

Accra Declaration from the African Regional Conference on the Forest Investment Program Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

We, Participants, acting as representatives of African indigenous peoples and local communities,

Having met in Accra from November 18 to November 20, 2010 at the Forest Investment Program (FIP) African Regional Conference on the Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities,

Recalling that Africa's priorities are to implement climate change programmes and projects to attain development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and in particular to alleviate poverty and achieve secure livelihoods, especially for the most vulnerable groups,

Reaffirming the principles set forth in the Terms of Reference for the Dedicated Grant Mechanism adopted by the FIP Sub-Committee, and in the Forest Investment Program Design Document, including *inter alia* the importance of: (a) inclusive processes and participation of all important stakeholders, particularly, in the present context, indigenous peoples and local communities; (b) securing and strengthening customary land tenure and resource rights and traditional forest management systems of indigenous peoples and local communities; and (c) according equal emphasis to the rights of people of all genders and ages in all activities relating to the grant mechanism,

Considering the vital importance, particularly in the African context, of the Dedicated Grant Mechanism as a means to enhance the capacity of indigenous peoples and local communities to participate fully, effectively and continuously in FIP pilot country activities in a manner that secures both forest resources and community livelihoods,

Emphasizing the provisions of the FIP Design Document that call for effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the development and implementation of pilot country investment strategies,

Recognizing the importance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), as adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 2007,

Reaffirming the critical role of indigenous peoples and local communities in achieving local, national, regional and global REDD+ objectives,

Seeking to enhance coordination and cooperation with other relevant efforts, including REDD+ programming, such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), and welcoming the knowledge sharing on the FCPF during the Accra meeting,

Aware that any complete design of the dedicated mechanism must take full account of all relevant Multilateral Development Bank policies and procedures,

Welcoming the presentations to the participants on the FIP planning processes in each of the pilot countries by government representatives in attendance as observers,

Noting that planning for FIP investment strategies is now underway in Africa's three pilot countries,

Recognizing that the dedicated grant mechanism will play a critical complementary role in relation to the development and implementation of FIP pilot country investment strategies, programs and projects,

Realizing the urgency of the completion of the consultative process to develop a full design proposal for the dedicated mechanism as envisioned by the Terms of Reference,

and

Understanding that a subsequent step in that process will be a global workshop of representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities intended to consolidate and build on recommendations from regional meetings such as this one,

Hereby recommend, to the participants in the global workshop, to the participants in other regional meetings on the dedicated mechanism, and to the members of the FIP Sub-Committee as they continue to deliberate on these matters, that the following be considered as building blocks for elaboration and inclusion in the ultimate design proposal for the dedicated grant mechanism:

Scope and Objectives

1. The grant mechanism should enhance the capacity of indigenous peoples and local communities to sustainably manage forest resources in a manner that both improves livelihoods and takes account of climate change, respecting the rights, aspirations and expectations of indigenous peoples and local communities.
2. More specifically, objectives of the grant mechanism should include:
 - a. Ensuring the participation of indigenous people and local communities in the elaboration and implementation of policies, strategies and programs in relation to the Forest Investment Program.
 - b. Recognizing indigenous peoples' and local communities' forest stewardship roles and traditional forest management systems while contributing to enhanced livelihoods and environmental benefits.

- c. Recognizing and building upon the traditional knowledge of indigenous people and local communities in relation to forest resources.
 - d. Recognizing and supporting the land tenure rights of indigenous people and local communities.
 - e. Ensuring equitable sharing of the profits derived from commercial forest activities.
3. The overall scope of the grant mechanism should include:
- a. Securing and strengthening customary land tenure and resource rights.
 - b. Enhancing traditional systems of land management used by indigenous people and local communities.
 - c. Supporting the elaboration and implementation of pilot projects proposals by indigenous peoples and local communities.
 - d. Supporting the participation of indigenous people and local communities in the monitoring and evaluation of forest activities.
 - e. Raising awareness of FIP processes and program among indigenous peoples and local communities.

Overarching Principles

- 4. The mechanism should provide for direct and streamlined access to grant funding by grassroots indigenous peoples and local communities, including associations of indigenous peoples and local communities. Procedures should be simple, clear, flexible and transparent, involving indigenous peoples and local communities in a central way in the process.
- 5. The activities of the mechanism should bring additional funding (over and above other sources) to on-site, forest-related activities of indigenous peoples and local communities, enhancing to the maximum extent the resources available to them in connection with objectives outlined above.
- 6. Projects should be appropriate in light of national forest strategies, and form part of an inclusive overall forest management approach that involves all stakeholders in an effective manner throughout the process.
- 7. Monitoring and evaluation of grant mechanism projects should be participatory, involving in particular the indigenous peoples and local communities who receive the grants, and also engaging, as appropriate, with grant decision-making bodies, government and NGOs.
- 8. Taken as a whole within the context of a pilot country, the grant mechanism should:
 - a. Reduce barriers that hinder full realization of community land tenure and resource ownership rights.

- b. Lead to specific gains in livelihoods in a sustainable manner that enhances local empowerment.
 - c. Make definable, measured progress toward an end to poverty and inequality, so that every person and community has the right and the capacity to live in dignity, free from the shackles of poverty.
 - d. Take decisions based on social justice, gender equality, protection of vulnerable people and groups, and responsibility to future generations.
 - e. Promote devolution of customary roles in a manner that will empower local communities to take responsibility for their natural resources.
 - f. Support sustainable capacity building and training at the local level.
9. The operations of the grant mechanism should respect the principles set forth in the FIP design document and the Terms of Reference for the Development of the Grant Mechanism.

Governance

10. On a global or regional level funds for the grant mechanism should be held and managed, in a fiduciary capacity, by a Financial Intermediary, which may be an international NGO or Regional Development Bank. The Financial Intermediary must meet fiduciary standards set by the World Bank, and should be selected also on the basis of such criteria as cost effectiveness and operational capacity in the pilot countries.
- a. The Financial Intermediary will disburse available funds for activities within pilot countries in accordance with the instructions of the appropriate National Steering Committee (see item 11 below).
 - b. The Financial Intermediary will disburse available funds for trans-national coordination and knowledge sharing activities in accordance with the instructions of the Global Coordinating Committee (see item 14 below).
 - c. The total amount allocated to the grant mechanism by the FIP Sub-Committee will be made available to the Financial Intermediary in a manner that provides for: (1) equal allocation of funds to each of the pilot countries (in accordance with item 10a above) and (2) 5% of total grant mechanism funding allocated to trans-national coordination and knowledge sharing activities (in accordance with item 10b above).
 - d. Recognizing the specific challenges facing the African continent, including the Millennium Development Goals, 3/8 of the total funds allocated to the grant mechanism should be allocated to Africa, including assurance of rapid flow of funds to the maximum extent possible.
11. Each pilot country should have a National Steering Committee (SC) for the grant mechanism in that country, composed as described in paragraph 15 below. The SC will:
- a. Establish criteria for grant eligibility and selection, and procedures and formats for grant applications; criteria to include dollar and time limits for grants, and eligibility

- of applicants and activities, based on the overall Design Document for the grant mechanism).
- b. Issue calls for grant proposals, through various appropriate channels.
 - c. Review and decide on grant proposals, either directly or with the assistance of one or more grant review committees established by the SC.
 - d. Establish reporting requirements, review reports, and participate as appropriate in monitoring and evaluation.
 - e. Engage in knowledge sharing activities across projects and programs being carried out by indigenous peoples and local communities.
 - f. Undertake (through the National Secretariat and consultants as appropriate) outreach, awareness raising and training for indigenous peoples and local communities who may seek grant funding through the mechanism.
 - g. Coordinate with ongoing national FIP activities, and with other relevant funding mechanisms.
 - h. Provide policy oversight and general direction for the National Secretariat.
 - i. Provide for resolution of conflicts arising in the implementation of activities supported by the grant mechanism in the pilot country, when such conflicts cannot be resolved locally.
 - j. Send representatives to, and coordinate with, the Global Coordinating Committee.
12. The National Secretariat will be hired by [options: an agency selected by the Steering Committee, an NGO, a Multilateral Development Bank] to support the Steering Committee in the activities listed above and, in particular, to facilitate the participation by indigenous peoples and local communities in the grant mechanism. Funding for the operations of the National Secretariat will be drawn from the national funds available for grant mechanism activities, under the direction of the Steering Committee.
13. The Global Coordinating Committee should consist of self-selected representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, reflecting balance with respect to gender and between indigenous peoples and local communities. A representative of the Climate Investments Funds Administrative Unit should participate with the Global Coordinating Committee as an active observer. The Global Coordinating Committee, supported as appropriate by the CIF Administrative Unit and consultants or contractors engaged by the CIF Administrative Unit, will:
- a. Support the establishment of the grant mechanism (including the SC, Financial Intermediary, and National Secretariat) in each FIP pilot country.
 - b. Organize simple reporting and communications across the pilot countries, with an emphasis on learning and knowledge sharing.
 - c. Fund and implement regional and global knowledge sharing activities.
14. The Global Coordinating Committee may also include observers representing other stakeholders (to be determined).

15. Each National Steering Committee should consist of equal numbers of indigenous peoples and local communities as voting members plus active observers drawn from government, civil society and the private sector. Active observers may include women and youth organizations, traditional and religious authorities, technical partners, and local authorities. Voting members of the National Steering Committee should reflect gender balance and regional balance, for example, balance across distinct ecological zones within the country.

Scope of Activities Eligible for Financing

16. Support for securing and strengthening customary land tenure and resource rights and traditional forest management systems of indigenous peoples and local communities, for example through:
 - a. Reducing cultural, social, economic, policy and legal barriers to such land tenure, resource rights and to the continuance and enhancement of traditional forest management systems.
 - b. Supporting relevant research and mapping activities by indigenous peoples and local communities (participatory mapping) and participatory land use planning.
17. Support for the development and implementation of pilot project proposals by indigenous peoples and local communities, for example through:
 - a. Community based needs assessment.
 - b. Capacity building and training relating to formulating and presenting grant proposals, managing and implementing grant projects, achieving sustainable funding strategies and participatory monitoring and evaluation of grant projects.
18. Development and funding of a mechanism to support participation by indigenous peoples and local communities in national policy development and legal reform regarding matters relating to forests, forest resources and forest protection.
19. Support for the involvement by indigenous peoples and local communities in monitoring and evaluating forest activities (including, but not limited to, activities funded by the grant mechanism, or activities carried out by indigenous peoples and local communities themselves), in conformity with relevant national laws and regulations.
20. Support for alternative livelihoods in a manner that generates incomes and reduces pressure on forests, for example through:
 - a. Agro-forestry and non-timber forest products.
 - b. Energy efficiency, technologies that save wood energy, and alternative energy sources.
 - c. Soil restoration and fertilization.
 - d. Improvements in agricultural and pastoral productivity.

- e. Economic valuation of environmental services.
21. Support to indigenous peoples and local communities as they carry out activities to build their institutional capacity relating to the goals of the grant mechanism, for example through:
- a. Training and awareness building in respect of FIP processes and activities.
 - b. Knowledge and learning sharing, for example through local, regional, national and international meetings, virtual and web-supported exchanges, and site visits.
 - c. Support and resourcing for Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs).
 - d. Formation and support for local community resource centres.
 - e. Creating an institutional framework to facilitate effective implementation of resource management at the local level consistent with national objective.
 - f. Strengthening district assemblies in a manner that enhances participation in and empowerment of indigenous peoples and local communities in carrying out forest-related activities.

Operational Procedures and Funding Modalities

22. Each National Steering Committee will establish procedures and standard formats for grant application, and set out the timing of grant deadlines and review through calls for proposals. For example, the SC may establish a semi-annual grant cycle, based on two SC meetings per year. The procedures and formats should be simple, and the mechanism as a whole should be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse situations and creative strategies of indigenous peoples and local communities at the grass roots.
23. Through the National Secretariat and consultants as appropriate, the SC will make available to interested indigenous peoples and local communities technical assistance in the form of (a) substantive assistance and (b) process assistance. Substantive assistance, for example, may be for agronomy or other technical advice. Process assistance may include facilitating a consultative process, developing community needs assessments and project plans, writing grant proposals, establishing an implementation committee, training and capacity building for implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation and local conflict resolution.
24. The SC should confirm that the community as a whole supports any project being proposed that affects that community, relying on the community's own decision making structures.
25. Gender equity and protection of vulnerable groups should be an explicit requirement in the granting process.
26. Partnership activities within a pilot country, coordinated by the SC may include, for example:
- a. Connections with national science and technology institutes.

- b. Networking among national and sub-national associations of indigenous peoples and local communities.
 - c. Support for joint grant proposals engaging more than one community.
 - d. Liaison with other relevant agencies, institutions, and NGOs.
27. The pilot country SC may also liaise with trans-national networks and institutions, such as ECOWAS, COMFAC and UEMOA.
28. Knowledge sharing activities (coordinated within a pilot country by the SC, and across countries by the Global Coordinating Committee) may include, for example:
- a. Sharing learning and experience and through local, regional, national and international meetings, virtual and web-supported exchanges, and site visits such sharing may include both pilot countries and other locations, based on the relevance of the knowledge involved.
 - b. Technical capacity building of associations and offices representing indigenous peoples and local communities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

29. Grant proposals should include a monitoring and evaluation plan, setting forth benchmarks and indicators, under the overall principal of participatory monitoring and evaluation. Part of the training provided by the grant mechanism to local communities may be for monitoring and evaluation activities; government technical services may also be available to support monitoring and evaluation. Where appropriate, grant activities may include establishment of permanent monitoring capabilities and systems.
30. Monitoring should start right away, and be ongoing; results should contribute to feedback to the SC and through knowledge exchange networks (see above). Any harm to environment or livelihoods should be identified right away through monitoring activities, so that it can be appropriately addressed.
31. Regular reporting to the SC, in a simple and non-burdensome format, should be an integral aspect of monitoring and evaluation. Reports may include written documents and videos. From the start, they should be structured to provide a basis for future sustainable funding of effective initiatives, so that the grant mechanism acts as seed funding.
32. Other concerned stakeholders may be involved in monitoring and evaluation processes as appropriate, for example, civil society organizations and donors.
33. All projects should include self-evaluation; the SC may also undertake external evaluations, for example at the half-way point and conclusion in larger projects, e.g. through joint supervision missions.

Grievance and Compliance Mechanisms

34. Unsuccessful applicants will have the opportunity to apply again so long as the grant mechanism itself continues to operate in the pilot country in question with funds available for grants.
35. Local conflict prevention and resolution may include support by the facilitation team (process technical support) for the community to develop clear and agreed rules for implementation, to assure inclusiveness (for example, gender inclusiveness), and to have in place (generally based on existing local approaches) a method of conflict resolution.
36. Conflicts that cannot be resolved locally can be referred to the national SC.

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