



Article 6, Paragraph 2 Initial Report (AIR) Referred to in Decision 2/CMA.3, Annex, Chapter IV.A (Initial Report) in Respect of Authorisation of ITMOs

1. General Information

Name of Party	Cooperative Republic of Guyana
Report Mandate	Decision 2/CMA.3, Annex, Chapter IV.A (Initial Report)
Report Type	Initial Report
NDC Submission	20 May 2016
NDC Implementation Period	2016-2025
Air Reference Number	AIR1
Date	February 12, 2024
Name of Mitigation Activity included in this Initial Report	Emissions Reductions from Sustainable Management of Forests
Submitted by	Government of Guyana
Contact information	Pradeepa Goberdhan, National Focal Point UNFCCC, Guyana

2. Participation Responsibilities (para. 18(a))

- A. Information on how the Party ensures that it is a Party to the Paris Agreement (para. 18(a), para. 4(a), to be updated by para. 21(a))

Guyana signed the Paris Agreement on April 22, 2016 and ratified on May 20, 2016 and is a Party to the Paris Agreement thereupon.

- B. Information on how the Party ensures that it has prepared, communicated, and is maintaining an NDC in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 2 (para. 18(a), para. 4(b), to be updated by para. 21(a))

Guyana submitted its NDC to the UNFCCC Secretariat on May 20, 2016. This NDC will be revised by 2025.

- C. Information on how the Party ensures it has arrangements in place for authorizing the use of ITMOs towards achievement of NDCs pursuant to Article 6, paragraph 3 (para. 18(a), para. 4(c), to be updated by para. 21(b))

The Office of the President is the designated authority within Guyana, tasked with authorizing the use of ITMOs. Guyana's national institutional arrangements for the issuance of correspondingly adjusted carbon credits are designed to align with UNFCCC standards and ensure transparency, accountability, and effectiveness. They are also designed to facilitate ongoing sales within the voluntary and compliance carbon markets.

1. Designated Authority:

Guyana's UNFCCC Focal Point serves as the designated authority responsible for overseeing the issuance of correspondingly adjusted carbon credits. The Focal Point collaborates with relevant government agencies and international bodies to ensure CAs remain aligned with national and UNFCCC guidance. The Focal Point also liaises, where applicable, with standards bodies and compliance market authorities.

The Focal Point ensures that:

- Guyana's approach to CAs, supports the relevant commitments made in the country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and, given the importance of the forest sector to the issuance of carbon credits, its Forest Reference Emissions Level (FREL).
- Pending the full operationalisation of Article 6 within the UNFCCC, Guyana will continue to articulate how it integrates with voluntary and compliance markets in a manner which remains in line with Guyana's UNFCCC contributions.
- Credits that are available for CAs are tagged as such, and mechanisms are in place to ensure that the adjustments are irrevocable.
- All submissions to the UNFCCC that relate to CAs are made, and these submissions are communicated.

2. Decisions on Corresponding Adjustments

The UNCCC Focal Point for Guyana, is authorized to oversee the issuance of carbon credits, which may be correspondingly adjusted, within the framework of commitments of the Guyana's NDC and FREL. The Focal Point is authorized to issue Guyana's Host Country Letters of Assurance and Authorization, related to REDD+ and any REDD+ programme activities.

- D. Information on how the Party ensures it has arrangements in place that are consistent with Article 6, paragraph 2, guidance, and relevant decisions of the CMA for tracking ITMOs (para. 18(a), para. 4(d), to be updated by para. 21(b))

Guyana will generate credits to be traded on the carbon market, with independent verification of the quality of those credits and their adherence to the rules of the marketplace. Credits will adhere to UNFCCC guidance on REDD+, pending the launch of a full REDD+ mechanism. Currently all credits generated by Guyana are listed on the ART TREES Registry. All ITMOs will be issued under the ART TREES Registry.

At the national level, Guyana is establishing a national carbon registry, integrated with international markets and with any future REDD+ mechanism under the UNFCCC. This will be done in accordance with the rules of all relevant international agreements on markets and carbon trading.

- E. Information on whether the most recent national inventory report required in accordance with decision 18/CMA.1 has been provided (para. 18(a), para. 4(e), to be updated by para. 21(b))

Guyana submitted its Second National Communication in 2012.

Guyana's BUR with updated GhG inventory information was submitted in February, 2024.

Guyana's Forest Reference Emissions Level was submitted in December 2014. The duration of the FREL is 2015 to 2022.

- F. Information on how the Party ensures participation contributes to the implementation of its NDC and long-term low-emission development strategy, if it has submitted one, and the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement (para. 18(a), para. 4(f), to be updated by para. 21(b))

Guyana's NDC (2016-2025) was developed to initially focus on the forest and energy sectors, where the majority of current and historic emissions have been produced. It seeks to pursue a resilient, low-carbon, socially-inclusive economy that provides a better quality of life for all within the ecological limits of the planet. The approach is a utilization of a combination of conservation and sustainable management of Guyana's forests in the fight against climate change. The greenhouse gas taken into account in the NDC is CO₂.

Guyana's nationally determined contribution is articulated in a set of unconditional commitments in both the energy and forest sectors. Guyana's target is to make a contribution beyond this NDC by achieving up to 46.3 MtCO₂e annually to global mitigation efforts through emissions credits from its forests. This is set out as a conditional commitment within the NDC document.

Guyana intends to expand the focus of its NDC and align this to the national Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030, and will move towards inclusion of other sectors.

Guyana recognises registries managed by international carbon mechanisms for the tracking of ITMOs, such as that of the Architecture for REDD+ Transactions (ART), through which Guyana has been issued 33.47 million TREES credits to date, for the period 2016-2020. With the development of its domestic registry, Guyana will seek to ensure synergies and interconnectivity with this and other relevant registries as that becomes necessary.

3. Description of the Party's nationally determined contribution, as referred to in decision 18/CMA.1, annex, paragraph 64, where a participating Party has not yet submitted a biennial transparency report (para. 18(b), to be updated by para. 21(b))

A. Target(s) and description, including target type(s) (decision 18/CMA.1, annex, para. 64(a))

Guyana's target for enabling ITMOs is an emissions reductions target set against maintaining forest cover. This target type is described in Guyana's NDC under the conditional commitments within the forest sector.

B. Target year(s) or period(s), and whether they are single-year or multi-year target(s) (decision 18/CMA.1, annex, para. 64(b))

Guyana has adopted an absolute single-year target approach, with 2016-2020 being the base period and 2030 the target year. The single year target is to maintain emissions levels in the forest sector below the baseline set by Guyana's FREL as submitted to the UNFCCC – 46.3 MTCO₂eq.

However, market acceptance to date is based on standards that are considerably more conservative than the UNFCCC FREL. While continuing to adhere to UNFCCC methodological guidance, Guyana will seek to build market confidence and cap its available ITMOs at the level allowed by the ART-TREES methodology. This cap will stay in place until there is greater convergence between ART-TREES and Guyana's FREL (there will be a new FREL from 2023), and will not be lifted before 2025 at the earliest. In sum,

Guyana will only issue Correspondingly Adjusted credits to the level of ART TREES verified and validated credit issuance.

C. Reference point(s), level(s), baseline(s), base year(s) or starting point(s), and their respective value(s) (decision 18/CMA.1, annex, para. 64(c))

Base Period: 2016-2020

Annual emissions target for ITMOs in the forest sector is 46.3MTCO₂eq. Guyana will only issue Correspondingly Adjusted credits to the level of ART TREES verified and validated credit issuance.

D. Time frame(s) and/or periods for implementation (decision 18/CMA.1, annex, para. 64(d))

Period for Implementation: 2021 to 2030

- E. Scope and coverage, including, as relevant, sectors, categories, activities, sources and sinks, pools and gases (decision 18/CMA.1, annex, para. 64(e))

Gases Covered: CO₂

Sectors: Forestry /LULUCF

LULUCF:

- Pools- All five IPCC recognized carbon pools are included
- All data are at Tiers 2 and 3 for the following reasons:
 - Wall-to-wall coverage of satellite imagery is used to obtain the AD related to conversion of forest lands to other uses and such data are combined and co-registered with other key spatial databases in a GIS such as roads, rivers, settlements, vegetation class, location of logging concessions, location of mining concessions, and topography.
 - A comprehensive, peer-reviewed, field sampling system was designed and implemented to attain a required precision target of a 95% confidence interval of <+/-15% of the mean total carbon stock of forests.

- F. Intention to use cooperative approaches that involve the use of internationally transferred mitigation outcomes under Article 6 towards NDCs under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement (decision 18/CMA.1, annex, para. 64(f))

Guyana ITMOs will be achieved against a target based on the current FREL submitted in 2015, of 46.3 MTCO₂eq – but with a temporary cap in place so as to limit ITMOs to those allowed through the ART TREES methodology for verified and validated credit issuance. At present (2024), this would be a maximum of 21 MTCO₂eq. per year.

- G. Any updates or clarifications of previously reported information (e.g., recalculation of previously reported inventory data, or greater detail on methodologies or use of cooperative approaches) (decision 18/CMA.1, annex, para. 64(g))

None

4. Information on ITMO metrics, method for applying corresponding adjustments and method for quantification of the NDC (para. 18(c–f))

- A. ITMO metrics (para. 18(c))

Guyana will apply and report ITMOs only in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), whereby one ITMO equals one tonne of CO₂e (1tCO₂e).

B. Method for applying corresponding adjustments as per chapter III.B (Application of corresponding adjustments) (para. 18(c))

- i. Description of the method for applying corresponding adjustment for multi- or single- year NDCs that will be applied consistently throughout the period of NDC implementation, if applicable (para. 18(c))

Guyana will apply corresponding adjustments based on a single year target. This will be applied consistently throughout the period of the NDC implementation. CAs will be issued only on ART approved credits (post verification and validation by independent process as per TREES V2) as issued in the ART TREES Registry. Though Guyana's FREL concludes on a reference level of 46.3 MTCO₂eq, Guyana will only issue CAs for ART TREES verified, validated and issued credits which will be to a maximum (based on TREES methodology computed for Guyana): 21 MTCO₂eq annually.

- ii. Description of the method for applying corresponding adjustments where the method is a multi-year emissions trajectory, trajectories or budget, if applicable (para. 18(c))

Not Applicable.

C. Quantification of the Party's mitigation information in its NDC in tCO₂e, including the sectors, sources, GHGs and time periods covered by the NDC, the reference level of emissions and removals for the relevant year or period, and the target level for its NDC or, where this is not possible, the methodology for the quantification of the NDC in t CO₂e (para. 18(d))

Guyana's mitigation sources are from the forest and land use sectors. It covers the period 2021 to 2030. Guyana's reference level is 46.3 MtCO₂eq annually of which CA will only be issued for those certified by ART-TREES (currently this equates to 21 MTCO₂eq annually).

D. Quantification of the Party's NDC, or the portion in the relevant non-GHG indicator, in a non-GHG metric determined by each participating Party, if applicable (para. 18(e))

Not Applicable

E. For a first or first updated NDC consisting of policies and measures that are not quantified, information on the quantification of the Party's emission level resulting from the policies and measures that are relevant to the implementation of the cooperative approach and its mitigation

Not Applicable

activities for the categories of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks, as identified by the first transferring Party pursuant to paragraph 10, and the time periods covered by the NDC (para. 18(f))

5. Information on each cooperative approach (para. 18(g–i), para. 19)

A. Copy of the authorization by the participating Party (para. 18(g))

Copy of LoAA attached to this Report and submitted to the UFFCCC.

B. Description of the cooperative approach (para. 18(g))

Cooperative Approaches

The cooperative approach promotes programmes in the forestry sector across a range of REDD+ actions including EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT), Sustainable Forest Management with a focus on Reduced Impact Logging, Development of a National Forest Management and Chain of Custody Standard and the MRV System for REDD+.

The Cooperative Approach promotes the maintenance of approx. 18 million hectares of forest cover that stores 19.5 GtCO₂eq. **This will enable a net emissions reductions level of 46.3 MtCO₂eq. of which Guyana will issue corresponding adjustments to a maximum of those allowed by ART-TREES (currently 21MtCO₂eq).**

Development and implementation of codes of practice to inform effective forest resources management in forest harvesting activities to maintain low rates of deforestation and forest degradation - Given the multiple use nature of Guyana's forests, forest harvesting activities is but one aspect of economic activities undertaken. To this end, sustainable forest management and the accompanying codes of practices are absolutely necessary to ensure the efficient management of the resources. Codes of practice are designed to take into account the various Acts and Legislations that are directly related to forest management. They provide guidelines for best practices in order to ensure that continuing economic returns can be obtained over the long term, while simultaneously fostering overall sustainable utilisation and management of Guyana's forest resources.

Implementation of forest monitoring activities to ensure conformance with sustainable forest management (SFM) guidelines and EU FLEGT requirements- REDD+ encapsulates all aspects of sustainable forest management, including forest monitoring and enforcement. Legality and the activities that accompany attaining same are critical to achieving good governance in the forest sector, in that, principles of sustainable forest management as well as activities under a REDD + agenda cannot be accomplished without this. Forest Monitoring is a critical support component of any REDD+ programme, especially to ensure forest degradation and deforestation is contained and or minimized. Guyana has been implementing a number of forest monitoring schemes, including its Legality Assurance System. Additionally, in 2009, the GoG engaged the European Union (EU) to better

understand the requirements of the European Union Forest Law Enforcement Governance & Trade (EU FLEGT) Programme. EU FLEGT is also part of Guyana's REDD+ Programme.

Guyana – EU FLEGT Process

Guyana's early commitment to REDD+ implementation under the Guyana-Norway partnership (Phase I), led to Guyana's national process to join the European Union's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative towards achieving a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA). This national REDD+ governance indicator aims to raise the profile of Guyana's timber industry and make it more sustainable.

Reduced Impact Logging (RIL)

As a key pillar for sustainable forest management, Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) will result in improved harvesting practices through the implementation of planned activities which includes directional felling of trees which reduces damage to the residual stand. These activities will support Guyana's REDD+ initiatives through the maintenance of its low deforestation rate during logging activities, as well as to continue to build capacities and improve practices within the sector.

Development of a National Forest Management and Chain of Custody Standard

Starting in 2021 and continuing through 2022, the Guyana Forestry Commission commenced preliminary activities on the development of a National Forest Management and Chain of Custody Standard. The National Forest Management and Legality Standard for Guyana will cover forest management on all land tenures where forest management for commercial purposes is permitted by law and is intended to be available to both individual forest management organisations and potential group schemes involving multiple forest management entities. Certification will cover both timber and non-timber forest products and will facilitate chain of custody certification for entities purchasing, processing and/or trading in forest products.

Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System (MRVS)

Building on Guyana's reporting commitments under the Guyana Norway Bilateral Agreement to measure and report on the country's performance against the REDD+ Performance Indicators¹, the country is committed to continuing to develop and maintain the MRVS as a platform through which the country can report on forest change and associated emissions.

The MRVS was designed to underpin results-based REDD+ compensation and is integral to Guyana's engagement with the ART. It is a key component of the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030, whereby the Strategy seeks to build on the platform provided by the MRVS to embark on a more inclusive and comprehensive path to a low-carbon economy.

Advance the promotion of value added initiatives within the sector to assist in creating higher potential for carbon storage in long term wood products- Market research and promotion are integral to supporting REDD+, as the country seeks to minimise the pressure on its forest by finding the most suitable and economic use for the forest resources. Guyana's NDC points out that the use of value added "could also potentially reduce the pressure on forest resources as derivation of a higher value may result in reduced harvest levels."

¹ Joint Concept Note, 2012

C. Duration of the cooperative approach (para. 18(g))

January 1, 2021 to 31st December, 2030

D. Expected mitigation for each year of the duration of the cooperative approach (para. 18(g))

Mitigation per Year: net emissions reductions level of 46.3 MtCO₂eq. of which Guyana will issue corresponding adjustments to a maximum of those allowed by ART-TREES (currently 21MtCO₂eq.)

E. Participating Parties involved in the cooperative approach (para. 18(g))

Cooperative Republic of Guyana – transferring participating Party.

F. Authorized entities (para. 18(g))

Cooperative Republic of Guyana

G. Description of how the cooperative approach ensures environmental integrity (para. 18(h), to be updated by para. 22(b))

- i. Description of how the cooperative approach ensures that there is no net increase in global emissions within and between NDC implementation periods (para. 18(h)(i), to be updated by para. 22(b)(i))

Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) was first formulated in 2008 and aimed to support the country in the pursuit of a '*resilient, low-carbon, socially-inclusive economy*', paving the way for national efforts to reduce emissions in the forest and land use sector. This initiative is led by the Office of the President of Guyana and continues to be the cornerstone for REDD+ strategic development in Guyana.

Guyana's legal framework provides a comprehensive suite of laws governing conservation and the protection of biodiversity consistent with national forest programmes that are applicable to the REDD+ Implementation Plan². The National Forest Policy Statement 2018 (NFPS) and National Forest Plan 2018 (NFP) have been developed within the framework of the Guyana Constitution.

The policy framework developed for REDD+ implementation in Guyana has resulted in greater levels of sectoral coordination and more efficient policy formulation and implementation, and Guyana has been able to align effort to further develop REDD+ actions and strengthened its institutional capacities for REDD+ implementation.

² The Constitution of Guyana 1980 – Principles and Bases of the Political, Economic and Social System recognises by virtue of section 36- the wellbeing of the nation requires inter alia the preservation of the rich diversity of plants and eco-systems. This is a general aspiration of the nation expressed by the drafters of the Constitution and represent the broad objectives which can be viewed as the foundation for all the subordinate legislation, regulations and policies.

In recognition that the bulk of Guyana's forest emissions emanate from mining and logging activities, Guyana's efforts will therefore focus on ensuring that such activities align with sustainable and efficient operations in line with the country's objectives stated in the NDC.

Guyana's national commitments were made that targeted the forest and energy sectors, which have produced the majority of emissions, both current and historic. Importantly, sustainable forest management and conservation are highlighted as key to Guyana's fight against climate change and are in keeping with the national implementation of REDD+ in Guyana. These activities all form the basis for Guyana's contribution to efforts to mitigate climate change up to 2025.

Unconditional contributions for forestry activities have been identified as follows:

- Ensure compliance with the various Codes of Practice to realise sustainable forest management (SFM);
- Forest monitoring will maintain a high level of timber legality. These efforts will maintain a low rate of illegal logging (at less than 2% of production).
- Forest monitoring to maintain a high level of timber legality, including the finalisation and implementation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) under the EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (EU FLEGT);
- Improve added-value activities locally to assist in creating higher potential for carbon storage in long term wood products and to support linkages to the FLEGT process.
- Strengthen support for indigenous communities as they continue the stewardship of their lands and inter alia the benefits that accrue from any REDD+ activities from these lands

Conditional contributions include:

- Conservation of an additional 2 million hectares through Guyana's National Protected Area System and other effective area-based conservation measures as per Guyana's commitment under the UNCBD, including the protection of conservancies and reservoirs and their watersheds and the watersheds upstream of new hydro-power sites. Existing mangrove forests will be counted in this target and the mangrove restoration programme along the vulnerable coast will be expanded.
- Avoided deforestation through the development of an Emissions Reduction Programme that will target:
 - Use of Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) with the potential to reduce annual emissions by 13.5%
- Completion and maintenance of building the national MRVS, provided that adequate financial resources are available to do so.

Guyana's MRVS has verified that small scale gold mining resulted in 89% of the national deforestation recorded over the past three years. To address this, the ERP will include actions by the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC) to implement policies, education programmes, and incentives for integrated planning and management of the mining sector. This will support the transformation of the mining sector and include actions to:

- Implement mineral mapping in the mining districts to identify economically exploitable deposits. This will significantly reduce deforestation by avoiding clearing of forest cover from lands which contain only marginal mineral deposits.
- Implement awareness and incentive programmes to improve the efficiency of technologies and practices in the mining industry.
- Implement policies to institute reclamation and reforestation of mined areas.

Guyana has continued to pursue efforts to have in place all requirements and methodological guidance to support REDD+ implementation as agreed under the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ (WFR), including ensuring the implementation of REDD+ in accordance to Cancun Safeguards and meeting all safeguards-related requirements.

The NDC acknowledges Guyana's robust MRVS as one that can ensure the integrity of emission reduction efforts as the country engages with carbon-neutral markets as a means of maximizing the value of national exports and providing internationally attractive, verifiable low carbon products. The MRVS will continue to be strengthened and improved as new international guidance and technologies become available. Further the role of the MRVS will be expanded to inform forest management policy and practice.

The MRVS was developed as performance measurement mechanism for REDD+ with focus initially placed on the development of two primary components: (i) a framework for forest area change assessment and monitoring; and (ii) forest carbon stock measurement and monitoring. The national-scale MRVS is identified as a national priority of Guyana's REDD+ program. Guyana's MRVS Roadmap, developed in 2009, aimed to build a comprehensive national system to monitor, report and verify forest carbon emissions resulting from deforestation as well as forest degradation. Since 2010, there have been twelve national-level assessments done on an annual basis. MRVS uses a combination of GIS and field-based data to report on activity and emissions data. Satellite imagery technology used include Landsat, Planet Scope and Sentinel 2. The range of deforestation rates is between the reference period of this report (2016 to 2020) is 0.048% and 0.073% which is at a maintained low level and for the period under monitoring of year 2022, the rate is 0.036%. The repeated, systematic assessments under the Guyana MRVS, integrates the risk of reversals in its approach.

Additionally, the Guyana Forestry Commission Act³ and the State Lands Act (SLA)⁴ with their corresponding NFPS⁵ and NFP⁶, the Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting⁷, the Guidelines for Conducting Management-level Inventory and 100%-level Inventory, and the Guidelines for the Preparation of Forest Management Plans and Annual Operational Plans additionally the Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting prescribes inter alia internationally accepted standards for exclusion areas and buffer zones, pre-harvest inventory, road construction and felling.

- ii. Description of how the cooperative approach ensures environmental integrity through robust, transparent governance and the quality of mitigation outcomes, including through conservative reference levels and baselines set in a conservative way and

³ Guyana Forestry Commission Act No 20 of 2007.

⁴ State Lands Act 1903.

⁵ Guyana National Forest Policy Statement 2018.

⁶ Guyana National Forest Plan 2018.

⁷ Code of Practice for Forest Operations 2018

below 'business as usual emission projections (including by considering all existing policies and addressing uncertainties in quantification and potential leakage) (para. 18 (h)(ii), to be updated by para. 22(b)(ii))

The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard (TREES) sets out ART requirements for the quantification, monitoring, and reporting of GHG emissions and removals; demonstrating the implementation of the Cancún Safeguards; and verification, registration, and issuance of TREES credits. TREES has been designed to ensure that all TREES credits issued are real, measured, permanent, additional, net of leakage, verified by an accredited independent third party, and are not double-counted. As a result, TREES credits will represent high quality while still allowing flexibility for implementing REDD+ programmes at a national level or subnational as an interim measure.

ART's standard TREES 2.0 includes approaches for the full range of necessary actions needed for a broad range of forest countries and communities to contribute to Paris Agreement targets. This includes reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, the most urgent priority for the forest sector, and protecting intact forests and restoring forest landscapes.

By ensuring the continuum of climate action is eligible for participation in carbon markets, ART offers an incentive for jurisdictions to reduce deforestation, restore forests and ultimately become High Forest – Low Deforestation (HFLD). Intact forests contribute both climate mitigation and adaptation benefits by storing carbon, regulating local and regional climate, supplying critical moisture to agricultural lands, and resisting wildfire. Also, providing incentives to HFLD jurisdictions lowers the risk of cross-boundary shifting of deforestation emissions (i.e., leakage).

- iii. Description of how the cooperative approach is minimizing the risk of non-permanence of mitigation across several NDC periods and how, when reversals of emission reductions or removals occur, the cooperative approach will ensure that these are addressed in full (para. 18(h)(iii), to be updated by para. 22(b)(iii))

Annual MRV reporting will be conducted by Guyana and subject to the independent verification and validation steps under TREES V2.

Guyana is a country with very low rates of deforestation (not exceeding 0.079% between 2005 and 2014) and as such a 15% variation in rate from a mean value is not a reflection of a high risk of reversal. Over a 5-year period the variation about the mean is 16%.

Given the very low areas of annual deforestation and low annual fluctuation in deforestation area (16% of the 5-year average deforestation rate is less than 2000 ha), there is very low risk of non-permanence of mitigation across the NDC period.

The programmes described in 5(B) maintains forest cover and prevents risk of non-permanence.

In the unlikely instance of reversal, ART TREES V2 provides for reversal at a level of 5% that results for period 2021 in an amount reversal buffer account of 446,714 tCO₂eq being provided for. Over the period 2016 to 2022, Guyana' reversal buffer account within ART TREES holds a total of 3MtCO₂eq.

H. Additional description of the cooperative approach (para. 18(i))

- i. Description of how the cooperative approach minimizes and, where possible, avoids negative environmental, economic and social impacts (para. 18(i)(i), to be updated by para. 22(f))

The cooperative approach ensures that the application of sustainable forest management and conservation are result in maintained low levels of emissions through the national implementation of REDD+ in Guyana. Annual MRV assessments are conducted to monitor and measure impacts of the approach and the programmes are all oriented towards effective management and strong governance of the forest sector.

Guyana has reported in two Summary of Information on REDD+ Safeguards to the UNFCCC and has reported on monitoring systems and progress across each Cancun Safeguard. This is part of the required reporting under ART TREES and is independently validated and verified before credits are issued to Guyana.

- ii. Description of how the cooperative approach reflects the eleventh preambular paragraph of the Paris Agreement, acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations to human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity (para. 18(i)(ii), to be updated by para. 22(g))

Guyana's institutional and legal framework supports the implementation of its cooperative approach, and includes the enactment of forest regulations under the national Parliament which aim to ensure the continued maintenance of the low rates of deforestation and forest degradation, including the provision of necessary platforms for the implementation of updated forest legislation.

Guyana's legal framework provides a comprehensive suite of laws governing conservation and the protection of biodiversity consistent with national forest programmes. Among them are the National Forest Policy Statement 2018 (NFPS) and National Forest Plan 2018 (NFP), which were developed within the framework of Guyana's Constitution. These present a set of policies and plans that address the economic, conservation, governance and capacity facets of forest management, while seeking to value the forest for more than the price of the timber.

Guyana's Constitution includes provisions protecting individuals from discrimination including on the grounds of gender, stating that (a) no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect; and (b) no person shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority. Further protections are provided specifically to women and children.

Guyana's legal framework guards against all forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the grounds of gender. The Guyana Constitution established the Women and Gender Equality

Commission to promote national recognition and acceptance that women's rights are human rights, respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality.

Guyana has a suite of legislation such as the Amerindian Act (AA), the Protected Areas Act (PAA), the Forest Act (FA) and other sectoral policies recognise the rights, statutory and customary ownership and use rights. This suite of forest legislation provides clear legal rules recognizing land and forest land tenure rights.

The Amerindian Act in its opening paragraph states that it is: An Act to provide for the recognition and protection of the collective rights of Amerindian Villages and Communities, the granting of land to Amerindian Villages and Communities and the promotion of good governance within Amerindian Villages and Communities.

Guyana's LCDS 2030 recognises that for global climate, health and other challenges to be met, nature-based solutions and eco-system services must be valued. It further posits that for Guyana, the long-term future for eco-system services should include market-based mechanisms, with the most realistic entry point for building an eco-system services economy being based on carbon through integration of Guyana's forest climate services into global carbon markets.

- iii. Description of how the cooperative approach is consistent with the sustainable development objectives of the Party, noting national prerogatives (para. 18(i)(iii), to be updated by para. 22(h))

Guyana's cooperative approach is outlined as part of the country's national development strategy – Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030.

Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) was first formulated in 2008 and aimed to support the country in the pursuit of a '*resilient, low-carbon, socially-inclusive economy*', paving the way for national efforts to reduce emissions in the forest and land use sector.

The Low Carbon Development Strategy set out a vision through which economic development and climate change mitigation will be reconciled through the generation of payments for "forest climate services" in a mechanism of sustainable utilization and development (i.e. REDD+). The result is intended to be the transformation of Guyana's economy whilst combating climate change. Guyana's LCDS was updated in 2011 and 2013, and expanded in 2021, when a draft LCDS 2030 was launched for national consultation. After seven months of national consultation, overseen by a Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC), the LCDS 2030 was finalised in July 2022.

LCDS 2030 seeks to build on the progress made in implementation of LCDS 2009 and to further create a new low-carbon economy in Guyana by establishing incentives which value the world's ecosystem services, and promoting these as an essential component of a new model of global development with sustainability at its core. The three objectives set out in 2009 continue to provide a guiding framework and have been enhanced based on knowledge gained since then, as well as new opportunities created by international progress. This LCDS 2030 addresses these objectives:

- **Forest Climate Services and other Ecosystem Services:** Guyana can access market-based mechanisms for forest climate services that includes private, as well as international public sector financing that will enable a pathway to build on the successes of the Guyana-Norway partnership as Guyana moves to a market based mechanism, and starts Phase II of Guyana's vision for REDD+.

- **Stimulate future growth through clean energy and sustainable economic activities:** Guyana can undergo one of the world’s most ambitious energy transitions and grow the economy up to five-fold, while keeping greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation at around 2019 levels. The development of the Ocean Economy is a further priority - to bridge the land-ocean nexus via low-carbon growth. This will include areas such as fishing, ocean biodiversity and mangroves, and shipping and transport.
- **Protect against climate change:** Global wellbeing continues to be damaged by climate change, including in Guyana where extreme weather events are destroying livelihoods and damaging the economy.

The LCDS 2030 recognizes that for global climate, health and other challenges to be met, nature-based solutions and eco-system services must be valued. It further posits that for Guyana, the long-term future for eco-system services should include market-based mechanisms, with the most realistic entry point for building an eco-system services economy being based on forest carbon through integration of Guyana’s forest climate services into global carbon markets.

- iv. Description of how the cooperative approach applies any safeguards and limits set out in further guidance from the CMA pursuant to chapter III.D (para. 18(i)(iv), to be updated by para. 22(i))

Not Applicable.

- v. Description of how the cooperative approach contributes resources for adaptation pursuant to chapter VII (Ambition in mitigation and adaptation actions), if applicable (para. 18(i)(v), to be updated by para. 22(j))

No Applicable.

- vi. Description of how the cooperative approach delivers overall mitigation in global emissions pursuant to chapter VII (Ambition in mitigation and adaptation actions), if applicable (para. 18(i)(vi), to be updated by para. 22(k))

Implementing LCDS 2030 will advance progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and Guyana’s multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements within the thematic areas of each programme. In fact, the LCDS is aligned to all SDGs to varying degrees. This alignment will feed into sector level planning and will be integrated within institutional programming at Governmental level. Where existing sector plans already exist, and in instances of new requirements stemming from global, bilateral and regional agreements/conventions, these will be aligned with LCDS programme areas and future revisions of the LCDS will also take these developments on board. Implementation will be advanced, where relevant, in collaboration with NGO and development partners.

As part of Guyana’s LCDS 2030, Guyana commits to following a development pathway that aims to simultaneously progress national and global solutions around development, climate change and ecosystem services. While national policies and plans are set through national processes, at the same time, Guyana is committed to a wide array of international treaties, conventions on pledges on climate, biodiversity and other broader sustainability.

Through the Cooperative Approach, which centres on maintaining and reducing impact on forests, Guyana's ecosystems will contribute to the world's health and economy, through:

- maintaining the second highest percentage of forest cover on earth, with more than 99% of the forest's 18 million hectares remaining.
- safeguarding approximately 19.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide equivalent stored in Guyana's forests
- Ensure that Guyana's deforestation rates are among the lowest in the world and Guyana is one of only four countries in the world (and one of only two in the Amazon Basin) verified to have sustained a High Forest Low Deforestation (HFLD) state.
- Maintain Guyana's contribution as one of six countries which host the Guiana Shield, one of the most pristine rainforest landscapes in the world. The Guiana Shield stores around 18% of the world's tropical forest carbon and 20% of the world's fresh water.

Guyana will authorise the use of ITMOs for NDC reporting, and other mitigation purposes, including voluntary and compliance offsetting. All ITMOs issued by Guyana will be ART TREES certified credits and will see a buffer provision of 5% being set aside in keeping with TREES requirements. This protects against the risk of reversal. Only TREES issued credits will be offered as ITMOs upon issuance.

**Submitted on behalf of the Cooperative
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