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SUSTAINABLE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME - GUYANA PROJECT



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## General Overview of SWM Guyana

The Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme – Guyana Project (SWM) 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 funded by the European Union, through the Africa, Caribbean, Pacific Secretariat.

It was developed and launched after a continuous consultation process over the past two years with Governmental Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations and Community Members across the region.

SWM seeks to ensure that the Rupununi 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.



## MID-YEAR SITE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR 2019-2020

On November 27, 2019, SWM held its Mid-Year Site Steering Committee (SSC) Meeting for 2019-2020.

This meeting sought to help partners communicate progress with their activities, share lessons learnt, resolve issues, and have a multi-stakeholder approach to the implementation of SWM at the site level.



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## PROJECT UPDATES

From October to December 2019, several activities have been ongoing. An outline of some of them are as follows:

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Term One of SRCS's Environmental Education Curriculum is now complete! Students from the four pilot schools have been learning about the different types of plants and animals that can be found in the Rupununi. They have also been doing practical activities to support their learning such as camera trapping and bird watching. At the end of the term an exhibition was held where each of the schools performed songs, skits and poems to show what they had learnt.



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### WILDLIFE MONITORING

**Red Siskin.** Rangers from six villages have begun going on monthly field trips to monitor the Red Siskin. On each trip, the rangers set up mist nets to catch Red Siskins where they then gather information about them such as size and weight before releasing them.

Rangers at Wichabai Ranch have also been going out every other day to observe the life cycle of the Red Siskin which is very valuable scientific information

**Giant Anteater.** Rangers from SRCS have started their Giant Anteater Research. Four rangers from Katoonarib village conducted household surveys with local residents to gather information on local perceptions of the Giant Anteater. The rangers are now going out twice a week to identify Giant Anteaters in order to estimate a baseline population for the area. So far they have spotted three and even given them names to help identify them in the future!



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**Camera Trapping Activities.** The SWM camera trapping team consists of local community representatives across the Rupununi. They have just completed over a month-long mission throughout the Rupununi where they collected data gathered from the Wet Season and relocated cameras to the dry season locations. We are still analyzing the images and compiling our report but we have a few wonderful images to share. You can really see just how wild the Rupununi is!



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## FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

**Awareness Building.** The NRDDDB is currently conducting community outreaches in the North Rupununi to develop awareness about their Fisheries Management Plan. So far, outreaches to twenty communities have been completed. This plan will only work if we have the cooperation and help of all of their communities. Let's stand together and manage our fish resources!

**Consumption and Fish Stock Data.** The NRDDDB are also collecting data on fish consumption and fish products from ten communities focusing on sales points such local shops, supermarkets and grocery stores. In addition to consumption data, the NRDDDB is also planning to conduct a fish stock assessment to help gain an understanding of the current levels of fish in their waters.

## ECO-TOURISM

**Learning Trail.** Visit Rupununi carried out their first 'Learning Trail' exercise this December. The activity involved giving new and emergent eco-tourism operators the opportunity to have a guest experience at some of the Rupununi's more established facilities. It was a very hands-on experience and saw five participants visiting various locations across the region,



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starting at Saddle Mountain in the South Rupununi on December 2, and ending at the Iwokrama River Lodge on the December 9.

They learnt about different the types of tourists visiting the region, various accommodation styles that can be considered, general necessities required by tourists, challenges faced as operators and the strong link between wildlife conservation and tourism in the Rupununi.

The experience also helped participants appreciate the uniqueness of each site while also learning how to make their products more attractive to tourists. On the final day each participant gave a presentation highlighting the lessons learnt along the "Trail" and which of the practices observed they would be taking home to help in the development of their own locations.

**Needs Assessment.** Eleonore Devillers (Eco-Tourism Consultant, SWM) worked along with Visit Rupununi to conduct a Tourism Needs Assessment on several lodges not captured previously. She also revisited some of the lodges assessed in 2018 to see how SWM's support through Visit Rupununi has helped their operations.

## TRAINING SESSIONS

The Theory of Change (TOC) and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Workshop. How do we achieve our goals? How do we measure our impact? SWM sponsored a training session in November 2019 facilitated by Mr. Jens Odinga (FOS Europe) which focused on this. This training sought to build the capacity of our partners in the Rupununi in the use of the TOC model which is used worldwide in project planning and development. It also relayed the importance of using indicators to determine the success of activities. This session was also used to gain valuable insights from our partners in updating the TOC for the Guyana Site.



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## HIGHLIGHTS:

- The SWM Wildlife Officer has been recruited!
- The Field Trip to visit wildlife farms in Trinidad and Tobago has completed. Proposals by Karanambu Trust and the RLPA will be tabled for action at the End of Year Site Steering Committee.



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## MEET A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM:

Meet Goretti Lewis. Goretti is a member of the Wapichan Wiizi Wildlife Committee of the South Rupununi District Council (SRDC), which is being supported by SWM. She first got involved in the work of the SRDC and South Communities Peoples' Development Association (SCPDA) in 2010 as a Women's Representative and today performs the functions of Assistant Secretary-Treasurer. Goretti was born in Shulinab Village, the lone Macushi village within the Wapichan Territory (Wapichan Wiizi), and still resides there, where she is the Secretary of the Village Council and also works with the School Feeding Programme.

"The Macushi and Wapichan people are united in our efforts to secure, conserve and protect our lands. We have practiced the principles of sustainable development since time immemorial and will continue to do so."



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## COMING SOON:

The RLPA will be opening its first Livestock Hub in Lethem to help provide easier access to livestock feed, equipment and hatchlings to the region.

## 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.