

IWOKRAMA

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

A UNIQUE PLACE
SPECIAL PEOPLE
AN EXCEPTIONAL MISSION

IWOKRAMA: at a glance...

About us

The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development (Iwokrama) was created in the "*run–up*" to the Rio Summit in 1992. It is a key environmental programme dedicated by the Government of Guyana to the Commonwealth in 1989 at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malaysia.

Iwokrama manages the 371,000 hectare (nearly one million acre) 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.

Find out more at www.iwokrama.org

The Iwokrama Forest sits in the centre of the Guiana Shield and represents an open transition zone in rainfall, landforms, human histories and biological communities.
The forest is spatially zoned into two distinct areas - the Wilderness Preserve (WP) and the Sustainable Utilization Area (SUA). The SUA is the part of the forest where Iwokrama's model businesses are undertaken.



An Aerial view of the Iwokrama River Lodge



Our Mission

"To promote the conservation and the sustainable and equitable use of tropical rain forests in a manner that will lead to lasting ecological, economic and social benefits to the people of Guyana and to the world in general, by undertaking research, training and the development and dissemination of technologies."



Map of the Iwokrama Forest showing the Wilderness Preserve and the Sustainable Use Area

Biodiversity

The Iwokrama Forest is a vast wilderness of nearly one million acres – home to 471 bird species, 134 types of fish, 81 different reptiles, 56 species of amphibians and 142 different mammals, South America's largest cat - the jaguar; the world's largest scaled fresh water fish - the Arapaima; the world's largest otters, river turtles, anteaters, snakes,eagles and caimans and more than 1250 recorded plant species.

There are 9 distinct forest types in the Iwokrama forest.

- 33% mixed greenheart, black kakaralli and wamara forest.
- 20% mixed greenheart, sand baromalli and soft wallaba forest
- 16% mora, manicole, crabwood and trysil forest
- 15% mixed low stature forest
- 7% manicole, kokerite and soft wallaba palm forest
- the remainder is less than 5% each of wallaba, dakama, muri scrub and liana forest.

Business at Iwokrama

Iwokrama focuses on the development of innovative models of private–public–community partnerships for the development of forest-based businesses in the areas of

- sustainable timber harvesting
- sustainable tourism
- learning services and
- intellectual property and services including eco-system services.

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FROM THE CEO



COP 21 in Paris in December 2015 saw the international community reaching an agreement on climate change. It underscored the importance of reducing CO_2 emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

The IPCC AR5 Synthesis Report has also put forward the assessment that 26% of global emissions come from the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use). A substantial part of this is ascribed to deforestation.

The European Climate Change Adaptation Conference in May 2015 cited agriculture and forestry as key sectors in terms of climate adaptation and vulnerability. The report goes on to say that *"these sectors are also significant contributors to climate change, through CO_2 emissions from deforestation (primarily driven by agricultural expansion) and non-CO_2 emissions from agricultural soils, manure management, and enteric fermentation."*

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals further highlighted the importance of sustainable forest management. A/RES/70/1 Goal 15 states "*Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss 15.1. By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements*"

These events underlined the continuing relevance of Iwokrama's mission: *to demonstrate how tropical forests can be sustainably managed in ways that benefit local communities, national development goals, and global objectives.*

The new coalition Government of Guyana which was elected in May 2015 confirmed its interest in continuing to support the Centre with a financial contribution and President Granger said that he saw an integral role for the Centre in his green growth vision. The Commonwealth Secretariat supported the Centre to attend international tourism and fundraising events. We expect that the new Commonwealth Secretary General will continue the Secretariat's support to the Centre.

The Centre continued its work on finding a financial model that would reduce its dependency on donor funding and return the Centre to more sustained viability. A key component of this model is Iwokrama's earned revenue sources which remained an important contributor to financing the Centre's core costs.

The development of Phase II of our sustainable model timber harvesting and processing business continued with harvesting operations which started in August and the first export shipments leaving Guyana late in the year. In this regard we welcomed support from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH to support Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification for this model forestry operation. Tourism was consistent in its contribution to Iwokrama's unrestricted revenues and the Centre also saw an increased interest in its training and research programmes from universities in North America and Europe.

We moved forward with the process of renewing our partnership with the communities and started extensive consultations with the communities towards renewing the Collaborative Management Agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding we have with the communities in early 2016. Members of the 20 communities toured Iwokrama's field operations including the sustainable forestry operations to get an understanding of the various aspects of Iwokrama and for the first time, a statutory meeting of the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB) was held at the Iwokrama River Lodge.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our friends, supporters, business partners and donors who contributed during the period. I would also like to recognise the hard work of our very committed staff, the Government of Guyana who provided financial support and the communities for their unwavering support and understanding.

We look forward to 2016 when the Centre will celebrate its 20th Anniversary.



Dane Gobin BSc MBA
Chief Executive Officer

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

One of Iwokrama's major strengths is its capacity to collaborate with local communities and other partners in the management of the Iwokrama Forest. Iwokrama operates in close partnership with a wide range of local, national and international partners and donors. The Centre's two founding partners are the Government of Guyana and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Iwokrama relies heavily on its stakeholders and partners in the sustainable management of the Iwokrama Forest. In fact, in 1996, the Centre was founded through a partnership between the Government of Guyana and the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Centre continues to work closely with both these partners.

The Centre continued to partner and collaborate with its public sector partners like the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment and its agencies such as the Guyana Forestry Commission, the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The development of its businesses remains a priority for Iwokrama and the Centre worked closely with its private sector partners for its sustainable timber, ecotourism and learning services businesses. A lot of time was spent in discussion with the Centre's timber partners since the operations had just started and there were some teething challenges.

The 20 local communities living in and around the Iwokrama Forest are key to the effective management and monitoring of the Iwokrama Forest as they frequent the forest and so can quickly spot illegal operators and infractions in the forest. We held consultations with the communities throughout the year so that we could finalize revisions of the Collaborative Management Agreement (CMA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Centre and the communities.

Other national partners we worked with during the year included the University of Guyana, the Protected Area Commission, World Wildlife Fund- Guyana and Conservation International- Guyana amongst others.

At the international level, the Centre engaged several donors, the most recent being Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative and the United Nations Development Programme.

Newcastle University, University of the West Indies, University of Miami and Operation Wallacea are a few of our international science and research partners

The Centre recognizes the valuable inputs of these stakeholders and partners in its work.

Iwokrama's International Board of Trustees

Dr R. K. Pachauri: Chairman,

Mr. Deodat Maharaj: Deputy-Chairman,

The Hononrable Mr. Sydney Allicock: Minister of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, Guyana

Mr. James Singh: Guyana Forestry Commission, Guyana

Dr. Kenrick R. Leslie CBE: Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), Belize

Dr. Elizabeth Losos: Organization of Tropical Studies (OTS)

Dr Thomas E Lovejoy: George Mason University, Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation

Ms. Frances J Seymour: Centre for Global Development, Washington D.C.

Mr. Dane Gobin: Iwokrama, Guyana



> “Guyana is committed to Iwokrama and the viability of Iwokrama is tied up with the whole issue of global warming and climate change; it’s not just a financial matter, it is just not a Guyana matter, it is a Commonwealth matter.
>
> In fact, it is a global matter, because we see Iwokrama as a global laboratory for ecology and the environment; so we hope we can move forward.”
>
> H.E. President David Granger
>
> *Interview with H.E. President David Granger at CHOGM 2015, Malta, Published Nov 28th 2015*

CONSERVATION AND RESPONSIBLE USE

The Iwokrama Forest is unique, it is a dedicated site to test the concept of truly sustainable forest management - where conservation, environmental balance and economic use can be mutually reinforcing.

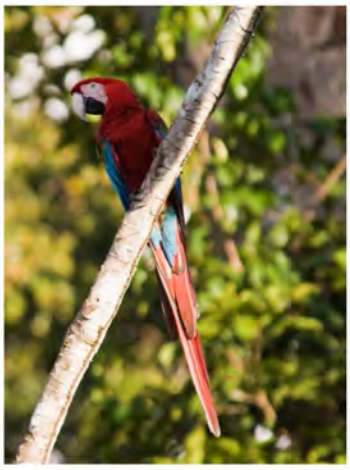
Eco-tourism is Iwokrama's oldest sustainable business and an excellent model for others to follow. In 2015, more than 1000 guests visited the Iwokrama River Lodge and participated in one or more of 12 different tours - the Turtle Mountain Hike, Canopy Walkway Tour, Wildlife Spotting Trips and birding tours were the most popular.

During 2015, Iwokrama facilitated a number of FAM tours and birding expeditions that provided international companies with the opportunity to experience what we have to offer.

The CEO attended the 2015 World Travel Market and was able to meet with international tour operators, travel writers and other marketing and promotional teams to promote Iwokrama as a '*must-see'* destination in Guyana.

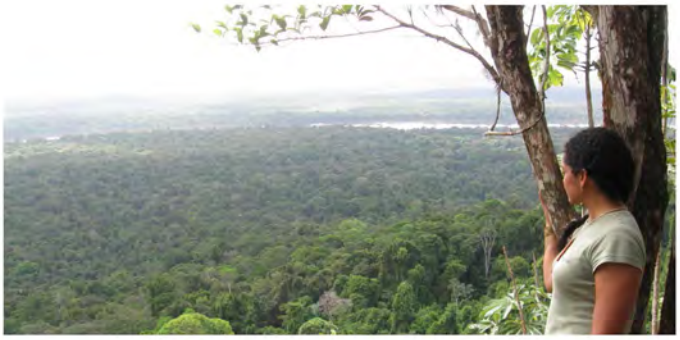
All in all, 2015 was a satisfactory year of good business, excellent partnerships, new relationships, ideas and visions for an excellent year ahead.















BUSINESSINSIDER.COM - The Iwokrama Forest was listed as one of the 12 most underrated tourist attractions in South America.

" IF YOU'RE INTO bird watching (no judgment), this is your spot. If you're not into bird watching, but have at least a modicum of appreciation for nature, this is your spot. The 1,430-square miles comprise one of the few swaths of pure, untouched rain forest in the world today. And not to be a downer, but you'll want to get to it while it's still that way"

CONSERVATION AND RESPONSIBLE USE

"AMAZING PLACE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND RELAXATION

I spent about a month in many of Iwokrama's beautiful lodges, it was amazing, definitely one of the best decisions that I made in my life. Thank you for hosting us all this time. Everyone at Iwokrama was so hospitable.

I stayed in a comfortable room overlooking the Essequibo river, and every morning I would enjoy the sunrise as I swung from my hammock.

At the end of the trip, Iwokrama makes you feel that even though you have left Guyana, Guyana will never leave you. Truly a magnificent place."

Huichang Y
Georgetown, Guyana
TripAdvisor Review



EXPERT INTERNATIONAL NATURE photographer Pete Oxford, winner of 2015 Terre Sauvage/IUCN Nature Image Awards, visited with his film crew for professional footage and images of Iwokrama. Mr. Oxford is also a co-photographer of the coffee table book- "*Rupununi- Rediscovering a Lost World*" and has over the years featured us on websites and social media and provided images for marketing and promotional purposes.

"BIRDING

Good staff, Great birds, and Turtle Mountain is not to be missed! I highly recommend a 2-3 day visit. Birds, Caimen, monkeys, frogs, bats and a serene vibe. Phone/wifi limited to central building. I cannot say enough."

wmharvey2015
Washington DC, District of Columbia
TripAdvisor Review

THE IWOKRAMA RIVER LODGE was awarded the TripAdvisor 2015 Certificate of Excellence. The Certificate is awarded to properties that consistently achieve outstanding traveler reviews on TripAdvisor.

CERTIFICATE of EXCELLENCE 2015 Winner tripadvisor

LOCAL GUIDE AND PHOTOGRAPHER Leon Moore and his guests added to their birding checklists with picturesque images of our star birds - the Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock, the Harpy Eagle, Guianan Red-Cotinga, Red-and-Black Grosbeak and many more.



The development of an economically viable timber business which follows international social environmental and cultural best practice methods has the potential to reduce the threat of deforestation and possibly reduce the negative impacts of climate change by reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions by approximately 20%.

CONSERVATION AND RESPONSIBLE USE

Tropical forests occupy only 7% of the Earth's surface; they capture and store naturally, without cost an estimated 1.3 billion tonnes of CO_2 annually. Iwokrama alone captures an estimated 1.3 million tonnes of CO_2 annually.

Iwokrama started Phase II of its sustainable timber harvesting and sawmilling operations in partnership with Farfan and Mendes Limited (FML).

The operation will be a demonstration model in keeping with Iwokrama's mandate to develop sustainable businesses using multiple forest resources and international best practices which include innovative governance systems that comprise of private and public sectors and local communities.

This partnership is committed to showing how a rain forest can be used for real sustainability, real climate change protection and real community benefit.

To validate the use of best practices in its operations, the Iwokrama Centre is once again on route to achieving international accreditation of its forest management practices and operations by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for which funding has already been secured.

FSC is the most prestigious international forest certification scheme and in 2008, the Centre was the first to have achieved and maintained FSC certification in Guyana.

For more information: www.fsc.org/en

1. Harvesting and sawmilling activities commenced in keeping with the approved 2015 Annual Plan of Operations.

2. New technologies - a new Tigercat 635D skidder and a model 234 knuckleboom log loader are being tested. This brand is new to Guyana and the technology should allow for faster and more efficient harvesting operations and a reduced environmental footprint.

3. Iwokrama and FML will employ a 60-yr cutting cycle, harvesting a maximum of 1,800 ha per year (less than 0.5% of the Iwokrama Forest). The operation will follow best practice methods including a strict "*no-log export*" policy.

4. The 2016 Annual Plan of Operations has been completed and approved by the Guyana Forestry Commission in fulfilment of national forest management guidelines.

5. The *"cutting for value"* method will be employed rather than the industry standard of *"cutting to order"* which allows for a higher recovery of high grade lumber and therefore greater value.



Logs at the Iwokrama Mill Site



Tigercat 635D Skidder



Woodmizer Sawmill at the Iwokrama Mill Site



Sawn lumber

CONSERVATION AND RESPONSIBLE USE

GIZ supports Forest Stewardship Council Certification at Iwokrama

Iwokrama continues to partner with the Caribbean Aqua-Terrestrial Solutions Programme (implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) funded by the German Government) which enables the Iwokrama Centre to pursue Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification of the Iwokrama Forest and its sustainable timber harvesting and sawmilling operations.

The grant supports various key aspects of FSC Compliance activities including institutional strengthening, stakeholder engagement, training and capacity building and compliance with FSC and National Laws and Guidelines.

For more information about the Caribbean Aqua-Terrestrial Solutions Programme:
www.caribbeancats.org

For more information about FSC:
www.fsc.org/en





Iwokrama to test new software for Chain of Custody Control Systems

Iwokrama has received support from the Guiana Shield Tropical Timber Program (appointed by IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative) to support the development of its sustainable forestry model.

This collaboration includes support for certification particularly the development of an innovative piece of software for chain of custody control systems called "*core timber business solution*" which focuses on the business activities of a wood processing operation such as client relationship management, production control system, track & trace (legality, FSC), warehouse management, inventory control and supply chain management.

This piece of software will complement the database management software that is currently being tested by Iwokrama for management of harvesting and sawmilling activities.

ACTIVE LEARNING: BY DOING

The Iwokrama Forest offers the ideal "*living laboratory*" where students can experience the rain forest and sustainable forest management, first hand.

Iwokrama has extensive experience in the collection and cataloguing of material and the development and delivery of training courses in the areas of natural resource management, rangering, tour guiding, participatory approaches in community-based resource management and management of protected areas.

In 2015, Iwokrama and its community partners hosted nearly 200 students and professors and more than 13 researchers and volunteers.



Iwokrama has facilitated visits by Operation Wallacea Expedition (www.opwall.com) and Earth Expedition(www.earthexpeditions.org) since 2011.

The Free University of Brussels has been visiting the forest annually for four years

REFRESHER TRAINING: In October 2015, Rangers, Tour Guides and other staffers participated in a refresher course on the use of Camera Traps and the use of GPS.

Special thanks to Deborah Iannizzotto whose generous donation via a GoFundMe campaign supported this training and a new GPS Unit for the Iwokrama Monitoring Team and to Matt Hallet - University of Florida who conducted the training.



Tourism Training for Coastal Communities

Iwokrama continued tourism training for coastal communities of the Guyana Mangrove Restoration Project, more specifically Rangers and Guides, with funding provided from the Government of New Zealand.

Specific areas of focus included birding, tour scheduling, costing and communication skills. More than 15 persons participated in the training course which was held in March 2015 at Unity Beach, Mahaica area. One outcome of this project is the development of a new tour - **the Mahaica River Birding Tour.** Special recognition to the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), Annette Arjoon-Martins and Ann Geer who provided invaluable support.

ACTIVE LEARNING: BY DOING

THIS IS OURS PROJECT: Iwokrama and the North Rupununi District Development Board forged an engaging and fruitful partnership with the **"This Is Ours"** Project. Ms Karen Wharton, a Queen's College Alumni was instrumental in introducing the project and team to Guyana. This project is an enrichment programme geared towards young people using the combination of digital photography, storytelling and illustration to communicate personal knowledge of one's local environment. The team of teachers from the USA held hands-on workshops with students of the Bina Hill Institute located at Annai, North Rupununi, and Queens College, which lead to the creation of a publication which is part of book series created by students all over the world.

For more information: www.thisisoursbook.com



CHAINSAW MILLING : Iwokrama continues to collaborate with the Guyana Forestry Commission and the Forestry Training Centre Inc. on the Chainsaw Milling Project which aims to find sustainable solutions for the problems associated with the production of lumber for the local timber markets.

Outputs from the project in 2015 included the publication of a book titled "***From cutting to order to cutting for value: A handbook for Chainsaw Millers***", that aims to shift the current practice of "*cutting to order*" to "*cutting for value*". An audio-visual training module is currently being developed to accompany the book.

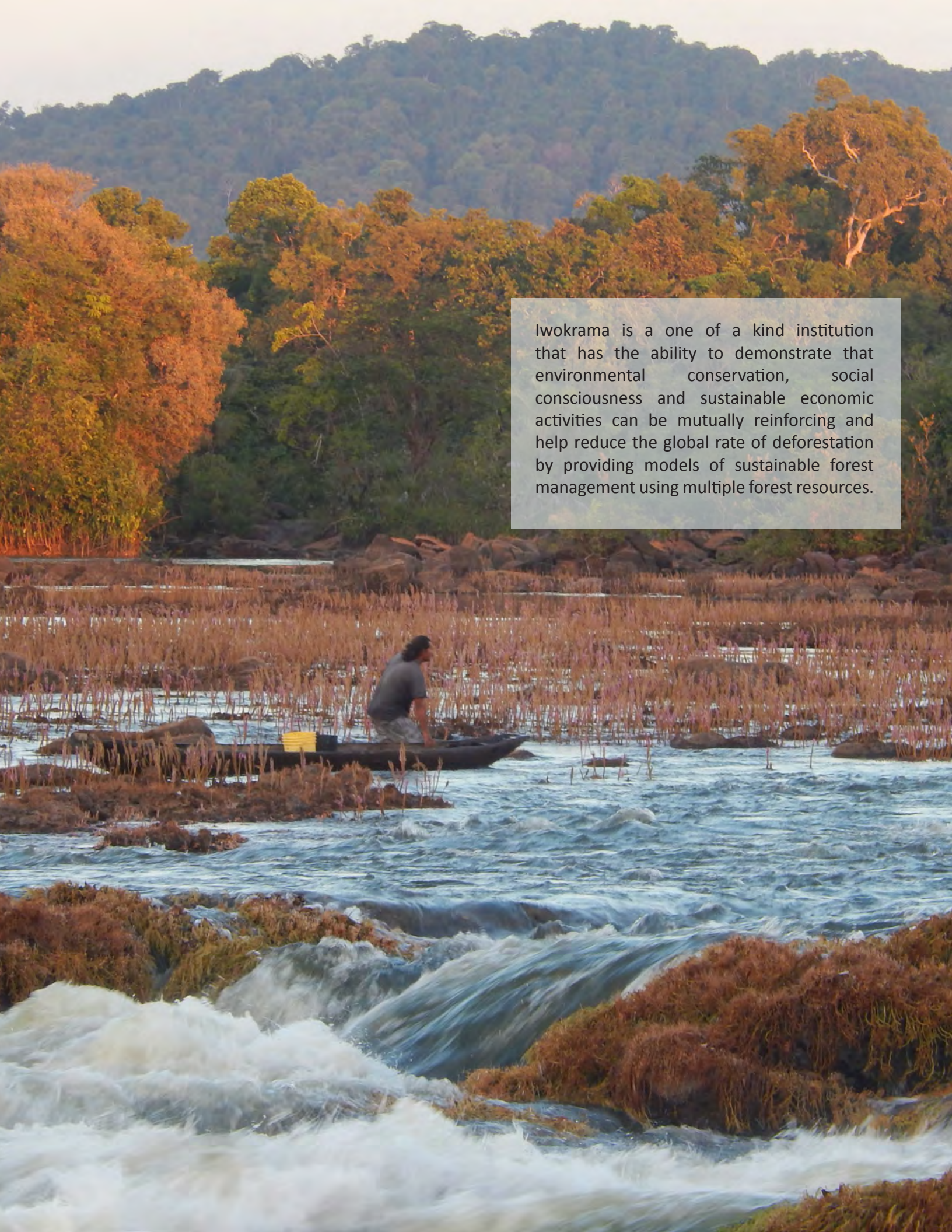
The project also facilitated research into the ***Economic Value of Chainsaw Milling in Guyana***, which was conducted by the Planning Research and Development Division of the Guyana Forestry Commission.

This EU-funded project is being implemented simultaneously in Ghana and Guyana to support the integration of legal and legitimate domestic timber markets into Voluntary Partnership Agreement (ENV/2010/220-198).



TOURISM STUDY TOUR for Region 8 Communities: The tour was organised by the Ministry of Tourism and Annette Arjoon-Martins. A 12 member team from Region 8 visited the Iwokrama River Lodge, Atta Lodge and Surama Village in September 2015 to experience the tourism product and observe how the activities are done.

They also met with the newly installed Council of Fair View Village. Kevin Edwards (Tourism Coordinator) and Micah Davis (Head Ranger) led the study tour at Iwokrama.



Iwokrama is a one of a kind institution that has the ability to demonstrate that environmental conservation, social consciousness and sustainable economic activities can be mutually reinforcing and help reduce the global rate of deforestation by providing models of sustainable forest management using multiple forest resources.

PEOPLE AND CONSERVATION

Iwokrama's community partners are firmly integrated into forest management activities through complex co-management, benefit-sharing and shareholding agreements. Community members hold senior positions in our sustainable businesses and the communities are represented on the Iwokrama Board of Trustees - the Centre's highest level of governance and decision-making.

COBRA goes to Brussels - Future Challenges, Local Solutions: Supporting communities is the most effective way to deliver sustainable development without destroying the environment.

February 2015 marked the end of the three year Community Owned Best practice for sustainable Resource Adaptive management in the Guiana Shield (COBRA), funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium of organizations including the Iwokrama International Centre and the North Rupununi Distinct Development Board (NRDDB).
The project's mission was to find ways to integrate local community solutions within policies addressing escalating social, economic and environmental crises in the Guiana Shield region of Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana.

A final conference was organized to share findings with policy makers and other stakeholders at the European Commission, Brussels in January 2015. Among many presentations, Mr. Lakeram Haynes, Mr. Mike Williams (NRDDB), Ms. Odacy Davis (Iwokrama) and Ms. Vanda Radzik (Cobra Advisor) delivered presentations supporting the findings of the project.





NRDDB, Iwokrama and Cobra team presenting project findings at the Conference

COBRA in the Rainforest: COBRA Handbook training at the Iwokrama River Lodge



Iwokrama Staff and Community leaders engage with Cobra Project participatory methods during Handbook Training at the Iwokrama River Lodge

Wow!, Wonderful, Amazing, Fun, Different, Inspiring, Educational, Innovative and COBRA Nation were some of the words used by participants to express their impression of the four day COBRA Handbook Training held at the Iwokrama River Lodge and Research Centre, Kurupukari from Monday 16th – Thursday 19th, February, 2015.

The training was facilitated by the COBRA Team and provided the opportunity for the participants to learn another approach to engage their community members in dealing with community issues. Using the COBRA handbook and participatory processes, the participants produced photo-stories and videos addressing solutions to the challenges of teenage pregnancy in schools, improving community livelihoods and overharvesting of Wildlife in local communities.

Find out more about Community Owned Best practice for sustainable Resource Adaptive management in the Guiana Shield, South America (COBRA) at www.projectcobra.org.

PEOPLE AND CONSERVATION

GEF Small Grants Programme: *"Supporting development of conservation leaders for monitoring and management of integrated ecosystems management of the Iwokrama Forest and North Rupununi Wetlands"*

Iwokrama has received funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme for a project titled ***"Supporting development of conservation leaders for monitoring and management of integrated ecosystems management of the Iwokrama Forest and North Rupununi Wetlands."*** The goal of the project is to empower local people for informed decision-making regarding sustainable forest and resource management of the Iwokrama Forest and the North Rupununi Wetlands.

The following activities have been implemented to date:

- Rangers visited with the wildlife clubs to encourage and support operational clubs and met with parents, youth and other community members to encourage resumption of dormant clubs and visited primary schools where they made interactive presentations to grades 4 and 5.
- A statutory meeting for the North Rupununi District Development Board was hosted at Bina Hill, September 2015. This provided an essential opportunity for community members and partners to meet and address concerns in a transparent and participatory manner.
- A participatory review of the Collaborative Management Agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding between Iwokrama and the NRDDB with the community leaders.

Toshaos and Makushi Researchers from the 20 North Rupununi communities visited the Iwokrama Mill Site. Visiting the Mill Site provided an opportunity for community members to see firsthand and understand Iwokrama's sustainable timber harvesting and sawmilling operations.



Rangers visit the Yupukari Junior Wildlife Club



Surama Junior Wildlife Club conduct Scientific Enquiry

IWOKRAMA has been registered as a charity on Amazon's new website – Amazon Smile as Iwokrama Friends-USA.

Amazon Smile is a simple way to support a favourite charity. The Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of any eligible item to the charity of your choice.

To support Iwokrama:

go to smile.amazon.com from any web browser and choose Iwokrama Friends - USA

PEOPLE AND CONSERVATION

Iwokrama and GIZ provided support for improved communication to the NRDDB.

The NRDDB Executive requested support from Iwokrama to help the NRDDB improve communications between itself and its partners and stakeholders e.g. regulatory and security agencies of the Government of Guyana, Iwokrama and other partners.

Supporting the NRDDB's efforts to improve communication will further Iwokrama's efforts to achieve FSC Certification because local community consultation and stakeholder engagement is key to sustainable forest management.

In addition to improved access to information, enhanced communication will result in better social and economic development, greater opportunity for participatory development as a result of improved communication and information sharing.

Better communication could also improve resource management through more efficient collaboration with relevant agencies and may increase access to information about health and education services.

This support was facilitated by the the Caribbean Aqua-Terrestrial Solutions Programme (implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) funded by the German Government)

SUPPORT FOR FAIR VIEW VILLAGE - Iwokrama staffers with the support of several sponsors hosted a New Year party for over 200 children of Fair View Village in January 2015.

Special thanks to our friends and sponsors including staff, GTT, Banks DIH, Robin and Michelle Low, Peter and Ruth (58 miles), Sterling Products, Accountancy Training Centre (ATC), Global Shapers, WWF, Robeson Benn and Khalid Alladin.

FAIR VIEW SCHOOL VISITED THE IWOKRAMA RIVER LODGE: 42 students and 3 teachers visited the Iwokrama River Lodge where they spent the day learning about Iwokrama's Mission and safety and health in the field.

The students were divided into two groups:

- one group (Grades 1-4 students) was taken on a nature walk on the Bushmaster and Screaming Piha trails in the environs of the River Lodge
- and the other (Grades 5-9 students) was taken downriver for a tour of Turtle Mountain.

After lunch at the River Lodge, the students were supplied with paper and crayons and pencils and writing paper to draw or describe their experience of the day. Prizes were given for first, second and third in both groups.

Special thanks to Republic Bank (Guyana) Ltd who sponsored this activity through its Corporate Social Responsibility Programme called "*Power to Make a Difference*."







ROLE OF FORESTS

Monitoring is a coordinated effort which is implemented by Iwokrama to collect critical information for effective planning and management of the Iwokrama Forest. Key ecosystem services are monitored and data is collected to assess the status and monitor trends and to identify areas or species that could be adversely affected by activity in the forest.

In 2015, the Monitoring Unit completed 29 road patrols and 5 upstream and 6 downstream river patrols within and along the borders of the Iwokrama Forest. Wildlife observations along the road and rivers remained constant throughout the year. River patrols reported that the water quality in the Siparuni River continues to be negatively affected by small mining operations along the north side of that river. In the last half of 2015, Iwokrama Rangers reported that there was evidence of commercial fishing in a few creeks along the road within the Iwokrama Forest. Iwokrama and the NRDDB are collaborating to resolve this issue.

During the months of November and December, the Monitoring Unit conducted outreach activities in the North Rupununi communities. These activities included presentations on Iwokrama, a short course in Natural Resource Management, and the resuscitation of wildlife clubs within communities.



Iwokrama and the Rupununi Communities rescued and relocated 27 Arapaima



Rescue team moving an adult arapaima



Rescuing Juvenile Arapaima

Two adult and 25 juvenile Arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*) were safely moved from a drying pond upstream of Iwokrama River Lodge in November.

Iwokrama was informed about the stranded Arapaima on November 2nd by the EPA - Guyana and sent a monitoring team to investigate.

With the critical dry season currently being experienced in that region due to the El Nino effect, the monitoring team soon realised that if the fish were not moved from the pond, they would perish. Consultations were held with partners including the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB) community experts, Fisheries Department, EPA and researcher Dr Lesley de Souza to come up with a rescue plan.

A team of local fishermen from Fair View, Kwatamang and Rewa Villages and Iwokrama staffers completed the rescue mission on November 10th.

This rescue mission has demonstrated the immense potential of indigenous resources for conservation and management.

Iwokrama remains resolute that collaborative management, with a focus on strong partnerships, valuing traditional knowledge and investment in capacity building, is the route to successful natural resource management.

ROLE OF FORESTS

Iwokrama endorses the IV International Congress on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield



The IV International Congress on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield scheduled for August, 8 - 12, 2016 was officially launched in Georgetown, Guyana on September 20th, under the theme "*Leveraging our High Endemicity, Cultural Diversity, and Intact Ecosystems for Inclusive Growth and Secure futures.*

This scientific conference commonly referred to as the IBG Congress aims to foster and develop education and research in all disciplines contributing to the knowledge and stewardship of the biodiversity of the Guiana Shield and the conservation, preservation, and sustainable management of its natural, rural and urban ecosystems.

IBG 2016 is being organized by the Guyana Society for Biodiversity and Ecosystems (GSBE), a local non-governmental organization through its affiliation with the International Society on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield, and in association with the Government of Guyana, University of Guyana, Iwokrama, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Guiana Shield Facility, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Conservation International-Guyana.

For more information: www.biodiversityguyana.com or Facebook: Guyana Society for Biodiversity and Ecosystems.

1 Tropical Forests are part of an interconnected system that

- facilitates the pollination of plants
- maintains biodiversity
- absorbs waste and pollutants from the atmosphere
- controls soil erosion
- stores water and generates new rainfall in areas far away from the forests
- cools the land surface
- produces oxygen

2 Tropical Forests create a double cooling effect, first by reducing CO_2 levels and second by maintaining high levels of evaporation from the forest canopy.

3 The Iwokrama Forest is one of only four remaining intact rain forest areas in the world, this 371,000 ha forest with rich biodiversity and stunning geographical features is ideally suited for research into climate change and sustainable development.

4 The Iwokrama Forest is a relatively intact ecosystem which provides goods for subsistence and commercial use, food, shelter, timber, wildlife, fish, materials for handicrafts and medicines, and services to mitigate droughts and floods, generate and conserve soils and their fertility, disperse seeds and pollinate plants, recycle nutrients, maintain biodiversity, support climate stabilization and act as the basis for aesthetics, study and culture.

FORESTS: VALUING NATURAL CAPITAL

"Earned revenues led by ecotourism and sustainable forestry made good contributions to the Centre's core costs over the period"

"Phase II of our Sustainable forestry operations got underway in mid-2015 and has already started to make contributions to our core costs. We are confident that once we have built capacity, this source of earned revenues would be able to make more significant contributions in the near future. This, together with maintenance of its austerity programme, a recommitment by its founding partners and a fully constituted Board the Centre will make strong strides towards reducing its dependency on donor funding and achieving a sustainable financial model"

Dane Gobin, CEO

Overview

The 2015 audit report, similar to those of previous years, has also earned an unqualified audit opinion.

Over the period, and for the first time, the Centre's businesses provided the bulk of the Centre's core costs. Because donor projects were coming to an end, as expected, total income of US$1,043,398 (US$100,000 from GoG) was down 44% over the 2014 figure of US$1,849,864 (which included GoG's contribution of US$631,455). Following suit, total expenditure of US$1,143,837 was 16% below the 2014 figure of US$1,365,983. This slight decrease in expenditure when compared with the more substantive corresponding 44% decrease in income levels was the result of the Centre ramping up its sustainable forestry operations which increased expenditure by 167% in 2015 over 2014 levels.

Grants accounted for 36% of our revenues whilst earned income accounted for 60% for the year as against 73% and 20% respectively in 2014. We are confident that the Centre's businesses will continue to make more substantive contributions to the Centre's core costs thus reducing its dependency on donor receipts and providing a more viable and more stable financial model for the Centre.

We would like to express our sincerest thanks to the Government of Guyana, the European Union, United Nations Development Programme, IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH amongst others for making contributions over the period.

The pie-charts which follow show the contributions to total revenue from the various revenue sources and the percentage of programmatic expenditure of overall expenditure.

Total Revenue

Total revenue decreased from US1,849,864 in 2014 to US$1,043,298 in 2015. There was a substantive decrease of 71% in grants which moved from US$1,292,515 in 2014 to US$374,966 in 2015. However, despite shortfalls in tourism, training and merchandise services, there was an overall increase of 17% in earned income from US$531,999 in 2014 to US$619,534 in 2015 mainly owing to sustainable timber which started to record revenues during 2015.

Sustainable forestry did not record any revenues in 2014 but registered a US$162,951 in 2015. Tourism services fell from US$356,409 in 2014 to US$304,484 in 2015 – a decrease of 15%. Training services also dipped from US$96,063 in 2014 to US$78,449 in 2015 as one group which normally came, could not afford it this year. Merchandise recorded a 7% decrease by bringing in US$73,651 in 2015 as against US$79,527 in 2014.

Expenditure

Overall expenditure decreased from US$1,365,983 in 2014 to US$1,143,837 in 2015 – a decrease of 16%.

Compared to this 16% reduction, was a 43 % reduction in revenues which was as a result of timber expenditure increasing by 167% in 2015 over 2014 levels. Main expenditure lines continued to be the Centre's core work in community development (US$216,917) and conservation and monitoring (US$211,135) both of them down by 34% and 32% over 2014 levels since projects supporting those

FORESTS: VALUING NATURAL CAPITAL

activities came to a close.

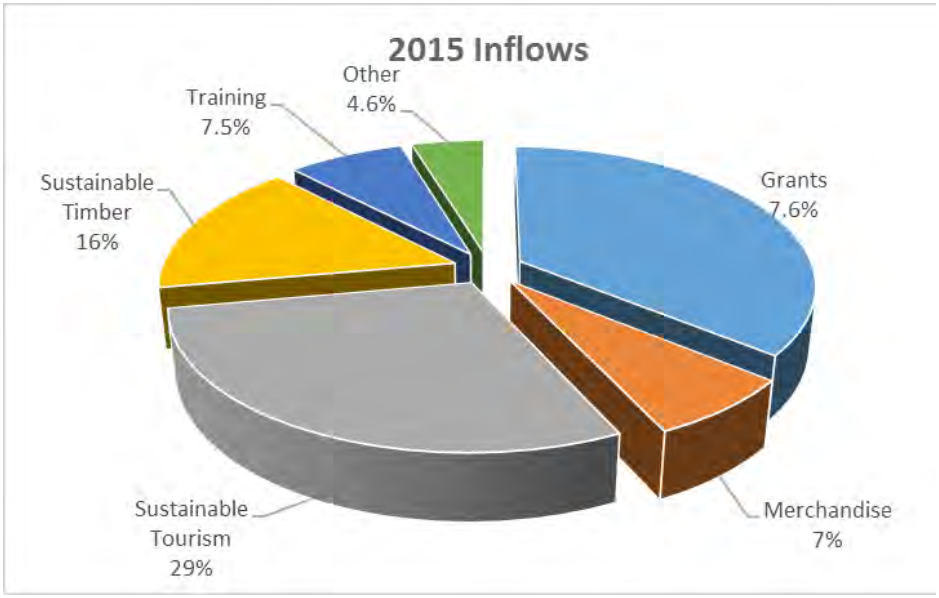
Even with increasing prices of inputs, the prolonged and rigid austerity programme resulted in a decrease in unallocated management costs from US$75,407 in 2014 to US$54,976 in 2015 – a decrease of 37%. As a percentage of overall expenditure (excluding depreciation) these management costs equated to 6% and 5% for 2014 and 2015 respectively and is testament to the Centre's prudent financial management.

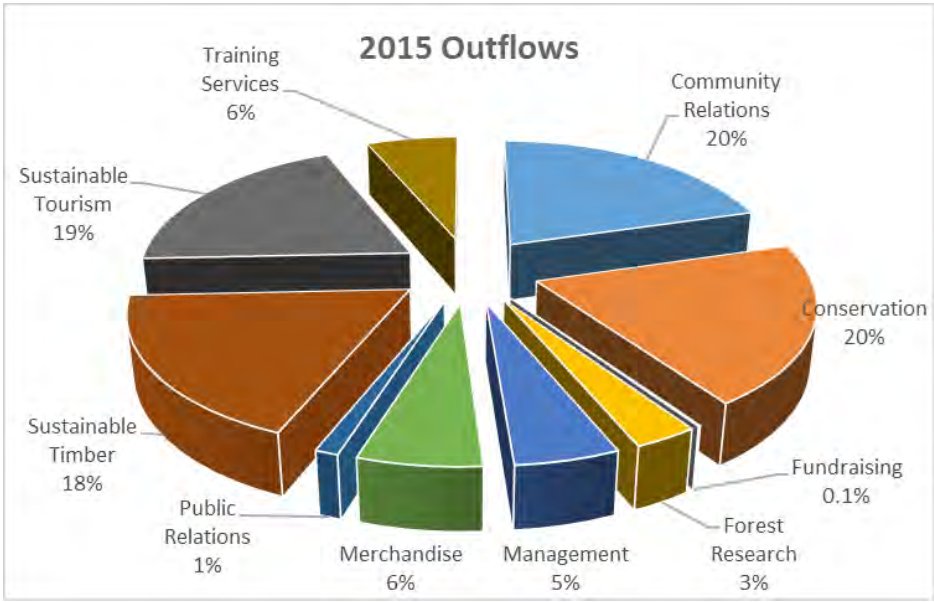
Performance

Overall, the Centre's financial position deteriorated by ending the year with a deficit of US$100,439 as opposed to a surplus of US$483,881 in 2014 but we are confident that timber revenues in 2016 will reverse this deficit position. From a cash flow perspective, the Centre ended 2015 with a cash flow of US$4,849 as compared to US$218,523 in 2014.



Dane Gobin BSc MBA
Chief Executive Officer





APPENDICIES

List of Publications 2015

Berardi, A., J. Mistry, C. Tschirhart, E. Bignante, O. Davis, L. Haynes, R. Benjamin, G. Albert, R. Xavier, D. Jafferally and G. De Ville. (2015). Applying the system viability framework for cross-scalar governance of nested social-ecological systems in the Guiana Shield, South America. Ecology and Society 20(3): 42. [online] URL: http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol20/iss3/art42/

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Lim, B.K. 2015. **Jungle experiments: this classroom has no desks, chalkboard or wifi.** Magazine of the Royal Ontario Museum, 48(2): 8-9.

Anand Roopsind. 2015. Policy brief on **Rapid tree carbon stock recovery in managed Amazonian forests.** (Reference publication in publications list, Rutishauser et 2015)

APPENDICIES

List of Publications 2015

ACCEPTED OR IN PRESS

Mistry, J., Tschirhart, C., Berardi, A., Davis, O., Bignante, E., Haynes, L., Benjamin, R., Albert, G., Xavier, R., Robertson, B., Jafferally, D., Verwer, C., Glastra, R. and de Ville, G. **Policies and practices: identifying synergies and conflict for Indigenous community sustainability in the Guiana Shield, South America**. In: Barker, D., D. McGregor, T. Edwards and K. Rhiney (eds). The Caribbean Region: Adaptation and Resilience to Global Change. University of the West Indies Press, Kingston, Jamaica (in press)

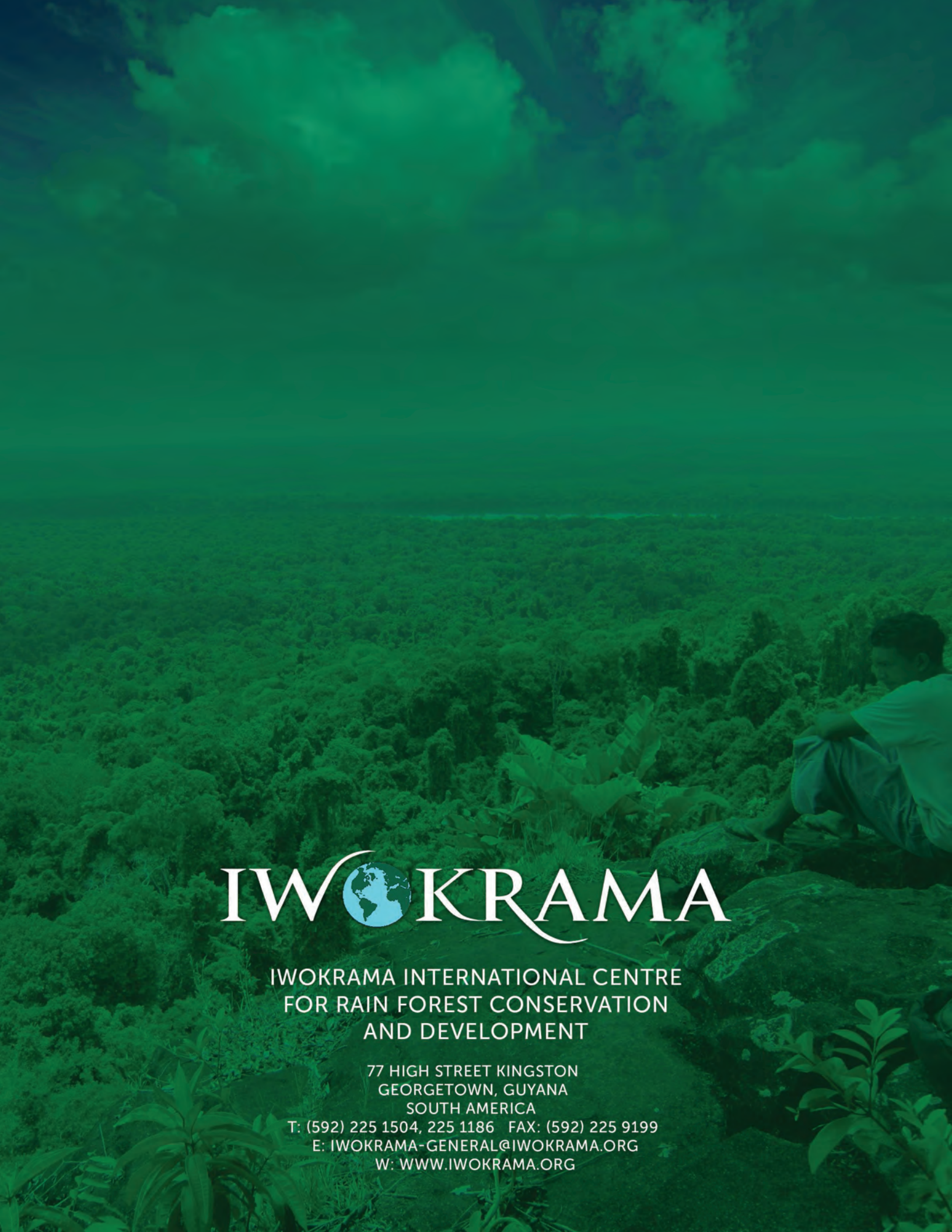
Mistry, J., A. Berardi, C. Tschirhart, E. Bignante, L. Haynes, R. Benjamin, G. Albert, R. Xavier, B. Robertson, O. Davis, D. Jafferally, and G. de Ville **Community owned solutions: identifying local best practices for social-ecological sustainability.** Ecology and Society (accepted – as part of Special Feature on Community-based natural resource management in Latin America and the Caribbean)

Tschirhart, C., Mistry, J., Simpson, M., Berardi, A., Bignante, E., Haynes, L., Benjamin, R., Albert, G., Xavier, R., Robertson, B., Davis, O., Verwer, C., de Ville, G. and Jafferally, D. **Learning from one another: the effectiveness of horizontal knowledge exchange for natural resource management and governance**. Ecology and Society (accepted – as part of Special Feature on Community-based natural resource management in Latin America and the Caribbean)

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