

**SWM SUSTAINABLE
WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT
PROGRAMME**

GUYANA newsletter

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WELCOME

We are approaching the end of the fourth year of implementation of the Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) Programme's work in Guyana, with the goal of achieving conservation and sustainable management of wildlife and promoting livelihoods aligned with local aspirations.

During the last five months, and thanks to ongoing engagement with communities, local partners in the Rupununi and governmental institutions, we have been able to make substantial progress which will need to be further consolidated in the following years.

Among the most salient achievements are the consultations for the development of the inland fisheries regulations, the consolidation of a final version of the Wapichan Wiizi Wildlife Management Plan which will now have to be validated by relevant stakeholders, the launching of the anteatr safe zone in Katoonarib and the biodiversity assessment of the Karawaimin Taawa. We have also continued to expand support for poultry development in the region and launched the wildlife friendly tourism manual. We are also incredibly proud of the work done in environmental education through the wildlife clubs, the environmental education classes and the turtle festivals in Yupukari and Sand Creek.

We hope you will enjoy reading more about SWM here. Do follow us on our active Facebook page for more instant and up to date information.

Nathalie Van Vliet
SWM Guyana Site Coordinator

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Inland fisheries policies and regulations

- The SWM Programme supported the Fisheries Department in the creation of the Action Plan for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Development and Management in Guyana 2021–2026.
- A national stakeholder consultation was organized to inform the regulatory development of the inland fisheries and aquaculture sector. The consultations involved virtual and in person meetings in Regions One, Five, Six and Nine.
- Thirty-seven village representatives from Region Nine participated in these consultations.

Fisheries management in North Rupununi

- The North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB) carried out a general fisheries stock assessment at 35 locations across three major rivers: Rupununi River, Rewa River and Essequibo River.
- A fish stock assessment training was undertaken in April 2022, benefiting nine participants from the NRDDB fisheries team and the Fisheries Department. The training introduced basic theoretical concepts in fish ecology and statistics, which are a necessary foundation for understanding the length-based assessment methods.



NRDDB fisheries ranger, Mr Dorrick, checks the seine during a fish stock assessment on the Rupununi River.

Turtle conservation

- South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS) and Caiman House rangers monitored 22 sandbanks along the Rupununi over 6 weeks and found 239 nests. Over 2 000 eggs were saved from flooding.
- A 20 ft square sand pit has been constructed in Caiman House for the ex-situ conservation of turtle eggs.
- Caiman House held its 10th annual turtle festival in Yupukari Village.

Wildlife management in South Rupununi

- A workshop and several consultations were organized to develop the Wapichan Wiizi Wildlife Management Plan.
- A multi taxa biodiversity and biocultural assessment of the Karawaimin Taawa was completed by the South Rupununi District Council (SRDC) monitors, with support from researchers from Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Chicago Field Museum, RE-wild and Jacksonville Zoo.
- A hunting survey was carried out among 300 hunters in 12 villages in the South Rupununi to compare with data collected in 2004 by Project FAUNA.
- The giant anteater conservation zone was established in Katoonarib Village, and consultations are happening with Shulinab and Sawariwau to include them. Surveys were conducted in these three villages to understand perceptions and attitudes towards giant anteaters. A camera trap survey was completed to analyze populations of giant anteaters in the conservation zone.



SRDC monitor, Mr Realine, holds up a large bat during the biodiversity assessment

Support to local livestock production

- A total of 37 880 chicks and 104 175 kg of feed has been supplied to the Rupununi since the beginning of this project. Rupununi Livestock Producers Association (RLPA) supplies 18 local broiler chicken farmers (Eight women and ten men) with chicks every month.
- RLPA and the Regional Democratic Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support local farmers/ranchers to be sustainable and self-sufficient.



A young boy wins a chick and some feed during RLPA's educational games at the turtle festival

PROJECT UPDATES

Environmental education

- In South Rupununi, 480 youths from 12 communities have participated in environmental education classes and 31 teachers have been trained to deliver the curriculum (19 women and 12 men). Traditional knowledge classes, to teach traditional skills to the younger generation, continued in 12 communities targeting about 360 youths and adults.
- In North Rupununi, wildlife clubs operate in six villages (Fair View, Surama, Wowetta, Rewa, Kwaimatta and Yupukari).

SWM sustainability plans

- We developed a sustainability plan to help prepare implementing partners in the Rupununi for the closure of the SWM Programme in Guyana in 2023.
- The plan was developed through a process facilitated by an external consultant, with 24 representatives from 6 local partners.

Moving towards wildlife friendly behaviours

- Along in collaboration with Visit Rupununi (VR), we are promoting the region through the campaign “Keep the Rupununi Wild”, which encourages visitors and residents to protect wildlife and respect village rules with regards to wildlife use. Wildlife based tourism is also being promoted.
- RLPA’s “Local meat you just can’t beat”, encourages consumption of locally produced meat, discouraging the purchase of imported meats as an alternative to wild meat and fish.
- Radio content has been aired on local stations to promote wildlife friendly behaviours among road users.



Local poultry farmer from Lethem, Mr Kishun, selling chicken to his trusted locals

Guyana One Health platform

- The result “One Health” has been added to address issues related to zoonotic diseases and wildlife, particularly with the risk of new pandemics originating from wildlife.
- The overarching goal of this “One Health” result area is to improve the preparedness of Guyana regarding the emergence of zoonotic diseases related to wildlife, by providing support to local communities and governmental institutions to better understand and prevent the outbreak of zoonotic diseases related to wildlife.
- Eight institutions have confirmed their interest in participating as members of the Guyana “One Health” platform.

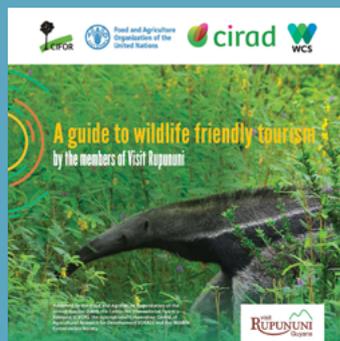
PUBLISHED



Wildlife clubs of North Rupununi involved in sustainable wildlife management - <https://www.fao.org/3/cb9094en>



Wildlife use in Wapichan Wiizi – <https://www.fao.org/3/cb9094en/cb9094en.pdf>



A guide to wildlife friendly tourism by the members of Visit Rupununi – <https://www.fao.org/3/cb9154en/cb9154en.pdf>



Three chapters about wildlife management in the Rupununi were published in: Lasso, C.A. and M.A. Morales-Betancourt, eds. 2021. IX. La caza y pesca de subsistencia en el norte de Suramérica. Parte I: Colombia, Venezuela y Guyana. Serie Editorial Fauna Silvestre Neotropical, pp. 534. Bogotá, Colombia, Instituto de Investigación de Recursos Biológicos Alexander von Humboldt. <http://repository.humboldt.org.co/handle/20.500.11761/35960>

FROM THE FIELD

“WE ARE GLAD TO FINALLY HOLD ANOTHER TURTLE FESTIVAL!”

Anthony Roberts – Caiman House Project Coordinator



Anthony Roberts ensuring the safe journey of turtles to be released to the Rupununi River.

HIGHLIGHTS

The SWM Programme held its year four Site Steering Committee meeting and partners submitted their year 5 proposals.

Caiman House held their 10th turtle festival.

SRDC completed their biodiversity assessment of Karawaimin Taawa.

SWM PROGRAMME

The activities of the SWM Programme in Guyana are part of the SWM Programme, an initiative of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), which is funded by the European Union with co-funding from the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and the French Development Agency (AFD). 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), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD). Projects are being implemented in 15 participating countries, namely: Botswana, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Guyana, Madagascar, Mali, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Congo, Senegal, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

MEET OUR TEAM



Mikey, sitting patiently whilst he waits for the consultations to finish in Shulinab Village.

Meet Michael Burnette (AKA Mikey), the SWM Programme driver. Mikey was born in Bartica, Region Seven, moved to Lethem 15 years ago and has been driving for a total of 36 years. He has worked as a driver for the SWM Programme in Guyana for the past 4 years and has worked for other organisations such as Romanex, Ministry of Education, Vanessa Mining, Guyana Timbers Limited and the Region Nine Administration. Needless to say, he can drive! Mikey owns his own bus and works the Lethem to Georgetown trail. On a busy month Mikey has said the SWM Toyota pickup will travel anywhere from 8 000 to 10 000 km.

Mikey said, “Wildlife is important, they are innocent and do no harm to us. We must be careful on the roads when driving so we don’t damage the wildlife around us. This way we can preserve them for our future generations.”



A brighter future for people and wildlife



SWM-programme@fao.org
www.swm-programme.info

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