



Call for UN carbon credit mechanism to reject Guatemalan project following allegations of murder and intimidation

28 May 2014, For immediate release

Guatemala City-Brussels – In a meeting starting today, the Executive Board of the UN's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) will decide whether to approve the Santa Rita Hydroelectric plant in Guatemala. The Peoples' Council of Tezulutlán and Carbon Market Watch call on the Board to reject this project because essential community consultation rules have been violated, tragically resulting in the alleged murders and intimidations of the affected community.

The Santa Rita Hydroelectric Plant (project 9713) is a project under development on the Icbolay River, in the municipality of Cobán, in the Alta Verapaz region of Guatemala and currently applying for approval under the UN's carbon offsetting mechanism. The project is subject to community opposition over its environmental and social impacts and violation of community consultation rights which are at the heart of the Guatemalan Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

A spokesperson for the Peoples' Council of Tezulutlán who remains anonymous due to fear of reprisal at home stated: *"We are calling on the CDM Board to reject the Santa Rita project and send a clear message that projects which bypass local indigenous communities rights, resulting in violence and intimidation are not tolerated by a United Nations mechanism."*

The CDM is an offsetting scheme that was established to help developed countries meet their climate commitments with cost effective emission reductions in developing countries. By generating carbon credits (1 credit = 1 tonne CO₂ eq.) these projects are supposed to reduce overall global emissions while promoting sustainable development in host countries. This project is the first to be formally reviewed by the CDM Board on the grounds that the local stakeholder consultation was not carried out in the proper way.

Eva Filzmoser, Director of Carbon Market Watch said: *"Sadly, we have seen many cases like this in the Clean Development Mechanism where local stakeholder rights have been ignored or forcibly silenced. This is the Board's opportunity to draw a red line and start protecting human rights."*

At the upcoming UN climate negotiations in Peru in November later this year the CDM will be subject to a full reform. Last month Carbon Market Watch made detailed recommendations to improve rules on public participation in the mechanism and how grievances should be handled when projects harm local communities or the environment.

- ENDS



Notes to editors:

- [UN official website](#): CDM Project 9713 : Santa Rita Hydroelectric Plant
- [Note](#) from the on how the consultations regarding the project have been carried out - Consejo de Pueblos de Tezulutlán Manuel Tot
- [Campaign information](#) on Santa Rita Hydroelectric Plant - Carbon Market Watch
- [Views](#) on suggested changes to the Modalities and Procedures (M&Ps) for the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) - Carbon Market Watch



Copyright © 2014 Carbon Market Watch, All rights reserved.
[Press Release Archive](#)

Contact:

Andrew Coiley, Communications and Outreach Officer
andrew.coiley@carbonmarketwatch.org
Tel: +32 (0)483 65 50 78

Maximo Ba´ Consejo de Pueblos de Tezulutlán
cptmanueltot@gmail.com
Tel +502 43 59 14 21

Our mailing address is:

Carbon Market Watch
Rue d'Albanie, 117
Brussels, 1060
Belgium