

# **Darwin Initiative**

## **Annual Report**

### **1. Darwin Project Information**

Project Ref. Number	162/12/019
Project Title	Sustainable management of the Rupununi: linking biodiversity, environment and people
Country(ies)	Guyana
UK Contractor	Royal Holloway University of London and The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
Partner Organisation(s)	Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development, Georgetown, Guyana
Darwin Grant Value	£132520.05
Start/End dates	1st September 2003 to 31st August 2006
Reporting period (1 Apr 200x to 31 Mar 200y) and annual report number (1,2,3..)	1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006 Annual Report Number 3
Project website	<a href="http://www.gg.rhul.ac.uk/Rupununi">http://www.gg.rhul.ac.uk/Rupununi</a>
Author(s), date	Matthew Simpson and Jayalaxshmi Mistry, 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2006

### **2. Project Background**

The Iwokrama Forest and North Rupununi Wetlands and Savannas, SW Guyana represents a unique assemblage of ecosystems. The area represents a significant geographical component of three eco-regions: the Guyana Shield forest, the Rio Branco savannas and the Amazon Basin. The World Bank identifies the region as an ecological 'hot-spot' and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has highlighted this region as being a 'major tropical wilderness area' requiring immediate protection. The area is a mosaic of savanna, wetland, forest and mountain habitats with high biodiversity and is the homeland of the Makushi people who depend on the natural resources for their livelihoods.

The region is becoming internationally recognised for high species richness (88 bat, over 400 fish and 500 bird species) and numbers of endangered species (Black Caiman, Giant Otter, Jaguar, Harpy Eagle, and Giant River Turtles). Unfortunately, the area is also becoming a focus for development through road improvements and national economic pressures to increase extractive activities such as mining and logging.

The project aims to significantly contribute to the effective management of this important sub-region and assist Guyana in fulfilling its commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by building capacity through training, technology transfer and research. Guyana's response to the CBD's Conference of Parties (1999) identified severe weaknesses in institutional, professional and technical capacity to meet the long-term commitments of its biodiversity management strategy. The same

report identified capacity building through partnerships with foreign institutions as a top priority to address these issues.

To assist Guyana in fulfilling its commitments to the CBD in the North Rupununi Region the Research Department of The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Geography Department of Royal Holloway, University of London and the Open University have joined together with the following key Guyanese organisations:

- *Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development (conservation and sustainable development interests);*
- *North Rupununi District Development Board (local Amerindian interests);*
- *Environmental Protection Agency and Fisheries Department (jurisdictional responsibility for natural resource management);*
- *University of Guyana (education and research interests).*

These organisations themselves have identified needs for capacity building in: savanna, wetland and riverine eco-hydrogeomorphic classification; biodiversity monitoring and assessment; GIS and remote sensing interpretation; and monitoring and management planning.

### **3. Project Purpose and Outputs**

- ***Project Purpose***

- To help build capacity for effective biodiversity management in Guyana through training and the development of ecosystem management plans and associated monitoring systems for the North Rupununi Region, Guyana.

- ***Project Outputs***

- Trained local community members and staff within the partner organisations
- North Rupununi Field Manual (NRFM)
- North Rupununi Ecosystems Management Plan (NREMP)
- Publications and presentations

- The major project outputs and proposed operational plan have not been modified over the last year.

### **4. Progress**

- In the project stages preceding this reporting period the following milestones, set out in the original proposal, were achieved as follows:
  - Dec 2003 The initial eco-hydrogeomorphic classification of habitats was developed
  - Dec 2003 An initial list of potential land-uses within the North Rupununi region was developed
  - Dec 2003 Mapping of habitat types and land uses using remote sensed data was completed ahead of the timetable
  - Jan 2004 Start-up workshop completed and project tasks for each of the partner organisations identified with appropriate timetables
  - Jan 2004 Stakeholder fora held with follow up meetings to identify possible collaboration and involvement within the project and possible linkages with other work within the region
  - Jan 2004 Ground-truthing of habitat types and land uses identified using the remote sensed data

- Feb 2004 30 reference sites for monthly habitat and species surveys was completed ahead of schedule
- Feb 2004 3 weeks of formal training in habitat and species survey techniques and land-use type and impact survey techniques and GPS mapping. This contributes to the 1<sup>st</sup> major output of the project which is: Trained local community members and staff within the partner organisations
- Feb 2004 Finalisation of the eco-hydrogeomorphic classification of habitats and types of land use within the North Rupununi region
- Mar 2004 Monthly monitoring of the 30 reference sites commenced
- Mar 2004 Methods refined during the training programme were written up to form the North Rupununi Field Manual
- Jan 2005 2 weeks formal training in data and GIS analysis techniques and management plan development training.
- Jan 2005 Project mid-term workshop with project staff to review how the project is commencing and how it can be improved in the following year. Outputs from this workshop included:
  - refining the monitoring methodology
  - a strategy to engage with stakeholders in a more targeted way
  - more detailed specific tasks and terms of reference for each project member
  - improved method of communication among all project members by instigating an individual monthly project reporting programme
- The following key project milestones were not achieved during the previous reporting period:
  - Due to severe flooding in Georgetown in January and February 2005, where over 200,000 people had to be evacuated from their homes, the stakeholder forum had to be cancelled as the whole city was underwater. The forum was rearranged and held in May 2005.
- Additional activities that occurred within the project during the previous reporting period include:
  - Production of an eco-hydrogeomorphic classification for all water body types within the North Rupununi Region. This classification combines the different geomorphic features found within the region that result in the presence of waterbodies such as rivers, ox-bow lakes, basins etc. with the hydrological characteristics such as inputs, outputs or regime and habitat types such as savanna or rainforest.
  - Production of a map of habitat and land use types for the whole of the North Rupununi Region. Remotely sensed data were analysed to determine different land cover types based on their specific spectral signature. These types were then ground-truthed to assign a particular habitat type or land use type.
  - User-friendly monitoring recording sheets were developed so that all surveys of habitat, species and environmental characteristics could be completed within one form. All data points were coded to allow simple input into the project database.

- Training of 10 local community members and staff within the partner organisations occurred in habitat and species survey techniques, land-use type and impact survey techniques and GPS mapping. Training took the form of formal classroom sessions, where concepts and theory were introduced, and practical sessions, in the field, to demonstrate the survey and monitoring techniques in practice.
  - Ongoing monthly monitoring of 31 reference sites within the Rupununi. This has involved site visits by members of the project team to undertake species, habitat and land use surveys. In general this has proceeded with few problems however during the January 2005 workshop methods were refined to ease the process of data collection.
  - The development and use of a user-friendly Access database for storage and manipulation of project data.
  - The production of a working draft of the North Rupununi Field Manual.
  - Launch of the project website with more comprehensive information related to the project – <http://www.gg.rhul.ac.uk/Rupununi>
  - As a result of feedback from the project team and stakeholders over the previous reporting period it was felt that the whole project needed to become more participatory in its approach and engage more with stakeholders. As a result workshop and training sessions were particularly focused on techniques on how to achieve this. It was decided amongst the project team that active engagement with the communities at the start of 2005 was required.
  - There was also a shift within project management so that in-country staff felt more ownership of the project. More key decisions are now being made by the project staff in Guyana and a more participatory approach to decision making across the whole project team (both UK and in-country staff) has been put in place.
  - Calvin Bernard, a project staff member undertook a project sponsored masters in global development management with the Open University, and received a distinction in one of his completed courses (Environmental Decision-Making). His success in the studies enabled him to have Guyanese sponsorship to attend a residential school run in the UK by the Open University in February 2005.
- The following activities were undertaken within this reporting period:
    - Postponed stakeholder forum. Held in May 2005. Appendix I contains a report of the findings from this forum, written by in-country project partners.
    - On-going monthly monitoring of 31 reference sites occurred for the entire year and are due to be completed in May 2006.
    - On-going stakeholder analysis and engagement. On-going for remainder of project. Visits to all communities within the Rupununi were undertaken in April 2005 to discuss the project, learn more about land and water management within the communities and discuss the refinement of project outputs to meet the direct need of the communities. One such refinement was the production of a

- non-technical, as well as a technical, North Rupununi Methods Manual to fulfil the requirements of both the communities and project partners such as the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Updated version of technical North Rupununi Methods Manual produced in June 2005. This draft is being edited and updated by project partners as a continual process.
  - First draft of non-technical North Rupununi Methods Manual produced in June 2005. This draft is being edited and updated by project partners as a continual process.
  - Analysis of first year's data and production of 'State of the Rupununi' report (report reviewing the project findings for the communities and other stakeholders) produced in August 2005. This is still a draft form as it has been handed to the communities for editing. A copy forms Appendix I of this report.
  - Completion of Calvin Bernard's MSc in Global Development Management in November 2005. His masters' dissertation focused on stakeholder participation in natural resource management of the North Rupununi. The dissertation can be downloaded from the project website.
  - Adaptive management planning training – Jan 2006 (Appendix III contains the training schedule whilst Appendix IV contains the feedback and evaluation of the training).
  - Stakeholder meetings – Jan 2006 – These were held with all project partners, staff, interested parties etc. to determine the final stages of the project and to ensure success over the coming months.
- The following project milestones will be completed within the next reporting period:
    - Development of North Rupununi Adaptive Management Plan – Apr 06
    - Draft of North Rupununi Adaptive Management Plan – Aug 06
    - North Rupununi Adaptive Management Plan published – Jan 07
    - Spatial database of habitats, key species and land use impacts – May 06
    - Final version of Technical Methods Manual – Aug 06
    - Final version of Non-Technical Methods Manual – Aug 06
    - Final project workshop – Jun 06 – This has been delayed until June to allow full analysis of the data which will give the project team the chance to present the findings of the research work. The workshop will be used to refine the Adaptive Management Plan and to further engage with all stakeholders.

## **5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)**

- The review of last year's annual report indicated that action needed to be taken to fully engage senior staff members of local partners to ensure the long term future and impact of the work. Communication has improved within this reporting period and in-country project staff now have individual, and collective, responsibilities to engage with all senior staff. Regular reporting has helped communication greatly. An additional trip, by UK partner staff, was undertaken in January 2006 to further engage with the partners and the successful completion of the post-project proposal, with significant contributions from all partners, is testament to that.
- It was suggested by the reviewer that our regular project bulletin become a newsletter and be the responsibility of our in-country partners. These suggestions have been adopted and an example of the bulletin can be seen in Appendix V.
- We are constantly reviewing activities within the project and the training evaluation process has ensured that we improve the training for project staff. The reviewer asked for an example of this process. In the 2005 training it was requested that more time and practice be given to elements such as statistics. During the 2006 training there were a number of sessions used as a refresher and to assist staff in practicing different techniques.
- The current version of the State of the Rupununi report is included in Appendix II as requested by the reviewer. It is still in production as the communities need to provide their agreement before we can finalise the document. There are many issues about Amerindian intellectual property rights in Guyana and the project is very supportive in ensuring there is full ownership of the project information by all project partners and stakeholders.
- The reviewer was interested in the project manual development. The two forms of the manual are being edited and continually tested by the project partners to ensure that they fulfil the requirements of the different stakeholders. These will be finalised during the next reporting period.
- In the last report it was noted by the reviewer that training had expanded beyond the project partners to include organizations such as Conservation International and the Karanambo Trust. This has continued throughout the reporting period and will continue beyond the end of the project. Requests from the University of Guyana to develop a Masters course, from the Ministry of Education to develop modules for the school curriculum and from partner and stakeholder organizations to further develop ranger training programmes resulted in the development of a proposal for post project funding.

## **6. Partnerships**

- The project partnership has continued to be strong through this reporting period. The three UK organisations have continued to co-ordinate activities well and the handover of key decision making to the main host country organisation, Iwokrama International Centre, has improved ownership of the project. This strong linkage has ensured that the project has run smoothly, particularly the organisation and logistics of fieldwork and training sessions.
- The formal monthly reporting of all project staff has been implemented and has alleviated problems of communication between staffing in Guyana, and between Guyana and the UK. The stakeholder forum held in May 2005 was a significant step forward in communication with project partners and stakeholders and regular reporting after this forum has strengthened the project.
- The partnership between Guyanese and UK stakeholders was significantly strengthened by the implementation of the information and communication infrastructure of the ECOSENSUS project. This ESRC funded project is developing a distributed team working application for natural resource

management, with a particular focus on the North Rupununi. The ICT tools integrate a geographical information system, a computer-assisted sense-making tool, and a content management system. These are all open source so will be freely available to all Guyanese stakeholders. The ECOSENSUS project is also funding capacity building of key Guyanese stakeholders in the use of these tools, including the Makushi Research Unit and the University of Guyana.

- Guyanese Darwin project staff have been invited to a number of international workshops organised by WWF and Conservation International, significantly strengthening international institutional partnerships. This is evidence of the high regard Darwin project staff have been given both in Guyana and internationally.
- The project partnership continues to have good relationships with a number of organisations. During the January 2006 field visit, meetings were held with various organisations and institutions including The University of Guyana, Conservation International, The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, WWF, the Amerindian Peoples Association, the Fisheries Department, the Wildlife Division, the North Rupununi District Development Board and The Karanambo Trust. These face-to-face meetings were important for informing organisations of project progress, building trust between partners, and for exploring avenues of further collaboration post-Darwin. It was through these discussions that the Post-Darwin funding application was completed.

## **7. Impact and Sustainability**

- The profile of the project remains very high within Guyana as regular national newspaper, radio and television items continue to feature the project. The key partner within Guyana is particularly active in promoting the project using internal and external communication systems. The strong links with organisations external to the project partnership mean that these organizations are continuing to adopt the project monitoring protocols for management of their sites. Staff trained within the project also continue to take training material and practical experience gained through the project into the local communities to help train local community groups and school children. Guyanese staff members are also developing professional training courses which build on the Darwin project experience.
- During the stakeholder forum, all stakeholders agreed that the local communities should play the key role in the management of the Rupununi wetlands. Since the forum, communities have increasingly engaged with the project, aided by the regular community visits by the project staff. There have been increasing signs of community engagement with the adaptive management process promoted by the Darwin project. Project staff have been invited to village meetings to discuss the management plan, and villages have assigned volunteer task groups to deal with the collaborative process of developing the management plan.
- The ESRC funded ECOSENSUS project will produce open content capacity building on-line training which will be available to a range of Guyanese institutions. The ECOSENSUS project is also funding the construction of a computer infrastructure within Guyana (networked servers, desktops and laptops), so as to minimise the reliance of external facilities for hosting the open content material and associated software.
- The Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, the Systems Department, Open University and the University of Guyana are pursuing Memoranda of Understanding, so as to strengthen and sustain expertise and technology transfers between the UK and Guyana. An immediate and practical outcome will be a four-month visiting fellowship in early 2007 where Drs Mistry and Berardi will assist the University of Guyana in developing a curriculum for natural resource management based on the Darwin and ECOSENSUS project outputs. This will then be followed by a visiting fellowship by Mr Calvin Bernard (lecturer at the University of Guyana) to the UK.

- Darwin project outputs have been included within the Open University postgraduate course in Environmental Decision Making. Monitoring data is used to show the causal linkages within food webs and the usefulness of predictive modelling for informing management. Darwin project material is also used by Royal Holloway and WWT in their educational programme. This will add to the resources available to Guyanese partners for their own training activities.
- The project partners have secured a Post-Darwin grant of £105,000 with the aim of implementing the management plan developed during the present project. Please see section 12 below for more details.

## 8. Outputs, Outcomes and Dissemination

- All project outputs, excluding a national TV and radio item in the UK have occurred on, or ahead of the project timetable and are listed below in Table 1.
- As has been discussed previously the project partnership has strong links with local community, non-governmental and government organisations and is actively disseminating project outputs to them and will continue to do so through regular meetings, reporting and through the media. Trained staff are sharing their knowledge and practical skills with these organisations through formal and informal training sessions.

**Table 1. Project Outputs (According to Standard Output Measures)**

Code No.	Quantity	Description
10	1	Development of the technical and non-technical North Rupununi Field Manual. First drafts sent to stakeholders in June 2005.
23	17	In-kind contributions of staff time and capital items £44,745.27
15A	2	Press releases in Guyana. Two updating project progress.
15C	2	Press releases in UK. Two updating project progress.
18A	4	Indranee Roopsind and Hemchandranauth Sambhu from Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development have regularly appeared on television to promote the project.
19A	1	Indranee Roopsind from Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development was interviewed on Guyanese Radio to promote the project
19C	15	Project staff from Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development and UK partners are regularly interviewed on local radio in the Rupununi to promote the project
5	10	10 field project staff carried out regular monthly monitoring of 31 key reference sites.
8	3	Three UK staff spent four weeks training staff and developing the management plans
6A and 6B	10	10 trainees undertook 2 weeks of formal and practical training





---

## 10. Monitoring, Evaluation and Lessons

- Informal communication among Guyanese project partners and project stakeholders, ongoing informal on-line communication between all project partners and formal face-to-face discussions during project workshops and subsequent meetings have been used to monitor and informally evaluate the project. The stakeholder forum was used to formally evaluate the project and to refine project activities and improve communication. Feedback from project partners has been positive and the enthusiasm for expanding the reach of the project in the post-project proposal is encouraging.
- As in previous years, feedback from trainees was sought each day during the training course. See Appendix IV for analysis of this feedback. These were reviewed each evening and if possible comments were addressed in the next day's activities. On-going evaluation of the reference site monitoring will occur from all partners and improvements in methodology, logistics and reporting is an on-going process and will be implemented. This will be demonstrated through the new drafts of the North Rupununi Methods Manual. The key milestones and outputs identified within the original proposal will continue to be used as an indicator of achievements within the project.

## 11. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum)

### ■ I agree for ECTF and the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section

The project partners have been awarded £106,000 from the Darwin Initiative, DEFRA, as a follow up grant to their current project. Starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> October, this Post-Darwin project aims to build the capacity of Guyanese stakeholders at both the local and national level in implementing the North Rupununi Adaptive Management Plan (NRAMP) in ways that are ecologically, socially and financially sustainable. The NRAMP will be a key output of the original project and will provide recommendations for the sustainable management of the North Rupununi wetlands and form guidelines for adaptive decision making. Although it will be adopted by a number of organisations it has become increasingly clear that the wider capacity to undertake

biodiversity conservation within Guyana is limited by both human and financial resources. The Post-Darwin project is designed to assist the Guyanese partners in the implementation of NRAMP by: significantly expanding the number of trained individuals in biodiversity monitoring and management; developing material for Guyanese university courses and schools to help raise awareness of, and build capacity for, biodiversity conservation (providing the next generation of biodiversity professionals and active conservationists); and developing local financially sustainable livelihood schemes, such as eco-tourism, that have a linked objective to the biodiversity monitoring and conservation of key wetland habitats important to the local communities. By developing innovative educational material and approaches to sustainable livelihoods within the region, this project hopes to build on the success of the original project and ensure that species and habitat monitoring is permanently established and biodiversity conservation within the region is achieved.

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2005/2006

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2005-Mar 2006	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><b>Goal:</b> To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The conservation of biological diversity,</li> <li>• The sustainable use of its components, and</li> <li>• The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Purpose</b> To build capacity for effective management of the Iwokrama Forest and Rupununi Wetlands and Savannas of Guyana, through training and the development of sustainable ecosystem management plans</p>	<p>New understanding of the relationships between environmental determinants, key species distributions and impacts of land-use change that will inform management plans</p> <p>Long-term monitoring and management strategies resulting in effective conservation of key habitats and species</p> <p>Evidence of sustainable development and key habitat and species conservation</p>	<p>Monthly monitoring of 31 key sites in the North Rupununi.</p> <p>Active engagement with local communities regarding land and water resource use.</p> <p>Engagement with the wider stakeholder community to encourage adoption of project approach to monitoring and natural resource management.</p>	<p>Final data analysis of data collected during the monitoring of the key sites will occur next reporting period</p> <p>Active engagement with local communities regarding land and water resource use will continue.</p> <p>Engagement with the wider stakeholder community to encourage adoption of project approach to monitoring and natural resource management will continue.</p>
<p><b>Outputs</b></p>			
<p>Trained local community members and staff within the partner organisations</p>	<p>10 staff trained in monitoring, data analysis &amp; management and 1 graduate Masters student</p>	<p>10 staff were trained in adaptive management techniques</p>	<p>All training material will be collated and handed over to all project partners.</p>

North Rupununi Field Manual (NRFM)	Monitoring protocols and data recording sheets produced and peer reviewed, publication and distribution arranged	Drafts of the technical and non-technical manual have been produced and are currently being reviewed by all project partners and interested external organizations.	Final versions of the technical NRFM and the non-technical NRFM will be produced within the next reporting period
North Rupununi Ecosystems Management Plan (NREMP)	GIS spatial database of ecosystem and species characteristics, stakeholder fora reports, NREMP peer reviewed, publication and distribution arranged	Database set up and in use, 'State of the Rupununi' report was circulated to partners.	NREMP will be developed and published
Publications and presentations	6 radio and TV items, 3 newspaper items, posters, 2 papers	20 radio and TV items and 4 press releases occurred within this reporting period	Further radio, TV and newspaper items will occur within the next reporting period

## **Appendix I – Stakeholder Forum Report**

# **Sustainable Management of the Rupununi: Linking Biodiversity, Environment and People**

## **Stakeholder Forum**

**Lecture Room**

**Centre for the Study of Biological Diversity**

**University of Guyana, Turkeyen Campus**

**May 11<sup>th</sup> 2005**

**(Draft) Report for Review**

Prepared by  
*Calvin R. Bernard*  
Stakeholder Coordinator



**defra**  
Department for Environment  
Food and Rural Affairs



**The Open  
University**



**NRDDB**



Questions and comments on the report can be directed to;

**Calvin R. Bernard**

Stakeholder Coordinator

Sustainable Management of the Rupununi: Linking Biodiversity, Environment and People

Iwokrama International Centre

77 High Street, Kingston

Georgetown, P.O.Box 10630

You may also visit the projects website at <http://www.gg.rhul.ac.uk/Rupununi>.





## ***Table of Contents***

<b><i>Executive Summary</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><i>1. Introduction</i></b>	<b>4</b>
<b><i>2. Programme and Methodology</i></b>	<b>6</b>
<b><i>3. Outputs</i></b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 Stakeholder Participation	
3.2 Stakeholders Knowledge of Project	
3.3 Stakeholders Perspectives on Focus and Needs of Project and Management of the Wetlands	
3.4 Stakeholders Perspectives on Relevant Values	
3.5 Stakeholders Links to the Project	
3.6 Stakeholders Perspectives on the Future	
<b><i>4. Recommendations</i></b>	<b>16</b>
<b><i>Appendix</i></b>	<b>17</b>

## *Executive Summary*

This document reports on a forum held with the stakeholders of the Sustainable Management of the Rupununi: Linking Biodiversity, Environment and People Project on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2005.

The aim of the forum was to gather stakeholders' perspectives as it relates to the basic requirements for management and decision making, outlined under the project as information, resources and values.

The forum was conducted in three sessions; session one aimed at assessing and enhancing stakeholders' knowledge of the project and assessing stakeholder perceptions on the project and management of the Rupununi wetlands. To accomplish this, four focus groups were run using semi-structured interview. And this was followed by a poster presentation and the discussion on various elements of the project. Session two focussed on assessing stakeholders' relation to the project, in terms of resource and information needs and availability, using focus groups along with semi-structured interviews. The results were then presented at a plenary. The final session attempted to solicit and discuss stakeholders' perceptions and priorities for the future of the project and management of the Rupununi Wetlands post project funding.

The level of stakeholder participation at the forum was fair. The results showed that stakeholder knowledge of the project ranged from good among partner institutions to poor among international and local NGOs. Stakeholders were more aware of the monitoring activities, the institutions involved in the project and the capacity building focus of the project. Enhancement of stakeholder knowledge about the project was not objectively quantified, however there were indications of an increased level of knowledge about the project.

Stakeholders identified three groups of beneficiaries of the project and suggested that communities should benefit most. They highly support the involvement of the NRDDDB and communities in strategic decision making and called for local views and perspectives to be given due consideration and also, gave greatest value to traditional knowledge and the values of the local community. There are clear indications that possibilities exist for the exploration and development of linkages/cooperation between the project and various stakeholder organizations in areas. Stakeholders views on the future mainly focused on finding a way of working together, tasks setting and necessary capacity building for implementation of the management plan, a strategic approach for future fund raising, and ensuring that communities buy-in on the project's concepts.



## ***1. Introduction***

This document reports on a forum held with the stakeholders of the Sustainable Management of the Rupununi: Linking Biodiversity, Environment and People Project (The Rupununi Wetlands Project) on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2005. The forum was held at the Lecture Hall of the Centre for the Study of Biological Diversity, University of Guyana, Turkeyen Campus and was sponsored under the Rupununi Wetlands Project which itself is funded by the United Kingdom (UK) Government's DEFRA, Darwin Initiative.

The Rupununi Wetlands Project aims to aid in building local capacity in the field of wetlands management through the development of an adaptive management system for the management of wetlands of the North Rupununi. It is a partnership between three UK based institutions – The Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL), The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) and The Open University (OU) – and four local institutions – The North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB), The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development (IICRFCD), The University of Guyana (UG) and The Guyana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

There are also a range of other organizations and citizen groups that are viewed as relating to the project and its focus (management of the Rupununi Wetlands) as stakeholders with varying 'stakes'. Among these are government ministries and regulatory agencies, local NGOs, international NGOs, community groups. With recognition of the critical need for the involvement of stakeholders in the process of developing an adequate management system and thereafter the implementation of the said system, the Rupununi Wetlands Project will endeavour to solicit stakeholder views continually to guide the development of the adaptive management system.

This forum represented the first major step on the path to full stakeholder engagement. The aim of the forum was to gather stakeholders' perspectives as it relates to the basic requirements for management and decision making outlined under the project as information, resources and values. In this regard, the forum sought to have stakeholders openly discuss what each perceived as the necessary information and other resources necessary for the development of an effective management system for the North Rupununi Wetlands. And, also what values stakeholders held in relation to the management of the North Rupununi Wetlands and whose values should count.

The specific objectives of the forum were to;

- Assess stakeholders' current knowledge of the project through semi-structured interviews.
- Enhance stakeholders' knowledge of the project through poster and multimedia presentation and open discussions.
- Assess stakeholders' perspectives on the resources and information needs of the project and management of the Rupununi.
- Explore possible linkages between stakeholders and the project (and management of the Rupununi Wetlands) by discussing what stakeholders can receive from and bring to the project.



- Assess the values stakeholders held and saw as relevant to the project and management of the Rupununi.
- Explore in discussion, the view of stakeholders on the future management of the Rupununi Wetlands post-project.

Additionally, the forum sought to encourage interaction between stakeholders and project staff and among stakeholders to generate ideas related to the management of the Rupununi Wetlands.

The report will first present the approach taken during the forum in terms of the methodology used and how the forum was conducted. In this regard mention is made of both the planned programmes and activities and the actual programme and activities. The following section looks at the outputs of the project as they relate to the objectives outlined above. The final section presents a list of items for follow up based on the days interactions both formal and informal.

It is important to keep in mind that the Rupununi Wetlands Project is about building local capacity and therefore the local staff are themselves in a learning mode (learning as they work). The forum therefore was not one ran by ‘experts’, but by developing professionals.



## 2. Programme and Methodology

The forum was scheduled to run from 09:00hrs to 16:00hrs on May 11<sup>th</sup> at the Lecture Room of the Centre for the Study of Biological Diversity, University of Guyana Turkeyen Campus. Invitations were sent electronically to a list of stakeholder organizations which were identified during a training & planning session which was conducted in January 2005 and involved all personnel working on the project, including those from UK partner institutions. The stakeholders were drawn from government ministries and regulatory agencies, local NGOs, international NGOs and community organizations.

As shown in the forum agenda (Appendix 1), the forum was run in three sessions. The forum commenced at approximately 9:30 hrs due to some delays. Participants were welcomed and introduced to each other and the project team by Ms Vanda Allicock, Wetlands Field Research Assistant. Ms. Allicock also introduced the day's activities in brief. The remainder of the programmes was chaired by Mr. Calvin R. Bernard, Stakeholder Coordinator on the Rupununi Wetlands Project. Partner institutions were invited to make brief remarks, but of the four local institutions only IICRFCD and the NRDDDB was able to do so. The Chairman then gave a detailed outline of the day's activities and made a brief presentation (in PowerPoint) on the Rupununi Wetlands Project to set out the conceptual backing for the forum (Appendix 2)

Session one aimed at assessing and enhancing stakeholders' knowledge of the project as well as assessing stakeholder perceptions on the project and management of the Rupununi Wetlands. The stakeholders were grouped into focus groups based on the type of organizations (a total of four focus groups). Each group had two facilitators; one serving as a scribe. A semi-structured interview was conducted in the focus groups using the following questions for guidance;

- What do you know of the Rupununi Wetlands Project?
- Who ought to be the beneficiaries of the Rupununi Wetlands Project and how should they benefit from it?
- Who should be involved and how should they be involved in decision making at the strategic level? (within the project and in the management of the North Rupununi Wetlands)
- What resources ought to be at the disposal of the decision makers?
- Whose relevant knowledge and skills should be integrated into the project?

At the end of the focus group interviews, stakeholders were invited to view a poster presentation on various elements of the project. Six posters were presented under the following titles;

- Sustainable Management of the Rupununi: Linking Biodiversity, Environment and People – An Overview.
- Project Timeline
- Monitoring the wetlands of the North Rupununi and Iwokrama Forest
- Protocols for Monitoring Wetlands in Guyana: Community-based and National
- Preliminary Results of Caiman Monitoring in the North Rupununi Wetlands
- ???Who's Who on the Project???



During the poster viewing session stakeholders interacted with project staff to discuss ideas related to the project. This was followed by a discussion session building on the information presented in the posters. A second PowerPoint presentation was made during the discussions by Ms. Deirdre Jafferally, Wetlands Monitoring Programme Coordinator, on the current project activities and planned outputs. (Appendix 3)

Session two focussed on assessing stakeholders' relation to the project in terms of resource and information needs and availability. The approach was similar to session one in-that stakeholders were placed in to focus groups and semi-structured interviews were conducted using the following questions for guidance;

- How can your organization benefit from the Rupununi Wetlands Project?
- In terms of what you as a stakeholder require from the project – When will you require this (or these)?
- What resources can your organization contribute to the Rupununi Wetlands Project?
- What activities are your organizations involved in that may compliment the project's work?

The results from each focus group were presented in a plenary session facilitated by Hemchandranauth Sambhu, Assistant Wetlands Researcher, and an attempt was made to map the possible area of linkages between the stakeholders and stakeholder groups<sup>1</sup> and the project and also between stakeholders.

The third and final session attempted to solicit and discuss stakeholders' perceptions and priorities for the future of the project and management of the Rupununi Wetlands post project funding. This was done in an open group discussion facilitated by Ms. Aiesha Williams, Assistant Wetlands Researcher.

At the end of session three, the chairman summarized the days activities and outcomes, and the next steps to be taken after the forum.

Brief closing remarks was made by Mr Lakeram Haynes, Wetlands Field Research Assistant.

Media houses were invited to cover the forum and in particular, the closing session. A press briefing scheduled to follow the closing of session was not held.

---

<sup>1</sup> A stakeholder group would be identified where several stakeholders express the same interest.



### 3. Outputs

The outputs here percent of corn to the specific objectives of the forum. Note however, that responses from the project partners at the national level suggest the interview questions related to sections 3.3 and 3.4 were misinterpreted or misguided and therefore they could not be included in this assessment.

The outcomes of the forum are presented based on the grouping and not individual stakeholder organization, except in those cases where it is necessary to do otherwise.

#### 3.1 Stakeholder Participation

The level of stakeholder participation at the forum was fair. Eleven of nineteen invited representatives were present at at least one of the five sessions, ten of nineteen were present at atleast one of the critical sessions. Five of the fourteen organizations invited has at least one representative present at all the sessions. Of the eleven invited representatives who attended the forum six participated in all the sessions. And, of the eight organizations which attended the forum five had atleast one represnetative present at all sessions.

Organization	Representative	Position/Title	Presence or Absence				
			Opn	Ses1	Ses2	Ses3	Cls
Wildlife Division	Alona Sankar		A	A	A	A	A
Community/Iwokrama Board	Sydney Allicock		A	A	A	A	A
NRDDB	Eugene Isaac	Chairman	P	P	P	P	P
NRDDB	Emily Allicock	Treasurer	P	P	P	P	P
University of Guyana	Philip Da Silva	Dean, FNS	A	P	A	A	A
Iwokrama	David Singh	Director General	P	A	A	A	A
Conservation International-Guyana	Patrick Chesney	Mng. of Policy and Planning	P	A	P	P	P
Guyana EPA	Ian Kissoon	Env. Off. II, Protected Areas	P	P	P	P	P
World Wildlife Fund	Patrick Williams	Programme Officer	A	A	A	A	A
World Wildlife Fund	Gary Clarke		A	A	A	A	A
Fisheries Division	Pamela Ramoutar		A	A	A	A	A
Flora and Fauna International	Euletta Bynoe		P	P	A	A	A
Amerindian Peoples Association	Candace Phillips	Programme Assistant	P	P	P	P	P
Karanambu Trust	Micheal McTurk		P	P	P	P	P
Karanambu Trust	Dawn McTurk		P	P	A	P	P
Conservation International-Guyana	Curtis Bernard	GIS Coordinator	P	P	P	P	P
Ministry of Amerindian Affairs	Carolyn Rodriques	Minister	A	A	A	A	A
Guyana Forestry Commission	James Singh	Comissioner	A	A	A	A	A
Ministry of Amerindian Affairs	Anthony Cummunings	Cunsultant/Researcher	A	A	A	A	A

**Table 1 - Summary of stakeholder Participation in the forum. A = Absent; P = Present**

The stakeholder focus groups used for sessessions one and two are shown in **Figure 1**.



<b>Project partners at national level</b> Iwokrama International Centre University of Guyana Environmental Protection Agency	<b>International NGOs</b> Conservation International-Guyana – Guyana Flora and Fauna International
<b>Project partners at local level</b> North Rupununi District Development Board	<b>Local NGOs</b> Karanambu Trust Amerindian Peoples Association

Figure 1 - Focus groups for stakeholders.

### 3.2 Stakeholders Knowledge of Project

#### 3.2.1 Current knowledge

In general the stakeholders' knowledge of the project ranged from good to poor; with the representatives from the national and local partner institutions at the higher end and, the representatives from the international and local NGOs at the lower end.

Stakeholders demonstrated knowledge of mainly the monitoring activities under the project and to an extent knowledge of the institutions directly involved in the project and the capacity building focus of the project.

#### 3.2.2 Enhancing stakeholders knowledge

The enhancement of stakeholders knowledge about the project was not objectively quantified, however the general indications from the discussion held after the poster session were of an increased level of knowledge about the various aspects of the project among the stakeholders. This was demonstrated in and facilitated the highly active discussion on the project's activities and outputs. The material presented during the poster and discussion session are attached to this report.

### 3.3 Stakeholders Perspectives on Focus and Needs of Project and Management of the Wetlands

Stakeholders identified three groups of beneficiaries of the project as; 1. the project partners; 2. the communities, and; 3. the country and world. One stakeholder group suggested that the partners should benefit directly, but stopped short of defining what those direct benefits should be. The benefits to the country or world were identified as improvement in knowledge about wetlands. However, responses suggest that in the view of the stakeholders present, the communities should be the major focus of the project in terms of the benefits derived. **Table 2** summarises stakeholders responses regarding the benefits and beneficiaries of the project. One conflict seems to have emerged as it relates to benefits which should go to the communities. The local project partners expressed the view that the communities should be indirect beneficiaries of the project while the national project partners see the communities as the primary beneficiaries. What this really means for the project may need to be given attention. Perhaps it is just a matter of miscommunication, but clarity needs to be sought.

**Table 3** presents the different organizations or individuals which stakeholders suggest should be involved in decision making at the strategic level and indicates the number of stakeholder groups which made the suggestion.





<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Benefit</b>
<b>Partners</b> <i>Iwokrama</i> <i>NRDDB</i> <i>University of Guyana</i> <i>Guyana EPA</i>	Direct – (not specified)
<b>Communities</b>	Primary; their livelihood; Indirectly; more contact and awareness to reduce lack of knowledge; community level representation more evident; more than others; co-management; Economic activities; secure livelihood
<b>Country or World</b>	Better knowledge of wetlands

**Table 2 - A summary of the stakeholders' perspectives on who should be the beneficiaries and what benefits should come from the Rupununi Wetlands Project.**

Decision Maker	# of Grp. suggesting	Comments on roles
Communities - Toushaus	2	
NRDDB - Executive Director - Executive Board	3	Project partners at the local level suggest that the NRDDB executive director should be involved, but feeding back information for adoption by the board and communication with communities for input. Also the Executive Director should be involved in management and the Executive Board in regulation and monitoring. The local NGO stakeholder group suggest that the NRDDB should be the focal point for the decision making.
Karanambu Trust	1	
Karanambu Cattle Company	1	
'Stakeholders'	1	
Project partners	1	The national level project partner group suggest that project partners such as the EPA, UG and NGOs could bring expertise

**Table 3 - Stakeholders perspectives on involvement in decision making at the strategic level**

It is clear that stakeholders unanimously support the involvement of the NRDDB in strategic decision making. Community involvement was also highly favoured among the stakeholders. There is some suggested justification for involvement of project partner institutions, though only one stakeholder group indicated that they should be involved. However, there are no suggestions on the role that the Karanambu Trust and Karanambu Cattle Company can play, and the suggestion for involvement of 'stakeholders' can be seen as loose ended.

As it regards the resource needs of the decision makers stakeholders seem unified on the need for appropriate information being available. Specifically, information on technical aspects such as the ecosystem and also on land use and ownership. Inline with the view that the communities should be given prominence in decision making, there is also the notable call for local views and perspectives to be given due consideration in decision making.



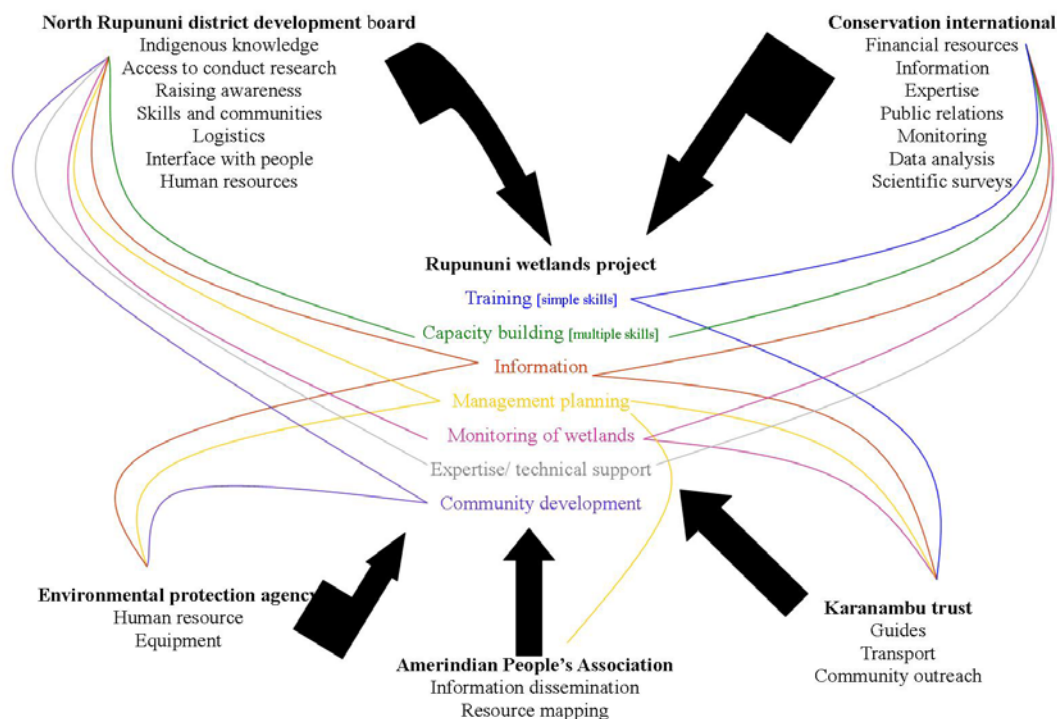
Other resource needs highlighted by stakeholders were appropriate expert inputs and consideration of a national vision for the district. In addition, the need for appropriate equipment and technologies, transport and finances were mentioned.

### 3.4 Stakeholders Perspectives on Relevant Values

The relevant values were assessed by considering stakeholders views on integration of knowledge and perspectives into project. In this regard stakeholders were again unified in giving value to traditional knowledge and the values of the local community. In open forum it was suggested that communal style management, which is familiar to communities, should be integrated into management planning. The views of experts, such as those on wetlands ecosystems, were also suggested to be of value.

### 3.5 Stakeholders Links to the Project

Stakeholder linkages were considered in two regards; what resources and information can the project provide to a stakeholder and, what reresources and information can stakeholders or stakeholder groups provide to the project and management of the North Rupununi. These two relationships are illustrated in **Figure 1** below.



**Figure 2 - An illustration of the linkages between the Rupununi Wetlands Project and the stakeholders based on resources. Resources listed beneath each stakeholder are those the stakeholder indicated that they can make available to the project, bold arrows indicate this flow. Resources listed below the project are those from which stakeholders have indicated they can benefit, this link is indicated by the think lines.**



From the analysis, indications are that the project can be of the greatest benefit to stakeholders in terms of the information it generates such as, detail on ecosystems, species information, land use data etc. there is particular interest in the data relevant to ensuring that the North Rupununi wetlands is recognized as one of the country's first RAMSAR Wetlands sites. The management planning activities are also seen by stakeholders as being equally beneficial to them. The wetlands monitoring is of interest mainly to the stakeholders with a physical presence in the North Rupununi.

Stakeholders also indicated that their organizations are involved in the some activities which may be complementary to the Rupununi Wetlands Project. These are outlined in the table below:

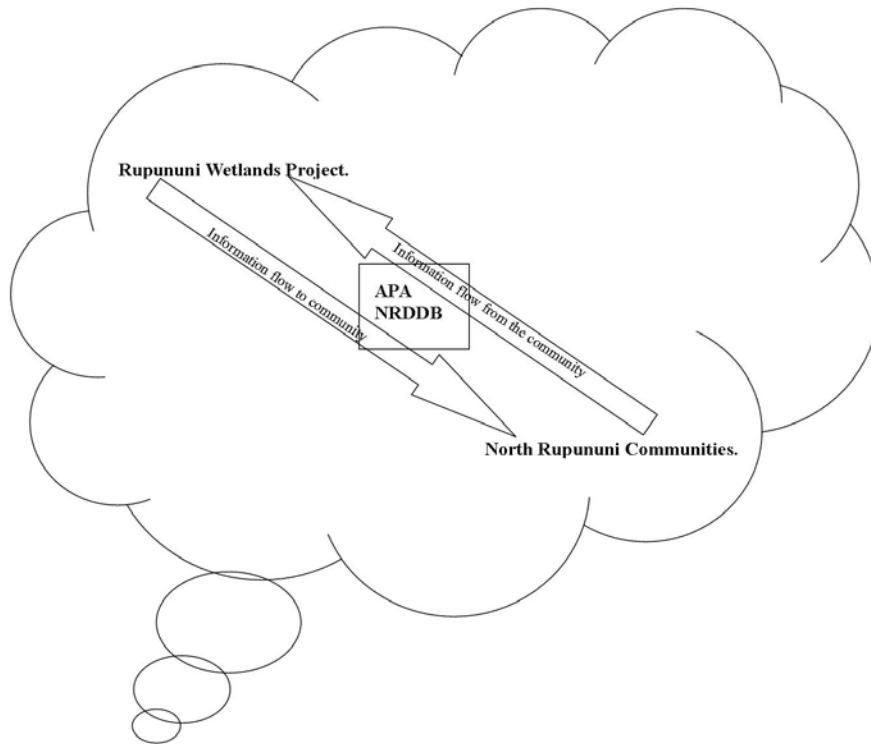
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Stakeholder organization</b>
Resource mapping	EPA, CI-G.
Communication with groups in community	The EPA, NRDDDB, CI-G
Community outreach	Karanambu Trust, EPA
Data analysis	CI-G
Public relations	CIG, EPA, NRDDDB [Radio Paiwomak]
Environmental monitoring	EPA
Policy development	EPA
Management planning	EPA, NRDDDB [Arapaima management, Community-based natural resource management project]
Sustainable business development	NRDDDB [Aquarium fish, Makushi loggers, Ecotourism]
Language translation	APA, NRDDDB [MRU]

**Table 4 – A summary of the activities undertaken by the various stakeholders, which may be complementary to the Rupununi Wetlands Project.**

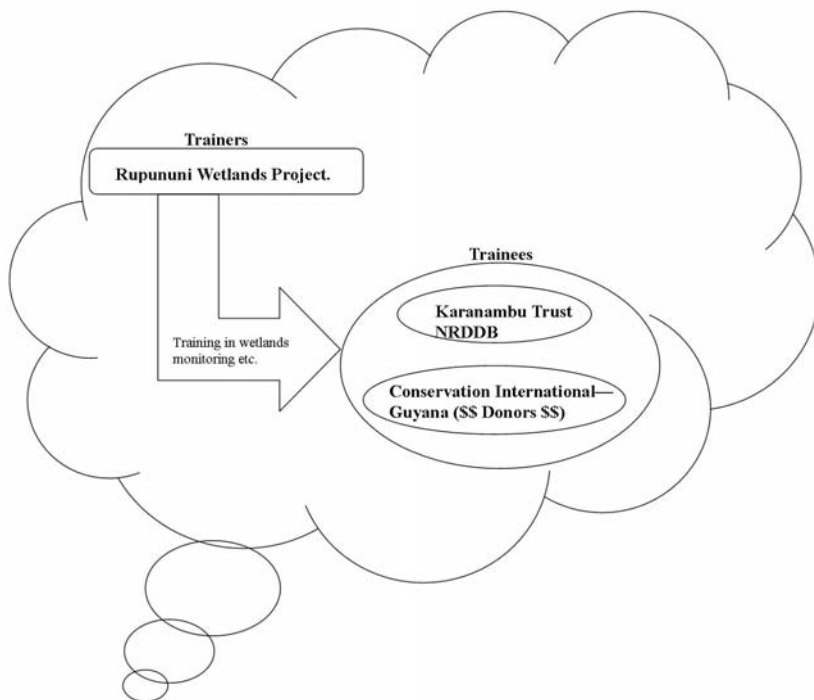
There are clear indications that possibilities exist for the exploration and development of linkages/cooperation between the project and various stakeholder organizations in areas such as resource mapping, communications with communities (in particular utilizing the translation services), general public relations and management planning.

Two specific arrangements were explored. The first was based on facilitating training in wetlands monitoring for interested stakeholder organizations. In this case, the training is to be provided by the knowledgeable personnel on the Rupununi Wetlands Project to selected persons from Karanambu Trust, Conservation International-Guyana and members of the North Rupununi District villages. Funding for this training could be provided by Conservation International-Guyana (see **Figure 2** below).

The second arrangement is based on that the facilitation of communication between the project and local communities particularly to communication of somewhat technical information. As **Figure 3** below indicates, this communication could be mediated by the APA and NRDDDB. The idea is that documents from the project for review can be channeled through the APA and NRDDDB to the communities, and community responses channeled back to the project through the same route.



**Figure 3 – An illustration of a possible link between the Rupununi Wetlands Project and APA and NRDDB to facilitate communication between the project and the local communities.**



**Figure 4 - An illustration of a possible link between the Rupununi of Wetlands Project and Karanambu Trust, NRDDB” and Conservation International-Guyana -Guyana to facilitate training in the wetlands monitoring.**

### ***3.6 Stakeholders Perspectives on the Future***

A very active discussion developed among stakeholders with regard to the future of the Rupununi Wetlands Project and the management of the Rupununi wetlands. The fruits of this discussion are outlined below;

- A mechanism needs to be devised to get stakeholders together to make full use of the data that would be available and to go forward on the management of the Rupununi wetlands. Stakeholders need to meet and begin discussions for the management of the North Rupununi wetlands and it is important for stakeholders to be able to meet post-Darwin Initiative Project.
- Monitoring should continue but consideration is to be given to who will be responsible and where funding will be sourced. If communities take on monitoring they need to have a central place for reporting data and other things.
- Implementation of the management plan needs to be given consideration. Particularly as it regards to who will be responsible for what aspects of the implementation and in this regard consideration of the necessary capacity building. For example, if the NRDDDB is to be the central body for implementing the management plan, then the necessary capacities need to be enhanced to facilitate this.
- The project needs buy-in by the communities to give them some control. The communities should be in the driving seat for the management of the North Rupununi wetlands and should be a key part in the designing of the plan. In order for communities to play an effective role in the management of the North Rupununi wetlands resources there is a great need for necessary capacity building within each community, this need to be given consideration.
- Need to make an assessment of what you know, what you think you know and what you don't know to plot a course in obtaining funding to carry on the work in managing the North Rupununi wetlands.
- A sound public relations strategy needs to be developed. This would be key in getting all stakeholders at the local, national and international level involved in the process and getting the information out to the public. Public relations particularly on the international level can help immensely with a campaign for fund raising, and this should be encouraged.

It is important to note that throughout the discussion the need for adequate financing to support any future vision was constantly reiterated.

#### 4. Recommendations

In consideration of the various objectives of the forum the following recommendations are suggested;

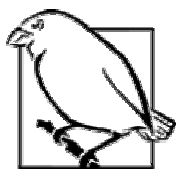
1. Public relations need to be enhanced within the project. This is to be done at three levels – community, stakeholders and, national and international. Community level public relations should be geared to ensure that communities understand all aspects of the project and to win the support of the communities. Stakeholders also need to be kept up to date to ensure that they can make valuable contributions to the project and subsequent management of the North Rupununi wetlands. Public relations on the national international level should be strategic to achieve the necessary political and public support for the recognition of the North Rupununi wetlands as one of Guyana’s first RAMSAR wetland sites and also to aid in fundraising activities for the management of the North Rupununi.
2. The Rupununi wetlands project should give serious consideration to meeting the expectations of stakeholders in terms of their perceived benefits. This will require some additional work particularly in negotiating on these benefits can be realized.
3. As it is the view of stakeholders that the communities should play the major role in the management of the wetlands attention should be given to those things necessary to realizing this. Also considering that the values of the communities should be given greatest recognition, work needs to be done to make explicit what these value are.
4. Since many potentially beneficial relationships between the Rupununi wetlands project and stakeholders and also among the stakeholders were exposed, these should be fully examined and attention should be paid to building the necessary links.

Note also that each point made with regards to stakeholders perspectives on the future, can in themselves be considered as specific recommendations of the stakeholders.





## Appendix 1 – Forum Agenda



# Sustainable Management of the Rupununi: Linking Biodiversity, Environment and People

## 1<sup>st</sup> Stakeholder Forum

11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005

### Agenda

09:00 hrs	Welcome and Introduction	Vanda Allicock – Wetlands Field Research Assistant
09:05 hrs	Brief Remarks from Project Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- University of Guyana</li><li>- Environmental Protection Agency</li><li>- North Rupununi District Development Board</li><li>- Iwokrama</li></ul>	
09:25 hrs	Outline of the day's activities	Chairman - Calvin Bernard – Stakeholder Coordinator
09:30 hrs	Presentation: The Rupununi Wetlands Project and Why are we Here	Calvin Bernard – Stakeholder Coordinator
09:40 hrs	Session One: Assessing stakeholder knowledge and perception of the Rupununi Wetlands Project	Group
10:10 hrs	Coffee Break and Poster session	
10:40 hrs	Discussion on project; What does it do? What can it offer?	Deirdre Jafferally – Wetlands Monitoring Coordinator & Calvin Bernard – Stakeholder Coordinator
1200 hrs	Lunch	
13:00 hrs	Session Two: Assessing Stakeholder Resources and Needs as they relate to the Project	Group
13:45 hrs	Plenary on Session Two	H. Sambhu – Wetlands Researcher
14:30 hrs	Session Three: Assessing stakeholder view on the future of the Rupununi Wetlands post-Darwin	Groups
15:15 hrs	Discussion on Session Three	Aiesha Williams – Wetlands Researcher
15:30 hrs	Closing session – Summary and Next Steps	Chairman
15:45 hrs	Closing Remarks	Lakeram Haynes – Wetlands Field Research Assistant
16:00 hrs	Refreshments	
16:30 hrs	Press Conference	



## **Appendix II - State of the Rupununi Report**



## **Appendix III – Training Programme**





## **Appendix IV – Training Evaluation**

## Feedback from January 2006 Training Session

Feedback from the training sessions was obtained through a feedback form (see Table 1 below), which gave the trainees some focus to their comments, but was open enough for qualitative responses. These were administered at the end of each half day and participation was 100% for all.

**Table 1. Form used to obtain feedback from training sessions.**

<b>Darwin 2006 Training</b>						<b>Place number and write at the back</b>
<b>Evaluation for session:</b>						
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Relevance to project						
Interest in topics						
Difficulty						
Clarity of communication						
Balance between lecture and activities						
Quality of handouts						
Your chance of contributing						
Overall length						
Have learning outcomes been achieved						

Overall, feedback was good for all the sessions. For all the issues, trainees responded in the “Good” to “OK” boxes. Of the issues listed, “Relevance to project”, “Interest in topics” and “Your chance of contributing” were consistently marked as “Good”. “Overall length” was one of the issues which many trainees marked as “OK” – this reflects the qualitative comments in which many trainees wanted more time for training. Table 2 below shows some of the qualitative comments from trainees.

**Table 2. Some comments from trainees about the training sessions**

<p>“Very important in taking the project to next step of developing a process for the management plan, is very important for all team members”</p> <p>“Clear language in explaining”</p> <p>“Relating to the whole session, I feel that it is going fairly well, I am learning a lot of new stuff, but the time is little to grasp everything. I feel if we can still talk more about what was taught would be much better for learning opportunity”</p> <p>“I am usually quiet with my views but I felt comfortable enough to contribute”</p> <p>“Easily grasped, good explanations”</p> <p>“I am very interested and would like some more, since these are helping me/us to deal with issues while on our community visits”</p>
---

“Andrea and Jay, this was a nice session, but my level of understanding is still behind because of my schooling”

“Handouts were excellent. Helped a lot”

“The topics dealt with was very interesting and hope to learn more about them in the coming month”

“Helps to put project into perspective”

## **Appendix IV – Wetlands Bulletin Example**



Sustainable Management of the Rupununi: Linking biodiversity environment, and people

### DID YOU KNOW...

- The Wetlands Project is currently monitoring 31 sites in the Rupununi

- There are six members from communities in the North Rupununi on the Wetlands Team

### THIS ISSUE FEATURES:-

Wetlands Update	1
Activity Schedule	1
Commentary	2
Activity Corner	2
Profile on Water Body	2
Contact Information	2



Be on the lookout for the next volume of the **Wetlands Bulletin** April 2006

# Wetlands Project

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2006

## Wetland Update - What is the Project about?

The Darwin Initiative funded programme for wetlands monitoring in the North Rupununi is aimed at developing a better understanding on the impacts of different land uses on the wetlands. Wetlands are very important and provide many benefits directly or indirectly. These benefits include food, water quality, recreation and flood control among others. Understanding how land uses activities impact North Rupununi Wetlands System is important as it gives an indication on how these uses may affect our lives as well as the habitats and populations of fish and wildlife in the area. The Wetlands Monitoring Programme over the last two years has undertaken monitoring



Biophysical Monitoring of the Rupununi

Over the last year, you would have also been visited by members of the Wetlands Team.

of 31 sites within the North Rupununi and the Iwokrama Forest. This monitoring will aid in developing a picture that is comprehensive and provide data that can be used towards the formulation and implementation of an adaptive management plan for the North Rupununi Wetlands. The information collected would also lend to completing the picture on the status of the North Rupununi Wetlands as the North Rupununi District Development Board and the Iwokrama Centre lobbies the Government to have the North Rupununi Wetlands registered as the first Ramsar Wetlands Site of International Importance in the Government's bid to accede to the Ramsar Wetlands Treaty.

Our visits were focused on hearing your thoughts on the resources that you are using within the wetlands and the changes that you have observed over the years living in the North Rupununi.

This year commenced with a third year of training for members of the team, including the Wetlands Researchers from the North Rupununi. This year's training was geared towards developing the strategy for the North Rupununi Adaptive Management Plan that will depend on input from you and all members from the North Rupununi communities

### Activities for February and March :-

Monitoring of the 31 sites - 1st - 22nd February and March

Community Visits - February and March

\* The Wetlands Community Researchers will also be collecting your thoughts on the Wetlands Project and what are some of the things you would like to see included in the North Rupununi Adaptive Management



## Commentary

Deirdre Jafferally and Aiesha Williams - Wetland Project Members

Deirdre and Aiesha have worked on the wetlands project since it started. They both have many fond memories of working in the Rupununi and with the people of the Rupununi. Deirdre and Aiesha left last year to pursue further studies, and they both hope to return to continue working with the people of the North Rupununi. They both wanted to share these thoughts on the North Rupununi, its People and the Wetlands Project, .



*"...The North Rupununi Wetlands and the Rupununi Wetlands as a whole plays an important part in the benefits it provides to the people of the region and to the world. The Rupununi Wetlands is an area of high biodiversity and the services the system provides for the local people. The people of the Rupununi have a unique opportunity in making sure that the development of this unique area is sustainable and in keeping with preserving their heritage and traditions..."*



*"...Wetlands are not only essential for the ecosystem services it provides, but also its important social, economic and recreational values. In this light it is important to manage and conserve wetland ecosystems, and more so to encourage all levels of stakeholder participation in the process. This approach, especially since it is applied in the initial stages, has enable participation of key stakeholders to inform the direction of the project and management of the wetlands."*



### Profile on water bodies in the Rupununi

Do you know of a very special pond, creek, part of the river that you use in your community? Would you like to see that pond featured the next edition of the Wetland Bulletin in April 2006?

Send in your choices for the profile on a water body for the next edition. Send us an entry with your name and village as well as; the name of your pond/creek/river/lake and story of the name- if there is a story behind the name, a short description, how is it important to you and your village and why do you think that this pond/creek/river/lake is special. You can also send us a drawing of a scene from the pond/creek/river/lake as well. Please send us your choices by the 13th March 2006.

### Activity Corner:-

## Water Bodies of the Rupununi

S L I V A D N I R A T S O P O  
 E J T I N U N U P U R S T Q W  
 M P A K E E R C T A B L R A U  
 O F P W N D G L D A T M I A F  
 N Y A T N S N I S U Y M M I C  
 I B K B A J K O O E U M C P A  
 E S N W I N K A P A T I Y W G  
 I U I Y K A B A Q H U I E G Y  
 I O R I E U J A C W C R S O P  
 D N O P T T E N R A G T A I H  
 S G J Z T A R A K A W A I L P  
 D N O P L I V E D Z H D G D A  
 T E O R R U B O R R U B Q Y N  
 A O S Q S M K L O K U S U K O

Search through this savannah of letters and find these rivers, creeks, ponds, & lakes ...

- |           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| BATCREEK  | BURROBURRO  |
| DEVILPOND | CAJUEIRO    |
| DIAMONDW  | GARNETTPOND |
| INKAPATI  | ITCHPOND    |
| PGYMY     | POSTARINDA  |
| REWA      | RUPUNUNI    |
| SEMONIE   | TARAKAWA    |
| WAIMU     |             |

For more information, please contact;  
 Vanda Allcock—Surama  
 Calvin Bernard - University of Guyana  
 Delano Davis—Toka  
 Orville (Rocky) Davis— Toka  
 Damian Fernandes - Iwokrama  
 Maliyza Hamilton—Aranaputa  
 Lakeram Haynes - Iwokrama/ Rewa  
 Indranee Roopsind—Iwokrama  
 Hemchandranauth Sambhu - Iwokrama  
 Dexter Torres -Iwokrama/ Wowetta

**Iwokrama Staff can be reached at Freq 7800 at call sign Kurupukari or 225-1504.**

What is a Wetland:- A wetland is an area that has water present on it for part of the year or for the entire year.