



2025 CONFERENCE ON LAND POLICY IN AFRICA

Theme: Land Governance, Justice and Reparations for Africans and Descendants of People of The African Diaspora

CALL-TO-ACTION

MESSAGE TO GOVERNMENTS

1. Develop and implement comprehensive national frameworks that integrate land restitution, cultural heritage recovery, and reparations within a single policy and institutional structure. These should:
 - Provide clear procedures for identifying rightful beneficiaries and managing restitution claims;
 - Restore indigenous place names and sacred sites;
 - Embed social justice, human rights, and sustainable development principles;
 - Provide for collaboration and coordination by, among others, the ministries of lands, culture, environment, and justice.
2. Establish national restitution and heritage restoration funds, with contributions from national budgets, partners, and restitution agreements. The funds should:
 - Support displaced and affected communities through compensation, rehabilitation, and livelihood recovery;
 - Finance the repatriation of cultural artifacts and ancestral remains without imposing financial burdens on African states;
 - Promote research, data systems, and capacity building for restitution and heritage management;
 - Complement broader land reform and conservation initiatives aligned with Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. **Formally recognize and safeguard customary land tenure systems** as legitimate and integral to national land governance, ensuring that they coexist equitably with statutory systems. This will require:

- **The** harmonization of customary and statutory land laws and closing gaps created by colonial legacies;
 - **Embracing inclusive land policies** that guarantee equitable access and ownership rights for women, youth, and marginalized groups in both rural and urban areas as urged under the *African Union Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges*;
 - Recognition of the important and central role of traditional authorities, which command the governance of over 80% of Africa's stock of land, and ensure their inclusion and participation in national and local policy and law-making processes;
 - **Anchoring of land reforms, including land policies and laws, in African values and sovereignty**, collective ownership, food security, and rural transformation rooted in Africa's historical and cultural heritage.
4. Form partnerships and collaborations with Academic and Research Institutions for capacity development in order to be able to effectively influence the training and research agenda for land governance professionals. Such collaborations will help Universities to equip graduates with the technical and research skills needed to support the priority needs of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.
 5. Reflect on and frame Africa's own narratives on land governance, ensuring alignment with regional frameworks for strengthening collaboration.
 6. Strengthen local participation in land governance through the development of guidelines for community engagement and capacity development, so that local communities can perform ADR, GRM, basic mapping and boundary delineation processes.
 7. Align and expand capacity-building programmes to address customary land issues, with support from NELGA and other partners.
 8. Infuse technology and digital innovations in land governance for transparency, efficiency, and improved data management.
 9. Work with development partners to institutionalize a biannual African National Land Commissions Conference for knowledge exchange, peer learning, and strengthening collaboration.
 10. Improve peri-urban land management systems to respond to rapid urbanization. This includes developing robust institutional frameworks to manage internal and cross-border migration,.
 11. Encourage participatory land policy development and enhance diaspora participation in land governance processes.

MESSAGE TO TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES

1. FATA will advocate for inclusivity in finding lasting solutions to historical injustices and to ensure that the actions of traditional authorities do not create further injustices.
2. FATA will advocate for traditional authorities to embrace transparency mechanisms like the Customary Land Secretariats to curb multiple land sales and improve management. Adopting such systems is crucial for improving record-keeping and managing land more transparently for the benefit of the community.
3. FATA will lead community dialogues to reform customary practices that negatively impact vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth.
4. FATA will spearhead the participation of queen mothers, women, and youth in land governance structures should be actively promoted to ensure inclusivity.
5. FATA will advocate for Traditional authorities to actively participate in national policy formulation to ensure that local indigenous knowledge is integrated into laws which are practical and community-centered.

6. FATA will encourage traditional leaders to enroll in professional development courses to build skills in law, land management, and ICT. This way they will have the capacity to participate in finding solutions to historical injustices.
7. Through FATA, traditional authorities would pilot community-based economic development projects that allow benefits from trade while retaining land custody.
8. FATA will encourage traditional authorities to improve access to land for vulnerable groups, including women and young people, through targeted programs and advocacy.
9. FATA will collaborate with academic and research institutions to strengthen customary land rights through capacity development, research and documentation
10. FATA will work with the African diaspora in addressing cultural heritage and land restitution and reparations for the benefit of Africans throughout the world.

MESSAGE TO TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

1. **Advance efforts to better coordinate technical and development partners to align financial and technical support at all levels. This will be done by:**
 - Strengthening the coordination mechanism and regional mapping around land reforms prepared by FAO, and convene regular meetings of the group (each 6 months)
 - Ensuring more coordinated partnerships at **national** level.
 - Building on **complementarity**: Different partners have distinct roles and mandates. Encourage the establishment of collaborations with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and areas of contribution, rather than competition over limited resources
 - **Leveraging Joint Funding: encourage partners** to implement reforms effectively while mobilizing resources for coordinated programs, encouraging donors to support joint initiatives rather than isolated projects.
2. Strengthening **lobbying for Land governance and for its frameworks** (VGGTs / F&Gs)
 - prioritize funding for the land agenda
 - integrate land governance agenda in discussions by other sectors such as climate, biodiversity, energy transition etc.
 - Highlight the special attention needed to address land governance issues arising from crisis situations driving displacements.
 - Make use of new spaces such as the ICARRD+20 (International Conference for agrarian reform and Rural Development)
3. Strengthening the multi-stakeholder mechanisms, with special attention to enhancing the **voice of grassroots actors**, including women and youth, traditional leaders in global and regional forums on land, to promote inclusiveness, by
 - Make use of the CLPA 2023 as promising examples of giving spaces to various stakeholder groups in other events and forums such as the WB Conferences.
 - Support the establishment of multi-stakeholder forums on land at global and continental level to push for more discussion among actors, in view of transparency and accountability.
4. **Continue to support research and data collection to**
 - Guide more capacity building for practical solutions, including better mainstreaming and systematizing, for greater uptake by various actors, as well at the various levels including grassroots and community levels.
 - Collate evidence to inform transparency and accountability initiatives in land governance.
 - Inform sustainable funding mechanisms in the land sector.

MESSAGE TO NON-STATE ACTORS

1. Strengthen existing alliances with lived experiences to hold governments and global actors accountable for land grabs, fortress conservation, extractive climate solutions and land laws and policies that perpetuate dispossession, commodify customary land, and weaken indigenous tenure systems, while supporting communities' tenure rights.
2. Partner with researchers to produce evidence that counters the myth of "unused", empty and idle land, deepen research and policy advocacy to shift narratives, influence policy, and drive reparative justice.
3. Support to build African Land Data Sovereignty that is open by invest in people-centered, gender-disaggregated data systems that serve communities and guide just policy decisions.
4. Noting that 2026 is the year of International rural women farmers and celebration of 10 years of Kilimanjaro charter of demands, and that the AU now has guidelines on women's land rights, CSOs propose to convene a Women's Land Rights Conference to mobilize a joint CSO Action Plan for advocacy and implementation of agreed framework.
5. Connect African and diaspora movements in the demand for reparation, restitution, and justice arising from historical land theft. Forge strong Africa–Diaspora partnerships, support reconnection programs for descendants of the African diaspora through partnerships, investment in ancestral homelands, and truth-telling platforms
6. Engage in Global Campaign Spaces by carrying the CLPA2025 outcomes to forthcoming global processes, such as ICARRD+20, IYRP 2026, IYWF 2026, CSW 70, and the Rio Conventions among others, with an amplified African voice to lead in defining land justice and reparation globally.
7. Advocate for land justice to be recognized as a national development priority – financed not by debt but by justice-driven domestic investments-
8. Support communities who have lost their land rights through legal aid and public interest litigation, strengthen grassroot social movements that defend and protect claims on land against state and corporate induced alienations while ensuring women youth, PWD rights to land are secured.
9. Continue to call on donors to redirect funding away from industrial agriculture, extractives, and carbon offset schemes that commodify land and nature but to invest instead in agroecology, indigenous and community-led stewardship, and women-led land restoration initiatives that strengthen sovereignty and ecological resilience
10. Promote rural-urban linkages in the face of urban sprawl for sustainable land use and landscape management
11. Support just land governance as an integral part of climate negotiations and responses to the climate, housing and energy crisis and Justice. Climate finance must reach the communities most affected by the climate crisis
12. Call on investment banks and other financial institutions to ensure that their sustainability frameworks are rights based, respect FPIC and ensure accessibility of the EIA reports
13. Interrogate technologies that are brought to us by having technology assessment platforms
14. Develop monitoring framework on land governance and monitor commitments made by all actors

MESSAGE TO ACADEMIA AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

1. Training and continuous training:

- Convene programs and actions to review and provide insights linking the national land policies with the reparation, decolonization agenda, and nation building
- Develop training strategies on including the new paradigms related to Climate Change, Artificial Intelligence and new geospatial technologies to enhance land tenure and equity
- Undertake continuous curricula review to meet the needs of the community and industry.
- Training should put people and social relations at the centre of training on land governance.
- Prioritise youth as a category and as an analytic lens in our training and curriculum development initiatives.
- Further develop the Climate Change and Land Governance short course to be accredited by the University of the Western Cape.

2. Research Agenda:

- Set up research programs dealing with issues of decolonization and post-colonial land relations;
- We call for more partnership between research institutions and civil society, social movements and grassroots structures;
- Integrate the aspects of climate change and environmental studies into universities training and teaching offerings to ensure students are well equipped with homegrown solutions and interventions needed to address pressing climate and environmental challenges facing our communities - from biodiversity loss and bioeconomy to pollution, from a social justice perspective;
- Collect data and provide evidence for policy advocacy to increase funding for the land sector and land restitution;
- Establish partnerships with community organizations and advocacy groups to apply research outcomes in practical contexts;
- Establish linkages between academia and researchers in Africa and the diaspora to undertake research on land and investments in Africa.
- Partner with land policy implementing institutions to impact on land reform processes.
- Initiate research on trends on land inequality in Africa, in partnership as universities and government institutions, to contribute analysis to the Global Land Observatory.
- More research is needed on spatial inequalities and its connections to digital agriculture and food systems, and establish digital repositories for research information sharing.
- To conduct new ground-breaking research on innovative and emerging forms of land tenure that are emerging around the continent that are neither individual private property nor customary tenure - but other forms of collective land holding and land management.
- Promote research on financing strategies for land administration.
- Develop new research on children and youth, and inheritance practices - especially given the youth bulge in Africa and the neglect of youth when it comes to land governance and entitlements to land.

3. Knowledge sharing and dissemination:

- Maintain the Conference on Land Policy in Africa as a fundamental platform of knowledge sharing on land policy, land development, and continental cohesion
- Build digital information sharing platforms across our institutions.
- Organize webinars and online seminars to share best practices in land governance
- Support AJLP-GS platform to boost publications, case studies, and research data dissemination related to the CLPA2025 theme.

- Commit to converting our academic research into accessible outputs in the form of policy briefs, short films, newspaper articles, policy submissions and other accessible outputs including in social media, radio, television and podcasts, to reach community, general public, and policy audiences.
- Embrace multilingualism and commit to disseminating our research in languages relevant to the communities where we conduct the research, to make information accessible in local languages in a democratic and egalitarian manner.
- Prioritise networking among universities to share information across national and regional contexts, including where relevant building stronger collaborations through memoranda of understanding.
- Coordinate priority topics across regions, so that institutions in specific regions specialise in topic areas, and share findings, to avoid replication, and streamline research agendas.
- Encourage and build a new cadre of strong academics researching and writing on the political economy of land and natural resources, building on the achievement of the NELGA course on the Political Economy of Land Governance.

4. Interconnection academia, industry and youth:

- Invite partners, stakeholders, government, policy makers to ensure the sustainability of the conference CLPA by providing necessary supports.
- Encourage the conceptualization and debates on land that include land rights, land use development, biodiversity conservation of land, water, forests and ocean; and new spheres of airspace uses
- Bring academic scholarship to bear in the debates and implementation of the 30x30 Kunming-Montreal target of 30% conservation by 2030.
- Encourage young scholars to undertake policy-oriented research studies on justice and reparations
- Support youth initiatives on land at national and regional levels, including YILAA, and mentor them to advance research and advocacy.
- A continental connecting regional surveying agencies and bodies, to ensure standardisation and interconnectivity, for social justice and reparations.
- Promote more partnership with professional bodies, like surveyors and others, to ensure that this informs our research and that our training meets industry needs.