

**Belize Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)
Readiness Preparation Project (PI52415)**

Preparation Mission

March 23 to 27, 2015

Aide Memoire

1. Background: The GoB has already completed the first step to access the Readiness Fund under the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) by preparing and submitting the Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP). On March 4, 2015, the final R-PP passed the completeness check and grant funding in the amount of US\$ 3.8 million has been allocated.
2. A World Bank team led by Enos Esikuri (Task Team Leader and Sr. Environmental Specialist,) and comprising of Keiko Ashida (Environmental Specialist), Sylvia Michele Diez (Operations Officer), Kristyna Bishop (Sr. Social Development Specialist), Rodrigo Fernandez (Climate Finance Specialist), and Julius Thaler (Sr. Counsel) conducted a preparation mission (the Mission) together with the Government of Belize (GoB) for the above named project (the Project) on March 23 to 27, 2015.
3. The main objectives of the Mission were to discuss the Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) in detail with the Government and initiate the due diligence review of the proposed Readiness activities. The Mission also held information sharing sessions in Belmopan, Belize City, and Punta Gorda with key stakeholders, including indigenous groups, to explain the REDD Readiness Preparation process and the roles of the World Bank in such a process.
4. The Bank team would like to thank the GoB for the excellent arrangements made for this Mission, and the Mayan leaders, NGOs/CSOs, and the University of Belize for the fruitful discussions that took place.
5. The opening meeting was held at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MFED) on Tuesday, March 24, 2015, chaired by Ms. Yvonne Hyde, Chief Executive Officer of the MFED and attended by representatives of the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development (MFFSD), Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture (MNRA) and Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT). A full list of the Mission meetings and their participants is attached in Annex 1.
6. A wrap-up meeting was held on Thursday, March 26, 2015 at the Forest Department (FD). A summary of the key issues, decisions and next steps agreed upon during the Mission is presented below.

I. Key Issues and Decisions

Kickoff meeting with Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (March 24, 2015)

7. The GoB reconfirmed that REDD+ is important to Belize which is currently developing the Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy for the mid-term. The REDD+ agenda is also consistent with the objectives of the current World Bank Country Partnership Strategy (FY12-15) supporting the country's efforts to achieve inclusive and sustainable natural resource-based growth and enhanced climate resilience.
8. The Mission commended the GoB for the well prepared R-PP and briefly presented the overview of REDD+ as well as the process of REDD+ engagement (i.e., the Readiness Preparation, investments to address deforestation and degradation, and the result-based payment scheme). The Mission highlighted the multi-sectoral nature of REDD+ and the importance of bringing all the players (i.e.,

by the FD. The Bank team briefly explained its role and invited the participant to share their views on this initiative. They brought up the need for capacity building at the technical and communal level, and issue of deforestation across the border (with Guatemala in particular).

16. Other financiers: The Mission met with other financiers (GIZ-Selva Maya Program; GEF-KBA Project) that are included in the R-PP. Synergies and complementary areas were discussed to avoid duplication and maximize the development impact of the REDD+ initiative.

Key Decisions:

- It was agreed that the GoB would explore the potential for incorporating natural coastal ecosystems such as mangroves and seagrass beds in the REDD+ readiness plans.
- It was agreed that (i) MNRA would revisit the National Agriculture and Food Policy focusing on the emerging REDD+ areas and strengthening the synergies with the REDD+ agenda, and (ii) pilot activities would be identified for the implementation phase (e.g. toolkit, south-south knowledge exchange, capacity building for extension workers).
- It was agreed that PACT would develop a fund-raising strategy for the implementation phase of REDD+.

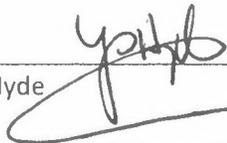
Legal Issues

17. A representative from the Solicitor General's Office updated the Mission on the pending land rights claim of 23 villages in the Toledo District before the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). The March 25, 2015 hearing was rescheduled for April 23, 2015. The representative from the Solicitor General's Office confirmed that for the two communities of Santa Cruz and Conejo customary land rights are not in dispute and have been recognized as a result of an earlier court ruling. The Bank team explained the potential implications of the land rights question for indigenous peoples in the context of REDD+. For instance, a future benefit-sharing mechanism would need to take as a starting point the land tenure situation in the country and, depending on the ruling of the CCJ, would have to focus on benefit-sharing arrangements that are not necessarily tied to land ownership.
18. It was agreed to replicate the institutional arrangements of the KBA Project under the FCPF grant agreement.
19. The Mission noted the efforts made in the R-PP in terms of identifying potential negative legal incentives that may contribute to deforestation and forest degradation. It was agreed to use grant funding for further analysis of questions such as agricultural subsidies, the impact of free trade agreements and mining legislation.

Field Visit to Punta Gorda (March 26, 2015)

20. An information sharing session was held with 16 alcaldes of the Toledo Alcaldes Association (TAA), which represents the 39 Mayan communities in the Toledo District. The representatives indicated that they appreciated the space created to directly discuss the R-PP with the Bank. They confirmed their motivation and willingness to be involved in the REDD project. An update regarding the status of the R-PP was provided by the Forest Department. The TAA also provided the Mission with a summary of their concerns related to the final version of the R-PP (see Annex 2 for details). It was agreed that Mr. Pablo Mis of the Mayan Leaders Association (MLA) will be the main point of contact for the Toledo Mayan communities. It was also agreed that the Consultation Framework will be sent to the Bank to be shared with other projects and the Regional Safeguards Advisor. The TAA/MLA will

Signed by:



Ms. Yvonne Hyde
CEO
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development



Mr. Enos E. Esikuri
TTL and Sr. Environmental Specialist
Environment and Natural Resources Global Practice
The World Bank

Information Sharing Session with IP Groups		
Wednesday, March 25, 2015, 9am-12pm, Punta Gorda, Toledo		
MLA/TAA	Cristina Coc	
IPLP Program U of A	Dr. Jide James	
San Marcos	John Chun	
TAA	Victor Cho	
TAA	Regino Hernandez	
TAA	Juanita Ical	
Alcalde	Thomas Bo	
Alcalde	Alfonso Cal	
MLA/TAA	Pablo Mis	
MLA	Francisco Ack	
Alcalde	Rudolfo Oh	
MLA	Martin Chen	
Information Sharing Session with General Stakeholders		
Wednesday, March 25, 2015, 12pm-3pm, Punta Gorda, Toledo		
SHI-Belize	Nana Monsah	
Satiim	Martin Chen	
Mayan Mountain Cacao	Lee Stroman	
Mayan Mountain Cacao	Peter Sacco	
Technical Meeting on the REDD+ and R-PP		
Thursday, March 26, 2015, 9am-11am at Beltraide, Belize City		
Ministry of Trade Investment Promotion Private Sector Development and Consumer Protection	Michael Singh	Chief Executive Officer
Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (Beltraide)	Melanie Gildeon	General Manager, Enterprise and Innovation Division
Information Sharing Session with General Stakeholders		
Thursday, March 26, 2015, 9am-12pm at George Price Centre, Belmopan		
Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development	Wilber Sabido	Chief Forest Officer, Forest Department
Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development	Marcelo Klindsor	Deputy Chief Forest Officer, Forest Department
Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development	David Perera	REDD Focal Point, Forest Department
Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development	Wiezsmann Pat	Director, Sustainable Development
University of Belize	Jair Valladarez	
KT Enterprises	Kenton Reimer	
Toledo Development Corp.	Mario Chavaria	
APAMO	Marvin Unsonez	
APAMO	Jose Perez	
Friends for Conservation and Development (FCD)	Rafael Manzanero	

Annex 2: Field Visit – Punta Gorda in Toledo District

An information sharing session was held with 16 alcaldes of the Toledo Alcaldes Association (TAA), which represents the 39 Mayan communities in the Toledo District. The representatives indicated that they appreciated the space created to directly discuss the R-PP with the Bank. They confirmed their motivation and willingness to be involved in the REDD+ activities. An update regarding the status of the R-PP was provided by the Forest Department (FD). The TAA then provided the Mission with a summary of their comments related to the final version of the R-PP as highlighted below:

-Consultation: The TAA/MLA congratulated the FD for the consultations undertaken as part of the REDD process. However, they noted that a follow up meeting to discuss how their issues and concerns were addressed in the final R-PP should have happened before the R-PP was finalized. The TAA/MLA has developed a Consultation Framework document (June 24, 2014) which should be followed as part of the consultation process (the two-page consultation protocol originally created pertained only to the 3 consultations undertaken by the Government during the preparation of the R-PP). The Mission recommended that the TAA/MLA send the Consultation Framework to the Bank so that it can be shared with other project teams and the Regional Safeguards Advisor. The Bank will review the Consultation Framework and discuss how it might be used during project preparation and as part of the Consultation Plan that will be prepared under the Readiness Grant.

-Logging within Toledo district: Toledo is a hotspot for deforestation, and there is significant illegal logging happening. They do not feel that this risk has been adequately addressed in the R-PP. Leaders also raised the issue of their forest rights (licenses) and recommended that the regulations be reviewed and clarified. The Bank recommends that this issue be included as part of the SESA.

-IP REDD+ roundtable: The TAA/MLA expressed their concern that there is still no indigenous representation in the Belize National Climate Change Committee (BNCCC). They also raised some concerns regarding the constitution and TOR of the IP REDD+ Roundtable that is outlined in the R-PP. The Bank recommends that the TAA/MLA prepare a draft TOR of the IP REDD+ Roundtable and consult with their constituencies in order to begin the selection process of the members of the Roundtable. The Roundtable should be established prior to the signing of the Grant Agreement.

-Indigenous land rights: The mission was provided some background and an update regarding the struggle for recognition of Maya land rights. The Caribbean Court of Justice will hold a hearing on April 23, 2015.

During the meeting, it was agreed that Mr. Pablo Mis of the MLA will be the main point of contact for the Toledo Mayan communities. The TAA/MLA will inform the Forest Department and the Bank how they would like to be involved in the preparation and implementation of the FCPF grant by mid-April.