

Benoit Bosquet,
Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist,
World Bank,
Washington, D.C.
January 25, 2010.

Dear Mr. Bosquet,

We are both Guyanese, one of us resident and working in Guyana, the other resident and working in Canada.

We are writing to request an explanation for the decision taken by the World Bank to terminate the contract of Dr Janette Bulkan as a member of the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) for Suriname in the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. Coming as it did at the end of December 2009, this decision appears to have been precipitated by the demand of the Government of Guyana that Dr Bulkan be removed from the roster of TAP experts on the ground of her alleged incompetence and lack of patriotism in relation to Guyana. We find this claim deeply concerning, unwarranted and unsubstantiated, in the light of Dr Bulkan's stellar qualifications in the field of forestry (including a doctorate from Yale University's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies), and her extensive experience in issues related to forest management and the livelihoods of forest peoples after more than 2 decades of work in the Guiana Shield. It is in this vein that we wish to inquire as to the reason for the Bank's decision regarding her contractual employment with the institution.

There have been numerous letters, articles and editorials in the Guyanese press (see Appendix), since the 'disclosure' in the Guyana Times of January 16, 2010 that the Guyana Government had demanded Dr. Bulkan's removal from what was described in the local press as a 'key World Bank panel', and the report carried a day later in Kaieteur News, that it was Minister of Agriculture Robert Persaud who had dispatched the letter of complaint. That letter not only consists of highly unprofessional, unsubstantiated claims and allegations, but is entirely consistent with the Government of Guyana's non-transparent approach to forest management issues and its discrediting of criticism through *ad hominem* attacks that are intended to deflect attention from the urgent issues at stake. We are deeply dismayed by what, at best, appears to be an unfortunate coincidence between the World Bank's termination of Dr. Bulkan's contract and the timing of this letter of complaint to your offices from the Government of Guyana, and would appreciate clarification from you on this matter. It has raised questions among the general public about whether the Bank has capitulated to a government's demand to marginalize what it deems to be critical voices.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, in its Charter establishing the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, sets out in Article 13 (a and b) the principles establishing Technical Advisory Panels:

(a) One or more Ad Hoc Technical Advisory Panels may be established by various bodies under the Facility including the Participants Committee, the Carbon Fund Participants Committee or the Facility Management Team, for the purpose of providing technical advice and information to these bodies; and

(b) Each Ad Hoc Technical Advisory Panel shall be independent, impartial and proportionate to the tasks being undertaken. The Facility Management Team shall establish a roster of experts and propose members of an Ad Hoc Technical Advisory Panel, and their terms of reference for consideration and approval by the body that establishes the panel in accordance with subparagraph (a) above.

So far as we know, there has been no suggestion from the World Bank that Dr Bulkan's input to the Suriname TAP has been other than "independent, impartial and proportionate".

It is also surprising that the Bank's explanation for her termination is a re-configuration of the organization of the TAPs but such a change in organization was not discussed or agreed by either the Participants Committee (PC4) or Participants Assembly (PA2) last October. We are aware that the Guyana Forestry Commission proposed at PC4 that PC Governments should have a say in the nomination of TAP members, rather than this being a conventional role for the FCPF Facility Management Team.

Given the wording in Article 13 of the FCPF Charter, and given the events of the past weeks that have now been made public part of the correspondence between the World Bank and the Government of Guyana, we request an explanation of the criteria used by the FCPF for selection and retention of its TAP roster. We also would like to know if the other Suriname TAP members - Sandra Brown (USA), Mark Bynoe (Guyana), Max Ooft (Suriname), Jim Tolisano (USA) and the EDG team (UK) have also been terminated or re-assigned from the TAP. In the interest of transparency, we are sure you will agree, it also behooves the World Bank to release to the general public its response to the letter sent by Guyana Minister of Agriculture Robert Persaud. Let us be clear. This is not about opposition to the LCDS and to Guyana's potentially key role in this FCPF REDD Readiness Preparation initiative. Nor is it a personal plea for Dr. Bulkan's employment. This is about principles and process, and a robust understanding of transparency, the implications of which extend far beyond any one individual.

Please be advised that a version of this letter will also be sent to the Guyanese and Caribbean diasporic press and networks.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Andaiye
International Co-ordinator,

Red Thread Women's Organization
Guyana

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APPENDIX: LIST OF PRESS POSTINGS IN GUYANA AS OF January 24, 2010

1. Guyana Times news item, Saturday 16 January 2010. Govt objects to Suriname map with Guyanas territory at World Bank forum.
<http://119.82.71.95/guyanatimes/>.
2. Kaieteur News news item. 17 January 2010. "Gov't protests Suriname's map showing Guyana's territory - demands Janette Bulkan's removal from key World Bank panel".
3. Stabroek News letter, Tuesday 19 January 2010. Not present at October meeting where Suriname map including Guyana's territory was displayed. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/letters/01/19/not-present-at-october-meeting-where-suriname-map-including-guyana%e2%80%99s-territory-was-displayed/>.
4. Kaieteur News letter, Tuesday 19 January 2010. Janette Bulkan challenges Govt. to quote the 'defamatory and slanderous correspondences'.
<http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/01/19/janette-bulkan-challenges-govt-to-quote-the-%e2%80%98defamatory-and-slanderous-correspondences%e2%80%99/>.
5. Kaieteur News news item, Tuesday 19 January 2010. Bulkan denies being at meeting when it was presented... Controversial Suriname map.
<http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/01/19/bulkan-denies-being-at-meeting-when-it-was-presented/>.
6. Kaieteur News letter, Wednesday 20 January 2010. . GFC presents the facts. <http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/01/20/gfc-presents-the-facts/>
7. Kaieteur News news item, Thursday 21 January 2010. World Bank replies to Persaud's protest.
<http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/01/21/world-bank-replies-to-persaud%e2%80%99s-protest/>
8. Kaieteur News letter. Thursday 21 January 2010. Bulkan has continuously lambasted State officials.
<http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/01/21/bulkan-has-continuously-lambasted-state-officials/>.
9. Stabroek News news item. Thursday 21 January 2010. AFC denounces gov't attack on Janette Bulkan.
<http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/stories/01/21/afc-denounces-gov%e2%80%99t-attack-on-janette-bulkan/>.
10. Stabroek News letter. Thursday 21 January 2010. The protection of our national patrimony and sovereignty are issues sacred to all

Guyanese. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/letters/01/21/the-protection-of-our-national-patrimony-and-sovereignty-are-issues-sacred-to-all-guyanese/>.

11. Guyana Times letter. Thursday, January 21, 2010. Bulkan was a reviewer of Surinames draft RPP which included a map of Guyanese territory within Surinames boundaries.

12. Guyana Times news item. Thursday, January 21, 2010. Border integrity first – Minister Persaud. Map row...

13. Guyana Chronicle letter. Friday 22 January 2010. AFC's commentary divisive, contemptuous.

14. Guyana Chronicle letter. Friday 22 January 2010. We cannot let Bulkan off the hook.

15. Stabroek News letter. Friday 22 January 2010. Surely Guyanese can agree to disagree civilly.
<http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/letters/01/22/surely-guyanese-can-agree-to-disagree-civilly/>

16. Stabroek News letter. Friday 22 January 2010. If Janette Bulkan's message is valueless the government should say why and not resort to victimization
<http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/letters/01/22/if-janette-bulkan%e2%80%99s-message-is-valueless-the-government-should-say-why-and-not-resort-to-victimization/>

17. Stabroek News letter. Friday 22 January 2010 Mr Singh should take up the matter of Guyana's sovereignty with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/letters/01/22/mr-singh-should-take-up-the-matter-of-guyana%e2%80%99s-sovereignty-with-the-ministry-of-foreign-affairs/>.

18. Kaieteur News letter. Friday 22 January 2010. Govt.'s attack on Bulkan seeks to divert attention from the substance of her criticisms.
<http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/01/22/govt%e2%80%99s-attack-on-bulkan-seeks-to-divert-attention-from-the-substance-of-her-criticisms/>.

19. Stabroek News news item. Saturday 23 January 2010. Gov't defends criticism of Bulkan.
<http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/stories/01/23/gov%e2%80%99t-defends-criticism-of-bulkan/>.

20. Stabroek News letter. Saturday 23 January 2010. Non-act of treason.
<http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/letters/01/23/non-act-of-treason/>.

21. Kaieteur News letter. Saturday 23 January 2010. Every patriot and concerned Guyanese should admire Dr. Bulkan's stance.
<http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/01/23/every-patriot-and-concerned-guyanese-should-admire-dr-bulkan%e2%80%99s-stance/>.

22. Guyana Chronicle letter. Sunday 24 January 2010. AFC trying to kick dust in our eyes.

23. Stabroek News editorial. Sunday 24 January 2010. World Bank panel.
<http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/editorial/01/24/world-bank-panel/>.

24. Stabroek News letter. Sunday 24 January 2010. A new tactic.
<http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/letters/01/24/a-new-tactic/>.