

**Patron: His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales**

---

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Iwokrama Celebrates Earth Day 2017**

On Saturday April 22, Iwokrama joined the rest of the World to celebrate Earth Day; the largest global, environmental movement, celebrated by over 1 billion people worldwide

The theme for Earth day this year is “Environmental and Global Literacy”. This theme was carefully selected with the aim to:

1. Increase awareness of Climate Change
2. Educate citizens on the ways they can help to reverse Climate Change
3. Use Environment and Climate Literacy as the engine to drive our green economy by encouraging youths to learn about green technology and green careers.

Among the four main activities planned for this year’s Earth Day Campaign in Guyana, Iwokrama was happy to lead the largest one – MARCH FOR SCIENCE.

**April 22<sup>nd</sup> –Iwokrama’s March for Science**

The March for Science is not only a celebration of science but a show of respect towards the importance research and discoveries have on our everyday lives. The March for Science is an unprecedented global gathering of scientists and science enthusiasts joining together to acknowledge the vital role science plays in our lives and the need to respect and encourage research that gives us insight into the world.

Science has no political stance, it serves all of us, it protects our air and water, preserves our planet, saves lives with medical treatments, creates new industries, puts food on our tables, educates the next generation, and safeguards our environment for future generations.

This year was the debut of The March for Science- starting as a non-partisan movement in Washington DC, the concept soon spread to a global movement with scientists worldwide joining together to show their support for the cause. Earth day saw 69 countries participate and over 600 marches take place. Iwokrama is proud to have represented Guyana on the global stage for this event.

The March began at the National Park and participants walked from this point to the Botanical Gardens via Vlissengen road. Over 100 scientists, students and science supporters turned out to march with numerous banners in tow.

Iwokrama would like to give thanks to all sponsoring agencies, Ministry of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Agency, Conservation International and Banks DIH for providing Rainforest Water. Special thanks to all supporting organizations and Individuals, University of Guyana, CYEN, WWF, GFC, Fisheries Dept., Protect Areas Commission and the Guyana Police Force for making this event possible

### **April 21- 23 – Earth Optimism Summit**

Outside of Guyana, Iwokrama also took part in the Earth Optimism Summit at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC, USA.

Earth Optimism celebrates a change in focus from problem to solution in the area of global conservation with an unprecedented gathering of thought leaders, scientists, environmentalists, artists, civic leaders and international media for a 3 day conference. The event sheds light on what is working in conservation with real –life case studies as well as hurdles that still need to be overcome on the path to protect our planet.

From Guyana

Vice President and Minister of Indigenous People Affairs –Hon. Sydney Allicock presented on “Income from Nature”- how local communities depend on nature for the sustenance and this can be done in a way that allows the ecosystems to both flourish and sustain local populations.

Dr. Raquel Thomas- Caesar – Director of natural resource and training at Iwokrama presented on “Education for Conservation”- how conservation information is essential for progress and how we can educate the world on this matter from the classroom to the Rainforest.

### **Notes to the Editors:**

#### **About Iwokrama**

The Iwokrama International Centre (IIC) was established in 1996 under a joint mandate from the Government of Guyana and the Commonwealth Secretariat to manage the Iwokrama forest, a unique reserve of 371,000 hectares of rainforest “in a manner that will lead to lasting ecological, economic and social benefits to the people of Guyana and to the world in general”.

The Centre, guided by an international Board of Trustees is unique, providing a dedicated well managed and researched forest environment. The forest is zoned into a Sustainable Utilization Area (SUA) and a Wilderness Preserve (WP) in which to test the concept of a truly sustainable forest where conservation, environmental balance and economic use can be mutually reinforcing. The IIC collaborates with the Government of Guyana, the Commonwealth and other international partners and donors to develop new approaches and forest management models to enable countries with rainforests to market their ecosystem services whilst carefully managing their resources through innovative and creative conservation practices.

Iwokrama brings together:

- 20 local communities (approximately 7,000 people) who are shareholders and participants in the IIC’s sustainable timber, tourism, research operations and forest management activities through complex co-management and benefit sharing arrangements;
- Scientists and researchers engaged in ground breaking research into the impacts of climate change on the forest and measuring the scope and value of its ecosystem services; and
- A portfolio of sustainably managed and certified business models using innovative governance systems which include participation of the private and public sectors and the local communities,

- earning income from the forest and its natural assets whilst employing international social, environmental and economic best practice, whilst still keeping abreast of the ever changing thinking on funding for environmental projects in the face of climate change and the perennial scarcity of international finance.

This alliance and the Centre's work programmes are committed to showing how a rain forest can be used for real sustainability, real climate change protection and real community benefit.

For further details about the Iwokrama International Centre please visit [www.iwokrama.org](http://www.iwokrama.org), [www.iwokramariverlodge.com](http://www.iwokramariverlodge.com) or contact Dane Gobin, Chief Executive Officer on [dgobin@iwokrama.org](mailto:dgobin@iwokrama.org)



The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development is an autonomous non-profit institution established by Guyana and the Commonwealth. The Centre manages the nearly one million acre (371,000 hectare) Iwokrama Forest in central Guyana to show how tropical forests can be conserved and sustainably used for ecological, social and economic benefits to local, national and international communities.