



14 March 2013

UN-REDD Programme Statement Regarding Recent Communications with COONAPIP (the National Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples in Panama)

The UN-REDD Programme acknowledges with concern the receipt of the letter from COONAPIP dated 27 February 2013 in which the organization withdraws from the UN-REDD Programme in Panama. The reason COONAPIP provided for this withdrawal is that the Programme did not guarantee respect for the rights of indigenous peoples nor for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in its activities in Panama.

The UN-REDD Programme is taking immediate action to respond to the concerns raised by COONAPIP; this will include a proposal for independent mediation as well as the immediate implementation of the planned independent mid-term evaluation to assess the National Programme in Panama.

From its inception, the UN-REDD Programme has prioritized stakeholder engagement and in particular, engagement with indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities. The Programme has made great efforts to promote and respect the rights of indigenous peoples through a number of activities, including ensuring indigenous peoples are represented on the UN-REDD Policy Board and in key decision making processes in the 16 partner countries that have active National Programmes.

The UN-REDD Programme is committed to ensuring adherence to a human-rights based approach and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and has developed the following Guidelines and Principles to support National Programmes on this: the [Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement](#) in REDD+ Readiness with a focus on Indigenous Peoples and Forest Dependent Communities; [the UN-REDD Programme Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent \(FPIC\)](#); and the [Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria \(SEPC\)](#).

The UN-REDD Programme considers the concerns of its stakeholders to be of the highest importance and will do everything it can to demonstrate to COONAPIP and others its continued commitment to recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples.