



Proposed language to the zero draft of the Ministerial Declaration of the 2020 SDG High Level Political Forum

Introduction

This proposal arises from the work of the SDG Land Momentum Group. This is an informal group of 18 CSOs and multi-lateral organisations working to promote the role [of secure and equitable tenure rights in meeting the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda](#).

Securing tenure rights of both women and men, including collective rights, is fundamental to achieve all SDGs including ending poverty, attaining food security, tackling climate change, achieving gender equality and building peaceful and just societies; the very reason for land rights to be included in goals 1, 2 and 5.

The zero draft of the 2020 Ministerial Declaration for the High Level Political Forum currently has no mention of land rights and tenure. This omission will drastically weaken attention to land rights and land related issues in achieving the SDGs. We propose three articles where this can be rectified:

Protect Human Rights and Environmental Defenders

Vulnerabilities of human rights and environmental defenders have significantly [increased since lockdowns began](#) across the world. Defenders are isolated, targeted and not in a position to mobilize support against threats to their lives. The current situation compounds the trend of increased abuses already documented in 2018 and 2019.

Article 11:

*11. We strongly believe that peace and security are a prerequisite for sustainable development, as lack of sustainable development is a threat to peace and security. Therefore, we will redouble our collective efforts to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies through reducing inequalities within and among countries, enhancing our ability to prevent and resolve conflicts, protecting and fulfilling human rights for all **with an emphasis on protecting human rights and environmental defenders**, ending all forms of discrimination, ensuring equal access to justice and achieve gender equality. We will also upscale our efforts to build and strengthen more effective, accountable and transparent institutions, and ensure equal access to basic services and opportunities, with a special emphasis on the most vulnerable.*

Support local food systems for food security and nutrition

Provided small-scale farming systems contribute to more than 80% of the global food production, the contribution of family farmers and indigenous communities for food security and nutrition should be respected and recognised in the next decade of SDG implementation. During the lockdown times, they played a significant role to secure food security for people particularly at local levels.

Article 16:

*16. We remain determined to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition and achieve food security for all, while minimizing the environmental impacts of food production. Recognizing the significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis to ensure food security, and also recognizing that international trade is an engine for development, we will work to ensure the flow of vital medical supplies, critical agricultural products, and other goods and services across borders, and work to resolve disruptions to the global supply chains to support the health and well-being of all people. We reiterate our goal to realize a free, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable and stable trade and investment environment, and to keep our markets open. **At the same time, we recognise and will support the critical role of women and men family farmers and indigenous communities in resilient local food systems.***

Recognise the role and tenure rights of local communities in ecosystem management

Local communities and indigenous peoples are an indissoluble part of eco systems that that they live. Given the impact on their lives from any activity on the land they live, their right to land should be respected and recognised as part of the perseveration and restoration efforts. This will also facilitate in tapping in to their traditional knowledge and sustainable practices in similar efforts.

Article 18:

*We recommit to reversing environmental degradation through the restoration of ecosystem, halting biodiversity loss, integrating the conservation and **equitable and** sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making, ending the illegal trade of wildlife, increasing reforestation, achieving land degradation neutrality, conserving and sustainably using oceans, seas and marine resources, promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, and achieving a world in which humanity lives in harmony with nature. In that regard, we emphasize that biodiversity, climate and health must be addressed holistically, including through investing in scaling up nature-based solutions and **recognising and respecting the tenure rights of local communities and indigenous peoples, especially of women.***