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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE SOUTH EAST ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON REDUCING EMISSIONS FROM DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION (REDD)

9-11 November 2008 (Baguio City, Philippines)

In the context of the increasing global focus on climate change, attention is being paid to the role of the forestry sector in contributing to and fighting against climate change. In particular, this includes a recent focus on opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries - known as 'REDD'. Like most climate mitigation tools, REDD-related activities pose risks and opportunities for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).

This regional consultation for IP was convened by the United Nations University - Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS) and Tebtebba - Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education, with the kind assistance of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, to provide an opportunity for IPs in South East Asia to discuss the possible impacts and opportunities from these developments, and to develop an IPs REDD strategy for the region.

Representatives of Indigenous Peoples from Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam met from 9 to 11 November 2008 in Baguio City, Philippines. Representatives from the UNU-IAS and Tebtebba were invited to participate in the meeting, as well as a representative of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

The consultation emphasized the need to distinguish between reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation as a goal that interests all climate change stakeholders including IPs, and the use of the term REDD to signify possible future policies and instruments designed to achieve this goal.

Participants stressed the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and that the main burden of reducing greenhouse gas emissions should be borne by Annex 1 countries by meeting their legally binding commitments. Participants also expressed concerns about Annex 1 countries missing their targets, and their unwillingness to cut emissions by restructuring their industrial architecture and implementing sustainable production and consumption.

The consultation adopted elements of an Indigenous Peoples strategy on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation for South East Asia, presented in Annex 1 to this report.

Issues that were raised during the discussions are included in Annex 2 to this report.

Annex 1:

Elements of an Indigenous Peoples strategy on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation for South East Asia

1. Consider REDD Under the Framework of Human Rights

- a. Use the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as the overarching standard and minimum necessary standard and protocol for any climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including REDD strategies to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation.
- b. Recognize that REDD is a cross-cutting issue that encompasses human rights, environmental and sustainable development issues, health, etc.
- c. Call on governments to respect the rights of IPs and to include IPs on their national delegations on meetings that discuss climate change issues and REDD.

2. Recognize Land Tenure and Resource Rights for Indigenous Peoples, and Develop Democratic Forest Governance Structures

- a. Ensure rights of IPs over their territories and resources are secured as part of the REDD process.
- b. Secure indigenous territories and resolve sovereignty/stakeholder claims over forests before considering proceeding with the development of REDD activities.
- c. Reject the use of incentives for governments to 'liberate' forest lands that historically belong to indigenous peoples and turn it into State land.
- d. Ensure genuine free and prior informed consent processes (FPIC) are followed.
- e. Rectify centralized, top-down, non-transparent and unaccountable forest management and governance practices, and develop more democratic alternatives that redress inequities and social injustices.

3. Empower IPs to Participate Effectively in redd/REDD

Raising Awareness on redd/REDD Issues

- a. Produce awareness materials in local languages, such as posters, CDs, VCDs, radio, Internet (website, email, blog).
- b. Organize training workshops for IPs leaders, communities and organizations on the impact of REDD, and training-of-trainers initiatives on redd/REDD.
- c. Hold consultations at various levels and produce declarations/statements for submission to government, intergovernmental bodies and other stakeholders.
- d. Undertake awareness and mobilization campaigns to present demands to governments and intergovernmental bodies and the private sector.
- e. Assist others to recognize the underlying issues driving deforestation.

- f. Establish a REDD Alert network to advise IPs of REDD developments relevant to IPs.

Capacity Building Needs

- a. Access to resource persons and training resources.
- b. Access to documentation concerning REDD in local languages, such as the *Tebtebba Guide on Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples* and the *UNU Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD): A Guide for Indigenous Peoples*.
- c. Access to funds and information about fund sources.
- d. Community learning exchanges, for example case-studies from other countries, opportunities to share stories between communities.
- e. Establish mentoring and internship programmes.
- f. Enhance capacities of Indigenous Communities to negotiate and resolve conflicts.
- g. Train communities to share information through the Internet.
- h. Develop research skills to be able to document IPs experiences and come up with research outputs that reflect their own worldviews.
- i. Provide support to all REDD stakeholders at local, national and international levels, including training by IPs, to build their capacity on IPs issues, rights and perspectives.

Engage with National and International Policy Setting Processes

- a. Support political structures that allow space for IPs to participate and establish them where no such spaces and structures exist.
- b. Establish community-formulated investment protocols and standards before entering into FPIC process.
- c. Organize consultations at local, regional and national levels.
- d. Monitor government plans and actions on redd/REDD and other climate change mitigation measures.
- e. Identify who is involved in national negotiating teams and lobby governments and agencies directly. Get involved in national processes on REDD, e.g. development of National REDD Strategy, policy and legal reforms on forest governance, etc.
- f. Establish working groups amongst Indigenous Peoples at the national level to monitor and influence government policies on climate change.
- g. Mandate the Asia Indigenous Peoples' Coordinating Body on Climate Change, which is preparing for the Asia Summit on Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change, to help organize participation of indigenous representatives to forthcoming climate change negotiating processes.
- h. Form alliances with structures such as the UN Inter-agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples Issues (IASG).
- i. Explore the possible role of the IASG in pursuing REDD issues and capacity-building as a cross-cutting issue across the international system, and the role of the UNU

Traditional Knowledge Initiative in assisting with internships, research and capacity building in partnership with IPs.

- j. Request the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to play a more active role in the UNFCCC negotiations and processes and to work with Parties to the Convention to address indigenous peoples' issues and concerns in their national climate policies and programmes and in the global negotiations and outcomes.
- k. Call on government agencies and UN bodies, bilateral and multilateral donors working and supporting REDD to coordinate and work more coherently, especially in ensuring that the rights-based approach is used as a framework in REDD.
- l. Call on the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People, the Permanent Forum and the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Issues.

4. Collect and Share Information

Research Priorities

- a. Focus research on the past and present drivers of deforestation (mining, plantations, logging, infrastructure projects such as dams and highways, etc.), and the policies and programmes that allow these drivers to flourish.
- b. Undertake more research to get data on impacts of climate change, and local adaptation and mitigation measures, on indigenous communities to establish baselines.
- c. Develop methodologies that address deforestation and forest degradation that reflect the worldview of IPs.
- d. Look into specific issues which link various UN multilateral environmental agreements such as UNFCCC and the Convention on Biological Diversity, e.g. biodiversity offsets, etc.
- e. Identify the broad range of opportunities that will be lost due to deforestation and forest degradation.
- f. Address 'perverse incentives' that work against conservation, sustainable use, forests and IPs rights.
- g. Submit results of IPs research for inclusion in the IPCC Fifth Report as part of a chapter on IPs.

Collecting and Disseminating Information

- a. Collect information from communities, for example through participatory action research; focus group discussions.
- b. Document existing IPs best practices and disseminate these widely.
- c. Prepare and disseminate annual reports on activities.
- d. Avoid abstract and scientific language, but focus on real threats (mining, plantations, other development projects - drivers of deforestation) as the entry point for discussion on climate change and redd/REDD activities.

Monitoring

- a. Establish an independent monitoring mechanism, such as an international panel of IPs to monitor impacts of REDD activities on IPs and to bring these to the attention of relevant bodies.

5. Follow-up on Outcomes of This Meeting

Organize South East Asian participation in upcoming meetings, including:

- a. International Expert Workshop on the Implementation of the UNDRIP (January 2009);
- b. Asia Summit on Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change (February 2009);
- c. International Expert Workshop on Indigenous Peoples, Extractive Industries and Corporate Accountability (March 2009);
- d. Global Summit on Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change (April 2009).
- e. Forthcoming Climate Change negotiation processes (Poznan COP 9, AWG-LCA, Copenhagen COP 10, and beyond)

Annex 2 :
Summary of Issues Raised During the SEA REDD Meeting

Observed Effects of Climate Change in Indigenous Communities in the Region

- Increased rain or drought; unpredictability of rainy season; shorter winter season
- Extreme weather events (floods, strong winds, etc) more severe and occur out of season
- Uncertainty about food crop yields
- Reduced land due to aggressive expansion of agrofuel and biofuel crops
- Reduced resistance of foods to pests due to use of commercial varieties, monoculture
- Traditional planting seasons disrupted (e.g. cannot burn due to flooding)
- New diseases from changing habitats of carriers such as mosquitoes
- Animal populations dwindling or leaving normal habitats

Common Risks from REDD in the Region

- Policies to protect forests often displace indigenous communities or disrupt their way of life e.g. cannot collect food from “forest supermarket”, rotational farming stopped because fallow lands are seized, villages relocated
- Indigenous Peoples’ lifestyles portrayed as a cause of global warming rather than a solution
- Indigenous Peoples are excluded from decision-making process but strongly (and often adversely) impacted by it
- Funds from REDD programmes will be provided to deforesters (government, loggers) and not to forest conservers (indigenous communities) - “perverse incentives”
- Implementation of REDD strategies may divide and threaten communities and create conflicts

Possible Opportunities for redd/REDD in the Region

- Take advantage of renewed international focus on forests to reform laws and policies to recognize Indigenous Peoples’ rights
- Global incentives to reduce deforestation may help Indigenous communities to protect forests
- Opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to be included in international climate change negotiations
- Focus negotiations away from carbon-trading to consider non-market financial mechanisms (e.g. establish a fund mechanism through UNFCCC; purchase emission quotas to fund REDD activities; tax industries causing emissions to fund REDD activities - “polluter pays” principle etc)

Needs

- More research and data on impacts of climate change on indigenous communities - especially baseline data

- Protect and share traditional knowledge, particularly related to adaptation and mitigation
- Involve Indigenous Peoples in REDD negotiation process
- Educate representatives of Indigenous communities
- Include research from Indigenous communities in national design and strategies
- Use UNDRIP as the minimum standard for any redd/REDD strategies
- Ensure protection of indigenous rights in implementation of redd/REDD strategies (How?)
- Ensure Indigenous communities that protect the forest benefit from their activities, not just governments (How?)
- Employ a human rights based approach in climate change initiatives
- Initiatives and projects related to climate change should encourage, provide space for and facilitate Indigenous Peoples to develop mitigation and adaptation alternatives based on indigenous knowledge and practices.

Notes

- REDD is only a small part of the whole story of destruction of Indigenous Peoples' territories and livelihoods
- Most IPs communities are not yet involved in climate change initiatives and campaign
- Need to address the underlying causes of deforestation - articulate these and make them more visible in international discussions
- Concerns about rapid development of "voluntary carbon market" and its facilitation by organizations such as the World Bank (discrepancy in chronotypes does not allow IPs time to apply indigenous knowledge systems to issues).
- Concerns about unwillingness of Annex 1 countries to cut emissions and restructure their industrial architecture.
- Benefits for Indigenous Peoples are only likely to be realized if redd/REDD architecture is designed with indigenous peoples.
- Value of Indigenous Peoples' lifespaces more valuable than the funds available under REDD.
- Protection of communal rights, human rights and indigenous rights are urgent matters that have to be the focus of international and national discussions.