



# Detailed timeline: Madagascar

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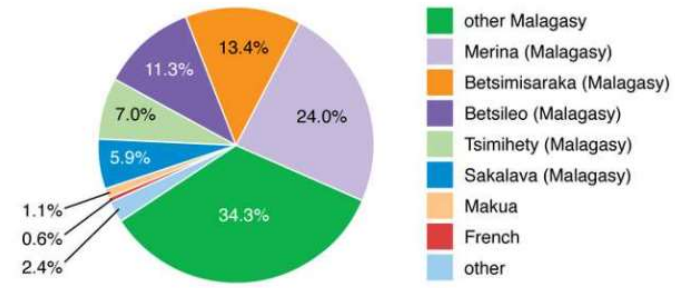

This timeline provides additional information to the Land Portal profile on Madagascar. Land related content is shaded in green and tagged using Landvoc metadata categories.

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Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
700CE	Mariners from Indonesia settle in Madagascar Afro Arab settlers inhabit the coasts before 1000 CE	Madagascar has only had human settlement for 1300 years. Language and culture derived from Indonesian origins although there is debate about how the first settlers came to the island and a precise settlement chronology has yet to be reliably established.	
1000 CE	“Slaves probably made an important part of the population of Madagascar as early as in the 10th century”. <sup>1</sup>		

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<sup>1</sup> (Regnier and Somda 2018)

Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
	Madagascar has a fragmented population made up of 20 ethnic groups. The island was visited by Diaz Portuguese navigator in 1500	<p><b>Ethnic composition (2000)</b></p>  <p>© Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. </p> <p><i>Figure 1: Encyclopædia Britannica<sup>2</sup></i></p>	
1600 to 1625	Portuguese navigators trade and raid Afro Arab coastal towns		
1642	The French invade and establish Port Dauphin in the south-east which they maintain until 1674		
<b>1810 - 1861 Formation of the Kingdom of Madagascar</b>			
	In this period Andriana Merina expand their influence to control much of the island.	The economy of the Merina kingdom was dependent on domestic slavery supplemented by the import of slaves from the African mainland. <sup>3</sup>	
1810	Radama I rises to head what became known as the Merina kingdom.	Radama I the Merina sovereign (1810-28) allied himself with the British governor of Mauritius.	

<sup>2</sup> (Kent 2020)

<sup>3</sup> (Campbell 1981)

Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
1820	British-Merina treaty of 1820 in which Radama I, the Merina sovereign, pledged to end slave exports from Madagascar.	<p>Radama I signs the agreement with Farquhar the British governor – himself the owner of the largest slave run plantation in Mauritius. Britain agrees to support Radama I with weapons and advisers to help prevent French reoccupation of the east coast of Madagascar. They also offer compensation for lost slave revenues.</p> <p>Despite this agreement there is a “phenomenal growth in the internal slave market from 1820” and the island continued to supply slaves to different foreign markets supplied by Arab, Indian and European slavers.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Radama I launched military expeditions launched against other peoples on the island.</p> <p>Radama I invited the London Missionary Society to spread Christianity</p>	
1828	Radama I is succeeded by his widow Ranavalona I who renounced British treaty and expelled foreigners.	Queen Ranavalona I, Radama I's successor, continues an aggressive campaign to subdue and enslave other groupings.	
1833	Two thirds of Antananarivo's inhabitants are estimated to be slaves.	“Imperial Merina assaults on other tribes grew more ruthless: it was estimated that between 1828 and 1840 over 100,000 men were slaughtered, and over 200,000 people enslaved”. <sup>5</sup>	
1861	Radama II reverses his mother's policies, adopts Protestantism and suppresses traditional Malagasy religion.	He establishes a government with European style ministries and governors in the provinces. The legal code is developed.	
1861	Radama II assassinated and succeeded by his wife.		
1873	British Frere Commission reports on Malagasy slave trade.		
1877	Emancipation of slaves.	150 000 slaves freed but restricted to specially designated villages. Illicit slave trade continues from the 1880's.	

<sup>4</sup> (Campbell 1981)

<sup>5</sup> (Campbell 1981, 211)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
1883	France invades Madagascar.	France prepares to institute colonial rule.	
1885	The rise of refugee slave republics in the <i>elfitra</i> encircling the central Madagascan plateau.		
1890	Britain recognises Madagascar as a French protectorate.		
1896-1945 Madagascar administered as a French colony			
1896	The French abolish slavery on the island. The colonial period sees the development of a railroad, the development of cities and seaports and the development of agricultural products for export to France. An estimated 50% of the population adopts Christianity.	Social and economic divisions widen between people living in coastal cities and those in the interior on the plateau.	
1911	The French colonial government imposes the Torrens registration system.	Land is parcelled into individual private holdings.	#land information systems; #land register #cadastral register #land tenure #Torrens system
1919	An economic conference recommends agrarian reform and the issuing of land concessions to colonialists coupled with the reservation of land for the Malagasy.	French expropriation of agricultural land claims a fifth of arable land in production.	#expropriation; #dispossession
1921	Introduction of the cadastre.	This leads to the legal separation of registered land and that which is held under customary law.	#cadastres #customary law #
1946-1958 Madagascar created as an overseas territory of France			
1946	The 1946 constitution created the French union and made Madagascar an overseas territory of the French Republic.	Representatives were elected to the Paris assembly as well as a local political assembly in the capital.	

Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
1946	Founding of Mouvement Democratique de la Renovation Malagache (MDRM)	The first nationalist political party is established.	
1947	MDRM initiate armed rebellion in the eastern part of the island. <sup>6</sup>	The insurrection spreads over the following months.	
1948	French forces crushed the rebellion.	Estimated casualties range between 30,000 and a 100,000 deaths. <sup>7</sup>	
1958-1960 process of transition to Madagascan independence			
1958	French policy change to let overseas territory decide their own fate.	A report in a referendum Madagascar voted for autonomy within the French community. An autonomous Malagasy Republic was proclaimed in October 1958 with a provisional government headed by Philibert Tsiranana.	
1960 to 1972: the first Malagasy Republic under Philibert Tsiranana			
1960	Madagascar obtains independence from France under Presidency of Philibert Tsiranana.	Tsiranana and the PSD remained in power until 1972. They largely maintain the political, economic and administrative systems inherited from the French.	
1960/70	Government allocates land through pilot titling projects.	The Lake Alaotra basin is the focus of this programme.	#land registration #titling
1968	Law on inheritance.	Daughters and sons have right to inherit equally. However, women most commonly access land rights via a male relative, such as their husband, father, or brother. If women inherit land from their parents, they typically leave it in the care of their brothers when they move to their husbands' villages. If a woman is subsequently widowed or divorced, she may reclaim the land. <sup>8</sup>	#land law #land inheritance rights
1971	Rising political and economic unrest leads to rebellion by the National Movement for the	The rebellion headed by Monja Jaona in Tulear province on March 31-April 2, 1971, resulted in the death of some 100 individuals.	

<sup>6</sup> (Wantchekon and Garcia-Ponce 2014)

<sup>7</sup> (Wantchekon and Garcia-Ponce 2014, A20)

<sup>8</sup> (USAID 2010, 7)

Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
	Independence of Madagascar (Mouvement National pour l'Indépendance de Madagascar – MONIMA).		
1972	President Philibert Tsiranana was re-elected to a third term without opposition on January 30, 1972. Opposition political parties boycotted the presidential election. Mounting political and labour unrest culminate in the May 1972 revolution.	In May 1972 Tsiranana faced after massive political and social protests. Tsiranana hands his powers General Ramanantsoa who becomes prime minister. <sup>9</sup> President Tsiranana resigned on October 11, 1972.	
1972 - 1975 Madagascar under military rule led by Gen. Ramanantsoa			
1972	Government imposes martial law. In October 1972, a national referendum overwhelmingly approved Ramanantsoa's plan to rule without parliament for five years. Madagascar takes a state socialist road seeking to establish "a socialist paradise under divine protection" by the year 2000.	Maj. Gen. Gabriel Ramanantsoa appointed as Prime Minister introduces radically different policies, establishing ties with the Soviet Union, withdrawing the country from the franc zone, expelling French military and naval forces and regarding French citizens as aliens.	
1972	The government establishes producer cooperatives and state farms together with a national consumers cooperative with retail shops located in most towns.		#land ownership #collective ownership
1974	Military officers from the coastal region launch an unsuccessful coup.	The coup attempt against a Merina military leader an indicator of rising polarization in the armed forces between Merina and the côtier (people from the coastal regions).	
1974	All unregistered land falls under state ownership	The state seeks to claim underutilised privately held land as part of the state landholding..	#property #state property

<sup>9</sup> (New Humanitarian 2010)

Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
1975	President Ramanantsoa dissolves the government on January 25, 1975, and Colonel Richard Ratsimandrava takes full control of the government on February 5, 1975 before being assassinated by members of the Groupe Mobile de Police (GMP) five days later. National Committee of Military Direction (Comite National de Direction Militaire-CNDM) headed by General Gilles Andriamahazo took control of the government on February 12, 1975. The military directorate declared martial law on February 12, 1975.	The CNDM appoints Lt. Commander Didier Ratsiraka as head-of-state on June 15, 1975. President Ratsiraka lifts martial law on June 26, 1975. The Charter of the Socialist Revolution (CSR) was approved with 96 percent of the vote in a referendum on December 21, 1975. The Democratic Republic of Madagascar was formally proclaimed on December 30, 1975, and Lt. Commander Ratsiraka was sworn in as president on January 4, 1976. Government banned opposition parties.	
1976 – 1992 Didier Ratsiraka leads Second Malagasy Republic			
1976	The second Malagasy Republic consolidates the Marxist turn.	French import export companies are nationalised and colonial plantations are run as state farms. The economy goes into a downward spiral with industrial production in a steep decline. <sup>10</sup>	#land acquisitions #compulsory acquisitions
1980	Madagascar faces mounting fiscal debt and approaches IMF for a loan to meet its balance of payments deficit.	As Madagascar deals with debt it is forced back into a closer relationship with France.	
1982	Madagascar bankrupt and forced to adopt a programme of structural adjustment. President Ratsiraka wins second term with 82% of the vote <sup>11</sup>	Mounting criticism of the Ratsiraka government from Malagasy Council of Churches and the social martial arts movement which becomes a focal point for resurgent Asian identities.	

<sup>10</sup> (University of Central Arkansas 2014)

<sup>11</sup> (University of Central Arkansas 2014)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
1985	Madagascan army attacks headquarters of kung fu movement.	Many people are killed.	
1985	Structural adjustment programme accelerates economic privatisation under pressure from IMF and World Bank.	Privatisation aids elite capture of economic assets for those close to political power. Privatisation associated with job losses and economic hardships associated with structural adjustment.	#poverty #conflict of interest
1986	Rio Tinto seeks rights to mine ilmenite on a 15 000 ha site.		#mining
1988	Government commits to new focus on environmental management.		#natural resources #natural resources management
1989	Government seeks to bring all land under individual tenure. Environmental Action Plan “mandated the replacement of the community-based tenure system with a formal land tenure system under which all land would be titled in the name of individuals”. <sup>12</sup>	Tenure programme was suspended as being too expensive and too difficult reconcile individual ownership with customary tenure systems.	#land registration #titling
1989	Ratsiraka re-elected with 63% of the vote.	However, election is met by popular protests fuelled by the collapse of the socialist bloc internationally with the fall of the Berlin wall. Malagasy Council of Churches urges the stripping of socialist references from the constitution and the end to what was effectively one-party rule.	
1990	A period of social unrest begins as opposition challenges the FNDR. A military rebellion in Antananarivo suppressed with 50 casualties.	An opposition alliance was created. A power sharing agreement reached with the opposition provides the prelude for constitutional negotiations. A national forum established to draft new constitution. Violent disagreements over federal vs national powers and functions.	
1991	Demonstrations for constitutional reform met with violent state response including the presidential guard firing on demonstrators.	Ratsiraka remains President but relinquishes power to Albert Zafy	

<sup>12</sup> (USAID 2010, 4)





Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
	National Environmental Action Plan launched. IMF suspends economic aid Ratsiraka declares a state of emergency		
1992	A new constitution was approved with 73 percent of the vote in a referendum on August 19, 1992,		
1993- 1996 Third republic: President Albert Zafy			
1993	Zafy elected as president of the third republic with 67% of the vote. <sup>13</sup>	Zafy leads an unstable political coalition. Social divisions widen between people on the plateau and the coast which fuels demands for a federalist state IMF demands for smaller government and reduced public spending erodes the president's support base	
1996	Opposition mounts to Zafy presidency with widespread street demonstrations and rolling strikes.	National Assembly votes to impeach President and Constitutional Court endorses his removal from office and appoints an interim president.	
1996	Community-Based Management of Natural Resources (GELOSE) Law	Under Madagascar's formal law, all forests except for those on titled land are state property. Villagers do not have the right to access and use the forests without state permission. Formal law is at odds with customary beliefs and practices, which give local communities the right to use the forest and forest products. <sup>14</sup>	#statute law #customary law #conflict of interest
1997	Law No. 17 of 1997 and by Decree No. 98-782 of 1998, defined the terms and conditions for the exploitation of forest resources.	State opts for a community-based forest management approach.	
1997 – 2001 Fourth republic: Didier Ratsiraka returned to power			

<sup>13</sup> (University of Central Arkansas 2014)

<sup>14</sup> (USAID 2010, 12)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
	Ratsiraka returns to power and drives constitutional changes which sees Madagascar becoming a federal state with six provinces.	Run off presidential elections return Ratsiraka to power with a slim margin. Constitutional changes strengthen the powers of the president.	
1999	An agreement signed with the IMF provides access to extended credit for Madagascar.	Some economic stabilisation and return of foreign investment.	
1999	Madagascar enacted its Water Code, Law No. 98-029.		#statute law
2000	The GCF (Forest Management Contracts) Decree transferred management of the forests to local communities and provided further details on local management.	The classification of protected areas is governed by the: Code de Gestion des Aires Protégées (commonly referred to as COAP); Law No. 2001/05; and by Decree No. 2005-848, Création de Nouvelles Catégories de AP et Procédures (USAID 2008a).	#forest law #statute law
2001	Ministry of Water and Forests grants forest cutting permits.	Confusion over locus of authority to issue cutting rights.	#forest law
2001/2	Contested Presidential election.	Ratsiraka's opponent Marc Ravalomanana alleges that the election has been rigged.	
2002- 2009 Marc Ravalomanana Presidency			
2002	Ravalomanana declares himself president. <sup>15</sup>	Ratsiraka declares martial law. Armed conflict breaks out between Ravalomanana and Ratsiraka supporters. Constitutional Court declares Ravalomanana the election winner. Ratsiraka flees the country and goes into exile in France.	
2003	Ravalomanana implements IMF sanctioned economic reforms. Failed coup attempt to oust him.	IMF prepares to write off half of Madagascar's debt. Government agrees to triple protected areas from 1.6 million ha to 6 million ha by 2012. <sup>16</sup>	

<sup>15</sup> (University of Central Arkansas 2014)

<sup>16</sup> (USAID 2010)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
2004	Launch of National Land Programme.	Under customary law, land in Madagascar is perceived as the land of the ancestors ( <i>tanindrazana</i> ).	#customary law #land reform
2004	Foreigners can purchase and lease land in Madagascar, and the 2005 Land Law specifically excludes from its requirements land designated for investment. <sup>17</sup>	There has been extensive foreign investment in agricultural land in Madagascar; an estimated 800,000 hectares of agricultural land has been leased out to investors in the 2004–2009 period. <sup>18</sup>	#land investments
2004	Move towards decentralisation.	The Government adopted an ambitious Policy Letter on Decentralization and Deconcentration (LP2D).	#decentralisation
2005	A 2005 Letter for Land Policy focused on four tasks: (1) restructuring and modernizing land ownership and topographical records; (2) improving decentralized land management by creating Land Management Offices at the commune (subdistrict) level authorized to issue and manage land certificates according to locally established procedures; (3) updating the legislation to incorporate the principles of decentralized administration and to formalize local landholdings; (4) establishing a national land tenure training program to build local capacity. <sup>19</sup>	In 2005, the US government’s Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) negotiated one of its first Compacts with Madagascar, identifying improvement of land administration and tenure security as one of three key areas of action. <sup>20</sup> Many land administrative functions decentralized to the <i>commune</i> level. <i>Communes</i> have permanent Land Management Offices that hold land records and oversee land certification.	#land policy #decentralisation #land information systems #land policies #statute law

<sup>17</sup> (USAID 2010, 6)

<sup>18</sup> (USAID 2010, 6)

<sup>19</sup> (USAID 2010, 4)

<sup>20</sup> (USAID 2010)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
2005	Madagascar passed a new land law in 2005, Law No. 2005-019	The 2005 Land Law classified land as state or private, delineated land tenure types, and provided procedures for land registration. The law specifically recognized the rights of individuals and groups to unregistered land, which had previously been considered state land. <sup>21</sup> Under Madagascar's Constitution, land can only be expropriated for public use and expropriation is conditional upon prior payment of fair compensation. Under the 2005 Land Law, expropriated land becomes government land, a classification that allows the government all ownership rights to the land. <sup>22</sup>	#statute law #land tenure #customary law #expropriation
2006	Law No. 2006-031. Establishment of Local Recognition Committees comprised of locally elected representatives determine land rights and boundaries and issue certificates.	This law allows individuals and groups asserting rights to untitled land to obtain certificates recognizing their rights to residential and arable from the local land administration office. Grazing land remains part of the commons. <b>Tenure types</b> <b>Ownership.</b> Land can be owned by the state, individuals or groups. Landowners have the rights of exclusive possession and use of their land, and land is freely transferrable. Land can be held in ownership if it is titled or the ownership rights of an individual or group are recognized by a land tenure system and can be recorded. An estimated 90% of farmers are owner-operators (World Bank 2003; Bellemare 2009; ROM Land Law 2005). <b>Leasehold.</b> Landowners are free to transfer their rights by lease. Leaseholds are subject to the terms of the parties' agreement. Leasing is relatively common, with between 10% and 30% of land leased in cropping. <b>Sharecropping.</b> An estimated 40–47% of all tenancies are sharecropping relationships. One study found that most sharecropping arrangements split the production with no sharing of inputs (Bellemare 2009).	#property rights #land tenure #land classification #tenure regularisation

<sup>21</sup> (USAID 2010, 5)

<sup>22</sup> (USAID 2010, 8)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
		<p><b>Concession.</b> Concessions can be granted on state land up to a period of 30 years. Concessions are subject to the government’s terms regarding land use and can be revoked for noncompliance (ROM Land Law 2005). Only roughly 7% of the country’s agricultural land is titled. The inefficiencies and costs of using the formal system lead most landholders to rely on an informal, local means of securing land rights, known as <i>petits papiers</i> (small papers). Although unregulated, the petits papiers system is surprisingly uniform throughout the country. Under this system, the current landowner drafts a document (the petit papier) describing the land and the origin of the land right and nature of the transaction. The local community recognizes and records the document.<sup>23</sup></p>	
2006	Presidential elections called ahead of schedule return Ravalomanana as president, but meets mounting opposition from Andry Rajoelina Antananarivo Mayor.		
2007	Establishment of Land Observatory.	As of 2007, local communities in Madagascar had signed 400 Forest Management Contracts (USAID 2008a; Raik 2007).	#forest law #geographic information systems
2007	Research <sup>24</sup> highlights no significant benefits in the form of investment or access to credit relating to titling in Madagascar. <sup>25</sup>		#land titling
2008	The sharp increase in demand for land in the period 2008–2012 due to high food and energy prices threatens tenure security. <sup>26</sup> Daewoo, a South Korean company, enters into an agreement to lease 1.3 million	The Daewoo agreement meets with widespread resistance which culminates in a military coup. The Daewoo agreement and others are cancelled.	#land deals #land grabbing

<sup>23</sup> (USAID 2010, 7)

<sup>24</sup> (Jacoby and Minten 2007)

<sup>25</sup> (Holden and Ghebru 2016)

<sup>26</sup> (Holden and Ghebru 2016)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
	hectares of land, equivalent to half of Madagascar's arable land area.		
2009- 2014 Rajoelina Presidency following a military coup			
2009	<p>Power struggle between Ravalomanana and Rajoelina culminates in military coup <sup>27</sup>which removes Ravalomanana and instates Rajoelina as President.</p> <p>Madagascar suspended from AU.</p> <p>Following negotiations and mediation led by Mozambique initial agreement is reached on a transitional government of national unity. Agreement unravels and Rajoelina forms his own transitional government while retaining presidency.</p> <p>Further talks lead to revised agreement with Rajoelina governing with two co-presidents. Rajoelina reneges again.</p>	<p>Dozens killed in opposition protests.</p> <p>International support for Ravalomanana remains and following the coup Madagascar suspended from AU and SADC</p> <p>Financial aid suspended and Madagascar enters period of isolation.</p> <p>US imposes economic sanctions and withdraws all aid</p> <p>SADC/AU intervention to seek a negotiated solution</p> <p>Ravalomanana flees country.</p>	
2010	<p>Rajoelina comes under pressure from military to accept power sharing agreement. An unsuccessful military coup</p> <p>Again Rajoelina changes course and forms a 'neutral' transition government of his choosing.</p> <p>Schedules constitutional referendum, parliamentary and presidential elections.</p> <p>Changes constitution to lower the age restriction on presidential eligibility</p>	<p>Ravalomanana found guilty of murder in absentia by a Malagasy Court and sentenced to life in prison with hard labour. He was held accountable for the deaths of Rajoelina supporters when Presidential Guard opened fire on protestors.</p>	

<sup>27</sup> (University of Central Arkansas 2014)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
	New constitution promulgated on 11 December establishes the fourth republic of Madagascar.		
2010	Madagascar population is 20 million.	More than 40% of cropland is under irrigated rice production. <sup>28</sup>	#land use
2011	Political uncertainty continues. New SADC agreement for a unity government rejected by opposition groups.	Political and economic crisis deepens .	
2012	Military mutiny kills three in Antananarivo.		
2013	New SADC agreement that neither Rajoelina nor Ravalomanana would run for election. After contestation and delays elections finally held in October.	Ravalomanana's wife announces she would run for election which prompted Rajoelina to do the same. The candidacies of Ravalomanana's wife, Rajoelina and Ratsiraka are struck down by the constitutional court.	
2014-2018 Rajaonarimampianina presidency			
2014	Rajaonarimampianina, a Rajoelina ally wins with 53.5% of the vote. Rajaonarimampianina inaugurated in Jan 2014. SADC and AU lift Madagascar suspensions.	Losers contest results alleging fraud. Ravalomanana returns despite no offer of amnesty and is placed under house arrest before this is lifted a year later. US lifts economic sanctions. IMF and World Bank re-establish ties. <sup>29</sup>	
2015	Malagasy assembly votes to impeach Rajaonarimampianina but this is not upheld by the constitutional court.		
2018	Presidential elections are scheduled. Rajaonarimampianina accused of manipulating electoral laws to bar		

<sup>28</sup> (USAID 2010)

<sup>29</sup> (University of Central Arkansas 2014)



Year	Event	Context	Landvoc metadata tags
	<p>opposition candidates including Ravalomanana.</p> <p>Electoral laws struck down by Constitutional Court which order the establishment of a coalition government.</p> <p>In December Presidential elections involve a runoff between two former Presidents Rajoelina and Ravalomanana.</p>		
2018	62.8% of the population is rural and 37.2% is urban		#urbanisation
2019 – Rajoelina presidency			
2019	Rajoelina elected president again after Ravalomanana's complaints about irregularities are dismissed.		
2021	National Agribusiness Development Strategy allocates 4 million ha of 'special status' agricultural land for foreign investment.	Civil society groups fear alienation of land will impact on local land-based livelihoods.	#land investments #land deals #land policies





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