Dear Sir,

The CAMPA Bill is now being considered in the Rajya Sabha. Civil society organizations are greatly concerned about the implication of this bill on the rights of forest dwelling communities. The Bill in the present form is fundamentally opposed to the Forest Rights Act by not addressing the legal rights of Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers (OTFDs) recognized and vested under the law and by not requiring the consent of the Gram Sabhas for implementation of compensatory afforestation on their customary lands.

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) now legally recognizes and vests forest rights of STs and OTFDs in about 1,77,000 villages over at least 40 million hectares of forest land. Community Forest Resource rights recognized under the Act now constitute a new forest category to be governed and managed by the Gram Sabhas and forest rights holders. Therefore any government program on forestlands, including with CAMPA funds has to be based on the framework of governance under FRA. However the structure of funding and implementation proposed under the CAMPA Bill is entirely opposed to the structure of forest governance established by the FRA. Under the bill the forest bureaucracy dominates both the National and State level CAMPA Authorities with no representation to tribals and forest dwellers. It also doesn’t address the key issue of compensating tribals and forest dwellers for the loss of their forests – a recommendation made by both the Kanchan Chopra Committee constituted by the Supreme court and the IIFM Committee for revising Forest net present value (NPV). When the major reason for poor implementation of the FRA remains the obstinate opposition of the forest bureaucracy to empowerment of gram sabhas and democratization of forest governance, we fear that the CAMPA Bill will serve only to empower the notoriously unaccountable forest bureaucracy to further deprive the forest dwellers and tribals of their livelihoods by forcibly undertaking plantations on their customary lands. We see the CAMPA bill as a further resource grab by the forest bureaucracy at the cost of tribals and forest dwellers, something which is already taking place on a considerable scale, and demand an alternate structure which would directly compensate the forest communities for the loss of their forests and transfer CAMPA money to Gram Sabhas for afforestation and ecological restoration.

Concerns regarding the impact of the CAMPA Bill on FRA have already been voiced inside the Rajyasabha. By enacting the FRA 10 years ago, the Parliament of India had committed to correct a historical injustice done to the millions of Adivasis and forest dwelling communities. If the CAMPA Bill is now passed by Parliament in its current form, it will represent a reversal of the commitment for justice made in the FRA to the Adivasis and forest dwelling citizens of India.

We, as concerned citizens, therefore appeal to you to make necessary intervention in the Parliament to stop enactment of the CAMPA Bill till it is amended and defend the Forest Rights Act.
Regards,

Tushar Dash, Sanghamitra Dubey, Sonali Pattnaik, Vasundhara, Odisha, tushardash01@gmail.com, sanghamitradubeyikk@gmail.com, sonali@vasundharaorissa.org

All India Forum of Forest Movements, souparna.lahiri@gmail.com

Manohar Chauhan, Campaign for Survival & Dignity, Odisha, csdorissa@gmail.com

George Monipally, Campaign For Survival and Dignity (CSD), Jharkhand, gmonippally@gmail.com

All India Union Forest Working People, aiufwp@gmail.com

Madhu Sarin, Chandigarh, madhu.sarin1@gmail.com

Ramesh, Ekta Parishad, ektaparishad@gmail.com

Prafulla Samantara, Lok Shakti Abhiyan, psamantara@rediffmail.com

Dr.Suhas Kolhekar, National Alliance for People’s Movement, Maharashtra, kolhekar.suhas@gmail.com

Ravi rebbapragada – Samata, Andhra Pradesh, samataindia@gmail.com

Ashok Shrimali - Mines, Minerals & PEOPLE (mm&P), secretarygeneralmmp@gmail.com

Kavitha Kuruganti, Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture, kavitakuruganti@gmail.com

Dr D Suryakumari, Centre for People’s Forestry, Andhra Pradesh, sk@cpf.in

Rythu Swarajya Vedika, Telangana and Andrha Pradesh

S.Ashalatha, Hyderabad, ashalatha.satyam@gmail.com

State Land Rights Protection Committee, AP

Girijan Youth Association, AP

Girijan Chaitanya Vedika, AP

Adivasi Samkshema Parishad, Tudumdebbba,

Adivasi Students Union, Telengana

Adivasi Ikya Vedika, Telengana

Adivasi Solidarity Forum, Telengana

Rai Centre, Telegana

Navrachna, Chhattisgarh, devjeetn@gmail.com

Mohan Hirabai Hiralal, Convenor, Vrikshamitra, Maharashtra, mohanhh@gmail.com
Pratibha Shinde, Lok Sangharsh Morcha, Maharashtra, loksamanwaypratisthan@gmail.com
Neema Pathak, Meenal Tatpati, Shruti Ajit, Kalpavriksh, neema.pb@gmail.com, meenaltatpati@gmail.com
Purnima Upadhyay, KHOJ, Melghat, Maharashtra, khojmelghat@gmail.com
Mahesh Raut, CSD, Maharashtra, maheshraut.work@gmail.com
Dilip Gode, Vidarbha Nature Conservation Society (VNCS), Nagpur, Maharashtra, dilipv_gode@yahoo.co.in
Trupti & Ambrish, ARCH-Vahini, Gujarat, truptiparekh1@hotmail.com
Soma KP on behalf of MAKAAM (mahila kisan adhikar manch), national forum for women farmers rights, CAWL RIGHTS- Collective for Advancement of Womens Knowledge and Action on Livelihoods Rights, somakp@gmail.com
Ekal Naari Shakti Sansthan, Abu Road, Rajasthan
Shweta Tripathi, Satyam Shrivastava, SRUTI, shweta.tripathi@sruti.org.in, satyam.shrivastava@sruti.org.in
Odisha Jungle Manch, odishajunglemancha@yahoo.in
Jilla Jungle Manch-Deogarh, Odisha
CREFTDA, Mayurbhanj, creftdajashipur@gmail.com
Jeeva viakash, Sundergarh, jeevanvikashorissa@gmail.com
Porivarthan and Rights Forum, Malkangiri, Odisha
Remish Ekka, ANGNA ORGANIZATION, SUNDERGARH, Odisha, ekkaremish@rediffmail.com
Banaja and Banani Mahila Mahasangha (Women NTFP cooperatives), Deogarh, Sambalpur, Odisha
Sharad Lele, sharad.lele@gmail.com
Nitin Rai, ATREE, Bangalore, nitinraiaatre.org
Oamjie John, Social Worker, oamjie@gmail.com
Nishok G U, Salem, Tamil Nadu, nishokgu25@gmail.com
Shabin Paul, Wayanad, Kerala, shabinpaul@gmail.com
Ville-Veikko Hirvelä, Chair of the Board, New Wind Association, villeveikkah1@gmail.com
Sheetal Sharma, North East Network, Assam, sheetal@northeastnetwork.org
Sandeep Minhas & Guman Singh - Himalaya Niti Abhiyan - Himachal Pradesh, sandeepminhas07@gmail.com, gumanhna@gmail.com
Aatreyee Sen, Forum for Human Rights and Justice, Himachal Pradesh, aatreyee@gmail.com
Dr Palla Trinadha Rao, Advocate and Researcher, Andhra Pradesh, pallatrinaradh5@gmail.com
Prasant Mohanty, NIRMAN, Odisha, prasantmohanty@gmail.com
Richa Audichya, Jan Chetana Sansthan Abu Road, Rajasthan
Bhakhar Bhiterot Adivasi Vikas Manch, Rajasthan
Rajasthan Tribal Rights Forum, Udaipur, Rajasthan, astha.trru@gmail.com
Kalyani Menon Sen, Feminist Learning Partnerships, Gurgaon, kmenonsen@gmail.com
Maa Maninaga Jungle Surakshya Parishad, Nayagarh, Odisha
Rukmini Rao/ Gramya Resource Center for Women, Andhra Pradesh, vijayrukminirao@gmail.com
Kalahandi Mahila Mahasangh, Kalahandi, Odisha, savetribal@yahoo.com
Odisha Dalit Women’s Forum, odwf@yahoo.co.in
Orissa Nari Samaj, Odisha, karmithread@gmail.com
Sandeep Kumar Pattnaik, NCAS, Odisha, sandeepkumar.pattnaik@gmail.com
Subodh Kulkarni, Jnana Prabodhini, Pune, subodhkir@gmail.com
Sumi Krishna, Independent Researcher, Bangaluru, sumikr@gmail.com
Krishna Srinivasan, Independent Researcher, Pune, 1011krishna@gmail.com
Madhavi, Human Rights Forum, madhavikandalla@gmail.com
Rajasthan Adivasi Adhikar Manch
Adivasi Vikas Manch, Kogra, Rajasthan
Bagad Majdoor Kisan Sanghathan, Dungurpur and Bansbada, Rajasthan
Gordward Adivasi Sanghathan, Rajasthan
Sheba Chhabhi, shebachhachhi@gmail.com
Prof Sujata Patel, University of Hyderabad, patel.sujata09@gmail.com
Kalpana Mehta, kalpanaindu@hotmail.com
Geetanjoy Sahu, Assistant Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, geetanjoy.sahu@gmail.com
Varsha Ganguly, varshaganguly9@gmail.com
Neera Singh, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto, Canada, neera.singh@gmail.com
Prakash Kashwan, kashwan@gmail.com
Malika Virdi, Ex-Sarpanch, Sarmoli-Janti Vap Panchayat, Uttarakhand, malika.virdi@gmail.com
Tarsh Thekaekara, The Shola Trust, tarsh@thesholatrust.org
ANANDI - Gujarat, jahnvi.andharia73@gmail.com
Pradeep Esteves, Context India, Bangalore, pradeepesteves@gmail.com
Shiney Varghese, shineyv@gmail.com
Abha Bhaiya, Jagori, Himachal Pradesh, abhabhaiya@gmail.com
Dr. S. Seethalakshmi, Independent Researcher & Consultant, ushaseethalakshmi@gmail.com
Meenakshi Narayan, Researcher, meenskii@gmail.com
Ravi Kanneganti, Rythu Swarajya Vedhika, AP and Telangana STATE COMMITTEES, ravi@csa-india.org
Sabita Parida, parida.sabita@gmail.com
Aganoo Ram Sahu, Parivartan Samaj Sevi Sanstha, parivartancg@gmail.com
V. S. Roy David, Secretary/Director, CORD, (Coorg Organisation For Rural Development), National Convener, National Adivasi Alliance, vsroydavid@gmail.com
J. P. Raju, BKS, National Adivasi Alliance, Karnataka
Amitha Bachan K Hyder, Hornbill Foundation, Kerala, amithabmes@gmail.com
Geethanandan M. Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha, Kerala
Dr. Harini Nagendra, Bangalore, harini.nagendra@gmail.com
Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia, laletin3@gmail.com
Mangrove Action Project, PO Box 1854, Port Angeles, WA 98362-0279, alfredo@mangroveactionproject.org