

FIELD TRIP REPORT – IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DUE DILIGENCE MISSION ON THE FOREST CARBON PARTNERSHIP FACILITY (FCPF)

Guyana – October 07 - 09, 2009

1. Introduction

From the 7th to the 9th of October, a team comprised of representatives from the Government of Guyana, civil society, and donors visited Regions 7 and 9, and met with Amerindian communities in Fair View (Kurupukari) at Iwokrama (Region 9), Nappi (Nappi, Moco-Moco, Parishara, Aishalton, Haiwa, St. Ignatius from Region 9) and Kamarang (Warramadong, Chinoweing, Kaikan, Arau, Kako, Kamarang, Jawalla, Warawatta, and Paruima from Region 7). The team also visited the Iwokrama International Research Centre and the FSC certified forest operation at Iwokrama.

The team was led by the Honourable Pauline Campbell-Sukhai, Minister of Amerindian Affairs; James Singh, Guyana's Forestry Commissioner; and Yvonne Pearson, Chair of the National Toshihaos' Council. It included representatives of the Guyana REDD Secretariat, the World Bank, the United States and the United Kingdom (two main FCPF contributors), the Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana, the National Amerindian Development Foundation, the Amerindian Peoples Association, the Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples, Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, Iwokrama, and the two national LCDS monitors from the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED).

This field trip financed by the FCPF and the UK was part of the World Bank due diligence process undertaken by the World Bank following the June Participants Committee of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility with a view of allocating an FCPF Preparation Grant to support Guyana's REDD preparation phase. The FCPF is a global partnership involving 50 donor and forest countries. It is administered by the World Bank, with the USA and the UK being two main contributors. The due diligence process is meant to ensure that there is compliance with the social, environmental and fiduciary safeguards of the World Bank; also that at the onset key issues relevant to REDD preparation, are identified and a process is in place to address them during the REDD preparation phase.

The mission set out to explain the FCPF and its priority areas, and the way in which it functions. Communities were invited to express their concerns and to explain their issues in order that they may be taken into account and addressed in the preparation phase.

The discussions were very frank and informative at each meeting. Discussions covered a range of issues related to climate change, the upcoming Copenhagen meeting, Guyana's participation in the FCPF, and issues around communities' rights and participation, legislation, land tenure, communication, World Bank safeguards, cross sectoral aspects, and synergies between REDD and LCDS. The team listened to the comments, questions, queries and suggestions, and provided responses, clarifications and comments.

Minutes of these meetings will be shared with the communities, and their feedback incorporated as relevant to the field trip. The mission report would feed into the Assessment

Note to be submitted to the management of the World Bank and the FCPF Participants Committee, and would also be shared with other relevant stakeholders.

2. Highlights of the discussions with communities/other visits

2.1 General

- Communities expressed their appreciation to the visiting team, noted the value of meeting with such a diverse team and looked forward to feed back on the discussions in a timely manner.
- Clarifying the inter relationship and synergy between the REDD and LCDS programmes was seen as imperative by the communities and by the mission team.

2.2 Visits at Iwokrama/Fair View

- At the Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development, the team was given a presentation on the history of the centre, and an overview of the eco-tourism, research, and forest management operations, and the collaborative arrangements with the communities especially that of FairView.
- At Fair View, the team had a meeting with the Vice Toshao, and some other community members including councillors and health workers. They expressed satisfaction with the collaborative and benefits sharing relationship with Iwokrama. The team also met the Toshao at the end of the meeting.
- The Fair View Community has progressed from a stakeholder relationship with Iwokrama to a shareholder relationship, achieved through a process of collaboration and continuous capacity building that strengthened the community as it clarified and enhanced the relationship with the Centre.
- The community seems to be well integrated into the management of the Iwokrama forest, the level of trust seems to be high, and the community seems to be appropriately informed in order to make decisions. In this sense the community appears more advanced than many other communities when it comes to the issue of benefit sharing and ownership issues.
- The arrangements between Iwokrama and Fair View appear to represent innovation, collaboration and good practice; it is founded on multiple activities and joint endeavours, the sustainable management of the site and the community lands the educational development and training of youth, forest certification, benefit sharing, and a shared long term vision.

2.3 Visit at Nappi

- The communities welcomed the mission team, and mentioned that it was the first time that such a large, diverse team has engaged them.
- One of the main concerns they raised is whether traditional practices would be allowed under the REDD and LCDS, and it was clarified that subsistence activities (such as rotational agriculture and fishing) would not be affected, although commercial forest management activities would need to comply with sustainable practices. It was stressed that REDD aims at improving livelihoods.

- The main issue raised was the issue of their land extension, noting that the savannah lands were too dry for the planting of crops and that extension lands were near to the mountains and would be better for agriculture.
- The general consensus amongst the communities was to support the REDD process provided that mechanisms to address the issues of land are put in place and agreed to by the communities and the state. They would like the Government to commit to resolving the land issue within a specified time-line and for the process to be overseen by an oversight committee which would include members of civil society, the community itself and the Government.
- Although the communities indicated overall support with respect to REDD and the LCDS, they expressed reservations and other uncertainties, including the anticipated benefits, the situation around traditional practices, the roles of NGO's, the Government, and the World Bank. They requested more information from the team and asked that all the material be simplified and more user friendly.
- The people were more comfortable using their own language, and it was realised that translation from Makushi to English and vice versa was essential for good communication.
- Communities expressed the view that they would like to be integrally involved in deciding what is allowable under REDD and the LCDS, to be better informed, to be a part of the solution, to express their views, and to know how they can cooperate.
- Communities expressed concerns about benefits accruing from this new initiative of the Government, in relation to the unrealized benefits from the Protected Area process. They questioned whether the REDD initiative was different from or is a replacement of the Protected Area process.
- They also indicated that they would like to see the Nappi road rehabilitated, and progress on the potential Jardine Falls hydro power to increase local employment. They appealed to the World Bank to supply farm machinery.

2.4 Visit at Kamarang

- The communities greeted the visiting team, and noted that the diversity of the representatives was new and was a welcome difference to the usual teams that visited.
- The Communities that were assembled at the Kamarang meeting seemed well prepared for the meeting, and well coordinated and organised. They expressed forceful and uniform positions especially with regard to the land issue.
- The long standing issue of their request for further lands, a matter they noted that has been in the courts for 11 years (extension of land boundary sought to include traditional land) was a serious deterrent to forward action and programming by the community. A history of the situation was presented by the Toshao of Paruima, who mentioned that the six communities tried different options and were unsuccessful in resolving the issue. The view was expressed that they would be willing to participate and negotiate in the REDD process only on the condition that their land issues will be resolved.
- The view was expressed repeatedly that recent consultations on LCDS were not conducted well because only one copy of documents was given to the Toshaos close to the meeting date, and the time to read and understand and discuss with the communities was inadequate.
- Communities stressed that this present meeting on REDD and FCPF did not meet good standards on consultations and many community members were in possession of

a guide book on methodologies for consultation with the World Bank. It was clarified that indeed this meeting was not to be seen a consultation, that this field trip is part of a pre-preparation phase (preceding the allocation of a preparation grant), and that there would be a readiness preparation phase to allow for detailed consultations in the future.

- Communities stressed that, even before full REDD consultations start, there is a need for further information-sharing and awareness-raising on REDD, to enable them to fully participate in future consultations. They stressed that they want to be involved in conducting such information and awareness activities. In addition, they stated that only the positive impacts of LCDS and REDD were mentioned and that they also wished to be given information on any negative impacts and risks since they believed that there would always be negative impacts in any strategy and they preferred to be given those upfront. They were critical of mining impacts that affected water quality and the fish both of which were essential to their livelihoods and well being.
- The view was also expressed that aspects of the Amerindian Act should be revisited.
- The speakers noted that they found the many acronyms and programmes confusing, and would like to know the interrelationship between these various projects/programmes. There was a clear request for more timely and thorough information so that they could make informed decisions and urged that this should be the standard for the future. There was a commitment to ensure that these requests would be met by the team.
- They pointed out errors in the draft RPP and the GFC committed to correcting them.

3. Main messages conveyed by the team

During the meetings, members of the team coming from different perspectives and institutions (government, civil society, donors) also shared with the communities their respective views and roles with regard to Guyana's REDD process. These can be summarized as follows:

- The Readiness Preparation Proposal (RPP) being submitted by Guyana to the FCPF represents an early stage in the REDD process. It outlines the studies, consultations and other activities that the Government intends to carry out as part of the REDD preparation phase, during which REDD strategies and mechanisms would be developed through a participatory approach, including fully-informed consultations and active community participation. One of the principles that the Government intends to follow is the free prior and informed consent of Amerindian communities with regard to their lands.
- The role of REDD in a future global agreement on climate change, and the rules for implementing REDD, are yet to be defined as this is a work in progress. The Copenhagen meeting, and further international discussions, will be important in that regard. At this stage, it seems wise for Guyana to engage in a REDD preparation process, so as to be ready and take advantage of this new socio-economic development opportunity should the REDD system materialize.
- REDD like any new development initiative entails risks, and these need to be carefully discussed, analyzed, and managed. Therefore, extensive consultations will be carried out during the preparation phase, and relevant World Bank safeguard policies will be triggered to avoid, minimize and mitigate these risks. In addition, it is recognized that important issues such as land tenure, benefit-sharing, community

participation, and cross-sectoral coordination, need to be identified from the start, and that a process needs to be in place to address them during the preparation phase.

4. Suggestions for next steps

Based on information gathered during the mission, the team agreed that it could suggest certain actions before and during the forthcoming Readiness Preparation phase. The team agreed such actions may need to be added to or revised in the future to meet any unforeseen circumstances and in response to any new issues.

- Iwokrama could be a useful reference given their history for community participation, training and capacity building activities, research and science, sustainable forest management and certification, community management plans and benefit sharing. It is also mentioned that another community initiative which would be useful is the Pineapple production at Mainstay, Region 2.
- During the preparation phase, consultation will need to be meaningful, effective, and an adequate budget should be provided through the FCPF Preparation Grant.
- The mechanism for sharing the potential benefits under REDD will have to be clearly and fully consulted upon and discussed between all parties including the Government, communities and other stakeholders. Monitoring arrangements for revenue sharing need to be agreed upon.
- Addressing those land related issues as raised in a mutually satisfactory manner should be a top priority during the REDD preparation phase. As Guyana moves into this preparation phase, a mutually agreed process to achieve a way forward should be put in place.
- Although the proposed RPP has been posted on the web, it is critical to actively gather input from key stakeholders into the final version so as to ensure a collective, shared vision while moving into the preparation phase. The same is true for the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA).
- Even before full consultation commences, there is a need for further and prompt awareness raising and information sharing on REDD, the FCPF, and information on the application of the World Bank safeguards with respect to REDD and FCPF. Such early awareness activities would assist in increasing awareness, ownership, transparency, inclusiveness and assist in the building of a more trusting relationship. Such information and awareness activities can also assist in the building of capacity in communities so that they can input into decisions about alternative livelihoods, and in the definition of new economic opportunities. There is need for more than one means of information sharing to clearly explain the linkages and differences between REDD and the LCDS which are crucial. This will require carefully crafted information materials, including visual aids and flow charts. The potential positive and negative impacts of the REDD and LCDS need to be fully explained too, with suitable caveats, given the uncertainty concerning the processes and future visibility of funding.
- In support thereof, the proposed US \$200,000 “formulation grant” under FCPF should proceed as soon as possible with an emphasis on information sharing and the active involvement of the National Toshias' Council.

- Capacity building should be continuously supported, including at the community and institutional level. For example, it would be useful to have a “community support network” with the support of the National Toshaos’ Council and their communities as a whole to address issues faced by all relevant communities on the ground.
- Next steps should ensure the inclusion of the views of other groups that use the forests, including the mining and forest operators, small, medium and large scale.
- The final RPP should have the clear endorsement of all relevant governmental agencies, considering that high-level and multi-sector decisions may well be needed to ensure a harmonized legal and institutional framework necessary for the successful implementation of REDD and LCDS. The final RPP should also include a mapping of current land uses (forests, mining, community lands, etc.).
- Given that the RPP needs to provide clarity on where Guyana should be at the end of the Readiness Phase, it will be important to have mid-phase indicators to help monitor and guide the process with respect to key issues.
- There is a need for harmonization of all projects and initiatives related to climate change related to the LCDS and REDD.
- Considering the synergy experienced by the mission team and the positive response from the communities, it is suggested to have similar teams and field trips in the future.

Reviewed and agreed by the members of the field team on October 12 and 13, 2009.

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