

This case study is one of several produced by the **CLARA** network to coincide with the publication of the IPCC Special Report on Land. We're showcasing **CLARA** member climate solutions which demonstrate the **rights-based, low-emission development pathways** needed for reducing emissions while **promoting livelihoods** and **ecosystem integrity**.

This case study is based on one of over 60 participatory assessments carried out with communities in 22 countries through the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative (CCRI).

Bambutu Babuluko communities crucial to forest ecosystems in Democratic Republic of Congo

Indigenous Peoples require stronger rights, recognition and protection from violence to ensure continued sustainable forest management

Organisations and individuals involved

Programme Intégré pour le Développement du Peuple Pygmée (PIDP, or the Integrated Programme for the Development of the Pygmy People), DRC

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Location

North Kivu in the Walikale territory, Democratic Republic of the Congo.



PIDP-KIVU FOR GFC/CCRI

THE PYGMIES OF the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are known for their ability to live in harmony with nature, and their knowledge of plants, animals and their habitats. The Bambutu Babuluko Pygmies live in the forested province of North Kivu in the Walikale territory, which is home to endemic animal and plant species. A large portion of the forest is not officially protected, yet remains in a good state of conservation thanks to non-destructive traditional resource use and management of the forest by the Bambutu and local communities in the region.

However, mining and water reserves are attracting the attention of transnational corporations. Overexploitation of resources by other communities is also a challenge to Babuluko communities. This includes illegal logging, overhunting and the overexploitation of other non-timber forest products, and slash-and-burn agriculture and mining without community consent. These problems are aggravated by the fact that the legal regimes that apply to natural resources, such as mining and oil and gas, do not recognise customary land. Local au-

thorities and conservation organisations show a disregard for forest peoples' rights.

In response, a series of participatory activities, including a community forestry programme in the Pygmies' territories, have been launched by the Integrated Programme for the Development of the Pygmy People (PIDP). The objective is to guarantee the sustainable management and use of forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

Through this process, the Pygmies have spoken out and called for respect for their land rights, ending violence, improving security in the region and making improvements to public services. They recommend the establishment of an official system of community-conserved areas, the demarcation of indigenous lands through participatory mapping processes and the intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge. They also recommend the wider education of other stakeholders about indigenous ways of life, and measures to strengthen and support the Bambutu Babuluko Indigenous Peoples' traditional ways of managing and governing natural resources.

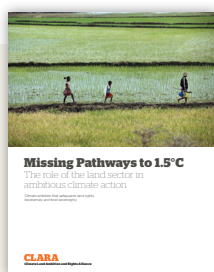
Testimony

Mukelenga Ksilembo, an elder from the Babuluko Pygmy community

“Our land and territories are our livelihood. Preserving them is our profession and our identity. The fruit and non-timber forest products are our source of energy, our pharmacy and our economy. No one can destroy the source of livelihood. This is why we take care to conserve our natural resources and our biodiversity. Without forgetting the known threats, large mammals such as the great apes (chimpanzees) and leopards can be seen in our forests again despite their disappearance over 30 years ago.”

‘Missing Pathways’ to climate action

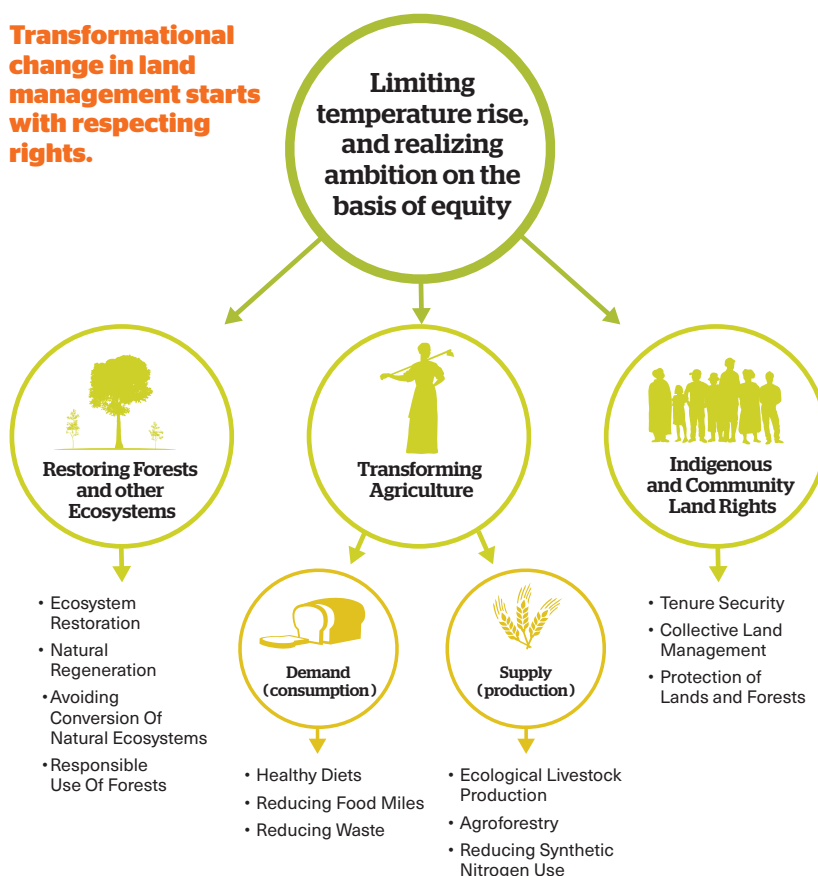
Last year, CLARA published the report ‘Missing Pathways’, identifying areas of global mitigation ambition rooted in land rights, restoration, agroecology, and food system change.



The climate actions that are needed to support the efforts of this community are...

participatory consultation and decision-making, with the inclusion of all voices (elders, Bambuti, other local communities, young people, women). The community highlights the role played by Indigenous Peoples in the protection of rich forest ecosystems, which are otherwise under threat from unsustainable extractive activities. As the current governance of the region is not adequate and the forest is under a barrage of threats including from illegal logging and mining, without the Pygmies it is unlikely the forest would retain the levels of biodiversity seen today. The Missing Pathways Report also highlights the immediate need for such community-level, local actions and consultations.

Transformational change in land management starts with respecting rights.



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