

25th, October of 2018

California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
USA

Dear Board Members,

We commend you on California's leadership in addressing one of the most important challenges of our time—the threat of irreversible climate change and its impact on our communities, our economies, and our environment. As fellow members of the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force (GCF), the world's largest subnational government network for climate and forests, we recognize that cohesive, state-level leadership on climate and forest issues is more important than ever. The conservation of tropical forests truly has a global reach, impacting the droughts and wildfires that have become a reality in California. We stand with you and stand prepared to do our part in fighting this global battle against climate change.

We are following and learning from California's example in many ways. The California-led Under2 MOU that many GCF governors have signed onto is challenging us to develop long-term pathways for low emissions development in the tropical forest states and provinces we govern. California's partnerships with indigenous peoples, like the Yurok Tribe, show us how a state government and tribal government can work together to conserve forests, promote economic development, and respect indigenous peoples' history, lands, livelihoods, knowledge and culture. Recently, at the 2018 GCF Task Force Annual Meeting in San Francisco, we built on the leadership that California has demonstrated by endorsing Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnership Between Subnational Governments, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. Through these principles we pledge to work in partnership with indigenous peoples and local communities, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring that our efforts to reduce tropical deforestation improve the livelihoods of local communities and recognize the rights of indigenous peoples.

California's cap-and-trade system has also served as an inspiration for governors around the world, like us, to commit to conserving forests across our jurisdictions while continuing to grow our economies. California is proving how a well-designed carbon market can reduce sector-wide emissions, and ensure industries innovate and join the collective fight against climate change.

We are aware that it is a critical moment in the California cap-and-trade program. The work of the California Air Resources Board has also shown us the importance and power of consultation with partner jurisdictions, local communities, civil society, and regulatory experts when developing standards. The inclusion of sector-based offsets from the forest sector would send an important message to the world on the power and possibility of innovative climate leadership at all levels of government.

We urge you to take this next step and commend you for releasing a draft of the California Tropical Forest Standard. This draft sets a gold standard for ensuring reductions from the forest sector must be achieved through a process which ensures environmental integrity and safeguards the rights and livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities. The draft standard is based on sound science and would provide an example for emerging markets around the world for how forest sector offsets can be recognized through a rigorous process. We enthusiastically urge you to move forward with the standard, recognizing that, as a global community, we cannot address climate change without addressing tropical deforestation.

We very much look forward to collaborating into the future as we show the world that subnational governments are leading the way in curbing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting sustainable livelihoods and bringing much-needed environmental, as well as economic, benefits to the states and provinces on the frontlines of climate change.

Attentively



Antonio Kubes
Governor's of Pastaza Province
Ecuador

