

The European Union's programme on Tropical Forests and other Forests in Developing Countries

Developing alternatives for illegal chainsaw milling through multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ghana and Guyana

Focus Group 2 Report – Policy Makers Roundtable



This project is financed by the European Union.



A collaborative project of Tropenbos International, Forestry Training Centre Inc. and Iwokrama International Center of Rainforest Conservation and Development.

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multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ghana and Guyana**

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ENV/2007/133-003

Focus Group Report Policy Makers Roundtable Discussions

Final Report

March 2009

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List of Acronyms

CITES	Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species
EU	European Union
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FTCI	Forestry Training Centre Inc.
GFC	Guyana Forestry Commission
GoG	Government of Guyana
GPS	Global Positioning System
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organisation
Iwokrama	Iwokrama Int'l Centre for Rain Forest Conservation & Development
MOU	Memorandum / Memoranda of Understanding
MSD	Mutli-Stakeholder Dialogue
NCC	National Climate Committee
NREAC	National Resources & Environment Advisory Committee
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation Framework
RIL	Reduced Impact Logging
SEMP	Sustainable Environment Management Practices
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SFP	State Forest Permit
TSA	Timber Sales Agreement
WCL	Wood Cutting Lease
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Overview of Framework & Objectives of Policy Makers Round Table

A high level round table discussion with representatives of the key policy making agencies concerned with the Forestry sector in Guyana was held on January 14, 2009 at Guyana Forestry Commission, Lower Conference Room, Water Street, Kingston, Georgetown. The “Policy Makers Roundtable Discussion” was designed and facilitated as a focus group session through the Chainsaw Milling Project in Guyana. (See *Background Briefing Note at Appendix 3*)

A series of these round tables and focus group sessions are being conducted by the project facilitators with a two fold purpose in mind: (i) to provide information and a stakeholder orientation on the Chainsaw Milling Project in Guyana and; (ii) to bring on board the perspectives of the relevant key stakeholder groups so as ensure a participatory process for developing the framework design for the national multi-stakeholder dialogue on chainsaw milling in Guyana.

1.2 Specific Objectives of the Policy Makers Round Table

The specific objectives of the Policy Maskers Round Table were to:

- Sensitize / brief / update policy makers on the Project;
- Receive feedback on the present opportunities and future challenges for chainsaw lumbering in Guyana;
- Field a number of Probe Questions related to chainsaw policy and sustainable forestry issues so as to solicit opinions and perspectives from policy makers;
- Facilitate the identification of concrete actions being taken by policy makers in the medium and long term.

1.3 Sustainable Development Framework

The five essential principles of the Bruntland Report’s definition for sustainable development were utilised as part of the orientation to establish the general framework and focus for the p0licy-makers discussions.

Five (5) Essential Principles that underpin sustainable development

1. Sustainable development must satisfy economic, environmental and social needs in the present and future and to be able to maintain the economic and environmental means to do so.
2. Sustainable development should provide the opportunity for all people to satisfy their needs equitably, both within and between generations.
3. Sustainable Development should minimize activities that cause serious environmental damage, ensure that renewable resources are managed and used in ways which do not diminish the capacity of the ecological systems to continue providing those resources, and ensure that non-

The Bruntland Report “Our Common Future”- United Nations World Commission on Environment & Development 1987, named for the Chair Gro Bruntland, provided the world with the definition of sustainable human development and its key principles.

renewables are managed and used in ways which account for future needs and the availability of alternative resources.

4. Sustainable development should operate within critical ecological limits
5. Sustainable development should maintain high environmental quality standards throughout urban and rural areas.

2 Focus Group Methodology

The use of the roundtable style of meeting proved to be suitable and effective for this level of stakeholder group – policy makers. The Opening Session moderated utilised the Card technique to gauge and record the policy-makers perceptions, expectations and challenges concerning the project and related chainsaw lumbering issues. Green and Red colour-coded cards were used for the activity: Green for Expectations and Red for Challenges. A series of Probe Questions were then fielded for interactive response and discussion.

3 Probe Questions and Responses

A number of Probe Questions were designed and utilised in this session by the facilitators in order to deepen thought and discussion and for perspectives to be shared by the policy-makers on some of the specific issues surrounding current chain saw lumbering policy as well as the challenges faced and new directions being taken or proposed.

The Probe Questions tabled for the Focus Groups' consideration key and recurring matters, unresolved issues and pressing concerns that are likely to emerge as critical components of the MSD forums.

Specific Probe Questions were assigned to Round Table participants so that each policy-maker present played a lead discussant role per Probe Question to which others contributed comments, different perspectives and/or supporting opinions

Probe Question 1

How is Guyana's Climate Change Agenda and REDD Policy going to affect the issuance of SFP's to communities and what may be some of the impacts on these communities' livelihoods as a result?

Stakeholders' Responses

- The GoG through the Office of the President has developed an avoided deforestation plan which is not inclusive of the areas already allocated for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). Therefore what may now be placed on hold will be the issuance of new and larger concessions such TSA's & WCLs.
- In terms of the REDD Initiatives GoG through the GFC has started the consultative process to sensitize Communities especially the Amerindian communities on the benefits of reduced emissions and the types of incentives being offered by the World Bank.

Probe Question 2

Are there any educational or sensitization activities about sustainable forest management? How does the Forestry Commission respond to Wildlife or the concerns of the conservationist as it relates to sustainable harvesting practices?

Stakeholders' Response

- The Code of Practice has documented recommended best practices so as to safeguard the economic, social and environmental forest values, which can be linked into the broad perspective of sustainable forestry operations.
- GFC has monthly community outreaches through its Social Development Programme, which is coordinated with identified Government Ministries and Agencies for the specific purpose of addressing social issues and ensuring that all appropriate and corrective measures are undertaken.
- Many logging communities and/or Logging Associations are the beneficiaries of training in Reduced Impact logging (RIL), Sustainable Forest Management Practices (SFMP) , Forest Law and Forest Inventory.
- Some communities receive grant aid from donors such as EU, WWF, ITTO, and IADB to purchase equipment such as portable mills, tractors, GPS and compasses, safety gear etc., as well as training needs.

Probe Question 3

Over the years numerous research studies have been undertaken in the Natural Resource Sector with reference to Forest livelihoods, Mining, Biodiversity, Environmental Impacts etc., what linkages have your Agencies or Ministry created to ensure that these research results enter the Policy Domain?

Stakeholders' Responses

- The GoG at Cabinet level has established the Natural Resources and Environment Advisory Committee (NREAC), which is chaired by the Prime Minister and co-chaired by an Advisor on Sustainable Development and is comprised of representation from Heads of Natural Resource Agencies such as GFC, Lands and Surveys Commission, EPA, Geology & Mines Commission etc. If research is done on a particular subject relating to land use - for the purpose of feeding into a policy position, the Land and Surveys Commission provides a coordinating mechanism. Research is channeled through the NREAC for policy decisions.
- The National Climate Change Committee (NCC) serves as the policy committee on climate change and also operates at a level where analysis is done.
- Cabinet Sub-Committee is comprised of cabinet members and co-opts the Heads of Natural Resource Agencies for technical advice and clarifications. _The afore-mentioned are some of the established mechanisms to ensure that research enters the policy domain.
- Participants noted that Research is always needed; basic information is always required such as baseline data, detailed inventories and threshold levels. They also emphasized the importance of the research results not only entering the policy domain but that it needs to be shared with communities and the public.
- The simple act of sharing research results is the beginning of the “dialogue process”

Probe Question 4

Communities have expressed concerns about the communication of Policy messages which has a “one size fit all approach” and does not take into consideration the dynamics of that specific community, such as culture, economical or developmental underpinnings. What is the nature of your Consultations with communities?

Stakeholders’ Response

- All Natural Resource Agencies are mandated to hold consultations with the Public at a national level and community level depending on the nature of the work.
- It has been the experience of the EPA, for example that in terms of participation that if a project is just “regular” the level of consultation is poor if the project is considered controversial the attendance by stakeholders is unusually high.
- Many Agencies have been known to have signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU’s) with different agencies for the monitoring of environmental standards and this is broken down into an understandable language and not the Industry jargon. Also, it enables the “other Agencies” during the consultative process for communities to take a more adaptive approach rather than a formal approach.

Probe Question 5

Given the complexity and cross sectoral nature of natural resource issues, some developmental agencies are organized along sectoral lines, which creates difficulties for the primary stakeholders to resolve issues such as issuance of permits, licenses, etc., complaints are about the length of time for processing, agency requirements, undue frustration etc. How do you respond to such concerns raised by communities?

Stakeholders’ Responses

- All Natural Resources Agencies are mandated by law to hold consultations with the public. As part of its standard development procedures the Bureau of Standards hosts public consultation and awareness forums for all procedural and standard changes. It was realized by all Agencies that during this sensitization for the multi-stakeholder dialogue process that it was important not to raise the expectations of the people.
- It was further explained that multiple land use in the Natural Resource Sector is fraught with conflict. Many valid constraints exist especially when it comes to land planning and zoning. With so many different pieces of legislations we have possibilities of overlap and conflicts; this has been improved with inter-agency collaboration but the ultimate solution has to be legislative reform that seeks to eliminate concurrent or overlapping jurisdiction. It was stated that once Amerindian lands were demarcated there was a significant reduction in conflict.

For the purpose of this roundtable discussion, the term ‘Agencies’ will be used to describe ,Ministries, Commissions, etc.,

Probe Question 6

Do you share information on your activities with other agencies; and do other agencies share information with you?

Stakeholders' Responses

- The NREAC is the coordinating body which manages the flow of information for of all sector agencies.

Probe Question 7

Many communities are asking why create new laws when an existing practice already exists?

Stakeholders' Responses

- Laws are always in a state of flux, circumstances are always changing, and laws are necessary for any civilized society to survive, these “norms” must be incorporated into our daily lives.
- An example is that there is a new Forestry Bill which due to be tabled in Parliament for legislation. One of the GFC planned activities is to sensitize the population on the new legislation once passed.

Probe Question 8

Is importance given to multiple perspectives when making policy?

Stakeholders' Responses

- Yes, through the consultative process for example the National Development Strategy as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, various stakeholders contributed to the process.

Probe Question 9

What are your views on the MSD process as Policy Makers?

Stakeholders' Responses

- We believe it would be a challenge, the challenge is not the manner in which we achieve consensus - the challenge is to have the resources and the will to forge ahead with implementation once consensus is achieved.
- It was noted that while many support the process for achieving consensus, there are some agencies that try to derail the process.
- With the level of distrust between the stakeholder themselves, we have to find innovative ways to get stakeholders from the Industry sector to buy into this MSD Process, the perception is that there is so many consultations and yet not much is successfully implemented.

4 Conclusion

Many issues were identified as reflected in the responses gleaned from the probe questions during the roundtable discussions. These are summarized below.

Policy and legislative reforms were discussed in the context of the need to harmonize and consolidate legislation so as to reduce cross-sectoral conflicts.

The relevancy of laws to address operational realities on the ground was noted and assented to by all as being of critical importance.

The view that some Non Governmental Agencies “operate with a view to oppose for the sake of opposing” was discussed and it was also noted that the expression of opposing and dissenting views from stakeholders were part of the dialogue process.

The dissemination of information and education to communities in a manner that is suitable for all to understand was expressed as a key priority.

The impact of policies was discussed: how they were implemented, how appropriate they were and how they were assessed so that the necessary amendments can be made.

It was recognized that policies related to renewable and sustainable forest resources and eco-system values were adaptive processes, and that there was a need to capture and reflect the emerging trends within policy reform.

It is recommended that this type of roundtable discussion on policy should be a permanent fixture since the greater need based on the outcome of these discussions was how to develop a mechanism to align and bring on board the various stakeholders priorities so as to enable a genuine conversation to start and continue with the primary stakeholders.

Annex 1: Agenda

Forestry Training Centre Inc. / IWOKRAMA Chainsaw Milling Project (Guyana Component)

Policy Makers Roundtable / Stakeholder Focus Group Session
“Developing alternatives for illegal chainsaw lumbering through multi-stakeholder dialogue”

January 14, 2009 – Lower Conference Room, Guyana Forestry Commission

AGENDA

Chair: *Dr. Raquel Thomas, Iwokrama Director of Natural Resources Management & Training*

9.00 - 9.15 Welcome Remarks and Introductions: *Chairperson*

9.15 – 9.30 Overview of Chainsaw Milling Project: *Director, FTCl, and Mr. Godfrey Marshall*

9.30 – 9.45 Overview of Policy on Chainsaw Lumbering: *Hon. Robert M Persaud, Minister of Agriculture*

9.45 – 10.45 Roundtable Session for Policy Makers (*Facilitators: Margo Boyce & Vanda Radzik*)

Roundtable Focus Group Activities:**

1. *Views & perspectives/expectations & challenges from Policy Makers on the Project*
2. *Identification of relevant and key policy information & implementation issues*
3. *Key Recommended Actions proposed*

10.45 – 11.30 Presentations & Discussions from Policy Makers Round Table

11.45 – 12.00 Wrap Up / Next Steps & Closure of Meeting – *Ms. Rohini Kerrett, Project Coordinator*

Light lunch will be provided.

*Note: ** Options for buzz groups / small working groups during Round Table session will be decided by stakeholders themselves*

Annex 2: Handout of Discussion Points

This hand out was provided beforehand to Policy Maker stakeholders for general orientation to key discussion points and aims to complement the Probe Questions fielded at the Focus Group / Round Table session.

1. The National Context

1.1 Multiple Uses of Natural Resources

Multiple use utilization of natural resources in developing countries is tedious due to the following reasons:

- a) The scope and extent of the resources and their real value are seldom known, making economic zoning or land use plans difficult to implement
- b) Several agencies and professionals and several pieces of legislation are involved in multiple resource use including miners, the military, foresters, agronomists and economists
- c) Concerns prevail about the nature and extent of indigenous assets and related challenges over land use.

For this reason, the use of any natural resources requires **consensus** with the users of other resources to ensure compatibility between resource uses, at least in the short term. **The major challenge for policy makers is the manner of achieving consensus quickly.**

1.2 Current Policies and Programmes

There are several national initiatives in place at this time to support the development of various sectors. A cost/benefit analysis of any prevailing sector development must be considered when introducing other sector developments to ensure whatever adjustments are necessary occur smoothly, especially from a social perspective.

In the forestry sector especially, the REDD process, issues of biodiversity, increased attention to eco-tourism, and concerns about the extent of indigenous properties are increasingly putting pressure on the more extractive type of forest based activity such as logging and ancillary infrastructure such as roads, bridges and culverts, and log landings.

The challenge here is to find ways to take forward developments in any one sector without the need for major legislative reform or serious social disruption at the community level.

2. The Forestry Sector

2.1 Availability of forest resources

Current levels of resource use by chainsaw operators cannot be sustained because:

- a) The resources are limited at the national and the community level. Transferring lands from concessionaires to small operators is not feasible when the total benefits of forests are taken into account: chainsaw operators use forests far more intensively than traditional loggers and traditional loggers mode of operation does allow for the functional aspects of forests to be conserved/maintained.
- b) Generally, the forests in the near interior (up to fifty miles from the coastland are severely degraded commercially. Small operators generally, and chainsaw operators in particular will not find it feasible to operate beyond a certain point. Even where they operate, they will not be the persons 'making money'.

The challenge for policy makers is, in the face of forest conservation and climate management initiatives, to gradually decline to award new forest areas to chainsaw operators. How will this be done without major social problems?

An additional challenge for policy makers is to force the development of alternatives such as agricultural activity (including livestock production) and support agricultural production with business/marketing skills. Agro-forestry is also an option....how can this be supported? Which department will take responsibility for it? How will people buy into it?

2.1 Community forests

Chainsaw and sawmilling operations are very useful options for communities, where sufficient resources still occur. A number of current initiatives by GFC and a few NGOs seek to empower communities to manage their forests better, to develop skills sets among residents to allow them to take up forest based job opportunities with logging enterprises near their communities, and to allow them to articulate their views on matters affecting forests in or near their communities.

The challenge for policy makers is to help communities take more responsibility for the management of their forest resources. Another challenge is the manner of support for communities that wish to undertake new economic ventures.

3. Managing people's expectations

A major challenge for policy makers is managing people's expectations, whatever policy measures are implemented. Who takes responsibility for that?

Annex 3: Register of Participants

No.	Name	Designation	Institution
1	Dr. Dindial Permaul	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Agriculture
2	Mr. James Singh	Commissioner	Guyana Forestry Commission
3	Mr. Andrew Bishop	Chief Executive Officer	Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission
4	Mr. Bharat Persaud	SRDO	Ministry of Local Government
5	Ms. Evadne Benfield	Standard Development Officer	Guyana National Bureau of Standards
6	Mr. S. N. Ng Se Quan	Sawmiller	Vergenogen Sawmills
7	Ms. Carollene Singh	Planner	Ministry of Finance
8	Ms. Adjua Bernard	Scientific Officer	Wildlife Division
9	Ms. Clydecia McClure	Environmental Officer	Environmental Protection Agency
10	Mr. Khalid Alladin	Director (ag.), EMD	Environmental Protection Agency
11	Mr. Tasreef Khan	Deputy Commissioner	Guyana Forestry Commission
12	Ms. Pradeepa Bholanauth	Head, Planning and Development Division	Guyana Forestry Commission
13	Mr. Godfrey Marshall	Director	Forestry Training Centre Inc.
14	Dr. Raquel Thomas	Director	Resource Management & Training
Project Support Staff & Consultants			
15	Ms. Margo Boyce	National Co-Facilitator	GFC / Chainsaw Milling Project
16	Ms. Vanda Radzik	National Co-Facilitator	Iwokrama / Chainsaw Milling Project
17	Ms. Quiana Dookie	Scribe	Guyana Forestry Commission
18	Mr. Leroy Welcome	Community Forestry Advisor	Chainsaw Milling Project
19	Ms. Rohini Kerrett	Project Coordinator	Chainsaw Milling Project

Annex 4: Photographs of the Focus Group Meeting



Annex 5: Feedback from Focus Group Clusters- Policymakers

Key Issues	Hopes	Fears	The Way Forward
	A shared knowledge of the nature, scope and inputs of chainsaw milling	Competing land use/forest based goals at the National Regional and Administrative	
	Creation of a long term plan to allow sustainable chainsaw milling in Guyana and effective management of the activities will be accomplished	Finding the balance between policy makers, and chainsaw millers and methods of regulation and enforcement	
	The Project will take into consideration the wildlife trade and in so doing results in the protection of the species that are of importance in the trade and also our obligations to CITES	Concerns that the wildlife trade would not be a major consideration in the outcome of the project	
	Environmental impacts associated with Chainsaw Milling will be reduced and wastage of forest resources will be minimized	Compliance of chainsaw operators with policies/laws	
	The relevant quality and environmental standards will be implemented and enforced to ensure that our forests are better managed in a sustainable manner and that the environment is protected at all times.	Implementation of projects is usually very difficult and as such can be a major challenge to this project	
	To have sustainable use of the Forest without making too much of an impact on the livelihood of the person that depends on	Socio economic conditions of persons engaged in this type of activity will continue	

	chainsaw milling	to drive it	
	Chainsaw milling will have minimal impact on sustainable forest management while ensuring livelihood to the millers and associated producers	Monitoring would be a challenge given the distribution/accessibility of our forest resources	
	Chainsaw loggers and forest users will recognize the challenges that the Government face in making lands available to them and will therefore use the current lands they have in a multiple, sustainable and value added ways to maximize benefits (socio-economic and environmental)	The greatest challenge will be the development of suitable methods and strategies for monitoring chainsaw millers and to ensure that regulations are not being breached	
		Also, convincing the chainsaw operators to seek other methods of harvesting, i.e. reduced impact logging (RIL) as well as to create other alternatives for them to make a livelihood	
		Resistance to regulations	
		Sensitizing the communities to the challenges that Government faces in trying to meet their expectations and working with the GOG and other stakeholders in finding innovative ways to maximize the benefits from the land they currently accessing	