- United Nations efforts to protect and preserve forests, known as REDD+, were launched in 2007, but it was the 2015 Paris Agreement that made them central to commitments aimed at preventing global temperatures from rising by two degrees Celsius.
- Deforestation accounts for an estimated 10 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions; forests that remain intact currently absorb up to [30 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions](#).
- An increasing body of evidence shows that Indigenous Peoples and local communities who live in and depend on forests are the best [guardians of these natural resources](#). Recent peer-reviewed studies have shown that strengthening the land rights of local peoples is more effective at conserving forests than any other policy tool, including the creation of national parks.
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) contains more than half of the world's second-largest tropical forest—8 percent of the world's tropical forest carbon is stored in its trees and peatlands. Since 2016, more than \$90 million has been invested into 20 REDD+ projects in the province.

###

The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) is a global coalition consisting of 15 Partners, 7 Affiliated Networks, 14 International Fellows, and more than 150 collaborating international, regional, and community organizations dedicated to advancing the forestland and resource rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. RRI leverages the capacity and expertise of coalition members to promote secure local land and resource rights and catalyze progressive policy and market reforms. For more information, please visit <http://www.rightsandresources.org>.