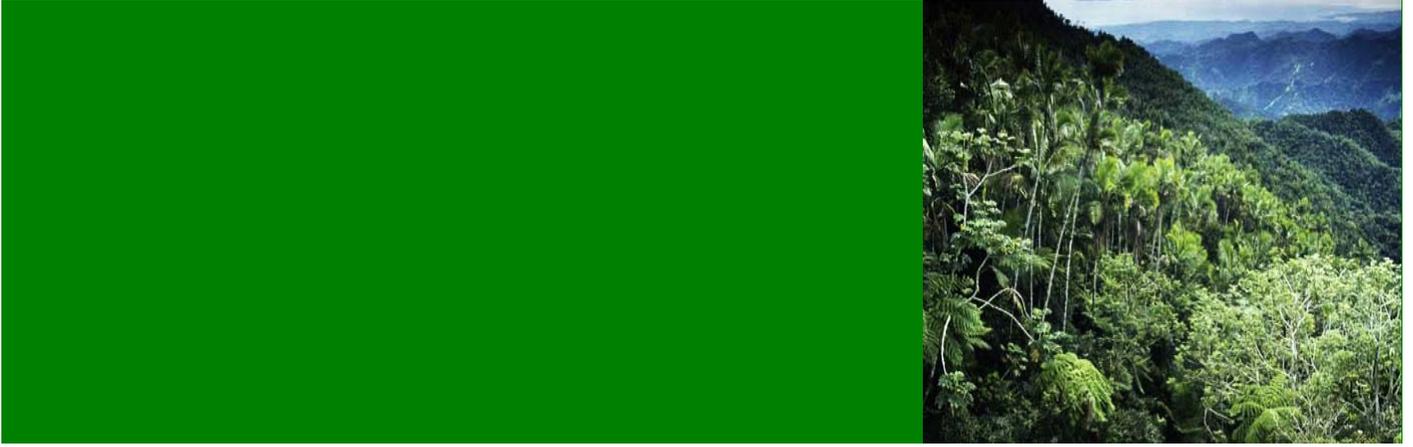


WORKING DRAFT



Guyana's REDD+ Governance Development Plan

June 2011 | **Office of the President
Republic of Guyana**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy

Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) is a long-term development strategy that sets out Guyana's vision for sustainable, climate-resilient, low-carbon development. There are three pillars to the strategy:

- **Avoiding Deforestation**
If an adequate UNFCCC (or interim, or bilateral) REDD-plus mechanism is created, Guyana can avoid cumulative forest-based emissions of over 1.5 gigatons of CO₂e by 2020 that would have been produced by an otherwise economically rational path.
- **Low Carbon Development**
REDD-plus payments can enable Guyana's economy to be realigned onto a low carbon development trajectory. Guyana can generate economic growth at or in excess of projected Latin American growth rates over the coming decade, while simultaneously eliminating approximately 30 percent of non-forestry emissions through the use of clean energy.
- **Adapting to Climate Change**
REDD payments can play a part in enabling Guyana's people and productive land to be protected from changing weather patterns. Investments in priority climate adaptation infrastructure can reduce the 1 percent of current GDP which is estimated to be lost each year as a result of flooding.

Underpinning the strategy are overall objectives of broad-based poverty reduction, inclusive national multi-stakeholder participation, applying social and environmental safeguards in accordance with international standards, and protecting the rights of Amerindians in accordance with the principles of free, prior and informed consent.

1.2 Guyana's REDD+ Initiatives

Guyana has garnered much support for REDD+ activities and has undertaken several initiatives to support REDD Plus activities.

International Negotiations

At the level of international lobby and negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Guyana, along with likeminded countries, has been successful in broadening the scope of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) in the framework of a post-Kyoto mechanism, to include forest conservation and sustainable forest management.

The COP 15 UNFCCC Conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009 concluded with the "Copenhagen Accord". This Accord highlights the importance of creating incentives for reducing emissions for deforestation and degradation and for conserving forest stocks. REDD+ therefore has been recognised as a mechanism for mitigating climate change and funds have also been committed. The subsequent COP held in Cancun, Mexico in 2010 saw a landmark REDD Plus decision that now allows for positive incentives for those countries with high forest cover and low deforestation rates (HFLD countries). The Cancun decision also set in train a process for modalities for MRV, reference levels to be further discussed by the SBSTA, and for negotiations on red plus financing options to be continue in 2011.

Avoided Deforestation Model

Guyana's Avoided Deforestation Model, prepared with assistance from the McKinsey Group, and launched on December 5, 2008 was the first of its kind, as it attempted to estimate the economic value of forest if left standing and to assess this in the context of opportunity cost at a national scale.

Readiness Preparation Proposal (RPP)

In March, 2008 Guyana submitted its Readiness Plan Idea Note (RPIN) to World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and this was approved in June 2008. In September 2009, after several revisions, the FCPF approved Guyana's Readiness Plan, subsequently renamed "Readiness Preparation Proposal." Guyana is the first country to have received approval of the RPIN and RPP. It is currently at the forefront of REDD+ planning and implementation.

Subsequent to the release of the April 2010 version of the RPP, a number of comments were received, both from local and international groups. These were incorporated into the document. In November 2010, an invitation was sent to the Government of Guyana, extending to Guyana, the opportunity for it to be one of five pilot countries to explore the option of using a Multiple Delivery Partner (MDP) under the Readiness Fund of the FCPF. Along with Guyana, the other approved pilot countries are proposed Cambodia, Panama, Paraguay and Peru.

The Participants' Committee (PC) of the FCPF has accepted the three regional multilateral development banks, namely the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the three UN-REDD agencies, namely the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as potential Delivery Partners alongside the World Bank. Guyana proposed the IDB as its MDP. The revised version of Guyana's RPP which would have integrated the comments from the April 2010 version is now with the IDB expert review team. Following the conclusion of the IDB's review, there is envisaged to be a further revision of the RPP to arrive at a final version. This version will be available to the public.

A Working Group was established and included designated representatives of the PC members, Carbon Fund Participants and Observers, and designated representatives of potential Other Delivery Partners such as multilateral development banks and UN agencies. This Group has been looking at the issues related to the development of a common approach that includes principles, standards, processes and criteria on social and environmental safeguards, procurement, and financial management. The activities of the Working Group are currently ongoing and the Group is expected to convey its final report on a Common Approach to the PC at PC9, which will take place on 20-21 June 2011 in Oslo, Norway.

Participation in the IWG-IFR

Guyana joined 34 other countries in the Informal Working Group on Interim Financing for REDD+ (IWG-IFR), convened by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in April 2009. The group made proposals on how to achieve a 25% reduction in global deforestation rates by 2015 at a cost of between €15 and €25 billion.

1.3 Payments for Forest Climate Services

Implementation of Guyana's LCDS will be funded in part through REDD-plus payments (referred to in the LCDS as "payments for forest climate services"), which are payments for forest carbon abatement achieved by Guyana.

The precise nature of the REDD-plus mechanism will be guided by the outcome of the UNFCCC negotiations. The position of the Government of Guyana is that this should be decided within a legally

binding global climate treaty to be concluded within the UNFCCC, recognizing that it is uncertain at this time when such a global agreement will occur.

Pending the creation of a UNFCCC REDD-plus mechanism, in the short term (up until end-2015), Guyana aims to participate in a REDD-plus mechanism along the lines set out in the report for the Informal Working Group on Interim Financing for REDD-plus (IWG-IFR). The report proposed the establishment of interim performance-based payments with the goal of achieving a global reduction in deforestation of 50% by 2020. Guyana has also associated itself with the Copenhagen Accord, and its provisions for fast start funding for REDD-plus. However, the disbursement of these funds has been extremely slow, and even the new and additional nature of those which have been disbursed is highly questionable. The rate at which developing countries like Guyana can respond to the REDD challenge is therefore severely curtailed by the disbursement rate of funds pledged by developed countries.

Pending the operationalisation of Interim Financing and of a Fast Start Fund for REDD-plus, Guyana aims to pursue bilateral arrangements through which REDD-plus payments will be generated. The first of these, with the Government of Norway, has been concluded and its details are set out in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Governments of Guyana and Norway on November 9, 2009 [see Appendix I of the LCDS]. These bilaterals will be subsumed into whatever multilateral mechanisms (such as the Interim Financing) are agreed in the coming years.

1.4 The Guyana – Norway Agreement

On February 3, 2009, the President of Guyana, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, and the Prime Minister of Norway, Mr. Jens Stoltenberg issued a Joint Statement on cooperation on climate and forest issues which commits the two countries to work to ensure the establishment of a REDD mechanism under UNFCCC post-2012 climate change agreement.

On November 9th, 2009, the Governments of Guyana and Norway signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) where Norway committed to providing financial support of up to US\$250 million by 2015 for results achieved by Guyana in limiting emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

The objective of the MoU is to foster partnership between Guyana and Norway on issues of climate change, biodiversity and sustainable low carbon development. Of particular importance is the establishment of a comprehensive political and policy dialogue on these issues, and close cooperation regarding Guyana's REDD-plus efforts, including the establishment of a framework for result-based Norwegian financial support to Guyana's REDD-plus efforts.

The Governments of Norway and Guyana, in the framework of the MoU, signed a Joint Concept Note (JCN) which constitutes the structure that takes the cooperation forward.

The level of support that Guyana will receive will depend on the country's delivery of results as measured against two sets of indicators: Indicators of Enabling Activities and REDD-plus Performance Indicators. While the latter indicator is to be measured through the MRV System being established, the former requires that Guyana carry out all REDD+ activities respecting social and environmental safeguards agreed upon in the MoU. As was stated within the JCN, "*.. Guyana's LCDS Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee and other arrangements to ensure systematic and transparent multi-stakeholder consultations will continue and evolve, and enable the participation of all affected and interested stakeholders at all stages of the REDD-plus/LCDS process; protect the rights of indigenous peoples; ensure environmental integrity and protect biodiversity; ensure continual improvements in forest governance; and provide transparent, accountable oversight and governance of the financial support received*".

The JCN provided guidance on key areas for the development of a REDD+ Governance Plan as the framework to improve REDD+ governance and the revised JCN of March 31st 2011, makes provisions for the continued updating and improvement of the REDD+ Governance Plan.

2 THE REDD+ GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Background

The outline of the REDD+ Governance Development Plan (Annex A) was prepared in December 2009 in accordance with the guidelines from the JCN by a Technical Team coordinated by the Office of Climate Change and included the Guyana Forestry Commission, Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, Environmental Protection Agency and Ministry of Amerindian Affairs.

This outline served as the guiding framework for the drafting of the REDD+ Governance Plan which was produced in October 2010. The draft REDD+ Governance Plan indicated key activities to be carried out, time-frame for implementation and lead agencies responsible for each of these. The Table below provides an updated outline as of June 2011.

OUTLINE OF THE REDD+ GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN – June 2011			
Outline of Planned Initiatives			
<u>Activities</u>	<u>Proposed Timeframe</u>	<u>Link to RPP/LCDS/CIFOR Study</u>	<u>Coordinating Agency</u>
1. Review National Forest Policy Statement (1997)	January 2010 - September 2011	LCDS	Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)
2. Review National Forest Plan (2001)	January 2010 - September 2011	LCDS	GFC
3. Revise National Forest Policy Statement (1997)	January 2010 - September 2011	LCDS	GFC
4. Revise National Forest Plan (2001)	January 2010 - September 2011	LCDS	GFC
5. Design new revenue structure	January 2010 - December 2011	CIFOR Recommendation	GFC
6. Implement new Revenue Structure	June 2012 - ongoing	CIFOR Recommendation	GFC
7. Develop Code of Practice for Processing Operations	January 2010 - November 2011	pg 19 of RPP	GFC
8. Finalize Code of Practice for NTFPs	January 2010 - September 2011	pg 37 of RPP, CIFOR Recommendation	GFC
9. Review and Update Code of Practice for Harvesting Operations	January 2010 - September 2011		GFC
10. Implementation of the Legality Assurance System	January 2010 - June 2012	pg 19 of RPP, pgs 23-24 of LCDS	GFC
11. Extend community forest activities to additional forest based communities - includes training in SFM implementation, formation of community associations and training in decision making and forest management	September 2009 - ongoing	pgs 19, 58 and 59 of RPP, CIFOR Recommendation	GFC
12. Strengthen forest law enforcement and institutional capacity of GFC and the REDD Secretariat, and provide training in new forest law to stakeholders.	October 2009 - ongoing	pgs 19, 37, 45 and 58 of the RPP	GFC
13. Enhance GFC's monitoring capability and SFM practices implementation	October 2009 - ongoing	CIFOR Recommendation	GFC
14. Assessment of stocking of Small Concession to inform future possible renewal.	September 2009 - ongoing	CIFOR Recommendation	GFC
15. Continue harmonization of policies, legislation of land use and other relevant agencies	January 2010 - December 2011	LCDS	OCC
16. Identify lead and support agencies for specific REDD+ activities	January 2010 - March 2010	LCDS and RPP	Office of Climate Change (OCC)
17. Ensure that training/capacity building is provided to these agencies	February 2010 - ongoing	LCDS and Component 5 of RPP	OCC
18. Ensure that agencies are equipped with resources to undertake designated activities	March 2010 - ongoing	LCDS and RPP Components 5 and 8	OCC
19. Development of a System for Reporting on Multiple benefits of REDD+	March 2010 - ongoing	OCC	OCC
20. Establishment of criteria for identifying priority areas for Biodiversity within Guyana's Forest	March 2010	LCDS	EPA
21. Development of Multi-Year Plan to continue the process of titling, demarcation and extensions of Amerindian lands	March 2010 - ongoing	LCDS	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
22. Development of a Mechanism for distribution of REDD+ funds as set out in LCDS	February 2010 - ongoing	LCDS	Ministry of Finance
23. Publicize all relevant information on REDD+ and LCDS efforts including information on funding	February 2010 - ongoing	LCDS	OCC

Table 1: Outline of Guyana's REDD+ Governance Development Plan

The REDD+ Governance Development Plan preparation benefited from the existing system of forest governance as defined by Guyana's forest policies, legislation, current initiatives including the RPP, and independent studies such as the assessment of forest governance and logging practices in Guyana, as performed by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

This June 2011 version of the REDD+ Governance Development Plan provides updates from the previous version and it includes progress made on improving forest governance during 2009 and 2010. Further updates and revisions to the REDD+ Governance Development Plan will also include the following:

- Progress on the development of the MRV System in accordance with the MRV Roadmap established in 2009
- The establishing of an Independent Forest Monitoring Mechanism
- The European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Government and Trade (EU-FLEGT) process
- The work of the Special Land Use Committee in the development of a national, inter-sectoral system for coordinated land use
- The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) process
- Guyana's progress in meeting its obligation under the UN Convention on Biodiversity

The following is a description and update on each of the Sections identified in Table 1.

2.1 Review National Forest Policy Statement (NFPS) (January 2010 to September 2011)

The **National Forest Policy Statement** was in place from 1997. It was developed over a period of two years, through a process of broad consultation with sector interest groups. Cabinet formally approved the Policy in October 1997. The Policy recognizes changes in Guyana's economic, social and political environment over the nearly 50 years since the previous forest policy was published. Increased attention was given to environmental aspects and to the importance of forest management in national development. International initiatives including the decisions taken at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 were recognized. The 1997 Policy marked a significant shift in emphasis from the development of the timber potential of the forests to management of the forests multiple goods and services for the national benefit.

The overall objective of the current National Forest Policy is the conservation, protection, management and utilization of the nation's forest resources, while ensuring that the productive capacity of the forests for both goods and services is maintained or enhanced. The specific objectives are to:

- a) promote the sustainable and efficient forest activities which utilize the broad range of forest resources and contribute to national development while allowing fair returns to local and foreign entrepreneurs and investors;
- b) achieve improved sustainable forest resource yields while ensuring the conservation of ecosystems, biodiversity, and the environment;
- c) ensure watershed protection and rehabilitation: prevent and arrest the erosion of soils and the degradation of forests, grazing lands, soil and water; promote natural regeneration, afforestation and reforestation; and protect the forest against fire, pests and other hazards.

In 2009-2010, the review of the NFPS has commenced with an aim to reflect changes, both in terms of the development over the past 14 years, as well as in the plans for future development of the sector. The process was undertaken as follows:

1. Dissemination of copies of the Policy to stakeholders
2. A national process of consultation and stakeholder engagement at various levels, initiated directly by the Guyana Forestry Commission and other undertaken by various groups to

- solicit comments within associations/groups/agencies on the Policy. In addition to direct engagement, an open invitation was made for comments to be submitted by both external and local stakeholders, within a clearly defined timeline.
3. Identification of key areas that revisions are needed.
 4. Incorporation of changes and recommendations, along with a clear identification of recommendations for revisions has been addressed in the revision process.
 5. The dissemination of the Revised Policy to stakeholders.

A number of activities were carried out with the aim of reviewing the NFPS, with the Guyana Forestry Commission as leading Agency:

1. Detailed terms of reference were developed for the review and revision of the NFPS and National Forest Plan (NFP).
2. Two consultants/facilitators were contracted to lead the consultation, review and revision processes of the NFPS.
3. Consultation sessions were held with stakeholder groups including the Multi Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC), the National Toshias Council (NTC), Amerindian NGOs, private sector, loggers, miners, agriculturalists, GFC staff, International NGOs and environmental groups, academic institutions, GFC Board members, etc. Consultation sessions were held for over 6 weeks, covering Regions 1, 2, 4, 6 and 10. Stakeholders in other regions were engaged through other means, including industry bodies, and the NTC, and through written submissions.
4. Comments were made by several stakeholders including GFC, other Government agencies, NGOs and provided either directly or through the GFC to the consultants. Participants at the consultative sessions were also provided with opportunities to submit (additional) comments to the facilitators after the meetings via electronic mail, telephone or through the various forestry stations throughout the country.
5. The review process commenced with the consolidating of all comments made at stakeholder discussion sessions.

The review of the National Forest Plan and Policy Statement has advanced and the revised drafts are being finalised. During the process of revision, the GFC's Board of Directors was engaged in the process and was also given regular updates on progress. The next step will involve approval by the GFC's Board and by the Cabinet.

2.2 Review National Forest Plan (January 2010 to September 2011)

The draft National Forest Plan of 2001 provides the framework within which identified programmes and activities must be accomplished, to ensure effective implementation of the Policy and fulfilment of the provisions of the Forest law. The National Forest Plan also identifies responsibilities for implementation and describes mechanisms for monitoring and providing feedback to the policy and planning process. This Plan is in draft and was not formally approved by Cabinet.

The draft National Forest Plan is divided into ten programmes, which follow the key areas of action identified in the Forest Policy. Policy issues are discussed in the identified sections and objectives, programmes and activities are described. For each activity, indicators are defined that will be used to assess progress with implementation. The lead responsibility and key stakeholders that will contribute to and participate in implementation are identified.

Four approaches to implementation are outlined:

1. Internal action by the GFC, mainly implementation of legal responsibilities;
2. Institutional and inter-agency collaboration;
3. Collaborative partnerships with specific groups such as GFC with government agencies, FPA, NGOs etc.;

4. Broad participation by interest groups where multi-stakeholder involvement is required.

As in the case of the National Forest Policy, there have been a number of changes in the economic, legal, environmental and social context over the past 9 years. A revised finalised Plan is therefore needed to take these into account.

A similar approach is planned to be undertaken in the revision of the National Forest Plan as in the case of the National Forest Policy. The Guyana Forestry Commission has been identified as the lead agency for this initiative and will work in close collaboration with a representative multi stakeholder committee in coordinating this process of review and revision. The Plan is expected to examine all relevant areas of the forest sector including the existing areas that are outlined in the current draft such as resources management, forest industry, education and training and social development, as well as new and developing areas such as management of the multiple use functions of the forest, and identification of follow-on programmes to the accomplishment of initial activities, across previously identified thematic areas. Like in the case of the new Policy, the Plan will be expected to reflect all relevant aspects of economic, legal, social and environmental development of the sector in the context of existing and new policy, and strategic framework.

The Process that is being undertaken involve:

1. Dissemination of copies of the Plan to stakeholders
2. A national process of consultation and stakeholder engagement at various levels, initiated directly by the Guyana Forestry Commission and other undertaken by various groups to solicit comments within associations/groups/agencies on the Plan. In addition to direct engagement, an open invitation will be made for comments to be submitted by both external and local stakeholders, within a clearly defined timeline.
3. Identification of key areas that revisions are needed.
4. Incorporation of changes and recommendations, along with a clear identification of recommendations for revisions has been addressed in the revision process.
5. The dissemination of the Revised Plan to stakeholders.

The activities that will be completed, as per the deadline of the end of September 2011, are:

1. Detailed Terms of Reference developed for the review and revision of the National Forest Policy Statement (NFPS) and National Forest Plan (NFP).
2. Two consultants/facilitators contracted to lead the consultation, review and revision processes of the NFP.
3. Consultation sessions were held with stakeholder groups including the Multi Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC), the National Toshios Council (NTC), Amerindian NGOs, private sector – loggers, miners, agriculturalists, GFC staff, International NGOs and environmental groups, academic institutions, GFC Board members, etc. Consultation sessions were held for over 6 weeks, covering Regions 1, 2, 4, 6 and 10. Stakeholders in other regions were engaged through other means, including industry bodies, and the NTC, and through written submissions.
4. Comments were made by several stakeholders including GFC, other Government agencies, NGOs and provided either directly or through the GFC to the consultants. Participants at the consultative sessions were also provided with opportunities to submit (additional) comments to the facilitators after the meetings via electronic mail, telephone or through the various forestry stations throughout the country.
5. The review process commenced with the consolidating of all comments made at stakeholder discussion sessions.

2.3 Revise National Forest Policy Statement (January 2010 – September 2011)

The Guyana Forestry Commission has been identified as the lead agency for this initiative and has been working in close collaboration with a representative multi stakeholder committee in coordinating the process of review and revision. The Policy is expected to address all relevant aspects of economic, legal, social and environmental development of the sector in the context of existing and new policy and strategic framework. Some of the developments in the sector include significant advances in the legislative environment with the passing of the Guyana Forestry Commission Act as well as the Forest Act in the Parliament. Additionally, advances in the forest monitoring and management environment will also be taken into account, including areas such as the implementation of the Code of Practice of Harvesting Operation; the development and implementation of other key guidelines including the forest management and annual operation plan guidelines; implementation of the national log tracking system; and the expansion in scale and scope of field monitoring activities. Further, new initiatives undertaken by the GFC, in its mandate of managing the forest for multiple use, including carbon storage services, will require some focus on monitoring and managing deforestation and forest degradation through the Monitoring Reporting and Verification of forest carbon stock and other related work on REDD+ readiness preparedness activities; along with other initiatives and programmes.

The Process that is being undertaken involves:

1. Dissemination of copies of the 1997 Policy to stakeholders
2. A national process of consultation and engagement at various levels, initiated directly by the Guyana Forestry Commission and stakeholder groups, undertaken to solicit comments within associations/groups/agencies on the Policy. In addition to direct engagement, an open invitation will be made for comments to be submitted by both external and local stakeholders, within a clearly defined timeline.
3. Identification of key areas that revisions are needed.
4. Incorporation of changes and recommendations, along with a clear identification of recommendations for revisions has been addressed in the revision process.
5. The dissemination of the Revised Policy to stakeholders

The revised National Forest Policy Statement is expected to be succinct, user friendly, relevant for any group of stakeholders and truly reflective of the forest sector in the current environment. It is expected to fully embrace planned development in the forest sector and chart the course forward in the short, medium and long term.

The activities carried out so far are:

1. A Draft Report detailing recommendation from consultations sessions was submitted to the GFC.
2. Draft Report on consultation sessions was submitted to the GFC.
3. Review of Reports in 1 and 2 has commenced.

The review of the National Forest Plan and Policy Statement has advanced and the revised drafts are being finalised. During the process of revision, the GFC's Board of Directors was engaged in the process and was also given regular updates on progress. The next step will involve approval by the GFC's Board and by the Cabinet.

2.4 Revise National Forest Plan (January 2010 to September 2011)

The background information on the National Forest Plan is available under "Section 2" and the revision process is projected to be completed by September 2011. The Process has been led by the GFC and facilitation of consultation sessions is being done by an independent specialist. Revision of the document will be led by a Multi Stakeholder Team and the Facilitator.

The revised National Forest Plan is expected to be succinct, user friendly, relevant for any group of stakeholders and truly reflective of the forest sector in the current environment. Additionally, it is expected to give clear guidance on the initiatives that need to be undertaken to effectively implement the revised National Forest Policy Statement. The activities carried out so far have been:

1. A Draft Report detailing recommendation from consultations sessions was submitted to the GFC.
2. Draft Report on consultation sessions was submitted to the GFC.
3. Review of Reports in 1 and 2 has commenced.

It is expected that the Plan will be implemented over a 5 year period and reviewed following this period. The new Plan is expected to be available by end of 2011.

2.5 Design New Revenue Structure (January 2010 – December 2011)

The Forest Act 2009 in Section 80 addresses the charge of fees in relation to various aspects of forest activities. The proposed structure presents varying measures of charging fees and comparisons can be made to the Forest Act. These are different in some cases with regards to their focus and application. Some of the pertinent provisions made for the charge of revenue under the Act include:

- Area Management Fees
- Volume Charge on Forest Produce
- Administrative Fees
- Levies on Forest Produce
- User Fees
- Fines

A summary of the fees and charges adapted from *Hunter (2001)* and the Guyana Forestry Commission is presented below:

- **Royalty** – the charge made for a specific forest product removed from the forest;
- **Area Fee** – this a charge levied in proportion to the area of the concession;
- **Licenses** – these are charged for sawmills and other forms of processing activity;
- **Administrative Fees** – these relate to applications, inspections, and other services provided by the GFC;
- **Penalties** – fines and other charges levied for non-compliance of laws and GFC regulations;
- **Export Commission** – commission on export, computed on f.o.b. values of forest products.

One of the main requirements of the Forest Act is to design and implement a system of revenue charges that reflects the sustainable, optimal and mutually beneficial use of the forest that brings benefits to the State, private investors and end users of forest products.

Over the past three years, the Guyana Forestry Commission has been continuously engaged in analyzing various elements of the cost and revenue structures of forest operators, both at the small and medium/large scale. This information has been collated into a proposed revenue structure and addresses all activity areas involved in forest operations, as well as forest monitoring and regulation. Updating of these structures has continued into 2010 and will be used at this stage, to inform the final updating of the Revenue Structure Report.

The new revenue structure will revise the existing series of charges implemented to provide for the new system of charges under the Forest Act. Some of the key technical areas that will be addressed in the Revenue Structure Document are: establishment of the levels of various charges that will be instituted following an assessment process; framework for implementation of new revenue structure; capacity building for the GFC and the forest sector to effectively implement the new structure; and monitoring of new system to assess efficiency, effectiveness and compliance.

The new revenue system will be designed and implemented undertaking the following process:

1. Conduct review and assessment of current system of revenue charges
2. Develop the new structure of revenue charges
3. Conduct technical review of the draft new structure
4. Engage stakeholder in information dissemination and feedback session
5. Revise draft revenue structure based on feedback received
6. Development implementation schedule for revenue structure

The process of designing the draft revenue structure is expected to be completed by end of December 2011 and the process of implementation will be based on the schedule developed as part of the design process. The process is being led by the GFC. Technical oversight and coordination of the process of designing and implementing the new revenue structure will be given by the GFC's Board of Directors.

The new Revenue Structure, will be one that is easily and efficiently implementable by both the GFC and the forest sector; reflective of optimal and beneficial utilization of the forest resources; equitable; that takes into consideration relevant economic, legal, social environmental considerations of the sector; and one that encapsulates new and emerging areas of revenue and cost structures affecting Guyana's forest sector currently, and in the foreseeable future. The activities carried out so far have been:

1. Draft of the new Revenue Structure completed.
2. Process has commenced on updating cost elements within the revenue structure
3. The structure has been discussed at the GFC Board in August 2010

It is expected that the structure will be reviewed after a period of 10 years.

2.6 Implement New Revenue Structure (June 2021 - ongoing)

All the information on the Revenue Structure is available under "Section 5". A draft implementation structure has been developed.

2.7 Develop Code of Practice for Processing Operations (January 2010 – November 2011)

To effectively achieve sustainable forest management in Guyana, efforts have to be made at all levels of the production and utilization chain to enhance efficiency and sustainability. On the production side, the Guyana Forest Commission has in place a Code of Practice (CoP) for Harvesting Operations and a number of guidelines for sustainable forest management, including the Guidelines for Management and Annual Operational Plans. This approach has been successful in improving the level of sustainable forest management at the level of the concession. The processing level of the utilization chain requires that a similar approach be undertaken to enhance efficiency and the overall level of sustainable utilization. The full development of a forest products industry is directly linked to the implementation of an efficient set of standards and practices to guide and regulate the industry.

A Code of Practice for processing operations is needed for the sector. This code will provide a bridge between policy and implementation and will guide the industry in best practice for processing. The operations that the Code will address will be Sawmills, Lumber yards and Sawpits. Additionally, the processing sector's capacity to produce quality products will require support. This is seen as especially important as enhanced capacity building in the forest sector along the industry value chain will encourage more efficient economic and sustainable utilization of the forest resources, thereby reducing wastage, damage to the environment, whilst maximizing the market potential of Guyana's wood products.

The Code that will be developed is expected to build on the current standards that are being implemented that address general sawmill layout and operations. Additionally, the Code will be expected to link to the overall licensing process and GFC's existing monitoring framework for such operations. It is expected

that areas for improvement, both in terms of physical and human capacity to effectively implement the Code from the GFC and industry side, will be identified in this initiative. This will form the basis of future follow up work that will be undertaken.

The Process that is being undertaken is:

1. A national process of consultation and stakeholder engagement at various levels with key stakeholders: sawmills, lumberyards and sawpit operators. The main purpose of this process will be to determine key areas that are to be addressed under the CoP that are necessary and appropriate to bring about the required improvements in the sub sector.
2. First draft of the Code of Practice developed by the Technical Expert in consultation with the GFC and a Project Committee.
3. First draft of the CoP reviewed by the Project Committee.
4. A process of consultation organized, aimed at informing the revision of the draft Code.
5. Revision and finalization of the Code.
6. Development of implementation schedule and capacity building plan for the Code.

The process of development of the Code of Practice will be completed by November 2011.

This process will be organized and coordinated by the Guyana Forestry Commission with technical expertise secured from a Processing and Capacity Building Expert. The Project Committee comprises of: The GFC, Forest Products Association, Guyana Manufacturers and Services Association, and Forestry Training Centre Inc.

The Code of Practice for Processing Operation is expected to be a dynamic document that covers three key types of operators. It is expected to effectively address the driving force of the implementation of the Code, which is to improve the efficiency of the processing industry that impacts on standards, quality and consistency, and quantity of materials produced. The Code is also expected to allow for a balanced approach for achieving this objective, though addressing efficiency and quality standards; environmental and safety factors, as well as other relevant areas.

The activities carried out so far have been:

1. Terms of Reference for development of Code of Practice (CoP) have been completed.
2. Consultation activities have commenced to inform the review with the forest sector.
3. Development of initial sections has commenced and is under review by the GFC.

It is expected that the Code will be reviewed after a period of 5 years.

2.8 Finalize Code of Practice for NTFPs (January 2010 to September 2011)

Introduction

In recognizing the significance of non-timber forest products to Guyana's local economy and the need to capitalize on the multiple uses of our forest resources, the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) in 2001 embarked on a project to design a Code of Practice (CoP) for the harvesting of Kufa and Nibbi. The CoP was developed with the aim of promoting sustainable harvesting of Kufa and Nibbi to maintain the resource base so that the future generation will benefit.

Additionally, the GFC recognizes that this resource is one of the major sources of income to rural communities especially in Pomeroon and to a lesser extent the North West District of Guyana.

In Guyana, Nibbi, *Hetropisis flexuosa* and Kufa, *C. grandiflora* are patchily distributed in mixed forest but are generally absent from swamp and secondary forest.

In 2001, the Guyana Forestry Commission conducted a series of workshops on the draft Code of Practice within Pomeroon, North West and Georgetown with all stakeholders. The responses were analysed from the workshops and the draft document was updated to accommodate responses from the stakeholders. Upon amending the document, the new draft CoP was circulated to all the technical stakeholders, including the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs and Conservation International.

Further, in 2003, sample plots were established and geo-referenced to obtain scientific information to evaluate growth rates, development and regeneration of Kufa and Nibbi to assist in drafting out the final guidelines for harvesting and managing this non-timber resource. Not much is known about the growth of these species i.e. Kufa and Nibbi. The establishment of Permanent Sample Plots (PSP) in different areas of Guyana would allow for the recording of growth and yield data. These PSPs would provide data on the growth and regeneration of these two species.

Current Status

At present, the Code needs to be finalised. Copies of the document were circulated to key stakeholders Nibbi and Kufa harvesters and the GFC monitoring officers. It should be noted that the implementation of the CoP will initially be done voluntarily to allow stakeholders to gradually adjust to the necessary changes, develop further management capacity by harvesters and most importantly provide training for harvesters and operators. This will eventually phase into mandatory compliance in the medium term. A total of 6 consultation sessions were conducted and provided comments and feedback on the draft Code. These sessions were held in Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice and North West. All comments were compiled and a consultation report was prepared. GFC is currently in the process of revising the draft Codes based on the inputs of stakeholders and expert views.

The GFC will also start the process of monitoring in accordance to the standards set out in the document to determine the levels and measures of compliance by the harvesters and operators. Although there are a few biological and socio-economical data available, there is still a need for scientific information in these areas. Therefore, it is important that all the technical stakeholders should seek available sources of funding in order to conduct scientific research, which can achieve national and international recognition of the CoP. In addition, research with regard to harvesting and utilization are also seen as the main approaches to be followed, followed by the re-establishment of all permanent sample plots (PSP).

Approach Tasks and Main Activities

Activity	Approach
1. Re-establishment of PSPs in order to achieve scientific data for further development of the CoP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Forest Resources Management Division (FRMD) within the GFC will identify and maintain all the PSPs established in 2003 ▪ Additional PSP will also be established to replace lost or destroyed PSPs
2. Voluntary implementation of Draft CoP for Nibbi & Kufa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribution of the draft CoP Nibbi & Kufa to all the GFC forest stations and the harvesters and operators.
3. Monitor the level of compliance and obtaining feedback to further refine document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitoring of the harvesting and transporting of the materials by the GFC forest stations located at strategic locations around the country.
4. Revise draft Codes of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revision will be done taking on board comments from stakeholder consultation sessions
5. Finalise Codes of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation will be done to GFC's Technical Committee, GFC's Board as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Activity	Approach
6. Establish Implementation Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This will be developed by the GFC in consultation with stakeholders and will be accompanied by training sessions.

Manicole Harvesting

Introduction

Manicole is considered one of the most important Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) in Guyana. Its consumption has made its way to international marketplaces especially in European countries. One of the focal areas of sustainable forest management has been on Non Timber Forest Products. This has been strongly supported by the Forest Act as well as the National Forest Policy. Finalizing a Code of Practice for Manicole Palm harvesting is essential to ensuring that stakeholders practice sustainable harvesting of Manicole Palm in the State forest, and in so doing, maintain a healthy and productive forest that facilitates the regeneration of high value Manicole.

The CoP was developed by the GFC in 2003 as a measure to alleviate the impact of harvesting of Manicole Palm on the environment. The document was circulated to the EPA, Iwokrama, Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, and AMCAR for comments and suggestions. AMCAR is the main company utilizing manicole palm in Guyana.

Several PSPs were established by the GFC. PSPs have long been considered a mainstay component of sustainable forest management. They are an important method in the collection of long-term growth, mortality, and recruitment information. When established, these will contribute significantly to the national network of PSPs being managed by GFC.

Current Status

Field visits to three (3) of the main communities involved in Palm Heart extraction were made (Kamwatta, Hobodeia, Hotoquai).

There were several presentations of the document and several reviews of comments and suggestions made by stakeholders. The COP was updated based on feedback received from stakeholders. AMCAR had raised some minor concerns with the Inventory methodology, data processing, harvesting practices, Social conditions, and Health and Safety.

Activity Summary (January 2010 – September 2011)

Activity	Approach
1. Field test inventory methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate site for trial. ▪ Plan Field Activity ▪ Carry out field exercise. ▪ Prepare report
2. Identify Amerindian villages currently supplying palm heart to AMCAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet with AMCAR officials to provide information and visit identified communities to gather additional information
3. Circulate Draft Code of Practice to AMCAR, Amerindian Communities involved in harvesting and other stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting and consultation with stakeholders.
4. Revised draft Codes of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revision will be done taking on board comments from stakeholder consultation sessions

Activity	Approach
5. 5. Finalise Codes of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation will be done to GFC's Technical Committee, GFC's Board as well as other relevant stakeholders.
6. 6. Establish Implementation Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This will be developed by the GFC in consultation with stakeholders and will be accompanied by training sessions.

2.9 Review and Update Code of Practice for Harvesting Operations (September 2009 – September 2011)

The Code of Practice (CoP) for Forest Operations contains standards and guidelines which were developed based on ongoing research and practical experience locally and abroad over a period of 10 years. The first draft of the Code was produced in 1994. After intense consultations with key stakeholders, the Code of Practice for Forest Operations was first implemented on a voluntary basis in October 1998. The FAO Model Code of Forest Harvesting Practice and the Fiji National Code of Logging Practice formed the basic framework for the first edition. While the GFC continued to collect baseline data, Codes of Practices were being published in several parts of the world. Based on the new information, the first edition was extensively reworked in 2001. The current draft edition takes into account the results of experience, research, and independent reviews, most notably a field test of the Code carried out by the internationally recognised research organization, Tropenbos in collaboration with Iwokrama and the GFC, which included cost monitoring of all stages.

The Code of Practice has been fully implemented and functions as a tool to ensure that Sustainable Forest Management is achieved.

However, the GFC recognises the current need for reviewing and updating the COP. Thus this project will seek to review and update the COP.

The activities to be carried out are (Jan 2010 – September 2011):

1. Begin review process and highlight sections necessary for updating the CoP
2. Research available information and update relevant sections
3. Circulate to internal and external stakeholders and invite comments
4. Circulate updated document based on feedback received from stakeholders to GFC board for approval

The activities that have commenced include:

1. The areas in the Code of Practice that requires updating have been identified.
2. Contact has been made with a potential resource person to assist in reviewing and updating the CoP
3. A stakeholder consultation plan has been developed and was executed during the period October 2010 to February 2011.
4. A total of 6 consultation sessions were conducted and comments and feedback were provided on the draft code. These sessions were held in Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice and North West. All comments were compiled and a consultation report was prepared. GFC is currently in the process of revising the draft Codes based on the inputs of stakeholders and expert views.

2.10 Implementation of the Legality Assurance System (January 2010 – June 2012)

One of the main focal areas of GFC's work has been on forest law enforcement and legality. This has been the case not only owing to the legal requirements as set out in the Forest Act, but also owing to a recognition of the importance of legality in ensuring that the benefits from forest resources utilization flow to the right beneficiaries, preventing unfair competition between illegal and legal produce, maintaining a

low rate of deforestation and forest degradation, ensuring sustainable development of forest dependent communities, and mitigating climate change.

A Programme of work has been undertaken by the GFC in developing a Legality Assurance System with support from its partners, including the Forest Products Development and Marketing Council, the Forestry Training Centre Inc. and private sector counterparts. This Programme forms part of the Commission's ongoing efforts to continually improve forest law enforcement and legality as a whole in the sector. Concurrently, efforts have been undergoing in other activity areas to also contribute to ensuring that legality is maintained at a high level. These efforts include: the implementation of a Code of Practice for Harvesting Operations, a national log tagging and tracking system, as well as concession level and environmental monitoring through the GFC's the head office along with its monitoring and mobile stations.

In June 2006, an international firm specializing in forest legality systems was contracted by the Guyana Forest Commission (GFC), the Forest Products Marketing Council (FPMC) and the Forestry Training Centre Inc. (FTCI), to assist in the development and field testing of an independent, transparent and suitable timber legal verification system for Guyana's forestry sector. The LAS has been the basis of engaging with relevant partners as the GFC advances its efforts in exploring the possibility of being part of an international system(s) of legality and verification, including the European Union through its FLEGT Process. In 2011, a review and updating was conducted by an independent expert on the LAS design document 2006. This review is being finalised by the FPDMC in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

The legal verification system that was to be developed for implementation in Guyana was designed in such a way to be compatible with other internationally recognized schemes such as the EU Forest Law, Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative and the WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network (GFTN). As such, in the preparation of a set of standard procedures as part of the development process, the following must be the main tenants:

- Credible and consistent with the EU FLEGT and the GFTN requirements
- Supported by the majority of stakeholders
- Technically sound and cost effective to implement by the sector
- Build on existing systems

Also, the legal verification system for Guyana was designed to be practical to be implemented by the GFC and the forestry sector, and must include built-in controls that provide assurance that forest management units and, where applicable, transport and processing facilities are recognised as legally operating, do operate in full compliance with all laws and regulations that comprise Guyana's definition of legality. The LAS also outlined controls to check that the chain of custody systems used in Guyana provide assurance that only timber from verified legal operations is licensed.

Consistent with the EU-FLEGT (as well as the GFTN) requirements for legal assurance systems, a legality verification system for Guyana comprise five main elements¹:

- **Definition of legality:** a definition of legally produced timber that sets out all the laws and regulations that must be complied with in the production process in Guyana.
- **Adequate traceability:** a secure chain of custody that tracks timber from the forest where it was harvested through different owners and stages in processing to the point of export.
- **Verification of legality:** a verification system to provide reasonable assurance that the requirements of the definition have been met for each export consignment. This involves verification of forest management operations and chain of custody in conformity with the requirements of the definition of legality for Guyana

¹ FLEGT briefing notes: http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/theme/forest/initiative/briefing_sheets_en.htm

- Licensing: the issuance of licenses to validate the results of legality verification and chain of custody.
- Independent monitoring: independent monitoring of the whole system to assure its credibility and to provide transparency.

The Process that will be undertaken will involve:

1. Determination on whether the LAS will be undertaken as part of the EU FLEGT Process
2. Conducting national stakeholder consultation processes on key issues including the definition of legality and the other elements outlines above.
3. Finalization of the LAS
4. Development of an implementation schedule

The process of development of the LAS re-commenced in 2009 and will extend over a period of 3-4 years. This is largely in keeping with the EU FLEGT outline of the process time that such a system entails for development.

This process is being coordinated by the FPDMC in close collaboration with the GFC, with guidance, and in consultation with, relevant stakeholder groups.

So far:

1. A draft outline of the Legality Assurance System has been developed.
2. A Protocol for implementation has been developed.
3. A governing board has been appointed for the LAS.
4. The LAS has been assessed by the Guyana National Bureau of Standards with an aim of exploring the possibility of making the LAS a national standard.
5. An updating process has been completed which aimed at including new and additional areas.

2.11 Extend community forest activities to additional forest based communities - includes training in SFM implementation, formation of community associations and training in decision making and forest management (September 2009 – ongoing)

Community Forestry has been an important part of the GFC's work programme over the past 10 years. Many communities have come to depend on the forest for their main source of livelihood and for income generation. The GFC efforts in community forestry over the past 10 years have focused on formalizing the establishment of community groups into formal Associations, assisting them in relevant training needs, overall support to their practices of sustainable forest management, and fostering sustainable development of the community forest resources as a whole. Some of the main areas of community development have been directed towards governance and decision making, financial management, movement of community forest operations along the value chain, marketing and trade, capacity building and training in key areas, and sustainable utilization of forest resources.

Up to April 2011, over 300,000 hectares were issued to 51 Community Logging Associations. Among the main reasons for allocating State Forest Areas to communities is enabling these groups, that rely on the forest for their main source of livelihood, to have legal access to forest resources. Over the years, there have been several positive results from this programme, including providing an alternative economic livelihood option to communities, creating jobs and income for residents of hinterland communities, and an improvement in the overall development of most communities that have been involved in the programme, among other areas.

The growth and sustainable development of these communities as well as others that may join this grouping rest on the extension of similar community forest activities along the approach outlined above. Training and capacity building in the implementation of sustainable forest management (SFM) guidelines, and overall effective decision making for various aspect of forest operations, along with other essential

skill sets, are needed to continually enable community to develop sustainably. As such, work will need to be continued in working with communities, assisting them to meet any identified need in their effective execution of SFM, formalizing their legal status, supporting efforts to extend utilization along the value chain, and overall effective management of forest resources.

The process to be undertaken will involve:

1. To work with community groups to form associations, in keeping with the process and criteria developed by the GFC.
2. To assist and guide communities in establishing governance and legal structure for the Association.
3. To support community needs in building capacity in key areas of SFM and forest resources utilization and trade.

The process continued in 2009 and 2010 and is part of an ongoing programme of community development. This process is being organized and coordinated by the Guyana Forestry Commission who responds directly to specific community needs. So far:

1. 51 community forest associations have been established to date which represents a 88% increase in community forestry activity from 2008. A total of 328,000 hectares of forest area has been allocated to these associations alone.
2. Capacity building, training, and financing has been secured for 30 communities over a 3 year period.
3. Project proposals have been developed by communities in collaboration with the GFC and Forestry Training Centre Incorporated to identify training needs to be addressed.
4. Training to commence in the next quarter.

The Forestry Training Centre has engaged with 16 communities, and trained 345 community members, over the period 2009/2010 in areas of forest planning and decision making, reduced impact logging, and other aspects of sustainable forest management.

2.12 Strengthen forest law enforcement and institutional capacity of GFC and the REDD Secretariat, and provide training in new forest law to stakeholders (October 2009 – ongoing)

Overview

The concept of REDD + is new and evolving, encapsulating all aspects of sustainable forest management such as forest monitoring and enforcement, along with activities such as establishment of demonstration projects, forest area change and biomass monitoring, along with others. A major component of REDD+ implementation will be the development of a national Monitoring Reporting & Verification System. This System will be designed to measure and monitor changes to forest carbon stock due to anthropogenic sources and will assess various drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and the impacts that these have on forest area and carbon stocks.

Legality is critical to achieving good governance in the forest sector, in that, principles of sustainable forest management as well as activities under a REDD + agenda cannot be accomplished without strengthening and enhancing the current forest law. The main legislative tool for forest law enforcement in Guyana was the Forest Act 67:01 (15 of 1953). Significant changes that have occurred in the forestry sector both nationally and globally have led to the revision of this tool. The Forest Act 2009 which was extensively reviewed and debated by a wide cross section of stakeholders fully encapsulates all relevant aspects of the forestry sector's development.

The establishment of forest stations at strategic locations within the country has allowed enhanced forest monitoring to occur at the concession level as well as the on the main transportation routes within the

country. Some aspects of forest monitoring include verification of origin of produce, legality, health and safety and sustainable harvesting practices.

In light of recent developments, as well as upcoming activities, it is imperative that not only the current forest law enforcement, but other areas such in GIS/ Remote Sensing, forest inventories, greenhouse gas inventories etc be strengthened to encompass these. This required for there to be continuous building of institutional capacity at the level of the GFC. Along with this, there will need to be public sensitization sessions to fully engage and inform all stakeholders of the activities such as strengthened forest laws, to allow for improved conformance by the sector.

In light of the above, there is a need to strengthen forest law enforcement and institutional capacity of GFC and the REDD Secretariat.

Approach

Capacity will need to be built in order to equip both the GFC and the RS to address the various components encompassed in REDD+ activities. Some of the main areas that have been identified for development of capacity are as follows:

- **Monitoring Reporting & Verification System** - in the establishment of the MRVS, a number of skill sets will be required to properly implement and manage the System. This would involve capacity building in areas such as GIS & Remote Sensing to monitor forest change assessment, conducting of demonstration activities and the establishment and maintenance of national biomass monitoring plots. Further, there will be the need to develop skills for reporting under the MRVS, with regards to compliance to the IPCC Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) guidelines. The capacity building process commenced in 2010 with the execution of the first stage of the forest area assessment including the historic and period ending September 2010.
- **Assessment & monitoring of forest carbon stock as well as development of skills to conduct forest greenhouse gas inventories**
These activities will provide information that will feed directly into the MRVS.
- **Legality**
Emphasis will be placed on improving the efficiency in the use of GFC's tagging system at the concession level. Additionally, emphasis will also be placed on strengthening the verification of legality of origin of forest produce by the GFC and by independent auditors.
- **Sustainable Forest Management**
Enhanced capacity building sessions on the Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting is essential for all stakeholders such as Amerindian communities, concessionaires and forest officers to ensuring sustainable management of the forest. These sessions should be focused to specific target groups for maximum output.

Activities in the development of the MRVS as well as with regards to improving legality, revision of Codes of Practice and development of new CoPs, have already commenced, and it is imperative that capacity building activities commence in order to ensure the sustainability of the activities initiated. The Guyana Forestry Commission is the coordinating institution through which the above-mentioned activities will be planned and implemented. It is foreseen that the activities outlined above will lead not only to strengthened forest law enforcement and implementation, but also to improved institutional capacity of GFC and the REDD Secretariat.

Through the execution of works under the MRVS, specifically in the areas of forest area change assessment (Bid 1) and forest carbon stock assessment and monitoring (Bid 2), staff of the GFC, students and lecturers of the University of Guyana as well as forest concession workers were trained.

So far, training of GFC staff has been completed in a number of areas including:

1. Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting & Non Timber Forest Products
2. GFC Procedures
3. Timber Grading
4. Basic GIS
5. Conducting Forest Area Change Assessment through the use of GIS & Remote Sensing
6. Conducting Forest Stratification (by threat) through the use of IDRISI software
7. Field techniques in data collection for biomass estimation
8. Techniques in establishment of biomass plots, logging plots, destructive sampling & soil sampling
9. Data inputting, analysis and storage (of biomass data collected)
10. Use of field equipment such as chain saws, diameter tapes, calipers, GPS, clinometers, DME, compasses, rangefinders and densitometers

Stakeholders, including those of the University of Guyana have been trained in:

1. Introduction to GIS and RS in a REDD+ Framework
2. GIS & Remote Sensing in the REDD+ Context
3. Global Carbon Cycle and Impacts of Climate Change
4. REDD+: Design and Implementation
5. IPCC GPG and AFOLU Guidance
6. Techniques in establishment of biomass plots, logging plots, destructive sampling & soil sampling
7. Measuring and monitoring forest carbon stocks on the ground to estimate emissions and removals
8. Harvesting operations (communities)

2.13. Enhance GFC's monitoring capability and SFM practices implementation (October 2009 – June 2011, and ongoing)

Overview

Forest Monitoring

Guyana has maintained a strong and continuously improving system of forest monitoring and regulation in the forest sector, resulting in maintained low rates of illegality, an environment where there is an inherent deterrent to illegal activities, systems of reporting and monitoring that lend to the fulfilment of most, if not all elements, of an effective chain of custody management system of forest product from the point of harvest to export, and a system that allows for verification of legal origin of forest produce. These have been enabled over the years by the strengthening of the institutional framework, whilst also supporting the sector. Key monitoring tools are in place including the Code of Practice, the log tracking system, concession level and environmental monitoring. GFC has 28 forest monitoring stations located at strategic control points throughout the country and 17 additional mobile monitoring units. Guyana has also developed a Legality Assurance System that will be the basis of engaging with relevant partners as the country advances the efforts in exploring the possibility of being part of international system(s) of legality and verification.

In order for the forest monitoring system in Guyana to be maintained and improved in some cases, continuous enhancement of GFC's monitoring capability is essential. This will involve developing and implementing relevant systems for legality assessment such as the Legality Assurance System, strengthening field monitoring, and expanding the scope and scale of monitoring activities as a whole to ensure that legality is maintained in the sector.

Forest Resources Management

The GFC is responsible for the administration and management of all State Forest land. The work of the Commission is guided by a Draft National Forest Plan that has been developed to address the forest policy. The Commission develops and monitors standards for forest sector operations, develops and implements forest protection and conservation strategies, oversees forest research and provides support and guidance to forest education and training and to promote sustainable forest management (SFM).

To achieve SFM, several guidelines and approaches were developed and implemented by the GFC. During 2001 and 2002, the silvicultural survey programme was implemented to field audit timber harvesting operations for large concessions. The surveys were intended to provide an indication of the quantity, quality and timing of the next two harvests within an area of recently logged forest and to compare these projections with the past harvest. A number of silvicultural surveys have been completed to date.

In addition, the State Forest Estate has been classified to identify areas with high biodiversity attributes, protected areas, conversion areas, conservation areas etc. To ensure the uniform allocation of forest land while reducing the risk of damage to the protected areas, Bio reserve and the environment as a whole, the GFC must be adequately equipped with the relevant information to enable better decision making.

The management of HCVF has been identified as a key area in SFM. This is relatively a new principle, which has been developed to replace the previously used concept of old growth or virgin forest. In order to make optimal use of the HCVF concept, it is important to develop national standards. The GFC has opted to develop the national criteria and indicators for the identification of HCVF in Guyana.

Current status

The SFM practices implemented by the GFC are as follows:

1. Submission of Forest Management (FMP) Annual Operational Plans (AOP).
2. Development of Guidelines to assist in the preparation of the FMP and AOPs.
3. Control of harvesting through the implementation on of Annual Allowable Cuts and Annual Allowable Area and compliance to the code of practice for timber harvesting
4. Post harvest assessments.

The main forest enforcement guidelines and activities implemented by the GFC are as follows:

1. National Log Tracking System
2. Legality monitoring and Assessment
3. Concession level and Environmental Monitoring
4. Removal control documentation system

Main Activities (Jan 2010 - June 2011, ongoing)

Activity	Approach
1. Implement Legality Assurance System	▪ Approach outlined in Section 10
2. Enhance capacity of GFC and Forest Industry to implement legality and monitoring requirements	▪ Theoretical and Practical Training with GFC staff to improve capacity in key technical areas. ▪ Work with the Forestry Training Centre Inc. to develop capacity of GFC staff and the Forest industry. ▪ Expand monitoring reach to new areas and strengthen monitoring in key areas along access ways and in concessions.

Activity	Approach
3. Review and Update FMP and AOP guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compare current guidelines with requirements of the LCDs and REDD+. ▪ Make adjustments where necessary. ▪ Circulate for review and feedback from internal and external staff. ▪ Prioritize four concessions for evaluation. The silvicultural survey procedures will be used as a guide to evaluate current timber harvesting practices within two concessions.
4. Update AAC calculation database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that AACs are being strictly complied with.

So far:

1. Currently GFC is conducting an assessment of the GFC GIS to include the following in forest resources planning and management;
 - a. Annual Allowable Cuts for all large concessions
 - b. Road construction
 - c. Block verified and approved by the GFC
 - d. Blocks verified and rejected by the GFC
 - e. Small concession boundary demarcation process
2. Increased use of GIS/GPS technology to monitor origin of produce and adherence to the Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting
3. Use of database to compare data submitted by concessionaires and monitoring officers
4. Increased monitoring capabilities through increased staffing at field stations, additional mobile monitoring units and an expanded and decentralized Internal Audit Unit. 30 additional monitoring staff were hired and placed as forest stations throughout Guyana.
5. Establishment of a Legality Monitoring and Extensions Unit with a primary aim of monitoring forest legality.

2.14 Assessment of stocking of Small Concession to inform future possible renewal (September 2009 – ongoing)

Overview

Ensuring sustainable forest management in small concessions is imperative to the maintenance of SFM nationally. The GFC has commenced a programme to execute a management level inventory within all SFP located in Berbice. Valuable information on the timber stocking density will be obtained. This will inform the future allocation of small concessions for harvesting purposes and more specifically inform the levels of harvest that will be allowed.

During 2001, a rapid assessment system has been developed to determine the quality and quantity of timber and forest conditions on areas issued under State Forest Permissions.

Using the management level inventory survey, vital forest resource information will be gathered. This information will be analyzed using custom designed software that the GFC has developed. The information collected from the inventories will determine the quantity, quality and other forest features and assist the GFC with its planning of operations and projections for a sustainable operation.

Main Activities

A national level reconnaissance survey will be necessary to achieve the actual task. With the Guyana Forestry Commission being one of the lead agencies for the LCDS and REDD+ readiness activities, it is important to have accurate and updated information on the stocking within all the concessions for commercial and harvestable species. This will also aid in archiving information on harvesting and growth rates of species within State Forest Permissions.

Current allocated SFPs, managed within the Berbice and Demerara Divisions will be prioritized for evaluation. Areas that do not meet ecological criteria may be considered for repossession by the GFC and allowed to regenerate for 5-10 years. Stakeholders will be consulted on the process to ensure that their inputs are taken into consideration.

Approaches that have commenced:

1. Identify all the SFPs within Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice and North West Division.
2. Send out letters, informing all SFPs holders that the GFC will be conducting reconnaissance survey in their area.
3. Acquire maps of 1:50,000 scales showing all the vacant and active SFPs.
4. Plan field activities
5. Implement field activities
6. Prepare and disseminate reports to management on stocking of Small Concessions
7. Present findings to technical committee

So far:

1. The methodology for assessing current stocking within allocated SFPs to inform future possible renewal is currently being developed.
2. The methodology has been tested in 13 concessions.
3. An Action Plan for conducting forest inventory assessment is being developed with initial implementation planned over the next three months.

2.15 Continue harmonization of policies, legislation of land use and other relevant agencies (January 2010 – December 2011)

One of the goals of the LCDS is to reform existing forest-dependent sectors, including forestry and mining, where necessary, so that these sectors can operate at the standards necessary to sustainably protect Guyana's forest.

Guyana is now entering into the implementation phase (Phase 2) of the LCDS which extends from 2010-2015 (starting to participate in REDD+ and building the foundation for the new economy) and one of the key goals of this phase is integrating forest land-use policies with the LCDS – through integrated land use planning for forestry and mining and other forest-based land uses. One of the most important aspects of this effort is to reform existing forest-dependent sectors, including forestry and mining, where necessary, so that these sectors can operate at the standards necessary to sustainably protect Guyana's forest. To enable this there is need for continuous harmonisation of policies, legislation and land use planning and management.

There already exists a robust system for forest management through policies, legislation, institutions and the mechanisms for coordination in planning and management. Policy coordination is effected through the Cabinet Subcommittee on Natural Resources and the Environment, and the Natural Resources and Environment Advisory Committee (NREAC). There also exists a Land use Coordination Committee comprising of the Commissioners of Forests, Lands and Mining, and the head of the environment agency,

chaired by the Prime Minister. This committee addresses conflict avoidance and conflict resolution among multiple land users and uses.

At the level of the agencies responsible for natural resources management (GFC, GGMC, EPA, GLSC), there has been efforts towards improved coordination of land use. There is a draft Land Use Policy and several regional land use plans have been prepared. Currently the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission is undertaking two important projects aimed at strengthening sustainable land- management. One is the 'Capacity Development and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management (SLM)' project which is being implemented through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which is more than 75% complete. Under this project, a sustainable land management policy is being drafted, which will enhance the existing draft land use policy. The other project is the 'Development of Land Use Planning project' being implemented through the European Commission. This project will complete three additional regional land use plans and a national land use plan.

Under the framework of the LCDS, the harmonization process will continue. Many agencies have started to align their activities within the context of REDD+ and to effect improved collaboration not only at the inter-agency level, but also with forest users and their representative organisations. Recently a Land Use Committee has been established to resolve particular issues in mining and forestry, and a draft set of proposals have been prepared.

Whilst the technical work of harmonization will be conducted by sector institutions, the OCC of facilitating this process.

Some key elements which will be maintained in the harmonization process are:

1. Strong inter-agency collaboration to maximize efforts and reduce redundancy
2. Identification of areas of contention and ways of addressing these
3. Identification of challenges and opportunities to improve harmonization process
4. Identification of areas of capacity building needed to enable the effective harmonization process: strengthening of existing systems, recruiting of specialists, technical reviews , etc.
5. Information is shared to agencies in an effective and timely manner
6. Inclusivity – agencies are engaged in key stages of the REDD+ development process
7. Agencies are represented at relevant fora or processes pertaining to REDD+

2.16 Identify lead and support agencies for specific REDD+ activities (January 2010 – March 2010)

REDD+ is a new and constantly evolving concept. This is also because developments in REDD+ occur at different levels: at the UN Negotiations levels, at national and local levels. The capacity of Guyana to support REDD+ activities is therefore influenced by several international and local processes. While the framework for supporting REDD+ activities in Guyana is being developed, there are some clearly defined areas where certain Agencies and institutions can play a strong role.

Lead Agencies

Institutional Arrangements:

To ensure successful execution of the Low-Carbon Development Strategy and the RPP, Guyana has developed institutional capabilities as follows:

1. An Office of Climate Change (OCC) to coordinate Guyana's climate change initiatives.
2. A Low Carbon Strategy Project Management Office (PMO) to drive key projects as part of the LCDS.

3. A REDD Secretariat within the Guyana Forestry Commission as the implementing entity for “REDD readiness” activities, including the development and implementation of a monitoring, reporting and verification system.

The Office of Climate Change will have the overall responsibility of ensuring that all Agencies and stakeholders involved are well equipped with the resources to undertake the designated activities. Its mandate is to work across Government to support work on climate adaptation, mitigation and forest conservation. It is the entity with overall coordinating responsibility for ongoing national consultations on Guyana's Low-Carbon Development Strategy and related stakeholder engagement processes, working closely with the REDD Secretariat in the Guyana Forestry Commission.

Guyana Forestry Commission

The Government, through the Guyana Forestry Commission, manages and regulates the activities of forest concessions to ensure that strict sustainable forest management rules and guidelines are implemented and that forest legislation is implemented effectively by operators. The GFC is responsible for the management and regulation of Guyana's State Forest Estate and the implementation of REDD activities in Guyana. The GFC's main responsibility is policy enforcement, sustainable forest management, community forestry and planning the effective utilization of Guyana State Forest Resources. It coordinates the activities of the REDD Secretariat.

As part of Guyana's efforts to provide an enabling environment for the facilitation of REDD activities, a REDD Secretariat has been established. The Secretariat has been set up as a unit within the Guyana Forestry Commission and is responsible for the coordination of national REDD activities of the country. The REDD Secretariat oversees the implementation of all REDD activities under the Low Carbon Development Strategy framework, guided by the Office of the President with the involvement of the National Climate Committee which includes stakeholders from both State and non State agencies. It is also tasked with consultation and outreach activities, dissemination of results of the assessment of the carbon stock potential of Guyana's forests and all activities included in the MRV System. In addition to reporting responsibilities, the REDD Secretariat will collaborate with the MSSC as necessary. The Secretariat will be responsible for overall coordination as well as being the permanent operational team for REDD nationally. The Secretariat has been established as the national working group to coordinate all national REDD activities as well as to advise of policy formulation and implementation.

Other Agencies

Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture has the responsibility for the forestry sector, and has also been responsible for a number of departments that have responsibility for various aspects of climate change and REDD activities. These Agencies include the Hydrometeorological (Hydromet) Division and the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority. The Agriculture Ministry remains integral to the coordination and implementation of REDD+ policy and activities.

Guyana Geology and Mines Commission

The GGMC is responsible for regulating all activities in the mineral sector including providing advice to the Government on mineral policy. It regulates the extraction of minerals from large scale (500- 12,000 acres) mining operations, medium scale (150- 500 acres) mining operations and small scale mining operations. The Mining Act provides for the management of both large and small scale mining claims. Environmental management of both large and small scale operations at the field and policy levels are monitored and implemented by the GGMC. The EPA also has environmental oversight for mining operations.

Mining is one of the major drivers of deforestation and the Government has been working with the mining sectors to identify ways to embark on wide-ranging reform of the mining regulations and their enforcement to ensure that mining operations promote higher standards of environmental sustainability alongside economic development and in doing so, possible payments from REDD+ will be factored into policy-making.

The Commission has also been keeping close relations with associations including the Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association that has been important in developing policies that factor in the views of the miners.

Ministry of Amerindian Affairs

The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs has purview over Amerindian people, their development and all issues pertaining to them and their lands, including land rights. The Ministry has had a very important role in facilitating consultations and awareness activities in indigenous communities. It is also playing a crucial role in developing opting-in mechanisms for communities to the LCDS. In fact, in alignment with the principles of free, prior and informed consent, Amerindian communities will not be required to participate in REDD+ unless they choose to do so, and no deadline will be set for whether and how they can “opt in” to REDD+ and the LCDS. The Ministry also maintains close relations with indigenous NGOs such as the Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG), the Amerindian People’s Association (APA) and the National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF). These NGOs have been very much included in many stages of the LCDS and R-Plan processes and their involvement is expected to continue. The Ministry also works closely with the national Toshaos Council, a democratically elected body of Captains of Amerindian Villages. The Ministry’s support to the implementation of the LCDS and to the development of indigenous people will not only continue but also grow over the years. .

Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance will have oversight of all revenue garnered from REDD+. Current the Ministry serves as the Chair of the Steering Committee for the Guyana REDD Investment Fund (GRIF) which is the body that approves projects for GRIF funding.

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency has the mandate of promoting, facilitating and coordinating effective environmental management and protection and the sustainable use of Guyana’s natural resources. The EPA’s involvement in the LCDS and R-Plan processes has been constant and the Agency has provided insights and recommendations pertaining to its field of work. The EPA will be increasingly involved as the LCDS process moves to implementation of projects in particular as it regards compliance with social and environmental safeguards.

Guyana Lands and Survey Commission

The Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission has responsibility for management of public lands. Most of Guyana’s forests and all of Guyana’s mineral and energy resources are owned by the State, and are regulated by the Forestry and Mines Commissions respectively. All other land uses, including agriculture, are regulated by the Lands and Surveys Commission. Land policy, land planning and land information systems all fall under the purview of this Commission, making it crucial to the implementation of the LCDS and REDD strategy.

Advisory Committees

- a) Natural Resources and Environment Advisory Committee

The NREAC comprises policy and technical representatives that provide guidance and technical review and support to the Cabinet. This sub-committee is chaired by the Prime Minister. This technical committee comprises representation of key Government entities and provides technical review, coordination and guidance. Natural resources issues, e.g. mining, forestry and agriculture are discussed and solutions are developed at this level.

b) The National Climate Committee

The NCC was set-up in light of the growing need for actions to be taken nationally to address the potential impacts of Climate Change for Guyana. It was developed to promote a coordinated and inclusive approach to Guyana's response to Climate Change. The Committee was established as being primarily responsible for developing cross sectoral contributions to national policies and actions on Climate Change matters.

In March 2007 the NCC was re-organised in an effort to strengthen the committee's ability to address growing climate issues. The Committee is currently comprises 27 representatives of key sectors at this stage.

c) Steering Committees

Two Steering Committees have been put in place subsequently to the launch of the LCDS and to the approval of the RPP: the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC) of the LCDS and the MRVS Steering Committee.

i. The Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC) of the LCDS

The Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC) includes representatives from Government, youth, women, private sector, indigenous NGOs, international NGOs, forestry, mining, among others. The MSSC has provided guidance and oversight to the preparation and initial nation-wide consultation and awareness sessions of the LCDS process. The Committee will continue to provide guidance and oversight to the LCDS process including the implementation of projects.

ii. MRVS Steering Committee

This Committee is chaired by the GFC, and carries out the following functions:

- Oversee the implementation of all MRVS activities;
- Providing assistance to the project when required;
- Ensuring that scope aligns with the agreed requirements of projects and advise on means by which key stakeholder groups are kept informed of progress in the development of the MRVS;
- Contribute inputs from representative agencies that each member is a part of, to ensure close cohesion and coordination of MRVS activities implementation.
- Participate in the review and selection of consultants from the bidding process;
- Monitor and manage the progress made in implementation of MRVS road map activities;

Supporting Agencies

The following Agencies/NGOs/institutions have played an important role in implementing REDD+ and LCDS related activities and their role will be important throughout the entire process:

- University of Guyana
- The Hydro-meteorological Service

- Locally-based international NGOs such as CI and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) also contribute to this process.
- Indigenous Community groups (APA, NDAF, GOIP and TAAMOG), Toshias, community residents
- Guyana Energy Agency
- Private Sector Commission

Donor Agencies

Several donors and international partners have expressed an interest in supporting Guyana's effort in the LCDS and REDD+ related activities. These include the World Bank, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Inter-America Development Bank (IDB) and Conservation International (CI). Other institutions such as the FAO, IDB, the German Government, USA and the ITTO may be approached for possible technical assistance. Efforts are also underway to secure assistance from funds under Guyana's UNFCCC GEF-4 RAF.

2.17 Ensure that training/capacity building is provided to these agencies (February 2010 – ongoing)

REDD+ is a new mechanism and effective capacity building and training is a very important aspect of ensuring that Guyana can effectively implement REDD+ activities. Many agencies will have to play key roles in ensuring that capacity is built to support REDD+ activities. Since REDD+ is a new mechanism, there may be challenges that affect their capacity to ensure this.

Areas of capacity building

Critical areas under which capacity building/training will be examined include the following:

- a. Institutional capacity building – Agencies may require support in developing institutional capacity to support REDD+ activities since this is a new concept. It is important that synergies among agencies are identified to support this and to maximise resources and efforts. The mandates of many agencies are governed by plans, policies and legislation. It is important for agencies to identify whether these policies, plans and legislation adequately support REDD+ activities. Gaps and areas for adjustment should be identified.
- b. Technical capacity - Technical capacity is a very important aspect in supporting REDD+ activities. Many agencies may require support to build technical capacity at different stages. This type of support can be provided through different mediums including training, consultations, education and awareness activities, formal /informal discussion, workshops, seminars, advisory groups etc. There are many local, regional and international channels that offer support for training in the area of REDD+ that can be accessed. Agencies should identify what technical resources are available their agencies to support activities and whether they consider the level of resources sufficient, and if not, how can they be improved.
- c. Human resources – The availability of adequate levels of trained personnel within agencies to effectively develop and implement REDD+ activities is very important. It is important that human resource needs are identified by agencies at an early stage.
- d. Financial support – Many agencies will require financial support along critical stages of implementing REDD+ activities. It is important that agencies identify whether there are sufficient financial resources to support REDD+ activities and identify funds needed at an early stage. Limitations to acquiring funding should also be identified. There are several sources of funding available through local, regional and international channels by which funds can be accessed.

Ensuring training/capacity building is provided to Agencies

The Office of Climate Change will spearhead efforts towards mobilising resources for training/capacity building is provided to key agencies in a timely and effective manner. This support will be provided based on the requirements of agencies and resources available. The OCC will communicate with agencies regularly to ensure that this support is provided.

2.18 Ensure that agencies are equipped with resources to undertake designated activities (March 2010 – ongoing)

The Lead and support agencies implementing REDD+ activities will require adequate resources in a timely manner to support the activities they are tasked with.

Many agencies are already equipped with certain essential resources and this can help to initiate some activities at an early stage. However, resource availability may pose a challenge for some agencies at different stages of implementation of REDD+ activities.

To support the capacity building /training and other needs as identified by agencies, adequate financial and technical resources will be required. These resources can be acquired through many sources including local, regional and international institutions, through existing and new mechanisms. The Office of Climate Change will continue play a lead role in ensuring that agencies are equipped with adequate resources to support REDD+ activities.

2.19 Development of a System for Reporting on Multiple benefits of REDD+ (March 2010 – ongoing)

As indicated in the Joint Concept Note between the Governments of Norway and Guyana: *“The development of a system for reporting on the multiple benefits of REDD-plus, including on measures to protect biological diversity, improved livelihoods, good governance, and how the Constitutional protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are facilitated within the framework of Guyana’s REDD-plus efforts”*.

The development of a system to report on multiple benefits of REDD+ should build from pre-existing mechanisms to avoid duplications of resources and institutions. The mechanism to be established can build from reporting mechanisms already in place, such as:

1. The Budgetary process
2. National Processes
3. External reporting

The indicated mechanisms are illustrated below:

1. The Budgetary process

The Annual Budget will serve as one instrument to understand the multiple benefits of REDD+ for Guyana. The projected revenues accruing to the country are included in the Budget and the beneficiaries are indicated. As the activities included in the LCDS and R-Plan are carried out, the MRV system becomes increasingly sophisticated and the opting-in mechanism is implemented, there will be a higher level of sophistication in the accounting of revenue inflows and distribution.

2. National Processes

Guyana has a number of institutions and processes in place that ensure information dissemination and awareness on climate change, the LCDS and in general REDD+ initiatives. In addition, a dedicated page

on the LCDS web site will be continually updated to provide information on international financial support for Guyana's LCDS and REDD+ efforts including indication of activities to be supported by these funds. The page has already been established at <http://www.lcds.gov.gy/international-financing-for-lcds-and-redd.html>

3. External Reporting

There are already external monitoring mechanisms in place and these can be expanded to include multiple benefits for REDD. These mechanisms can include the "Human Development Report" published yearly by UNDP. National reports place human development at the forefront of the national political agenda. They are tools for policy analysis reflecting people's priorities, strengthening national capacities, engaging national partners, identifying inequities and measuring progress.

2.20 Establishment of criteria for identifying priority areas for Biodiversity within Guyana's Forest (March 2010)

Guyana became a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD/CBD) in 1992 and ratified it in 1994. By signing on to CBD, Guyana has signalled to the international community that it is committed to implementing measures to conserve and sustainably utilize the country's biological resources. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the National Focal Point for the UNCBD. The EPA elaborated the criteria to identify priority biodiversity areas after very thorough consultations, which led to the production of the Second National Biodiversity Action Plan.

The strategic approach presented here identifies the general scope or framework within which the process of establishing a system of protected areas has been operating. Within this framework, the areas selected for inclusion in the system are required to satisfy a number of criteria.

The strategy adopts a site classification scheme based on international standards, and defines the goal and objectives of establishing a system of protected areas. It then outlines aspects of the organisational framework, management responsibility, implementation, and sustainability of the process.

Framework for establishing protected areas

The NBAP has as its basis several underlying principles, which sets the framework for the conservation and management of biodiversity. This strategy is consistent with the principles set forth in the following approaches:

1. The Systematic and Scientific approach

This approach aims at achieving, to the greatest degree possible, the following:

- Protection of examples of all natural ecosystems in Guyana
- Protection of areas of particular biological significance, such as, but not limited to, areas of high endemism, and areas of high biological diversity
- Protection and integrated management of key watersheds with provide buffers to mitigate against the effects of climate change and natural hazards such as, but not limited to, fires, floods and drought, and
- Protection and preservation of sites of importance to the cultural and spiritual heritage of Guyana

2. The Participatory approach

All stakeholders will be invited and given opportunities to be involved in and contribute towards the effort of establishing and managing the system of protected areas to make it a viable component of the country's sustainable development strategy.

3. The Precautionary approach

Even as the process of building a system of protected areas will be systematic and scientific, likely limitations of information and scientific certainty will not deter decision-making aimed at securing the goals of this strategy. In instances of uncertainty, therefore, decisions taken will be based on the principle of ensuring that the highest number of options possible is retained.

4. The Holistic approach

The principle that natural ecosystems serve many functions, including sources of economic well being, satisfying social functions, and provision of environmental services, will serve as the basis of policy and management of the protected area system. In this context, the protected area system will provide the following:

- opportunities for societal development, education, training, and capacity building
- contribute to sustainable economic development through the provision of viable and compatible economic opportunities
- provide sustainable employment opportunities for neighbouring, rural communities
- contribute towards meeting the biodiversity and watershed conservation requirements of international reference standards for sustainable forest management certification and market access for timber and other forest products, and
- preserve national insurance functions by maintaining options for future demands, unforeseen problems, or future uses.

Guidelines at the local level for establishing protected areas

The following guidelines would be used observed at the local level when there is an effect or impact on the local populace or communities.

- Amerindian land uses for traditional and subsistence purposes will be upheld
- The establishing of protected areas will ensure that the rights and interests of local populations are respected
- Local communities, and stakeholders in general, will play an active role through direct involvement in the planning and design, implementation and management of the system and its components
- Protected areas will not be located in titled or gazetted Amerindian lands without the approval of the communities involved
- Protected areas would not result in involuntary resettlement, and
- Where potential protected areas fall within lands claimed by Amerindians, efforts will be made to resolve those claims.

Criteria for selection of protected areas

The effectiveness of a protected areas system for Guyana will be ensured through the following criteria:

1. Representative, comprehensive and balanced - It will include examples of the full range of ecosystem types in Guyana as well as biodiversity.

2. Viable - Areas will have sufficient spatial extent and management capacity in order to maintain their integrity and effectiveness.
3. Coherent and complimentary - Each site will add value to the overall system in quality and quantity.
4. Consistent - In applying management objectives and classification, a standard approach will be used to ensure that the purpose of each unit is clear.
5. Cost effective, efficient and equitable - An appropriate balance will be set between the costs and benefits of each area and the overall system. Also, the minimum number of areas will be identified to achieve the system's objectives. The system will ensure benefits to stakeholders are equitable.

Goal

Based on the considerations presented in the preceding sections, the goal of the strategy can be delineated as follows:

To develop a system of protected areas in Guyana to achieve national and international conservation objectives while at the same time allowing for the realisation of social, economic and cultural benefits through processes that allow for the meaningful participation of all stakeholders and the accruing of benefits in a sustaining manner.

Objectives

The objectives of establishing a system of protected areas are as follows:

- a. To protect and maintain viable examples of natural ecosystems and areas of particular biological significance.
- b. To serve as a key building block for the conservation of the natural, cultural, and spiritual heritage of Guyana.
- c. To allow Guyana to meet its commitments and obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, and other agreements.
- d. Contribute towards the alleviation of poverty by facilitating sustainable livelihoods through the provision of opportunities for employment, education, and training at all levels.
- e. To serve as a natural resources pool for maintaining options for future considerations
- f. To achieve the biodiversity conservation, watershed protection and other requirements of international standards in order to acquire certification and gain access to markets for timber and non-timber forest products.
- g. To serve as the foundation for the development of a nature-based tourism sector in Guyana.

Workshop for the Establishment of Criteria for identifying Priority Biodiversity Areas in Guyana's Forests

Recognising that the criteria outlined above were prepared some time ago and are not specific to forest areas alone, the EPA conducted a workshop in 2010 to discuss this.

The workshop was intended as a first step in crafting criteria to inform Guyana's overall land use planning system and, ultimately, the REDD-plus governance development plan under the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS). These criteria will also be linked to policies that foster the adoption of biodiversity conservation best practices by concession holders in the different REDD-plus relevant areas, such as logging, mining and agriculture.

A summary of the workshop proceedings and discussions is presented below.

Objective: To facilitate stakeholder input in the development of criteria for identifying priority biodiversity areas in Guyana's forests.

The following presentations were made:

1. Mr. Andrew Bishop, Adviser to the President, Office of the President, delivered a presentation on the REDD-plus Programme and the importance of identifying priority areas for biodiversity within Guyana's forests.
2. Mr. Fernandes, Director, Natural Resources Management Division, EPA, provided a brief overview of the criteria for selection of protected areas (PA) as highlighted in the National Strategy for the Establishment of a System of Protected Areas. He explained that the PA criteria can be used as a starting point in the discussions to establish criteria for priority biodiversity areas. He noted that there are many similarities between PAs and priority areas for biodiversity conservation, and as such the PA criteria can either be adjusted or new criteria can be developed altogether.

The participants indicated that the process involved in PA identification is very different to that of identifying priority areas for biodiversity conservation in Guyana's forests, and therefore the PA criteria should not be used as a starting point in the discussion. A number of persons voiced concern as to the slow progress in establishing the National Protected Areas System, and indicated that the enactment of National Protected Area Legislation should be given priority by the Government.

Many participants indicated that general criteria for identifying priority biodiversity areas have already been developed internationally. These criteria should therefore serve as the starting point in Guyana's efforts, and should be adjusted to fit the conditions found in the country's forest. The High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) indicators were specifically suggested.

The participants at the workshop agreed that the following should be considered when developing the above-mentioned criteria:

1. Species richness and Special species contained within the area.
2. Special habitats.
3. Areas where activities would have broad impacts, such as wetlands, watersheds, climate (ecosystems).
4. Traditional-Use areas.
5. Areas that provide utility, tourism, and biodiversity services.
6. Threatened Areas.

The six areas mentioned in the workshop will therefore form the basis for the criteria used in identifying priority areas for biodiversity in Guyana's forests. It was concluded at the workshop that internationally developed criteria/indicators and/or principles should be reviewed and adjusted to fit the conditions found in Guyana's forest. Based on these recommendations, the EPA reviewed existing, internationally recognised criteria and prepared a report which includes a draft list of criteria adapted to Guyana's context. The High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) Toolkit developed by Pro-forest was used to guide the text of this document. This report will be submitted to stakeholders for their review and input at a second consultation.

2.21 Development of Multi-Year Plan to continue the process of titling, demarcation and extensions of Amerindian lands (March 2010 – ongoing)

Background and significance

Underlying the development of the Low Carbon Development Strategy will be the transformation of the Amerindian village economy, of governance and of tenure security and opening windows of opportunities for the all Amerindians, especially for those that depend on forest resources as means of livelihood. Accordingly, structures will be implemented to secure land rights by fast-forwarding the granting of titles and facilitating the demarcation of all titled Villages. Through the LCDS, the Government of Guyana

(GoG) is committed to fast tracking economic projects that are geared towards providing income and employment in every Amerindian cluster. These notwithstanding, the GoG interventions will be guided by the principles of free, prior and informed consent, under which principle Amerindian Villages will not be forced to participate in REDD+ nor will any pressure be put to “opt in” to the LCDS.

Land Titling and Demarcation

As part of the criteria for ‘opting-in’ to the strategy, the titling and demarcation processes of Amerindian Villages will have to be accelerated. The rationale for prioritizing Land Titling and Demarcation was also to enable the Villages to understand the boundaries of the lands they own; thereby enabling them to better manage and develop their lands in a sustainable manner. For this reason, providing a mechanism for granting of titles to communities that qualify and demarcating those Villages that accept demarcation will enhance and secure the positions of Villages to ‘opt-in’ to the LCDS.

Land titles have been given in different forms, namely as Amerindian villages, Amerindian areas, and Amerindian Districts. Amerindians hold land collectively, although individual/family parcels are identified and generally accepted at the village level. In some villages the village council has identified parcels of land for housing, farming, etc.

Amerindian land rights and ownership have always been a Government priority. To date, Amerindians collectively own 13.9% of Guyana’s land. The total number of Titled Amerindian Villages (i.e. having absolute grant of lands) is now ninety-six (96). Of these, seventy-seven (77) have been demarcated thus far. Titled Amerindian Villages have legal ownership of the land that falls within their domain. Ownership of land in Amerindian Villages is communal, meaning that the land is collectively owned by the Village under the administration of a Village Council and headed by a Toshao. The Village Council gives representation to the village and provides leadership and guidance on all aspects of the Village life. The Council coordinates the Village aspect of the allocation and use of the land to both residents and non-residents, including leases to non-residents and private companies, and occupation. The Amerindian Act #6 of 2006 allows Amerindian Village Councils to lease communal lands for up to 10% of the titled area. The Village Council also decides on the use of the village resources, in particular on how much land will be used for activities such as forestry, farming, and for residential occupancy, including providing permission for mining. Knowledge of its natural resources helps the Village to strengthen its Governance structure. This aim is accomplished by forming sub-committees to oversee specific resources; for example a Village may have a Forestry committee or association, and the same for monitoring mining activities or managing butterfly farms, or aquaculture for sports.

Demarcation helps the Village to know its boundaries and over how much land it can exert control over. In simple terms, land demarcation is the process of defining the boundaries of a Village so as to distinguish it from other Villages and from state lands. Moreover, a provision has been made for the Village to apply for an extension of its land in the event that its occupancy may justify receiving additional lands beyond the original boundaries as described in granted titles. Provided that the area does not conflict with another Village’s allocated boundaries, the request for extension should demonstrate its purpose.

Objectives of Land Titling and Demarcation

The objective of the Land Titling and Demarcation is to facilitate the Amerindian Land Titling and Demarcation process. Through engagement and consultation and based on requests from villages or communities, the project seeks to enable Amerindians to secure their lands and natural resources with a view towards sustainable social and economic development. It is expected that titling of communities and villages will strengthen land tenure security and the expansion of the asset base of Amerindians, allowing for long term planning for their future development. It is also expected to enhance the opportunities for villages to ‘opt-in’ to the REDD+ and the LCDS, should they wish to do so.

Fast - tracking the Land Titling and Demarcation is aimed at facilitating the following:

1. Demarcation of outstanding 19 villages with absolute Grants, of which 12 to be demarcated in 2011 that have agreed to demarcation.
2. Process land titling and issue an absolute Grant to 13 communities in 2011 that have already submitted requests to the MOAA.
3. To address the applications for extensions submitted by demarcated Villages.
4. To address the outcome of land matters involving Amerindian villages following the Court's decision.

Procedures for Land Titling and Demarcation of Amerindian Lands

Communities that never had Titled Lands

According to the Amerindian Act, Section 60:

An Amerindian Community may apply in writing to the Minister of Amerindian Affairs for a grant of state lands provided –

- (a) it has been in existence for at least 25 years;
- (b) at the time of application and for the immediately preceding five years, it comprised at least 150 persons.

The application must include –

- (a) the name of the Amerindian Community;
- (b) the number of persons in the Community;
- (c) the reason for the application;
- (d) a description of the area requested;
- (e) a resolution authorizing the application and passed by at least two thirds of the adult members of the Amerindian Community.

The application must be signed by at least four members of the adult community, and if the Community has a Community Council, at least four signatories must be members of this Council.²

Communities that have titled lands but are requesting extensions for a larger area

Under Section 59 of the Amerindian Act, a Village may apply in writing to the Minister of Amerindian Affairs for a grant of State lands as an extension to its Village lands. The application must include –

- (a) the name of the Village
- (b) the number of persons in the Village;
- (c) the area of land which the Village already owns;
- (d) the reason for the application;
- (e) a description of the area;
- (f) a copy of a resolution passed by two thirds of the Village general meeting, which authorizes the Village Council to make the application.

An application must be signed by the Toshiaw, Secretary and two other members of the Village Council. The application must be accompanied by a plan showing the existing Village lands prepared by a qualified land surveyor on the basis of a survey authorized by the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission.

The State shall pay for the cost of the survey.

² Note: Not all communities that qualify for title lands may have Community Councils.

Under Section 61:

Within one month of receiving the application for a grant of state lands or for an extension, the Minister of Amerindian Affairs shall respond in writing acknowledging receipt.

Within six months, an investigation will commence to obtain the following information:

- (a) a list of persons in the Community or Village and the number of households;
- (b) the names of all persons;
- (c) the length of time the Village or Community has occupied or used the area requested;
- (d) the use which the Village / Community makes of the land;
- (e) the size of the area occupied or used;
- (f) a description of the customs or traditions of the Village/ Community;
- (g) the nature of the relationship that the village or Community has with the land;
- (h) any interests or rights in or over the area of land requested;
- (i) whether there is a school, health centre or other initiative by the Amerindian Village/Community or Government;
- (j) any other information which the Minister reasonably considers to be relevant.

The Minister may accept information comprising:

- (a) oral or written statements from the Amerindian Village or Community;
- (b) authenticated or verified historical documents;
- (c) sketches and drawings prepared by the Amerindian Community or Village;
- (d) surveys prepared or authorized by the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission;
- (e) photographs;
- (f) reports or documents from anthropologists or archaeologists;
- (g) information in any other form which the Minister reasonably believes is appropriate.

During this period of investigation, a number of standard procedures are followed:

- The Minister writes to the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC) requesting:
 - That the sketch or description of the area provided by the community be converted into a preliminary sketch plan and description of the proposed area;
 - That the GLSC provide the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs with the names of any lessee in the requested area, if any;
- The Minister sends the preliminary sketch plan and description produced by the GLSC to the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) and the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC), requesting that they indicate any comments or concerns that they may have with the requested area. If there exist any forest or mining concessions or other conflicting land uses within or contiguous to the requested area, the relevant Commission must indicate this.
- The Minister³ visits the community to hold a consultation which is attended by the community members, as well as representatives of the GLSC, and if necessary⁴, GFC and GGMC and any other stakeholders who may reasonably claim to have an interest in the area of land requested.

³ In cases where there are no disputes or other concerns over the area of land requested, another Officer of the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs may attend the consultation in place of the Minister.

⁴ If there are no mining or logging concessions or interests in the requested area of land, GFC and GGMC need not attend the consultation session.

- The purpose of the consultation is to discuss the application and any issues or disputes that may exist over the requested area of land, to share information about the titling process and to verify the area under request.
- After discussion with the community and other relevant stakeholders, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs re-submits the preliminary sketch plan and description to GLSC indicating any changes to be made to the proposed boundaries.
- The preliminary sketch plan and description are amended accordingly by the GLSC and returned to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs.
- The Minister makes a decision on the community or village request:
 - If, in the view of the Minister, the application is straight forward, the request is submitted to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Amerindian Affairs and Natural Resources for no-objection.
 - If further negotiations are required, the Minister will commence negotiation with the community. Once negotiations are completed and an agreement is reached, the request is submitted to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Amerindian Affairs and Natural Resources for no-objection.

Under Section 62 of the Amerindian Act, the Minister of Amerindian Affairs will make a decision within six months of the investigation being completed. In making a decision the Minister shall take into account all information obtained in the investigation and consider the extent to which the Amerindian Village or Community has demonstrated a physical, traditional, cultural association with or spiritual attachment to the land requested.

Section 63 of the Amerindian Act states that: "If an application is approved, title shall be granted under the State Lands Act".

Under the State Lands Act, Section 3, the President may make absolute or provisional grants of any State lands of Guyana, subject to such conditions as he thinks fit or as are provided by the regulations for the time being in force. The State Lands Act also specifies that the issuance of a grant of State lands requires that the tract of land being granted must be surveyed by a surveyor (Section 18(1)), unless the area has previously been surveyed (Section 19(1)) or if the land is bounded by creeks or other well-defined limits (Section 19(2)).

In practice, therefore, the granting of title to Amerindian lands involves two distinct steps: 1) the issuance of an Absolute Grant of land to the community by the President; and 2) the demarcation and subsequent issuance of a Certificate of Title to the community.

The issuance of an Absolute Grant involves the following procedures:

- Upon the receipt of no-objection from the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Amerindian Affairs and Natural Resources, the request for title is submitted to Cabinet.
- Cabinet approves the request.
- Cabinet decision is issued to the GLSC and the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs.
- The Minister of Amerindian Affairs writes to the GLSC requesting that the grant be prepared.
- A Special Provision Plan, which is a map produced from aerial photography and using existing records, and the absolute Grant, are prepared by GLSC.
- The Commissioner of Lands and Surveys endorses Grant, which is then sent to the Office of the President for the signatures of the Head of the Presidential Secretariat and the President.
- The Grant, along with a certified copy of the Special Provision Plan, is then issued to the community by the President.

The issuance of a Certificate of Title involves the following procedures

- After having received a Grant from the President, the community may request to have their lands demarcated.

- The community writes to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs requesting that their lands be demarcated.
- The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs writes to the GLSC to inform them of the request and that funds have been allocated for the surveying, and ask that the process for surveying commences.
- GLSC advertises for surveyors⁵ or uses in-house surveyors.
- A surveyor is contracted to conduct the cadastral survey.
- The GLSC advises the Minister of the contractor's readiness to commence the survey.
- The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs informs the community that a surveyor has been selected to conduct the survey and introduces the surveyor to the community.
- A consultation takes place between the community, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs and the GLSC in order to discuss the demarcation process.
- At least three members of the community are employed as part of the team that conducts the cadastral survey. The Special Provision Plan, on which the Grant is based, is used to determine which boundaries must be demarcated on the ground. If all or part of the area is bounded by creeks or other natural or well-defined boundaries, it is not necessary to demarcate these stretches of the boundary.
- If the area lies on an international border, a buffer zone of 300 yards along the border must be observed.
- A cadastral survey is carried out in accordance with the State Lands Act, the Land Surveyors Act, the Land Registry Act, and any other Act which may be relevant, and in accordance with GLSC's standard operating procedures.
- The cadastral survey is completed and a Land Registration Plan, which is a map showing the accurate boundaries of the area after demarcation and registered in the Land Registry, is prepared by the GLSC. The Land Registration Plan must be certified correct by the Village Council.
- A first registration letter is prepared by the Cadastral Section of the GLSC⁶ and sent to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. This letter indicates that the Grant and Special Provisions Plan will be lodged with the Registrar of Lands under the Lands Registry Act, in order to be replaced with a Certificate of Title.
- The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs adopts the letter and sends it to the Registrar of Lands for preparation of the Certificate of Title.
- The Registrar of Lands prepares the Certificate of Title, based on the Land Registration Plan, in favour of the Village Council, and sends it to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs.
- The Certificate of Title is issued to the community by the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs.

Under Section 63 of the Amerindian Act 2006, in the case of a Village, title is granted to the Village Council to be held for the benefit of the Village. In the case of an Amerindian Community, the Minister shall by order establish a Village Council to hold title on behalf of the applicant Community, and upon the grant of a title the Amerindian Community becomes a Village.

The Amerindian Act recognises that there may be cases in which the community and the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs cannot come to an agreement on the area of land that the community can reasonably request title to. It therefore makes provision for a community to challenge the decision of the Minister, under Article 64 which states:

“An Amerindian Village or Community which is dissatisfied with the Minister’s decision [...] may apply to the High Court for review of the decision”.

⁵ Under the Land Surveyors Act, surveying of the land must be done by a licensed surveyor who has been certified by the Board of Examiners in Guyana.

⁶ Under Section 46 of the Land Registry Act Cap 5:02.

Challenges in Land Titling and Demarcation

Achieving the sustainable benefits to be derived from land ownership and management is a challenging and complex task that requires an array of skills, capacity and commitment from all involved.

- The high cost attached to land titling and demarcation and the limited human resources available to conduct multiple demarcations simultaneously are two severe challenges that face Amerindian land demarcation.
- The current process of demarcation involves cadastral surveys of the land, which is significantly more time-consuming than modern technology. However, GIS technology is applied for the production of the plans.
- Instances in which the Villages occupation conflicts with location of titled lands (for example Sawariwau and Katoonarib) the process can be delayed by the need for additional negotiations to arrive at agreement/consent by the villagers.
- Similarly, over time, the method of rotational farming did result in some occupancy outside of the titled lands. Once occupation is verified to have occurred as long as the village has been in existence as in the case of Massara Amerindian village extension has been approved for the farmlands. .

Expected Impact/Outcome

Absolute Grants and certificate and Certificate of titles are expected to be issued to eligible communities/villages that have submitted applications for titling, demarcation and extensions.

The expected outcome of the completion of demarcation and additional titling of eligible communities will result in even more strengthened land tenure security and in expansion of the assets of Amerindians in Guyana. These outcomes are expected to be realized with the GOG commitment to allocate increased financial resources from the Guyana-Norway MOU to accelerate the land titling and demarcation process. Land security, through demarcation, will perpetuate social cohesion, and thus will reduce conflicts, as stricter land rights and protected land use will be clearly defined.

To date, a total of 96 communities have received titled lands. Amerindian Titled lands are owned communally and administered through an elected Village council. The demarcation process is an ongoing process that has proven to be very expensive but the Government is fully committed to this process and provides resources for both titling and demarcation. Increased technical and human resource to do cadastral surveys will accelerate the process.

Seventy-seven (77) titled villages has so far completed the demarcation exercise and holds the certificate of title document and plan which detail the titled area.

Eight (8) extensions have so far been processed and approved, of which four (4) have completed the titling and demarcation exercise and the other four are scheduled to be addressed in 2011. Another 31 villages have applied for demarcation and are under review for processing.

There are presently thirteen (13) communities that are eligible for titling who have met the required stipulated legal criteria.

In the Upper Mazaruni Region (Region 7), a legal land titling issue involving six Amerindian Villages and the Government of Guyana is currently at the level of the courts. The expected outcomes of the Land Titling and Demarcation Programme are as follows:

1. Land titling and demarcation process completed at all Amerindian villages that have submitted requests
2. Strengthened mechanism to deal with unresolved land issues
3. Improved information dissemination on Amerindian Rights and the Land Titling Mechanism
4. Project Monitoring and evaluation of the Project activities.

Amerindian Development Fund – Grant based program

Benefits from the LCDS and REDD+ initiatives will flow to Amerindian Villages through the Amerindian Development Fund via a grant-based program. Each village will be eligible for a grant of \$5m-\$7m on a yearly basis to facilitate the formulation of economic ventures that will stimulate development and improve standards of living for the residents. Beneficiaries of this grant-based initiative will be all residents of the village with oversight of the village council. Selection criteria for projects will be based on their village economy component embedded into the village community development plans, with a clear identification of the cross-section and approval of the population that stands to benefit. Villages will be encouraged to be inclusive and to ensure that gender consideration is taken on board, as this will minimize migration and support family and village cohesion.

Technical support and insight will be provided to the Village Councils throughout the process. Training in project proposal writing, monitoring and evaluation, and financial management is imperative to the success of this initiative and will therefore be one of the priority activities. Equipping the Council with this increased capacity will ensure that structures are put in place and that projects are effectively monitored and success criteria are met within the given timelines. Transparency of operations will also be improved as clear procedures will be outlined to provide for accurate recording of all transactions and requisite record keeping in an effort to secure a proper paper trail of all accounts. The outcome will impact on the wider governance requirements to include strengthened institutional and administrative capacities and capabilities of the village councils and village members including women and youths.

Disbursement of funds will be similar to the Presidential Grant programme currently benefiting villages. A Village General Meeting will determine the most feasible projects. The Village Council takes the lead in preparing the proposal and budget with guidance from the technical officers at the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. Villages will be encouraged to pursue projects that are innovative, beneficial, and feasible. The projects will maximize the villages' resources, in line with the principles of the Low Carbon Development Strategy.

Economic

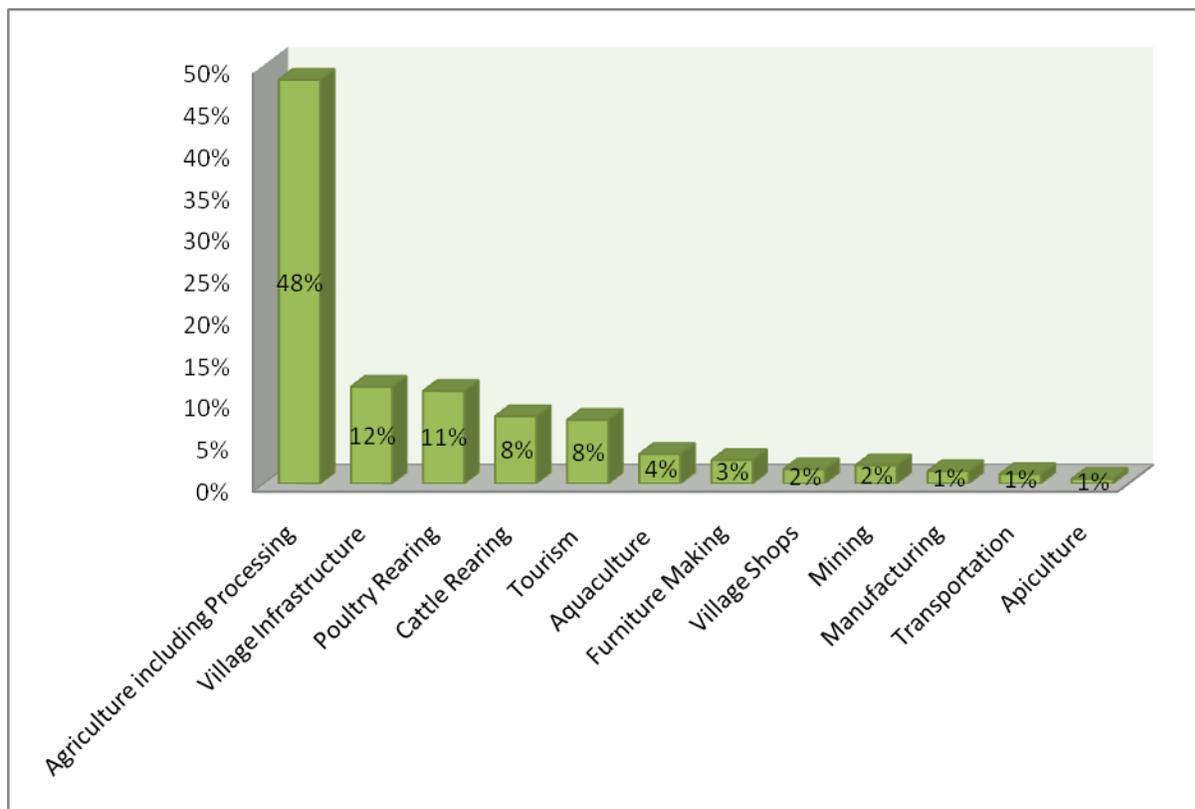
Provision of employment and income to all citizens of Guyana is one of the Government's principal objectives. On this note, significant national resources will be dedicated to engaging Amerindian cluster Villages in economic ventures that will seek to transform their village economies profoundly, through expansion of the National Hinterland Secure Livelihood Programme and the promotion of low carbon small business initiatives. Thus, stimulating increase income and employment generating capability. These ventures will be developed within the plan to promote low carbon enterprises in partnership with the Villages and will form a major component of their Community Development Plans. These plans are developed by the Village Council through a Village General Meeting, where consensus is reached on the most feasible projects, given the natural resources endowment and the geographic and topographic layout of the Village. Consideration is also given to access to market, infrastructure, up-stream and down-stream processing, and available skills within the Village.

It should be noted that Amerindian culture and heritage are very closely linked to the natural environment and therefore many of the CDPs drafted by these communities focus on sustainable development via traditional means. Additionally, self sufficiency and self government of Amerindian communities are advocated and fostered through the development and implementation of this process

An initial analysis of CDP submissions has been done to assess the consistency with the initial thrusts of LCDS.

Below is a graphical representation of the completed proposed projects by sector. Agriculture Projects represent the highest proportion of 48%, Village Infrastructure follows next with 12 %, poultry rearing

11%, cattle rearing 8%, tourism 8 %, Aquaculture 4%, Tourism 3% followed by Village Shops, Mining with 2% respectively. The rest which includes Apiculture, Manufacturing and Transportation have 1% each.



Agriculture and Agro-processing

Investments in high-potential low-carbon sectors, such as fruits and vegetables, will be a priority. Innovative techniques and methodologies will be introduced to build on existing local technology. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that the organic methods should be complement other safe and acceptable technological developed methods of Pest Control and Agriculture; savannah farming and promotion of organic agricultural management will support ongoing low carbon initiatives.

Significant investment will also be made that are geared at optimizing the use of agricultural products available in the many districts occupied by Amerindians with the construction of processing facilities for value added products as juice, farine, peanut butter, peanut punch, and dairy products among others. Inherent in all of the economic projects will be the use of clean energy sources. The installation of solar panels will be encouraged wherever energy is needed to power the projects.

Village Infrastructure:

Investments will be made in village infrastructure such as village centres, airstrips, multi-purpose skills training centers, farm to market roads, village market. These infrastructures would facilitate the economic activities that the village undertake, that would provide employment and generate income in the villages.

Aquaculture

In 1997, Guyana's National Development Strategy stated that aquaculture development should become a priority because of its potential to positively impact social and economic development by creating jobs and generating income. The LCDS further advocates rapid development of aquaculture as a high-earning low-carbon investment. -

Cattle Rearing and Processing

The topographic make up of some Villages, being that they are largely savannah, is conducive to large-scale cattle rearing and pasture cultivation. By this description, Region 9 and some Villages in Region 8 (Kurukabaru, Itabac, Kanapang, and Karisparu) qualify for an intervention of this nature. For clusters where cattle-rearing are likely to dominate, the construction of a processing facility will be appropriate for the stimulation of value-added meat production. The processing plant should offer services for slaughtering, processing, and packaging of meat and milk production. The plant will be situated in the most central Village to ease in the transporting of meat to markets. It is estimated that one such facility will cost approximately \$14m, while another \$40m will be required for the rearing of the animals in every district in which this project will be implemented.

Manufacturing and Value-added Production

The rich land resources coupled with unique skills of the Amerindian people provide myriad of opportunities for growth in the manufacturing sector. The development of non-timber products, handicraft, cattle rearing and agro-processing are some of the potentially viable projects that have been identified out to improve and expand job prospects and incomes for the indigenous peoples. Many Villages, most notably those in the North Rupununi, have capitalized on this area of expertise and have thriving micro-industries that produce a range of non-timber forest products including furniture, jewellery, and other items of this nature.

Processing facilities will be established, financing mechanisms and technical support will be provided towards positioning packing and processing facilities on par with accepted standards. Additionally, training in financial management and administrative control will be provided to Villages that embark in value-added production, in order to ensure sustainability and viability.

Ecotourism

Ecotourism entails sustainable travel through Communities by conserving natural resources and preserving cultural values. Whilst Guyana's pristine forest serves as a major contributor to the world's environmental services, its visual aesthetics are unknown by many. Guyana's most marketed eco-tourist sites are Kaieteur National Park and Iwokrama Rainforest.

There exist many avenues for tourism in Amerindian Villages. Ecotourism is seen as a precursor for the overall development of Guyana, especially with its wide variety of flora, fauna and indigenous culture. With a proper documentary, effective advertising and networking strategy, villages can benefit from increased income, employment and improved overall standard of living. There however is a need for substantial capital investment by the Government, diverted towards provision of accommodation, energy and communication for the villages to have a competitive advantage in the tourism market.

All hinterland regions (regions 1, 7, 8 & 9) have potential viable eco-tourist destinations based on its geographical location, land composition, flora and fauna and basic hospitality infrastructure (village guest house, lodges etc), that they already possess. Amerindian Villages in regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 10 are viable for community based agro tourism businesses. Networking with the other relevant ministries and agencies to build capacities of local stakeholders for unleashing the potential of community tourism development in the villages, their inclusion and opportunities to benefit from the current enabling tourism incentives for pioneering efforts, while allocation of finance for capital investments and the development of marketing strategies may be sourced from the ADF and other source of available seed funds.

Cultural

Demarcation guarantees that the land remains the property of the Amerindian Village, thus providing a sense of security. Having this sense of ownership makes it easier for the Village to preserve and protect sacred sites that are inherent to the formation and history of their culture.

Land ownership is inextricably interwoven with the preservation of cultural identity. Land is indispensable in the development of beliefs, traditions, language, customs and norms; all of which grow when security over land tenure is manifest and assured. The development of language, if nurtured within a community, is sustained when cultural values remain cohesive and are neither eroded nor challenged by the lack of Amerindian pride emanating from a lack of cultural identity. It is imperative to protect Amerindian Culture through documentation and archiving of traditional languages, as it gears itself towards further economic prosperity with the opportunity for enhancing the heritage of Amerindians while working to minimize the risks of losing traditional values.

Environmental

Demarcation allows the 'owners' to clearly understand the extent of their ownership and to engage in negotiations with more certainty when dealing with private individuals engaging in profit-making ventures within their boundaries. These individuals include miners and loggers who may be granted concessions on village lands and are, therefore, required to abide to the rules of the Village in terms of employment and payment of royalties. Conflicts arising in this regard between companies and the village can be easily solved by re-examining the boundaries.

Of equal importance is the fact that whether villages consent to opt in or not to 'opt-in' to the Low Carbon Development Strategy; they are all eligible to receive benefits under the initiative at the national level. Likewise, those villages that do "opt in" will receive direct benefits. REDD + and LCDS activities can easily be monitored if village boundaries are defined.

Clear tenure systems and communal management of village lands can lend themselves to sustainable land & resource use and to an effective system of wildlife conservation. Therefore, demarcation of village lands is of great importance as it would allow for proper planning, management and use of land and natural resources within the Amerindian villages. Proper management of natural resources and land can help to mitigate the impacts of climate change/extreme weather conditions such as flood, drought and fires, and avoid other negative effects on natural capital – which would potentially have damaging effects on livelihood of Amerindian communities. Also, the villages would be able to conserve, support alternative livelihoods and sustainable development activities that would foster diversification of local economies, while contributing to the reduction of global carbon emissions.

Governance and Management

Titling and demarcation make it easier to develop and enforce their village rules. This is as a direct consequence of having ownership and exercising control over their land and resources. The Amerindian Act (section 14 (1) endows the Village Council with the leverage to make rules that govern (b) 'the occupation and use of Village lands;' (e) 'the protection and sustainable management of wildlife including restrictions on hunting, fishing, trapping, poisoning, setting fires and other interference with wildlife' and (l) 'the granting of permission for business or trade on Village lands'. Under the direction and guidance of the Amerindian Act, 2006 the Village Council also has the power to investigate breaches of rules and impose fines for those breaches. As such, it is even more important that all communities who qualify to be titled as an Amerindian Village and after being titled villages should immediately seek demarcation so that they have legal ownership of their land with a clear map showing the extent of their communal ownership.

Solar Energy:

The GOG will continue to address the energy needs of hinterland villages and communities. Solar power programme is designed to include the distribution of solar units to every household. The expansive programme proposed to achieve full coverage at the household level in all Amerindian villages and communities. The programme makes provision for supporting the energy needs of a large number of emerging small manufacturing and processing units and other economic enterprises with the objectives of complementing the wider approach for stimulating sustainable transformative economic activities in the Amerindian villages.

The impacts of Solar Energy Programme will see improvement of social and economic aspects of village life, and the growth of capacities of the human resource in the village.

Logical Framework: Amerindian Development and Land Demarcation.

Components	Planned activities	Expected Output	OVI	MOV	2011		2012		2013		2014		TOTAL	
					US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$				
					Number of villages	Cost	Number of villages	Cost	Number of villages	Cost	Number of villages	Cost	Number of villages	Cost US\$
1. Land demarcation and Demarcation														
1.1 Demarcation of villages with Grants	Demarcate the vilages with grants Stimulate demarcation request from five (5) vilages that have not yet applied for demarcation	Successfully demarcated vilages Five requests for land demarcation received by MoAA	Number of Vilages Titled. Number of new applications for demarcations received.	COT Land demarcation applications	12	\$ 1,643,822.05	8	\$1,653,100.00	0	0	11	\$2,187,500.00	31	\$ 5,484,422.00
1.2 Grants to untitled fourteen (14) communities	Granting titles to thirteen eligible communities	Thirteen successfully titled communities	Number of communities titled	COT Applications	13	\$108,645.60	0		0				13	\$ 108,645.60
1.3 Grants to vilage extensions	Titling of vilages that have been approved for extension Investigating and Titling of vilages that have applied for extensions	Titles to four approved extensions Successfully titled land extension	Titled Land extensions	Applications for Land extensiions COT	9	\$ 67,458.00	10	\$82,520.00	13	\$ 135,776.00	3	\$33,006.00	35	\$329,762.00
1.4 Demarcation of vilage extensions	Demarcation of approved extensions	Successfully demarcated land extension	Demarcated land extensions	Application for land extension demarcation	10	\$ 1,175,553.75	10	\$ 1,778,961.00	13	\$ 2,780,475.00	3	\$ 772,500.00	36	\$6,764,988.00
1.5 Titling and demarcation Administrative Costs	Employment of administrative staff Procurement of office supplies	Successful recruitment of staff	Number of contracted staff	Employment contract Office supplies	-	168,673.97	-	194,629.05	-	\$ 164,712.55	-	168,550.30	-	\$ 696,565.82
TOTAL COST					-	3,164,153.36		3,709,210.05		3,080,963.55		3,161,556.30		13,115,888.00

Economic Activities

1. Economic Activities	Planned Activities	Expected Output	MOV	OVI	2011: G\$	US\$
2.1. Agriculture (incl. poultry & cattle)	To provide food security while expanding the income generating capacity of Amerindian Villages.	Establishment of 106 projects in the areas of farming including processing, cattle rearing and poultry rearing	Number of farms established Number of farmers trained Number of person employed	Farms Training reports Reports/Sales records Associations formed	Total: GYD\$ 533,784,570.00	Total: US\$ 2,668,922.85
2.2 Village Infrastructure	To build and improve existing infrastructure which will improve the socio and economic interaction of villagers	Establishment of 18 projects which will enhance village economies	Number of new buildings constructed Numbers of individuals employed	Buildings Reports	Total: GYD\$ 102,624,960.00	US \$513,124.80
2.3. Manufacturing	Provide opportunities for growth in the manufacturing sector through utilizing existing skills and resources.	Establishment of a clay brick factory and a water bottling plant	Number of equipment procured Number of buildings constructed Number of training sessions Quantity of produced made and sold Package and label developed Number of training sessions	Equipment/receipts Buildings Reports/Pictures Sales records/receipts Processing plant Training report	Total: GYD\$ 11,946,000.00	US \$ 59,730.00

2.4. Tourism	To provide overall development of Amerindians through their wide variety of flora, fauna and indigenous culture.	11 classy tourism areas which boast accommodation for tourist who are drawn to the Village by the pristine lakes, stunning sights, bird watching etc	Number of guest houses constructed Benab and play parks Number of persons employed Solar panels installed	Guest house Benab and play park Visitor records Employment records Solar panel	Total: GYD\$ 66,874,000.00	US \$334,370.00
2.5 Aquaculture	To lessen the dependence on natural fish stock through the introduction of fish farming technology and also providing an alternative source of livelihood	Establishment of Aquaculture project in 5 communities	Number of ponds built Site selected Number of persons trained in fish farming Number of ponds dug Number of fabrication nets installed Quantity of fish reared and sold Number of Associations Formed	Ponds Training report Reports/Sales records Associations	Total: GYD\$ 28,680,000.00	US \$ 143,400.00
2.6 Furniture Making	To provide opportunities for growth in the timber sector through the development of high quality furniture	Establish of 6 furniture manufacturers.	Number of Buildings built Equipment purchased Individuals trained	Buildings Equipment Training Reports	Total: GYD\$ 31,829,980.00	US\$159,149.90

				Production and sales records		
2.7 Village Shops	To provide Amerindians in remote areas, easier access to food and clothing.	Establishment of 5 village shops	Number of Buildings Stocks purchases Individuals Trained	Buildings Stocks Purchases and sales ledger Reports	Total: GYD\$ 14,836,000.00	US\$ 74,180.00
2.8 Mining	To increase the income generating capacity of village economies thorough sustainable mining.	The development of 2 sustainable mining projects	Equipment purchased Individuals trained Number of Villagers employed	Equipment Training reports Production records	Total: GYD\$ 17,739,240.00	US\$ 88,696.20
2.9 Transportation	To provide easier access for the people and students of Amerindian Villages.	Procurement of 2 buses to transport school children long distances	Buses purchased	Buses Maintenance schedule and reports	Total: GYD\$ 9,211,000.00	US \$46,055.00
3.0 Apiculture	To diversify income sources of villagers.	Introduction of Beekeeping as a means of livelihood in one community	Equipments purchased Individuals trained Hives established	Equipment Hives Production and sales records	Total: GYD\$ 4,567,500.00	US \$22,837.50
Total:					GY\$ 822,093,250.00	US \$4110466.25

2.22 Development of a Mechanism for distribution of REDD+ funds as set out in LCDS (February 2010 – ongoing)

Since the launch of the Low Carbon Development Strategy on June 8, 2009, considerable progress was made both at the national and at the international level to promote the Strategy and to gain support for avoided deforestation.

On May 24, 2010, the revised version of the LCDS was released and launched by His Excellency President Jagdeo. The event took place at the Umana Yana and involved remarks from members of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee. The revised draft of the LCDS places greater emphasis on implementation, and outlines seven key priority areas for investment of forest payments over the next two years.

In 2010 and 2011, Interim REDD+ revenue of approximately US\$70 million will be invested in projects as set out in Chapter 9 – Pg 51 of the revised LCDS as follows:

Investing Payments in 2010 and 2011

In 2010 and 2011, Interim REDD+ revenue of between US\$60 million and US\$111 million in total will be invested as shown in Table 2. The individual investments are described below.

Table 2: 2010-2011: Indicative Investment Plan (US\$ millions)

	2010		2011	
	Min	Max	Min	Max
Amaila Falls Equity ⁷	19	20	20	35
Amerindian Development Fund	4	8.2	4	12.3 ⁸
Amerindian Land Titling	3	3	3	3
Fibre Optic Cable	0	4.5	0	6.5
SME and Vulnerable Groups' Alternative Livelihoods	1.5	3	1.5	5
International Centre for Bio-Diversity Research, Low Carbon Curriculum Development and IT Training	1	2	0	2
MRV and Other Support for LCDS ⁹	1.5	3.2	1.5	3.7
TOTAL	30	43.9	30	67.9

⁷ A further investment of US\$5 million in Amaila Falls Equity may take place in 2012

⁸ This figure is based on 2009 titled villages. If there are more villages titled by the end of 2010 (the period for which 2011 payments are made), this figure will be higher.

⁹ Guyana is also likely to receive further funding to assist in developing Enabling Capabilities from the Forest Carbon Partnership Fund (FCPF). The country may receive up to US\$3.6 million in the coming years. Once there is further clarity on this funding stream, it will be integrated with the Interim REDD payments.

Guyana has also received proposals from Overseas Development agencies for capability development. If these proposals progress, they will also be integrated into this funding stream.

Further details on LCDS projects can be obtained from the GRIF link on the LCDS web site.

2.23 Publicise all relevant information on REDD+ and LCDS efforts including information on funding (February 2010 – ongoing)

The Joint Concept Note in the Guyana Norway Memorandum of Understanding provides: *“Transparency and accountability are key to success in any REDD-plus effort. REDD-plus-relevant decisions and data should be publicly available. An overview of all funding directed to activities relevant to REDD-plus/LCDS efforts in Guyana shall be made public and be updated on the LCDS website, in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of the funds and to provide transparency concerning contributors to Guyana’s REDD-plus/LCDS efforts”.*

The Government of Guyana is committed to following these principles throughout the process. The LCDS and REDD+ processes have until now demonstrated transparency, accountability, availability of information and public participation, and will continue to do so.

Conceptual Framework and IIED Report: As part of the partnership between Norway and Guyana on REDD, and in response to the request of President Jagdeo for independent monitoring of the stakeholder consultation process in Guyana to ensure it complies with international standards, the Government of Norway engaged the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to provide advice to assist the consultation process. A ‘Conceptual Process Framework’ to guide the process was produced at the beginning of the engagement period. Nine principles have been followed throughout the consultative process: transparency, inclusivity, information, timeliness, representation, flexibility, clarity, accountability and continuity. There is commitment to continue following the principles the entire duration of the process. Indigenous communities were also consulted following the principles of ‘free, prior and informed consent’. A report was produced at the end of the consultation process, in preparation to the redrafting of the LCDS. The IIED noted both strengths and limitations in the national consultation process, and these are laid out in detail in the IIED document that is on the LCDS website. *“The Independent Monitoring Team finds that the*

process of multi-stakeholder consultation surrounding Guyana’s Low Carbon Development Strategy has

broadly followed principles derived from international best practice and has met these criteria. It is the opinion of this team that the consultative process, to the extent that its findings inform a revised LCDS, can be considered credible, transparent and inclusive. The government’s commitment to transparency and accountability has been commendable during the preliminary consultation process of the LCDS and it is hoped that the openness and inclusivity with which this first phase is proceeding will be strengthened and continued in the ongoing phases of its development and implementation”.

Committees: The Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC) and the MRVS Steering Committee embrace concepts of inclusivity and all relevant stakeholders have been invited to participate to the periodic meetings.

Websites: All reports, relevant documents, minutes of meetings and news are promptly uploaded on the LCDS and/or GFC websites.

The LCDS website is a platform of information on broad subjects related to the LCDS and climate change. It publishes reports from the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC), published verbatim reports from the consultation and awareness sessions, press statements, terms of agreements (such as the MoU with the Government of Norway), the report compiled by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) on the LCDS process and relevant documents on Amerindian land tenure and rights. The GFC website publishes documents more pertaining to the REDD+ process. It includes the RPP Plan, reports of the MRVS Steering Committee, reports of workshops, among others. All reports, relevant documents, minutes of meetings and news are promptly uploaded on the LCDS and/or GFC websites.

Awareness tools: a series of tools to make the LCDS and REDD+ processes available to stakeholders and to the general public will include:

- Presentations and speaking tours to specialised audiences
- Display booths and presence at conferences and exhibitions
- Lectures
- Personalized letters
- Text messages
- Articles, features and letters on media
- Viewpoints
- Advertisements
- Infomercials
- Panel discussions
- TV panel discussions
- Documentaries
- Banners and billboards
- Handouts

The present structure of transparency and accountability will remain and be strengthened. There is dedicated website for the Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund (GRIF) which is managed by the PMO and OCC.

Information on REDD+ funding, in particular on the mechanisms of disbursement and investment will be also published. A dedicated page on the LCDS web site will be continually updated to provide information on international financial support for Guyana's LCDS and REDD+ efforts including indication of activities to be supported by these funds. The page has already been established at <http://www.lcds.gov.gy/international-financing-for-lcds-and-redd.html>

3 ANNEXES

3.1 Annex A Guidance of the JCN for the REDD+ Governance Plan

As indicated in the JCN the REDD+ Governance Plan should include the following points:

- Transparency and accountability are key to success in any REDD-plus effort. REDD-plus-relevant decisions and data should be publicly available. Guyana recognizes the need to demonstrate international standards, and therefore aims to implement IFM. Data generated through IFM and EITI (or an alternative mechanism agreed by the Participants to further the same aim as EITI) could also serve as input and/or verifiers to the forest carbon accounting system. Guyana has also decided to enter into a dialogue with the European Union with the purpose of entering the FLEGT program; through a Voluntary Partnership Agreement;
- The development of a system for reporting on the multiple benefits of REDD-plus, including on measures to protect biological diversity, improved livelihoods, good governance, and how the Constitutional protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are facilitated within the framework of Guyana's REDD-plus efforts.
- The development of a national, inter-sectoral, land use planning system in order to avoid national leakage, with REDD-plus as the overarching goal and with specific emphasis on managing the impacts of infrastructure development and agricultural expansion on forests;
- The development of valuation systems for determining the costs and benefits of different alternatives and courses of action on the forest resource, related to environmental benefits and new alternative uses of forests, and also more classical uses and standing timber values;
- A strengthened forest monitoring and control system, focusing on all significant drivers of deforestation and degradation, including logging, mining and agriculture activities on forest lands. Monitoring and control activities must be intensified in areas identified as or assumed to be of high risk of deforestation and forest degradation, for example in border areas or adjacent to infrastructure developments;
- Establishment of criteria for identifying priority areas for biodiversity within Guyana's forests, to inform the overall land use planning system and especially the REDD-plus component of the LCDS. Policies should be put in place for concession holders in the different REDD-plus-relevant areas, such as logging, mining and agriculture, to adopt best practice, including with regards to protecting biodiversity. Indicators to monitor progress should be put in place, e.g., increases in areas with certified REDD-plus-relevant concessions; and over time company compliance with EITI or equivalent commitments if appropriate. Identified forest biodiversity priority areas should also be targeted for expanded conservation/protection efforts;
- The development of a multi-year plan to continue the process of titling, demarcation, and extension of Amerindian lands when requested to do so by Amerindian communities, with the aim of completing the process for outstanding requests. The Government of Guyana has expressed the urgency of accelerating this process, and sees REDD-plus as an opportunity to achieve this;
- The development of the mechanisms by which distribution of REDD-plus funds will occur, as set out in the LCDS. The distribution system will be publicly available and will be reported on annually. The Government of Guyana has stated that all REDD-plus funds that accrue for indigenous peoples will be allocated to indigenous communities. The RGDP will set out more detail about how this will work. The system will recognize the stewardship role of indigenous peoples protecting forest on their traditional lands;

- An overview of all funding directed to activities relevant to REDD-plus/LCDS efforts in Guyana shall be made public and be updated on the LCDS website, in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of the funds and to provide transparency concerning contributors to Guyana's REDD-plus/LCDS efforts;
- The mandating and where appropriate establishment of operational institutions tasked with and given authority to implement and coordinate strategic activities of the LCDS as well as Guyana's REDD-plus plans as part of the LCDS, as prioritized by Guyana through its multi-stakeholder consultation process. These institutions will also coordinate national and international actors involved in efforts relevant to REDD-plus and be responsible for identifying human resources needs in the various entities involved in the REDD-plus governance process;
- The continuation of the institutionalized, transparent, multi-stakeholder processes to ensure that grievances can be addressed as an intrinsic part of Guyana's ongoing REDD-plus efforts.