

Resolution of the National Toshias' Council Conference
Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030

July 15, 2022

The National Toshias' Council, at its Conference of July 11-15, 2022, adopts the following resolution:

Whereas the National Toshias' Council (NTC) recognizes Guyana's leading role in forests and climate action nationally and globally, and recognizes that through the joint effort by Government and Indigenous Peoples, along with other stakeholders, Guyana has maintained over 99% of forest cover over many years; and further notes that this is testimony to Guyana's strong stewardship on forests and Guyana's continued contribution to the global fight on climate change.

Reaffirming that the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2009 has been a visionary Strategy that showed how inclusive, sustainable development can take place, while simultaneously maintaining the country's forests, to help meet some of the most urgent challenges the world faces.

Recalling that the LCDS 2009 laid the early framework for low carbon development in Guyana, including forest carbon credits; and was subject to extensive national, regional, and community-based consultations, and one of the widest national consultations exercises completed in Guyana in recent history.

Emphasizing that the LCDS 2009 was discussed at the Community and National Toshias' Council levels and received full endorsement.

The National Toshias' Council notes that:

- Projects based financing and additional resources from national-level programmes, benefitted Amerindian Villages across Guyana.
- Phase I of the approach to Forest Climate Services saw Guyana earn a total of US\$220M from the Guyana-Norway Agreement for the period 2010-2015.
- These revenues were channeled towards financing a wide range of programmes, including those that are aimed at improving the quality of life of Indigenous Peoples, including:

- two separate phases of the **Amerindian Development Fund (ADF)** Project which used funds earned under the Guyana-Norway agreement to implement the Community Development Plans (CDPs) of Amerindian communities and villages. The development of the CDPs was led by the communities and villages and approved at their Council meetings. The first phase funded 26 communities and villages and the second phase funded 154 communities and villages. The project aimed to strengthen the entrepreneurial and institutional capabilities of the village economies of Amerindian communities; improve linkages with the private sector to further develop value chains; and strengthen institutional frameworks to support local economies. CDPs implemented were categorised under the following sectors: agriculture, village infrastructure, tourism, manufacturing, village business enterprise, and transportation. Between both phases of the project, the CDPs of 180 communities and villages were funded and implemented at an approximate value of US\$4,412,540 or G\$911,189,465.

- The **Amerindian Land Titling (ALT)** Project, which is still ongoing, seeks to accelerate the legal demarcation and titling of Amerindian lands for a total budget of US\$13.3M or G\$2.8B. Amerindians total approximately 14 percent of Guyana's population and currently own in excess of 15.65 percent of Guyana's territory, up from about six percent in the early 1990s. The ownership of land empowers and allows Guyana's first peoples the liberty to engage in and promote investments towards their own social and economic advancement. Under the ALT project:
 - 15 villages were issued with absolute grants, bringing the total number of Amerindian villages titled with Absolute Grants to 111.
 - 26 villages were demarcated and 24 were issued with certificates of title in what is the final step in the titling process. This brought the total number of villages demarcated and issued with Certificates of Titling to 101.

The principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) continues to be an important and respected principle that is applied under the Project. Amerindians are provided with enough information well in advance of planned or proposed activities to allow communities and villages to agree or consent to the execution of those activities. Under the project, over 210 persons were trained in FPIC to ensure that not only do Amerindians understand their rights but importantly, for other

stakeholders to recognise and understand those rights and practically apply the principle of FPIC during project implementation. A Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) was established as an alternative for helping to resolve land titling disputes. Twenty-three persons were trained as GRM liaisons, 254 community members were trained in mediation and 378 persons were part of cluster awareness exercises on the core function of the GRM.

- The **ICT Access and e-Services** for Hinterland, Poor, and Remote Communities Project. This project restarted in 2021, is still ongoing and ICT hubs are being established in 200 communities and villages. Each hub will be equipped with printers and televisions, as well as 20 laptops and software. Once complete, this project will provide the necessary infrastructure, equipment, hardware, and software necessary to enable access to high-quality ICT, training and e-services in all parts of Guyana, with particular attention given to vulnerable groups and remote communities who might otherwise be excluded.

Highlighting that Guyana's pursuance of a new Low Carbon Development Strategy, LCDS 2030, expands to a broader ecosystem approach, to include biodiversity and water management, and one which creates a model for avoiding deforestation and maintaining forests; investing in urban, rural and Amerindian development; protecting the coast and hinterland from climate change; creating jobs in a suite of low carbon sectors; and aligning the education and health sectors with low carbon development.

Recognizing the commitment to Free Prior and Informed Consent in Guyana's LCDS 2030.

Recognizing that a central tenet of the LCDS 2030, like the LCDS 2009, involves communities benefiting from revenues earned from the sale of forest carbon services; and where the LCDS 2030 sets out new opportunities for new revenues.

Noting that the LCDS 2030 seeks to advance the work started under the LCDS 2009 and charts the path for a sustainable future towards 2030.

The National Tshaos' Council:

Welcomes Guyana's pursuance of an expanded Low Carbon Development Strategy, LCDS 2030, and the proposal to move to a second phase for accessing forest carbon financing, to continue the approach outlined in the LCDS 2009.

Recognises that extensive national scale and community-based consultations, conducted over the past seven months, have informed the main aspects of LCDS 2030.

Welcomes the commitment expressed in the LCDS 2030 to continued consultation and engagement with Indigenous Communities and Villages as the LCDS moves to implementation.

Agrees with Guyana's national approach of engaging with forest carbon financing that is aimed at bringing benefits to Guyanese and particularly Indigenous Villages and Communities.

Notes and welcomes the information in the LCDS 2030 that from 2022, there is a strong possibility that Guyana's sale of forest climate services can be structured around high-quality voluntary carbon markets that could include private, as well as international public sector, financing.

Welcomes and supports the proposal which resulted from the national consultation that:

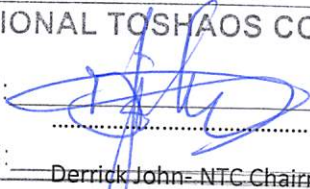
- The LCDS, and engagement with carbon markets, nonetheless will create new *opportunities* to opt into revenue-sharing mechanisms where Amerindian and other local communities can choose to access revenues through a combination of:
 - o national programmes as outlined in the draft LCDS 2030 (e.g., renewable energy, land titling, protection against climate change), and
 - o community/village-led programmes for indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) as set out in Village Sustainability Plans or equivalent, put together by communities themselves.
- All Amerindian communities will have the opportunity to engage with both pathways for carbon market revenues, in accordance with the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).
- A dedicated 15% of all revenues from forest carbon markets will be allocated for Amerindian communities. These funds will be available to the villages to support development initiatives. This will be supplementary to the considerable funds communities are expected to receive from national-level programmes.
- This dedicated revenue stream will be shared equally with villages and communities, including those that are covered with forest as well as those in non-forest ecosystems
- Communities are free to opt into this dedicated revenue mechanism for local communities.
- No deadline will be set for opting in.




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Support by the National Tshao's Council Executive Committee
Resolution on Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (2030)



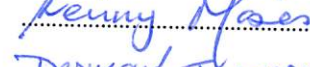




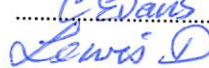


July 15, 2022

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