

**Meeting 1**  
**Technical Briefing Session**  
**Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)**

**Date:** Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013

**Venue:** Office of the President

**Time:** 10:00hrs

**Attendance:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Minister Pauline Sukhai	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
Shyam Nokta	Office of the President
Kapil Mohabir	Office of the President
Pradeepa Bholanath	Guyana Forestry Commission
Edward Shields	Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association (GGDMA)
Ronald Webster	Private Sector Commission
Yvonne Pearson	National Toshias Council (NTC)
Michael Williams	North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB)
Peter Persaud	The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG)
Pamela Mendonca	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)
Paulette Bynoe	University of Guyana (UG)
David Singh	Conservation International (CI)
Charles Hutchinson	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
Dane Gobin	Iwokrama International Centre
Joe Singh	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
Dr. Roger Luncheon	Office of the President	Excused
Minister Ashni Singh	Ministry of Finance	Excused
Minister Leslie Ramsammy	Ministry of Agriculture	Excused
Minister Robert Persaud	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment	Excused
Andrew Bishop	Office of the President	Excused
James Singh	Guyana Forestry Commission	Excused
Shereeda Yusuf	Office of the President	Excused
Indarjit Ramdass	Environmental Protection Agency	Absent
Alfred King	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	Absent
Rickford Vieira	Guyana Geology and Mines Commission	Absent
Carvil Duncan	Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana	Absent
Derrick John	National Toshias Council	Absent
Hymawattie Lagan	Women's Affairs Bureau	Absent
George Jervis	Ministry of Agriculture	Absent
Hilbertus Cort	Forest Producers Association	Absent
Gillian Burton	Guyana Trades Union Congress	Absent
David James	Individual Capacity	Absent
Jean La Rose	Amerindian People's Association	Absent by Choice

**Invitee**

Kandila Ramotar	Office of the President
Lisa Famolare	Conservation International

## 1. Call to Order

Mr. Shyam Nokta called the meeting to order.

## 2. Opening Remarks on the International Context

2.1 Mr. Nokta informed the meeting that the Technical Briefing Sessions for the MSSC are intended to deal with substantive issues and indicated that he would open the session by framing the global picture of key climate change issues.

2.1.1 Mr. Nokta indicated that affirmative climate action is underwhelming: current emissions reductions pledges are weaker and countries are showing less ambition. The meeting was informed that if current trends continue, the commitment of limiting temperature increases to 2°C will be unattainable. This is particularly worrying in light of the extreme climate change impacts including higher weather intensities and climate variation.

The meeting was informed that political will must start to translate into affirmative action and one of the principal reasons for this is the view that green growth strategies will not stimulate economic growth. It was stated that Guyana's position is the reverse and that the LCDS is a working example of how economic development and measures to combat climate change can be synergised.

2.1.2 It was indicated that the flow is climate financing has not met expectations given that COP 19 deferred the discussions on Long Term Finance for another year and, Fast Start Financing (FSF) has been marred in controversy. The meeting was informed that topics of intense debate werewhether the funds are new and additional; allocated in a balanced manner between mitigation and adaptation actions; and Official Development Assistance (ODA) allocations included under the FSF umbrella.

It was stated that delays in the delivery of near term financial resources will impact the extent of work that can be achieved on the ground and in the implementation of national scale models like the LCDS.

2.1.3 On the issue of financing for REDD Plus, it was stated that funding under the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) has been disappointing. Further, there has been a significant amount of pledged funds to the FCPF but disbursements have not been sufficient. As of December 2012, USD 239 million was pledged to the FCPF's Readiness Fund but only USD 11 million disbursed. A significantly lower amount was disbursed from the Carbon Fund, the other funding stream of the FCPF.

The meeting was informed that UN-REDD showed more promise; as of December 2012, USD 99 million was disbursed out of the USD 154 million pledged.

The meeting was further informed of progress under Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) from which Guyana benefits. Norway has also entered into partnerships with Brazil and Indonesia, which is providing momentum to bilateral agreements. This is especially important in the absence of a global REDD+ agreement.

2.1.4 It was indicated that progress remained slow in several of the thematic areas under the UNFCCC including on adaptation, technology transfer and capacity building and that greater momentum is needed in that process.

2.1.5 It was pointed out that the LCDS was promoted and recognised as a working model of green growth at the Rio +20 Conference in June 2012, and more recently, at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) in January 2013.

2.2 It was stated that the key achievements for 2012 included the receipt of a third performance based payment from Norway and the development of a new Joint Concept Note (JCN).

- 2.3 The meeting was informed that the key milestones for 2013 included the launch of the LCDS Addendum which would include a second wave of LCDS projects, catalysed work on current projects, GRIF Reform, and intensified national stakeholder involvement and engagements.
- 2.4 Mr. Nokta stated that this inaugural session provides a platform for such meetings of the MSSC in the future and then invited presentations from the Office of Climate Change (OCC) and the Project Management Office (PMO).

### **3. Presentations from OCC and PMO**

- 3.1 The presentation from the OCC provided the meeting with updates of the LCDS including on the revised JCN (2012) and the mandates therein for priority areas of work on Indicators of Enabling Activities.
- 3.2 The PMO's presentation provided background information and current status of six of the priority LCDS projects.
- 3.3 Mr. Nokta opened the floor for questions and comments.

### **4. Question and Answer Segment**

#### **LCDS Projects**

##### *The Institutional Strengthening Project*

- 4.1 It was requested that reference should be made to the initial support of the German Government to the MRV System.

##### *Amaila Falls Hydropower Project*

- 4.2 It was asked whether the construction of the access road is likely to be delayed and was noted the negative impact this could have on the overall schedule of the hydropower facility.

It was pointed out that several contractors are engaged on the project and a schedule to finish at the end of June is being maintained. As such efforts have intensified to ensure that timeline is maintained.

- 4.3 It was pointed out that the cost of the Project has been a point of contention since the project has a 'flat price'. It was questioned whether allowance was made for over budgeting given that global experience shows the hydropower plants of this size have been over budgeted.

The meeting was informed that a key feature of Amaila is that the project is a private investment with government equity and the Government and Sithe Global have agreed on a 'flat price' that is now locked in. Moreover, the contractor has built in buffers but has attempted to limit that as much as possible. Some challenges were faced during the process but none which could hamper the project's feasibility.

- 4.4 Clarification was sought on Sinosure. It was explained that Sinosure is an insurance company that was brought into the arrangement to provide insurance to the project's financiers.

##### *Cunha Canal*

- 4.5 The question was asked why Cunha Canal was selected for rehabilitation given that it had been diverted in the 1990s. Further, it was asked whether attention would be given to the clearing of the outfall of the canal without which the maximum impact of the project would not be achieved.

The response offered was that generally, previous work on drainage and irrigation and also work on sea defences relied on the technical expertise available at the time but was constrained by the limited availability of reliable data. Undoubtedly, despite the constraints, an excellent job was done and ongoing work is filling data gaps. In 2005, Guyana was one of the first countries to receive funding from the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) for the Conservancy Adaptation Project (CAP). The CAP is

being facilitated by the World Bank and is generating valuable information and models, including hydrographical models; highlighting trends, and making future projections. The full report of the CAP will be completed in a month's time and is expected to play an integral role on improving the management of the East Demerara Water Conservancy (EDWC) which is especially important given the frequency of overtopping events. Following the completion of the full report, a final decision will be made on following through with the current envisaged approach to the rehabilitation of the Cunha Canal but in the meanwhile the Government will continue its work of push the rehabilitation forward.

#### *Issues of Capacity Building*

- 4.6 It was noted that there is a need for a more integrated approach to planning of agriculture programmes as many small community groups lack the required capacity to maximize their earnings by tapping into available markets. This is further compounded by the limited field capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the National Agriculture Research and Extension Institute (NAREI) to conduct training exercises.

The meeting was informed that there is a specific budget line in the Amerindian Development Fund (ADF) for training and capacity building exercises.

#### **Indicators of Enabling Activities – Public Awareness Programmes**

- 4.7 It was commented that there should be some feedback mechanism to measure the effectiveness of public awareness programmes.

It was pointed out that during the first national awareness and consultation exercise the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) played the key role of Independent Monitor of this process and their report provided valuable feedback. The current revised JCN (2012) has provisions for engaging an independent monitor once the momentum on stakeholder engagements and awareness move forward.

### **5. Recommendations**

#### **LCDS Projects**

- 5.1 It was recommended that the Government should seek ways to utilise local expertise, ideally a suitably qualified MSSC member, in large infrastructural projects like the Cunha Canal in the role of local independent oversight. Given the great expenditure earmarked for large infrastructural projects it is important that the Committee have engineering expertise, and the inclusion of retired engineers like Messers Sohan or Ali should be considered.

This recommendation was acknowledged and would be passed onto the MoA.

- 5.2 It was recommended that GoG clearly convey, in future public relations work, the Amaila Falls Hydropower project is a private investment with government equity as such information may allay public fears.

This recommendation was accepted.

#### **Future Technical Briefing Sessions**

- 5.3 The meeting expressed gratitude for the Technical Briefing session. It was requested that at future sessions there should be a presentation with a matrix that identifies deliverables and timelines of GRIF Projects. The view was expressed that such a presentation would better enable the MSSC to give advice and make recommendations.

The suggestion was accepted and the Projects Matrix, currently circulated to the MSSC, will be expanded to include more detail.

**6. Close**

The meeting closed at 11:05 hrs.

**End of Minutes**