

## **Capturing the Voices of Guyanese – a participatory, national consultation process to inform elaboration of the *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040***

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### List of Acronyms

CBO	Community-based Organisation
CHC	Community Health Centre
CHW	Community Health Worker
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
E&A	Education and Awareness
FGD	Focus Groups Discussion
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
GITA	Green Industry Trade Assessment
GLSC	Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission
GPL	Guyana Power and Light Limited
GSDS	Green State Development Strategy
GTI	Government Technical Institute
GTT	Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company
IPED	Institute of Private Enterprises Development
LCDS	Low Carbon Development Strategy
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOC	Ministry of Communities
MOIPA	Ministry of indigenous Peoples' Affairs
MOPH	Ministry of Public Health
MOPI	Ministry of Public Infrastructure
NDC	Neighbourhood Democratic Council
NDIA	National Drainage and Irrigation Authority
PTA	Parent and Teachers Association
RC	Regional Consultations
RDC	Regional Democratic Council
SBB	Small Business Bureau
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Environment	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation

## 1 Introduction

This report is a consolidated account of all consultations conducted in Coastal and Hinterland Regions coordinated by the Green State Development Strategy/Coordination Office (GSDS/CO) and WWF-Guianas. Separate reports for each region were prepared by the GSDS/CO and WWF and are appended to this summary report (see appendix).

### 1.1 Background

The Co-operative Republic of Guyana is committed to pursue a 'green economy', and the Government in collaboration with UN Environment has elaborated a *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040* for the country's development over the next two decades. A key input into the development of the Strategy was an open and participatory multi-stakeholder national consultation process.

The Guyanese Constitution guarantees protection of citizen rights as well as transparency regarding the access to information, and the right to participate in the decision-making process. Therefore, a national consultations process was designed to capture the voice of the Guyanese people in the elaboration of policies of the Green State Development Strategy. The consultations provided the platform to gather information from stakeholders in selected communities of each of the 10 Administrative Regions.

### 1.2 Objectives of the consultation process

The general objective of the nation-wide multi-stakeholder consultations was to ensure public participation in the design and elaboration of the *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040*. The specific objectives were to: i) create awareness and a better understanding of the development strategy; and ii) engage diverse stakeholder groups to identify regional priorities, aspirations, challenges, and develop policy recommendations.

### 1.3 Approach

The national consultations applied a participatory process for the purpose of educating and building awareness of the national population on the concept of a green economy and its application to the *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040*. Key partners of the national consultations – WWF Guianas, Conservation International (Guyana) and the University of Guyana - were engaged in all stages of planning and implementation. Details of the coordinated approach to the consultations are fully described in Annex A<sup>1</sup> of the *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040*.

The national consultations comprised three components:

- Coastal consultations conducted by the Green State Development Strategy Coordinating Office in the West Demerara-Essequibo Islands (Region 3), Demerara-Mahaica (Region 4), Mahaica-Berbice (Region 5) & East Berbice-Corentyne (Region 6) Regions;

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to Section 3 "Methodology" in: "Annex A: Analytical Evidence to Support Guyana's *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040* – Background, Introduction, Planning and Socio-Political Context".

- Hinterland consultations were conducted by WWF Guianas (Guyana) in the Barima-Waini (Regions 1), Supenammm-Pomeroon (Region 2), Cuyuni-Mazaruni (Region 7), Potaro-Siparuni (Region 8), Upper Takatu-Upper Essequibo (Region 9) & Upper Demerara-Berbice (Region 10) Regions; and
- “Green Conversations” media and public events conducted by CI-Guyana in collaboration with the Green State Development Strategy Coordinating Office, the Department of Environment, Ministry of the Presidency, WWF, and the University of Guyana, in five regional towns and in Georgetown (see Table 1).

Other partners to the consultation process included the Ministry of Communities, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, and several NDC and RDC offices in the localities. The results and findings are summarized below<sup>2</sup>. Over 1,600 persons representing more than 250 communities participated in 32 consultations meetings in all ten Administrative Regions (Figure One).

Figure One: Map showing locations of National Consultations



## 2 Summary of Findings

### 1.4 Green Conversations

The Green Conversations events established a forum for educating the general public on green economic development and its application to the Green State Development Strategy.

<sup>2</sup> This summary is developed from the individual reports prepared and submitted by the GSDS Coordination Office, WWF Guianas and Conservation International on the consultations.

There were ten Green Conversations events held on varying topics and in five main towns across five of the ten Administration Regions (Table 1). These conversations involved 14 keynote speakers and eight panelists with knowledge and experience on the topics discussed.

Table 1: Green Conversations on Concepts of Green Economy and Green State

Regions	Locations	Dates	Key Note Speakers & Panelists	Themes
Demerara-Mahaica (Region 4)	Georgetown	11 <sup>th</sup> January 2018	Mr. Pavan Sukhdev	Securing our Future in a Sustainable Economy
		28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2018	Ms. Claudia Coenjaerts; Mr. Johannes Dobinger and Mr. Rawle Small	Green Jobs and Sustainable Businesses
		19 <sup>th</sup> November, 2018	Mr. Pavan Sukhdev	Human Capital Development and Renewable Energy
		6 <sup>th</sup> December, 2018	Dr. Ralph (Skip) Luken	Towards a Green Industry and Trade Assessment (GITA)
		25 <sup>th</sup> January, 2019	Dr. Paloma Mohamed-Martin <u>Panel</u> - Dr. Quincy Jones - Mr. Richard Rambarran	Human Capital: Good Health, Education and Well-being for wholesome families and communities
East Berbice-Corentyne (Region 6)	New Amsterdam	19 <sup>th</sup> November, 2018	Mr. Pavan Sukhdev	Innovation for better opportunities and Sustainable Enterprises in Agriculture
Upper Demerara-Berbice (Region 10)	Linden	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Dr. Gary Dirks <u>Panel:</u> - Mr. Sam Wright - Ms. Kenesha Mc Turk - Mr. Staydon Payne - Mr. Orin Adolph	Oil Revenues for Social Development and Environmental Management (SWF)
Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo (Region 9)	Lethem	6 <sup>th</sup> September, 2018	Honourable David Lammy and Ms. Danielle Andrade <u>Panel:</u> - Mrs. Christina Edwards - Mr. Kevin Warde	Good Governance: Building Participatory Framework
Cuyuni-Mazaruni (Region 7)	Bartica	16 <sup>th</sup> October, 2018	Professor Carlos Scheel and Dr. Leonardo Pineda Serna <u>Panel:</u> - Mr. Kerion Husbands - Mrs. Marina Charles	Responsible Mining for Guyana
	Bartica	26 <sup>th</sup> January, 2018	Mr. Leo Heileman	Moving from a Green Town to a Green State

Over 270 persons (mostly under the age of 30 years)<sup>3</sup> representing almost all sections of the Guyanese society – State and Private Sector Agencies, academic institutions and CSOs - participated in interactive and open discussions on various aspects of the green economy concept and its relationship to social, economic and environmental development. The presentations may be summarised as follows:

- *Securing our Future in a Sustainable Economy*

Mr. Sukdhev who is an internationally renowned environmental economist currently serving as President of World Wildlife Fund informed the audience on the green development approaches of other countries (e.g. Uruguay; Norway, Peru) presenting these as the means by which they planned to achieve the 2030 SDGs. He identified four important pillars of a green economy as: improved human well-being, social equity, reduction of environmental risks and prevention of ecological scarcity. He advised that for the green economy to be successful, national strategies should include, among other things measures for conservation of natural resources, development of human resources; a focus on long-term resilience, reforming taxes to deter 'bad' or undesirable actions, while instituting other incentive programmes such as the "Polluter Pays" and the "Precautionary Principle".

- *Oil Revenues for Social Development and Economic Management*

Dr. Gary Dirks former senior executive at BP Asia discussed the concept of sustainability, urging participants to develop their communities in a sustainable manner without polluting the natural environment. Participants discussed the dichotomy between the green economy and petroleum production, and potential opportunities for greater involvement of youths in green development and the opportunities provided by the oil and gas sector.

- *Good Governance and Participatory Decision Making*

Ms. Adrade's presentation was centred on the regional agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters i.e. the "Escazu Agreement" signed by 14 Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries that committed to greater public participation on projects, plans, programmes. Mr. Lammy highlighted the importance of citizens being empowered to exercise their rights and communicate openly to ensure that the wealth earned from oil is used for the development of Guyanese and future generations. He urged participants, majority of whom were youths, to develop their skills and capacity to become employed for the creation of wealth, with better opportunities from Guyana's economy. The questions and comments of participants demonstrated an interest in becoming more involved in social dialogue on plans for the development of their communities, protecting human health, and addressing problems of improper waste disposal in their communities.<sup>4</sup>

- *Circular Economy and Responsible Mining for Guyana*

At Bartica, Dr. Leonardo Pineda Serna of the Universidad de América and Professor Carlos Scheel of the Monterrey Institute of Technology engaged with residents on the concepts and

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<sup>3</sup> CI-Guyana's Final Report on Green Conversations

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

practices of a circular economy and the requirements for responsible mining under a green development pathway. Dr. Pineda enlightened participants on the new roles for bio-technology in recovering areas degraded from the use of mercury in the mining industry. He also highlighted the potentials of using metal scraps in the mining industry as raw materials for the manufacture of windows, ornamental craft, etc. creating new industries and employment.

Professor Scheel suggested that the Green Town of Bartica should adopt the circular economy as a model, and that it not be restricted to the mining sector. The circular economy was presented as a global model that decouples economic growth from the consumption of natural resources, allowing for the transformation of waste into wealth, and creating new and cleaner jobs. He further explained that the idea is not just about recycling, but also applies to the transformation of process waste into a new product that can be utilized by the population. During the interactive sessions, most participants sought guidance on ideas for greening the mining sector and requested technical assistance for the development of green businesses from metal waste.<sup>5</sup>

- *Innovations for better opportunities and Sustainable Enterprises in Agriculture*

Mr. Sukhdev on his second visit to Guyana, advised the audience in New Amsterdam that the agriculture and food sector should be the focus for solutions to climate related issues and the development of sustainable economies.<sup>6</sup> He suggested that Guyana's agricultural programme should adopt tools and techniques to improve greater efficiency and productivity of small scale farmers without depleting the soil. Participants were very engaged reflecting a general interest in learning more about organic and sustainable farming practices.

At a Georgetown event, Mr. Sukhdev also presented on "*Human Capital Development and Renewable Energy*" stressing for its future development the importance of investing in the country's human capital and renewable energy transition. Investment in human capital relates to ensuring a healthy, skilled and technically trained populace who can take advantage of current and future job opportunities in a diversifying and expanding economy. He presented cases from other countries and particularly India, where such investments have led to the country's technological advancement. Mr. Sukhdev also presented lessons on India's massive investment in solar and other renewable technologies demonstrating that it was also possible for Guyana to transition its electricity generation to 100% renewable sources.

- *Towards a Green Industry and Trade Assessment (GITA)*

Dr. Ralph Luken, advisor on sustainable development and industry-related environmental issues at the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), presented the results of Guyana's GITA. Agro-industry was identified as having the greatest potential for the transition to a green economy in Guyana. One of the biggest challenges, however, is the lack of data on industrial pollution, solid and hazardous waste generation and disposal. The main recommendations of the GITA as presented by Dr. Luken included:

- The need for the development and enforcement of environmental safeguards;

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

- Industrial estates and abandoned sugar estates should be converted into Eco-Industrial Parks; and
- A pilot-project should be established to demonstrate resource efficiency in at least one sector of the economy, for example fish processing.

Dr. Luken concluded that green industry development should be the basis for Guyana's structural transformation.

- *Human Capital: Good Health, Education and Well-being for wholesome families and communities*

Professor Paloma Mohamed-Martin (Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Guyana) and panelists engaged participants on the essentials of building human capital and wholesome communities.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Mohamed-Martin discussed the importance of citizens being respectful to each other and willing to integrate with all ethnic groups.

Dr. Quincy Jones highlighted the importance of human capital to national productivity and sustainable development. He posited that health is directly related to human capital, productivity and the fostering of wholesome families and communities.

Mr. Rambarran provided insights on the important relationship between the Green State Development Strategy and the SDGs, indicating the Strategy's importance for stimulating both economic growth and development. He explained that economic development relates to human wellbeing, while economic growth is measured by indicators such as GDP. Mr. Rambarran also alluded to the need for policies to retain highly qualified personnel to contribute to national development.

Other Green Conversations event conducted in 2018 included an earlier presentation from staff of the International Labour Organisation who introduced the concept of a just transition to the green economy and the provision of green jobs, as part of the green state development agenda; and from UN Environment at Bartica to promote the concept of transitioning to a green town under the green state agenda.

## 1.5 National Consultations

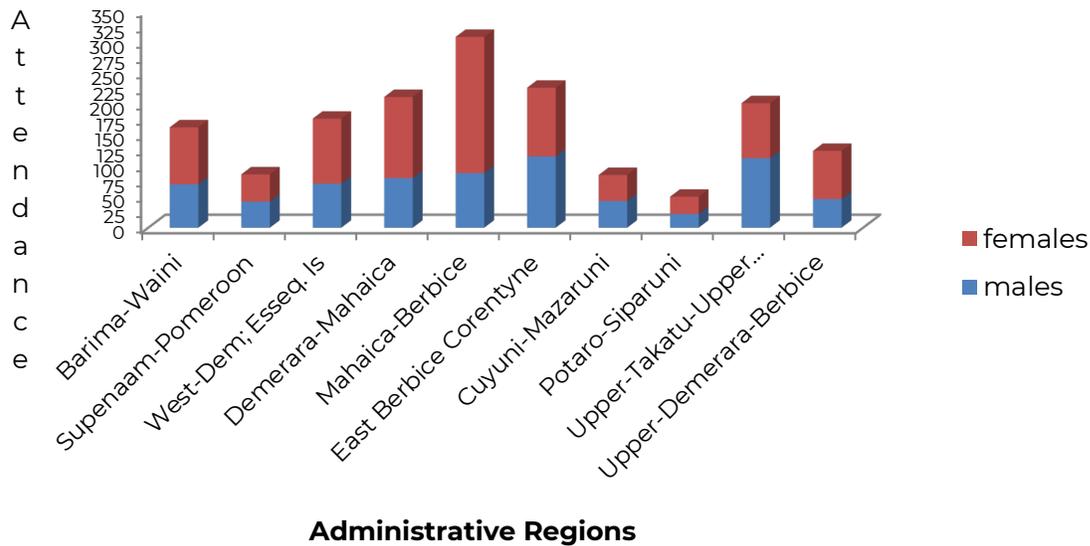
National consultations involved community-based discussions across Guyana's 10 administrative regions. Participants were from the public and private sectors and civil society organisations. Women comprised 58 percent of all participants, out-numbering their male counterparts in seven regions (Figure 2). Attendance was highest in coastal regions, and in the Upper Essequibo-Takatu Region (9). Youths represented 43 percent of all participants across Regions.

The consultations were jointly conducted between the UN Environment/Green State Development Strategy Coordination Office (April-July 2018) and WWF Guianas, with the latter responsible for the hinterland regions<sup>8</sup> (July-October 2018).

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Barima-Waini (1), Supernaam-Pomeroon (2), Cuyuni-Mazaruni (7), Potaro-Siparuni (8), Upper Takatu-Upper Essequibo (9) and Upper Demerara-Berbice (10).

**Figure Two: Attendance at National Consultations by Gender**

### 3 Summary of the Main Issues and Recommendations

Four issues were common to all consultations in both Coastal and Hinterland regions. These are: i) unemployment; ii) insufficient health care; iii) poor infrastructure including limited utility services and inadequate transportation; and iv) social ills such as substance abuse, domestic violence, teenage pregnancy and high levels of school drop-out. Issues specific to Hinterland Regions relate to insecurity of land tenure, inadequate educational facilities, poor leadership and representation by village leaders<sup>9</sup>, whilst those restricted to the coast relate to improper solid waste disposal and the related problems of land pollution and clogged drains.

#### 1.6 Unemployment

As described by WWF, most participants in Hinterland consultations attributed unemployment in their communities to high rates of school drop-out, lack of entrepreneurial opportunities particularly in agro-enterprises, lack of well-paid jobs and inadequate access to financing. Though these are similar to the reasons provided in coastal consultations, the aspects are different. For instance, the effects of unemployment in the Hinterland include poverty, lack of funds to afford a proper education, emigration and brain-drain,<sup>10</sup> but in the Coast, most participants indicated school drop-out, substance abuse and lack of access to opportunity as the observed reasons for unemployment.

<sup>9</sup> WWF Guiana's Final Consolidated Consultation Report for Elaboration of the Green State Development Strategy Vision 2040

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

### 1.6.1 Recommendations for increased employment and income earning opportunities

Across all Regions, participants specified the following recommendations for improved employment opportunities:

- *Implementation of capacity improvement programmes*

Most participants indicated the need for technical and entrepreneurial skills development to improve access to job opportunities and for self-employment. Other suggestions include the implementation of youth apprenticeship schemes involving collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Education and local business within communities and Regions. The widespread expectation is that apprenticeship schemes will provide opportunity for school drop-outs and prepare them for the job market, as part of a programme of continued education. Hinterland communities described aspirations for skills development in masonry, plumbing and welding<sup>11</sup>, while coastal communities identified preferences for skills development in areas such as building construction, food processing, joinery, handicraft, tour-guiding, electronics and electrical repairs.

- *Improved access to start-up business financing*

Participants from the Hinterland communities suggested start-up assistance to establish their own businesses and made recommendations for an investigation into the viability of community-based financing mechanisms (particularly for communities with communal land ownership) to support youths with small-scale eco-friendly investments.<sup>12</sup> Coastal participants requested assistance with start-up grants but also recommended support for accessing small grants and loans from financing institutions.

- *Increased promotion of sustainable agriculture and agro-processing/value adding*

Emerging from all consultations were recommendations for the promotion of sustainable agriculture and greater investment in manufacturing, agro-food processing and other value-adding industries. Coastal residents of the Mahaica-Berbice Region particularly singled-out opportunities for diversifying the coconut industry as one of the best options for value-adding industry and alluded to the abundance of other agricultural produce, by-products and waste that can be processed to create new income earning opportunities.

Other suggestions for increasing employment opportunities that emerged from Hinterland consultations included: revision of incentives schemes and provision of allowances (e.g. uniform, housing, transportation) to encourage the uptake of jobs by public sector workers, particularly for the Hinterland Regions.<sup>13</sup> Those in Coastal consultations would also welcome a review of public procurement policies to allow local residents to earn the first rights of refusal to undertake infrastructural projects (e.g. bridge construction, school repairs, etc.) in their communities.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

## 1.7 Inadequate Health Care and Education Services

At all consultations, a lack of human resources (e.g. trained doctors, dentists, mid-wives) was identified as the primary reason for inadequate health care services. However, the health care system in Hinterland regions was reported to be also hampered by shortages of medications at health centres, inadequate facilities and equipment, and the absence of emergency care services. These inadequacies have reportedly had effects on communities that include physical stress and financial difficulties and the need to commute long distance outside of their communities for medical attention.<sup>14</sup> With regards to education, most participants in Hinterland areas complained of inadequate supplies of text books, shortage of qualified teachers, lack of pre-school, secondary and post-secondary educational facilities and limited opportunities for professional development. The deficiencies in secondary education in the Hinterland is generally believed to be a driver of high rates of school drop-out, and youths not being qualified and equipped with skills to meaningfully contribute to the community and to national development.<sup>15</sup>

### 1.7.1 Identified solutions for improved health and education services and facilities

At all consultations, the general opinion of participants was that the inadequacies in health care could be reduced through

- Community health centres, which should be regularly supplied and equipped with adequate quantities of medication and on-site doctors, Medics, dentists, etc.;
- An increase in professional development opportunities for medical practitioners to improve the quality of primary health care within communities.
- Regional Hospitals and community health centres should be upgraded with better equipment (e.g. ultrasound and X-ray machines), reliable electricity, and well-equipped laboratories; and
- A comprehensive community-based public health campaign to raise awareness on healthy behaviours and lifestyles.

Separate from healthcare, other solutions identified<sup>16</sup> for increased access to educational opportunities in the Hinterland Regions included:

- Increased access to scholarships for youths to attend higher level learning institutions such as the University of Guyana, Georgetown Technical Institute (GTI) and Burrowes School of Arts;
- Allowing Village Councils to set aside funds to support sponsorship of outstanding residents to further their education; and
- Equipping schools with laboratories, libraries, facilities for arts and sports, and eco-friendly classrooms conducive to creative learning.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

## 1.8 Inadequate infrastructure and utility services

Though the main infrastructural issues (e.g. inadequate roads, bridges, transport and potable water supplies, poor telecommunication services, unreliable and expensive electricity) were similar between coastal and hinterland regions, there were some causal differences. The poor state of infrastructure in hinterland communities was reportedly due to poor construction, for example, from projects that were not properly located or that were constructed without the use of local materials, which have proven their durability to local conditions over the years.<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, most persons attending coastal consultations indicated that the deplorable condition of public infrastructure in their communities was due to inadequate maintenance by the relevant authorities. As reported by WWF,<sup>18</sup> poor infrastructure has led to: inflated prices of essential commodities due to high costs of transportation; financial stress on parents who send their children to schools over long distances from home base; isolation of communities, which restricts transportation; inefficient Med Evac services; and poor access to markets.

### 1.8.1 Recommendations for improvements in infrastructure and utility services

The general feedback from participants across all Regions is that there is need for cheaper and reliable sources of electricity, which can be met through the promotion of investments (e.g. tax breaks on imports and use of solar-voltaic cells) in renewable energy. Other suggestions specifically made by the hinterland participants, include amongst others:<sup>19</sup>

- Allowing communities to have oversight of projects, use of local expertise and materials;
- Improved connectivity between communities through the provision of internet cafes and Wi-Fi hubs in public spaces, and expansion of the road networks;
- Investments that will equip villages/communities/Regions with the necessary skills, knowledge, equipment and machinery to independently address most of their infrastructural needs.

Coastal participants preferred that the focus be on road improvements including farm-market roads in their communities, with upgrading to more durable, all-weather carriageways; that street lights should be regularly maintained, and for greater protection of natural mangrove forests to support the sea-defence system.

## 1.9 Social Issues

According to WWF, the main social issues reported at Hinterland consultations were substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, school drop-outs, domestic violence, poor parental guidance, sexual abuse, and incest. All, except incest, were also reported by Coastal participants. The general belief of participants across all Regions is that the occurrence and persistence of social ills in their communities are related to unemployment, as well as a lack of education and awareness on the importance of healthy lifestyles.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

### 1.9.1 Identified solutions for eliminating social ills

Solutions common to all consultations included:

- Implementing education and awareness programmes e.g. health workshops, life- skills seminars and behavior change campaigns, recreational activities;
- Legislative reforms and enforcement of laws; and
- The establishment of rehabilitation centres and shelters.

Most participants of hinterland consultations suggested implementation of programmes to train and certify social/welfare workers from within communities to support counseling and guidance services.

## 4 Other Issues

### 1.10 *Insecurity of land tenure*

Participants of the Hinterland consultations reported<sup>20</sup> that there are many Amerindian communities with boundaries that are not contiguous, and that the Authorities were granting leases to miners to operate on their adjacent customary lands and/or lands claimed as Village extensions. This has resulted in disputes between miners and Village Councils, degradation of areas utilized for traditional practices and extensive delays in the granting of legal land titles to communities. Solutions identified to address these issues were, amongst others:

- Better coordination among all stakeholders (Government, and other agencies, Indigenous People's representative organizations, etc.) when engaging with indigenous communities;
- Reducing the time taken to process applications and award Villages with titles to their land;
- Greater practice of the Constitutional requirement for 'free, prior and informed consent in Amerindian villages and communities.

While many Hinterland communities are facing challenges and delays to legal titling of their lands, coastal communities in the Central Mahaicony area (Mahaica-Berbice Region) are concerned about repossession of their ancestral/inherited lands that were once the *bona fide* property of their ancestors, who were former slaves.

### 1.11 Lack of leadership and representation by the NDCs and RDCs:

Political polarisation within the local government system was identified by participants of Hinterland consultations as the main reason for poor communication, lack of transparency and accountability, and inadequate representation on issues affecting communities.<sup>21</sup> Community leaders in Hinterland regions were also reported to be disrespectful of the opinions of youths, and insensitive to the needs of residents. Consequently, there is lack of cohesion and cooperation among community members, slow or stagnant development, persistently unresolved issues and increased tension between youth and elders. The opinion of

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

most participants<sup>22</sup> is that the situation can be reversed with the implementation of measures such as:

- Innovative and attractive initiatives to lure and encourage youths to participate in community engagement processes, and improved dialogue between elders and youths;
- Development of systems for leaders to be more accountable to the communities, and transparent with the use of public/community funds, and to routinely report on progress made on the execution of their duties; and
- The implementation of public awareness programmes on the importance of respecting the rights of everyone irrespective of political affiliation, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

#### 1.12 Improper solid waste management, pollution of canals and rivers:

Improper solid waste management is apparently not as much a priority for hinterland communities as in coastal areas. Reports from the latter were made of citizens discarding solid waste injudiciously in canals, creeks and along roadways, polluting the landscape and causing drainage blockages, and increased flooding during rainy seasons or at high tides. The underlying causes of the problem were reported to be the absence of waste management facilities (e.g. landfill sites, garbage receptacles), and an unreliable garbage collection service. Improving the regularity of garbage collection and desilting of canals were the most common solutions identified for improving solid waste management. Other suggestions were for the development and distribution of awareness tools i.e. billboards and flyers, and campaigns to educate the public on the importance of good garbage disposal practices; and the establishment of composting and recycling plants.

#### 1.13 Issues affecting Youths

Irrespective of region, the most common issues affecting youth are crime, violence, teenage pregnancy and substance abuse. Coastal participants are also affected by low wages, lack of disposable incomes, and shortage of recreational facilities, whilst the issues specific to most of their hinterland counterparts include shortages in business opportunities, and inadequate cellular phone and internet connections.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid

## Appendix G1

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### Coastal Consultations

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Green State Development Strategy – Coordination Office  
(April – July 2018)

## 1. Introduction

National Consultations for elaboration of the *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040* were conducted in all ten Administrative Regions. This document represents an overview of consultations conducted by the Green State Development Strategy Coordinating Office in four Coastal regions, namely, West Demerara-Essequibo Islands (Region 3), Demerara-Mahaica (Region 4), Mahaica-Berbice (Region 5) and East Berbice-Corentyne (Region 6). Consultations in the six Hinterland Regions were separately undertaken and reported<sup>23</sup> by WWF-Guianas under contract agreement with UN Environment.

## 2. Methodology<sup>24</sup>

The objective of the consultations was to embrace a total participatory approach for the building of trust and allow participants to freely and willingly voice their concerns and make proposals for solutions. Planning and execution of all consultation meetings occurred in collaboration with several local and national-level partners<sup>25</sup>. Over 900 persons from over 100 communities participated in 15 consultation meetings in selected localities and municipalities (Table 1) of the four coastal regions.

**Table 1: Communities and Participation at Coastal Consultations**

Regions	Locations	Participants				Total
		Men (> 24 yrs)	Women (>24 yrs)	Men (<24 yrs)	Women (<24 yrs)	
West Demerara-Essequibo Islands (Region 3)	Pouderoyen	30	12	23	68	133
	Parika/Barnwell	9	8	9	17	43
Total		39	20	32	85	176
Demerara-Mahaica (Region 4)	St Cuthbert's/Pakuri Village	24	63	39	43	169
	Diamond	2	4	0	0	6
	Georgetown	8	5	0	1	14
	Soesdyke	7	15	0	0	22
Total		41	87	39	44	211
Mahaica-Berbice (Region 5)	Mahaicony	22	53	5	14	94
	Bella Drum	20	52	5	7	84
	# 8 Village	18	10	3	26	57
	Bush Lot	7	13	3	18	41

<sup>23</sup> Reference to WWF Guiana's Final Consolidated Report for Elaboration of the Green State Development Strategy Vision 2040.

<sup>24</sup> A fuller account of the methodology used in the national consultations are provided in Annex A.

<sup>25</sup> Reference to Section 3 "Methodology" in: "Annex A: Analytical Evidence to Support Guyana's *Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040* – Background, Introduction, Planning and Socio-Political Context".

Regions	Locations	Participants				
		Men (> 24 yrs)	Women (>24 yrs)	Men (<24 yrs)	Women (<24 yrs)	Total
	Moraikobai	5	21	0	6	32
Total		72	149	16	71	308
East Berbice-Corentyne (Region 6)	New Amsterdam	38	30	10	7	85
	Corriverton	17	23	5	9	54
	Rose Hall	23	12	2	3	40
	Orealla Village	17	21	3	6	47
Total		95	86	20	25	226
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>247</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>921</b>

At each meeting participants discussed and agreed on a common vision statement for their community or region, based on the most frequently used words and/or phrases arising from group discussions.

### 2.1 Data Analyses

The data was analyzed in two different but complementary ways. Firstly, the five main problems identified by focus groups at each consultation meeting were collated and analyzed to quantify the most frequently reported issues. Secondly, the individual issues of all participants across all four Regions were then categorized into nine groups of problems: i) environmental quality; ii) family issues; iii) education and related services; iv) cultural degradation and poor government services; v) health and related services; vi) public health, safety and security; vii) infrastructure and related services; viii) crime, violence, abuse and delinquency; and ix) lack of business support/market opportunities.

An Excel database was developed and the frequency of responses analysed by gender and age group, and responses colour-coded to identify the main issues.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Vision Statements

The groups achieved consensus on vision statements for the Green State Development Strategy as summarised in Table 3.

**Table 3: Vision Statements received during Consultations in the Coastal Regions**

Regions	Locations	Group Vision Statements
West Demerara- Essequibo Is. (Region 3)	Pouderoyen	A Region where there is an improved quality of life through cleaner environment, improved infrastructure, social justice and equality, enhanced income earning opportunities, and equity for all under the stewardship of good governance.
	Parika	Region 3 will work together to achieve improved infrastructure, better health & recreational facilities, new and

Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040

Regions	Locations	Group Vision Statements
		enhanced waste management, increased agricultural productivity and processing, eradicate crime and substance abuse, for a clean and green country.
Demerara-Mahaica (Region 4)	Georgetown	A green, sustainable city rooted on the principles of diversity and inclusivity for social wellbeing and economic growth with renewable energy and climate resilient infrastructure.
	Soesdyke	A Township that is free from all pollution with adequate infrastructure (roads, canals, street lights) and social services (health, education, employment opportunities) through greater collaboration/coordination among all community sectors and stakeholders.
	Diamond	Sustainable development through greater stakeholder participation through education and awareness. Thus, creating green jobs for everyone.
	Pakuri (St. Cuthbert's)	A better life for all through the provision of reliable electricity, more jobs/income, better buildings/roads, better health care and improved education.
Abary-West Berbice (Region 5)	Central Mahaicony	A healthy, educated and economically viable community, with adequate infrastructure, improved public services and improved land distribution with good governance.
	Moraikobai Amerindian Village	A socially cohesive community, with necessary infrastructure for socio-economic development (i.e. health, markets, education, jobs) and improved human well-being.
	Bella Drum	A Region where communities live in harmony having access to education which will enhance proper job opportunities, reduce school drop outs, improve health care and infrastructure in order to have clean, green, healthy and sustainable communities
	Bush Lot	In the next 20 years we would like to see cohesive and harmonious communities that are friendly with increased socio-economic benefits and infrastructure.
	Number 8 Village	For Mahaica-Berbice to be more cohesive to enhance sustainability (schools, sustainable agriculture, employment opportunities, health services, and infrastructural development) and an improved security sector
East Berbice – Corentyne	New Amsterdam	A Region where there is an abundance of job opportunities, healthy environment within a cohesive society.

Regions	Locations	Group Vision Statements
(Region 6)	Rose Hall	An environment that is safe, healthy, and economically sustainable with social cooperation and prosperity.
	Corriverton	A Region that embraces the principles of a green economy through improved communities, training, job creation and environmentally sound spaces, health, wellness and education.
	Orealla Amerindian Village	Orealla and Siparuta merged as one village with improved health facilities and services, more educational opportunities, better transportation, cheaper and reliable electricity and greater opportunities for employment.

A word cloud graphic (Figure 1) presents a view of the above vision statements from the standpoint of the most frequently expressed sentiment.

Figure 1: Word cloud of most frequently used words and phrases in coastal consultations



There is a clear preference for “improvement” in infrastructure, education, health and services generally across coastal regions, along with a need for better job opportunities, and clean and green communities.

### 3.2 Main Issues

Based on feedback from all participants, the challenges faced by coastal communities are primarily: i) unemployment; ii) improper solid waste disposal; iii) poor infrastructural development and maintenance (e.g. lack of recreational facilities, improper roads, inadequate street lights, telecommunications, water supplies, drainage and irrigation canals, etc.); iv) inadequate healthcare services and facilities; and v) substance abuse (Figure 2).

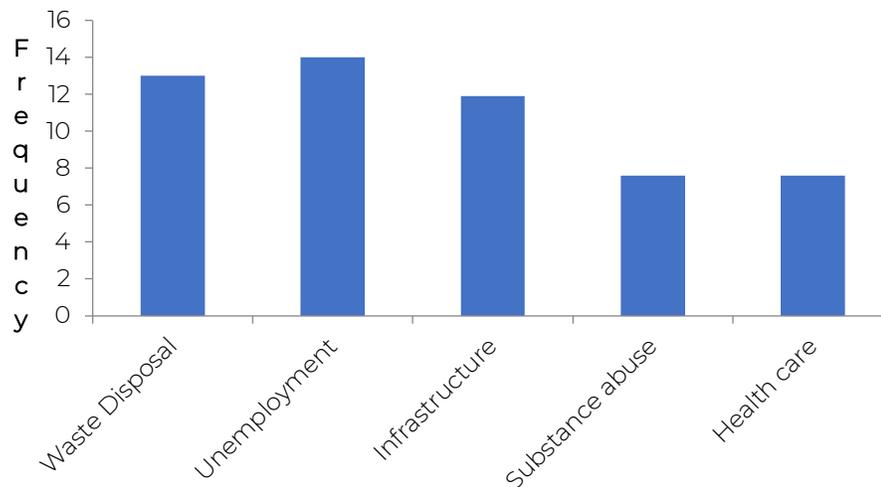
The analyses of individual responses showed a pattern similar to that which emerged from the focus group discussion i.e. injudicious waste disposal, inadequate infrastructure and maintenance, and unemployment being the three most frequently reported issues, while the abuse of illicit drugs, and inadequate health care facilities were other reported issues (see Appendix 1).

There was not any discernible distinction in the major issues between groups (e.g. women, youths). However, young people described issues of crime and violence (e.g. illegal trafficking, drugs and alcohol abuse), low wages and limited cash flow, which deprives them of disposable incomes; and a lack of recreational facilities, playgrounds and community centres.

Women also cited issues such as lack of cash flow, shortage of youth training programmes for school drop-outs and delinquents; and lack of opportunities for entering into agro-processing businesses.

Men, on the other hand, described issues related to poor security and slow emergency responses by protective and emergency services to situations in their communities.

Figure 2: Most Frequently Reported Issues from consultations in the Coastal Region



### 3.3 Identified Solutions

The groups' identified solutions to the above issues include the following:

i) Improper solid waste management, pollution of canals and rivers:

Most participants were of the opinion that poor solid waste management would be alleviated with the following actions:

- Increasing the availability of waste management facilities (e.g. garbage bins, landfill sites). Participants also expressed interest in employment opportunities arising from the establishment of waste recycling plants.
- Improving the frequency of garbage collection;
- Desilting of canals would also help to reduce flooding;

- Participants of the West Demerara-Essequibo Islands Region offered to help the NDCs to freely distribute garbage receptacles to citizens. Most participants also expressed an interest in composting and establishment of recycling plants.
- Stiffer penalties and taxes could be implemented as a deterrent, for instance, the introduction of a tax for polluting industries.
- Use of awareness-raising tools e.g. billboards, flyers and campaigns to educate the public on the importance of proper waste disposal practices.

ii) Unemployment and lack of job opportunities:

Participants identified school drop-outs as one of the main drivers of unemployment, and that high rates of teenage pregnancy and pressures on young males to become the breadwinner in the family were the two main drivers behind school dropout. High public transportation costs were also cited as the main factor behind school dropouts, particularly among coastal Amerindian communities (i.e. Orealla, Moraikobai and Pakuri). Self-employment is hindered by lack of start-up assistance for small business development. Unemployed persons were reported to be more inclined to become involved in alcohol and drug abuse, loitering and illegal activities.

Solutions identified include:

- Training, particularly in technical and entrepreneurial skills, for reducing unemployment. Recommendations were made for an expansion of technical and vocational education training programmes, and implementation of apprenticeship schemes for dropouts.
- Apprenticeship schemes could involve partnerships between the Ministry of Education and the private sector e.g. successful business entities within Regions that are willing to support training in specific areas such as business management, building construction, food processing, joinery, handicraft, electronics, electrical repairs and maintenance, and eco-tourism (e.g. tour guiding, hospitality).
- Promotion and development of opportunities for self-employment in agro-processing and other value-adding industries through greater access to start-up grants and support programmes to enhance awareness on the application process and to access small grants and loans from the Institute of Private Enterprise Development (IPED) and the Small Business Bureau (SBB).
- Reforming public procurement policies to ensure that local residents earn the first rights of refusal for development projects e.g. bridge construction, school repairs, etc. in their communities;
- Reduction in the time taken to process land leases at the Guyana Lands and Survey Commission (GLSC) for agricultural production; and
- Better promotion of agriculture as a worthy career option.

iii) Inadequate Infrastructure (e.g. poor condition of roads, street lights, sea-defence, canals):

The general belief of most participants is that the poor condition of infrastructure (roads, street lighting etc.) is due to inadequate maintenance by the responsible agencies (e.g. NDCs, National Drainage and Irrigation Authority, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and GPL). At the consultation meetings in the East Berbice-Corentyne Region it was reported that a lack of maintenance of community centres and playgrounds is due to the downsizing of GuySuco, which previously maintained recreational facilities in communities adjacent to sugar estates.

Identified solutions included:

- Improving the roadways, particularly all the farm-to-market roads in their communities upgrading these to all-weather, multi-purpose roads that are durable and resilient to adverse weather conditions such as flooding.
- Road construction and repairs that adopted green practices such as the paving of roads with recycled plastic and tyres;
- Third party validation (e.g. by independent consultants or citizen-based watch-dog groups) of all newly constructed or repaired roads. Improving maintenance of lights and lamp-posts in communities.
- On sea-defences, most participants recommended greater use of Dutch expertise and technology, combined with the protection of the natural coastal mangrove forests.

iv) Substance abuse:

Substance abuse was identified as one of the leading causes of domestic violence, especially among participants from communities in the West Demerara-Essequibo Islands and the East Berbice-Corentyne Regions. The four main solutions identified were;

- Implementing public initiatives to promote healthier lifestyles (e.g. physical exercise, athletics). Participants suggested greater collaboration between ministries (e.g. MOPH, MOE) and NGOs (e.g. Youth Counselling Services) on awareness-raising, recreational activities and youth development programmes, including the creation of safe public places (e.g. sports clubs and community centres) for healthy social interactions;
- Implementing comprehensive education and awareness programmes;
- Establishing rehabilitation centres; and
- Legislative reform and law enforcement. The need for law enforcement and legislative reform was the most frequently recurring request, particularly new laws to prohibit rum shops in close proximity to schools and stronger enforcement of the law that forbids minors (< 18 years) from purchasing alcohol and cigarettes; decriminalizing the recreational use of marijuana; and stiffer penalties for convicted drug traffickers.

v) Inadequate health care services and facilities:

Most participants indicated that the inadequacy of health care services is essentially a human resource issue influenced by factors such as “localized brain-drain” (e.g. trained Community Health Workers do not return to serve their villages after graduation); irregular visits or prolonged absences of medical specialists at Community Health Centres and/or District Hospitals; and poor public-relations skills among medical personnel.

These could be improved by

- Increasing the regularity of visits by specialists (e.g. doctors and dentists);
- Implementing community-based training programmes to enhance capacity for primary health care; and
- Increasing the availability and quotas of medication allocated to the Community Health Centres.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The perception among coastal communities is that policy and decision makers are unaware of the above-mentioned issues that affect their welfare and livelihoods.

The main issues reported by participants surround the consequences of high rates of school dropout. These affect young girls (as pregnant teens) and young boys (through delinquency and the need to provide for the care of pregnant girls), and contribute to their lack of education and skills, and their involvement in activities that are detrimental to their development, which also contribute to persistent unemployment. Coastal communities have identified the need to address the education of teenage boys and girls in respect of sexual and reproductive health, formal and vocational education that ensure they have the skills to lead more productive lives as adults and members of the community.

Injudicious discarding of waste in canals and creeks result in blocked drains that increase vulnerability to flooding in rainy seasons or at high tides. There was certain interest and buy-in by communities to work collaboratively with local government authorities to develop and implement more effective solid waste management strategies.

## Appendix G2

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### Hinterland Consultations

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WWF (Guianas)  
(July – October 2018)

## Appendix G3

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### Green Conversations

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Conservation International  
(2018-2019)