



# Forest Peoples Programme

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Houria Sammari, Senior Programme Manager  
Cc: Briana Wilson  
Social Responsibility, Environment and Social Development Department  
International Finance Corporation  
2121 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
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Dear Ms Sammari,

We would like to thank your department for providing us with an update on the IFC's development of a possible Human Rights Impact Assessment framework. We have recently been informed by your office that the strategy for developing the HRIA has been changed and that road-testing of the HRIA will occur prior to wide-spread and open public consultation.

We are concerned about this change of plan for public consultation at such short notice and we wish to request a firm commitment that the IFC will hold a widespread international public consultation on its HRIA guidelines.

Civil society groups that participated in the IFC safeguard policy update process repeatedly called for mandatory standards on HRIA which we argued must be part of due diligence for project processing at the IFC. While the IFC regrettably did not adopt such mandatory rules, the plan to develop guidelines on this issue is a progressive step – a step which may be very positive in promoting genuine sustainable development and avoiding and mitigating negative aspects of IFC finance for private sector projects.

While the proposed guidelines will only constitute optional guidance for IFC clients, there is little doubt that companies may come to view their methodology and content as best practice in this field. This is why it is essential that the guidelines genuinely do reflect best practice and they are subject to widespread public scrutiny prior to their adoption. In addition to upholding citizen's rights to participate in public policy making, through broad consultation the IFC will have the opportunity to gain insights, experience and knowledge from a range of actors intimately involved in human rights defence.

All the undersigned organizations would welcome the chance to provide assistance, insights and advice to the IFC on the finalization of this potentially important initiative. However, we are surprised that to date we have not been provided sufficient information on the process of developing the HRIA nor opportunities to effectively contribute to its development.



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We thus look forward to receiving confirmation and clarification of the IFC's public participation schedule for its HRIA guidelines and details of how we may make inputs to the process.

Sincerely,

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