Ethiopia becomes 17th country to endorse global land tenure commitment

Ethiopia brings extensive experience on land certification, restoration and resilience to the ILTC, strengthening the link between land rights and action across the Rio Conventions

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 26 August 2026 – Ethiopia has become the 17th country to endorse the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment (ILTC), expanding political support for the global commitment to recognise and strengthen the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and Afro-descendant communities across 160 million hectares of forests and lands by 2030.

Developed in response to Indigenous Peoples' leadership and advocacy and launched at COP30 in Belém in 2025, the ILTC established a global political commitment with quantified targets. It provides a coordinated framework for governments to translate political commitments into country-led action through national implementation plans and stronger partnerships.

Ethiopia's endorsement carries particular significance as the country prepares to host UNFCCC COP32 in Addis Ababa. Announced at UNCCD COP17, its endorsement helps create a political thread from the ILTC's launch at COP30 in Belém to UNCCD COP17 to COP32, while highlighting secure land tenure as an important enabling condition for progress across the three Rio Conventions on climate, biodiversity and desertification.

Ethiopia also brings substantial practical experience to the ILTC. The country sees secure land tenure and land certification as central to sustainable development, food security and environmental conservation. Its large-scale rural land administration and certification programmes have demonstrated how greater tenure security can incentivize long-term investments in soil conservation, watershed restoration and climate resilience, including among millions of smallholder farming families.

Through the ILTC, Ethiopia sees an opportunity to build on this experience by strengthening land governance, supporting community-led landscape restoration and advancing climate adaptation across diverse landscapes and ecosystems. Its endorsement also reinforces the wider relevance of secure land tenure beyond forests, while retaining the ILTC's core focus on recognizing and strengthening rights.

"Secure land tenure is fundamental to Ethiopia's food security, sustainable development and climate resilience. By joining the ILTC, Ethiopia is strengthening international cooperation to put people and land at the heart of climate action. As we look towards COP32 in Addis Ababa, we have an important opportunity to carry this ambition forward," said Dr. Teshome Tamirat, Head of the Department of Forest at Ethiopian Forestry Development.

The ILTC recognises the leadership of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, who are among the world's most effective stewards of forests and nature, managing and protecting around 40% of protected areas and ecologically intact landscapes. Yet less than 1% of global climate finance is directed towards recognising and strengthening their rights. Closing this gap

— through secure land tenure, stronger rights and better access to finance — is critical to protecting forests, biodiversity and the climate.

“Ethiopia’s endorsement is an important milestone for the ILTC, demonstrating how secure tenure can support people and landscapes across a range of biomes. Seventeen governments are now coming together around a shared ambition to strengthen land rights at scale, which is a critical enabling condition to deliver targets across all three Rio Conventions. The FCLP Secretariat is proud to help bring governments and partners together to turn that growing political commitment into action for people, nature and climate,” said Charlie Speller, Deputy Director, Forest & Climate Leaders’ Partnership.

The ILTC is gaining steady traction. At London Climate Action Week in June, Peru became the 16th government to endorse the ILTC, Brazil presented key elements of its implementation roadmap and new measures to advance tenure rights across 63 million hectares, and Norway highlighted funding to support rights, livelihoods and forest stewardship, including ILTC implementation.

With 17 countries and one sub-national government, now behind the commitment, attention is increasingly turning from political endorsement to implementation. As countries develop national plans and partnerships to deliver their commitments, Ethiopia’s experience provides an opportunity to strengthen learning on how secure tenure can support restoration, sustainable land management and climate resilience — carrying momentum from COP30 and UNCCD COP17 towards COP32 in Addis Ababa.

ENDS

Notes to editors

About the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment

At COP30 in Belém in 2025, FCLP members launched the Intergovernmental Land Tenure Commitment (ILTC), establishing a global political commitment with quantified targets to recognise and strengthen the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities and Afro-descendant communities. Through the ILTC, 17 countries and one sub-national government are working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples, local communities and Afro-descendant communities towards a shared ambition to recognise and strengthen rights across 160 million hectares of forests and lands by 2030, supported by national implementation plans, stronger governance and coordinated investment.

About the Forest & Climate Leaders' Partnership

The Forest & Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP) brings together governments committed to accelerating action to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation while advancing sustainable development and climate objectives.

Media contacts

Tesfaye Gashaw
Head of Communications, Ethiopian Forestry Development (EFD)
Email: fish2952@gmail.com

Leona Liu
Global Communications Lead, Forest & Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP)
Email: leona.liu@forestclimateleaders.org