

UN-REDD PROGRAMME



23 March 2013

Communiqué

The UN-REDD Programme launches independent evaluation of its activities in Panama

The UN-REDD Programme reiterates its unwavering commitment to promoting and upholding the rights of indigenous peoples. The UN-REDD Programme's policy and programming continues to be informed by and adheres to a human-rights based approach, and full respect for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Representatives of indigenous peoples form part of the UN-REDD Programme's Policy Board, the Programme's consensus-based governing body, which also includes representatives from partner countries, donors, civil society and UN agencies. Indigenous peoples play a critical role in key decision-making processes in the 16 partner countries that have active National Programmes.

Accordingly, the UN-REDD Programme has acknowledged and taken immediate steps to address the concerns raised by COONAPIP, the National Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples in Panama, in their letter dated 27 February 2013 in which the organization withdraws from the UN-REDD Programme in Panama.

In response to the recent communications from COONAPIP, a delegation of senior representatives from the UN-REDD Programme undertook a mission to Panama from 20 to 21 March 2013 to meet with stakeholders. The high-level mission had a meeting with technical staff of COONAPIP, as senior officials were not available. In this meeting, COONAPIP reiterated their decision to withdraw from the National Programme in Panama. The UN-REDD Programme acknowledges and respects COONAPIP's decision. The mission also met with government representatives, including the Minister of Environment, UN agencies and project staff.

The UN-REDD Programme notes with concern COONAPIP's allegations of human rights violations and seeks further clarification and specific details on this matter. The UN-REDD Programme will immediately launch an independent evaluation of the National Programme, with a view to thoroughly investigate the allegations made by COONAPIP. Although the evaluation will assess the entire National Programme, it will place particular emphasis on the participation of indigenous peoples in the Programme. The evaluation is expected to be completed by June 2013 and the results will be made public and disseminated widely as soon as they are available. Until such time, any new activities of the National Programme in Panama are suspended.

Information on the National Programme in Panama is available at <http://www.un-redd.org/UNREDDProgramme/CountryActions/panama/tabid/1030/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

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