

— UN-REDD PROGRAMME

Advancing land tenure rights for lasting impact in tropical forest countries

Background note, Session 3 | Tenth Executive Board Meeting

2 October 2026 | Rome, Italy

OBJECTIVE

Strategic discussion on UN-REDD support on land tenure (ILTC and beyond), lessons learned and reflections on scaling and sustaining the results through time.

Board proposition: provide recommendations on how UN-REDD can support scaling and sustaining the efforts of tropical forest countries to clarify and streamline processes for the formal recognition of customary lands and territories, and advance legal and policy reforms to support the recognition of community-based tenure rights, to advance the International Land Tenure Commitment.

Background

Strengthening land and forest tenure is essential for achieving climate and forest goals, including REDD+, high-integrity carbon finance, equitable benefit sharing, and NDC implementation. Across many UN-REDD partner countries, tenure insecurity, overlapping land-use regimes, and weak institutional coordination continue to limit forest-positive investments and climate action. At the same time, global initiatives such as the Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP) and the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment (ILTC) are increasing expectations for measurable, rights-based tenure reforms.

Since 2025, the UN-REDD land tenure portfolio responds through a dual global-national approach. Globally, UN-REDD supports coordination under the FCLP, develops practical guidance on tenure formalization, carbon rights, community forestry, and geospatial approaches, and synthesizes lessons to inform policy and incentives. This work promotes coherence, consistency, and knowledge exchange across countries while sustaining political momentum for tenure reform.

At the national level, UN-REDD supports countries including Cambodia, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, DRC, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Lao PDR, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Viet Nam, and Zambia to advance participatory mapping, FPIC processes, collective titling, legal and policy reforms, conflict resolution, Indigenous bioeconomy initiatives, social forestry and community-led forest management. These interventions aim to strengthen the recognition and security of Indigenous

Peoples' and local communities' land rights while responding to national priorities and ILTC commitments for those countries that have endorsed it.

The portfolio builds on the complementary strengths of UNDP, FAO, and UNEP. UNDP leads on governance, social safeguards, Indigenous Peoples' engagement, policy dialogue, and integration of tenure reforms into climate and development planning. FAO provides technical expertise on tenure governance, legal reforms, community forestry, geospatial tools, and land administration systems. UNEP contributes support on REDD+ safeguards, carbon rights, and benefit-sharing mechanisms. Together, these efforts help countries advance tenure commitments, strengthen the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and create the enabling conditions for high-integrity forest climate action.

This session aims to discuss the progress and lessons on UN-REDD supported land tenure work and seek strategic guidance from the Executive Board on scaling and sustaining these efforts in 2027 and beyond.

Session flow

Indicative run of show. Friday, 2 October 2026, all times Rome local time. Duration: 75 minutes.

Time	Agenda item	Description
14:15–14:25 (10 min)	Session introduction and background presentation	Overview of approach and highlighted results from 2025/2026 tenure support. Presenters: José Carlos Fernández and Clea Paz-Rivera (participating virtually), 10 minutes.
14:25–15:00 (35 min)	Facilitated discussion Facilitators: José Carlos Fernández and Elspeth Halverson	Country perspectives: reflections from country pilots on tenure reform complexities and lessons learned. Facilitated interventions by Ecuador (virtual, tbc); Peru (tbc); Indonesia (confirmed); Ghana (confirmed). 20 minutes. Selected stakeholder reflections: reflections on the centrality of land rights for Indigenous Peoples and local communities (5 minutes); reflections on progress from the Forest Tenure Funders Group (5 minutes) and ILTC/FCLP (5 minutes); Reflections on the ILTC and interlinkages to the Forest and Land Tenure Pledge 2026–30.
15:00–15:20 (20 min)	Open discussion	Guiding questions and secondary questions below.
15:20–15:30 (10 min with buffer)	Synthesis and closing	Summary of discussion, recommendations from the Board and action items. Clea Paz-Rivera, 5 minutes.

Discussion questions

1. On geographic scope: should UN-REDD continue exploring potential support to countries on tenure beyond ILTC signatories?

2. On means to achieve scale: how to ensure countries supported by UN-REDD progress on tenure are sustained and scaled?

Secondary questions

3. On modalities of support: what can be done with TA, with KM, and with coordination at country level and global level; how can UN-REDD help with global convening; what other instruments or support would be useful and how to fund it.
4. How to continue and maximize specific synergies with the key players at country and global level (FCLP, WB, ILTC).