



**Symposium on Protected Areas of the Guiana Shield
In celebration of 50 years of SEPANGUY &
Follow-up on the Kurupukari Plan of Action
10-15 OCTOBER 2014 - CAYENNE, FRENCH GUIANA**

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Preamble:

On the occasion of the anniversary of the 50th year of [SEPANGUY](#), the [Guiana Shield Facility](#) (GSF) joins with SEPANGUY and the [Council of Culture, Education and Environment in French Guiana](#), to organize a **symposium on Protected Areas of the Guiana Shield**. The Symposium will be held from 10-15 October 2014 in Cayenne, French Guiana.

SEPANGUY is a non-profit association created under law 1901, and working to protect the environment in French Guiana. It was founded in 1964 by Father Barbotin of the Zoological Society and is the oldest of its kind in the region. The objectives of SEPANGUY are to:

- study nature in French Guiana (flora, fauna, environment);
- preserve the environment and quality of life; and
- distribute and disseminate information about the association.

The Guiana Shield Facility (GSF) as a whole has a strong focus on science cooperation, including data collection and knowledge sharing through the International Society of Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield (IBG) and the periodic Biodiversity Congresses, and on priority setting, through Science-Policy Consortia, with an ecoregional assessment and planning framework on biodiversity and ecosystem services updated periodically, and an emphasis on enabling public policies / decisions based on sound science. The GSF is a UNDP initiative and it is financially supported by the Commission of the European Union and the Government of the Netherlands.

During 21-23 May 2014, the GSF, together with the Convention on Biological Diversity LifeWeb Initiative and the governments of the Guiana Shield, held a workshop on Guiana Shield Biodiversity Corridors at Iwokrama, Kurupukari, Guyana, and developed an action plan – **Kurupukari Plan of Action**. The decision was taken to use the occasion of the SEPANGUY Symposium to follow up on key actions identified in the action plan. In celebration of its 50th anniversary, SEPANGUY would like to focus on three themes:

- Protected areas – contribution to the knowledge, and the management of biodiversity;
- Protected areas – research, recommendations and actions in the fight against climate change;
- Protected areas – towards a shared governance with indigenous peoples

The GSF and SEPANGUY are partnering to bring together Guiana Shield protected areas practitioners, indigenous leaders and scientists for the “***Symposium on Protected Areas of the Guiana Shield***” to provide follow up to the Kurupukai Plan of Plan and to celebrate the 50th anniversary of SEPANGUY.

SEPANGUY recognizes the GSF as a strong link between the countries of the Guiana Shield, institutions, NGOs and individual experts, fostering collaborative work for the sustainable development of the Guiana Shield.

Background:

The Guiana Shield (area: 2.7 million km²; population: 8 million) is a unique and very special part of our planet, and ranks as one of the world’s last great wild places, occupying roughly the northeastern third of Amazonia, and that it is particularly noteworthy for its endemism, unique ecosystems, and exceptionally pristine state, as well as for its cultural diversity. It has a higher percentage of intact tropical rain forest than any other region on Earth, with some 80-90% still in pristine condition. This fact places the Guiana Shield in a truly privileged position in terms of natural resources, and it is one of the few places left on Earth where all options are still available, and where development and conservation can proceed hand-in-hand -- maintaining healthy ecosystems and advancing economically at the same time.

The biodiversity of the Guiana Shield is very high, with an estimated 20,000 plant species and at least 4,000 vertebrate species, several of which are found exclusively in this region. The Guiana Shield is also extremely important in terms of ecosystem services, both regionally and globally, that includes a major portion of the largest river system on Earth (both in volume and catchment area), the Rio Amazonas, and the southern portion of the Rio Orinoco drainage, which ranks third in the world, and a series of important watersheds in the Guianas that drain into the Atlantic. The Guiana Shield may account for as much as 10-15% of the world’s freshwater, and has the largest number of pristine or near pristine river basins on Earth.

The Guiana Shield provides unparalleled opportunities for conservation and protected area creation at a scale that is simply no longer possible in tropical Asia or Africa, and is rapidly becoming difficult elsewhere in South America. The biodiversity resources and ecological services of the Shield potentially represent an enormous competitive economic advantage to its people, through ecotourism, non-timber forest products and capturing of compensation for ecosystem services, especially as intact resources of this kind become an ever scarcer global commodity.

In April 2002, a conservation priority setting process was organized and facilitated by Conservation International (CI) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, International Union for the Conservation of Nature National Committee of the Netherlands and the Guiana Shield Initiative (GSI). That Priority Setting Workshop (PSW) identified 41 priority areas covering approximately one-half of the Guiana Shield and resulted in the signing of the Paramaribo Declaration, which includes 20 recommendations for conservation action in the Shield¹. The 2002 report was updated by CI in [2011](#) with the financial assistance of the GSF.

Since the Paramaribo Declaration was signed, progress towards its recommendations has been made in each of the six countries of the Shield. At the Kurupukari meeting in 2014, Brazil informed about the mosaic of protected areas of the West of Amapá and North of Para and emphasised the need to protect the mosaic from the threats of mining and hydroelectric projects as well as the challenges of representation, communication and economic sustainability of protected areas. Colombia highlighted the Parque Nacional Natural Serranía de Chiribiquete as a major hotspot for biodiversity, and highlighted that during the period 1990-2010, 22,260 km² of forests were lost in the Colombian Amazon due to deforestation and a further 13,000 km² risk being lost by 2030. French Guiana mentioned that illegal gold mining remains a threat for the communities and the environment and emphasised the need for cooperation among the countries of the Guianas. Guyana indicated that the areas identified for biodiversity conservation include areas of most ecosystems and biodiversity and that the challenge is how to work with indigenous owners of land who are free to do whatever benefits them most. Suriname mentioned the urgent need for collaboration in the conservation of Suriname's major rivers, and to monitor the population of leatherback sea turtles. Venezuela highlighted opportunities for cross-border collaboration to include research for management and conservation actions including jaguar conservation, territorial and wildlife management of indigenous territories and academic programmes for indigenous peoples of the region.

Objectives of the Symposium

The overall objective of the Symposium is to present data and examples illustrating the socio-economic contributions of protected areas within the Guiana Shield, and be a follow-up to the Kurupukari Plan of Action on Guiana Shield biodiversity corridors. The Symposium will allow participants to make a special report on the contribution of the Guiana-Shield Eco-Region to the Aichi targets at the next [IUCN World Parks Congress](#), in Sydney.

The specific objectives of the Symposium are:

1. To document significant examples of contributions of protected areas within the Guiana Shield, particularly in terms of science, socio-economic development, governance with

¹ http://guianashield.org/index.php/publications-home/cat_view/89-publications/41-gsi-phase-i-documents/34-priority-setting-workshop

local communities and answer to environmental risks and global changes – special report for the IUCN World Parks Congress, Sydney 2014;

2. To strengthen the networking between local communities;
3. To contribute to constituting a network related to the grounding of marine mammals;
4. To advance progress on the Kurupukari Plan of Action in the following areas:
 - a. Organising technical database with appropriate data sharing protocols that allows identifying and prioritizing transboundary corridors;
 - b. Strengthening indigenous and other networks at the regional level to share experiences of territorial management and facilitate platforms to promote idea exchange and best practices, capacity building and natural resource management;
 - c. Encouraging the further development of transboundary marine protected areas in the Guiana Shield through ongoing initiatives such as Marine Mammals Cooperation (MAMACOCOSEA);
 - d. Supporting national efforts to better manage and monitor small and medium-scale gold mining, including promoting best practices for biodiversity conservation and water resources management. In addition, facilitate and support inter-governmental cooperation to:
 - i. address issues and minimize negative impacts related to the highly mobile nature of gold miners/mining in the region;
 - ii. examine related laws and regulations across the countries and territories and identify potential opportunities for harmonization.

Logistics

Date:	10-15 October 2014
Venue:	Cayenne, French Guiana

Organisers: GSF; DEAL Guyane; SEPANGUY; CCEE; WWF Guianas

Proposed list of invitees: No more than six delegates from each of the six countries of the Guiana Shield.

Number of participants: 36

Inviting party: SEPANGUY (in French Guiana) and UNDP Guyana/GSF (outside of French Guiana)

Proposed itinerary/agenda:

10-11 October: Responsible - SEPANGUY

Two days of field trip to:

- Maripasoula in the Parc Amazonien, to meet local inhabitants, observe and discuss issues related to conservation and management of protected areas, and experiences with convergence and implementation in the countries of the Guiana Shield;
- Connectable Island and Roura-Kaw swamps, to observe biodiversity and interact with local inhabitants.

12 October (evening): Responsible – SEPANGUY & CCEE

- Opening of the Symposium

13-15 October: Symposium

13 October: Responsible - SEPANGUY

Theme: Strengthening of the network between indigenous, tribal and local communities within the Guiana Shield and co-management of protected areas

14 October: Responsible - GSF

Theme: Reviewing progress on Kurupukari Plan of Action to develop biodiversity corridors in the Guiana Shield

15 October: Responsible – All Partners

Theme: Contributions of protected areas within the Guiana Shield to mitigating environmental risks and global changes: science, socio-economic development, and co-governance with local communities – special report for the IUCN World Parks Congress, Sydney 2014;

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