

Commitment to Practice: Using the UN Guiding Principles as a Launching Pad for Responsible Land-Based Investments

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The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are a valuable starting point for promoting responsible land-based investments, as they call for states and business enterprises to develop and adhere to benchmarks in the form of policies, laws, regulations, guidance, principles, and standards. To achieve responsible land-based investments, however, business enterprises need to look to more granular and land rights-specific instruments, such as the UNFAO/CFS *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure* (VGGT) and the *New Alliance Analytical Framework for Responsible Land-Based Agricultural Investments*. In support of this, civil society organizations, business enterprises, commodity roundtables, multi- and bi-lateral banks, and others have made commitments and developed policies that expressly address responsible investments in land. With these guidelines, commitments, and policies now in hand, the panel will focus on how different stakeholders are working to achieve responsible land-based investments, with a particular emphasis on best practices and lessons learned.

Discussion Questions:

- What standards are shaping corporate commitments to socially responsible investments in land?
- What rights are primarily affected among communities and other stakeholders relating to land?
- How can corporations ensure they are meeting their obligations under international standards?
- How are corporations implementing their commitments and measuring progress?
- What kinds of accountability mechanisms and grievance mechanisms are being implemented?
- How are multinational corporations holding national suppliers accountable?
- Is “zero tolerance for land grabs” a binary goal or a journey? What is a realistic timeline for achieving this commitment?

Moderator:

- David Bledsoe, Sr. Attorney and Sr. Director Corporate Partnerships, Landesa

Speakers:

- Brent Wilton, Director of Global Workplace Rights, The Coca-Cola Company
- Joan Carling, Secretary-General, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
- Kate Mathias, Group Development Consultant, Illovo Sugar Limited
- Simon Usher, CEO, Bonsucro