

Meeting 52 Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)

Date: Wednesday, 20th March 2013

Venue: Office of the President

Time: 10:30hrs

Attendance:

Name	Institution
His Excellency President Ramotar	
Minister Robert Persaud	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment
Minister Pauline Sukhai	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
Shyam Nokta	Office of the President
Kapil Mohabir	Office of the President
Shereeda Yusuf	Office of the President
Alfred King	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
George Jervis	Ministry of Agriculture
Indarjit Ramdass	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Nasheta Dewnath	Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)
Paulette Bynoe	University of Guyana (UG)
Ronald Webster	Private Sector Commission (PSC)
Hilbertus Cort	Forest Producers Association (FPA)
Hymawattie Lagan	Women's Affairs Bureau
Edward Shields	Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association (GGDMA)
Derrick John	National Toshios Council (NTC)
Peter Persaud	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG)
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)
Dane Gobin	Iwokrama International Centre
Joseph Singh	Individual Capacity
Raquel Thomas-Caesar	Individual Capacity

Absent/Excused

Former President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo	Individual Capacity	Excused
Minister Leslie Ramsammy	Ministry of Agriculture	Excused
Minister Ashni Singh	Ministry of Finance	Excused
Dr. Roger Luncheon	Office of the President	Excused
Andrew Bishop	Office of the President	Excused
James Singh	Guyana Forestry Commission	Excused
Pradeepa Bholanath	Guyana Forestry Commission	Excused
Yvonne Pearson	National Toshios Council	Excused
Charles Hutchinson	World Wildlife Fund	Excused
Michael Williams	North Rupununi District Development Board	Excused
Pamela English	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana	Excused
Ashton Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation	Excused
Annette Arjoon-Martins	Individual Capacity	Excused
David James	Individual Capacity	Absent
Carvil Duncan	Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana	Absent
Rickford Vieira	Guyana Geology and Mines Commission	Absent
Gillian Burton	Guyana Trades Union Congress	Absent
Jean La Rose	Amerindian People's Association	Absent by Choice

Invitee

Nikolaus Oudkerk	Office of the President
Preeya Rampersaud	Office of the President

1. Call to Order

His Excellency President Ramotar called the meeting to order.

2. Announcements and Correspondence

2.1 Excuses were received from Minister Ashni Singh, Minister Leslie Ramsammy, Mr Andrew Bishop, Ms Yvonne Pearson, Mr Charles Hutchinson, Ms Annette Arjoon-Martins, Mrs Pamela English, Mr David James and Mr Ashton Simon.

2.2 There was no correspondence.

3. Remarks from His Excellency President Ramotar

3.1 His Excellency stated that the MSSC members participated in a technical briefing session convened by the OCC to provide an update on climate matters, specifically projects under the LCDS. President Ramotar noted the importance of such sessions to not only provide an understanding on the status of matters but to examine and appreciate the challenges being faced.

3.2 President Ramotar provided the following update to the Members of the MSSC:

3.2.1 Several projects are moving forward in 2013 including the LCDS flagship project the Amaila Hydropower and the Amerindian Development Fund (ADF), and the Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) development project will commence implementation shortly.

3.2.2 Financing is being earned from the Guyana-Norway partnership, which is put directly into LCDS projects. There were challenges with the establishment of the GRIF, however, Guyana continues to work with Norway and international partners to address these. Concurrently, national resources are also used to invest heavily in the implementation of the LCDS.

3.2.3 Work has been ongoing on updating the LCDS, with the most significant update being identification of the second wave of LCDS Projects based on specific areas identified within the LCDS document. During the period to the end of 2015, the current LCDS projects will continue utilising resources already allocated. In parallel, and subject to revenues from climate services and other sources, the Government of Guyana intends to address a further 5 priority projects:

3.2.3.1 *Climate Resilience, Adaptation and Water Management:* Up to US\$100 million will be allocated to upgrade Guyana's ability to cope with climate change. The details of this will be determined through a Climate Resilience Strategy that will be completed by the first half of 2014. It will include upgrading infrastructure and assets to protect against flooding through urgent, near-term measures; including Hinterland Adaptation Measures, and an Adaptation Readiness Programme.

3.2.3.2 *Facilitation of Investment in High Potential Low Carbon Sectors:* Building on the priority diversification opportunities identified in Guyana's National Competitiveness Strategy, up to US\$30 million will be allocated to assist in the development of six-priority low carbon sectors. It is expected that the priorities to 2015 will be business process outsourcing, aquaculture, eco-tourism, and fruits and vegetables. In parallel, work to strengthen the sustainable forestry and mining sectors will continue.

3.2.3.3 *Hinterland and Amerindian Development:* Much of the work that started before March 2013 will continue up to 2015. Land titling efforts will continue with the goal of satisfactorily addressing all requests from communities who wish this to be done in accordance with the principles of free, prior and informed consent. The established Amerindian Development Fund will continue to be capitalised to provide financing for all Community Development Projects. Alongside the existing programmes, further measures will receive investment. Hinterland Adaptation measures will progress, up to a further US\$17 million. US\$11 million will be allocated to improving ICT access and US\$6 million to facilitate Hinterland Distance Learning through ICT. At the same time, the "Opt In" process will be advanced.

3.2.3.4 *Centre for Biodiversity:* Up to US\$11 million will be allocated to the International Centre for Biodiversity project.

3.2.3.5 *Clean Transportation Programme*: Up to US\$2 million will be allocated for planning work to look at low carbon transportation options for Guyana, and to quantify how they can benefit the economy.

3.2.4 Members of the MSSC were informed that implementation of the new wave of projects, coupled with existing projects, will assist to move Guyana towards a climate resilient, low carbon economy. The solid progress on the LCDS is testimony to the leadership and hard work of everyone involved. The President concluded by inviting the Members of the MSSC to the launch of the LCDS Update on Friday at 16:00hrs at the State House.

4. Minutes of Meeting 51

4.1 Edits were made to Points 4.1; 5.5, 6.2 and 6.5.

Motion to adopt the Minutes was moved by Mr. Ronald Webster and seconded by Mr. Peter Persaud.

5. Matters Arising from Minutes

Follow-Up Action Items from Meeting 51

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)

5.1 Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment submitted to the MSSC the list of members of the EITI Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG) through the Office of Climate Change.

5.2 The meeting was informed that the inaugural meeting of the Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG) of the EITI was held in February and the group will meet again in April. It was stated that the MSSC members who are members of the MSG will provide an update of their next meeting to the MSSC.

5.3 Enquiry was made on whether the MSSC was adequately represented on the EITI MSG. It was replied that an invitation was received for three members to participate in the meeting. Members indicated their willingness to participate and were chosen namely: Mr. Persaud, Mr. Gobin and Ms. Pearson.

LCDS Project Update

5.4 The matrix with updates on the LCDS projects was circulated to the MSSC via email. It was reported that several LCDS projects are being implemented and others are awaiting approval. Specific details on these projects can be accessed on the GRIF website.

5.5 Request was made for the Forest Producers Association (FPA) to receive assistance from the Institutional Strengthening project. In response it was stated that the current Institutional Strengthening Project supports three (3) key institutions – OCC, PMO and REDD Secretariat. However, there are supporting initiatives from other financial sources to provide training and capacity building to other institutions, private sector, NGOs, GGDMA and National Toshihos Council (NTC). These entities all have important roles in the promotion and implementation of the LCDS.

5.6 Concern was reiterated at the slow pace of project implementation; in particular the Amerindian based projects. Members of the MSSC were reminded of the previous discussions on the matter and it was pointed out that under the Amerindian Development Fund (ADF), 27 communities are targeted in the first phase. The Amerindian Land Titling (ALT) project document is still in the pipeline and is closer to being approved. The mechanism for the operation of the ADF is in progress and the implementation of the Community Development Plans is expected to start soon.

5.7 The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MoAA) and UNDP will be launching the initial phase of the ADF and the invitation was extended to the Members of the MSSC. The launch will be held at the Princess Hotel on Friday March 22 2013 at 09:00hrs. After this inception workshop, the project representatives from the MoAA and UNDP will visit communities to finalise projects in capacity building. It is expected that by May 2013 disbursements to communities will start. By December 2013, all disbursements in Phase 1 are expected to be made for the implementation of the Community Development Plans (CDPs).

5.8 Concern was raised on the lack of understanding of the different phases and the budget allocations for each phase of the projects. In response it was noted that within the last two years, the MoAA had made significant efforts to ensure that communities understand the projects. The NTC both the current and previous memberships, were updated on projects. The communities were limited to G\$ 5 million for each CDP. However, some communities submitted projects that were less than G\$ 5 million and some above G\$ 5 million. The MoAA is seeking alternative funding for those projects above G\$ 5 million such as government grants from the National Budget. Also, there are discussions with the UNDP to fund some of these CDPs that are more than G\$ 5 million through their small grant project.

EU FLEGT

5.9 The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) provided the following update on the milestones of the EU FLEGT Negotiations:

- 5.9.1 Second Joint Technical Meeting was held on 19th March on EU FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) development.
- 5.9.2 Plans have commenced to conduct a formal Study on the Scoping of Impacts of the VPA.
- 5.9.3 A draft definition of forest legality is being developed for the EU FLEGT VPA and is currently undergoing stakeholder consultations as well as discussion with the EU.
- 5.9.4 Various Annexes and Articles of the VPA have been drafted, for example: the Scope of the Agreement, Compliance Framework, and Product List, as well as the Objective of the Agreement. These are being discussed with the EU.
- 5.9.5 Meetings are being held with key stakeholders, including indigenous communities, on various aspects of the EU FLEGT areas. One meeting is currently being held on 20-21 March with indigenous representatives, NGO, and the NTC on the Scoping of Impacts of the VPA, and the draft definition of forest legality.
- 5.10 The GFC was informed that the GGDMA had not received any invitations from the GFC regarding participation at the stakeholder consultations for EU FLEGT.

Biodiversity Research Centre

- 5.11 MSSC members received an electronic copy of the report "Establishing an International Centre for Biodiversity Research (ICBR) and Low Carbon Development" via electronic mail. This report is a result of a UG hosted stakeholder consultation and workshop to develop a framework for the Centre for Biodiversity.
- 5.12 Members were informed that the Project Steering Committee, of the World Bank funded project, chaired by UG's Vice Chancellor was held earlier this month. The Terms of Reference for the Centre's Feasibility Study was signed off and is expected to start within the next three months. It was stated that the MSSC should look forward to the commencement of the Study and share their expertise.

6. Any Other Business

Technical Briefing Session Report

- 6.1 Suggestion was made for the preparation of a report on the MSSC Technical Briefing Session. However, it was pointed out that the Minutes of the Meeting were circulated to the MSSC and posted on the LCDS website.

MoNRE's Strategic Plan

- 6.2 Members were informed that the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MoNRE) has embarked on a strategic planning exercise resulting in a draft Strategic Plan to guide for the management of the agencies that fall under the Ministry. It is a commendable exercise and the Ministry should be recognised for the substantial work being done. It is hoped that the MSSC will be part of the process.
- 6.3 The MoNRE will be invited to provide an update to the MSSC on the progress of its Strategic Plan.

- 6.4 Suggestion was made for the Ministry to circulate its Strategic Plan to the MSSC. Members were informed that the document is large and cannot be easily circulated via electronic mail but it is accessible on MoNRE's website.
- 6.5 Proposal was made for the MoNRE's to use graduates from the University of Guyana (UG) for its growing human resources need. In response, it was noted that the new Vice Chancellor for UG is working on revising UG's curriculum to make it applicable worldwide, therefore, making it easier for graduates to find jobs.
- 6.6 The meeting was informed that the broader issue is not to have the curriculum reformed for the LCDS but to include what is happening in the 21st Century on pertinent matters such as Globalisation and Climate Change. It was reported that UG has a Science and Technology grant of US\$ 600,000 for research projects for lecturers. A Committee is established with UG personnel, as well as prominent individuals, to have both academia and practitioners interact on the Committee.
- 6.7 Suggestion was made that there should be alignment of activities with various Ministries and organisations and the LCDS; since, many of the Ministries are not aware how their roles are integrated in the broader scope of the LCDS, such as education and health.

Solid Waste

- 6.8 Members of the MSSC were informed and discussed the issue of accumulation of solid waste across Guyana. While reference was made to the Parliamentary Resolution to address the solid waste issue in the city, it was noted that more needs to be done country-wide since the clean-up will only last a short time and the garbage will accumulate again. A ban on the import of plastic bottles and Styrofoam containers should be considered especially as biodegradable containers are available and can be made obligatory for use by fast food restaurants.
- 6.9 It was pointed out that direct investment in Guyana is being affected because of the garbage issue. Investors are of the view that the city's state as regard solid waste reflects the in-discipline nature of the legal system.
- 6.10 Members were informed of efforts to fast track the solid waste management legislation, prepared before the last Parliament convened, but was not tabled and was re-submitted to Cabinet. Additionally, other efforts are in place to deal with the waste issue such as the Pick-up Campaign, which is expected to be launched in early April; the establishment of the environmental code and the EPA is seeking funds to develop enforcement legislation. It was also stated that there was a motion in Parliament for which there have been positive exchanges from both sides of the House.
- 6.11 Suggestion was made to use the seven economic instruments to correct the environmental issue. It was reported that these instruments were included in the legislation sent to Parliament.
- 6.12 The point was made that although efforts are being made legally to address the issue; it is not practical or immediate. The issue needs to be addressed holistically and the Guyana Police Force must play a major role in the solution.

Illegal Hunting

- 6.13 Concern was raised on illegal hunting and fishing occurring with increasing intensity within Guyana. There is an influx of foreigners hunting illegally for sport in Guyana. There is a law against such activities but there is no enforcement. It was stated that the Police can reprimand persons who hunt illegally, since those persons will need to state their intended actions before being granted access to the hunting site. Short term measures must be taken while the legal aspects are resolved.
- 6.14 The meeting was informed that the issue must be tackled using both legal and practical approaches. There cannot be discriminating hunting practices, since it is a sensitive part of Guyanese culture.

One Laptop per Family (OLPF)

6.15 Enquiry was made on the status of OLPF in Amerindian communities. It was reported that the OCC will arrange for the OLPF to meet with the NTC Chair to update him on the status.

7. Close

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11:35 hrs.

End of Minutes

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

Key Points	Follow Up
The MoNRE to make a presentation to the MSSC on the progress of its Strategic Plan.	OCC to follow up
Arrange meeting between NTC Chair and OLPF.	OCC to follow up