



**CORDILLERA PEOPLES ALLIANCE**  
*For the Defense of the Ancestral Domain and for Self Determination*



**Center for Development  
Programs in the Cordillera Inc.**

**Position paper and Call to Action of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA)-  
Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC) Network**  
*Color it REDD-Plus Philippine Roadshow on REDD+ and the PNRPS*  
*4 May 2012, Supreme Hotel, Baguio City*

---

The same global economic order that perpetuates development aggression, that has caused so much forest deforestation and degradation, is the harbinger of market-based mechanisms like REDD+, in addressing the climate crisis. Instead of concretely reducing carbon emissions, the market approach maintains a "business as usual" situation for Corporations and Annex A countries, that are the main culprits in global warming. These countries should reduce their carbon emissions; but through market-based "business as usual" solutions, they do not have to, so long as they can pay. IPs view this as a perpetuation of the same development aggression, where governments and foreign economic interests collaborate to the detriment of IPs and communities.

In the Cordillera, there has been historical defense of land, life and resources (DLLR) since colonial times to the present. The existence of our communities, livelihood, and our indigenous systems and values are integral in our particular character as indigenous peoples. The principle and world view is to nurture and develop our land and resources for the present and future generations, using traditional as well as new sustainable knowledge. Our present DLLR campaign has been sustained for more than 3 decades and continues to be vibrant because of issues related to natural resources like mining and dams.

The network of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance and the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera rejects REDD+ because of its market-based context, that would further entrench existing global economic system, that benefits a few to the detriment of the majority, including IPs, and undermine their self determined development. Giving values to the carbon in trees (e.g. resource valuation and forest carbon financing) commodify and commercialize our forests, which is not the world view of IPs. This would benefit Annex A countries and their corporations. Commercialization of forests would cause divisiveness and corruption among the people.

But we are open to engage in capacity building opportunities for our IPOs and communities to further enhance their campaigns addressing their basic issues, and strengthen their assertion of ancestral land rights and self determination; and towards reducing deforestation and degradation and improved management of forest resources and biodiversity.

The bottomline for Philippine indigenous peoples on REDD+ is for it to recognize and respect indigenous peoples rights, including a human rights and ecosystem-based approach to sustainable development. Thus, REDD+ aimed at peoples' empowerment and capacity building activities should be open for participation with simultaneous info-education for IPs to understand REDD+, to expose the capitalist system's use of REDD+ for business.

REDD+ should enhance present struggles of IPs against development aggression, and advance exercise of collective rights to land and resources. It would be an exercise in futility to even attempt to address the climate crisis on the part of IPs if the development aggression which is the primary cause of deforestation and forest degradation, continues.

From this two-day activity on REDD+ and based on previous discussions, we specifically recommend the following actions:

- a. greater consultations at grassroots level and IEC in indigenous communities based on their needs and priorities for substantial feedbacking and community decision-making for a truly bottom-up process of participation and decision-making, not to be timebound in nature to truly give justice to indigenous peoples self-determination and our inherent right to free, prior and informed consent.
- b. engagement in any REDD+ capability building activity should enhance the people's affirmative actions on their basic issues and assertion of ancestral land rights, self determined development, and right to self determination that equally enable and promote women's participation and gender equality.
- c. recognition of the right to FPIC, customary laws and indigenous practices of forestry management in case indigenous peoples' communities would opt to engage in REDD+.
- d. documentation of indigenous systems of governance and viable traditional knowledge in forestry and biodiversity management and sustainable development.
- e. facilitate more information-sharing among stakeholders of indigenous peoples, civil society groups, LGUs and concerned government agencies \*\*\*