

United States Position

Proposed IFC Investment in ContourGlobal Terra

May 16, 2013

The United States welcomes today's discussion of IFC's proposed support for ContourGlobal. IFC's support for this company, which has pursued power generation opportunities across a number of countries, is strongly aligned with the IFC's strategic priority of boosting private sector investment in infrastructure. As importantly, ContourGlobal has demonstrated its willingness to engage in difficult, frontier markets – we would note in particular ContourGlobal's investment in Togo. The United States strongly approves of IFC's efforts to find sponsors – like ContourGlobal – who are willing and able to work in riskier environments in order to help meet the significant infrastructure deficits that these countries face.

The United States also strongly supports IFC's work with sponsors who are committed to adhering to high standards in addressing environmental and social risks associated with those investments. The United States is pleased that ContourGlobal, which according to staff already has strong systems to manage these risks, aspires to excel in its environment and social risk management systems. We believe that this is an area where the IFC can clearly add value.

Finally, given ContourGlobal's desire to achieve excellence on environment and social risk management, the United States wonders if IFC staff considered asking for a 120-day standard for the disclosure of ESIA's for greenfield Category A projects instead of the current 60-day standard. The United States believes that asking for a longer standard, particularly in an investment where there is a great deal of uncertainty about the pipeline of future projects, would have been appropriate. In conclusion, the United States wishes to be recorded as abstaining on this investment for legislatively mandated reasons.