

Patron: His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales

PRESS RELEASE

Iwokrama Celebrates 20th Anniversary of the Iwokrama Act.

11th August, 2016

Georgetown, Guyana.

The Iwokrama International Centre celebrated its 20th Anniversary with an event held at the Arthur Chung Convention Centre on August 10, 2016 under the auspices of the IV International Congress for the Biodiversity of the Guyana Shield.

This anniversary celebrates 20 year of the passage of the Iwokrama International Centre for Conservation and Development Act which was signed on the 7th May, 1996.

The programme included presentations by His Excellency Brigadier David Granger, MSS, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Minister and Vice President Sydney Allicock – Iwokrama Trustee, Vanda Radzik - civil society activist and long-time friend of Iwokrama and Michael Williams – Deputy Chairman of the North Rupununi District Development Board and Dane Gobin, CEO of the Iwokrama Centre.

Messages were read from Iwokrama's Patron, HRH Prince Charles and Dr Patrick I Gomes, the Secretary General of the ACP and a video message from the Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Rt Honourable Patricia Scotland SC was presented.

Long service awards were presented to Maiodeen Jameer and Colin Jarvis who both joined the Centre over twenty years ago and Fredrick Allicock for his invaluable contributions towards the development of the Centre.

The Surama Culture Group also did an inspiring performance at the event.

Iwokrama is grateful for the support of the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs, Office of the Prime Minister and Evergreen Forest Products Inc who assisted in sponsoring the event.

The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development is an autonomous non-profit institution established by Guyana and the Commonwealth. The Centre manages the nearly one million acre (371,000 hectare) Iwokrama Forest in central Guyana to show how tropical forests can be conserved and sustainably used for ecological, social and economic benefits to local, national and international communities.



Iwokrama's CEO escorting President Granger to Iwokrama's 20th Anniversary Celebrations



The Surama Culture Group Performing at the Event



A section of the gathering at the event

Notes to the Editors:

About Iwokrama

The Iwokrama International Centre (IIC) was established in 1996 under a joint mandate from the Government of Guyana and the Commonwealth Secretariat to manage the Iwokrama forest, a unique reserve of 371,000 hectares of rainforest “in a manner that will lead to lasting ecological, economic and social benefits to the people of Guyana and to the world in general”.

The Centre, guided by an international Board of Trustees is unique, providing a dedicated well managed and researched forest environment. The forest is zoned into a Sustainable Utilization Area (SUA) and a Wilderness Preserve (WP) in which to test the concept of a truly sustainable forest where conservation, environmental balance and economic use can be mutually reinforcing. The IIC collaborates with the Government of Guyana, the Commonwealth and other international partners and donors to develop new approaches and forest management models to enable countries with rainforests to market their ecosystem services whilst carefully managing their resources through innovative and creative conservation practices.

Iwokrama brings together:

- 20 local communities (approximately 7,000 people) who are shareholders and participants in the IIC’s sustainable timber, tourism, research operations and forest management activities through complex co-management and benefit sharing arrangements;
- Scientists and researchers engaged in ground breaking research into the impacts of climate change on the forest and measuring the scope and value of its ecosystem services; and
- A portfolio of sustainably managed and certified business models using innovative governance systems which include participation of the private and public sectors and the local communities, earning income from the forest and its natural assets whilst employing international social,

environmental and economic best practice, whilst still keeping abreast of the ever changing thinking on funding for environmental projects in the face of climate change and the perennial scarcity of international finance.

This alliance and the Centre's work programmes are committed to showing how a rain forest can be used for real sustainability, real climate change protection and real community benefit.

For further details about the Iwokrama International Centre please visit www.iwokrama.org , www.iwokramariverlodge.com or contact Dane Gobin, Chief Executive Officer on dgobin@iwokrama.org