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**Comments on Proposed International Sector based Offsets**

As a doctoral researcher in the field of REDD+, I write to take advantage of the opportunity to draw your attention to certain key effects of REDD+ intervention already undertaken. My interest here lies in the pursuance of the initiative globally. My more specific focus on California’s cap-and-trade initiative is that it takes place in a geographic area quite close to one in which I am deeply involved, that of the REDD+ efforts in Guyana and Suriname, and of those with which I have been tangentially involved, that of Amapá, Brazil. The findings of my doctoral research so far, and that of a growing body of academic literature exploring REDD+ globally, are that:

1. Indigenous and tribal voices on the mechanism’s implementation are often sidelined.
2. REDD+, and in this case Cap and Trade mechanisms, do not get to the root of the problem of deforestation which often originate from more complicated and deeply rooted market demands.
3. In the case of Amapá, Brazil, Payments for Ecosystem services such as REDD+, functions as a market fix for the societies which usually have difficulty accessing markets for their goods and services.
4. REDD+ funds are usually insufficient to incentivize against the real sources of deforestation in these countries.
5. REDD+ tends to complicate land rights disputes, or to heighten pre-existing tensions over access to the land.

By and large, REDD+ preparation and implementation in these areas (Amazon forests of the Guiana Shield) has been manifested differently, with different funding sources, governance structures and methods of forest monitoring. However, in relation to its stated intentions of providing incentives for the protection of forests, REDD+ activities have thus far been unable to generate enough funding to combat the entrenched economic and forest degrading/removal options in which these societies have engaged to sustain themselves. It remains unlikely to do so.

Given that I have no vested interest in the manner in which the funds of the State of California are allocated, I wish to urge merely that you consider that tropical deforestation is the outcome of international market demands, such as that of gold, in the case of Guyana and Suriname. As such, mechanisms like REDD+ do not get to the source of the deforestation problem. Further, the use of carbon credits does little or nothing to change the global behaviors which drive deforestation, and global climate change.

More impactful forest preservations efforts would include the provision of funding to support these countries in making their governments more capable of monitoring and managing their forest resources. It would also include the generation of more sustainable streams of income which compensate for that which would have been earned from damaging extractive or damaging economic industries in the first place. Finally, evaluating and encouraging a change in consumer behavior and market demand where the demand exists, instead of pursuing cost saving approaches which complicate the political situation in countries classed as developing, would also be a more positive and widely beneficial outcome of efforts aimed at curbing deforestation in the interest of combating global climate change.

Yours sincerely,

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