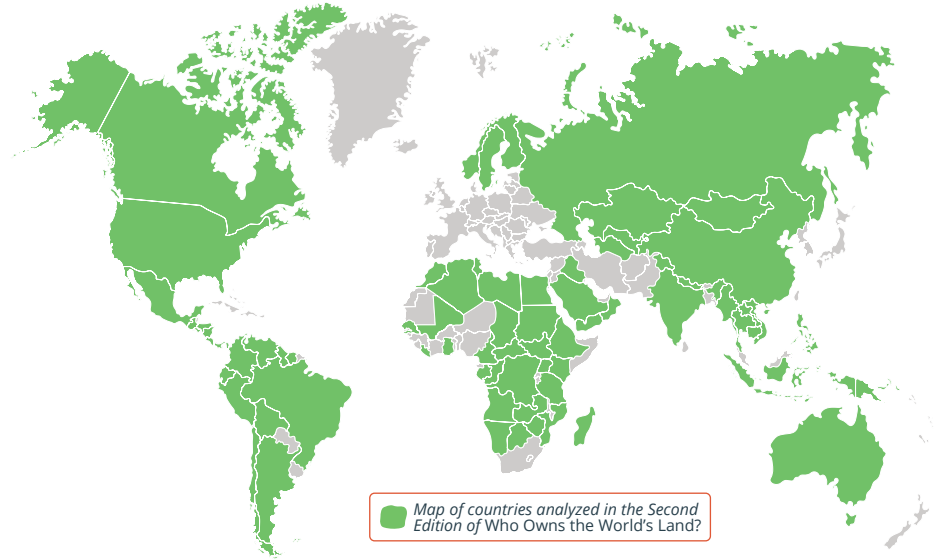




The most comprehensive and up-to-date picture of global progress towards the legal recognition of community-based land tenure.

This report provides updated data on the extent of lands legally recognized as designated for and owned by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and local communities in 73 countries covering over 85% of global land area. The data covers the period 2015–2020.

It also revisits and expands upon estimates of the land area that these communities traditionally hold and use, but to which their rights are not yet legally recognized by national governments. It also reports on progress over the first five years of adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement and offers a baseline against which the Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework 2030 Targets can be monitored.

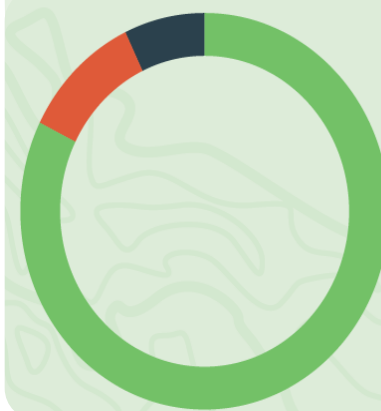


Key Findings

The area legally designated for and owned by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and local communities increased by **more than 100 million hectares (Mha)** from 2015–2020. The land area designated for or owned by communities increased in at least 39 countries during this period.

More than 11% of land is legally owned by these groups, and their more limited designation rights are recognized over 7.1% of global land. China, Canada, Australia, Brazil, and Mexico contain the largest total area of recognized community lands. Together, these five countries account for nearly 62% of total lands designated for or owned by communities globally, despite accounting for only 33% of total land area analyzed by the report.

Distribution of Statutory Land Tenure Across 73 Countries



82% Area Owned by Governments, Private Individuals, or Firms

11% Area Owned by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and Local Communities

7% Area Designated for Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and Local Communities

In 49 countries with available data, more than

1,375 Mha
of communities' lands

have not yet been legally recognized

(that's an area slightly smaller than Antarctica)



Regional Snapshot

Africa

Between 2015 and 2020, Sub-Saharan Africa saw the most legal recognition of community land rights of any region. Kenya saw an increase of 928% and Liberia's share increased 129%.

Latin America

In Latin America, communities experienced critical successes in their respective nations' Supreme Courts and international human rights courts, but continue to experience considerable threats of rollback.

Across 16 Latin American countries, the area designated for communities increased from 3.0% of land in 2015 to just 3.2% of land in 2020. The area owned increased from 16.7% of land across the region in 2015 to 17.6% of land in 2020.

ASIA

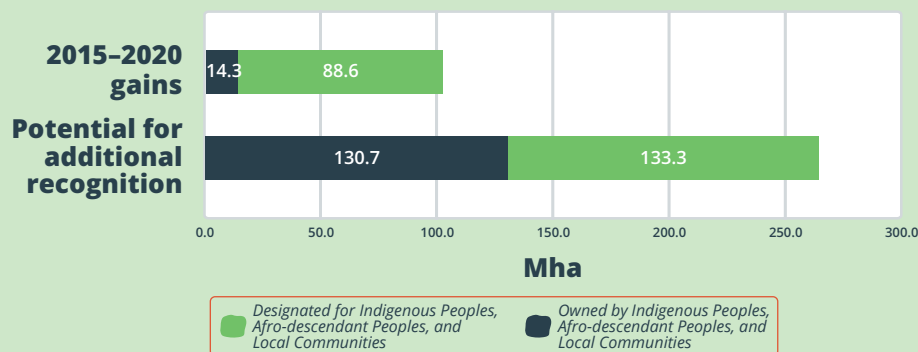
In Asia, home to an estimated 70% of the world's total Indigenous population, almost 98% of all recognized community-owned land is in China. Without China, Asia has the lowest percentage of community-owned land of any region, at only 0.8%.

Two countries, India, and Indonesia, saw notable progress. While newly recognized areas are small when compared to total land area, recognized land area increased 18 times against the 2015 baseline in India and nearly sevenfold since 2015 in Indonesia.

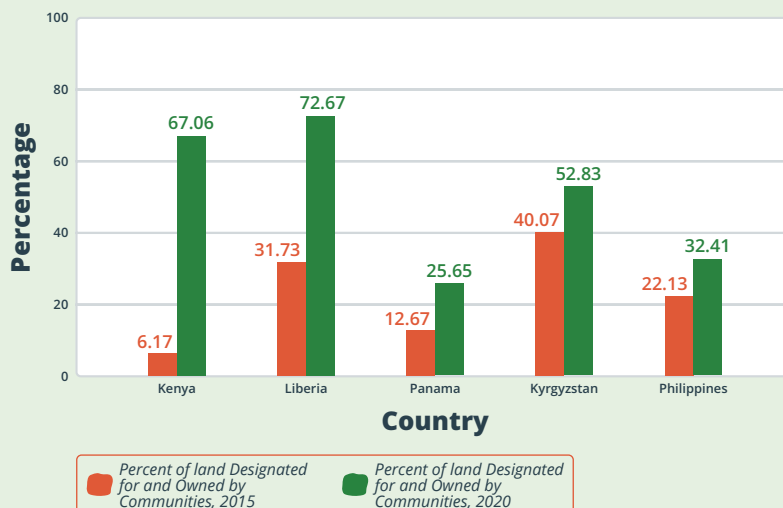
Rights Recognition from 2015-2020, and Potential for Scaling Up

More than 85% of the new areas recognized in 39 countries are owned by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and local communities. An increase in community ownership was observed in 20 countries; in four countries, the increases were due to the establishment of new Community-Based Tenure Regimes (CBTRs). Globally, 12 countries established new CBTRs.

Implementation of existing legal frameworks could increase the total area legally owned by or designated for communities by **over 260 Mha in 19 countries**, more than twice the total area recognized between 2015-2020. This suggests that further investment should target promoting and scaling up implementation of existing laws in these countries.



Increase in land designated for and owned by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and local communities (2015-2020), by percent of total country land area



**RIGHTS +
RESOURCES**

This data is from the Second Edition of *Who Owns the World's Land?* published by Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) in June 2023. You can download the full report at rightsandresources.org.

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