

DISCUSSION GUIDE

A Review of Guyana's National Forestry Policy and Plan

May 2017

Making Decisions about the Future of Guyana's Forests

Guyana's forests are one of the country's most valuable riches – they are an important part of the Guyanese economy, provide valuable ecosystem services, support Guyana's rich biodiversity, and are home to many communities.

Guyana is just over 21 million hectares in size, with about 19 million hectares of land and almost 2 million hectares of inland water and coastal waterways. Here are a few quick facts*:

- 77% of Guyana's land cover is forest (over 16 million hectares)
- Over 6.5 million hectares have been allocated to the forest industry
- Over 1 million hectares have been designated protected areas (e.g. forest reserves, Kaieteur, Iwokrama, Kanuku Mountains, and Shell Beach)
- 3 million hectares have been conveyed as Amerindian Titled Lands

**numbers are rounded*

Over time, Guyana's Forestry Policy and Plan need to evolve in order to remain relevant, useful, and responsive to changing societal demands.

Guyana's Forestry Policy and Plan were last updated in 2011. The purpose of this Review is to reflect on the changing context of forestry in Guyana and to proposed revisions to the Forestry Policy and Plan that respond to 2017 needs.

There are a number of different "lenses" through which one can look at Guyana's forests and Forestry Policy, and this Review is considering all of them:

- Timber
- Value-added processes
- Ecosystem services
- Non-Timber Forest Products
- Tourism
- Conservation
- Livelihoods
- Mining
- Agriculture

What is a national forest policy?

"A national forest policy is considered to be a negotiated agreement between government and stakeholders on the ideas and actions to guide and determine decisions on the sustainable use and conservation of forest and tree resources for the benefit of society A national forest policy is a policy for society, not for the forestry administration".

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome 2010, Developing Effective Forest Policy – A Guide

www.GuyanaForestConsultation.org

What prompted the need for the Review?

Significant changes in the forestry sector have prompted the urgent need for the revision of Guyana's forest policies and practices, including:

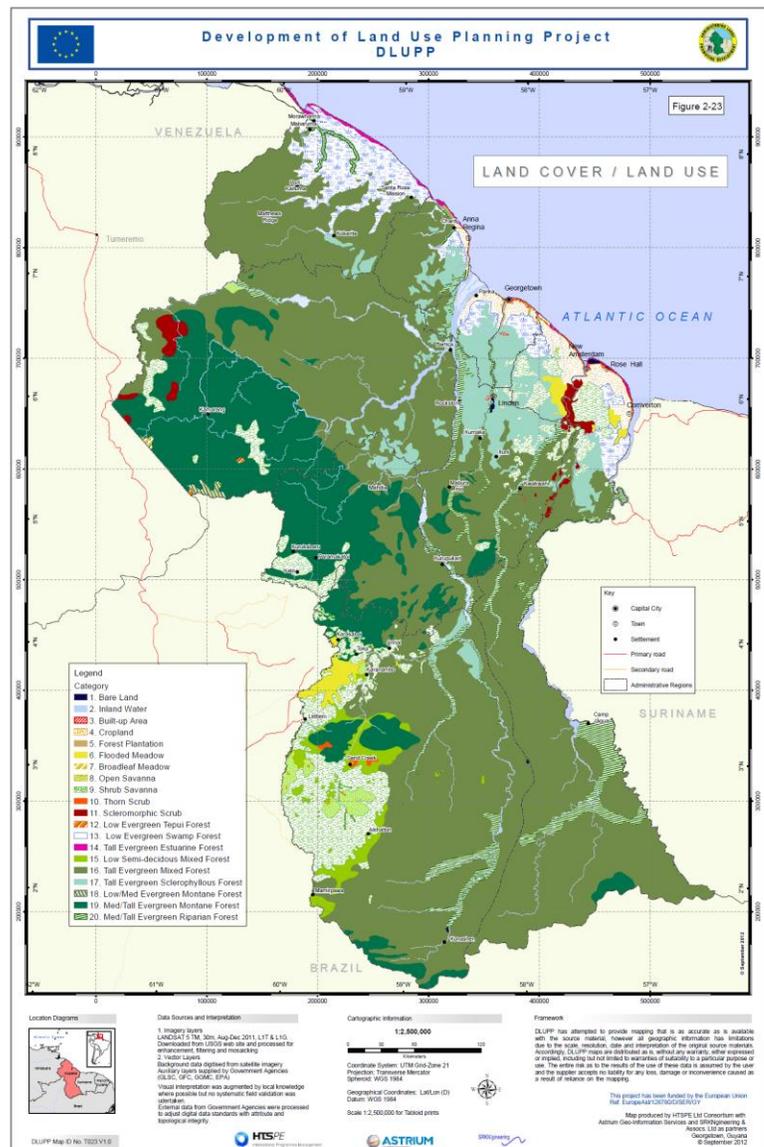
- **New national policy imperatives** – Guyana is committed to becoming a Green Economy and combatting climate change
- **Institutional changes** – The Ministry of Natural Resources has been established
- **Conservation commitments** – The President has committed to adding 2 million hectares of Guyana lands and waterways for conservation
- **Changes in standards** – Including the European Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (EU FLEGT) and the Log Export Policy
- **More experience in monitoring** – Guyana has over 5 more years of experience meeting its international commitments to sustainable forest management (e.g. through REDD+)
- **Interest in payment for ecosystem services** – Considerations for establishing a payment for ecosystem services mechanism
- **Global engagements** – Including the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Project
- **Mining and resource** – Extraction activities are expanding and impacting forests
- **Tourism** – It's becoming more nature-based

How much of Guyana is forest?

The map on the right is taken directly from Guyana's 2014 National Land Use Plan. You can see that all the land in different shades show the various types of forest in Guyana. For more background on the National Land Use plan and more detailed maps, visit <http://www.gjsc.gov.gy/>.

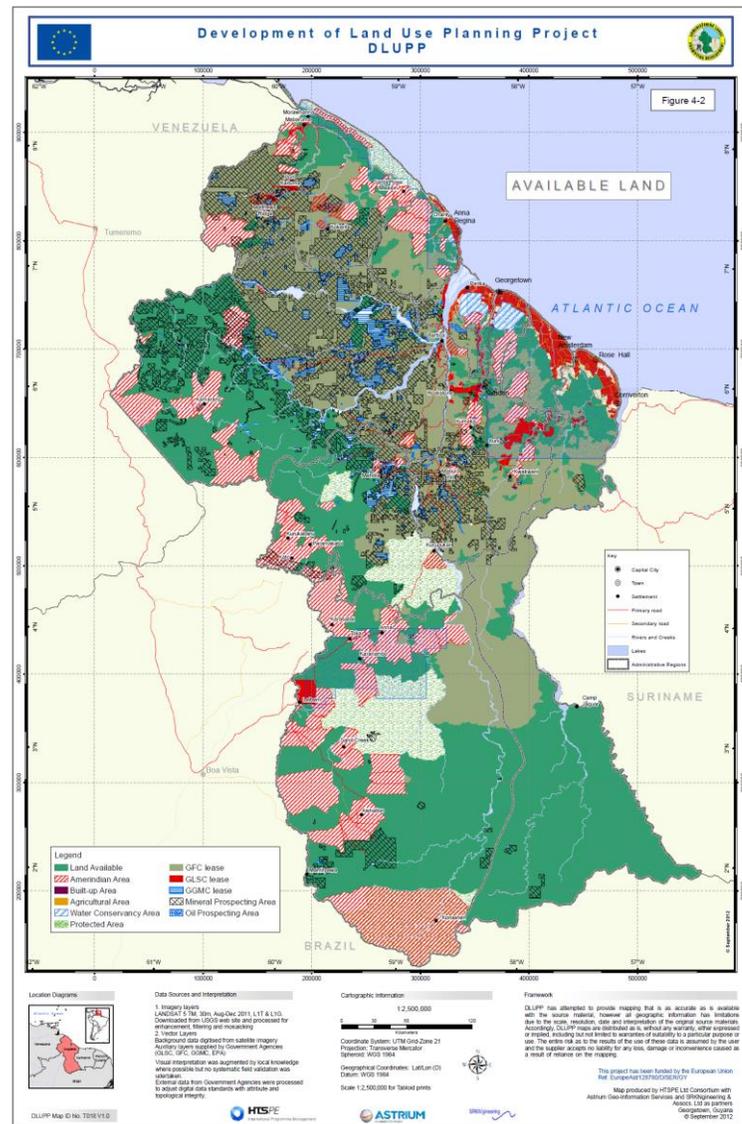
What are the key challenges in forest governance?

Given the diversity of interests, policies, and institutions, governance of the natural resources sector is challenging, with forest governance being particularly so. Guyana's ability to implement forest-related plans and policies depends on a high degree of institutional cooperation alongside sectoral expertise. Unfortunately, the legal framework of the concerned institutions has encouraged the establishment of separate mandates and limited cooperation – with specific challenges such as corruption, illegal harvesting of timber, forest degradation, and others.



What types of issues will the Review address?

While much of Guyana is covered by forest, there are many other activities that also take place on forested land. The map below shows these overlapping activities - notice all of the places where mining, for example, overlaps Guyana's forests (see black hatching)



Who are the stakeholders?

A national forest policy, such as Guyana's, reflects the particular social, cultural, economic, and political context in a country as well as the unique characteristics of its forest resources and their use. The policy must respond to the changing needs of different groups and to emerging opportunities and challenges. There is a long list of sectors and interests that have a stake in the future of Guyana's forests, including (but not limited to):

- **All Guyanese citizens, whether they are or are not directly involved or live in the forests**
- Permit holders (timber sale agreements, wood cutting leases, forest authorizations, exploratory permits)
- Local timber harvesting and mining (e.g. loggers, haulers, millers, dealers, exporters)
- Indigenous communities (logging villages, forest-dependent villages, logging dependent communities)
- Indigenous groups and organizations (e.g. Councils, Commissions, Institutes, Boards, Foundations)
- Forest producers (e.g. manufacturers) and Chambers of Commerce
- Service and support sector (e.g. equipment and materials suppliers, transport, maintenance and repair)
- Non-forest timber product collectors and dealers (e.g. crafters and artisans, fishers and hunters, wildlife trappers and traders, small gatherers)
- Small manufacturers and contractors (e.g. construction, furniture, funeral homes, craft producers, firewood/charcoal, split and round wood producers)
- Policy makers and key state actors (natural resource, forestry, geology and mines, planning, environmental protection, tourism, etc.)
- International interests (governments, non-governmental organizations focusing on environment, food, agriculture, conservation, human rights, etc.)
- Miners and mining associations
- Tourism sector (community tourism, tour operators, etc.)
- Academia (e.g. training centers, schools, universities, researchers, etc.)

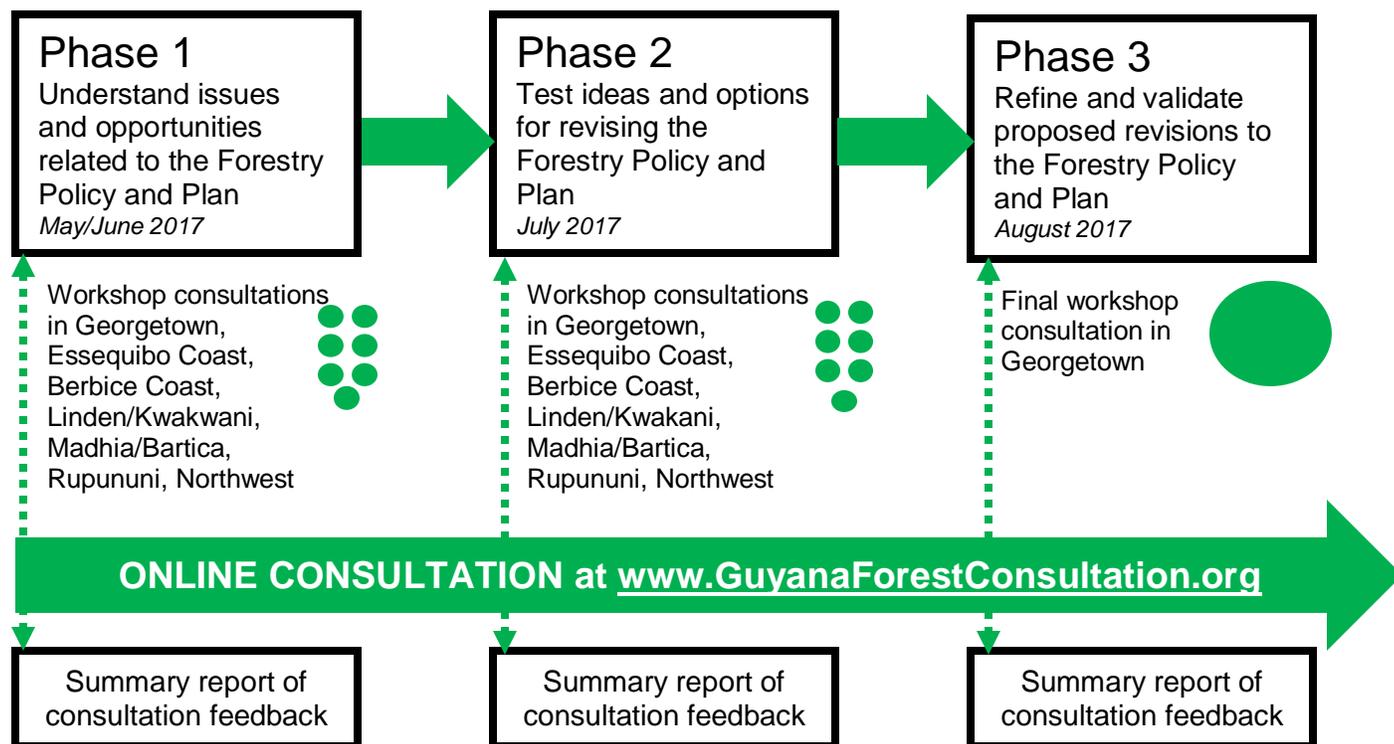
Who is leading the Review?

Sustainable management and conservation of Guyana's forests is the responsibility of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC).

A team of consultants has been hired by the Ministry and GFC to help conduct the Review. The team is led by a local Guyanese firm called The Consultancy Group (TCG), and includes foresters, an economist, a social scientist, as well as specialists in governance, information technology, and facilitation and engagement.

Overview of the Review Process

The Review is happening in three parts. The graphic below shows the key parts of the process, and the critical role that in-person and online information sharing and consultation plays throughout.



Share Your Thoughts with Us

Consultation on Phase 1 of the Review will focus on seeking feedback on questions below. There are three ways you can provide your responses:

- Attend a consultation meeting
- Provide your responses online through the project website at www.GuyanaForestConsultation.org
- Email the Project Team by contacting Nicole Bowen at nbowen@theconsultancygroupguyana.com

Deadline:

All feedback received by June 15, 2017 will be included in the Phase 1 Feedback Summary.

For more information:

- Visit the website at www.GuyanaForestConsultation.org - leave your name and email on the website if you're interested in receiving updates on the process
- The Consultancy Group (TCG), Nicole Bowen (Project Manager), nbowen@theconsultancygroupguyana.com, (592) 225-8771 or Professor Rory Fraser (Project Lead), rdfrasers@gmail.com, (592) 672 5852
- Guyana Forestry Commission, Pradeepa Bholanath (Project Lead), project.coordinator@forestry.gov.gy, (592) 226-7271.

QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. What do you think is working well with Guyana's current Forestry Policy and Plan?
2. What do you think are new and emerging issues to be considered?
3. What are the challenges, if any, with the current Guyana Forestry Policy and Plan?
4. What ideas would you like to see considered as part of the Review process to address those challenges?
5. Do you have any other advice for the Project Team as they initiate the Review?