

17 June 2009

Dear Mr. Eguren,

I take the opportunity of the completion of the UN-REDD Programme's second Policy Board (held in Montreux, Switzerland 14-15 June) to introduce myself as the new Head of the UN-REDD Secretariat, based in Geneva. I also would like to thank you for your support for the UN-REDD Programme in Panama.

As you know, Panama's National Programme was not submitted formally to the Policy Board. Eduardo Reyes (Deputy Director, ANAM) did however present the outline of it as a progress report. He was quite insistent he had fulfilled the obligations of the UN-REDD Programme and the funding request for the National Programme should be considered by the Policy Board. The UN-REDD Secretariat and UN Agencies asserted that not all requirements of UN-REDD's Rules of Procedure and Operational Guidance had been met.

After a lengthy and sometimes heated discussion, the Policy Board invited Panama to submit its National Programme for inter-sessional decision by electronic circulation. It was agreed to earmark up to USD 5.3 million for Panama's Programme, in the expectation that all submission requirements are met. The Policy Board requested the UN-REDD Secretariat and UN Agencies to expedite the process of inter-sessional decision.

The three outstanding submission requirements are:

1. Validation meeting
2. UN-REDD Secretariat review
3. Independent technical expert review

Once the requirements are completed, the National Programme will be circulated to the Policy Board members for ten working days. The Policy Board would then consider whether to approve the funding allocation to the National Programme.

To: Mr. Jose Eguren, UN Resident Coordinator, Panama  
Cc: Mr. Peter Grohmann, UNDP Country Director, Panama  
Dr. Mara Murillo, interim Regional Director, UNEP  
Dr. Deodoro Roca, FAO Country Representative, Panama  
Mr. Nick Remple, UNDP Regional Environment Team Leader



It is important to note that Policy Board approval does not result in the disbursement of funds. In order for the Multi-Donor Trust Fund to release any funds they must receive a copy of the signed National Programme Document – signed by the appropriate Government counterpart(s), the country representatives of FAO & UNDP, the Deputy Executive Director of UNEP and yourself – the UN Resident Coordinator. Signature of the Document follows the normal national process for the UN in Panama.

As such, the next immediate step to take to demonstrate the UN Agencies can respond to the Policy Board is to hold the Validation Meeting. The UN-REDD's Operational Guidance explains the arrangements for Validation Meetings (relevant section enclosed). It is a meeting between the UN Resident Coordinator (or designate), national government counterpart -in this case ANAM (or designate) and representative(s) of civil society and Indigenous Peoples.

The purpose of the Validation Meeting is to:

- (i) Ensure parties are satisfied that it is appropriate for the UN Resident Coordinator to submit the National Programme to the UN-REDD Secretariat
- (ii) Confirm the information in the draft National Programme is valid, with particular reference to the consultations with stakeholders

If the UN Resident Coordinator is not satisfied, the reasons should be discussed and necessary actions agreed. Once satisfied, signed minutes of the meeting should be forwarded to the UN-REDD Secretariat with the National Programme document.

Given the decision of the Policy Board, I would be extremely grateful for your kind assistance in ensuring the meeting is held as soon as possible, either with you or your designate (who can be a representative of FAO, UNDP or UNEP). Representatives of the National Coordination of the Indigenous Peoples of Panama (COONAPIP) are here in Montreux attending the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership meeting held in conjunction with our Policy Board. COONAPIP recently sent a letter of concern to the World Bank regarding the participation of Indigenous Peoples in ANAM's REDD work (letter attached). It would appear critical for COONAPIP to participate in the Validation Meeting.

The COONAPIP representative here in Montreux is seeking to have the COONAPIP representatives available in Panama City next Wednesday, 24 June. Should this date suit you, or your designate, my colleague Tim Clairs, UNDP's representative in the UN-REDD Secretariat, is available to travel to Panama to participate in the meeting. Please do not hesitate to contact Tim directly for further information.

Thank you once again for your support of the UN-REDD Programme. I look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely,

For,  
Dr. Yemi Katerere  
Head, UN-REDD Secretariat

## Extract from UN-REDD Programme Operational Guidance

### Country Validation of the Draft National Joint Programme (NJP)

Before being submitted to the Secretariat, the draft NJP must be validated in-country as part of the ongoing consultative process. It is an initial step to ensure government ownership of the NJP and civil society engagement. It requires consultation among the following:

- The UN Resident Coordinator (or designate)
- National Government counterpart (or designate)
- Civil Society/Indigenous Peoples representative(s)<sup>1</sup>.

Evidence of the consultation should be appropriately documented (*i.e.* signed minutes of meeting(s) – referred to as “validation meeting(s)”).

Where a National REDD Steering Committee or equivalent mechanism has been established, it should be used for the validation purpose.

Wherever possible, existing appropriate coordination mechanisms are encouraged to be used – provided they meet the requirements set out above.

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<sup>1</sup> In this context the representative(s) will be determined in one of the following ways:

- i. Self-determined representative(s) meeting the following requirements:
  - Selected through a participatory, consultative process
  - Having national coverage or networks
  - Previous experience working with the Government and UN system
  - Demonstrated experience serving as a representative, receiving input from, consulting with, and providing feedback to, a wide scope of civil society/Indigenous Peoples organizations
- ii. Representative(s) who participated in a UN-REDD Programme scoping and/or formulation mission and sit(s) on a UN-REDD Programme consultative body established as a result of the mission
- iii. Individual(s) recognized as legitimate representative(s) of a national network of civil society and/or Indigenous Peoples organizations (e.g. the GEF Small Grants National Steering Committee or National Forest Programme Steering Committee)

