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SUSTAINABLE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME - GUYANA PROJECT



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General Overview

The Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme (SWM) – Guyana Project was launched on November 9, 2018. The Project is being implemented in the Rupununi Region over a period of five years (2018-2023), by the Government of Guyana through the Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission (GWCMC), in coordination with the Centre of International Forestry Research (CIFOR). The project is part of the SWM Programme, which is an initiative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States that is being funded by the European Union.

SWM seeks to ensure that the Rupunini can continue to offer sustainable options for food security and livelihoods in accordance with traditional lifestyles. To this effect, SWM will build upon existing community-driven initiatives that contribute to maintaining healthy fish and terrestrial wildlife populations at the landscape level.

Project Updates

During our first few months of operation, several activities have been going on:

GARNERING FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT (FPIC) FROM THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

SWM is committed to ensuring that the rights of indigenous peoples' are respected and that they participate to the project as beneficiaries, decision makers and implementers. To date, we have presented SWM over forty communities and are in the process of having the consent forms signed.

SETTING UP A SITE STEERING COMMITTEE

At our launch the framework for a site steering committee was set up. The committee includes members of the district community boards, the Regional Democratic Council, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs (MoIPA), two Rupununi based civil society organizations – the Rupununi Livestock Producers' Association (RLPA) and Visit Rupununi (VR), the Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission (GWCMC) and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). Invited members will include other relevant stakeholders working in the region on similar topics.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN

With support from SWM, NRDDDB finalized its fisheries management plan and is preparing an agreement with SWM for its implementation. The NRDDDB Fisheries team has been identified and will soon be recruited.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ECO-TOURISM ACTIVITIES

An SWM community-based tourism consultant worked closely with Visit Rupununi to support the development of Visit Rupununi's strategy and action plan which is now starting to be implemented.

DEVELOPMENT OF OUTREACH AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PLANS

In close collaboration with District level boards, South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS) and the schools, SWM developed the environmental education plans for North Rupununi and South/Central. Through environmental education, SWM seeks to enhance scientific and technology skills, inform youth about environmental concerns and inspire innovative thinking and solutions, encourage confidence in youth and develop leadership skills.

DESIGNING THE SWM INTERVENTION ON LIVESTOCK

The livestock component of SWM aims to explore, through meaningful interventions, to what extent improved access to domesticated livestock reduces pressured on wildlife as a source of meat, and whether improving the viability of livestock production makes livestock more attractive than wildmeat as an income source. The intervention of SWM is currently being designed through a partnership with TGC (The Consultancy Group).

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN SOUTH RUPUNUNI

SWM facilitated a strategic planning workshop for SRCS. An action plan for the period 2019-2023 was also developed, in accordance with the vision of SRCS. In addition, the workshop served to identify areas of potential collaboration between SRCS and SWM.

Training Sessions

KOBOCOLLECT TRAINING

A training session was coordinated by Dr. Nathalie Van Vliet (Site Coordinator, CIFOR) on February 6 – 7, 2019 with twenty-one members of the South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS) on the use of KoboCollect at the Wichabai and Manari Ranches. The training aimed at introducing the advantages of digital data collection forms. It taught participants how to: use Kobotoolbox, develop digital forms, collect data using smartphones, upload and analyze data. The training involved very practical experience including fieldwork.

CAMERA TRAPPING TRAINING

Dr. Matthew Hallet (Camera Trapping Consultant, CIFOR) conducted a training exercise on February 5-6, 2019 with twenty community members at the Manari Ranch. The training sought to build capacity in critical theoretical and practical aspects of large mammal research and monitoring, including scientific observation and the development of research questions, research design, the use of GPS, camera traps, and line transects, and the processing, maintenance, and analysis of project data.

ROADS IMPACT ASSESSMENT TRAINING

Dr. Evi Paemelaere (Road Assessment Consultant, CIFOR) trained four participants on data collection and monitoring of the section of the Guyana to Lethem Roadway during February, 2019. Trainees received a brief introduction to road ecology to understand the motivation for the SWM project. The received basic training in data recording and learnt how to evaluate bridges and culverts as underpasses for wildlife. Other training activities conducted included the evaluation of traffic and roadkill, practicing the use of GPS instruments and the use of KoboCollect for data recording.



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FISHERIES MONITORING TRAINING FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NRDDB FISHERIES MONITORING PLAN

Dr. Deirdre Jafferally (Fisheries Management Consultant, CIFOR) conducted a fisheries monitoring and management training at the Bina Hill Institute on January 28, 2019 with twenty- eight persons. The training was conducted to familiarize the community monitors with the monitoring protocols being developed to monitor fisheries resources in the North Rupununi and to also obtain feedback on the practicality of the data collection forms.

On The Horizon

Over the next three months, several activities will be conducted:

ROADS ASSESSMENT

The newly trained field staff will commence the execution of field activities to monitor the animals killed on the road and identify road crossing areas

CAMERA TRAPPING ACTIVITIES

Terrestrial wildlife will be monitored using Camera Traps. The first cameras have been set at Manari Ranch in February, 2019. Field work in South Rupununi is scheduled to commence in early March for the remainder of the dry season.

ECO-TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING

Visit Rupununi, our partner for the implementation of our Eco-Tourism Action plan scheduled a meeting March 3, 2019 with stakeholders of the Eco-Tourism sector in the Rupununi.

News Room

We have new offices in Georgetown (48 Craig and Sheriff Streets) and Lethem (174 Lethem, Region 9)!

Events Corner

Turtle festival on April 13, 2019: SWM will provide financial and logistical support for the organization of the turtle festival in Yupukari and participate with environmental education activities.

Meet a Member of our SWM Team

This is Oswin David, the Site manager for SWM, based in Lethem. He is responsible for coordinating field activities and support with logistics and planning. "I have a great passion for the environment and working with SWM is so far rewarding trying to make a difference in finding ways for the environment and the Indigenous people to work in harmony with one another. I love what I do because SWM involves great outdoors. I always believe that how far you travel for fieldwork is related to your areas of interest. I think it is time for us to walk the talk."

SWM Programme

The SWM Guyana Project activities are part of the SWM Programme, which is an initiative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States. It is being funded by the European Union through the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). The Programme mobilizes an international group of partner organizations with experience and expertise in wildlife conservation, food security and policy development. It is implemented through a consortium partnership, which includes the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD). Projects are being implemented in twelve participating ACP countries, namely: Chad; Democratic Republic of Congo; Gabon; Guyana; Madagascar; Mali; Papua New Guinea; Republic of Congo; Senegal; Sudan; Zambia and Zimbabwe.



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