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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 after continuous consultation with governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations and community members across the Rupununi region. The Government of Guyana is implementing SWM through the Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission (GWCMC) in coordination with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). SWM is funded by the European Union through the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

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

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PROJECT UPDATES

Sustainable Livestock Rearing: RLPA has added over 20,000 kg of chicken meat to the region!



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- The Rupununi Livestock Producers' Association (RLPA) continues with its hard work to improve the livestock sector in Region 9. With the establishment of its Livestock Hub in Lethem, RLPA has so far supplied over 10,000 chicks and 25,000 kg of chicken feed to farmers.
- This is estimated to have added over 20,000 kg of chicken meat to the region, further helping to bolster food security in the Rupununi. This has been particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly reduced goods traded from Brazil and Coastal Guyana.

Fisheries Management: The NRDDDB completed its first fish stock assessment in the North Rupununi!

- SWM continues to support the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDDB) in the implementation of its fisheries management plan.
- The NRDDDB has already collected a year of fisheries data in 10 communities of the North Rupununi.
- Patrols are being done in most of the rivers of the North Rupununi.
- The NRDDDB completed a fish stock assessment in October in collaboration with the University of Guyana. The initiative seeks to determine species abundance and water quality. With this data, the NRDDDB hopes to form a baseline against future assessments.



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- Dr. Elford Liverpool of the University of Guyana facilitated the fish stock assessment. Local Community Resource Environmental Workers (CREWs), who were trained by Dr. Liverpool, will collect data for the fish stock assessment.
- This assessment was the first of its kind for inland fisheries in Guyana. It can be adapted by many other communities across the country.



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Community Based Conservation Management Zone in South Rupununi

- With support from SWM, the South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS) is monitoring the Endangered Red Siskins (*Spinus cucullatus*) in the South Rupununi. It is now working with six communities (Potarinou, Shulinab, Sand Creek, Rupunau, Katoonarib, Sawariwau) to create a Community-Based Conservation Management zone.
- While this zone was initially created to conserve Red Siskin habitat, it will play a wider wildlife management role in the region. The South Rupununi District Council (SRDC) has already facilitated the development of wildlife use

guidelines in three of those communities. This will ensure that hunting, fishing and gathering respect traditional harvesting and serve the needs of the community without hampering the resource for future generations. Hunting guidelines vary between villages. However, they often include the following: hunt only to satisfy family needs; use traditional hunting practices; avoid killing the lead bush hog; avoid hunting animals during their known gestation period; restrict external hunters; manage fires; use rotational hunting; and control transboundary hunting.

Giant Anteater Safe Zone



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- Another emblematic species of the Rupununi is the Giant Anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) – a species classified as 'Vulnerable' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature in its Red List. Before August 2019, little was known about this species in Region 9. With support from SWM, SRCS began to pilot a research and monitoring project in Katoonarib Village. This used household surveys, camera traps and tracking to learn more about this unusual animal. By November 2020, SRCS had identified 33 Giant Anteaters in Katoonarib. It subsequently expanded the project to Shulinab, Sawariwau and Wariwau. From the data collected, habitat destruction, unmanaged fires, road development and opportunistic killings are clearly threats for the species. SRCS is therefore collaborating with Katoonarib to make a 'Safe Zone' for the Giant Anteaters within the Community-Based Conservation Management Zone. This will enable the village to create rules and use local residents to act as rangers to enforce them to provide greater protection for the species.

- SRCS has consulted with villages and signed Memoranda of Understanding to formalize this collaboration. Consultations are ongoing with communities to understand key information such as anteater hot spots, sleeping areas and local perceptions.
- It is hoped the safe zone can be adapted to protect other threatened species once baseline population estimates for these species are complete.

Wildlife Management Regulation - Awareness Raising Campaign



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- The GWCMC's "Knowledge of Wildlife Regulations" survey is still ongoing and has gathered over 200 responses. These data will be used to understand the knowledge levels of different stakeholders to target so that more effective sensitization efforts can be made.
- The GWCMC is producing some invaluable communication materials. These include two factsheets entitled "Wildlife Licenses and You" and "Wildlife and the Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission". It is also producing a small booklet with detailed information on protected species, wildlife licensing processes and penalties.
- With support from SWM, the GWCMC is also gathering and synthesizing all legal texts related to wildlife management, hunting and fishing, as well as on other thematic areas covered by SWM such as livestock production, ecotourism, etc. The analysis has two main goals. First, it aims to produce content for the awareness-raising strategy in a language that can be understood by the general public. Second, it wants to identify areas in the regulation that may require further development or clarification.

COMING SOON:

- The Wildlife Conflict Team will be in the Rupununi in the first quarter of 2021 to start their work on the interactions between large carnivores and livestock!
- Look out for the GWCMC's "Protected Species" Poster!
- Check out our Facebook Page for information about the GWCMC's ongoing "Knowledge of Wildlife Regulations" survey!



MEET A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM:



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MEET SUSAN GEORGE

Meet Susan George! Born and raised in Katoka village, Region 9, Susan has been contributing to community resource monitoring and management since 2013. She has walked, paddled and ridden a motorbike across most of the North Rupununi in pursuit of data. Fluent in both English and Makushi, Susan is an invaluable member of the SWM/NRDDB Fisheries Management Team!

SWM PROGRAMME

The SWM Guyana Project activities are part of the SWM Programme, an initiative of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). Funded by the European Union through the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), the Programme mobilizes an international group of partners with experience and expertise in wildlife conservation, food security and policy development. It is implemented through a consortium that includes the Center 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 12 participating OACPS countries, namely: Chad; Democratic Republic of Congo; Gabon; Guyana; Madagascar; Mali; Papua New Guinea; Republic of Congo; Senegal; Sudan; Zambia and Zimbabwe.