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Subject: Asian American Community opposition to the proposed California Tropical Forest Standard and Draft Environmental Analysis
Date: Monday, October 29, 2018 2:09:25 PM

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CARB Board Chair Mary Nichols

We, the undersigned are united under the motto “From Our Homelands to Our Frontlines.” The crisis of climate change has inflicted environmental disaster across our homelands in Asia ranging from rising sea levels, air, soil and water pollution, dams bursting, typhoons, extreme temperatures, drought, major threats to food security and a host of other assaults, resulting in deaths, illness and displacement of millions of people. The tragedy of Fukushima is proof that nuclear energy cannot be safely harnessed. Our homelands have been plundered for their natural resources such as coal and oil by multi-national corporations. US military intervention in Asia is used to secure access to these resources. As a result, US military bases, war, and the use of horrific weapons, such as the atomic bomb and Agent Orange have secured a US presence in Asia. Environmental defenders of the land and rain forests are being intimidated, imprisoned and killed. All of this has devastated countless numbers of our people and destroyed local ecosystems

In our local communities in the US, environmental racism, the systemic disproportionate exposure to harmful environmental exposure, can also be traced to white supremacy and economic exploitation that has resulted in our families living near toxic facilities such as refineries, chemical plants, landfills, freeways, or in urban areas such as the Tenderloin and Chinatown. It is in these spaces where we live, work, go to school, socialize, worship that we are exposed to toxics and pollution that harm our bodies. It is in these spaces where our streets have become militarized, and where prison, detention and deportation have become normalized. A toxic environment is also present when our humanity is denied, when our cultures, genders and ways of being are not embraced.

But where there is oppression there is resistance. Internationally our environmental defenders are being targeted by state and local authorities for their commitment, courage and self-determination to stop the plunder of their resources including their forests and energy. We are inspired and uplifted by their resistance and stand in solidarity.

In this vein we reject carbon offsets and carbon trading of any kind as these are false solutions. These false solutions include the contentious international forest offsets, like the California Tropical Forest Standard that would keep polluters poisoning California environmental justice communities by allowing carbon offset credits from tropical forest projects—already seen as driving displacement of indigenous people and forest dweller including in the Philippines, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Cambodia and other parts of Asia. Offset programs (REDD and REDD+) fails to address the drivers of deforestation.

This moment calls for real solutions and the political will that calls for ending emissions at their source with a just transition away from reliance on dirty energy economy to a regenerative and sustainable way of living and a return of the biodiversity of a healthy ecosystem.

Alliance of South Asians Taking Action
Anakbayan - East Bay
Alliance of South Asians Taking Action
API Equality, Northern California APIENC
Asian Pacific Environmental Network, APEN
AYPAL: Building API Community Power
Chinese Progressive Association, CPA - San Francisco
Filipino Advocates for Justice, FAJ
Filipino/American Coalition for Environmental Solidarity, FACES
Filipino Community Center, FCC

GABRIELA - Oakland

HOBAK

San Francisco Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines

National Alliance of Filipino Concerns, NAFCON

Nikkei Resisters

Salupongan International

San Francisco Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines

Stanford Asian American Action Committee

Stanford Asian American Students' Association, AASA

Stanford Pilipino American Student Union - Kabayan Committee, PASU

Strength In Unity

Students of Color Environmental Collective

Viet Unity - East Bay