

Meeting 58 Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)

Date: Friday, 20th September 2013

Venue: Office of the President

Time: 10:00hrs

Attendance:

Name	Institution	
Minister Pauline Sukhai	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs	
Shyam Nokta	Office of the President	
Kapil Mohabir	Office of the President	
Preeya Rampersaud	Office of the President	
Shereeda Yusuf	Office of the President	
Nasheta Dewnauth	Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)	
Edward Shields	Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association (GGDMA)	
Hymawattie Lagan	Women's Affairs Bureau	
Yvonne Pearson	National Tshaos Council (NTC)	
Colin Klautky	Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous People (GOIP)	
George Norton	Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous People (GOIP)	
David Singh	Conservation International (CI)	
Annette Arjoon-Martins	Individual Capacity	
David James	Individual Capacity	
Absent/Excused		
His Excellency President Ramotar	Office of the President	
Former President Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo	Individual Capacity	Excused
Minister Leslie Ramsammy	Ministry of Agriculture	Excused
Minister Robert Persaud	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment	Excused
Minister Ashni Singh	Ministry of Finance	Excused
Andrew Bishop	Office of the President	Excused
Dr. Roger Luncheon	Office of the President	Excused
Paulette Bynoe	University of Guyana	Excused
Joseph Singh	Individual Capacity	Excused
James Singh	Guyana Forestry Commission	Excused
Charles Hutchinson	World Wildlife Fund	Excused
Indarjit Ramdass	Environmental Protection Agency	Excused
Ronald Webster	Private Sector Commission	Excused
Ashton Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation	Excused
Rommel Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation	Excused
Pamela English	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana	Excused
Peter Persaud	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana	Excused
Dane Gobin	Iwokrama International Centre	Excused
Raquel Thomas-Caesar	Individual Capacity	Excused
George Jervis	Ministry of Agriculture	Absent
Carvil Duncan	Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana	Absent
Michael Williams	North Rupununi District Development Board	Absent
Alfred King	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	Absent
Rickford Veira	Guyana Geology and Mines Commission	Absent
Derrick John	National Tshaos Council	Absent
Hilbertus Cort	Forest Producers Association	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	

1. Call to Order

Mr Shyam Nokta called the meeting to order.

2. Announcements and Correspondence

2.1 Excuses were received from Dr Bharrat Jagdeo, Dr. Roger Luncheon, Mr Andrew Bishop, Minister Robert Persaud, Minister Leslie Ramsammy, Minister Ashni Singh, Dr. Raquel Thomas-Caesar, Dr Indarjit Ramdass, Mr Joseph Singh, Dr Paulette Bynoe, Mr Peter Persaud, Ms Pamela English, Mr Ashton Simon, Mr Rommel Simon, Mr Ronald Webster, Mr Dane Gobin and Mr Charles Hutchinson.

2.2 There was no correspondence.

3. Minutes of Meeting 57

3.1 Edits were made to Points 4.4, 4.6, 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 4.7.4 and 4.8.

Motion to adopt the Minutes was moved by Mr Colin Klautky and seconded by Dr David Singh.

4. Updates and Reports

Technical Briefing Session

4.1 The third Technical Briefing Session scheduled on September 04, 2013 has been postponed until October 04, 2013 due to Dr Mahender Sharma having to travel urgently on official business. Dr. Sharma will provide an overview of the energy sector with a focus on renewable energy.

Fourth Audit for Guyana-Norway Agreement

4.2 Members of the MSSC were informed that the in-country visit by the team of Independent Verifiers from Indufor to assess Guyana's progress on the JCN 2012 indicators for the fourth payment under the Guyana-Norway agreement has been completed. The team engaged with various stakeholders including members of the MSSC to complete their report. The OCC was in continuous contact with the team and it was noted that any additional evidence must be submitted by September 20, 2013. Based on preliminary results/feedback on the ranking of the indicators Guyana has made significant progress and met most of the indicators. For those process oriented indicators, progress is on-going such as stakeholder engagements; however, others are outside the realm of Government for example the Opt-In Mechanism. In this case, Government needs to await village deliberations before the process can move to the next stage. MSSC members were notified that the draft audit report will be presented to the Government of Norway by the end of the month (September 2013).

4.3 The second component of the audit process under the Guyana-Norway agreement is the completion of the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Report and its independent verification. This process is on schedule and the report is expected to be completed by the end of October.

The Guyana-Norway Partnership

4.4 Members of the MSSC were informed that the OCC prepared a document on the lessons learnt from the Guyana-Norway partnership. This document captured lessons from the last four years since the partnership has been in operation. These lessons can be used by governments, international financial institutions and non-governmental organisations as part of a wider global effort to advance the REDD+ agenda internationally. This document is posted on the LCDS website and will be circulated to MSSC members at the conclusion of this meeting via email.

4.5 MSSC members were informed that the results of the recent elections in Norway resulted in a change in Norwegian Government. The Government of Guyana's (GoG) will reach out to the Government of Norway to reinforce the work of the partnership given the progress over the last three and a half years.

4.6 Looking beyond Norway in 2015, a suggestion was made for the mainstreaming and sharing of lessons learnt and experiences from implementing projects under the LCDS. It was further pointed out that those lessons can also help shape other developmental projects. For instance, the changes made by the banking sector for ADF project can be used for other projects such as the one currently in operation by Conservation International (CI) in the Rupununi. NGOs like CI have a bit more flexibility in the procedures and can easily explore modifications to procedures and other options in the process of testing and learning in model building. The lessons learnt from both sides can be beneficial for national development beyond 2015. In this regard, it was suggested that GoG can:

4.6.1 Work with financial institutions to see the extent to which elements of this could be incorporated into their portfolio and whether they can take this on board because it is good business.

4.6.2 Incentivise the extractive industry sector and examine to what extent it is integrated into the LCDS.

4.7 It was pointed out that efforts are underway to mainstream climate change and the LCDS across sectors. For the extractive sector, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MoNRE) has a Strategic Plan that outlines how this can be achieved. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is also under the purview of MoNRE. There is an increase in interest from the private sector and willingness from the financial sector, for example, the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry (GBTI) to not only support LCDS projects but to also be innovative.

4.8 It was suggested that the Institute for Advanced Science and Technology (IAST) could strengthen its capacity to research and develop ideas to move Guyana forward similar to what was done during mining week. Consideration could be given to invite IAST to deliver a presentation at the MSSC Technical Briefing Session on IAST's innovative ideas.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) team in Guyana

4.9 MSSC members were informed that a team of experts from TERI is in Guyana to support Guyana's climate initiatives and LCDS implementation with a focus on the energy sector, GUYSUCO & GRDB. The team will build on the previous work done under Phase 1 of the MoU signed between the Government of Guyana and TERI. Apart from conducting studies, the team will also undertake demonstration of new energy technology, for example, street lighting. The team is currently working within the productive sectors and has been in contact with GUYSUCO, rice millers, through GRDB, and the private sector. Further, TERI has been able to not only share expertise with rice millers on using rice husk as raw material for an alternative energy source but to link the millers with technical experts overseas.

4.10 It was suggested that the TERI team could meet with the Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association (GGDMA) to examine the GGDMA's energy consumption and areas to optimise energy use. It was replied that the TERI team will be in Guyana over a period of time and a meeting with GGDMA could be arranged. It was further reported that TERI could deliver a presentation to the MSSC on their findings and research at the next technical briefing session.

Monthly GRIF Matrix

4.11 The monthly GRIF matrix on the LCDS projects was circulated to members of the MSSC. The matrix provides a status update on all projects funded under the Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund (GRIF).

Amaila Falls Hydropower Project

4.12 Report was given that at the last MSSC meeting there was much discussion on the Amaila Hydropower Project. There is currently no substantive update on the project hence it was not included in the GRIF matrix.

Amerindian Land Titling (ALT)

- 4.13 There have been efforts to significantly advance work of the ALT Project. The Project Document was finalised by GoG and UNDP and has been presented to the GRIF Steering Committee for approval. Even though there were some challenges relating to the UNDP's process, these were resolved and are reflected in the document.
- 4.14 A MSSC member stated he is extremely pleased that the ALT is in its final stages of approval. However, a concern was raised regarding the granting of titles, especially with regard to recent titles. The concern is that recent land titles granted to Amerindian villages have invariably contained the exemption provision "save and except lands legally held" and in legal action brought against titled villages in recent times this provision has been judicially interpreted to exempt property such as mining concessions and permits from the village title. The Constitution of Guyana in Article 142 "Protection from Deprivation of Property" provides in 142 (b) (1) 'To the extent that the law in question makes provision for the taking of possession or acquisition of property of the Amerindians of Guyana for the purpose of its care, protection and management or any right title or interest held by any person in or over any lands situate in an Amerindian District, Area or Village established under the Amerindian Act for the purpose of effecting the termination or transfer thereof for the benefit of an Amerindian community'. It was stated that this constitutional provision was intended to prevent the situation of having to insert an exempt clause in the title and moreover to prevent legal action being brought against Amerindian Villages challenging their titles. However, it does not appear that the Amerindian Act 2006 contains the enabling provision to give effect to the constitution which was previously provided for in the repealed Amerindian Act.
- It was replied that the Amerindian Act makes provision to balance the rights of all parties involved. The Act prescribes certain steps that both parties need to complete and if done properly, there will be no legal recourse. Should there be an issue with the process and it cannot be rectified by both parties, the matter will need to be resolved in Court.
- 4.15 Members of the MSSC were informed that such an issue would have been flagged by the UNDP and addressed in the Project Document. A request was made for the document to be circulated to MSSC members to see how the issue was addressed.
- 4.16 Enquiry was made on how many communities are titled and how many are awaiting titles. The Members of the MSSC were informed that 97 communities are titled to date and 13 are expected to be titled soon. No eligible community will remain untitled. The law states that a community must be in existence for a minimum of 25 years before they can request titling and there is currently no community that is eligible that hasn't made a request.
- 4.17 Enquiry was made on the size of the Amerindian population. The MSSC Members were informed that there are approximately 70,000 Amerindians based on the data generated at the last (2002) census.

Amerindian Development Fund (ADF)

- 4.18 The GoG continues efforts to implement the ADF Project and 22 communities have received funds already, totalling GYD 75,668,680, for their Community Development Plans (CDPs). The remaining five (5) communities are expected to receive their funds shortly. Phase 2 of the project is expected to start in January 2014 and the lessons learnt/experiences from ADF Project are being applied in the ALT project such as increasing the budget for consultations.
- 4.19 Enquiry was made on how the monies were disbursed for the villages. The MSSC Members were informed that bank accounts for villages were created, if one did not exist previously, and the money was transferred from UNDP to the villages' bank accounts.
- 4.20 Enquiry was made on whether the flow of funds to villages that choose not to opt-in will be affected. It was stated that whether a village choose to opt-in or not they will still receive funds.

Micro and Small Enterprise Development (MSE)

- 4.21 Significant progress has been made on the MSE Project and, in particular, the Project Document was approved. In addition, the GoG has met the conditions prior to the first disbursement of funds. There was no objection from the IDB and the Agreement for project implementation was signed. Significantly, GoG has negotiated with the commercial banks to reduce the lending rate to 6% through concessions.
- 4.22 Capacity building and monitoring is one notable component of the MSE Project. Since the Small Business Bureau (SBB) is the executing agency, capacity building is needed to ensure there are no bottlenecks during the start-up and implementation.
- 4.23 The question of the requirements to receive funds under the MSE was raised and it was noted that any Guyanese can receive funding providing he/she has a business plan or an existing business.

Cunha Canal Rehabilitation Project

- 4.24 The findings for the Conservancy Adaptation Project (CAP) will provide key data and analytic inputs for this project and the GoG is working with World Bank to move the project forward.

Biodiversity Research Centre

- 4.25 The project has progressed and the evaluation has moved to the next phase whereby three organisations were shortlisted and invited to submit full project and financial proposals by 9 October 2013 to prepare the feasibility study for the Centre. This project is part of the World Bank project 'University of Guyana (UG) Science and Technology Support Project'.

LCDS Second Wave Projects

- 4.26 MSSC members were informed that the LCDS Update presented by H.E President Ramotar in March 2013 identified a second wave of projects under the LCDS. Some current projects will be extended such as the ALT and ADF while there will be new projects in areas of adaptation, agriculture and tourism. The Office of the President has started to engage with sector agencies to develop the concepts for the new projects. These concepts will be made available to the GRIF Steering Committee and to the public for comments. It is expected that the first two project concepts will be developed by the last quarter of 2013.

International Negotiation

- 4.27 Members of the MSSC were informed that the next UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP) 19 meeting will be in Warsaw, Poland. The Guyana delegation is not confirmed but Guyana's Lead Negotiator to the UNFCCC, Mr Andrew Bishop will attend the conference. Mr Bishop is currently attending preliminary meetings for COP.
- 4.28 It was reported that there is not sufficient global ambitions on cuts and on financing. There needs to be a strong political presence since many of the world leaders who were championing climate change such as Prime Minister Stoltenberg are no longer in that role. It is hoped that a new advocate for climate change will arise from the non-traditional players. There is recognition that climate change is one of the top three global issues presently. There needs to be momentum to move climate change forward if the world is to avoid catastrophic climate change.

Oil Production

- 4.29 Concern was raised by a MSSC member on the possibility of having oil refineries in Guyana should oil be found in the country. The refineries will increase Guyana's carbon emissions and will then not be compatible with Guyana's goal of being a low carbon economy. It was replied that this issue was raised in the initial stages of the LCDS and it was stated that the LCDS does not have to forego any opportunity that will create economic development including oil production. Although, Guyana is moving

towards a green economy exploring renewable energy sources, the global dependency on oil will still remain for some time. Guyana's current GHG emissions are miniscule and should oil be found, the majority of this could be exported to overseas refineries where it will be closer to the markets. Nevertheless, any such refinery project would need to be subject to the environmental permitting requirements and environmental assessments to determine its potential impacts to the environment.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 There was no other business.

6. Close

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11:17 hrs.

End of Minutes

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

Key Points	Follow Up
Circulate the document on the Key Lessons Learnt from the Guyana-Norway Partnership	OCC to follow up
Invite Dr. Narine to deliver a presentation on IAST's work	OCC to arrange for the next technical briefing session of the MSSC
Invite TERI to deliver a presentation on their research and findings to the MSSC	
Arrange a meeting with TERI (Dr. Rao) and GGDMA	OCC to follow up when Dr. Rao returns to Guyana in January, 2014