GUYANA'S

LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (LCDS) 2030

October 2024 UPDATE









October 2024

CONTENTS

Executive Summary ***1***
Introduction… ***4***
Progress to Date on LCDS 2030 ..... ***7***
1.1 Carbon Credits **7**
1.1.1 Phase I: Bilateral Partnerships 8
1.1.2 Phase II: Integration with Global Voluntary and Compliance Carbon Markets 8
1.1.3 Phase III: United Nations Mechanism for Forest-Based Carbon Trading (2030 goal) 9
1.2 Sustainable Forestry **9**
1.2.1 EU-FLEGT VPA 9
1.2.2 PEFC Certification: 10
1.3 Low Impact Mining: Mineral Mapping **10**
1.4 Energy Transition and Renewable Energy Initiatives **11**
1.4.1 Gas to Energy Project 11
1.4.2 Amaila Falls Hydropower Project 12
1.4.3 Solar Energy Expansion and the GuySol Project 12
1.4.4 Grid Upgrade 13
1.5 Amerindian and Hinterland Development **14**
1.5.1 Amerindian Land Titling 14
1.5.2 Digital Infrastructure and ICT Hubs 14
1.5.3 Village-Led Development Plans and the Use of Carbon Credit Revenues 15
1.5.4 Support for the National Toshaos Council 17
1.6 Climate Adaptation **17**

New Priorities 19
2.1 Sustainable Urban Development and Infrastructure: 19
2.1.1 Georgetown's Transformation: Building a Model for Sustainable Growth 20
2.1.2 "Greater Georgetown" Coordinated Vision and Urban Development Framework 21
2.1.3 Smart Code 22
2.1.4 Silica City Master Plan 22
2.1.5 Neighbourhood Plans 23
2.1.6 Comprehensive Heritage Conservation Plan 23
2.1.7 Greenway Strategy 25
2.1.8 Urban Mapping: 25
2.2 Biodiversity Conservation 26
2.2.1 Expansion of Protected Areas 27
2.2.2 International Centre for Biodiversity 28
2.2.3 Biodiversity Alliance 28
Stakeholder Consultation 29
Conclusion 30



Executive Summary

LCDS 2030 was launched following a national address by the President of Guyana in late 2021. It was an evolution and expansion of Guyana's original 2009 LCDS, which was the first low-carbon development strategy from any developing country in the world.

Fifteen years after the launch of Guyana's original Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), LCDS 2030 re-energised Guyana's commitment to sustainable development. It integrates economic growth with environmental preservation while setting out policy-based approaches to fossil fuel use and climate finance. In particular, it focuses on Guyana's vision to create a global model for recognising the essential role of tropical forests in the fight against climate change and biodiversity conservation.

Since its finalisation in July 2022, after a seven-month national consultation, notable progress has been made on LCDS 2030 priorities.

Guyana's **global model for payments for forest climate services** achieved several "world-firsts", building from the 2009 Guyana-Norway Agreement which saw Guyana earn US$227 million for the period 2009 to 2015. In 2022, Guyana was issued the world's first jurisdictional carbon credits under the ART-TREES standard, enabling credits to access voluntary and compliance markets. This country securing the largest forest carbon credit sale to ever take place in the world, amounting to US$750 million in sales in the voluntary carbon market. As of September 2024, US$237.5 million of this has been received and 100% is being invested in community, regional and national LCDS priorities. A guaranteed 15% is self-managed by indigenous communities who choose to opt in to the programme. A further global milestone was reached in mid-2024 when Guyana's credits became the first in the world to be eligible for Phase I of the United Nations' emissions reductions programme for the aviation sector – CORSIA. This is now paving the way for new sales.

Guyana's **sustainable forestry practices** continued to be enhanced. Timber and timber products from Guyana will soon bear the prestigious PEFC international labels and trademarks, while Guyana was the first country in the Amazon region to sign a Voluntary Partnership Agreement under the European Union's FLEGT initiative. This agreement is expected to enhance market access for Guyanese timber and timber products in Europe and beyond.

Work to **modernise Guyana's mining industry** advanced with the start of a mineral mapping project – one of the first of its kind in the world where Artificial Intelligence and traditional techniques will be used to create highly detailed maps for mineral exploration. This will allow miners to continue their business sustainably, and open up possibilities for the exploration of critical minerals including lithium, which is becoming increasingly important to the global economy.

Guyana's **domestic energy transition** continues to be one of the most ambitious in the world. By 2030, the country's energy use is projected to increase five-fold, yet greenhouse gas emissions will stay flat or reduce, while electricity costs for citizens and businesses will decrease. The foundational elements to make this happen are well advanced: the gas-to-energy project will soon see national electricity end-user tariffs halved. Since 2020, solar energy installation has increased by 173% with the Guysol project on track to see the biggest utility-scale solar plants in the country come on-stream in 2025 in Berbice, Essequibo and Linden. Work has already begun in Berbice and Essequibo. In parallel, work is ongoing to prepare to upgrade the national grid system.

Amerindian and Hinterland development has seen long-term investments with revenues from carbon credit sales augmenting government investment, including from sales under the Guyana-Norway Agreement. The Amerindian Land Titling project issued more titles, demarcations and extensions – with the project about halfway to reaching its target of 45 Absolute Grants and 67 Certificates of Title (21 Absolute Grants and 30 Certificates of Title have been issued – adding to the 96 Grants and 70 Certificates of Title issued before the project started). 111 of the planned 200 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) hubs have been completed in remote areas of the country. 71 have been connected to the internet so far, with 51 of those connected to the high-speed Starlink system. By the end of 2025, all hubs will be completed and connected to Starlink, enabling new opportunities for education, healthcare, jobs and economic activities. Villages are self-managing 15% of all carbon credit revenues – and investing their money in Village Sustainability Plans (VSPs). Receipt of revenues from carbon credits has funded over 1,300 projects across the country in the last two years, with villages choosing to invest in agriculture, tourism, social protection, transport, education and many other areas. As of September 2024, 242 villages have received over GYD 9.5 billion in revenues from carbon credits over the past two years.

Work on **climate adaptation** is accelerating, with investment from the Guyana-Norway Agreement and more recent carbon credit revenues being used across the country to upgrade drainage and irrigation structures. This includes the construction of two new high-volume canals that will protect agricultural and other land from climate impacts. 45 kokers are being upgraded. Cumulatively, these investments amount to

the biggest investment in climate resilience in Guyana's history. At the same time, foundational work for other key LCDS 2030 priorities has been ongoing – in particular in the LCDS areas of sustainable cities and towns, water management and biodiversity conservation,

Urban areas across Guyana are undergoing the **biggest infrastructural transformations in the country's history** – enabling more Guyanese than ever to own their own homes, creating jobs, boosting the economy, and increasing revenue for public services. The construction of four-lane highways is improving connectivity, the new high-span Demerara Harbour Bridge is on track to open in early 2025 with other key bridges soon after, the Government is on target to allocate 50,000 housing lots by 2025, and beautification activities are ongoing across the country.

This transformation creates a platform for the next phase of Guyana's potential to create **sustainable cities and towns.** LCDS 2030 speaks of the Government's plans to work with local government and other entities to support development plans for Guyana's urban areas, including Georgetown, Silica City and environs; and the eight additional towns of the country: Anna Regina, Bartica, Corriverton, Linden, New Amsterdam, Rose Hall, Lethem and Mabaruma.

From September 2024, the Government will work with stakeholders to support the creation of these plans for sustainable cities and towns. While national government will fund and facilitate work given its cross-cutting nature, engagement and effective implementation by local administrations will be key to its success. Work will focus on creating eight key elements in the short term: a Vision and Urban Development Framework for "Greater Georgetown", a Smart Code to guide sustainable urban development, the Silica City Masterplan, two demonstration Neighbourhood Plans, a comprehensive Heritage and Conservation Plan; a Greenways Strategy and modernised Urban Maps.

On **biodiversity protection and water management,** significant work has been undertaken to enable the doubling of Guyana's protected area system in 2025, the establishment of an International Centre for Biodiversity, protection and restoration of critical ecosystems, expansion of Guyana's offering for nature-based solutions beyond carbon, and advancing Guyana's progress towards the global target of conserving at least 30% of the planet's lands and oceans by 2030.

The next phase of technical work on sustainable urban development, water management and biodiversity conservation will be complete in early 2025, and will pave the way for further stakeholder engagement and consultation.

The LCDS' Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee will continue to have responsibility for oversight of LCDS 2030 development and implementation.



Introduction

In 2009, the then-President of Guyana, Bharrat Jagdeo, launched the country's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), which was believed to be the first such strategy from any developing country in the world.

It was widely recognised as a pioneering effort to align economic growth with environmental sustainability, while creating a model for valuing the world's tropical forests as part of the solution to climate change.

The 2009 LCDS, and a 2013 update, had two fundamental pillars, where Guyana (i) was paid for forest climate services, and (ii) invested these revenues in low carbon development priorities. From 2009 to 2015, Guyana earned a total of US$227 million for forest climate services through a landmark partnership with the Government of Norway. This money was invested in LCDS priorities.

In October, 2021, HE President Irfaan Ali set out his vision to expand the LCDS in a national address, and spoke of how Guyana could once again lead on the linked challenges of climate security, energy security, and food security. A seven-month national consultation followed and the resulting final draft of LCDS 2030 was launched in 2022 – after approval from the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC) which oversees the LCDS; a vote of support in the National Assembly; and a resolution from Guyana's elected indigenous leaders, at the 2022 National Toshaos' Council (NTC) meeting.

As outlined in the following chapters, LCDS 2030 set the scene for further progress across multiple priorities. Two years on from the finalisation of LCDS 2030, significant progress has been made across its priorities. This LCDS 2030 Update summarises major highlights as of September 2024:

- Chapter Two sets out progress on the first wave of LCDS 2030 major priorities: forests, carbon credits, energy transition, Amerindian and hinterland development, and climate adaptation.

- Chapter Three speaks of the work to build the foundation for the next wave of LCDS 2030 priorities and how these priorities are now being advanced, specifically sustainable cities and towns, water management, and biodiversity.

- Chapter Four sets out how the new priorities will be further developed through technical work and consultations in the months ahead.



Progress to Date on LCDS 2030

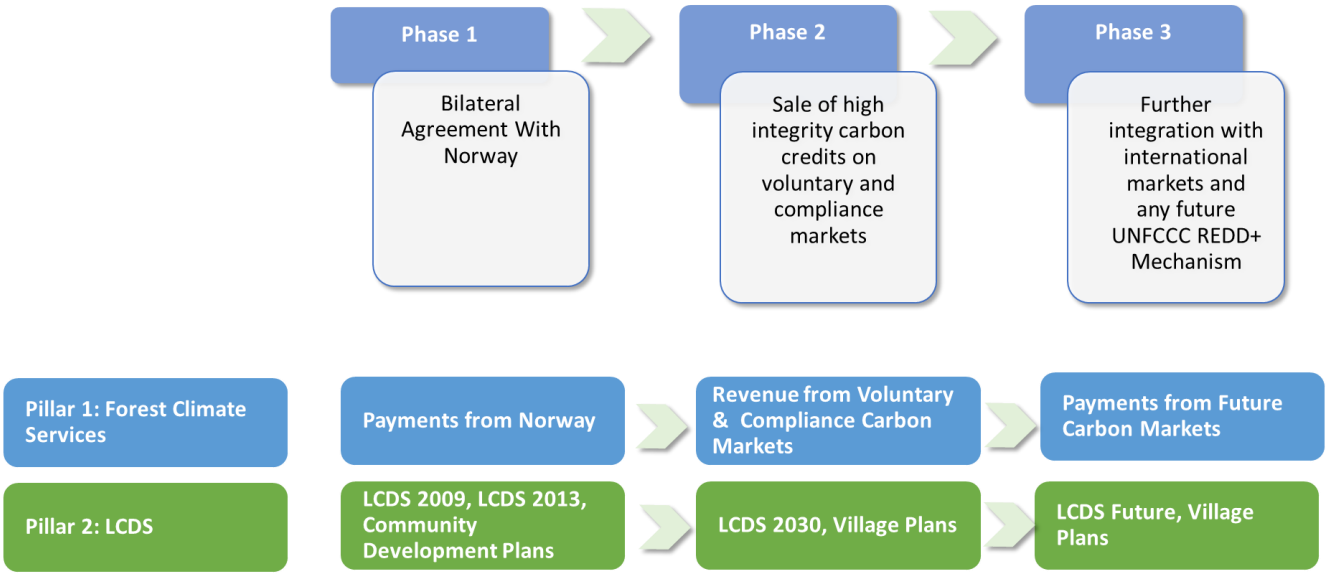
Since the launch of LCDS 2030 about two years ago, substantial progress has been made across several key areas, and highlights are summarised here.

1.1 Carbon Credits

Since the original LCDS was launched, Guyana has been able to quantify the extraordinary value of its forests in the fight against climate change and the preservation of biodiversity. Guyana's 18 million hectares of forest - within the Amazon Basin and Guiana Shield – mean that Guyana has the second highest percentage of forest cover on earth. The country sustains one of the world's lowest deforestation rates as a result of sustainable forest management. Guyana's forests, as with tropical forests in other countries in the Amazon Basin, Congo Basin and South East Asia, are crucial global assets in the fight against climate change.

Yet in 2009, the international community was only starting to recognise this reality and the need for new financial mechanisms that change a centuries-old development model where tropical forests were worth more dead than alive.

The 2009 LCDS articulated how Guyana could be a global model for addressing this reality through (i) financial mechanisms that value forest climate services, and (ii) investment of those revenues in low carbon development. The 2009 LCDS set out three phases through which this vision would be realised.



1.1.1 Phase I: Bilateral Partnerships

Guyana sought partnerships with international partners who shared Guyana's vision to promote the value of the world's tropical forests as global climate assets, resulting in the landmark 2009 Guyana-Norway Agreement, which earned the country USD $227 million for forest climate services in the period 2009-2015. As recorded in LCDS 2030, the revenue from this agreement enabled the implementation of nineteen projects across a range of LCDS sectors like energy, infrastructure, Amerindian development, climate adaptation and conservation. Six of these projects are still being implemented.

1.1.2 Phase II: Integration with Global Voluntary and Compliance Carbon Markets

In July 2022, Guyana advanced to the next phase by issuing the world's first jurisdictional carbon credits under the ART-TREES standard, which enables high-integrity, national-scale carbon sequestration activities to be monetized in global markets. This led to the country securing the largest forest carbon credit sale ever in the world, amounting to USD $750 million for sales in the voluntary carbon market up to 2030. As of September 2024, US$237.5 million of this has been received, and 100% is invested in community, regional and national projects and programmes. At least 15% is self-managed by indigenous communities as outlined in the following sections.

A further global milestone was reached in mid-2024 when Guyana's credits were the first to be eligible for Phase 1 of the United Nations International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) compliance market for the aviation sector - CORSIA. This is now paving the way for further sales in the years ahead. It is also paving the way for expanded revenue generation from ecosystem services beyond carbon, including biodiversity credits.

1.1.3 Phase III: United Nations Mechanism for Forest-Based Carbon Trading (2030 goal)

The final phase aims to fully integrate Guyana into the United Nations REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) mechanism by 2030. This remains under negotiation within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), specifically through the negotiations on Article 6 of the UNFCCC's Paris Climate Agreement. Guyana is an active participation in these negotiations, aiming to achieve an ambitious REDD+ mechanism within a global climate response that meets the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

1.2 Sustainable Forestry

Guyana's forests cover approximately 85% of the country's landmass, acting as a significant carbon sink while supporting biodiversity and livelihoods. LCDS 2030 emphasizes sustainable forest management, balancing the need for development with environmental conservation.

1.2.1 EU-FLEGT VPA

A significant milestone was achieved in December 2022 with the finalisation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) under the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade (FLEGT) initiative.

The VPA provides EU-based timber buyers with the assurance that timber products sourced from Guyana are legally harvested and meet stringent environmental and social standards. This agreement is expected to enhance market access for Guyanese timber products in Europe, offering new opportunities for businesses while promoting sustainable development practices.

The implementation of the VPA will integrate Guyana's existing national wood tracking mechanisms—established since the early 2000s—with new enhancements to ensure full compliance with the EU's FLEGT regulations. This dual wood tracking system, which includes both electronic and manual components, ensures that timber products can be traced back to their source, thereby enhancing the credibility and integrity of Guyana's forest products on the international stage. The dual wood tracking system will be further strengthened under the VPA, with plans to transition towards a fully electronic system to increase efficiency and credibility.

The negotiation and implementation of the VPA have been inclusive, involving a wide range of stakeholders from the public and private sectors, indigenous communities, and civil society organizations. This collaborative approach has ensured that the concerns and rights of all forest stakeholders are addressed, particularly those of indigenous peoples and local communities who are most directly impacted by forest management practices.

Guyana's achievement in becoming the first country in the Amazon and the second in the Americas to sign a VPA with the EU confirms the country as a frontrunner in the global effort to protect, restore, and sustainably manage forests. The implementation of the VPA is expected to bring numerous benefits to Guyana, including the modernization of the forestry sector, job creation, and the promotion of economic development—all while ensuring that forest resources are managed sustainably.

1.2.2 PEFC Certification:

It is expected that by mid-2025, all timber and timber products certified under the Guyana National Forest Certification System (GNFCS) will bear the prestigious PEFC International labels and trademarks. This certification provides clear evidence to both local and international buyers that Guyana's forest management practices meet rigorous global criteria for sustainability, including compliance with environmental, social, economic, and legal requirements. It will support the advancement of Guyanese workers and businesses and expand supply chains to meet the demand for sustainable building materials, including across the Caribbean.

The PEFC's endorsement of Guyana's robust wood tracking system also serves as an endorsement of the broader national systems developed by the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC). The existing system, which draws on the GFC's national code of practice for forest management, ensures that all timber harvesting and export activities are conducted in a manner that is both legal and sustainable.

The PEFC endorsement also demonstrates that Guyana's timber products are compliant with key international regulations such as the EU Timber Regulation, the US Lacey Act, and the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill. Furthermore, the certification process guarantees adherence to fundamental International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions that govern workers' rights and prohibit child labour.

1.3 Low Impact Mining: Mineral Mapping

Guyana is modernising and optimising its mineral exploration efforts by integrating advanced technology with traditional prospecting methods. In 2024, a mineral mapping contract was signed between the Government of Guyana and a company specializing in leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) in resource exploration.

This project marks a significant milestone for Guyana, as it aims to produce detailed mineral maps that identify the locations of critical minerals across the country. These maps will serve as valuable tools for both local and international investors, enabling more precise and efficient exploration and extraction processes. The initiative is expected to boost the natural resources sector while minimizing the environmental impact of mining activities—a critical objective of LCDS 2030.

The mineral mapping project will allow for the creation of highly detailed data maps, featuring targeted mineral zones across nine key areas, including major mining districts like Mazaruni, Puruni, and the North-West District. The project will reduce the time and costs associated with prospecting while also minimizing deforestation caused

by mining activities. By pinpointing the exact locations of mineral deposits, the project will allow miners to adopt more targeted extraction processes, significantly reducing the environmental footprint of mining operations.

While gold has traditionally been a major focus of Guyana's mining sector, the mineral mapping project is also set to explore other critical minerals, including lithium, which is becoming increasingly important as the global economy transitions away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy technologies. Lithium, essential for rechargeable batteries used in a wide range of devices and electric vehicles, is poised to become one of the most sought-after minerals globally.

1.4 Energy Transition and Renewable Energy Initiatives

Today, Guyana faces some of the highest electricity rates in the Americas and is about 97% dependent on imported fossil fuels. This heavy reliance on fossil fuels has been a significant challenge for the country, both economically and environmentally.

LCDS 2030 sets out Guyana's ambitious energy transition strategy - to reduce the country's reliance on heavy fuel oil and transition to cleaner, more affordable energy sources.

By 2030, Guyana's energy use is projected to increase five-fold, yet greenhouse gas emissions are expected to stay flat or even decrease. This represents one of the world's highest levels of decoupling of economic growth from fossil fuel use in energy production.

The transition is advancing through a series of projects and investments.

1.4.1 Gas to Energy Project

Guyana's Gas-to-Energy Project will harness offshore natural gas resources to drive energy production and reduce electricity costs, with operations due to begin in 2025. The project involves capturing natural gas from the ExxonMobil-operated Liza oil fields in the Stabroek Block and transporting it via a 225-kilometer subsea pipeline to an onshore processing facility at Wales, West Bank Demerara.

Once processed, the gas will be used to generate around 300 megawatts of electricity, utilizing Siemens turbines. These turbines will play a crucial role in converting natural gas into electricity with enhanced fuel efficiency, contributing to the stability and modernization of Guyana's power grid.

The project incorporates both single-cycle and combined-cycle power generation. In a single-cycle setup, natural gas is burned to produce electricity through a gas turbine, which is highly efficient but only uses part of the energy in the fuel. In a combined-cycle setup, the waste heat from the gas turbine is used to power a steam turbine, significantly increasing overall efficiency by generating additional electricity from the same fuel. The use of both single and combined cycles in the Gas-to-Energy Project will ensure optimal energy output and efficiency.

The project will halve end-user tariffs for Guyanese citizens and businesses, reducing electricity costs from about 24 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to approximately 12 cents per kWh. By achieving emissions reductions alongside 50% cheaper electricity, Guyana will make a significant leap toward its energy sustainability goals. The project will also drive industrial growth, create jobs, and support economic development.

1.4.2 Amaila Falls Hydropower Project

The next major investment in Guyana's plans for cheaper, cleaner electricity will be through the Amaila Falls Hydropower Project. This project is set out in LCDS 2030 as another cornerstone of the energy transition, providing a significant source of renewable energy that will contribute to the country's long-term energy security.

1.4.3 Solar Energy Expansion and the GuySol Project

A key component of Guyana's energy transition is the expansion of solar energy, particularly in remote and isolated areas.

Between 2020 and 2023, the Government increased investment in solar PV technology including utility-scale solar PV farms and solar mini-grids. This has resulted in an increase from 5.35 megawatts prior to 2020 to 14.62 megawatts in 2023 (a 173% increase in installed solar PV capacity).

Details are as follows:

- At the end of 2020, this capacity increased by 626 kilowatts to 5.98 megawatts with the addition of the 0.4 megawatt Mabaruma solar PV farm, 18 solar PV systems at Government buildings, 4 solar PV mini-grids at Yarakita, Hotoquai, Chinoweng and Phillipai, and a solar PV micro-grid at Moraikabai.
- In 2021, the solar PV installed capacity increased by 630 kilowatts to 6.61 megawatts with the addition of a 0.4 megawatt solar PV system at the Caricom Secretariat, 22 solar PV systems at public buildings, and 5 solar PV mini-grids at Akawini, Bethany, Kabakaburi, Monkey Mountain and Achiwib.
- In 2022, the solar PV installed capacity increased by 1.35 megawatts to 7.96 megawatts with the addition of the 1 megawatt Lethem solar PV farm, 10 off-grid systems at Loo Creek in Region 4, and 59 solar PV systems at public buildings. As part of the energy conservation and efficiency programme, 36,520 LED lights were installed for residents and businesses of Linden, Wakenaam, Leguan and Bartica.
- In 2023, the solar PV installed capacity increased by 6.661 megawatts to 14.62 megawatts with the additions that include the 1.5 megawatts Bartica solar PV farm, completion of 21 solar mini-grids, 22 solar PV systems at public buildings, and distribution of 26,398 solar home energy systems.

In 2024, solar farms at Mahdia (0.65 megawatts) and Leguan (0.60 megawatts) as well as distribution of the remaining 3,602 solar home energy systems will be completed. Also, the construction of two (2) mini-hydropower stations at Moco Moco

(0.7 megawatts) and Kumu (1.5 megawatts) are advanced and on schedule for completion in early 2025. A total of 377.58 kilo-watts of new solar PV and 2016 kilo-watt hours of battery energy storage will be installed on 79 public buildings across 9 administrative regions.

Far greater advancement of solar electricity installation is being achieved through the Guyana Solar Energy Program (GuySol), funded under the Guyana-Norway partnership through the Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund (GRIF) – which will add 33MW in solar-generated electricity capacity.

The GuySol project is now well-advanced. Soon, the project areas - Essequibo Coast, Linden, Bartica, Lethem, Mabaruma, Mahdia, Leguan, and Wakenaam – will have solar photovoltaic (PV) systems installed.

By 2025, these areas are expected to generate an average of 30% of their electricity from solar PV, up from near-zero when LCDS 2030 was launched. This transition is a significant step towards reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and enhancing energy security in these regions. The project also includes the installation of battery storage systems to ensure a stable and reliable energy supply, even when solar generation is low.

In addition to expanding solar PV capacity in these regions, the GuySol project focuses on developing local capacity for solar energy installation and maintenance. This includes training programs for technicians and engineers, ensuring that the knowledge and skills required to support the solar energy infrastructure are available locally.

Furthermore, there are plans to increase the share of solar PV in isolated grids to an average of 50% by 2027 and 70% by 2030. The expansion of solar energy is expected to lower electricity costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while also providing significant economic benefits, including job creation and the stimulation of local industries that support solar energy production and distribution.

1.4.4 Grid Upgrade

The modernization of Guyana's electricity grid is a crucial component of the country’s broader efforts to transform its energy sector and support sustainable economic development. Historically, Guyana's electricity grid has struggled with inefficiencies, high operating costs, and frequent power outages, largely due to its reliance on imported heavy fuel oil for energy generation and outdated infrastructure. However, with the implementation of strategic energy initiatives like the Gas-to-Energy Project, the government has set out to modernize and upgrade the grid to meet the growing energy demands of its population and industrial sector.

Work is ongoing to determine how smart grid technology will be introduced to allow for better monitoring, control, and optimization of the electricity supply. These upgrades will not only improve the overall efficiency and stability of the grid but will also create a more flexible and adaptable system that can meet the needs of a growing economy, foster industrial growth, and ensure that electricity is accessible and affordable for all Guyanese citizens.

1.5 Amerindian and Hinterland Development

Alongside recent increases in allocations for Amerindian and hinterland development from the regular national budget, revenues from forest climate services – both from the Guyana-Norway Agreement through the GRIF and more substantially, from carbon credits revenues – have seen increases in development investment in Guyana's 242 hinterland communities. Some have been through nationally-managed projects, while others have been through self-managed Village Sustainability Plans.

1.5.1 Amerindian Land Titling

The Amerindian Land Titling (ALT) Project, supported by revenues from the Guyana-Norway Agreement through the Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund (GRIF), provided the extra resources to accelerate the Government's land titling progamme.

Guyana's Amerindians total approximately 14% of Guyana's population and in the early 1990s owned about 6% of Guyana's land territory. Land titling efforts since then meant that by the time the LCDS 2030 was launched, this had increased to about 16% of Guyana's territory.

This was in part due to the Amerindian Land Titling (ALT) Project funded by revenues received under the Guyana-Norway Agreement which is working to advance the titling, demarcation, and extension of lands for Amerindian communities across the country. This process involves extensive consultations with communities, while considering the need for sustainable resource management.

Before the project began, 96 absolute grants and 70 Certificates of Title had been issued. The project targets an additional 45 Absolute Grants and 67 Certificates of Title, As of today, the project has reached about 50% of its target – with 21 Absolute Grants and 30 Certificates of Title.

1.5.2 Digital Infrastructure and ICT Hubs

One of the critical objectives of LCDS 2030 is bridging the digital divide in Amerindian and hinterland communities. The establishment of over 200 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) hubs – funded by revenues for forest climate services under the Guyana-Norway Agreement - is a vital element in providing remote communities with internet access, digital literacy training, and e-commerce opportunities.

As part of the implementation plan, the government is working with local communities to establish high-speed internet service points, particularly in areas where existing internet infrastructure is either non-existent or inadequate.

From the finalisation of LCDS 2030 in 2022 up to September 2024 the total number of hubs completed with laptops and equipment is 111, with 30 more under construction. 71 have internet connectivity, with 41 of those already being converted to Starlink. All

ICT hubs should be constructed, and equipped with Starlink by the end of 2025, providing reliable high-speed connectivity to some of Guyana's most isolated regions. All the hubs are powered by solar systems.

With access to high-speed internet, students in these areas will be able to participate in online learning, access a wider range of educational resources, and connect with peers and educators from across the country and beyond. The availability of reliable internet will facilitate telemedicine, allowing residents of remote areas to consult with medical professionals remotely and receive timely medical advice and support. Small businesses and entrepreneurs to access new markets, sell products online, and participate in the digital economy. It will promote local tourism, as communities can better market their unique cultural and natural attractions to national and global audiences.

1.5.3 Village-Led Development Plans and the Use of Carbon Credit Revenues

A key component of LCDS 2030 is the empowerment of Amerindian and hinterland communities through village-led development plans, ensuring that these communities are not only included in the country's sustainable development journey but are active participants and decision-makers in the process. At the heart of this strategy is the guarantee that 15% of all carbon credit revenue earned under the national carbon credit program is directly allocated to Indigenous and hinterland communities to be managed themselves in accordance with their own priorities.

To date, this has seen over GYD 9 billion dollars allocated to more than 240 villages across the country for self-managed programmes when villages choose to opt in.

When a village opts into the carbon credit program, they do so through a consultative process that ensures the community's full participation, as set out in LCDS 2030 and in accordance with the Amerindian Act. Each community develops a Village Sustainability Plan. This is done through a series of village meetings involving all community members, including elders, youth, women, and leaders, to ensure that the voices of all stakeholders are heard.

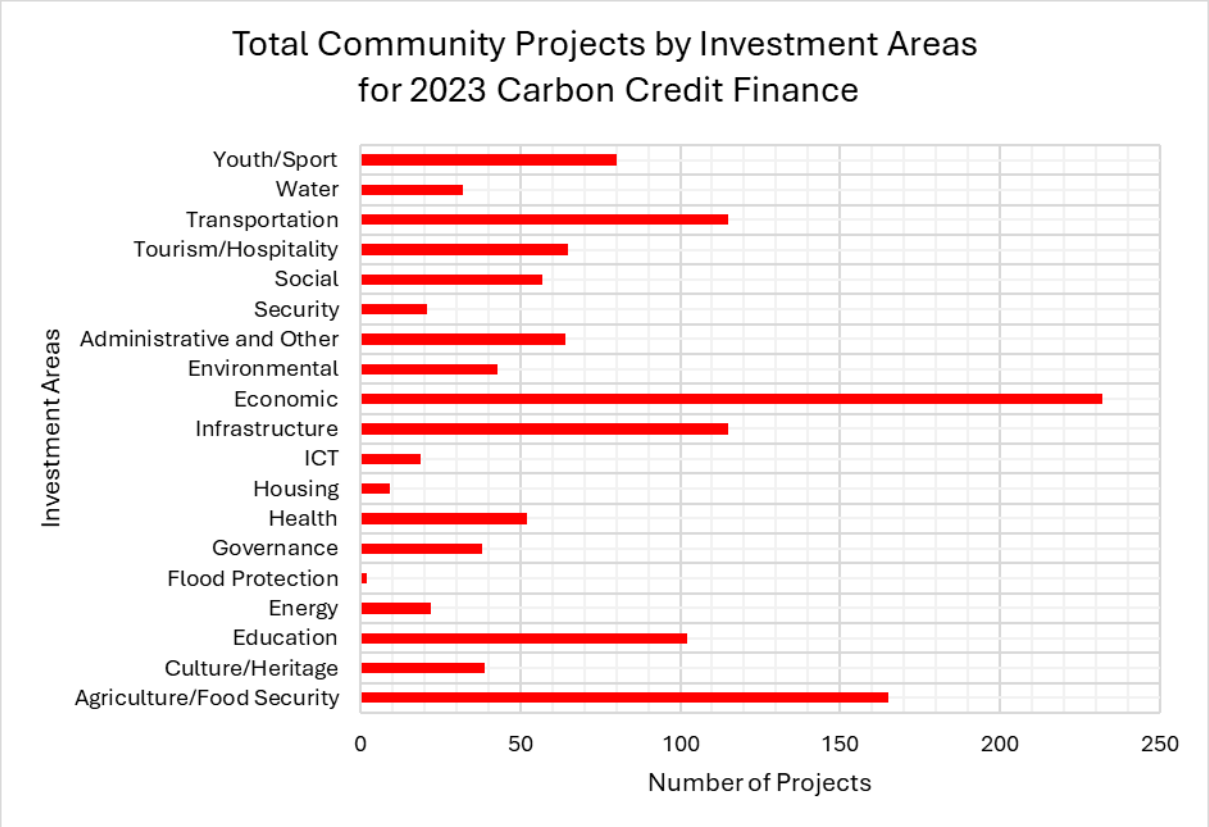
Since the launch of LCDS 2030, over 1300 village-led development projects have been initiated across the country, thanks to the reinvestment of carbon credit revenues. The 15% allocation of carbon credit revenue to these communities has provided a stable and reliable source of funding for development projects, allowing communities to plan long-term investments in their futures.

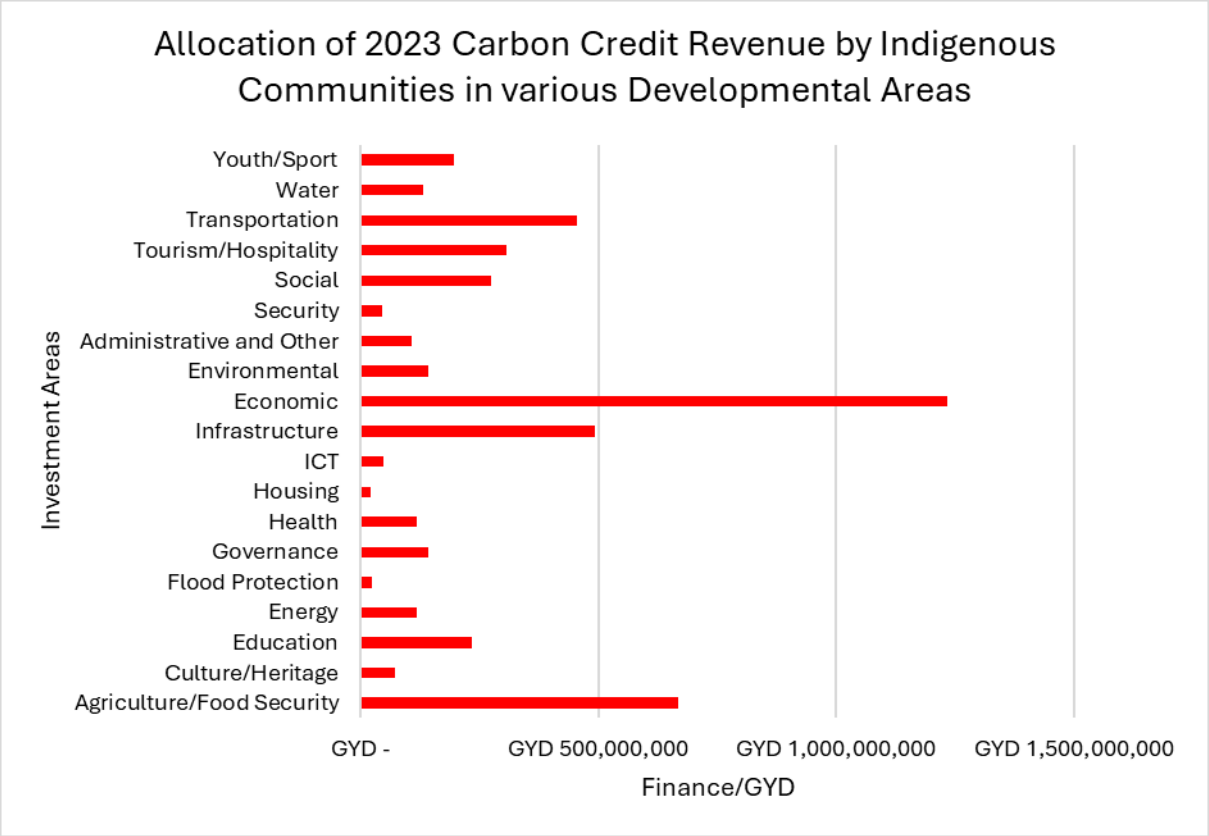
The Village Sustainability Plans serve as roadmaps for local development, outlining key areas where the village wishes to invest its portion of the carbon credit revenue and other money. The plans are highly individualized, reflecting the unique needs and aspirations of each community. Areas of focus often include:

- **Agriculture**: Investment in modern farming equipment, irrigation systems, and sustainable agricultural practices to ensure food security and income generation.

- **Transportation solutions**: The purchase of community buses, boats, and tractors, which are essential in regions where transportation options are limited or non-existent.
- **Economic diversification**: Supporting local businesses and introducing new economic activities, such as tourism or small-scale manufacturing, that align with the community's values and environmental goals.
- **Education and training**: Scholarships and training programs designed to build capacity within the community, particularly for young people and those involved in sustainable resource management.

The following two graphs visually summarises the total number of community projects and financial allocations for various investment areas respectively for the portion of Guyana's carbon credit finance that was directly disbursed to Indigenous communities throughout the country for 2023. Economic projects accounted for the most number of projects (230+) and finance (≈ GYD 1.5 Billion).





1.5.4 Support for the National Toshaos Council

The National Toshaos Council (NTC) has been supported through the Guyana-Norway Agreement, via the GRIF, to strengthen the governance and leadership capacity of the NTC. After central government funding enabled the construction of a new headquarters for the NTC executive, work is now ongoing to support the NTC in helping Toshaos across the country manage their villages, oversee development projects, and contribute to national decision-making processes. The NTC is also supported to help communities formulate and implement their Village Sustainability Plans (VSPs).

1.6 Climate Adaptation

As a low-lying coastal nation, Guyana is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate` change, including sea-level rise, increased rainfall, and more frequent and severe flooding. To address these challenges, LCDS 2030 sets out a comprehensive adaptation strategy that focuses on enhancing resilience across key sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, water resources, and public health.

As part of the revenues from the Guyana-Norway Agreement, the Cunha Canal project alleviated flooding impacts from the East Demerara Water Conservancy, and allowed previously flooded areas to return to agricultural use for residents in neighbouring villages. Over 118,000 people are believed to benefit from this investment.

The final major project funded by revenues from the Guyana-Norway Agreement is now underway – the recently announced Coastal Adaptation and Resilience project is focussing on rehabilitation over 45 kokers across Guyana, strengthening adaptive flood control measures and building resilience within communities. Over 320,000 residents are estimated to benefit from this project.

Since the launch of LCDS 2030 and the start of sales of carbon credits, the largest singled investments from carbon credit revenues is in the area of climate adaptation. As set out in the Budget for 2024, one of the most notable achievements has been the start of a massive drainage and irrigation program, which includes the development of the new canals similar to the Hope Canal, and other major infrastructure projects. These efforts will benefit hundreds of thousands of Guyanese citizens.

These investments are essential for safeguarding Guyana's economic development and protecting its population from the adverse effects of climate change. As Guyana continues to implement its climate adaptation strategy, the country will become more resilient and better equipped to handle the challenges posed by a warming planet.



New Priorities

Since the launch of LCDS 2030 in 2022, Guyana has made major strides in LCDS priorities, including forestry, carbon credits, Amerindian and hinterland development, climate adaptation, energy transition and other LCDS priorities. The next phase of LCDS 2030 will expand implementation to increase focus on address LCDS 2030 priorities related to urbanization, water management, and biodiversity conservation.

Preparatory work has been ongoing to build foundations across each of these priorities. The status and plans for these areas are outlined in this chapter.

2.1 Sustainable Urban Development and Infrastructure:

LCDS 2030 speaks of how urban areas in Guyana are undergoing one of the biggest infrastructural transformations in the country's history.

This new infrastructure is enabling more Guyanese than ever to own their own homes, creating jobs, boosting the economy, and increasing revenues for public services. This unprecedented investment in infrastructure is also setting the scene for the next phase of urban development to support liveable, clean, affordable towns and cities.

LCDS 2030 speaks of the Government's plans to work with local government and other entities to support sustainable development plans for Guyana's urban areas, including Georgetown, Silica City and their environs, and the eight additional towns of the country; Anna Regina, Bartica, Corriverton, Linden, New Amsterdam, Rose Hall, Lethem and Mabaruma.

This urban development is being approached with a clear understanding that infrastructure is not just about physical construction but about creating healthy environments that enhance the quality of life, promote economic growth, and protect natural ecosystems. Therefore, the government plans to work with local administrations, the private sector and community groups to support the creation of plans for cities and towns that are not only economically vibrant but also environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. While central government will fund and facilitate work given its cross-cutting nature, local administrations will be key to its success.

This area of LCDS 2030 will now be further advanced, with the "Sustainable Cities and Towns" section of the LCDS 2030 being updated through stakeholder consultation. This will:

- incorporate infrastructure work already in progress including transportation, housing, water, construction, and drainage and irrigation networks – to strengthen integration within a holistic plan and joined-up strategy.
- determine how to increase capacity in urban areas for significant and rapid growth, seizing the opportunity for healthy and sustainable urban development practices that can have long-term impact on people's wellbeing and prosperity.
- enhance the cultural aspects and identify of urban areas, with an increased focus on preserving cultural assets such as the many heritage buildings and community assets to be found across the country.
- set out a plan for new actions across the life of the LCDS to 2030.

Due to its role as Guyana's largest urban area, and its current rapid development across multiple local government areas, initial work will focus on the "Greater Georgetown" area, building a model that can be further developed across the country.

2.1.1 Georgetown's Transformation: Building a Model for Sustainable Growth

The "Greater Georgetown" Area, extending from Silica City in the south to the sea in the north, and from West Coast Demerara to East Coast Demerara, is undergoing a rapid transformation, at a speed matched by few urban areas in the world. To facilitate this transformation, the Government has been laying the groundwork for sustainable urban growth, including:

- **Highways:** The construction of new four-lane highways will significantly improve connectivity within Georgetown and between other key regions. These highways are critical for facilitating the movement of goods and people, reducing travel times, and supporting economic activities. The strategic placement of these highways is designed to support not only current transportation needs but also future growth, ensuring that the infrastructure can accommodate increasing population and economic activity.
- **Demerara Harbour Bridge:** The new high-span Demerara Harbour Bridge is set to enhance trade and commerce by connecting key economic zones, allowing for improved transportation and logistics. This bridge is a symbol of modern engineering in Guyana, and its construction has involved the use of

innovative techniques that minimize environmental impact while maximizing structural integrity and longevity. The bridge is expected to open by March 2025.

- **Housing Developments:** The allocation of 36,000 new housing lots in the 'Greater Georgetown' area addresses the growing demand for residential spaces. These housing projects are being designed with the goal of sustainability in mind, including integrating green spaces and modern infrastructure that will improve the quality of life for residents. To realise this goal, the focus is increasingly on building on the foundations now being put in place to evolve communities that are not just places to live but thriving environments that foster social interaction, provide access to essential services, and promote well-being.
- **Beautification and Green Spaces:** The beautification of Georgetown and the preservation of existing green spaces are integral to the city's cultural identity and a sustainable development strategy. New parks and green spaces have been created to promote outdoor recreation and improve urban living, with more planned in the years ahead. These initiatives are also part of a broader effort to enhance biodiversity within urban areas, providing habitats for wildlife and improving air and water quality for residents.

This transformation that is already well-advanced creates a positive and dynamic platform for the next phase of Guyana's efforts to build sustainable cities and towns. At the same time, it creates significant challenges that need to be addressed by local and central government, including traffic congestion, urban sprawl, and potentially a lack of integration in urban development.

To seize the opportunities for sustainable urban development, from September 2024, technical work and inclusive stakeholder engagement will lead to the production of eight key elements within this LCDS 2030 objective:

- Vision and Urban Development Framework for "Greater Georgetown"
- Smart Code
- Master Plan for Silica City
- Neighbourhood Plan for Historic Core
- Neighbourhood Plans for Two Newer Areas
- Conservation and Heritage Management Plan for Historic Core
- Greenway Strategy
- Modern Urban Map

These elements are described in further detail below.

2.1.2 "Greater Georgetown" Coordinated Vision and Urban Development Framework

From September 2024, technical work will be done to provide the basis for a draft Urban Development Framework to be presented for public consultation.

Once finalised, the comprehensive Urban Development Framework will provide a strategic vision for the future growth of Greater Georgetown (and provide a model

approach which can be adapted and applied for other towns in Guyana). The framework will set out plans for integrated development and growth and:

- outline key areas for investment, including infrastructure development, transportation networks, community infrastructure and public services.
- incorporate sustainable practices such as renewable energy, waste management, and water conservation, ensuring that urban growth is managed in a way that minimizes environmental impact and enhances resilience to climate change.
- address issues such as affordable housing, social equity, and community engagement.

By involving local communities in the planning process, the framework aims to create an urban environment that is not only sustainable but also reflects the needs and aspirations of the people who live in them.

2.1.3 Smart Code

One of the central components of the Urban Development Framework will be the development of a 'form-based code' or Smart Code. This regulatory framework will guide sustainable urban development by setting standards for building design, land use, and public spaces. The Smart Code will ensure that new developments are environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially equitable. It will also help maintain Guyana's cultural and historical character while facilitating the integration of modern infrastructure.

The Smart Code is expected to include provisions for energy-efficient building practices, the use of renewable materials, and the incorporation of green technologies in new constructions. It will also set guidelines for the development of public spaces that are accessible, safe, and inclusive, ensuring that all citizens can benefit from urban development.

2.1.4 Silica City Master Plan

Plans continue to advance for Silica City - designed to become a future city for the nation, and a model of sustainability, resilience, and innovation. Working with the University of Miami's School of Architecture, the Government is designing this future city on an 11,000-acre area site near Cheddi Jagan International Airport.

The Silica City Master Plan is integrating advanced technology and sustainable practices, to be a model of sustainability, resilience, and futuristic thinking.

The Innovation Village, encompassing elements of industrial, digital, biomedical, and artificial intelligence sectors, is intended to be a central feature of Silica City. The Innovation Village introduces "innovation districts", an urban model promoting synergies between public and private sectors, academia, and NGOs, to foster societal change. Leveraging technologies like blockchain, AI, and big data, these districts aim to nurture local talent and innovative solutions.

While the Silica City masterplan aims to set a new standard in sustainable urban planning, it will also be important that this is integrated within the broader Urban Development Framework for Greater Georgetown to maximise opportunities for continuing to enhance the urban realm in Guyana.

2.1.5 Neighbourhood Plans

To ensure that the overall Urban Development Framework reflects the needs and aspirations of local communities, more detailed neighbourhood plans will be developed for key areas within Greater Georgetown, the principles and approach of which can then be adapted and modelled across the city and country. These plans will focus on enhancing liveability, health and well-being, promoting economic opportunities, and improving access to services and amenities. Two initial, demonstration plans will be produced:

- **Newly Developed Area:** A Neighbourhood Plan for a newly developed area will respond to the challenges of rapid urban growth that is already in train, including housing, transportation connectivity, and access to community infrastructure and essential services.
- **New Development Area:** This plan will focus on integrating best practices in urban planning, design, and technology for areas that are yet to be developed. It will emphasize green infrastructure and community facilities that support walkable communities, with mixed use, mixed income smart city solutions, setting a benchmark for future urban developments in Guyana.

These neighbourhood plans will serve as prototypes for sustainable urban development across Guyana, demonstrating how cities can grow in a way that is economically successful while also both environmentally responsible and socially inclusive.

2.1.6 Comprehensive Heritage Conservation Plan

Guyana's rich cultural and historical heritage is a key asset that, without careful management and preservation, could easily be diminished or lost, as the country modernizes. A comprehensive plan for heritage preservation will be produced that balances conservation with adaptive reuse and sustainable new development. This plan will recognise that preserving heritage is not just about protecting buildings but also about maintaining the cultural identity and historical continuity of the community and country, as well as offering opportunity for economic development.

Under the stewardship of the National Trust of Guyana, the first phase of the heritage preservation plan will focus on the Kingston/Cummingsburg area in Georgetown, and the potential to celebrate what was known as the Garden City of the Caribbean. This area is home to many of the city's most significant cultural landmarks and buildings. The plan will involve documenting and prioritizing sites for preservation, engaging with local communities and stakeholders, and developing strategies for adaptive reuse that maintain the integrity of historic structures while accommodating modern needs.

While the most important objective of conserving Guyana's heritage will be the enhancement of city life for its residents, heritage preservation is also closely linked to tourism development, which can generate significant economic benefits for Georgetown and Guyana. By supporting sustainable tourism practices, the Heritage Conservation Plan will ensure that tourism contributes to the preservation of Georgetown's cultural heritage while providing economic opportunities for local communities. It may also facilitate the creation of immersive experiences for schools and both domestic and international visitors, such as guided tours, interactive exhibits, and cultural events that showcase the rich history and traditions of Georgetown. It will also include the development of infrastructure such as visitor centers, museums, and cultural venues that enhance the tourism experience while supporting the preservation of historic sites, such as:

- **Physical Exhibition Space** A dedicated exhibition space will be established in Georgetown, featuring immersive displays, artifacts, and multimedia exhibits. This space will explore various aspects of Guyana's history and culture, from Indigenous heritage and colonial history to contemporary society. By providing a platform for education and cultural exchange, the exhibition space will enhance public understanding of Guyana's rich heritage. The exhibition space will also serve as a venue for cultural events, workshops, discussions and community activities, creating a dynamic and interactive environment that engages people of all ages.
- **Virtual Museum Platform** In addition to the physical exhibition space, a comprehensive virtual museum platform will be developed. This platform will offer virtual tours, digital exhibits, and interactive experiences, making Guyana's heritage accessible to a global audience. The use of 3D scanning, augmented reality, and virtual reality technologies will create immersive environments that engage visitors in new and exciting ways. The virtual museum platform will include educational resources for schools and universities, providing a valuable tool for teaching Guyana's history and culture. It will also offer opportunities for international collaboration, connecting Guyana with museums, cultural institutions, and researchers around the world.
- **Storytelling Initiatives** These initiatives will involve collaboration with local historians, cultural practitioners, and community members to curate authentic and inclusive stories that reflect Guyana's multicultural heritage. By preserving and sharing these stories, the initiative will contribute to a deeper understanding of Guyana's history and cultural identity. Storytelling initiatives will be integrated into both the physical and virtual museum platforms, using multimedia tools such as video, audio, and interactive exhibits to bring stories to life. These initiatives will also include oral history projects, collecting the voices and memories of Guyana's people to ensure that their experiences are preserved for future generations.

To ensure the sustainability of heritage preservation efforts, the government will collaborate with training schools, institutes, and colleges to develop a program for young people in conservation management and heritage skills. This program will focus on practical skills such as the repair and restoration of historic timber buildings, preserving and evolving traditional craftsmanship while creating new job opportunities in the field of heritage conservation and sustainable design. The training program will

also include education on the importance of heritage preservation and sustainable development, encouraging a new generation of professionals who are committed to maintaining Guyana's cultural and historical legacy. By building local capacity in conservation and restoration, the program will help ensure that heritage preservation efforts are sustained over the long term. This will involve collaboration with local artisans, architects, and historians to ensure that restoration efforts are both authentic and sustainable.

2.1.7 Greenway Strategy

The development of a greenway network – nationally, and in and around Georgetown - will be a key long-term initiative. Over time, greenways will enhance connectivity within the city, promote environmental sustainability, and provide residents with access to green spaces. The greenway network is envisioned as a vital part of Georgetown and other towns' urban fabric, connecting neighbourhoods, parks, and cultural sites while promoting active transportation, such as walking and cycling, and outdoor recreation. The greenways will also contribute to ongoing beautification efforts, enhancing visual appeal and creating spaces for recreation and relaxation.

In addition to improving connectivity, the greenways will feature extensive landscaping, tree planting, and the installation of public art and seating areas. The use of native vegetation will promote biodiversity and support ecosystem health along the corridor. These beautification efforts will make the greenway an attractive destination for residents and visitors alike, contributing to the city's overall liveability.

Over time, public art installations will reflect the cultural and historical heritage of Guyana, providing both aesthetic appeal and educational value.

To showcase Guyana's rich history and cultural heritage, interpretive signage will be installed along the greenways. These signs will highlight key historical and cultural landmarks, as well as ecological features, providing visitors with insights into the city's history and natural environment. Collaborating with archivists and historians, the government will develop storytelling initiatives that engage visitors with Guyana's diverse heritage.

For practical reasons, the strategy will enable the temporary use of identified greenways for parking, which is an urgent need today. However, as parking needs start to be met through the provision of other facilities (and in the longer-term future, as the urban area develops potential public transportation options such as light rail or mass rapid transport systems), conversion into greenways will be possible due to the pre-identification of routes.

2.1.8 Urban Mapping

In 2023, the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC) completed the first phase of a project - set out in the original LCDS and funded by revenues received by Guyana under the Guyana-Norway Agreement - to improve Guyana's mapping capabilities. Specifically, the LCDS project enabled GLSC to update their geodetic

infrastructure, and establish a location network of Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) which can now enable improved mapping to help with cross-government planning and the corresponding needs of other public and private stakeholders.

Given the sheer speed of economic growth and development in Guyana, new improved capabilities are needed to provide the tools for urban planning with the consequent positive impact on citizens, businesses and the economy.

Working with global experts in the field, the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC) will use existing data to create high-quality urban maps to support integrated urban planning. This map – starting in the Greater Georgetown area - will provide accurate, up-to-date geospatial data, providing the base materials for communities, planners and decision-makers to make informed decisions and improve the efficiency and quality of urban development projects. Once this is complete, the capabilities will be expanded nationally, alongside further capacity building at GLSC.

2.2 Biodiversity Conservation

LCDS 2030 highlights how Guyana is situated in two of the world's most biodiversity rich zones: the Amazon region and the Guiana Shield.

Due to Guyana's efforts in sustaining a very low rate of deforestation and enhanced forest protection, Guyana's ecosystems are largely intact and functional – and as a result, the country has been recognised as having extraordinary levels of biodiversity, which is of regional and global significance. New species are discovered every year and the country is known to have more than 100,000 invertebrate species, more than 7,000 vascular plant species most of which are native, more than 900 species of birds, 625 freshwater fish species, 250 mammal species, 250 amphibians, and 210 reptiles. Nearly 100 of the vertebrate species occur nowhere else on Earth.

Therefore, biodiversity conservation is a critical pillar of Guyana's LCDS 2030 strategy, recognizing the country's rich natural heritage and its role in global climate change mitigation efforts.

Recent years have seen the deepening of scientific and other technical knowledge about Guyana's biodiversity, and from late 2024, this will enable several major new initiatives to move forward on biodiversity conservation, including:

- *Biodiversity Goal 30x30:* Guyana supports the global target of conserving at least 30% of the planet's lands and oceans by 2030. Guyana is working towards expanding the Protected Areas system that includes integrating Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), which complement traditional protected areas, into national and international conservation strategies. This will include exploring conservation concessions, managed water conservancies, all enabling multiple uses under an OECM type of structure. By expanding the scope of conservation efforts beyond 30%, Guyana aims to

safeguard critical habitats and biodiversity hotspots in Guyana and by extension globally.

- *Protection and restoration of critical ecosystems:* Guyana will prioritize the implementation of targeted conservation projects in key biodiversity areas. These initiatives will focus on restoring ecosystems where that is needed, and protecting endangered species, mitigating threats such as habitat loss and fragmentation. By employing science- based approaches and innovative conservation techniques, Guyana aims to enhance ecosystem resilience and promote biodiversity conservation.
- *Nature-based solutions:* Promoting sustainable practices in economic and urban development is crucial for biodiversity conservation. Guyana will innovate around the integration of nature-based solutions into policy frameworks, urban planning, and infrastructure development. These solutions leverage natural ecosystems to provide essential services such as water purification, carbon sequestration, and climate regulation, thereby supporting both human well-being and biodiversity conservation.
- *Capacity building:* Supporting scientific research, education, and training initiatives is essential for strengthening biodiversity conservation efforts globally. The Alliance will invest in capacity-building programs that empower scientists, conservation practitioners, and local communities with the knowledge and skills needed to address emerging environmental challenges. By fostering innovation and knowledge exchange, the Guyana aims to enhance adaptive management practices and promote sustainable development.
- *Community involvement:* Guyana will continue to prioritize inclusive and participatory approaches that empower communities to actively engage in conservation decision-making processes.

2.2.1 Expansion of Protected Areas

Guyana's vast and diverse ecosystems, including its rainforests, wetlands, and savannahs, are home to a wide variety of plant and animal species, many of which are endemic to the region. By creating and expanding protected areas, the government aims to preserve these ecosystems and the biodiversity they support, ensuring that they remain resilient in the face of climate change and other environmental pressures.

Today, Guyana's National Protected Area System (NPAS) encompasses approximately 8.4% of Guyana's land area. These protected areas include the Iwokrama forest, Shell Beach Protected Area, Kanuku Mountains Protected Area, Kaieteur National Park (which was the first protected area in the Amazon Region) and the Kanashen community-owned Conservation Area. Urban parks include the National Park, Botanical Gardens, Zoological Park and the Joe Viera Park.

As announced by HE President Irfaan Ali in July 2024, Guyana's protected areas will be doubled in size by the end of 2025.

The expansion of protected areas will involve the designation of new conservation zones, the establishment of buffer areas around critical habitats, and the development of management plans that involve local communities in conservation efforts.

2.2.2 International Centre for Biodiversity

The Government has started work with local and international partners to support the establishment of an International Centre for Biodiversity Research.

The Centre is being designed to serve both as a repository of collections and as a center for research. Its collections should include botanical specimens in a world-class herbarium and zoological specimens in a modern natural history museum, including facilities designed to house dry collections (e.g., pinned insects, skins, skeletons, shells, fossils), wet collections (e.g., ethanol-preserved specimens), and herbaria sheets.

The major goals of the newly created Centre for Biodiversity in Guyana are:

- to preserve the animal and plant biodiversity of Guyana,
- to train the next generation of biodiversity scientists in modern techniques,
- to foster biodiversity research, conservation, and international collaborations,
- to educate the Guyanese public and visitors about the unprecedented biodiversity found in this country.

2.2.3 Biodiversity Alliance

Guyana is leading a global effort to create a Biodiversity Alliance, which will seek to provide pathways to valuing the global ecosystem services provided by biodiversity, building on the foundational work which values the carbon services of Guyana's forest.

Guyana has started working with international partners, and intends to host a Biodiversity Summit, gathering members of the Alliance, in 2025.



Stakeholder Consultation

The detailed strategy for the next phase of LCDS 2030 will be developed through extensive stakeholder consultation. Stakeholder consultation is a critical component of LCDS 2030, as it ensures that the strategy is inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the concerns and ideas of all segments of society.

The LCDS Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC) will continue to provide the overall strategic guidance for the new wave of priorities. As a result, its membership will be augmented to ensure stakeholders involved in urban development and biodiversity are fully represented.

In the period to the end of 2024, initial technical work will proceed to produce materials that can support stakeholder consultation. This will include a series of workshops from September to November 2024, involving a wide range of stakeholders – including central and local government, technical experts, the private sector and civil society – so as to ensure that there is a vision and plan that is understood and shared across all stakeholder groups.

Once this initial work is complete, a comprehensive update of the Sustainable Cities and Towns and Biodiversity sections of LCDS 2030 will be launched for public consultation in 2025.

The Office of the President will coordinate efforts to ensure the initiative remains nationally-led and managed, with input from all local, national - and international where relevant - stakeholders.



Conclusion

As Guyana continues to re-energise its leadership in sustainable development, the progress made under LCDS 2030 serves as a testament to the country's commitment to balancing economic growth with environmental stewardship. With its focus on expanding carbon markets, transitioning to renewable energy, and promoting inclusive development, Guyana's strategy offers a roadmap to address the dual challenges of climate change and economic development.

The next phase of LCDS 2030, which prioritizes sustainable urbanization, biodiversity conservation, and water management, will ensure that Guyana remains at the forefront of the global movement toward a low-carbon future. Through stakeholder engagement and international collaboration, Guyana will continue to shape its own sustainable development pathway, setting an example for the world.