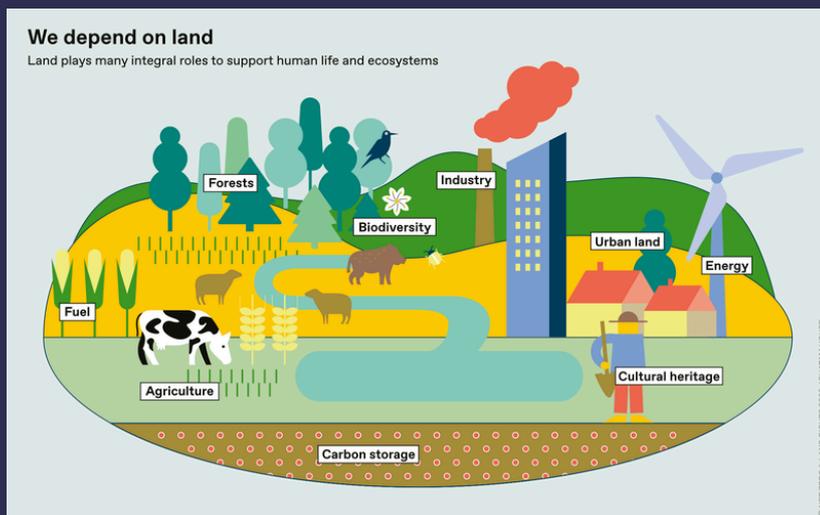


Cumulative land demand and access to land as a structural political challenge

A key empirical development shaping land governance today is cumulative land demand: the growing overlap of land-use claims for food production, climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation and restoration, infrastructure development, and land-based investments.

These overlapping demands are major drivers of:

- land concentration and exclusion,
- increasing tenure insecurity, and
- conflict and contestation, particularly affecting smallholders, pastoralists, and Indigenous Peoples.



Growing global policy ambitions are translating into rapidly increasing and overlapping demands for land.
Source: Chatham House, Sustainability Accelerator, Land Use Challenges, <https://bit.ly/4jvQ7a9>.

See the full publication here: [Net-zero and land rights](#)

Cumulative land demand turns land governance into a core political issue. It requires governance systems that can manage competing land claims, recognize and safeguard legitimate and customary tenure rights, and enable fair and effective allocation of land for a range of social, economic, infrastructure, and environmental purposes.

TMG's contribution focuses on making cumulative land demand visible in policy and planning processes and supporting governments and partners to integrate land governance and tenure security into climate, biodiversity, and restoration frameworks.

TMG builds on long-standing engagement on land tenure across the three Rio Conventions. Our 2024 Triple COP outcome analysis highlights both emerging entry points and persistent gaps in systematically integrating land tenure across these frameworks. See full report [here](#).

Evidence from more than five years of TMG's work on monitoring the implementation of the UNCCD land tenure decisions reinforces the urgency of addressing these gaps. [Findings from six countries](#) (Benin, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Uganda, and Niger) show that:

- Customary tenure is the dominant form of land access but is not integrated into national LDN strategies in any of the countries studied.
- Perceived tenure insecurity is high, and women are particularly affected.
- In several contexts, communities fear eviction from land targeted for restoration and conservation.

Looking ahead, TMG applies its UNCCD enabling-environment approach to the governance of cumulative land demand. Building on engagement with National Focal Points, we assess whether mandates, coordination, resources and decision-making authority are sufficient to manage competing land claims across climate, biodiversity and restoration policies. This helps identify institutional bottlenecks and opportunities to integrate tenure security and human-rights-compliant safeguards into cross-sectoral land-use and investment planning.



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