

For more information, please contact:
Wanda Bautista, wbautista@burness.com

******EMBARGOED MEDIA ADVISORY******
NEW REPORT AND ZOOM MEDIA BRIEFING
THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 9:00 ET // 14:00 BST // 15:00 CEST

New Report Quantifies, Amidst Continuing Violence, Amount of Land Across 20 Countries Where Indigenous and Local Communities' Rights Can Be Legally Recognized Immediately

As deforestation continues across the tropics, new analysis to reveal countries and regions making progress in recognizing community land rights

Global climate change and biodiversity goals at risk

New research to be released on June 15, 2023, will provide the most comprehensive review to date of the land area in 73 countries that is legally owned by or designated for Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and local communities, and how many more hectares of community land remain to be recognized. The analysis, compiled by researchers with the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), also estimates the area that could be recognized for communities through existing laws in 20 countries.

The report will be published as scientists with the United Nations' World Meteorological Organization express growing concern at the pace of global warming, [reporting](#) that for the first time ever, global temperatures are now more likely than not to breach 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming within the next five years due to the pace of environmental destruction.

A growing body of [research](#) suggests that recognizing the land rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities is one of the world's largest and most cost-effective tools for fighting the deforestation that fuels climate change, biodiversity loss and pandemic risk. Without strong and secure land rights, Indigenous and local communities face constant threats, including forced displacement, the deforestation and degradation of ecosystems that are vital to their culture and health, and violent attacks that claimed the lives of more than 200 land defenders in 2022, according to a [report](#) released this year by Frontline Defenders.

WHAT & WHEN:

A virtual press briefing to present the findings of a new report, published by RRI, that assesses the areas legally designated for and owned by Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, and local communities across 73 countries covering 85 percent of global lands.

Zoom details available when you RSVP with Andrea Rizkallah (ARizkallah@burness.com).

WHO:

- **Solange Bandiaky-Badji**, Coordinator of RRI and President of the Rights and Resources Group, which is RRI's coordinating mechanism
- **Sara Omi**, President of The Coordinator of Territorial Women Leaders of Mesoamerica (CWTLM)

- **Patrick Saidi Hemedi**, National Coordinator of the Dynamics of Indigenous Peoples Groups (DGPA)
- **Gam Awungshi Shimray**, Secretary General, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

WHERE: Email Andrea Rizkallah (ARizkallah@burness.com) to register to join the event virtually via Zoom and to submit questions in advance. If you cannot tune in live, a recording of the briefing can be emailed upon request. Press materials are also available under embargo upon request.

MORE INFORMATION:

A growing body of research directly connects strong Indigenous and community land rights with [lower rates of deforestation and forest degradation](#). The United Nations' [most recent report on climate change](#) emphasizes these rights as a key bulwark in both climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. And the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) emphasizes the importance of respecting Indigenous and community rights in efforts to stave off the growing biodiversity extinction crisis.