



Theme: Forest smart policies and governance

Session 11: Improving land governance

Wednesday, February 21 16:00-17:30, Red Room

Hosts: FAO, CIFOR, WB

Moderator: Dominique Reeb, FAO (tbc)

Around 80% of global forest loss is due to conversion to agriculture through such means as: irregular acquisitions that exploit loopholes and inconsistencies between laws and existing tenure systems; illegality and breach of the law; or failure to fully follow the social and environmental safeguards. Conversion can also take advantage of low levels of government coordination and capacity, lack of transparency, and corruption in land-management practices. In forestry especially, weak or unrecognized local tenure rights facilitate illegal as well as legal small- and large-scale land acquisitions. In some cases, even where land rights are relatively secure, governments expropriate privately held land legally through compulsory acquisition to make it available for investment.

In response to these challenges, several countries have taken initiatives to put in place effective legal and institutional frameworks, secured customary land and forest tenure rights, introduced measures to develop land-use master plans, and regulate land-use change. That can include requirements for environmental impact assessments and special protection for designated areas in light of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change. This session will seek to advance thinking on better practices to improve land governance as a key measure to achieve the SDG target of halting deforestation by 2020.

Key questions or discussion points:

1. What measures are national and local governments taking to improve land governance to effectively contribute to the SDG targets for halting deforestation, eradicating hunger and poverty, and improving local livelihoods?
2. What legal and regulatory measures are national governments promoting to improve land governance, responsible land use and acquisitions, and recognition of local tenure rights?
3. How are the various international instruments and guiding documents being used to promote these goals?

Confirmed speakers:

Name	Title
Lien de Brouckere	Co-director, Africa Program, Right and Resources Initiative (RRI)
Pablo Pacheco	Team leader, Value chains, Finance and Investment, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)