



Tenth RRI Dialogue on **Forests, Governance and Climate Change:** Common approaches to dealing with the challenges of food security and climate change

In Collaboration with: IS Academy on Land Governance (LANDac), Netherlands, and
EcoAgriculture Partners



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The convergence of global climate change, food insecurity, and political exclusion in the world's poorest countries threatens to reverse global gains in poverty alleviation and raises the risks of conflict. Close to 1 billion people went undernourished in 2010, and climate change is putting millions of the world's poorest people at an even greater risk. Meanwhile industrial agriculture and the demand for natural resources present a major threat to the rights and livelihoods of the rural poor. And both are major drivers of deforestation and sources of carbon emissions, which in turn contribute significantly to global climate change, causing a vicious circle.

Poverty and exclusion in rural areas are not new phenomena, but the booming global demand for all natural resources commodities – food, fuel, fiber, minerals – is putting unprecedented pressure on rural people, their land, and related natural resources, especially water. Industrial land acquisitions, so called “land grabbing” grew over 1000% between 2008 and 2009 according to the World Bank while at the same time there was no globally significant progress on the recognition of local land rights. Global food prices have continued to rise, returning in early 2011 to the high levels of 2008 when there were food riots in over 30 countries. Cereal prices increased 70% over the last year and there are an estimated 44 million more people in extreme poverty in low and middle income countries since June 2010. Yet, limited rights and weak governance are undermining local, national and global responses to all of these crises.

The global development community has responded with particular programs focusing on each crisis. The G20 who'll focus their meeting on global food security this November. The Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and other Natural Resources and the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) are attempts to improve the likelihood that agricultural investments in developing countries do not harm local communities. REDD+ was developed to reduce deforestation and mitigate climate change. The Adaptation Fund was created in Copenhagen to assist nations to undertake actions to adapt to climate change. And, tellingly, the crisis and peace-building sector is gearing up for the conflicts they expect will come more frequently, and with greater violence. Yet, it is increasingly clear that there are local responses to global problems. Small holder agriculture is productive and resilient given the right support and investment. Forests provide food security to millions. Locally owned and managed forests fare far better than forests owned and administered by governments.

While there is growing recognition, in all of these initiatives, of just governance in preventing, diminishing, or dealing with these crises and the fundamental role of human rights and in particular fair and equitable land rights, the efforts of civil society and development organizations and local actors active in these areas are not well connected. There has not been adequate discussion across these sectors and levels about the underlying institutional drivers of the lack of rights, weak governance and political and social exclusion, and what their particular initiatives can do to more effectively contribute to solutions. The lack of common understanding and joint effort hampers global progress.

The RRI Dialogues on Forests, Governance and Climate Change are designed to foster critical reflection and more informed action on critical issues related to governance, the rights and livelihoods of forest communities and Indigenous Peoples, agriculture and global efforts to combat, and adapt to, climate change.

Oxfam is co-hosting this event in the framework of its worldwide "Grow" campaign for a world where everyone has enough to eat today and in the future in which it calls on governments – in particular the G20 – and business to invest in a fairer and more sustainable food system.

The 10th Dialogue will be designed to:

1. Identify common approaches to dealing with the interconnected global challenges of responding to the food crisis, forest loss and degradation, the recent rise in global "landgrabbing", the need to drive additional investment into agriculture, and adaptation to climate change.
2. Bring more focused attention to the interconnection between forests, agriculture, the rights of producers and affected populations, and the growing global demand for agricultural land and products.

3. Consider issues such as agriculture as a driver in forest loss and degradation, the role forests play in providing food for the rural poor, as well as the implications of the global effort to meet the challenge of feeding nine billion people by 2050 without destroying the natural resources on which all people, but in particular rural and forest dwellers rely for their livelihoods and food security.
4. Influence policy dialogues in a variety of fora, including the Committee on Food Security in October, the Working Group of the G20 Food Security pillar, the UNFCCC COP 17 in December, the International Ecoagriculture Conference in 2012, UN Earth Summit +20 in 2012, the follow-up conference to the Hague Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change which will take place in Vietnam in 2012, and other forest, food and agriculture related initiatives.