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PRESS RELEASE

Iwokrama's Youth Engagement Enhanced with New Publication and Forest-themed Board Game

Georgetown, Guyana – The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development (*Iwokrama*) together with its community partners, the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB) and the ExxonMobil Foundation, has launched a new publication, ***Conservation Canvases: Hand-Painted Banners from the North Rupununi Wildlife Club Festival*** and a Board game, ***Wildlife Wonders***, at an event at Annai, North Rupununi in January 2025.

The idea originated from a very successful 2023 Wildlife Club Festival at Annai where each club created a banner for the “Parade of Banners” held during the opening ceremony. These banners demonstrated exceptional talent and creativity, and to celebrate their significance, each club developed a story to accompany the banners, resulting in the creation of this unique publication.

The Wildlife Wonders game is similar to the traditional Snakes and Ladders but uses a forest theme and includes several key biodiversity species found in Guyana’s forests.

The intention of these conservation initiatives is to showcase the work of the youth from the communities of the North Rupununi and inspire a deep sense of conservation in these young people, which we expect will permeate communities both in the hinterland and on the coast. For more than 20 years wildlife club members have become leaders in several areas including village leadership, managers, researchers, tourism experts, rangers, and much more.

The Foundation funds several other projects in the North Rupununi that align with the LCDS 2030, including support for 17 wildlife clubs (approx. 400 children), forestry research, the Makushi Research Unit and Radio Paiwomak, the first community-owned radio station. A coastal programme led by Environmental Management Consultants Inc., (EMC Inc.) and the EMC Foundation covers



The mark of
responsible forestry

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.

areas such as species conservation, sustainable livelihoods in tourism, ecosystem restoration and management and environmental education and awareness.

The Centre remains grateful to the ExxonMobil Foundation for its support to continue this vital work.

Appreciation also goes out to the Government of Guyana for their valuable ongoing support to the Centre, EMC Inc and the EMC Foundation as implementation partners, the Centre's committed staff and our local community partners, the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB), for their unwavering support.

Photo 1: Game and Banner Book Display



Photo 2: Banner Book Publication- Conservation Canvases



Photo 3: Peak inside book- Annai Wildlife Club Banner and Story

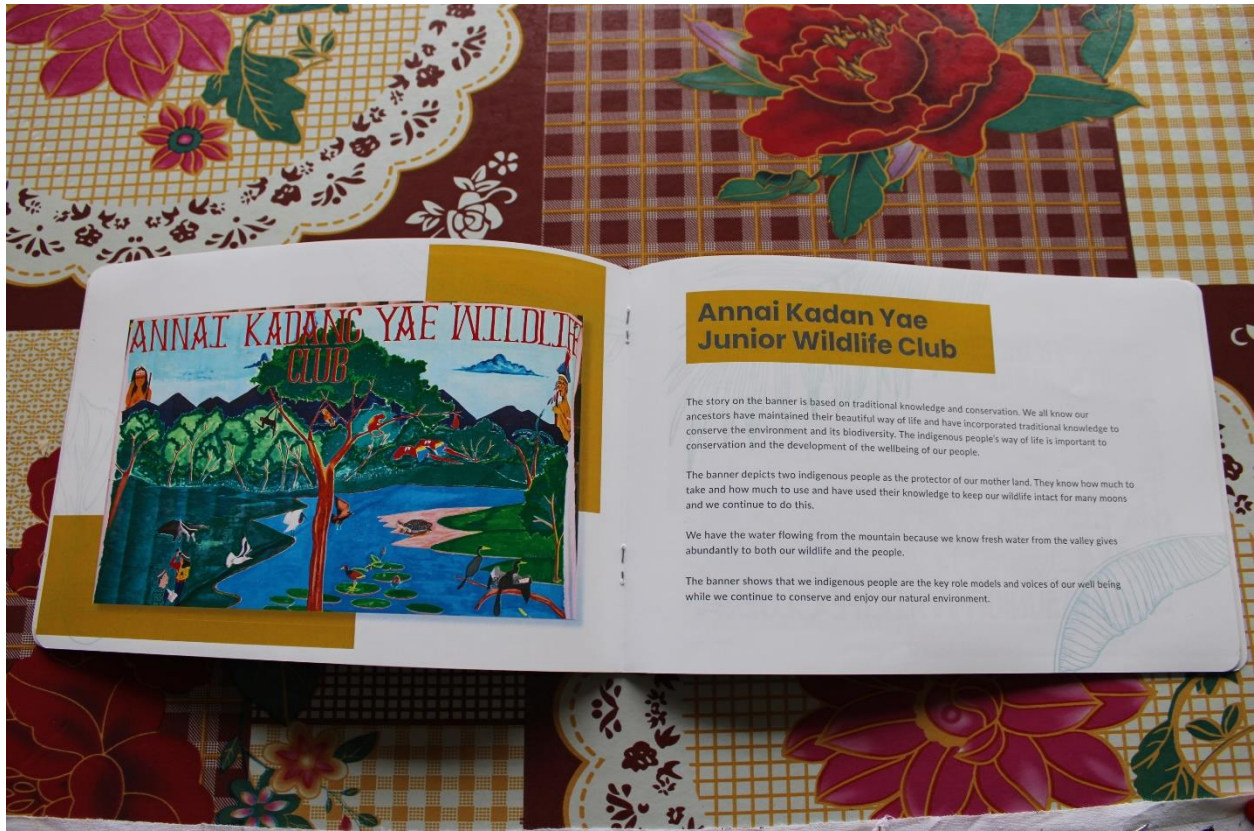


Photo 4: Wildlife Club youth enjoy the new Iwokrama Game- Wildlife Wonders



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.

- 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.

