



Thawthi Taw-Oo Indigenous Park Charter

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Introduction/ Background of TTIP

In the highlands of Taw Oo (Taungoo) District area resides various indigenous and ethnic groups that all possess distinct traditional cultures, customs, beliefs, and practices. The communities believe in the importance of revitalizing and practicing their unique ways of life so they can be handed over to the generations to come. The Thawthi Taw-Oo indigenous park, located in the Northwest portion of Karen State and is replete with important cultural heritage sites, protected wildlife species, ecosystems, and significant religious sites that are of utmost importance for the communities residing in the area.

Thaw-Thi Taw-Oo indigenous park also carries a strong geographical and spiritual connection with the nearby Thaw Thee Phgaw Peace Park in Karenni State and the Salween Peace Park in Mutraw District, serving as an inspiration for KNU members and communities to carry out a similar holistic approach to landscape conservation in the TTIP. The powerful spiritual mountain Thawthi Kho, sitting at the confluence of these three indigenous lands, further emphasizes the religious, historical, cultural, and spiritual significance of the area for indigenous and local communities residing in Taw Oo District.

Above all, communities of TTIP are proud practitioners of their traditional cultures. Religious and cultural practices remain hugely important across the KanYaw Wah (White Karen), Keh Bah, Paku, Paku Maw Nay Pwa, and vast areas of the TTIP continue to be administered according to the traditional *Kaw* system, a governance and decision-making structure that enshrines values of consensus and natural resource conservation.

Both KNU leaders and local communities in Taw-Oo District are aware that the protection of their ancestral lands through effective and sustainable land and natural resources management and governance is the stepping stone to achieving their political aspiration for self-determination rights. As witnessed and asserted by local communities and leaders in Taw Oo, the Burmese Government and Army (Tatmadaw) continue to repress, threaten and undermine people's governance and management of their ancestral territories. They do this in a number of ways such as oppressive land, forest, and natural resource policies and laws, the implementation of large-scale development projects, authorizing illegal encroachment by outsiders, large-scale land confiscation for military bases, domestic and multinational investments and the continued expansion of centralized governmental administration.

In the face of generations of Burman-chauvinist oppression, state-perpetrated violence against indigenous and local people, and exploitative resource extraction in the Taw-Oo district, the communities have come together in defense of their right to protect and practice their unique traditional cultures.

The vision of local communities in Taw Oo is for the people to live harmoniously with nature, enjoy secure and sustainable livelihoods, maintain the freedom to practice their traditions and culture, gain full realization of their customary land and natural resources governance rights, and work towards community-driven sustainable development. The establishment of the Thawthi Taw Oo Indigenous Park will allow these values to be put into practice, as a significant first step towards achieving the local communities' vision of Taw-Oo.

The charter of TTIP was established and redacted through ongoing and inclusive consultation and participation of the communities of the Taw-Oo district in Karen state, reflecting their desires and yearning for a peaceful, harmonious and sustainable environment and way of life. Originating from the community codes of conduct and indigenous worldviews, the Charter represents an adaptation of the beliefs and values that Karen people and indigenous communities of Taw Oo have held for generations to a more structured system of governance and management.

Above all, the Charter enshrines the right of the indigenous Karen people to self-determination over how to manage and govern their natural resources and lands, including ways to guide the sustainable development of their communities. Their approach prioritizes community-based conservation work, which includes integrating sustainable livelihoods, environmental protection, and democratic governance as an initial step toward reaching this goal.

Chapter 1. Overview

Section 1.1 Objectives

Article 1.

Through the implementation of the Thaw Thi Taw Oo indigenous park charter, the people of the TTIP strive to promote the peaceful and equitable development of indigenous people and long-standing resident community members and protect the forest, agro-ecological, and socio-cultural systems throughout the TTIP territory.

With regard to land, forests, fisheries, water, and associated natural resources, the specific objectives of this charter are as follows :

Article 2.

To recognize, protect, prioritize and promote the full enjoyment of forest and land tenure rights of indigenous peoples and long-standing communities in the TTIP.

To facilitate communities' self-governance of different types of tenure and collective determination of their related rights, rules, duties, and restrictions on ownership, occupation, use, and management practices, to promote the welfare and peaceful and equitable development of human society.

Article 3.

To recognize, promote and respect indigenous living models, including communities' rights to autonomous forms of self-governance and differentiated political systems. This charter aims to encourage and facilitate the decentralization of political authority, governance, and management over territories, natural resources, and economic activities within the TTIP.

To ensure joint management of natural resources between the local communities, indigenous groups, and their legitimate government under a federal union structure based on political, economic, and civil self-determination. This charter, along with KNU policies, strives to promote sustainable and durable peace in Kawthoolei and a decentralized federal union within the country.

Article 4.

To recognize, prioritize and promote customary tenure rights and practices, including communal rights to forests, land, water, and associated natural resources. The charter also ensures that ancestral domain rights are unburdened from encroachment, unauthorized occupation, exploitation, or use by others.

Article 5.

To recognize, prioritize, respect, and promote the rights of land and livelihood restitution of refugees and displaced persons forced from their lands, livelihoods, and homes.

Article 6.

To promote and improve communities' traditional sustainable management practices. Thus, this charter aims to fully respect and recognize the contribution of communities and indigenous groups of TTIP. They have endeavored to maintain ecologically sound forest and land management that serve the people's ecological and social welfare.

Article 7.

To implement an accessible, effective, and pertinent system for addressing and resolving forest, land, and natural resource tenure-related grievances and disputes while emphasizing the rights of local communities and their legitimate land tenure systems.

Article 8.

To promote and facilitate the collaboration between communities and encourage joint local strategies for action by deepening mutual understanding and solidarity between communities residing in TTIP.

Article 9.

To protect and sustain the environmental integrity of the rivers such as the Leh Lo, Ko Lo, Deh Lo, Yaw Lo, Klæ Lo, Play Lo, Pa Shaw Lo, Kae Chaw Lo Rivers and their surrounding ecosystems, forests, and mountain landscapes.

To ensure the preservation of TTIP's unique and abundant biodiversity for the benefit of local communities and the people residing beyond the borders of Kawthoolei, the Charter supports the establishment of an indigenous-led community conserved area that ensures people's right to live in concord and harmony with nature.

Article 10.

To ensure that local communities and indigenous people's cultures, values, customs, beliefs, and practices will be preserved and revitalized so that future generations can participate in and belong to a way of life closely attuned to the land, forests, and waters of Kawthoolei.

Section 1.2 Nature and Scope**Article 11.**

This charter establishes the guiding principles for management, rules, and regulations supporting the just and socially legitimate, peaceful, and ecologically sustainable governance of the TTIP's land, forests, fisheries, water, and related natural resources.

Article 12.

This charter recognizes indigenous peoples, communities, and other long-standing residents of Taw Oo District, Kawthoolei, and affirms their associated customary occupation, use, and stewardship of the land, forests, water, and related natural resources.

Article 13.

This charter's provisions and regulations apply to all people living within the TTIP's boundaries and those temporarily visiting, working, or residing within the indigenous park.

Article 14.

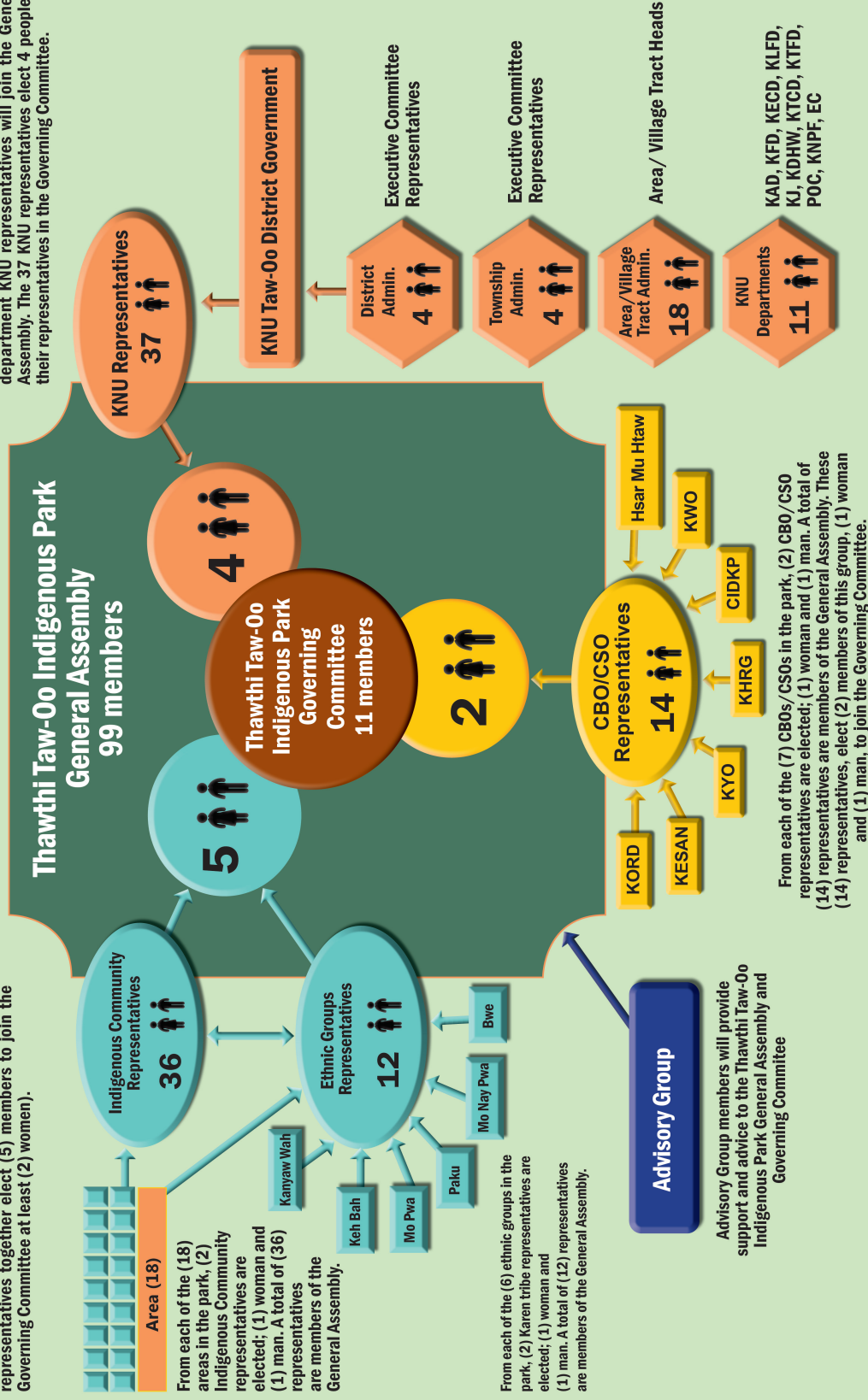
The TTIP is a physical space and living vision governed through a decentralized approach that embodies the aspirations and self-determination rights of communities and indigenous groups of the Taw Oo district.

The wishes and political aspirations of the people and communities form the basis of authority in the TTIP. Through direct and participatory forms of governance, the people shall enact their right to political autonomy and self-determination through community bodies.

Chapter 2 . Thawthi Taw-Oo Indigenous Park Governance Structure

The (36) Indigenous community and (12) ethnic groups representatives together elect (5) members to join the Governing Committee at least (2) women).

District, Township, Area/Village Tract and other relevant department KNU representatives will join the General Assembly. The 37 KNU representatives elect 4 people as their representatives in the Governing Committee.



Section 2.1. The right to self-determination

Article 15.

Local communities of TTIP shall handle their affairs, produce their unique system of laws, rules, and regulations, and select their governing authorities. For communities to sustain their intangible cultural heritage and traditional practices closely attuned to the land and their environment, they shall possess the right to manage and govern their land and natural resources, which are intrinsically linked to the indigenous territory.

Customary rights to communities' ancestral domain take precedence over governance systems that have excluded the voices and perspectives of the people of Taw Oo district.

Article 16.

The TTIP's constituency shall include the free association of individuals and communities, the collective interest in supporting the continuation of indigenous models of living, the preservation of natural resources, and the prosperity (health) of the land.

Article 17.

All the TTIP's people and communities shall possess equal rights and opportunities to contribute and participate in the TTIP's governance, management, and development.

Article 18.

There will be no tolerance for discrimination, intimidation, or exclusion between community members of the TTIP based on age, ethnicity, health, language, beliefs, ancestral background, sex, religion, or socioeconomic status. The people of TTIP shall demonstrate values of equity, justice, and solidarity between one another.

Pregnant or breastfeeding women, adolescents, elderly persons, ill or disabled, or other vulnerable priority persons shall have their needs provided for by the local community or receive direct assistance from the TTIP governing committee.

Article 19.

The people of TTIP shall not undertake actions or engage in activities that may hamper the collective and public interest and well-being of communities in the area.

The people shall endeavor to ensure that their collective rights to live in a harmonious environment, lead sustainable livelihoods, and preserve their traditional cultures will not be violated or disrupted by actors residing within or outside the boundaries of the TTIP.

Section 2.2 Principles of governance

Article 20.

In order to fulfill and satisfy the aspirations of indigenous people and local communities of the TTIP, the following articles aim to contribute to the establishment of legitimate and accountable governance of collective and public affairs of the park.

Article 21.

The TTIP constitutes space and territory for people not beholden to the laws, rules, and regulations of external or non-legitimate entities or actors. Legal regimes established without the contribution or consent of the residents of TTIP or their legitimate representatives will not be considered and taken into account.

Instead, the legitimacy of governance and decision-making structures shall be determined collectively by the TTIP's local communities and indigenous people following their beliefs, values, and practices. The designation of representatives and political decisions shall be done through a democratic (or electoral) process that is fair, open, impartial, transparent, and not disproportionately influenced or determined by the KNU Taw Oo District government or the TTIP governing committee.

Article 22.

Individually and collectively, the people of TTIP shall be the main actors to partake in the planning, management, monitoring, and decision-making of collective and public affairs of the TTIP.

The political participation and empowerment of the people to actively participate in public and collective affairs shall be exercised through community-based mechanisms and direct democracy at the local level and direct democracy at the territorial level.

The people's participation shall be based on principles of equality, freedom of expression, association and information, public deliberation and consensus, and respect for diversity.

The legitimacy of the KNU or any political leadership is dependent on the support and endorsement from community members, and, in turn, the community members also acknowledge and seek just leadership from the KNU in order for them to attain their goals.

Article 23.

The ruling and management of the TTIP shall respect the distinctive features of local and indigenous communities. They shall be done according to communities' unique and differentiated cultural patterns, social institutions, legal systems, and highly decentralized governance structures.

Following this principle, a TTIP congress, open to all members of the TTIP, shall be held annually in order to provide people with a forum that will allow members of the TTIP territory to mutually discuss, exchange information, learn and express their views between and within communities.

The representation of communities in the Congress, the General Assembly and Governing Committee is put forth in the following section.

Article 24.

The consent of local communities and indigenous groups to be included in and to agree to comply with the rules, regulations, and policies of TTIP shall be based on democratic values and obtained through a fair, inclusive, and transparent process.

Section 2.3. Organizational Framework of the Thawthi Taw-Oo Indigenous Park

Article 25.

To ensure the peaceful and equitable development of local communities and the full realization of their cultural, environmental, and traditional rights, a general assembly shall be congregated to act as a representative body to coordinate efforts with local people of the TTIP, KNU Taw-Oo district government authorities, and civil society/ community-based organizations.

The General Assembly shall be convened for a period of four years. At the end of each term, a new election process will be conducted openly and transparently in accordance with the adopted election procedures.

Article 26.

To ensure that all issues relating to the integrity of the TTIP are attended to and successfully addressed, a Governing Committee for the TTIP shall be assembled to act as an executive body to coordinate and facilitate cooperation between local communities and KNU

Taw-Oo district government authorities. The governing committee shall intervene on matters relating to, but not limited to, environmental concerns, sustainable development, economic activities, and external relations within the boundaries of the TTIP.

Article 27.

Relevant community members shall be included in the TTIP Governing Committee and General Assembly's proceedings when necessary. Designated representatives of the General Assembly shall participate in all organized meetings or gatherings, whereas members of the TTIP can attend in an advisory capacity.

Article 28.

The members and the structure of the TTIP Governing Committee and the General Assembly shall be determined by the people through a representative democratic process concerning local and traditional cultures, political systems, beliefs, and environmental practices.

The local communities of the TTIP will be the primary decision-makers. They will be responsible for the division of administrative and management responsibilities of the committee and general assembly, including creating TTIP's rules and regulations, establishing positions of authority, and delineating what powers those authorities exercise.

Article 29.

The structure and membership of both the TTIP Governing Committee and the General Assembly shall be inclusive and offer the possibly for all to participate in the governance and decision-making process.

In addition, the TTIP Governing Committee and General Assembly shall include representatives from the following groups : communities of the TTIP, the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo District Government and Karen Civil Society/ Community Based Organizations.

Article 30.

Community and ethnic representation in the TTIP General Assembly will be ensured by allowing each Village Tract/Area to democratically and transparently elect two individuals who shall serve as representatives in the General Assembly. In the interest of promoting participation and inclusiveness of all ethnic groups living in the TTIP, each specified ethnic group that is agreed upon by the TTIP governing structures shall democratically and transparently elect two individuals who shall serve as representatives in the General Assembly. In the interest of promoting equal gender rights and ensuring women's inclusion and participation in the governance of the TTIP, communities of each village tract/area shall elect one woman and one man to serve as their representatives.

The General Assembly's community and ethnic representatives, as the primary spokesperson of the villages, shall be the ones responsible for communicating and exchanging information between the TTIP Governing Committee and the communities. In a timely, appropriate and exhaustive manner, the general assembly representatives shall commit to transmitting to their respective village tract communities information about the TTIP-wide decisions and recent developments.

Article 31.

In a fair, open, democratic, and transparent manner, the TTIP General Assembly's community and ethnic representatives shall elect five individuals from its members to serve on the TTIP Governing Committee.

In the interest of promoting equal gender rights and ensuring women's inclusion and participation in the governance of the TTIP, the Community elected Governing Committee members shall include at least two women.

Article 32.

The KNU Taw Oo district government's representation in the TTIP General Assembly will be ensured through the designation of 32 members of the KNU administration and appointed township and district-level leaders to serve as representatives in the General Assembly.

The General Assembly's KNU administration representatives shall be responsible for exchanging information between the TTIP Governing Committee and the KNU District administration. In a timely, appropriate and exhaustive manner, the KNU administration representatives of the general assembly shall commit to transmitting information about the TTIP's decisions and developments to their respective offices.

Article 33.

The General Assembly's KNU administration representatives shall, in a fair, transparent, and democratic manner, designate 4 individuals from its members to serve in the TTIP Governing Committee. In the interest of promoting equal gender rights and ensuring women's inclusion and participation in the governance of the TTIP, the KNU's appointed committee members shall include at least 2 women.

Article 34.

The KNU Taw Oo district government's representatives shall participate in the collective management and organization of the overall territory of TTIP. The latter shall also share their expertise and contribute to matters relating to natural resource management such as the use of resources, land, water, and forests in the TTIP.

Article 35.

Designated/ formally recognized civil society/community-based organizations operating within the TTIP shall have their representation ensured in the TTIP's General Assembly through the designation two representatives (one man and one woman) from each organization.

Article 36.

In a fair, open, democratic, and transparent manner, civil society/ community-based organizations shall elect 2 members from the General Assembly representatives to serve as Governing Committee members.

In the interest of promoting equal gender rights and ensuring women's inclusion and participation in the governance of the TTIP, the civil society's appointed committee members shall include at least one women.

Article 37.

Civil society and community-based organizations' designated representatives will ensure that the TTIP's governing committee's activities and decisions comply with international or local rights standards. The organizations' representatives shall ensure that matters of social inequity, cultural discrimination, and environmental negligence are considered equally important as economic development matters.

Article 38.

The TTIP Governing Committee and the General Assembly shall possess the authority to institute working groups, task forces, and sub-committees to assist with establishing activities associated with the overall administration, organization, and management of the TTIP.

These bodies shall be in charge of peace-building, conflict resolution, reconciliation processes, external relations, refugee resettlement, internally displaced people's rehabilitation, sustainable natural resource management, infrastructure and economic development, land management, cultural heritage preservation, and revitalization.

Article 39.

An Advisory Group shall be assembled to provide expertise, advice, and knowledge to the TTIP Governing Committee and General Assembly on issues that pertain to, but are not limited to, indigenous culture, traditional ecological knowledge, natural resource management, spirituality, religion, social customs, and societal and economic development.

The people will collectively determine the Advisory Group's structure, members, and roles. It shall include elders; natural resource experts; religious leaders from all faiths; any relevant legal, economic and/or political technical experts; and customary authorities.

Article 40.

To successfully represent the aspirations, interests, and needs of the people of TTIP, particularly those who have been marginalized and socially neglected, the TTIP Governing Committee shall, to the best of its abilities, ensure a balance between male and female representation.

Article 41.

The governance of the TTIP shall be aligned with the administrative and decision-making structures of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo District government. As the people of TTIP have the right to self-determination, in case of contraction or conflict between the governance systems of the community and the legitimate government, the traditional community governance shall have the right to make the final decision and determine the outcome of a situation.

However, suppose a community's traditional governance system causes harm, excludes, or hampers individual rights or a communities' well-being; in that case, the TTIP's Governing Committee must intervene on behalf of the individual or group.

Article 42.

In a situation where the TTIP Governing Committee and its members cannot reach a consensus or an agreement regarding a decision that impacts a significant proportion of the communities of TTIP, an emergency General Assembly meeting shall be held to formulate a solution to the situation collectively.

Article 43.

TTIP Governing Committee shall be directly responsible for carrying out a social, cultural, and environmental impact assessment of future projects that may negatively affect common resources such as air, soil, and water that may extend beyond land ownership boundaries.

The affected parties, such as local communities and long-standing residents of TTIP, have the right to openly and freely express their opinions and participate in the decision-making processes or the project implementation. Before establishing such projects, any decisions regarding the TTIP will require the prior approval and consent of the communities residing in the area.

Article 44.

The people of the TTIP shall collaborate with the selected authorities of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo District government to manage and govern the collective and public affairs of the park.

Article 45.

Every community of the TTIP shall, in a democratic, transparent and open manner, collectively elect its distinct resource management committee. The designated members will negotiate and collaborate with the TTIP Governing Committee and the Advisory Group.

Article 46.

The TTIP Governing Committee shall delegate management duties and responsibilities to decentralized committees that will be in charge of the daily management of the collective and public affairs of the TTIP.

The people and communities represented by that committee shall determine each management committee's area of representation and jurisdiction. The residents and communities of that designated area shall have the right to collectively decide if they wish to associate as a single administrative unit and be governed by a single management committee. The size of an administrative unit can range from a single village to an entire kaw, depending on the community's preferences.

The TTIP Governing Committee shall be responsible for addressing disputes and disagreements over access to or using natural resources and land that involve more than one administrative unit (i.e., the management committee).

Article 47.

Every policy, rule, and regulation implemented in the TTIP must take into consideration the community codes and by-laws, residents' consent, and rights.

In the case where policies lead to an infringement of rights or hamper the collective and public welfare of the communities, the procedure, rule, or regulations must be amended and revised.

Article 48.

In order for the people and communities of the TTIP to fulfill their right to self-determination and autonomy, they shall be able to:

- Establish their distinct forms of community structures or societal organization,
- Take part in, and contribute to public decisions,
- Monitor and supervise the TTIP governing committee and KNU Taw-Oo district government authorities' actions, especially in land and territory management.

Article 49.

The TTIP governing committee shall foresee establishing an inclusive and accessible communication system to ensure that the communities needs, requests, and desires are fully accounted for in a fair, open, and transparent manner.

Article 50.

If an individual, community, village tract, or member of the TTIP no longer wishes to be included in, associated with, or be part of the TTIP; in that case, the Governing Committee shall be consulted to discuss the application of the rules, regulations, and policies and formulate a solution adapted to this situation.

Section 2.4 Principles of Rules and Regulations

Article 51.

The following articles aim to contribute to formulating and implementing rules and regulations pertaining to the TTIP's collective and public affairs. The rules and regulations enlisted below intend to support and assist in establishing a management system that communities of the TTIP can agree to and follow collectively.

Article 52.

The Charter of TTIP is not legally binding. However, the persons or communities that individually or collectively agree to be included and live within its boundaries shall agree in good faith to abide by the Charter of the TTIP. The Charter of the TTIP can only be adopted after at least 75% of the adults (18 years and older) have endorsed the TTIP Charter, according to Referendum Principles and Guidelines that have been adopted by the TTIP Implementation Committee. Once the minimum amount of persons have

endorsed the draft charter during a referendum, the TTIP Implementation Committee will sign the TTIP Charter, thereby enacting its contents.

Article 53.

The people of the TTIP shall collaborate to improve rules, regulations, by-laws, and customary or community codes of conduct that govern the TTIP and its distinctive culture, traditions, and natural environment.

Each village or group of villages, kaw, or administrative unit, as freely determined by the members of those communities, shall be responsible for establishing and implementing rules and regulations that pertain to :

- Customary and or community codes of conduct
- The governance and management of the park,
- The access to natural resources in defined areas of ownership or socially legitimate tenure.

With the assistance of the TTIP governing committee and designated agents of the legitimate KNU Taw Oo district government, the communities will determine the enforcement mechanisms and penalties for the breach of these rules and regulations.

Article 54.

If there are no explicit rules, regulations, or policies pertaining to a specific situation or activity, the people and local communities shall refer to the laws and regulations put forth by the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo district government.

Article 55.

Every community shall establish and live by its unique code of conduct, rules, and traditional practices concerning the management and handling of natural resources, land, forests, waters, wildlife, and economic development projects in a fair, democratic and transparent manner.

In the case of contradictions or inconsistencies between community codes and the regulations of the TTIP charter, representatives from the concerned communities shall report to the TTIP Governing Committee and collectively agree on an appropriate solution to the issue.

Article 56.

In order to suggest an amendment to the Charter of the TTIP, individuals, communities, and households are authorized to submit an amendment to the TTIP Governing Committee. However, in order to amend the Charter, the approval of at least 75% of representatives present at the General Assembly's Annual Forum is required.

Article 57.

To strengthen communities' ability to manage, contribute, handle and govern the TTIP's natural resources and development, local communities shall voluntarily participate in learning activities to increase their knowledge of their political, economic, and environmental surroundings.

Article 58.

Communities of the TTIP shall endeavour to respect, revitalize and value rules, policies and knowledge that has been passed down from the elders.

Article 59.

The people and communities have the right to gain access to information held by public bodies and to be included in decisions regarding the management and governance of the TTIP.

Designated agents of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo District government or TTIP Governing Committee shall strictly comply with these rules and ensure prompt, effective, and practical access to information for local communities in a language and format they understand.

Chapter 3 : Peace and Justice

Section 3.1. Peace-building and Reconciliation

Article 60.

Numerous human rights violations, acts of violence, and tactics of oppression have been carried out by the central Burmese government actors and military junta against local communities and indigenous people in the Taw-Oo district, undermining people's right to self-determination and peace. In response to the central Burmese government's chauvinistic oppression, the people of Taw-Oo shall demonstrate solidarity and work together to bring peace, security, and harmony within the TTIP territory.

Article 61.

Thawthi Taw Oo Indigenous Peace Park residents shall recognize the rights of internally displaced people and refugees to return, with dignity and respect, to their hometowns in the Taw-Oo areas.

Article 62.

In order to guarantee access to shelter, housing, food, and healthcare, the KNU Taw-Oo government authorities, together with the Thawthi Taw-Oo Indigenous Peace Park Governing Committee, shall provide humanitarian assistance to those displaced due to the war or development projects and those whose lands have been confiscated.

Internally displaced people and refugees shall be compensated at reasonable rates for land in case other people or families have seized their hometowns in Taw-Oo.

Article 63.

The legitimate KNU Taw-Oo District government shall guarantee the security of inhabitants and protect them from incursions or encroachment on TTIP's territory. Before being allowed to enter, external actors who do not constitute the people of TTIP must receive prior approval from the park's governing committee and the KNU Taw-Oo District Government. This includes but is not limited to, state or non-state armed groups, private security forces, corporations, companies, or organizations.

Article 64.

When possible, the government of the KNU Taw-Oo District and the people of the Thawthi Taw Oo Indigenous Peace Park shall commit to demilitarizing the park territory for public and collective safety reasons.

Article 65.

Thawthi Taw Oo Indigenous Peace Park residents will not defame or incite hatred against each other for their benefit or those of the community.

Article 66.

In the case of the start of a controversy between communities, groups, or single persons of the Thawthi Taw Oo Indigenous Peace Park, the disputes shall be peacefully solved using traditional or other resolution strategies.

Article 67.

There will be no tolerance for corruption, including deception and bribery, in the management of Thawthi Taw Oo Indigenous Peace Park or the surrounding areas.

Article 68.

The rights and dignity of persons accused of committing crimes shall be acknowledged and respected under the community's laws and codes of conduct. Specialized treatment will additionally be given if the person is an adolescent, an elder, is sick, has a disability, or is pregnant or breastfeeding.

Article 69.

Court proceedings are to be held following the Code of Conduct, with judiciary authorities in attendance, and should be made accessible to the public. Decisions will be made based on principles found within the relevant legal codes, including but not limited to the community's own Regulations/ Code of Conduct, the Thawthi Taw Oo Indigenous Peace Park Charter, or the KNU laws and policies.

The communities shall be responsible for resolving internal disputes or breaches of rules within their designate territories. In case of a lack of consensus or depending on the severity of the crimes committed by community members, the final decision shall be made by the TTIP General Assembly.

Article 70.

Court proceedings are settled once an agreement is reached and there is consensus between judiciary authorities, community members, and the law.

Chapter 4 : Environmental integrity and land use

Section 4.1. General principles regarding the environment

Article 71.

The undermentioned articles are guiding principles intended to contribute to the TTIP's fair, sustainable and appropriate management and extraction of natural resources. The people and communities shall collaborate in good faith to establish codes of practice and regulations pertaining to the management and protection of lands, territories, and natural resources.

Article 72.

The ways of life, well-being, and prosperity of the local communities and people of TTIP are closely intertwined with their natural environment. Communities and the people of TTIP possess the human right to live in a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment and shall collaborate to ensure the protection and preservation of natural resources for generations to come.

All political, social, economic, or legal projects conducted within the boundaries of the TTIP shall guarantee the local population's self-sufficiency and material welfare and must be based on values of equity, justice, and solidarity and include the respectful and considerate use of natural resources.

Article 73.

Local communities and indigenous people of TTIP shall have full guardianship of ecosystems and natural environments in the area given that they have inhabited them for several generations.

The protection of ecosystems and ecological functions, biodiversity conservation, the integrity of genetic assets, and the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded environments within the TTIP territory will be ensured by the communities and shall be treated as matters of collective and public interest.

Article 74.

Suppose the actions of a community or those of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo government negatively impact the environment or hamper the well-being of another community ; in that case, the TTIP Governing Committee shall be consulted and intervene to resolve the issue.

If the problem persists and cannot be resolved, communities shall turn to the designated judiciary authorities of the TTIP Governing Committee or the judiciary authorities of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo government, who will collectively discuss an outcome to the situation.

Article 75.

The communities, the TTIP governing committee, and the designated agents of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo district government shall cooperate and collectively decide, in an equitable manner, land-use zoning categories and management structures.

Zoning categories include, but are not limited to :

- Individual or collective household lands for farming,
- Communal lands for rotational farming,
- Community forests,
- Wildlife sanctuaries,
- Other categories that are mentioned in customary traditions and KNU government regulations and policies.

The abovementioned zoning categories can overlap or be found within the traditional boundaries of the *kaw* lands.

Section 4.2. Agriculture

Article 76.

Communities and indigenous people's relationship with the land is the foundation of their identity, heritage, culture, and ways of life. The land not only constitutes a vital economic resource and generates income for the communities of TTIP, but it also possesses a profound spiritual, cultural, and religious significance to the people. Therefore, the people of TTIP shall have the right to food sovereignty and to achieve self-sufficiency by controlling the mechanisms and structure of their food production, consumption, and distribution.

Article 77.

Any social, political, economic, or legal changes that may cause disruption to the well-being of communities or restrict their access to food and necessary needs will not be authorized.

Codes of practice, rules, and regulations pertaining to using chemicals such as pesticides and fertilizers in agriculture are collectively defined and implemented by the communities. To ensure the quality of food sources and promote sustainable and ecological practices, the communities shall prioritize using traditional, natural, and organic farming and gardening methods.

Article 78.

To better preserve, sustain, protect and ensure the TTIP's land health, soil fertility, and cultural heritage, the people shall collectively endeavor to strengthen and restore traditional agricultural practices such as rotational agriculture and cultivation methods (Ku).

Article 79.

Local communities and indigenous people shall collaborate and collectively define and implement the rules and regulations pertaining to agricultural practices, harvest areas, livestock grazing, and necessary precautions to protect the surrounding environment and biodiversity.

Both the TTIP Governing Committee and the designated agents of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo district government shall work together to coordinate and unify their regulations and policies relating to land management and zoning.

Article 80.

To tackle climate change and environmental deterioration in Taw-Oo district, communities shall ensure the appropriate and sustainable management of lands by limiting the deforestation of virgin forests, the overexploitation of natural resources, and the use of environmentally harmful chemicals that lead to soil degradation.

Article 81.

To minimize losses and mitigate negative environmental impacts within the TTIP, the people and the designated agents of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo district government shall collaborate and promote ecological land cultivation and agricultural practices such as cropping patterns, harvest areas, and water management.

Prior to the implementation of agricultural projects, the TTIP Governing shall, in order to monitor and evaluate the current ecosystem state, conduct an environmental impact assessment and document factors that may affect the health and functioning of natural ecosystems.

Section 4.3 Forests

Article 82.

Forests and their ecosystems are essential to the livelihoods and survival of the communities of the TTIP and hold immeasurable ancestral, traditional, and cultural values. For this reason, the people of TTIP shall ensure the sustainable management of forests and their regeneration. The communities shall aim at protecting and restoring forests' ecological balance while meeting the needs of the communities.

Article 83.

To ensure the protection and flourishing of forests, the people and communities of TTIP shall collectively establish or improve codes of practices, rules, and regulations that pertain to the use and extraction of forest resources.

Both the TTIP governing committee and the designated agents of KNU Taw-Oo district governments shall collaborate and unify their rules and regulations that relate to forests. In particular, they shall agree on harvesting non-timber forest products such as vegetables, fruits, herbs, rattan, bamboo, honey, and rubber and harvesting fuelwood or local timber for local construction.

Article 84.

The environmental integrity and cultural value of sacred forest sites are inviolable. The communities of TTIP, regardless of ancestral background, faith, or religious orientation, shall acknowledge and take into account existing customary rules and regulations against access and use of existing forests.

Local communities and the people of TTIP shall collectively ensure the respect of reserves, sacred forests, and the boundaries of community forests.

Article 85.

Illegal logging activities, development projects, extraction of resources, and exploitation of forests from both community members or outsiders without the free, prior and informed consent of the people and communities of TTIP shall be halted.

Section 4.4. Wildlife

Article 86.

The people and local communities of TTIP shall cooperate and collectively establish and ameliorate the existing rules, regulations, and practices related to wildlife, which include, but are not limited to, hunting limitations, nesting and foraging sites, sacred sites, wildlife sanctuaries, and protected areas.

Article 87.

The people of TTIP shall endeavor to respect, maintain and care for the wildlife and preserve the environment in which the animals live.

Article 88.

The people of TTIP shall follow the traditional rules of their elders and the ones established by the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo district government concerning wildlife and animal conservation. Communities and the people shall not participate in the illegal wildlife trade and are strictly prohibited from hunting specific species, including but not limited to Gibbons, tigers, hornbills, and other species.

Article 89.

The people and communities of TTIP shall collectively improve rules and regulations on managing wildlife, protected areas, and sanctuaries. The people shall equally respect the environmental and natural integrity of protected areas and corridors where no wildlife shall be hunted, no land cultivated, and no plants foraged.

Both the SPP governing committee and the designated KNU agents of the Taw-Oo district government shall manage protected areas and wildlife sanctuaries in a manner that does not hamper the rights of people to secure their livelihoods.

In the case of non-compliance to rules and regulations pertaining to wildlife conservation and animal protection, such as illegal hunting and foraging, communities, designated KNU agents, and the TTIP Governing Committee will collectively decide on an appropriate course of action and consequences in compliance with relevant international law.

Article 90.

In the case where wildlife and animal species negatively impact the livelihood or community welfare of the people of TTIP, the community shall consult with the TTIP Governing Committee and the designated KNU Taw Oo district government to decide on an appropriate outcome to the situation.

Section 4.5. Waters

Article 91.

The Leh Lo, Ko Lo, Deh Lo, Yaw Lo, Klæe Lo, Play Lo, Pa Shaw Lo, Kae Chaw Lo Rivers hold a profound spiritual and cultural significance for the communities and are vital for the subsistence of the people living within and beyond the boundaries of the TTIP. For this reason, the communities shall continue to protect the free flow of these rivers and oppose any development projects that may restrict access to clean water, undermine the health of waterways or disrupt the surrounding ecosystems.

Article 92.

Rivers are vital components to ensure the survival of forests and wildlife and sustain communities' ways of life inside and outside the boundaries of the TTIP. For this reason, the people shall collaborate and work together to establish and improve the rules and regulations that pertain to the use of water and aquatic resources within the park.

Article 93.

The TTIP Governing Committee and the legitimate KNU Taw Oo District government shall work together to sustainably manage aquatic resources and watersheds in a way that meets the needs of the people without disturbing the ecological balance of the rivers or streams.

Article 94.

The people of TTIP shall, in order to ensure that the rivers maintain their major ecological features, follow traditional rules related to overfishing and fishing in conservation areas. Since fishing and overfishing are the main contributors to water quality and health decline, people shall not use environmentally harmful and disruptive fishing practices, such as using chemicals, dynamites, or electrical shocks.

Article 95.

The people of the TTIP shall aim to respect, protect and preserve aquatic resources and cause minimal interruption to the natural flow of water. All major water-related projects, such as micro-hydro systems to generate electricity or manage irrigation, shall require a cultural and environmental impact assessment along with the local communities' free, prior, and informed consent before its implementation.

Section 4.6. Infrastructure and Economic Development

Article 96.

All economic development projects should respect and emphasize ecologically sustainable practices, cultures, traditions, and ways of life of the TTIP's communities while meeting the material and immaterial needs of the people.

Projects undertaken in the park shall include rational, respectful, and considerate use of natural resources and be based on equity, justice, and solidarity values.

Article 97.

Development and economic activities shall only be undertaken to meet the needs of the people residing in the TTIP and must not hamper the people's rights, livelihoods, or disrupt the natural environment. Infrastructure and invasive projects such as road construction, transportation, healthcare infrastructure, and cemeteries shall be carried out in a sustainable and environmentally-friendly manner and ensure the continuation of the people of TTIP's ways of life, self-sufficiency, and material welfare.

Article 98.

The communities, alongside the TTIP governing committee and the designated members of the KNU Taw Oo district government, shall cooperate in formulating, establishing, and enforcing the rules and regulations that pertain to business agreements, commercial activities, and infrastructure development in the TTIP.

Article 99.

Prior to the establishment of any development projects, the designated government authorities and community members shall be informed by the corporation, individual, group, or company undertaking the project. In addition, there should be adequate time for public consultations and scrutiny among the affected communities, and their approval shall be required to move forward with the project.

If infrastructure or commercial activities fail to obtain the support of the communities or if there is a lack of consensus as to whether a project can take place ; in that case, it shall be suspended and will not be supported as a socially legitimate structure.

Article 100.

All profits generated from development projects and the extraction of nonrenewable natural resources that are not the personal or collective property of the people of TTIP shall be declared to the communities residing in the area, the TTIP Governing Committee, and to the designated KNU Taw-Oo authorities. The people shall have the right to collectively demand a portion of the revenue derived from these commercial activities or have the right to prevent its implementation. TTIP's land and surrounding resources are rightfully owned, managed, and occupied by indigenous peoples and local communities. For this reason, the profits received by the entity undertaking the projects shall not exceed the profits received by the communities directly impacted by such activities

Article 101.

The TTIP Governing Committee will be in charge of monitoring activities and distributing the funds and benefits in a fair and equal manner to the concerned communities.

Communities shall endeavor to collectively develop dispute resolution mechanisms and negotiate benefit-sharing agreements between communities to ensure that no injustice, harm, or discrimination arises from the undertaking of extractive activities and development projects.

Article 102.

In order to prevent environmental degradation and mitigate the effects of climate change within the TTIP area, the legitimate KNU Taw Oo District government and local communities shall work towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions by promoting and prioritizing the use of clean and non-polluting sources of energy.

Indigenous people and local communities of TTIP shall have the right to be included in the decision-making processes and shall be informed by the responsible authorities of the KNU Taw-Oo District government if renewable energy transitions or development activities may threaten human health or lead to the impairment of the environment.

Chapter 5. Land and Cultural Heritage

Section 5.1. Principles of Land Ownership and Tenure

Article 103.

The undermentioned articles are intended to contribute to and assist in the formulation of rules, policies, laws, and regulations regarding land ownership and tenure rights within the TTIP. In a manner that does not undermine communities' existing governance systems or infringe on individual rights, the following articles aim to fulfill the communities' aspirations and wishes.

Article 104.

The land is the foundation for the lives, identity, traditions, and culture of communities and residents of TTIP. For this reason, indigenous communities of TTIP have the right to be informed, consulted, and to participate in making processes on legislation or policy and shall not agree to the implementation of any activities that may impact or alter their models of living.

Article 105.

In TTIP, local communities and indigenous people have the right to the lands, territories, and resources they have traditionally owned and occupied. They shall not be displaced, evicted, or kept away from their ancestral domain.

The KNU Taw-Oo district government and the TTIP Governing Committee shall agree on similar regulations and laws concerning land ownership, including the demarcation, zoning, purchase, transfer, inheritance, or sale of land and its use.

Article 106.

Land and boundary demarcation shall be conducted collectively between the communities of TTIP, the TTIP Governing Committee, and the designated members of the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo district government in a comprehensible, open and equitable manner.

Article 107.

Communities' distinct and traditional land tenure systems, such as the Kaw and customary land rights, shall not be violated and must be respected by all residents of the TTIP.

Land in the TTIP structured under the indigenous *Kaw* system rightfully belongs to the communities and villages that form the *Kaw*. The people of the given *Kaw* are responsible for managing their lands and establishing rules and regulations within their *Kaw* according to indigenous Karen customs and traditions.

Article 108.

Sacred territories and ancestral lands shall not be violated, including cemeteries and *Loh* (areas inhabited by spirits). Thus, it is fundamental to preserve their cultural and ecological integrity by working together to identify the considered sacred and establish related guidelines that respect indigenous Karen and local communities' culture.

Article 109.

Land areas that are used for *ku* (rotational agriculture) are comunally owned by the people of a given *kaw*, village or local administrative unit. Every village or community shall collectively decide on the rules and regulations surrounding the division and period of legitimate tenure of such areas allocated for individuals, groups or households.

Article 110.

Individuals, corporations, organizations, and non-legitimate government authorities who are outsiders and do not represent the TTIP are forbidden to access, control, or own any land in the area.

Article 111.

If land in the TTIP is to be transferred or sold under the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo District government's authority to outsiders, the people of TTIP shall have the right to be informed by the responsible actors promptly prior to the transfer or sale of land.

The people shall then have the right to participate in the decision-making processes and deliberate in a public forum to collectively decide on the situation's outcome.

In the case that the KNU authorities sell any lands without following the correct procedures and community-based FPIC, then justice must be provided in accordance with the Kawthoolei Land Policy procedures.

Article 112.

Organizations, corporations, and companies, as well as other persons and illegitimate government authorities, who are not affiliated with the individuals of TTIP, do not have the right to take over or exercise any influence on the lands inside the territory.

Section 5.2. Cultural heritage preservation and revitalization

Article 113.

Oppressive military occupation and restrictive assimilation policies have deeply challenged and undermined the people of TTIP's core values, knowledge, and traditions, depriving them of their identities and integrity as distinct people. For this reason, local communities of TTIP shall have the right to develop, practice, and revitalize manifestations of their cultures, traditions, and customs, such as animist faith and beliefs, language, literature, and poetry.

The people and communities of TTIP shall also collaborate and collectively work to preserve and revalidate their ancestral knowledge and traditional practices that have eroded in order to preserve them for future generations.

Article 114.

Local communities and indigenous people of TTIP shall have the right to participate in, belong, and freely associate with one or various communities and access diverse cultural experiences. No form of discrimination or prejudice may arise from exercising such rights.

Article 115.

The traditional knowledge of the *Kaw Hko* and *Kaw Hka*, their position, and responsibilities shall be respected and preserved by the people of TTIP, the elders' council, healers, judges, and other indigenous leaders.

Suppose the ceremonial leaders of a *Kaw* are no longer part of a village or community or have passed away without transmitting their knowledge and expertise ; in that case, the people shall collectively decide if the *Kaw* system or its traditional structure, organization, rules, and regulations be reinstated.

Article 116.

The people of TTIP must respect and preserve Indigenous Karen identity in order to protect their recognition as distinct people. Thus, Karen ancestral culture, language, literature, healing methods, traditional crafts, music, art, and animist faith and beliefs must be valued and retained. Education of youth regarding Karen identity, heritage, and practices is a priority.

The people of Taw Oo shall endeavor to keep records of their written and oral histories, such as myths, stories, legends, chants, and knowledge passed down from the ancestors, which are all essential components of the communities' cultural heritage and traditional belief systems.

Article 117.

Education is an indispensable means for local communities of TTIP to achieve their self-determination rights and strengthen their social, economic, political, and cultural autonomy. The people of TTIP shall have the ability to access, develop and control their educational systems and institutions, provided in their own language and teaching and learning methods.

The TTIP Governing Committee and the legitimate KNU Taw-Oo District government shall collaborate and collectively establish an educational institution that guarantees the preservation of local communities and indigenous Karen's cultural traditions.

Article 118.

Persistent conflict in Burma has not only negatively impacted the tangible heritage of Taw Oo communities but has also diminished and eroded aspects of people's intangible cultural heritage, such as language. Local communities shall have the right to openly practice, revitalize and teach their distinct languages, including spoken dialects and variations of the Karen languages.

Article 119.

Communities of TTIP are proud practitioners of their traditional cultures. They shall have the right to freely maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with territories, resources, forests, water, and land.

Annex/ Glossary

Collective and public affairs : The environmental, socioeconomic, political and legal elements that support the general welfare of the people of the TTIP.

Commercial projects : Refers to businesses run by individuals, communities, companies or corporations that require a large amount of land, or may lead to environmental impacts on common pool resources such as air, soil and water. Commercial projects such as mines, agricultural or timber plantations shall be subject to public approval beforehand.

Community : Refers to a single village or- for areas that continue to be administered according to the traditional Kaw system- a single Kaw.

District Government : Refers to the District level authorities of the Taw-Oo District government, including all administrative levels under the jurisdiction of the Taw-Oo District government, such as Township and Village tract level authorities and representatives.

Designated agents and authorities : Refers to individuals that have been formally or informally designated by the TTIP Governing Committee, with the communities' consent, to manage or undertake specific tasks or activities within the TTIP. Designated agents and authorities can include, but is not limited to, the Taw-Oo District and Township government departmental and administrative staff, KNU District judges, village heads, local community representatives and leaders, and civil society or community-based organization representatives.

Governance : Refers to the structure of the decision-making processes and how power and responsibilities are exercised between citizens, leaders and stakeholders.

Public approval and deliberation : In a situation where activities lead to negative socioeconomic, political or transboundary environmental impacts and hamper the well-being of individuals, groups or communities within the TTIP, the prior and informed consent of the concerned community or village is required to move forward with the project.

Traditional and spiritual or religious leaders : Refers to individuals that are designated or considered by a community to be one or more of the following :

- Customary authorities of a Kaw and indigenous land management systems,
- Elders that are valorized and respected for their long-standing contributions and indigenous knowledge,
- Traditional natural resource experts that possess key insights and knowledge on wildlife and biodiversity,
- Religious leaders who possess deep understandings of their communities.

