Dr. Jim Yong Kim
President
The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433

Via email: jkim@worldbank.org

15 November 2017

Dear President Kim

As the UNFCCC Conference of Parties 23 meets in Bonn, we call on the World Bank to fulfil its commitment to prioritise forests and forest peoples' rights in its support to borrowing countries and the implementation of their nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

An estimated 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihood, including some 70 million indigenous people. Forests are home to more than 80 percent of all terrestrial species of animals, plants and insects. Moreover, forests play a key role in tackling climate change, providing both mitigation and adaptation benefits. However, as the World Bank's 2016-20 Forest Action Plan makes clear, forests are "under significant threat" due to increasing and competing demands for food, fibre, fuel, and minerals, among other pressures, driving large scale land use changes leading to "economic and social losses and severe environmental degradation". Moreover, deforestation and forest degradation is the third largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, after burning of coal and oil.

The impacts of climate change fall disproportionately on the world's poorest people with vulnerable groups, such as women, children and the elderly, being particularly affected. The protection of forests and forest peoples' rights is therefore essential for achieving the World Bank's twin goals of eliminating extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity, as recognised in the Forest Action Plan. Moreover, the Bank is a supporter of the Sustainable Development Goals, which include a commitment to "promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally." In addition, forced evictions of forest peoples must stop. Securing tenure rights for forest peoples plays a fundamental role in protecting forests.

As the largest source of multilateral finance for forests, and a standard setter for international finance more broadly, it is important that the World Bank sends clear signals about the need to protect forests and forest peoples' rights, both in public messaging and in its operations, for example, through the Country Partnership Frameworks and by opening up its Forest Notes for consultation. It must also address the direct and indirect drivers of deforestation, such as commercial agriculture, infrastructure, energy and mining, which receive significantly more investment than forests. This includes the impacts on forests of Bank investments through indirect lending, such as financial intermediaries and Development Policy Finance. A clear distinction between forest and monoculture tree plantations is also necessary as this type of plantations, among many other social and environmental negative effects, are very often drivers of deforestation.

We call on the World Bank to:

- Support countries' implementation of forest related measures in their NDCs, with a particular focus on IDA countries, including those prioritised for World Bank support;
- Ensure that securing customary rights for indigenous peoples and local communities are at the center of any forest related intervention, with particular attention to women. Moreover, projects should not incentivize or contribute to forced evictions;
- Prioritise the protection of forests and the recognition of the rights and inclusion of forest peoples in the development and implementation of Country Partnership Frameworks, including in the Systematic Country Diagnostic and subsequent reviews. This includes opening up the Forest Notes for stakeholder input;
- Ensure that funds are directed to activities that genuinely support forest conservation and restoration, rather than to those that undermine these efforts, such as the expansion and promotion of monoculture plantations;
- Address and stop investing in direct and indirect drivers of deforestation and those that violate forest peoples' rights, including through indirect lending, such as financial intermediaries and Development Policy Finance; and
- Strengthen its safeguards frameworks and their coverage of different loan operations to provide better protection for forests and the recognition and securing of forest peoples rights, including for Development Policy Finance.

We thank you in advance for considering these issues and look forward to a continued dialogue on how they can be addressed.

Sincerely,

Abibiman Foundation	Ghana
Acción Ciudadana	Guatemala
ACT Alliance EU	
Action for Forest	Colombia
African Climate Reality Project	South Africa
African Law Foundation (AFRILAW)	Nigeria
AIDER	Peru
Alianza Hondureña ante el Cambio Climático (AHCC)	Honduras
Alliance for Rural Democracy	Liberia
Amigos del Río San Rodrigo (ARSR)	Mexico
Asociacion Ambiente y Sociedad	Colombia
Asociación de Desarrollo Comunitario Rural (ADECOR)	Guatemala
Asociación Marianista de Acción Social (AMAS)	Peru
Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos (APRODEH)	Peru
Asociación Servicios a Programas de Desarrollo e Investigación (ASOSEPRODI)	Guatemala
Bank Information Center	US
Big Shift Global campaign	International
Both Ends	Netherlands

Bretton Woods Project	UK
Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation (BIRUDO)	Uganda
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)	US
Centro de Derechos Económicos y Sociales (CDES)	Ecuador
Centro para el Desarrollo del Indígena Amazónico (CEDIA)	Peru
Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales (CEPES)	Peru
Christian Aid	UK
CNCD-11.11.11	Belgium
Collectif Camerounais des Organisations des Droits de l'homme et de la Démocratie (COCODHD)	Cameroon
Comisión de Derechos Humanos (COMISEDH)	Peru
Confederación General de Trabajadores del Perú (CGTP)	Peru
CooperAccion	Peru
Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos	Peru
Coordination Office of the Austrian Bischop's Conference for International Development and Mission (KOO)	Austria
Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR)	Peru
Environment & Millennium Targets	Nigeria
Forest Peoples Programme	UK
Foro Ecologico del Peru	Peru
Foro Nacional por Colombia	Colombia
Fórum Mudanças Climáticas e Justiça Social	Brazil
Frente Regional de Pueblos del Bajo Mixe Choapan	Mexico
Friends of the Earth Ghana	Ghana
Friends with Environment in Development (FED)	Uganda
Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN)	Argentina
Fundacion Chile Sustentable	Chile
Fundar, Centro de Análisis e Investigación	Mexico
FUNDEPS	Argentina
Gender Action	USA
Global Forest Coalition	International
Global Initiative for Food Security and Ecosystem Preservation (GIFSEP)	Nigeria
Green Advocates International	Liberia
Green Development Advocates (GDA)	Cameroon
GRUFIDES	Peru
Grupo de Financiamiento Climático para Latinoamérica y el Caribe (GFLAC)	Latin America & the Caribbean
Grupo GEMA	Dominican Republic
ICCO Cooperation	Netherlands
IDLADS PERÚ	Peru
Instituto de Derecho Ambiental de Honduras	Honduras
Instituto de Estudios de las Culturas Andinas (IDECA)	Peru
International Analog Forestry Network (IAFN)	Costa Rica
Jamaa Resource Initiatives	Kenya

Lawyers' Association for Human Rights Of Nepalese Peoples (LAHURNIP)	Nepal
Lumière Synergie pour le Développement	Senegal
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns	US
Natural Resources Women Platform	Liberia
NGO Forum on ADB	Philippines
Oakland Institute	US
Observatoire d'Eudes et d'Appui à la Responsabilité Sociale et Environnementale (OEARSE)	Democratic Republic of Congo
Plataforma Internacional contra la Impunidad	Guatemala
Pomio potongpaga group Inc	Papua New Guinea
Proyecto sobre Organización, Desarrollo, Educación e Investigación (PODER)	Mexico
Red Latinoamericana sobre las industrias Extractivas (RLIE)	Latin America
RED MUQUI	Peru
Red Regional Agua, Desarrollo y Democracia	Peru
Red Uniendo Manos	Peru
RedGE	Peru
Servicios en Comunicación Intercultural Servindi	Peru
Ulu Foundation	US
Urgewald	Germany