

Intervention in respect to the Amerindian Peoples Association's letter on the Guyana Early Idea Note by the IPs Observer to the Carbon Fund Mr. Daniel ole Sapit, Paris, France during the CF12 on the 30th April 2015.

Thank you Chair for the opportunity to make this intervention.

Thank you James for the presentation and appreciate the obvious work that went into preparing the presentation. We appreciate the recognition of the significant role that IPs and their Organizations can and are willing to play to ensure the success of the process.

However;

I would like to bring to the attention of the CFPs that an IPs organization has officially written to the CFPs through the FMT to raise pertinent issues on the EIN that just been presented by Guyana, and this letter is posted on the website as well as the response by the Guyana Forestry Commission. The organization also reached out to me as the IPs Observer to raise these concerns during the CF12.

The concerns generally revolve around the issue of participation and consultation of the Amerindian peoples in the Readiness process and there is a claim of the lack of a Communication and Outreach Plan and Strategy and they question the stakeholder engagement referred to in the EIN given the lack of the plan and strategy.

There is mention of poor quality translated information to the Indigenous Peoples languages if it gets done, majorly influencing information flow.

A serious deficiency in the GFC outreach has been criticized as lacking in meaningful discussions on the potential impacts and risks of a national REDD scheme on Indigenous Peoples livelihoods. Despite early assurance from the government that traditional farming will not be restricted, more recent statements in the Low Carbon Development Strategy meetings are reported to indicate that customary farming systems may be classified as deforestation or degradation in the national system of forest monitoring.

There are specific questions on the dissemination of the Low Carbon Development Strategy to the Indigenous Peoples and there is reported no effort to inform them on pertinent issues including key activities like the Forest Carbon Sampling and the National Forest Monitoring System.

The other issues raised include the disenfranchisement that will be occasioned by the Opt-in Mechanism given the lack of knowledge on the mechanism, lack of a FPIC process ingrained in the mechanism and the availability of the mechanism for application.

On the SESA, it is stated that the process has not started and the benefits from that process are lacking in the formulation of the EIN. The Feedback and Grievance Mechanism has not been finalized and the Readiness Package refers to the Amerindian Act whose only recourse is the long winded court processes that have never delivered justice for the Amerindian people.

In summary the IPs of Guyana request the CFPs to ensure that the Guyana government;

1. Institutes a transparent and inclusive engagement strategy that is effective and non-divisive.
2. The question of carbon rights needs to be ventilated at the national level and clearly reflected in the ER-PIN if and when developed.
3. Tackle long standing land issues of the Amerindian peoples as the status of the customary forest lands remain unsettled and communities suffer land tenure insecurity as they lack legal title and formal recognition. These community forests are reportedly vulnerable to expropriation by mining and logging interests and potentially also investor and companies seeking to make REDD investments.

They strongly contend that these key issues need to be resolved, otherwise Guyana would not be considered to have a genuine REDD readiness in place.

Thank You.