

Inspection Panel Investigation Report on Panama Land Administration Project
February 3, 2011
U.S. Position

The United States welcomes the Inspection Panel report and Management's proactive response to this request on Panama's Land Administration Project. The findings are serious: key documents were not released, which undermined the consultations process, and the design and supervision were inadequate. In particular, the project failed to disclose publicly the social assessment prior to appraisal and failed to provide a stand-alone Indigenous Peoples Development Plan (IPDP). In addition, supervision of the project did not promptly and adequately react to warnings and emerging issues during phases of the Project, and did not include appropriate staff, such as social scientists.

We are pleased by Management's forthright recognition of these problems and commend it for acting swiftly to improve supervision and consultations, which include sending social scientists on missions subsequent to the Panel's request. The quality of the Bank's response has been such that the requestors have indicated that they want the World Bank to remain engaged in the area.

The United States recognizes that these kinds of projects are complicated and difficult to implement and supervise. Therefore, we appreciate Management's commitment in its action plan to improve how these operations are designed and supervised, including the importance of having a stand-alone IPDP, inclusion of social scientists, increased supervision, specialized technical assistance, and organizing workshops in 2011 with key stakeholders, the Panel, and the authorities.