



# IMPACT REPORT 2014

# Conservation International's Global Strategy

Conservation International's major goal is to empower societies to manage their natural assets in a sustainable way as an essential condition for their socio-economic development. This work is intended to support the development of Healthy, Sustainable Societies, which are societies that have achieved sustained social and economic wellbeing while maintaining the integrity, resilience and productivity of natural ecosystems .

CI's hypothesis is that achieving a healthy sustainable society requires the simultaneous advancement and strengthening of its three interdependent and mutually reinforcing dimensions of (1) critical natural capital, (2) effective governance and (3) sustainable production to generate improvements in human wellbeing. Integrated transformations in all three dimensions are needed to ensure that nature's benefits will endure. The benefits targeted by CI include climate resilience, food, fresh water, and livelihoods.



# Message from the Executive Director

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**“Life is not just about work but about being committed to what you believe in. ...In a money-chasing society... success is not about financial wealth and acquisitions. A truly successful man lives his dreams and this requires learning about one’s inner self.”**

*Sandile Masondo, on Ian Player\**

Dear Friends,

In most of our cultures we emphasise the importance of having a vision or a dream that gives us structure and purpose in life. This guides us when we think about securing the future we want for our children, be it through earning a living or ensuring that our nature, traditions and culture are passed on. Ian Player and Sandile Masondo, who might represent very contrasting aspects of their homeland, were both seized with the importance of having a clear dream to guide their actions, and they were empowered to work within their communities and society to bring about the changes they felt were important for the future of South Africa. This is no different for us here in Guyana, and as part of the Guiana Shield, of the wider Amazon, and of the Caribbean.

At Conservation International – Guyana, I am proud to be part of a team of committed and passionate people who have great dreams for a sustainable future for our country. Keeping any vision alive calls for continuous self-reflection and recognition of the successes and challenges faced daily. Each year we carry out an internal review of our work, and we present highlights of the calendar year to you in the form of a report.

None of our successes would have been possible without your support. It is to you, friends, family, and partners that we owe a debt of gratitude when we highlight any positive impact that we have had in 2014.

As we enter 2015, we are encouraged by the relationships we enjoy with such a wide cross-section of our society. We hope that we can continue to build a common future for our country through the deepening and widening of these relationships, through the generation and communication of objective information about people and nature, and through demonstration of further proofs that we can indeed maintain nature while people thrive.

May the New Year bring closer to realising a future we want for our children.



David Singh

*\*Ian Player was a famous South African Conservationist known for his work in conserving the white rhino. He was a founder of the Wilderness Leadership School and the World Wilderness Congress. He died on November 30, 2014.*

*Sandile Masondo is a young South African advocate for conservation and promotion of the Zulu language and culture. He strongly believes in the importance that contact with traditional roots is necessary as a moral or spiritual compass to guide our lives, while learning and respecting other cultures and languages.*



CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL PRESENTS

# NATURE IS SPEAKING

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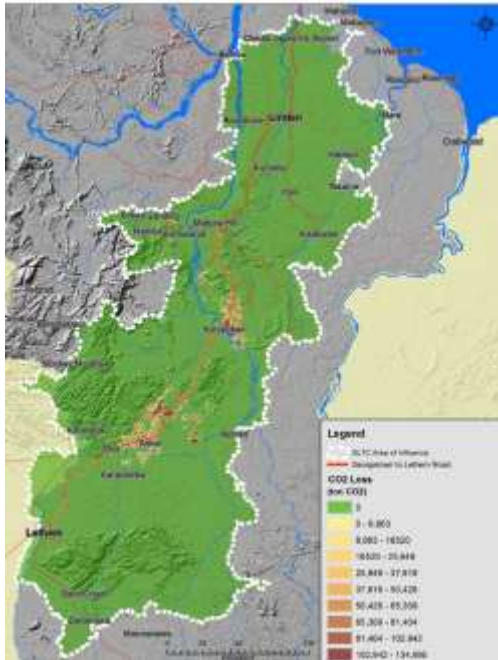
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# Securing Natural Capital

## the basic building block for life

We are committed to assist the Government of Guyana to meet its obligations under the UN Convention on Biodiversity (UNCBD), to protect at least 17% of terrestrial areas that are representative of the rich biodiversity of the country, and in planning and controlling natural ecosystem loss. We recognise that while some loss may be necessary, the representativeness, and functionality of the country's ecosystems must be maintained to sustain long term growth and development and for the country to play its rightful role in the fight against the impacts of climate change.

### Minimizing Impacts of Infrastructure Development



Map of the potential carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions that can result in deforestation from the upgrade of the Georgetown to Lethem road. An estimated total of about 36 million tons of the Greenhouse gases are likely to be emitted over 29 years through direct deforestation from the road upgrade, and indirectly from uses such as mining, settlement, logging and agriculture induced by the road.

CI-Guyana completed an assessment of the potential impact of the upgrade of the Georgetown to Lethem Road on biodiversity and ecosystem services. This is a first of its kind assessment of the road that objectively demonstrated that it is economically better to implement measures to avoid, minimize, restore, and compensate the associated impacts, and demonstrated tools for assessment of impacts of infrastructure development.

Without measures to manage the direct and indirect impacts of the upgrade of the road, the resultant carbon emissions alone can significantly impact the success of Guyana's REDD+ programme. Recommended management measures include the implementation of broader landscape planning for the wider road corridor, and enhanced integrated management of extractive activities in region.

CI-Guyana continued to expand the range of partners with whom we work to achieve our mission. Over the years of our work in Guyana we have built and maintained strong and successful partnerships for securing Natural Capital through protected areas and other conservation measures. To strengthen our support for realizing success of Guyana's development along a sustainable path, we have formed new partnerships to strengthen our work in the other dimensions.

Strong partners are essential to the sustaining of the impacts we seek to realize and therefore I am extremely proud that at CI-Guyana we are developing new and effective relationships.



Curtis R. Bernard  
Technical Director

## Prioritizing conservation across Guyana's landscape

I believe that communities have an important role to play in protecting nature's ability to continue to provide for life. Community engagement is therefore important as it builds relationships that are based on respect, trust and understanding; which CI-Guyana values deeply. I am inspired by the organization's mission and work it does with communities to provide opportunities for capacity building and knowledge sharing for the realization of sustainable development. One way in which the organization realized this in 2014 was by working with several communities along the Georgetown to Lethem road to develop resource use maps utilizing local knowledge, science and technology. This helped identify critical areas that provide natural resources and other ecosystem services to communities that might be impacted by the road upgrade.



Annalisa Marks  
Project Assistant: Data Management

Priority areas for biodiversity identified using tools for systematic conservation planning showing overlap with Amerindian Village Lands. These areas are of the highest importance for biodiversity conservation through protected areas and other means, such as highly managed uses. This emphasizes the importance of community conservation.



Approximately 20% of Guyana's territory was identified as priority for biodiversity conservation through the work of CI-Guyana and the University of Kent's Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE) in collaboration with the Protected Areas Commission. This work involved the conduct of an analysis to objectively identify Priority Areas for Biodiversity (PAB) across Guyana. It is intended to inform land use planning and, in the long-term, the objective expansion of Guyana's National Protected Area System. The analysis was completed using data on the distribution of biodiversity and habitats across Guyana, and expert stakeholder feedback. These inputs were utilised in a spatial decision support tool to identify areas where biodiversity conservation targets can be met at least cost.

The analysis identified that some of Guyana's conservation targets can only be met on lands titled to Amerindian communities, re-emphasizing the importance of ensuring the continuation biodiversity conservation on Amerindian lands.

## Working towards a Healthy Sustainable Rupununi



The Rupununi Region of Guyana is ecologically connected to Lavrado System in the Brazilian State of Roraima.

The synergies and dependencies between the sustainable development of the Rupununi Region and the Roraima State are a prominent feature of discussion between the peoples of this ecoregion. Conservation International through its offices in Guyana and Brazil are supporting further dialogue within civil society actors in the ecoregion.

Many of our staff and partners are from the Rupununi Region of Guyana. The People from the Region have a strong passion for nature, culture and traditions. This is true not only for people who have lived there for generations but also for most newcomers.

Acting on the challenge to communicate a model for a Healthy Sustainable Rupununi, we have articulated a working “vision” for the development of the Rupununi, intended to inform a series of dialogues on the topic.

Through the availability of sound information and with strong participation of stakeholders, we envision a region where people are committed to, and have embraced, a sustainable development path in which they live in prosperous communities in harmony with their environment; where nature is recognised as the centre of human wellbeing; where economic growth is fuelled by integrated and sustainable production systems, and a continuous effort to maximise the value to resource owners is pursued; and where people make conscious decisions to ensure provision for future generations; therefore, creating a Healthy, Sustainable Rupununi.

The CI-Guyana team has been working very hard over the last three years to promote green development and minimize poorly planned development that could severely impact the fragile ecosystems of the Rupununi region. Being a part of this small force trying to promote eco-friendlier development is a real challenge for me because sometimes the conventional paths of development can be more attractive than the friendlier ones. However, because the people of the region themselves see and understand that maintaining the rich ecosystems for the present and future generation's needs are vital, makes our task less difficult. The team in its effort to promote this form of development has been using various marketing and environment/development education approaches and tools. Producing short videos and creating local context leaflets, posters and brochures has been particularly useful to help build the capacities and empower the local people to drive the future development in a greener path that could lead to the overall development of a healthy sustainable Rupununi for the benefit of all of Guyana and the world at large.



Vitus Antone  
Natural Resource Management, Education &  
Awareness Consultant

## Kanashen Community Owned Conservation Area– Leading the process on Amerindian Protected Areas

I am proud to be working with Kanashen, as the first Amerindian community to go through the process with the Protected Areas Commission, putting their lands into the National Protected Areas System. They are setting a good example for other Amerindian communities.

The inclusion of communities are vital to the success of these areas and no more is it clearer that people need nature to thrive than in these disappearing sections, where the dependence is evident.



Kayla DeFreitas  
Community Development Assistant

The Wai Wai Amerindian Village of Kanashen is located in the southern part of the country on the border with Brazil and where the Essequibo River's headwaters are located. The village comprises some 625,000 hectares of intact forest land – approximately one-third the size of Wales. At the time of receipt of title they declared their intention to manage all of their land as a protected area.

Colin and Janeda (Children of Anthony and Salomi ShuShu playing in the Essequibo river)



With the assistance of CI-Guyana, Kanashen Village formally applied to the Protected Areas Commission for recognition of their lands as a Protected Area as part of the National Protected Areas System (NPAS). This step has helped Guyana to be closer to its first National Amerindian Protected Area as catered for in the Protected Areas Act (2011) and fulfill its international commitment under the CBD to demonstrate conservation of 17% of representative terrestrial biodiversity. Kanashen is also paving the way for other communities to become formally involved in the NPAS.

We assisted the Protected Areas Commission to review and develop a process to by which an Amerindian Village governed under the Amerindian Act (2006) could be recognized as a protected area under the Protected Areas Act (2011). We also provided financial and technical support to the Village to revise its draft management plan, and the implement a number of priority activities identified within the plan.



# Enabling Effective Governance and Institutions

## for effective and sustainable natural resource policymaking and implementation

We are committed to supporting the Government of Guyana in the implementation of the national Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), and in working with stakeholders to test, learn about, and implement strategies for the healthy sustainable development of the Rupununi Region. The Rupununi is where we have gained most of our experience in Guyana, and through these experiences we are better able to focus our efforts to support national efforts.

### Sustainable Development in Natural Resource – Based Economies: Trading Up to Benefit Human Wellbeing



In September, CI-Guyana collaborated with the Trent Centre for Biomaterials Research at Trent University to organize a Policy Forum on the theme Sustainable Development in Natural Resource – Based Economies: Trading Up to Benefit Human Wellbeing. From left to right, Professor Suresh Narine, Senior Professor in the Departments of Physics & Astronomy and Chemistry and Director of the Trent Centre for Biomaterials Research; Andre Guimaraes, Vice President for Development, Americas Division, CI; John Goedschalk, Executive Director, CI-Suriname; David Singh, Vice President, CI-Guyana

The Policy Forum is part of the ongoing process to foster informed dialogue on the role of extractive industries in shaping sustainable development in natural resource-based societies. The forum emphasized (1) the importance of recognizing the extractive industry sector as a whole, (2) the common issues faced within regional economies related to the sector, and (3) the value of open spaces for dialogue to incrementally build consensus on how best to enhance the sector's contribution to sustainable development. We will continue this work in 2015, seeking an alliance of civil society partnerships around some common thematic areas.

I am proud of our work to continue and enhance the depth of dialogue on green growth in Guyana, particularly through creating a dynamic space in which persons across civil society – including industry, and government can continue to strengthen consensus on the role of the extractive sector in our country's LCDS. We have focused on facilitating discussions on evidence-based and cross-sectoral options with an interest in informing public policy. I am optimistic about the growing commitment to green growth demonstrated across sector leaders, including private sector leaders who are testing the limits of the role of the private sector in advancing sustainable development.

CI-Guyana remains focused on advancing a model in Guyana for how less developed countries can best manage natural capital for fair returns and sustained development.



Dianne Balraj  
Coordinator, Environmental Policy

## Integrating Gender Considerations into Conservation Action

Men, women, and youth's unique needs, desires, and priorities are often invisible in development projects. Our Team's commitment to and collaboration for inclusivity has made visible these groups of people. It has resulted in important understandings of the linkages between gender, conservation, and climate change and how gender integration can enhance efficacy, efficiency, and equity of our interventions. The focus on gender this past year positions CI-Guyana to demonstrate our Team's capacity to practically and meaningfully advance a rights-based approach to sustainable development in our current and future work.



Marcelle Chan-A-Sue  
Project Assistant- Research &  
Communications

Making men, women, and youth visible in the Rupununi.

Carrying out focus group discussions among men women and youth separately, is a common practice to obtain frank opinions and triangulate feedback in public consultations.

CI is working towards ensuring that the learning is not only geared towards its relationships with external partners, but that it also seeks to further improve its internal policies and practices.



In 2014, CI-Guyana undertook a project to build internal capacity and understanding of the link between gender and conservation. The project focused on addressing gender issues within our means, and enhancing the outcomes of the Rupununi Low-carbon Livelihoods Project by integrating gender considerations into the project's interventions.

Achieving true integration into our practices will require sustained commitments of time and effort, and will include continuous review of internal policies, processes, systems and professional and personal engagements.

Through the process we started, we are developing a good working model for gender integration for other field offices. As CI assists in creating healthy sustainable societies, gender and youth considerations must underpin our planning processes.

# Promoting Sustainable Production and Consumption

## through local sustainable enterprise development

We are committed to helping green public investments, mainstream low-carbon green practices in the corporate sector, and demonstrate the value of green enterprises. We are testing models for expanding low carbon economic sectors by supporting communities and human development whilst maintaining the capacity of the Rupununi to provide environmental services. The main aim is to promote healthy sustainable societies through the spirit of community-based enterprises.



The cassava and cassava products value chain has been assessed under our Rupununi Low Carbon Livelihoods Project. It is the single most significant agriculture product from the Rupununi, contributing to food security and to support the growing village cash economy.

According to the FAO, it is a highly versatile, climate resilient crop grown by smallholders in more than 100 countries. The plant as a whole is rich in carbohydrates (roots); protein, plus iron, calcium and vitamins A and C (leaves). Other parts of the plant can be used as animal feed, and livestock raised on cassava have good disease resistance and low mortality rates. It is a competitive alternative to wheat and maize, and potentially a good biofuel feedstock.

CI-Guyana partnered with Practical Action-Latin America and the UN-Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to conduct baseline assessments on the socio-economic, environmental, food and agriculture conditions and performance in the Rupununi. These assessments are helping us to monitor and evaluate the project's performance and impact and as background information for identifying key sub-sector value chains in community agriculture and tourism and specific areas for intervention to support the development of community-based enterprises that are more climate resilient and in keeping with Guyana's LCDS.

We are pleased that the information is being used by key decision makers at the national, regional and local levels to inform policy and sector strategies and plans.

Our growing partnership with the UN-FAO has been an exciting aspect of our work in 2014. We collaborated together to develop the State of Food and Agriculture in the Rupununi. The first time globally such a sub-national study was done, it evaluated the current situation and performance of agriculture, food and nutrition security and sustainable and low carbon livelihoods in the region.

Based on the results and recommendations of the study, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Regional Democratic Council have initiated a process to develop a sustainable agriculture development strategy in 2015. This strategy will advance food and nutrition security and enable sustainable and climate resilient agricultural enterprise development in the region.



René Edwards  
Technical Coordinator  
Rupununi Low Carbon Livelihoods

## Partnering with the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry and the Government of Guyana to Support Green Community Based Enterprises

Over the past year in collaboration with GBTI and the Government of Guyana, we have fostered the “green” fund—the RIF which seeks to grow community based climate resilient businesses in agriculture and tourism. I am particularly pleased to be part of the project team and to have been given the opportunity to commit time and effort to share information, build capacity and shape the sustainability of businesses that fulfill the role of the Rupununi Low Carbon Livelihoods project in transforming lives.



Egbert Ralph  
Local Enterprise Development Counterpart  
Rupununi Low Carbon Livelihoods Project

Caiman House, Yupukari Village in the Rupununi operates a programme to give the yellow-spotted river turtle hatchlings a head-start. Hatchlings are nurtured until they stand a better chance of surviving once released.

Ms. Shaleeza Shaw, Head of Credit of the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry (GBTI), and Ms. Jennifer Morris, Chief Operating Officer, Conservation International share some common thoughts at Caiman House.



In July 2014, GBTI in collaboration with the Government of Guyana and CI-Guyana officially launched the GY\$60M Rupununi Innovation Fund (RIF). The fund provides financing and technical support for local and community based agriculture and tourism enterprises to enable them to participate in and advance the national Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS). The RIF helps these enterprises to develop greater synergies between low-carbon development, maintenance of ecosystems and good business practices.

In his remarks, the Honorable Dr. Ashni Singh, Guyana’s Minister of Finance recognized the initiative driven by civil society groups, with the endorsement and support of the Government of Guyana and the private sector, and the way in which it reinforces the value of the LCDS in Guyana’s development.

# Keeping CI-Guyana Strong



Our mission can only be realized through financial support in the form of grants to and from our partners. With the combination of strong technical support and financial support, grants management plays a vital role towards achieving our institutional conservation outcomes as well as our national outcomes.

Participants at the Stocktaking for National Adaptation Planning (SNAP) assessment workshop facilitated by Acclimatise, consultants preparing Guyana's Climate Resilience Strategy and Adaptation Plan.

Over the last year, CI-Guyana provided project management services to assist in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Guyana and Norway. These included support to (1) the Office of Climate Change to procure the services for a national Climate Resilience Strategy and Action Plan; and for LCDS Education, Communication, Outreach and Awareness Activities in Guyana, and (2) the Guyana Forestry Commission for implementation of Year 4 of the national Monitoring Reporting and Verification System Roadmap.

I am proud of what CI-Guyana stands for and the many accomplishments our small team has achieved over the past year.

Through our work, we continue to demonstrate that conservation and development are not mutually exclusive but rather, a development path that fully incorporates the value of nature which has benefited us and will continue to benefit our future generations.

It is important to understand and recognise that for work to be sustainable and impactful at all levels intended, we need to work and strengthen our relationship with all partners including civil society, governments and local communities.



Suzanne Mcrae – Munro  
Grants Coordinator

## Fostering Team Development and Empowerment to Achieve Strategic Goals

CI-Guyana in all their work is committed to the core values of the organisation. These are Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Passion and Teamwork. Every employee, consultant and volunteer at the organisation works to uphold these in all that they do.

An organisation is stronger as a team than as individuals. Therefore it is important that in our work we encourage and foster open communication that will help to build a culture where individuals work together to achieve one common goal.

Effective teamwork improves the chances of success.



Marissa Sawh  
Administrative Assistant

CI employees with stakeholders during a 05:30hrs field trip to the falls in Moco Moco, Central Rupununi, Region#9 in August 2014 with B. DiPietro.

Energising with fresh-air, fruits and fresh-water before an eventful day in the office.



### **Conservation International is known for practicing what we preach.**

- \* A Team-building exercise was conducted in the National Park in July'2014, which allowed each member to work on their communication skills as well as focus on trust, with emphasis being placed on nurturing the morals of all staff.
- \* Training and development: CI globally engages new team members in various orientation processes to enlighten them of CI's history, achievements, training to effectively use CI global integrated systems and periodic reviews of CI-Guyana's current work-plan for realising our vision.
- \* Barbara DiPietro - Chief Financial Officer of CI, had her first 'real' field visit during one of her many country program trips. She visited CI-Guyana for the first time in August 2014 to assist the entire team with training and transitioning into the new Enterprise Resource Planning system. It was the opportune time for her to also visit our satellite office in Lethem to have a full understanding of CI-Guyana's impact on the everyday lives of the communities with whom we work to encourage sustainable livelihoods. Barbara has been with CI for almost eight years and this was her first visit into one of the many villages where CI work globally.

# Staff

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David Singh, PhD	Executive Director
Curtis Bernard, MEM, BSc	Technical Director
Gillian Albert, Certified Ranger	Community Enterprise Development Assistant
Vitus Antone, Diploma in Forestry & Certified Ranger	Natural Resource Management, Education & Awareness Consultant
Dianne Balraj, MA	Environmental Policy Coordinator
Marcelle Chan-A-Sue, BSc	Project Assistant
Kayla De Freitas, B.A	Community Development Assistant
René Edwards, MA, BES	Project Coordinator, Low carbon Livelihoods
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Marissa Sawh, L.L.B	Administrative Assistant (Georgetown)

CI-Guyana continues to strive to develop not only its partnership in its continuous quest for successful Sustainable Natural Capital, but also in its quest to have a strong and committed team, without which none of CI- Guyana's work would be possible.

As part of this dynamic team, I am proud to be able to bring my knowledge, skills and expertise to assist in this exciting process as together we commit to realise our goals.



Evadney Mangar  
Operations Manager

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CI-Guyana collaborated with the students and teachers of St. Gabriel's Nursery and Primary schools for the first time to participate in the 2014 World Environmental Day annual walk under the theme "raise voices, not the sea level".



# Partners & Collaborators

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our strength lies in our relationships

Air Services Limited  
British High Commission  
Caiman House  
Carly's Bus Service  
Clowes Fund  
CUSO International  
Edward B. Beharry Company Ltd.  
Greenleaf Solutions (Guyana) Inc.  
Guyana Livestock Development Authority (Region 9)  
Helping Hands Women Producers Cooperative Society  
Inter-American Development Bank  
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture  
Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation & Development  
Kanashen Village, Rupununi Guyana  
Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau (KfW), German Development Bank  
Kingdom of Norway— Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation  
Ledder Family Foundation  
Ministry of Agriculture  
Ministry of Amerindian Affairs  
Ministry of Finance  
Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment  
Ministry of Public Works  
National Agricultural Research & Extension Institute  
National Centre for Educational Resource Development, of the Ministry of Education  
National Tshaos Council  
North Rupununi District Development Board—Bina Hill Institute  
Office of Climate Change, Government of Guyana  
ONF International  
Ori Guesthouse  
Partners of the Americas

Practical Action— Regional Office for Latin America  
Projekt Consult GbMH  
Protected Areas Commission  
Protected Areas Trust of Guyana  
Regional Democratic Council, Region 9, Guyana  
Reunion Manganese  
Rewa Eco— Lodge  
Rockview Lodge  
Rupununi Chamber of Commerce & Industry  
Rupununi Eco Hotel  
South Rupununi Conservation Society  
South Rupununi People's Development Association  
South— South Central District Tshaos Council  
Surama Village and Eco— Lodge, Rupununi Guyana  
The Guyana Bank for Trade, Industry and Commerce  
The Guyana Forestry Commission  
The Guyana Tourism Authority  
The Swift Family Foundation  
The Waterloo Foundation  
Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana  
Trans Guyana Airways  
Trent Centre for Biomaterials Research (Trent University)  
UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)  
University of Guyana  
World Wildlife Fund—Guianas (WWF-Guianas)

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