

Meeting 27

Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)

Date: Thursday, 13 May 2010

Venue: Office of the President

Time: 15:30 hrs

Attendance:

Name	Institution
His Excellency President Jagdeo	Office of the President
Minister Pauline Sukhai	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
Shyam Nokta	Office of the President
Andrew Bishop	Office of the President
Michael Brotherson	Office of the President
Edward Dreyfus	Office of the President
Shereeda Yusuf	Office of the President
Alfred King	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
Dindyal Permaul	Ministry of Agriculture
Pradeepa Bholanath	Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)
Hilbertus Cort	Forest Producers Association (FPA)
William Woolford	Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC)
Indarjit Ramdass	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Vanda Radzik	International Institute for Environmental and Development (IIED)
Yvonne Pearson	National Toshias Council (NTC)
Mimi Fernandes	Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous People (GOIP)
Ashton Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF)
Romel Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF)
Peter Persaud	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG)
Pamela Mendonca	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG)
Hymawattie Lagan	Women's Affairs Bureau
David Singh	Conservation International (CI)
David James	Individual Capacity

Absent/Excused

Dr. Roger Luncheon	Office of the President	Excused
Minister Robert Persaud	Ministry of Agriculture	Excused
Steven Grin	Office of the President	Excused
James Singh	Guyana Forestry Commission	Excused
Jocelyn Dow	IIED	Excused
Patrick Williams	World Wildlife Fund	Excused
Joe Singh	Individual Capacity	Excused
Sydney Allicock	North Rupununi District Development Board	Excused
Carvil Duncan	Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana	Absent
Edward Shields	Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association	Absent
Gillian Burton	Guyana Trade Union Congress	Absent
Gerry Gouveia	Private Sector Commission	Absent
Jean La Rose	Amerindian People's Association	Absent by Choice

1. Call to Order

Mr. Nokta called the meeting to order.

2. Announcements and Correspondence

There was no announcement or correspondence.

3. Minutes of Meeting 26

The following corrections were identified:

- i. Points 7.3, should include the word “only” after “why”
- ii. Point 7.11, first line should be edited.

Motion to adopt the Minutes was moved by Ms. Pradeepa Bholanath and seconded by Ms. Mimi Fernandes.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

The Meeting agreed to subsume this item under Updates and Reports.

5. Updates and Reports

Payments from Norway

- 5.1 Mr. Nokta said that the Annual Progress Report was presented to the MSSC and the draft document was also placed on the LCDS website with an invitation for the public to offer comments and suggestions within a two week period which has come to an end. Mr. Nokta informed that efforts are underway to establish the GRIF and discussions are continuing between the Governments of Guyana and Norway and the World Bank.

6. “Opt In” Mechanism for Amerindians

- 6.1 Mr. Nokta indicated that the OCC has circulated the updated matrix of comments by members of the MSSC on the “Opting in” Mechanism Concept Paper. He recognised that several MSSC members had requested additional time to submit comments and these are being awaited.

CIFOR and FAO Reports

- 6.2 Mr. Nokta stated that the MSSC has reviewed the draft CIFOR and FAO reports and comments have been sent to the consultants. Several attempts have since been made to obtain responses from the consultants, particularly from CIFOR.

- 6.3 Ms Pradeepa Bholanath was requested to follow- up.

REDD+ Governance Plan

- 6.4 Mr. Nokta informed the meeting that the Plan addresses key areas outlined in the Guyana – Norway MoU and accompanying Joint Concept Note. The Plan is currently being developed with a number of key entities having responsibility for specific components. Mr. Nokta stated that as part of the process of developing these components, several Agencies are conducting stakeholder workshops and engagement sessions to which the MSSC is invited. He made reference to upcoming workshop by the GFC on the National Forestry Policy and Plan, and by EPA on developing criteria for the establishing of Protected Areas. Mr. Nokta pointed out that the REDD+ Governance Plan has a timeline of October 2010 to be developed and progress is currently on schedule.

MRVS

- 6.5 Ms. Pradeepa Bholanath stated that there are four bids that the GFC plans to issue out. Over the next week the GFC will have convene a meeting of the MRVS Steering Committee where the results of the Bids 1 and 2 evaluation will be presented. She informed that Norway has provided assistance for Bid 3 and is expected to do similarly for Bid 4 and so far progress on the Bids is within the timeframe specified.

EITI

- 6.6 Mr. Nokta stated that last week a team from EITI visited Guyana to examine the possibility and requirements of Guyana aligning with EITI, in accordance with the provisions of the MoU with Norway. Mr. Woolford informed that Dr. Paris came to Guyana on 3rd -4th May and met with various stakeholders including PM Sam Hinds, Finance Minister Ashni Singh, Mr. Khursid Sattaur Mr. Andrew Bishop and Mr Michael Brotherson. Several questions relating to the objectives and application of EITI to the civil society were clarified by Dr. Paris. Mr. Woolford stated that there is no similar organisation to EITI so alignment may be a necessity.
- 6.7 Mr. Nokta stated that the visit by EITI was useful in providing information and allowing for a better understanding of EITI and its requirements and therefore to better understand the obligations and implications of alignment. Mr. Nokta requested that GGMC prepare a paper examining this and outlining the various scenarios that relate to Guyana acceding to EITI.

LCDS

- 6.8 Mr. Nokta informed that the revised LCDS is currently being prepared and will be available soon.
- 6.9 His Excellency stated that it is expected that the document will be presented to the MSSC and thereafter will be launched. This should be done before the Oslo meeting.

Awareness

- 6.10 Mr. Nokta stated that a community manual and programme outreach have been planned by CI - Iwokrama for Regions 8 & 9 to raise awareness on climate change and REDD. The manual provides a background on climate change and REDD+ and is a useful tool.
- 6.11 Dr. David Singh said that not all MSSC members received copies of the manual and he will send copies to the OCC for distribution.

MoAA Consultations

- 6.12 Minister Sukhai informed that a team, on 14 April,2010 visited communities whose Tshaos, according to press reports, had indicated that communities were against "Opting In". The outcome of the meeting was that villagers stated that they were not apprised of their Tshaos' participating in the APA workshop. They indicated that at their General Meeting they requested that their Tshaos explain some of what occurred at the workshop. The Tshao from Karaudaunawa was present at the meeting and indicated that since the first awareness programme he had stated he supported the LCDS. The team also updated the communities on climate change developments and progress on the LCDS.

7 Any Other Business

Congratulations to His Excellency

- 7.1 Ms. Yvonne Pearson, on behalf of the NTC, conveyed congratulatory greetings to His Excellency for the UN Champion of the Earth award. Ms. Pearson reiterated that the NTC supports the LCDS.
- 7.2 Mr. Peter Persaud congratulated His Excellency for the award on behalf of TAAMOG. He said that it is noteworthy that the monetary aspect of the award will go to Amerindian communities. Mr.

David James and Mr. Ashton Simon also expressed congratulations to His Excellency for the award received.

Press Conference

- 7.3 Mr. Ashton Simon enquired about the press conference to be held by the MSSC with regards to the LCDS. Mr. Nokta indicated that the date and time for this will need to be coordinated with President Jagdeo.

Information Sharing

- 7.4 Mr. David James stated that Conservation International assisted with his participating in a forum in Ecuador last week on climate change and community involvement. Mr. James said that he is willing to share the experience gained at that forum.

Simplified Informative Posters

- 7.5 Mr. Ashton Simon stated that simple posters with information on the LCDS can be made to place in strategic locations in the Amerindian communities such as the medical centres. His Excellency noted that this was a good suggestion.

Disbursement of Funds for Amerindian Communities

- 7.6 Ms. Radzik stated that there should be a mechanism for the disbursing funds accrued to those Amerindian communities that choose to “opt in”.
- 7.7 His Excellency informed that caution should be taken in determining how communities will use the money. It was already agreed that the money they earn will go directly to them and they will need to decide how the money will be spent. What can be done is to share the experiences of other countries but the government cannot dictate how the communities spend their money. Ideally, it is hoped that the money will go to economic transformation. Each village needs to come up with its own economic plan. The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs has been working with communities on this and a format has been provided to villages to see what ideas they have come with.
- 7.8 Mr. Ashton Simon stated that the Indigenous peoples of Canada were given a lot of money from the government, roughly CA\$10M, but the money went to waste.
- 7.9 His Excellency stated that an activist for indigenous people from Canada should come to speak on how the indigenous peoples are being treated in Canada and compare it to what obtains in Guyana. The government is giving communities US\$7M, from the initial US\$30M, even without them exercising the “opting in” option.

Other Financing

- 7.10 There is no money for adaptation projects; a single adaptation project could cost about US\$60-\$70M. Guyana is working with CARICOM’s lead for Climate Change, Prime Minister Stephenson King, to have a Meeting in Guyana to co-ordinate the region’s position with regard to maximising the anticipated disbursement from the US\$10B that is earmarked to help developing countries adapt to and mitigate climate change. President Jagdeo said that there is a need now to transition from just talking about projects to actually implementing them.
- 7.11 After an enquiry by His Excellency on funding from FCPF, Ms. Pearson stated that the NTC has not received any money to date.
- 7.12 Ms. Pradeepa Bholanath added that the WB switched the GFC and NTC requirements by sending the GFC what the NTC should do and vice versa. The GFC has alerted them of the mistake and is still awaiting the correction.

International Indigenous Presentation

- 7.13 Minister Sukhai stated that at the UN Indigenous Forum at which Guyana was represented, there were many complaints about forests being destroyed but when the delegation from Guyana made its presentation the positivity that the team brought to the forum was refreshing and well received.
- 7.14 His Excellency stated that sometimes Guyana has conflicts with international bodies because we do not conform to their line of thinking and because of this Guyana has sometimes encountered problems over the years. But, there is opportunity to work with these bodies and common ground should be found.
- 7.15 Ms. Yvonne Pearson stated that at a side event in London, there was a presentation on indigenous issues and she thought it fitting that she should say something about Guyana's process. Ms. Pearson recalled that someone from the UK Rainforest Foundation, who admitted limited knowledge of the facts, opining that Guyana has some problems. Ms. Pearson said the forum did not facilitate responses but she did explain to other members of head table the full picture regarding land issues in Guyana.

COICA

- 7.16 His Excellency enquired if the NTC has applied to COICA. Ms. Yvonne Pearson replied that the NTC has not applied yet.
- 7.17 Minister Sukhai added that it is reported that COICA is currently experiencing some weaknesses in the organisation as they have move away from certain principles. Additionally, COICA is reluctant to accept anyone or organisation outside the APA. They are aware of the other organisations but they have stated that the APA is the lead I-NGO in Guyana. His Excellency replied that all I-NGOs in Guyana are equal in standing and if any organisation should take the lead it should be the NTC. The President requested that COICA should be invited to a MSSC Meeting so that they can meet with the stakeholders.

Perception of Guyana in the International Scene

- 7.18 Mr. Edward Dreyfus stated that in the international arena sometimes there is confusion on whether Guyana is a part of the Amazon and any abuse that takes place there, and in particular as it regards indigenous peoples, is seen as happening here as well. His Excellency replied that perceptions are changing. He noted that in Copenhagen Prince Charles spoke about Guyana and the work that has been done here.
- 7.19 Ms. Vanda Radzik added that the BBC last month had a children's quiz that featured a question on Guyana. This is an example of positive recognition of Guyana on the international scene.

Awareness Sessions

- 7.20 In response to a comment by Ms. Vanda Radzik about continuing with consultations, His Excellency agreed that the visits scheduled by Minister Sukhai should continue.

There being no other business, the meeting closed.

End of Minutes

Some key points were made and follow up actions identified. These are summarised below.

Key Points	Follow Up
A concept paper stating the requirements and various scenarios of operations needed for EITI should be done	GGMC to follow up
Copies of the CI-Iwokrama climate change manual should be sent to the OCC for circulation to the MSSC	CI to follow up
COICA should be invited to a MSSC Meeting to meet stakeholders	MoAA to follow up

