

Meeting 19 Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)

Meeting 19

Date: Tuesday 10th November 2009

Venue: Office of the President

Time: 14:00 hrs

Attendance

Name	Institution
His Excellency President Jagdeo	Office of the President
Michael Brotherson	Office of the President
Edward Dreyfus	Office of the President
Dr. 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)
Jocelyn Dow	International Institute for Environmental and Development (IIED)
Vanda Radzik	International Institute for Environmental and Development (IIED)
Gerry Gouveia	Private Sector Commission (PSC)
Hymawattie Lagan	Women's Affairs Bureau
Yvonne Pearson	National Toshias Council (NTC)
Peter Persaud	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana
Mimi Fernandes	Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous People (GOIP)
Alfred King	Youth Representative
Joe Singh	Individual Capacity
Edward Shields	Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association
David Singh	Conservation International Guyana (CI)
Andrew Bishop	Office of the President

Absent/Excused

Dr. Roger Luncheon	Office of the President
Minister Robert Persaud	Ministry of Agriculture
Minister Pauline Sukhai	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
Shyam Nokta	Office of the President
Shereeda Yusuf	Office of the President
Pamela Mendonca	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana
Sydney Allicock	North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB)
Carvil Duncan	Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana (FITUG)
Ashton Simon	The National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF)
James Singh	Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)
David James	Individual Capacity
Gillian Burton	Guyana Trade Unions Congress
Patrick Williams	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
Lester Flemming	National Toshias Council
Jean La Rose	Amerindian People's Association (Absent by choice)

1. Call to order

- 1.1. His Excellency President Jagdeo opened the meeting

2. Minutes of meeting 18

- 2.1. His Excellency suggested that the reviewing of the minutes of the previous week's meeting be postponed until next meeting, when the minutes of both the 18th and 19th meeting will be reviewed.
- 2.2. Ms. Vanda Radzik noted that there were errors in the minutes of the 18th meeting, and said that she will write a statement on the issue of accuracy of the minutes, but agreed to the suggestion of reviewing the minutes in next week's meeting. His Excellency President Jagdeo again noted the fact a determination ought to be made on the format for taking the minutes since the practice from the beginning was to record verbatim and not within any particular context

3. Discussions concerning Copenhagen

- 3.1. His Excellency remarked that he wants to include a number of people in the delegation going to Copenhagen in December, including representatives from indigenous peoples' organizations, the head of the Toshias' Council, local management and staff from the Climate Change unit, but that there is a problem of finances. The unique aspect of the Guyana team will be the inclusion of NGOs, in particular representatives of the indigenous peoples.
- 3.2. His Excellency wished to ascertain whether there is a maximum number of people allowed as part of the government delegation.
- 3.3. Dr. David Singh suggested that a budget be sent to him and he will see what Conservation International can do on the matter of finances.
- 3.4. Ms. Jocelyn Dow put forward the suggestion of a forum or panel to discuss possibilities for Copenhagen.

4. Concept Note between Guyana and Norway

- 4.1. His Excellency informed the meeting that there were further discussions on the Concept Note with Norway last night (Monday 9th November), and that there are a number of minor details which remain to be resolved, but that this should be done soon.
- 4.2. His Excellency said that he has been explaining some aspects of the MoU with Norway and the Concept Note in the Cabinet meeting that is taking place simultaneously to this MSSC meeting, and that it was felt that there are certain issues that should be reflected in a particular way, especially in terms of language in particular. For example, the issue of "biodiversity", which it was felt should refer specifically to "forest biodiversity".
- 4.3. His Excellency mentioned that the issue of the protected areas systems would be dealt with at a later stage.
- 4.4. His Excellency noted that the reference level of deforestation as set out in the Marrakesh Accord is too tough.
- 4.5. His Excellency brought up the question of linking reference levels for deforestation to historic levels. He pointed out that while linking reference levels to historic deforestation levels may be appropriate for countries that have deforested heavily in the past, it would be too restrictive for Guyana, which has a very low historic deforestation level compared to other forested countries. Rather, the text of the Concept Note refers to an "agreed level" of deforestation, which does not have to be agreed upon until October 2010. Norway supports this position. An interim reference level of 0.45% has been agreed, and will be revised by October 2010.

- 4.6. His Excellency mentioned the issue of how payments will be affected by the development of a hydropower facility at Amaila Falls, which would require some forest clearing for the building of a dam. He said that Guyana will argue that this is part of the LCDS and will accrue benefits in terms of reduced carbon emissions through reduced reliance on fuel oil and diesel for electricity generation. It would be inconsistent for Norway to support Guyana with payments and then penalize for a development that will reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
- 4.7. His Excellency highlighted that he wished for everyone to fully understand every detail of the concept note.
- 4.8. His Excellency further noted that the concept note should not appear sycophantic or too soft to the rest of the world. Guyana has worked with many other developing countries, and it should not appear that our solidarity with other developing countries will be jeopardized by this agreement with Norway.
- 4.9. His Excellency noted that irrespective of the outcome of the UNFCCC COP 15 in Copenhagen this December, this MoU with Norway will ensure that Guyana receives payments for avoided deforestation. Thus, Guyana only stands to gain from Copenhagen if a deal that includes forestry and interim financing is reached.
- 4.10. In the absence of such a deal, the agreement with Norway will still hold. If avoided deforestation is included in Copenhagen as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but an agreement on interim financing is not reached, then Guyana cannot in any case expect to get much funding through the UNFCCC until around 2050?? Is this correct check with Andrew.
- 4.11. His Excellency noted that the agreement with Norway is a good one, and will bring in more money to Guyana than the IDB, CDB, World Bank and EU collectively.
- 4.12. His Excellency noted that the MoU does not commit Guyana by locking away its forests for an indefinite period of time. It simply means that if we deforest beyond the agreed level, we will not receive payments from Norway. The choice lies with Guyana.
- 4.13. Mr. Gerry Gouveia asked whether Guyana will be charged a penalty if we do deforest after making the agreement.
- 4.14. His Excellency responded that we won't be charged a penalty, but we won't receive payment. He also highlighted that the structure of the agreement is such that the payments from Norway are lagged, i.e., each year's payment is dependent on the previous year's performance. Thus, for example, payment for 2009's performance will accrue in 2010.
- 4.15. Mr. Edward Dreyfus noted that there are three classical problems with international carbon agreements that include deforestation namely, permanence, leakage and additionality. The lagged nature of payments in the agreement with Norway provide a solution to the problem of permanence. The carbon credit market does not have this feature, and the problem of permanence would have to be dealt with in another manner.
- 4.16. Mr. Peter Persaud expressed satisfaction at the indicators included in the concept note, especially the one which concerns the protection of indigenous people's rights.
- 4.17. His Excellency said that this would be spelt out in more detail as we evolve. We don't have to resolve all the details yet, but we have to show that we are making progress. He further emphasized that there are indicators should be removed as conditions and include as assertions from Guyana's government.
- 4.18. His Excellency emphasized that World Bank's safeguards concerning borders and disputed areas cannot be applied to Guyana, as there will be no agreement if that is the case.
- 4.19. His Excellency pointed out that the concept note states that the GRIF will be managed by a reputable international organization which will be selected by the participants. This

organization must be able to ensure accountability and disburse funds quickly. This need not necessarily be the World Bank. There is a fear among developing countries that given its propensity for conditionalities and processes, the World Bank is may not be best suited for managing REDD-plus funds in a timely manner.

- 4.20. Ms. Jocelyn Dow asked whether the Regional Development Bank would be an appropriate organization, to which His Excellency responded that the Norwegian Government doesn't recognize this organization.
- 4.21. Mr. Joe Singh asked what other institutions would be appropriate, to which His Excellency replied that the IDB would be one possibility, or alternatively, the WB may be pressured into understanding the urgency for unhindered flow of REDD-plus funds.
- 4.22. Ms. Jocelyn Dow commented that this could become a thorny issue. His Excellency pointed out that the WB will be under pressure to agree to specific extraneous safeguards.
- 4.23. His Excellency noted that there have been bad reports about mining, and related destruction of forests.
- 4.24. Mr. William Woolford said that the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission were part of a recent inspection.
- 4.25. His Excellency pointed out that there is a need to toughen up on enforcement of mining legislation. He suggested that we could look into training young people from forest communities to be involved in monitoring and enforcement.
- 4.26. Ms. Vanda Radzik mentioned that the mining is an issue, and that Rupununi leaders are concerned..
- 4.27. His Excellency emphasized the need to recruit and train young people from the interior to assist with monitoring.
- 4.28. Mr. Edward Shields pointed out that this should include all hinterland communities, not just Amerindians, a suggestion to which His Excellency and Ms. Radzik agreed.
- 4.29. His Excellency said that the Toshias could help to choose people from the village to be trained. This would discourage any dishonesty or corruption, which would reflect badly on the village.
- 4.30. Mr. William Woolford said that we already have people from the village involved – 14 rangers are already employed and more are being trained.
- 4.31. His Excellency mentioned that Guyana could lobby Britain for further financial support. In the Concept Note, the maximum payment is US\$41 million, and Norway has pledged US\$30million. We need to get the additional US\$11 million from another country, such as the UK.

5. Briefing on Barcelona talks

- 5.1. His Excellency invited Mr. Andrew Bishop to give a briefing on the status of the Barcelona talks that were held from 2-6 November 2009. Mr. Bishop said that progress was made in technology transfer and adaptation. He highlighted that the key principles – historical responsibility, polluter pays, and common but differentiated responsibility - were being carried forward from Barcelona to Copenhagen. There was discussion on some important financing issues, specifically on the issue of priorities to countries that are most vulnerable to climate change in terms of access to finance and technology. Mr. Bishop mentioned that it is important to remove barriers to technology (e.g. those resulting from intellectual property rights).
- 5.2. Mr. Bishop emphasized that the outcome of Copenhagen is likely to be a declaration plus a COP decision – highlighting an agreement on objectives, core elements, principles - rather than a legally binding treaty.

- 5.3. Mr. Bishop said that the financial building blocks were laid in Bali. The Bali Action Plan highlights several key elements for discussion, including finance, technology, adaptation, mitigation and shared vision. Progress: geographical balance – representatives from various regional groupings. Equity – balance between Annex 1 and Annex 2 countries.
- 5.4. Mr. Bishop gave an overview of some of the problems that arose in Barcelona: No money was put on the table, and targets were too low. Annex 1 countries were holding out for a single agreement – asking developing countries to make commitments. G77/China objected to this, and the Africa Group moved to suspend all KP talks except targets. A settlement was reached that 60% of the remaining time would be used for setting emissions reduction targets and 40% for remaining KP issues. There were detailed technical discussion on how targets were structured until Friday morning -but much of this time was spent on explanations of how targets are calculated, rather than making progress.
- 5.5. Mr. Bishop explained that with regard to REDD – some progress was made on phasing, financing and MRV. With MRV, the two detailed pages were reduced to a paragraph that stressed compliance with Convention guidelines.
- 5.6. Mr. Bishop explained that the Swiss led Environmental Integrity Group inserted text that safeguards must be the subject of MRVs, in particular respect of indigenous people's rights and free prior and informed consent. However, he argued that the MRV is about measuring forest carbon, and should not be about social issues, which could be reported through other means.
- 5.7. In terms of phasing, most parties agreed to the three phase approach. This approach will be beneficial to Guyana. It was agreed that fund based and market based approaches should be used, but there was disagreement about using market based approaches in the "plus" activities. The argument against using market based approaches in the "plus" activities is that the market should pay for reductions that actually reduce the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere. The argument in favour, which Mr. Bishop is going to put forward, is that the market should pay for reductions in CO₂ relative to what the atmosphere would have seen in the absence of REDD-plus, i.e. paying for avoided deforestation. Brazil is one of the countries that oppose market access for REDD plus. .
- 5.8. In terms of reference baselines, Mr. Bishop explained that Guyana supports an elevated baseline. Those countries that are against using market based approaches in the "plus" activities are also against elevated baselines. They argue that payments should be for actual reduced deforestation, not 'future' avoided deforestation.
- 5.9. Mr. Bishop explained that there was a deadlock with KP. We will not have a legally binding agreement in Copenhagen. This may not be a bad thing, as we don't want a legally binding agreement that is weak, and we don't want to push for an agreement if targets are low. What is likely to come out of Copenhagen is a political declaration coupled with a COP decision. If the declaration makes a commitment to reach a legally binding agreement within a given timeframe, this would be better than a hollow declaration, and this is what he will advocate.
- 5.10. Mr. Bishop informed the meeting that Yvo de Boer called the heads in Barcelona, saying that a deal in Copenhagen is unlikely because heads have not been invited. Mr. Bishop said that this is nonsense, and the real reason why there will not be a deal in Copenhagen is because of the USA. It will not be possible to reach an agreement if the US is not on board. The US will not come to the table until the Climate Change Bill passes in Senate, which will not happen in time for Copenhagen, thus President Obama will not make a commitment. Ideally we need a declaration that commits negotiators to a treaty like deal in the future, and gives time for the US Bill to be passed.

- 5.11. Mr. Bishop mentioned that as far as Guyana's deal with Norway goes, financing should not be a problem. The details on financing from state funds or market mechanisms will be determined during the first phase of REDD.
- 5.12. Mr. Bishop mentioned that Guyana will need to use some negotiating levers in Copenhagen.
- 5.13. Ms. Vanda Radzik said that MRV goes beyond narrow carbon reporting, and it seems that it will take into account more than just forest carbon.
- 5.14. Ms. Pradeepa Bholanath pointed out that there is a difference between inputs to the MRV and what is reported to the UNFCCC as outputs.
- 5.15. Mr. Bishop said that the reason for MRV is to enable payments for changes in forest carbon.
- 5.16. Ms. Vanda Radzik said that the Guyana model is gaining traction in other countries.
- 5.17. Mr. Bishop pointed out that we have openly included indigenous people and FPIC, in the text. These can be monitored. But the question is should they be monitored using MRV or by another mechanism? MRV is specifically designed for monitoring forest carbon, not for social issues.
- 5.18. Mr. Bishop said that the Swiss-led Environmental Integrity Group are also talking about how offsets related to environmental integrity. We need to focus arguments on incentivizing conservation in order to avoid further CO₂ emissions into the atmosphere.

6. Miscellaneous Issues

- 6.1. Mr. David Singh wished to convey to His Excellency the greetings of Dr. Russel Mittermeier, President of Conservation International, and his congratulations on the signing of the MOU with Norway.
- 6.2. His Excellency asked Ms. Pradeepa Bholanath to ask James Singh to call and give him and in-depth briefing on forest issues before his trip to London.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 15.30 hours.