

## Statements on Release of the Rights and Resources Initiative Study on Rights-Based Conservation

**Embargoed until 0:00 GMT December 1, 2020**

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*“We are in the midst of two crises: a deadly pandemic and climate disaster. If the voices of Indigenous Peoples were heard, we could have avoided these crises that resulted from destruction of forests and biodiversity. The finding of this report provides evidence that walling off people is not the answer to the destruction of nature. To tackle these crises, we must be recognized as the rightful owners and stewards of our lands and reverse the shrinking of civic space through democratization of environmental governance with transparent and accountable institutions.”*

**- Gam Shimray**  
**Secretary General of Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)**

*“For too long, communities’ lands in Liberia have been treated like a commodity. This has created conflict and dispossession for rural communities. This report shows that the conservation sector can play a key role in stopping the trend towards displacement, but only if their approach is grounded in recognition of communities’ land rights. Without prioritizing these rights, conservation will contribute to the problem, as it has all too often in the past.”*

**- Julie Weah**  
**Executive Director, Foundation for Community Initiatives, Liberia**

*“With delays on the 2020 climate and conservation calendar, incorporating this report’s findings and the Gold Standard principles can help conservation organizations and donors reshape their plans for next year. They have an opportunity to redirect their resources to strengthen rights-based approaches as a central strategy toward inclusive conservation.”*

**- Dr. Alain Frechette**  
**Report co-author / Director of Strategic Analysis and Global Engagement, Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI)**

*“The widespread human rights violations of Indigenous and local communities in Messok Dja, Chitwan, Kaziranga and other public protected areas illustrate the deep moral hazards for citizens of high-income countries who are subsidizing exclusionary conservation, especially if they adapt exclusionary conservation strategies to meet expanded biodiversity targets”*

**- Dr. Kundan Kumar**  
**Report co-author / Asia Program Director, RRI**

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