

PRESS RELEASE

Iwokrama Research Plots for Monitoring Forest Impacts

Georgetown, Guyana, Sept 8, 2023

Iwokrama's Science Program conducts a variety of forestry research projects annually. One such project, recently completed in August 2023 was the re-census of 18 Permanent Sample Plots (PSP's) in the Iwokrama Forest.

Permanent sample plots are permanently demarcated areas of forest, typically of one hectare, which are periodically remeasured. They are the basis for growth and yield studies, provide knowledge on forest changes under different situations such as climate change and inform carbon storage capacity. When established in areas that are to be harvested, they provide information on the impacts of harvesting on the forest and on biodiversity recovery rates. Forest management then, can be based on this knowledge and be continuously adapted to new information. This monitoring system is especially important for Iwokrama's internationally certified timber operation.

The PSP system established in the Iwokrama Forest has the following characteristics:

- Plots consist of one-hectare, 100 m x 100 m square plots divided into 20 m x 20 m quadrats, where all trees larger than 20 cm in diameter are measured. Smaller trees of the pole, sapling and seedling categories are measured in subplots of the main plot.
- Plots are located in areas with planned logging and in reserve areas where no logging is done.

Plot location also considers forest types, giving priority to the forest types that are suitable for commercial harvesting.

Plot establishment began in 2002 with two being set up and continued in 2008 for the majority. The last set of four plots were established in 2018.

This re-measurement exercise was made possible with the support of the Exxon-Mobil Foundation





Photo 1- Iwokrama staff explain to UG Forestry Students the PSP plot set up and measurements



Photo 2 UG forestry students measuring tree in PSP plot.

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 dgobin@iwokrama.org.