

Meeting 51 Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)

Date: Wednesday, 20th February 2013

Venue: Office of the President

Time: 10:05hrs

Attendance:

Name	Institution
Minister Leslie Ramsammy	Ministry of Agriculture
Shyam Nokta	Office of the President
Andrew Bishop	Office of the President
Kapil Mohabir	Office of the President
Alfred King	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
Nasheta Dewnath	Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)
Yvonne Pearson	National Toshias Council (NTC)
Derrick John	National Toshias Council (NTC)
Peter Persaud	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG)
Ashton Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF)
Rommel Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF)
Colin Klautky	Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous People (GOIP)
George Norton	Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous People (GOIP)
David Singh	Conservation International (CI)
Charles Hutchinson	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
Ronald Webster	Private Sector Commission
Hymawattie Lagan	Women's Affairs Bureau
Hilbertus Cort	Forest Producers Association
Joseph Singh	Individual Capacity
David James	Individual Capacity
Raquel Thomas-Caesar	Individual Capacity
Annette Arjoon-Martins	Individual Capacity

Absent/Excused

His Excellency President Ramotar		
Former President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo	Individual Capacity	Excused
Minister Robert Persaud	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment	Excused
Minister Pauline Sukhai	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs	Excused
Minister Ashni Singh	Ministry of Finance	Excused
Dr. Roger Luncheon	Office of the President	Excused
Shereeda Yusuf	Office of the President	Excused
Indarjit Ramdass	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Excused
James Singh	Guyana Forestry Commission	Excused
Pradeepa Bholanath	Guyana Forestry Commission	Excused
Edward Shields	Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association	Excused
Michael Williams	North Rupununi District Development Board	Excused
Dane Gobin	Iwokrama International Centre	Excused
Paulette Bynoe	University of Guyana	Excused
Pamela English	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana	Excused
Carvil Duncan	Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana	Absent
Rickford Vieira	Guyana Geology and Mines Commission	Absent
George Jervis	Ministry of Agriculture	Absent
Gillian Burton	Guyana Trades Union Congress	Absent
Jean La Rose	Amerindian People's Association	Absent by Choice

Invitee

Kandila Ramotar	Office of the President
-----------------	-------------------------

1. Call to Order

Mr. Shyam Nokta called the meeting to order.

2. Announcements and Correspondence

2.1 Excuses were received from Dr. Paulette Bynoe, Mr. Mike Williams, Dr. Indarjit Ramdass, Mr. Edward Shields, Mr. Dane Gobin and Mrs. Pamela English.

2.2 There was no correspondence.

3. Minutes of Meeting 50

3.1 Edits were made to Points 5.3; and 7.7.

Motion to adopt the Minutes was moved by Mr. Ashton Simon and seconded by Mr. Peter Persaud.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

Follow-Up Action Items from Meeting 50

4.1 It was noted that the first Technical Briefing Session of the MSSC was held on February 13, 2013 during which presentations were made to the Committee and this was followed by a lively interactive session.

4.2 It was reported that the adjustments were made to the Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and the OCC is preparing updated versions.

4.3 The meeting was informed that three Committee members indicated their interest in becoming members of the MNRE's EITI Steering Committee, namely Mr. Peter Persaud, Toshao Yvonne Pearson and Mr. Dane Gobin. It was stated that the first meeting was held on February 19, 2013.

Updates from the GFC on EU FLEGT and the FCPF

4.4 The meeting was informed that the Roadmap for EU FLEGT negotiations has been finalised and is available on the GFC website. It was noted that the second round of negotiations was held in December 2012. Over the next two months, there will be Joint Technical Meetings between Guyana and the EU. It was noted that this work is being led by a National Technical Working Group on Guyana's behalf. The next round of negotiations will be held in July 2013.

It was requested that the GFC provide the milestones leading into the July negotiations.

4.5 It was reported that the most recent revision of the RPP is of December 2012. An IDB Mission is expected from February 26 – March 1, 2013 to discuss technical components including the development of Terms of References (ToRs) as outlined in the RPP. Following this mission, the IDB will prepare a project document to send to the IDB Board. It was noted that this document would then have to be reworked to the IDB format before it can be submitted to the IDB Board with a tentative schedule of March – May 2013. The meeting was informed that other tentative dates included receipt of approval from the IDB Board in June 2013, and approval from the FCPF in Grant Signature in June 2013.

It was asked whether the initial disbursement for stakeholder consultations is still expected to be made available. In the initial stages, a Seed Grant of USD 200,000 was expected to precede implementation with total funds amounting to USD 3.6 million. The meeting was informed under the current arrangement there is no Seed Grant but a Grievance Mechanism is included. It was reported that there is expected to be a single disbursement of USD 3.8 million.

Clarification was requested on whether the project proposed by the NTC in 2010 is still included. It was replied that the project remains part of the package and the GFC has scheduled a meeting with the NTC next week to discuss a way forward.

Report on the EITI Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG)

- 4.6 The meeting was informed, by Mr. Peter Persaud, that the EITI Multi Stakeholder Group (MSG) was officially established on February 19, 2013 in a meeting held in the MNRE Boardroom and the Hon. Minister Robert Persaud gave the Feature Address. It was noted that the Group comprises Government, members of civil society and the private sector. It was reported that the primary function of the Group would be to administer the EITI Standard which has two main elements: companies publish payments, and Government publishes receipts both of which will be reviewed by the EITI Board. It was indicated that Guyana will tailor the EITI to its national circumstances in a process which will be overseen by the MSG.
- 4.7 Clarification was requested on composition of MSG. This point was noted and it was indicated that there will be follow-up with the MNRE for a list of members.
- 4.8 It was asked whether the MSSC would have an oversight or involved role to play in the MSG and EITI other than some degree of representation. It was suggested that if this occurs, a separate agenda item should be created for MSSC meetings. It was replied that the EITI will move forward under the guidance of the MSG for which the MSSC has three representatives. The MSG will be agreeing on a Work Plan and the MNRE is responsible for coordinating its execution. The meeting was informed the MNRE is represented at the MSSC and the Committee can have some level of involvement in the execution of the Plan.

5. Update on the LCDS

Biodiversity Research Centre

- 5.1 Clarification was requested on the focus of the World Bank Technical Study, the engagement of local stakeholders in the process, and whether the report could be circulated to the MSSC. It was replied that the Study is an initial piece of work that examines the concept of a Biodiversity Research Centre with the goal of generating a ToR for a Feasibility Study. The Feasibility Study will be more comprehensive and engage all relevant stakeholders. The ToR for the Feasibility Study has been completed.

The meeting was informed that the World Bank's funds are directed to a project at the University of Guyana (UG) and the Biodiversity Research Centre is one component of that larger project. UG's Vice Chancellor will Chair a Project Steering Committee. It was reported that Mr. Shyam Nokta is a member of the Project Steering Committee and will be able to provide the MSSC with timely progress updates.

- 5.2 It was asked whether the Biodiversity Research Centre under the LCDS would entail an expansion of the existing Centre at UG, a new Centre will be built, or a new Centre to be constructed at a new site. Moreover, it was remarked that the challenges associated with these ventures are greater in their maintenance than in their establishment.

It was replied that decisions about the Centre will be informed by the Feasibility Study and that the vision of the LCDS is of an independently functioning research facility that would attract and sustain high calibre local and international researchers and scientists. In addition to its academic work, the Centre will investigate the potential commercial value of forest resources. It was noted that the existing Centre was started by the Smithsonian and subsequently handed over to UG but it currently functions mainly as a repository for samples rather than a research facility.

- 5.3 It was suggested that stakeholders should be adequately consulted. It was noted that this is especially important so that potential donor agencies have the opportunity of being briefed and better informed so that any support for the Centre could be facilitated. The meeting was informed that no project document has been prepared and that it would be recommended that at some point during the Feasibility Study there is a forum for all key players and interested stakeholders.
- 5.4 The meeting was informed that there are two documents that could serve as background documents, along with the World Bank technical study, for the Feasibility Study. The first was a report supported by the British High Commission (BHC) to examine the possibility of the Centre; and the second, informed

partly by the BHC report, a UG Workshop Report on Establishing an International Centre for Biodiversity Research and Low Carbon Development prepared by local and international experts, and UG Faculty.

- 5.5 Conservation International (CI) reiterated its commitment to support the process and noted its interest in working with partners to shape a Biodiversity Centre of Excellence.

The Amerindian Development Fund

- 5.6 The meeting was informed that the implementation of Community Development Plans (CDPs) has begun and that the 27 pilot CDPs of Phase 1 are on schedule for completion of Phase 1. Concurrently, a full project document is being developed. Phase 2 of the project, which will see the implementation of the remaining CDPs, will begin in January 2014.
- 5.7 Disappointment was expressed at the slow pace of the project's implementation. It was further expressed that since the signing of the ADF agreement at the Conference of the NTC in August 2012, the Toshias expected its implementation by the end of 2012. It was advised that concern and criticisms could be forthcoming at the next NTC and the situation would be exacerbated by any delays in the implementation of Phase 1. It was asked whether anything can be done to accelerate the current pace of the work.

It was replied that the frustration of the slowness of the project is shared however there are safeguards which must be followed. The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MoAA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are implementing Phase 1 during which safeguards will be tested. It was stated that it has been contractually agreed that Phase 1 must be completed before the project could move to Phase 2. In addition it was noted that the timeline for Phase 1 implementation has not changed and has been documented in the Project Concept Note (PCN). The challenges associated with the GRIF mechanism were noted.

The meeting was informed that, as discussed during the Technical Briefing Session, the Project Summary Matrix usually circulated to the MSSC will be expanded to include next steps and the "hoops" Government faces in implementation. Safeguards are necessary and the Governments of Guyana and Norway are fully committed to ensuring that they are maintained. It was remarked that the current situation is less about the actual safeguards but more about the time it takes through the systemic bureaucracy. The example of current experiences under the Institutional Strengthening Project was shared where it takes two months to have funds approved to print the "Focus on the LCDS" newsletter. It was acknowledged that there are certain realities of the process and that the timelines under the projects are statutory.

It was further questioned why are there still so many "hoops" given that the work of the MSSC for the last two years has been focused on similar issues, and whether, in the preparation of the CDPs, the safeguards required by the UNDP were addressed. Clarification was also requested on whether safeguards any of the CDPs have been resolved and implementation of the plan can move forward. It was shared that it is difficult for bureaucrats to determine what the appropriate safeguards when they are not based in the fields. It was suggested that His Excellency contact the UNDP Resident Representative and MoAA to discuss how the process could be accelerated.

The meeting was informed that, for this project, safeguards were more applicable to the execution of the CDPs rather than to their preparation and more specifically, on issues relating to procurement since UNDP must comply with its organisational protocol. It was stated that the sectors in which the Plans would operational have been agreed with the UNDP, particularly for projects that are not strictly 'low carbon' like artisanal mining. It was stated that all 27 of the Phase 1 CDPs do not trigger any safeguards, and were selected by the MoAA and UNDP to encompass a wide variety of projects across the administrative regions of Guyana so that Phase 2 could be better planned. Further, it was informed that the process under which communities were engaged for preparation of the CDPs has been well documented and could satisfy the requirements of any international system at each stage.

- 5.8 It was suggested that a proactive approach should be taken to address the unmet expectations of the pilot communities and that this should be done before the annual NTC Conference. Further, in the future, expected timelines should be better communicated with communities.

5.9 The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) suggested that this time should be used to fine-tune the concepts of the projects to ensure that potential benefits are maximized and that implementation flows smoothly and subsequently offered their technical expertise in sectors like tourism, and others. It was replied that substantial effort has already been undertaken to provide technical support during the development of the CDPs by the MoAA. The point on maximisation of benefits was noted and it may be useful to explore a “cluster” approach in this regard.

5.10 Clarification was requested on the sufficiency of the project's budget to fund all 180 CDPs, and whether resources outside of the GRIF would be considered. It was responded that the ADF was designed to be replenished and provisions have been made for this to occur through the GRIF. Initiation of process was highlighted as the principal challenge currently. The meeting was informed however, of a similar ongoing project being implemented by CI and partners in the Rupununi and is focused on creating alternative livelihood opportunities.

5.11 It was suggested that this period be used as a learning exercise that should better position to proceed with speed and to make Phase 2 move faster. It was acknowledged that this experience should also assist efforts at pre-planning.

6. Any Other Business

Work of the MSSC

6.1 Appreciation was expressed to the MSSC for the continued work in the New Year, and to the OCC and PMO for the informative presentations at the Technical Briefing Session held on February 13, 2013.

Support for the Panthera Institute

6.2 The Guyana Organisation for Indigenous People (GOIP) declared their support for the agreement between the Panthera Institute and the Government of Guyana to protect Guyana's national animal, the Jaguar. The GOIP also indicated that similar protection should be afforded to other species of national importance including the Wild Deer, Howler Monkey, Peccary, Guyana's national bird Chanje Pheasant, and a popular tourism bird the Hanaqua.

6.3 It was further indicated that this issue is related to the proliferation of wild meat shops, and the special contracting of poachers to provide wild meat to mining communities. This industry is currently not regulated and Guyana's Wildlife Management Authority focuses mainly on wildlife export. Unless appropriate controls are implemented this unsustainable practice will continue. It was shared that the Protected Areas Commission (PAC) will focus on large areas designated as Protected Areas, it is unlikely that the Commission could effect the desired level of control for species protection.

6.4 The meeting was informed that the concern for the flagship species is shared and, importantly, that the PAC will help to focus on this and to pay increased attention to this issue.

Conservation International (CI) Issues Paper

6.5 It was reported that CI is continuing its work with Partners, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Projekt Consult, on the Issue Paper on the Extractive Industries Sector. The second draft of this paper came out on February 1, 2013 and was prepared based on inputs from a series of consultation activities. CI has completed the draft paper and presented it the Donor. Later in the process of the Paper's preparation, there will be a more public consultation process including the involvement of civil society, and other Partners interested in the relationship between the extractive industries and sustainable development, and moreover, how this fits into the LCDS. Thanks and the desire for future updates were expressed to CI for the update.

7. Close

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11:04 hrs.

End of Minutes

A number of key points were made and follow up action identified. These are summarised below.

Key Points	Follow Up
Milestones for FLEGT Negotiations	GFC to follow up
List of members of the EITI Multi-Stakeholder Group	OCC to follow up
Report from UG hosted workshop on Biodiversity Centre to be shared with the MSSC	OCC to follow up
Expanded GRIF Matrix to be developed for MSSC	PMO to follow up