

PRESS RELEASE

Iwokrama Receives Good Travel Seal Certificate

Georgetown, Guyana. Wednesday 11th January, 2023

The Iwokrama Centre announced today that the Centre had received the Good Travel Seal Certification for its tourism operations. It was more good news coming quickly after Iwokrama was also selected as one of the Top 100 Green Destination Stories in late 2022.

CEO Dane Gobin stated “this was a major achievement for the Centre as, like everyone else, we lost a lot of capacity in tourism service delivery during the COVID years. Staff had to be retrained, facilities had to be renovated, policies and procedures had to be revised among the many other things that had to be done to maintain best operating practices”.



The mark of
responsible forestry

The entire Iwokrama Forest is also certified for Forest Management (FSC-C131490) by Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC™) since 2008 and this is a testament to the Centre’s work in ecological, cultural /social and economic best practices. Today there are more than 6 forest management and chain of custody certificates in Guyana and we are proud to have raised the bar in this regard.

The Centre noted that tourism certification is particularly important for Guyana at this juncture. Guyana’s world- class oil and gas industry has propelled it to prominence on the world stage and that in turn is making Guyana a popular tourist destination. The CEO stated that “we must be careful, as international guests come with an expectation of best practice operations including adequate health and safety protocols – this is what certification provides for the industry – third party validation of how safe and environmentally friendly our operations are”.

Iwokrama encourages and stands ready to help support any institution wanting to improve on their tourism operations and it is committed to continuing to work with the GTA to help build capacity.

The Centre noted that this achievement would not have been possible without the steadfast support from the GTA and the Ministry of Tourism and the CEO further stated “I would like to thank them both for investing in the necessary tools to help Guyanese service providers raise the bar of their operations and be more competitive”.



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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.

Special thanks were also offered to Iwokrama's staff, community partners and other stakeholders who made many sacrifices along the road to allow the Centre to achieve this certificate.

Notes to the Editors:

1. 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. In more recent years, the Centre has received support from corporate partners such as Exxon Mobil (Guyana) Limited who has funded the development of its Science Programme and continues to provide an annual contribution to the implementation of this Programme.

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
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