



INA PATA, KO'MANGNÀTOK YESELU

OUR LAND, OUR LIFE

A Participatory Assessment of the Land Tenure Situation
of Indigenous Peoples in Guyana

Report for Region 8

May 2018

Amerindian Peoples Association, Forest Peoples Programme and Rainforest Foundation US

OUR LAND, OUR LIFE: A participatory assessment of the land tenure situation of indigenous peoples in Guyana.

Report for Region 8

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FOREWORD

This report is the second of a series of participative land tenure studies undertaken by the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA) in response to the decades-long situation of unclear indigenous land tenure in Guyana.

Many of the communities in Guyana have expressed concerns over not having title to the full extent of their traditional lands or no title at all in some cases. Communities have complained about poor demarcation exercises that have left out parts of the communities' lands thereby eroding their customary land rights or causing boundary conflicts with other neighbouring communities. Then there are problems with extractive activities such as mining and logging on community lands, while the state has taken little action to address these concerns. With the advent of the government's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS), and now the Green State Development Strategy (GSDS), the state is increasingly engaged in activities affecting indigenous communities, resulting in the need for communities to have these situations clarified and for indigenous land issues to be dealt with in a fair and transparent manner.

This report presents research on these issues carried out during the period from 2015 to 2017, following similar work done in Regions 1 and 2 between 2012 and 2016. In 2011 the General Assembly of the Amerindian Peoples Association had agreed that a study of this nature was important for the communities so that they could tell the stories behind the land issues confronting them. At the APA's last General Assembly in 2016, the importance for such research was again underscored as the membership of the organisation urged the APA to continue the work in other regions. Now having completed Region 8, the APA will continue its work into the remaining regions where the majority population is indigenous.

This study therefore sought to get clarification of the land tenure situation in individual communities in Region 8 and to provide those communities with the results of the study so that they could use the information in seeking redress or solutions. This exercise is also intended to enhance the information base of the organisation and to deepen our understanding of this issue so that the APA can articulate its views supported by evidence-based information.

Action research of this nature by and for the communities is not only important for Region 8 and the Villages and communities in Regions 1 and 2 that have been so far covered, but is important for all indigenous communities in Guyana, irrespective of whether or not they are titled or not. It will enable the communities to see more clearly their own situations and those of their neighbours or even the communities further afield. The government continues to make statements regarding our land issues and we must contribute to ensuring that the right information is imparted to them.

Jean La Rose,

Executive Director, APA

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|---|
| ALC | Amerindian Lands Commission |
| ALT | Amerindian Land Titling Project (UNDP-GRIF) |
| APA | Amerindian Peoples Association |
| ATAC | Amerindian Toshiho Area Council (Region 8) |
| DFID | UK Department for International Development |
| EU | European Union |
| FLEGT | Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade |
| FPIC | Free, prior and informed consent |
| FPP | Forest Peoples Programme |
| GFC | Guyana Forestry Commission |
| GGMC | Guyana Geology and Mines Commission |
| GIM | Geospatial Information Management Unit (government website) |
| GLSC | Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission |
| GRIF | Guyana REDD Investment Fund |
| GSDS | Green State Development Strategy |
| IDB | Inter-American Development Bank |
| ICESR | International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| IPC | Indigenous Peoples Commission |
| LCDS | Low Carbon Development Strategy |
| LCOI | Lands Commission of Inquiry |
| LTA | Land Tenure Assessment |
| MIPA | Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs (from June 2015) |
| MoAA | Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (up to May 2015) |
| NORAD | Norwegian Agency for International Development |
| NPAC | National Protected Areas Commission |
| NPDC | North Pakaraima District Council |
| NTC | National Toshihos Council |
| REDD+ | Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| TSA | Timber Sales Agreement |
| UNCERD | UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNDRIP | UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples |
| VC | Village Council |
| VPA | Voluntary Partnership Agreement (between Guyana and EU on FLEGT) |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of two years' research on the land tenure situation of Amerindian settlements in the Potaro-Siparuni Region in west-central Guyana (Region 8). The Amerindian Peoples Association (APA) carried out the study in collaboration with community members between 2015 and 2017. It covers 22 settlements – 15 of which are titled, four are located within the titled lands of these 15, and three do not possess any legal papers to their land. The majority of the communities are located in the North Pakaraima Mountains, but most of them consider their customary lands to extend towards the South Pakaraimas down into the low-lying areas around Siparuni, Tipuru, Takatu (Takatu Neng) and Burro-Burro (Puru Puru).

Together with the preceding report published in December 2016 covering Regions 1 and 2,¹ this report highlights experiences of indigenous communities in Guyana that are of vital importance to inform on-going efforts to streamline national policies and laws on land, resource tenure and allocation, and to bring these into line with international human rights commitments and obligations of Guyana. The Villages and communities taking part in this tenure study urge the relevant agencies and authorities of the Government of Guyana, as well as international development organisations, to use the information contained in this report to inform and guide:

- Revisions to the 2006 Amerindian Act to ensure full protections for our customary land rights;
- Official measures to resolve land conflicts and deal with the third parties that are operating within our Village land titles and extension areas without our consent;
- The national legal and policy changes needed to reform the way our land is allocated to outside concession holders, including respect for free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) on our untitled customary lands.

Part I of the report provides the background to the study starting with the methodology (Section 1) followed by a brief history of indigenous peoples' occupation and use of the Potaro-Siparuni Region (Section 2). Sections 3 and 4 provide brief accounts of Guyana's past and present land policies. Part II presents the land tenure assessment done by this study, starting with summary findings for each of the 22 settlements visited (Section 5) and ending with a synthesis of the findings, conclusions and recommendations (Section 6).

The main findings of this study, distilled from the synthesis in Section 6, are as follows:

Legal recognition of tenure rights

- Fifteen of the 18 settlements visited had land titles;
- The land tenure security of the Villages that hold a legal title is limited in some Villages by a 'save and except' clause in titles allowing exclusion of third party private property or land lease interests within the title area;
- Joint requests for collective land title in the past have been dismissed e.g. by the Amerindian Lands Commission in the 1960s;

¹ APA and FPP (2016) *Our Land, Our Life: A Participatory Assessment of the Land Tenure Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Guyana: Report for Region 1 and Region 2*, <http://www.forestpeoples.org/sites/fpp/files/publication/2016/12/1ta-study.pdf>

- Fourteen of the 15 titled Villages say they were not consulted, and did not give their free, prior and informed consent to the area granted as title;
- The titles of all 15 titled Villages fail to cover the full customary areas occupied and used by the Villages;
- Residents in 14 of the 15 titled Villages report that they depend on land outside the title for hunting, fishing, gathering and farming;
- Nine of the 15 titled Villages report that they have homesteads and small settlements outside their title boundaries;
- Residents in many Villages and communities are worried about their land tenure security given the increase of commercial extractive activities (mostly mining, but also logging) on their untitled customary land;
- Many Villages and communities visited are dissatisfied with the way individual titles fragment what has historically been seen as one collective territory extending over the North Pakaraimas, Moruwa, Siparuni and the Potaro regions – an area for which their foreparents sought legal recognition.

Title demarcation and extension

- Fourteen out of the 15 titled Villages visited have been demarcated;
- Twelve of the 14 demarcated Villages report flaws in their title demarcations, with the demarcations not following the title descriptions;
- The fragmentation caused by flawed demarcation exercises is causing disputes between several Villages with regard to tenure rights and control over resources that were previously shared;
- Titles and demarcation were granted and completed without an official procedure in place to avoid overlaps between title and extension applications of different Villages, which can cause disputes;
- Of the five extension applications filed by the Villages visited, only one has so far been partially granted;
- The current system of titling communities individually does not cater for the fact that much of the customary land of communities has traditionally been shared between neighbouring Villages within a collectively held territory;
- Villages that are surrounded by other Villages do not know how to address the inadequate area of their titles within the current system, as they have ‘nowhere to extend to.’

Overlapping land claims and threats to livelihoods

- Five of the 15 titled Villages have problems with mining activities or movement of unauthorised miners on their titled land;
- Fifteen² of the 18 communities visited report some sort of land and resource conflict with external parties on their titled and customary lands. Most of the issues relate to mining and logging and the rest to cattle ranching, shops on the communities’ land and Kaieteur and Iwokrama protected areas;
- Bullying, violence and human abuses by miners are reported, particularly close to mining areas such as Mahdia, Echerak and Wailang.
- Commercial mining and logging are harming the environment and livelihoods that many of the

² The satellite communities of Chiung Mouth, Bamboo Creek, Mountain Foot and Princeville are counted as part of their main villages in this number.

communities depend on, particularly untitled customary areas around Siparuni, Potaro, Tipuru and Moruwa;

- Resources within titled areas are becoming scarce due to population growth, title areas that are too small and that lack suitable farm land, mining, pollution and climate change.

Causes of land tenure insecurity and land conflicts

Similar to the assessment in Regions 1 and 2, this land tenure assessment concludes that indigenous peoples' land rights have been violated by

- flawed national laws, especially the 2006 Amerindian Act;
- problems with the way land is allocated by State authorities to mining, logging and protected areas; and
- lack of consultation, FPIC and means of redress for indigenous communities.

These are the main reasons underlying indigenous peoples' land tenure insecurity and land conflicts in Region 8 of Guyana.

Proposals for action

In their recommendations, communities call on the government and authorities to recognise, and provide with secure title, all lands that the Patamona and Makushi of the North Pakaraimas and surrounding areas have traditionally owned, occupied and used and where they hold close attachment to the land. These areas include land that their foreparents depended on and which people continue to occupy and use for farming, hunting, fishing and gathering today as well as spiritual sites, cultural heritage sites and areas of historical importance. **A core recommendation from the Villages and communities in Region 8 is for the government of Guyana to recognise and secure their collective land as a communal territory in 'one block'.** Key proposals, including from the North Pakaraima District Council, include calls for measures by the State and its authorities and agencies to:

1. Revise the relevant laws (e.g. Amerindian Act, Mining Act and Forest Act) to bring them in line with international human rights standards and ensure that they provide for a) recognition of indigenous collective territories, b) the rights of indigenous communities to the natural resources on their land, including waterways and subsoil resources and c) the rights of indigenous communities to say yes or no to any kind of mining on their land, including large scale operations;
2. Avoid overlaps between communities' individual titles, by ensuring that the revision of the Amerindian Act, and its amended regulations, include requirements to consult with communities on titling, demarcation and extension matters and obtain their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) before any areas are decided upon;
3. Cancel logging and mining concessions that have been allocated on Amerindian titled and untitled customary lands without the communities' FPIC;

4. Crack down on illegal mining and forestry activities on titled and untitled customary land;
5. Stop allocating new mining and logging concession on titled land and customary lands (including lands earmarked for extension). No allocation must be done without first obtaining communities' FPIC;
6. Correct flaws in Village demarcations and make sure residents are fully involved in this process as they are the ones who best know the land;
7. Speed up processing and implementing the Village land title and extension applications that communities have submitted to date, to ensure their land security until a collective Patamona and Makushi territory is legally recognised by the State of Guyana;
8. Build capacity of government officials to understand indigenous peoples' land rights, and related standards like FPIC;
9. Review and revise Guyana national park policies to adopt a human rights-based approach, including through consultation and engagement with Patamona Villages affected by Kaieteur National Park. The communities do not recognise the extended boundaries of the Kaieteur National Park and have called for a reduction to the 1929 boundaries or for the boundaries to be cancelled altogether;
10. Recognise and strengthen the North Pakaraimas District Council (NPDC) by gazetting this body and starting formal discussions on land rights matters and proposals from indigenous communities to improve their tenure security;
11. Recognise and support the NPDC's right to self-determination in developing their indigenous peoples' action plan for the region.

The Villages and communities call on their Village Councils (VC) and the National Toshao Council (NTC) to take unified positions and proactive approaches to ensure that their land and resource rights are addressed in the national policy agenda.

LTA Results at a glance: Region 8, 2015-2017

15 Villages with LAND TITLE

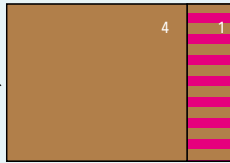


0 Villages say their title includes all of their customary lands

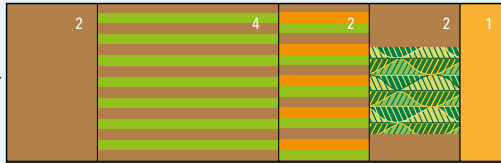


1 Village says it was (maybe) consulted about its title

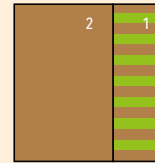
5 of 15 titled Villages have resource conflicts with outsiders within their titled lands



11 of 15 titled Villages have resource conflicts with outsiders on their customary lands



3 Communities with NO LAND TITLE



All 3 untitled communities have resource conflicts with outsiders on their customary lands

14 Village titles are demarcated

12 incorrectly demarcated boundaries

5 Villages applied for land title extension

4 Responses from Government

By 2017 the government had granted only 1/2 of one extension

7 of 15 Villages in the Amerindian Land Titling project

7 concerned about their land tenure security

8 Villages NOT in the Amerindian Land Titling project

6 concerned about their land tenure security

PART I

METHODS, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND LAND POLICIES PAST AND PRESENT

INA PATA,
KO'MANĠNÀTOK
YESELU

1 HOW THE LAND TENURE ASSESSMENT WAS DONE

At the General Assembly of the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA) in May 2011, participants from 66 Villages called on the APA to make land rights issues in Amerindian communities its highest priority. Delegates agreed that the APA should continue to work with Villages on land issues and promote national and international measures to resolve land conflicts and secure land and territorial rights. They also asked the APA to make sure that official projects and programmes aimed at indigenous peoples are in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and related human rights instruments ratified by Guyana. All of these recommendations were reiterated at the APA General Assembly in April 2016.

The APA developed a project for participatory land tenure assessment in Guyana, which began in 2012. The project worked with Amerindian communities in Regions 1 and 2 between 2012 and 2016 and published a comprehensive report on their land tenure situation in December 2016. During 2015 and 2016 the project carried out fieldwork in Region 8. Members of the North Pakaraima District Council (NPDC) reviewed a draft of the Region 8 LTA report at the end of 2017 prior to publication.

The project will continue in Regions 7 and 9 during 2018 and 2019.

Purpose of the study

The Land Tenure Assessment (LTA) collected baseline information on the situation of indigenous peoples' land and territorial rights in Guyana for use by Amerindian Villages, Village Councils, Amerindian District Councils, Regional Toshias Councils, local and national indigenous peoples'

Group discussion in Kurukabaru Village.

Photo: APA



organisations, indigenous NGOs and policy makers. The main purpose is to help indigenous peoples and their representative organisations protect their rights to their lands, territories and resources. The LTA collected information through participatory fieldwork and discussions with community members. This also increased community awareness about their collective rights to land, and informed villages and inter-village bodies about the national and international laws and policies affecting their land security.

Communities can use the land tenure information in Part II in their interactions with national policy processes including 'green economy' initiatives such as the Green State Development Strategy (GSDS), (previously the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS)), REDD+ and the EU-Guyana FLEGT-VPA process. The information gathered by the project is also intended to help communities when they are talking to agencies such as the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs (MIPA), the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC), the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC), the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC), the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Office of Climate Change and the National Protected Areas Secretariat.

Team training and field methods

Villages and local APA units nominated eight team members to join the first land tenure research team. These people were trained in participatory action research methods over four days in Georgetown in February 2012. Experience gained during the extensive research for report on Regions 1 and 2 indicated that it would be useful for the original researchers to continue in Region 8 and bring on a set of new persons from this region who had in-depth knowledge about the area. New and old team members met in Kato (Region 8) in October 2015 to evaluate methods used so far, including the project's questionnaire on land tenure, and to agree on methodology for the upcoming work. The tools used for data collection were modified; each team



Late evening work in Maicobie Village.

Methodology workshop in Georgetown.

Photos: APA

was equipped with small laptops with an off-line Kobo toolbox browser form to record information gathered, and smart phones for geo-referencing photos and recording videos. Following testing of the off-line browser form in several villages in 2015, a further meeting in Georgetown in July 2016 identified technical problems and it was agreed to go back to pen and paper notes for the Region 8 field work. The smart phones were still considered a very useful tool.

The field data, including sound files, photographs of documents and sketch maps, typed field notes, testimonies and Village Input Forms were uploaded to APA's server, and to a password-protected cloud database.

Validation and sharing of information collected

In each community visited, the team collected information by questionnaire and organised a validation meeting with the residents before they left, to check that the information was correct. Team members re-visited several villages where further clarification was needed. Further information could not be obtained from some villages because residents did not have it to hand, could not remember exactly what happened or official documents (including land title documents) were missing from the Village Council records. In some of these cases the authors requested information from the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs and Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission, but received no response despite numerous calls and emails.

In April and May 2017 APA sent the summary reports, synthesised from the data collected, back to the respective villages so they could point out any mistakes or add additional information. The topography of Region 8 hinders communication between villages and the APA in Georgetown, and in some cases it was very difficult to contact the communities about the summary reports.

The research team has made every effort to check and confirm the information presented in this report. Where information was not available or unclear this is recorded in the summary for each village or community (Part II, Annex II). Any remaining errors or omissions in this report are unintentional and are the sole responsibility of the authors and contributors to this publication.

What the study covers







The study covers 22 villages and settlements in the Potaro-Siparuni region in west-central Guyana, often referred to as Region 8. These include all the titled Villages in the Region, as well as their satellites (15 titled Villages and four settlements located within them), and three communities that do not have a title – Maikwak, El Paso and Moruwa.³ The research team also visited two settlements that do not have separate summary reports in this report: Orinduik and Wailang. People once lived in Orinduik and it was an area much used also by distant villages for collecting uling, a river weed used as salt in cooking. Currently only one person lives there. A family has lived at Wailang for decades, but as this area is also visited and used by surrounding communities, the data from Wailang has been included in the summary report for Princeville.

Eighteen of the villages and settlements visited were mainly Patamona and four mainly Makushi. Most of them are located in the Pakaraima Mountains, while some are in the lowlands to the east of the mountains, closer to Essequibo River (see Map 1). Many villages, even those located in the mountains, consider their territory to extend far into the lowland areas around Siparuni, Tipuru, Takatu and Burro-Burro. The research teams made an effort to also visit some of these areas, which are vital for the customary resource use of the communities.

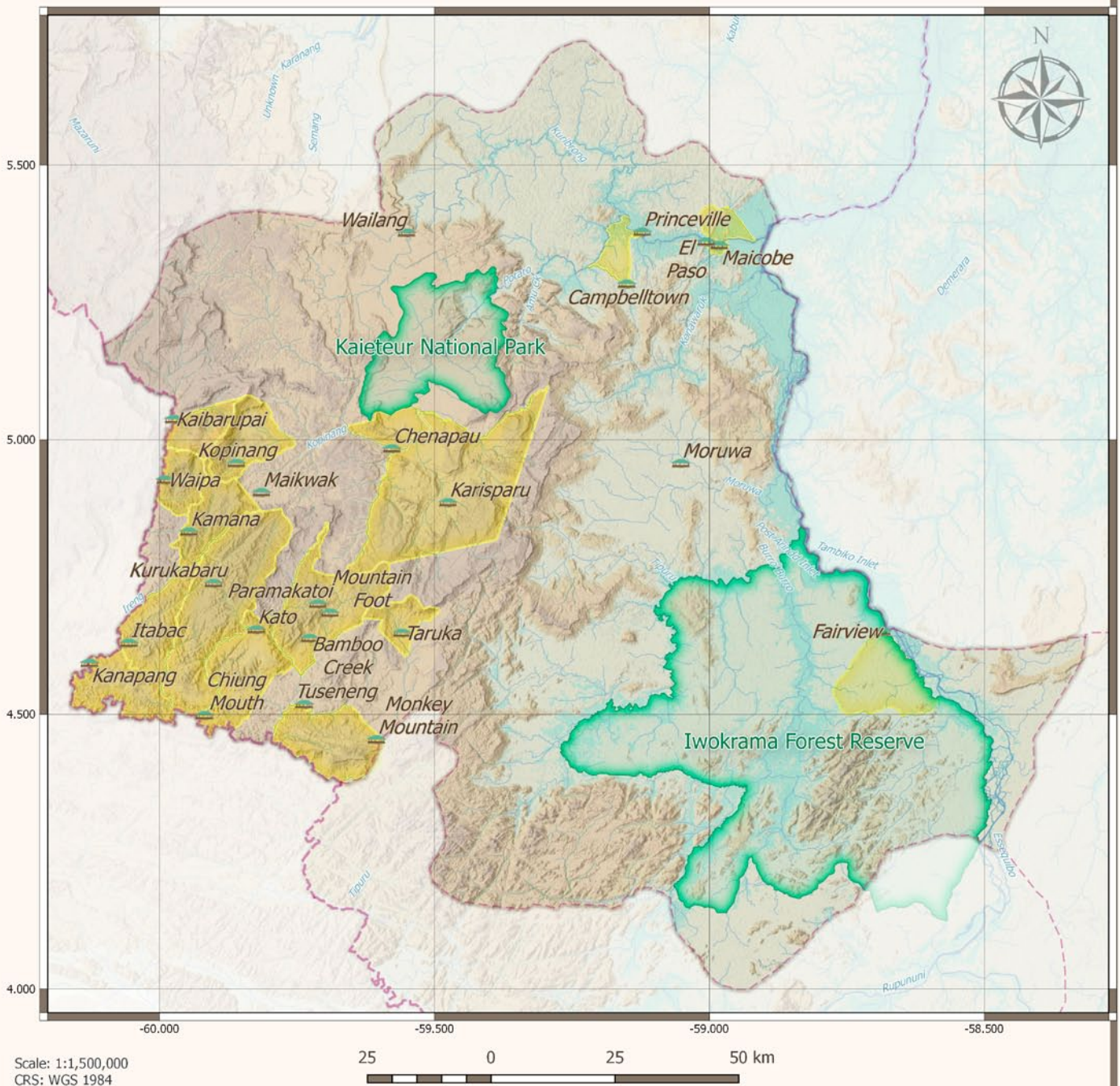
3 The only community without title not covered in the report is Tusenen. The research team did visit this community, but the Village Input Form was lost when it was uploaded from the field computer to the online cloud. Attempts to retrieve the form from the hosts of the cloud service (Kobo toolbox), were unfortunately not successful.

Map 1: Indigenous Peoples' Settlements and Titled Villages, Region 8, Guyana

Legend

-  Village visited in LTA study
-  River
-  Amerindian Title
-  Country Border
-  Reserved Land
-  Region Boundary

Disclaimer: Data sources include Guyana GIM (<http://data.gim.gov.gy/>), Nasa SRTM, Openstreetmap, Google Earth and handheld GPS. This map is for indicative purposes only. Information shown does not purport to be validated and correct information on the title boundaries of titled Amerindian Villages. GIM is known to be inaccurate or incomplete. The map does not show untitled customary lands nor the requested extension areas of communities and Villages.





Researchers and community members plotting resource use on maps.



Researchers in Kato Village before setting off to different villages.

Training researchers to use laptop and smart phones.

Late night data entry.



LTA team preparing travel plans.

Photos: APA



2 HISTORY OF HOW INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE USED AND OCCUPIED THEIR LANDS

2.1 PREHISTORY

Archaeological research in Guyana has mainly focused on the North West District and the Demerara River area.⁴ In these areas, numerous shell mounds, tools and pottery indicate human occupation from as early as 7,000 years ago. Much less is known about the prehistory of the more remote parts of the interior of the country. However, there are some significant archaeological findings in the areas *around* the North Pakaraima Mountains where the Patamona and Makushi villages of this study are located today.

Guyanese archaeologist Dennis Williams suggested that Meso-Indian and Archaic hunter-gatherers lived in the Rupununi savannah around 7,500 years ago and connected them with projectile points (e.g. spear heads, arrow heads), chipped stone tools and petroglyphs (rock inscriptions).⁵ These people seem to have been distinct from those occupying the Aruku Hills and Barima River in the North West around the same time. There are indications that Paleo-Indians⁶ could have occupied Guyana even earlier, based on the finding of five bi-facial (worked on both sides) projectile points. Two of these projectile points were near the Barima River in the north, one near the Essequibo River and two near the Ireng River close to the northern part of the Rupununi savannah.⁷ Mark Plew points out that these projectiles are almost identical to Paleo-Indian tools found at several locations in the Amazon, such as at Pedra Pintada on the lower Amazon, which are dated to about 10,000-11,000 years ago.⁸

Reports of stone alignments to the east of Ireng River suggest Archaic⁹ occupation of that area.¹⁰ Similar stone alignments have also been reported in the Annai area, in the lowlands to the east of the North Pakaraimas. Archaeological findings from the Archaic period also include tools that show a varied use of the forest, such as axes and adzes, as well as artificial depressions in the ground that were likely used to process plants (e.g. for fish poisoning) and to sharpen the tools. Williams reports many such groundstone features on the Siparuni, Burro-Burro and Essequibo Rivers (Table 1).

4 Osgood, C. (1946) *British Guyana Archaeology to 1945*, New Haven: Yale University Press; Plew, M. (2005) *The Archaeology of Iwokrama and the North Rupununi*, in Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Vol 154 at 9. See also summary in APA and FPP (2016) *Our Land, Our Life: A Participatory Assessment of the Land Tenure Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Guyana, report for Region 1 and Region 2*, Georgetown. <http://www.forestpeoples.org/sites/fpp/files/publication/2016/12/lta-study.pdf>

5 Williams, D. (1985) *Ancient Guyana*. Ministry of Culture, Georgetown.

6 Paleo-Indian is a term used for the first people to cross the Bering Strait into North America, who went on to populate the American continent. The Paleo-Indian period was between 11,500 and 7,000 years ago. See Plew, M. (2005) *The Archaeology of Iwokrama and the North Rupununi*, in Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Vol 154 at 16.

7 Plew, M. (2005) *The Archaeology of Iwokrama and the North Rupununi*, in Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Vol 154 at 10-12

8 Lynch, T. E. (1998) *The Paleoindian and Archaic stages in South America: zones of continuity and zones of segregation*. In: M.G. Plew (ed.), *Explorations in American archaeology: essays in honor of Wesley R. Hurt*. University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland; Plew, M. (2017) Personal communication

9 Between 7,000 and 3,500 years ago

10 Plew, M. (2005) *The Archaeology of Iwokrama and the North Rupununi*, in Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Vol 154 at 13; Barrington Brown makes reference to a row of small white quartz rocks in a row between Cara-Cara and Ireng in (1876) *Canoe and Camp Life in British Guiana*, London: Edward Stanford at 189.

Table 1: Location of basin depressions and sharpening grooves¹¹

| River | Sites | Basin depressions | Sharpening grooves |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Essequibo | Reserve Base Camp | 4 | -- |
| | Cuneiform rock | 136 (?) | -- |
| Siparuni | Cuneiform rock | 2 | -- |
| | Electric Eel | 18 | 13 |
| | Tapir rock | 33 | 1 |
| | Little 'S' Falls | 12 (?) | -- |
| | Big 'S' Falls | 853 | 129 |
| | Trinity rock | 3 | -- |
| | Pakatan | 3 | -- |
| Burro-Burro | Monkey Falls | 24 | -- |
| | Black rock | 22 | 2 |
| | Unnamed rock | 8 | 1 |
| | Dukali Falls | 3 | -- |

Different styles of petroglyphs¹² dating from this period, in geometric, human and animal-shaped designs as well as more stylised shapes, are found in the same areas as the groundstone features i.e. close to the Siparuni, Burro-Burro and Essequibo Rivers, as well as the Takatu River. It is not clear whether these different styles are associated with different cultures, ethnic groups and time periods, since most rock inscriptions are not possible to date.¹³ At Burro-Burro River, close to the Inscription Rock (decorated with enumerative petroglyphs) thousands of pieces of quartz indicate that there was a chipping station (a place where people made stone tools).

Seven sites with pottery on the Essequibo and Siparuni Rivers, within the Iwokrama forest, also indicate occupation during the horticultural period.¹⁴ One of the areas excavated by Williams in the 1990s, Errol's Landing close to Kurupukari Falls, revealed 1,627 broken pieces of decorated and undecorated pottery, the oldest dating back about 2,080 years.¹⁵

In summary, although a direct link between pre-historic and present-day populations cannot be proven, there is evidence of very long-standing occupation and use in the areas adjoining the places where the North Pakaraima Patamona and Makushi peoples live today. The lands around the rivers of Siparuni, Tipuru, Takatu, Essequibo and Burro-Burro are considered by many of the villages to be their key hunting and fishing and sometimes farming grounds¹⁶ although the settlements are sited elsewhere. Several villages are indeed located on the Ireng River.¹⁷ The lack of consistent evidence of pre-historic occupation throughout the study area is likely to be due to the lack of systematic excavations and surveys rather than absence of people living there and using the land.¹⁸ Even if not dated, the artefacts frequently discovered by today's inhabitants such as stone axes, clay and stone pots, stone figures and arrow heads suggest a history of people in the region. During this study, such findings were reported in Campbelltown, Princeville, Maicobie, Kurukabaru, Siparuni, Moruwa, Kato, Kaibarupai, Karisparu, Kopinang, Kanapang, Monkey Mountain and Waipa. Villages also reported rock carvings close to Monkey Mountain, Kaibarupai, and in the Siparuni area, which many villages use today.

11 Plew, M. (2005) *The Archaeology of Iwokrama and the North Rupununi*, in *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*, Vol 154 at 20; Williams, D. (1996) *Iwokrama: Archaeological Studies*. The Commonwealth and Government of Guyana Rain Forest Programme. Unpublished Manuscript.

12 Dennis Williams and Mark Plew refer to enumerative, fish-trap and cuneiform styles.

13 Plew, M. (2005) *The Archaeology of Iwokrama and the North Rupununi*, in *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*, Vol 154 at 17

14 Between 3,500 years ago and early 18th century

15 Williams, D. (1996) *Iwokrama: Archaeological Studies*. The Commonwealth and Government of Guyana Rain Forest Programme. Unpublished Manuscript referenced in Plew, M. (2005) *The Archaeology of Iwokrama and the North Rupununi*, in *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*, Vol 154

16 E.g. Kurukabaru, Campbelltown, Taruka, Kato, Monkey Mountain, Paramakatoi, Bamboo Creek, Mountain Foot, Karisparu, Moruwa, El Paso and Maibobie

17 Kanapang, Itabac, Waipa and Kaibarupai

18 Plew, M. (2017) Personal communication

2.2 HISTORICAL RECORDS OF LAND OCCUPATION AND USE

The remoteness and challenging topography of the North Pakaraima Mountains meant that it took some time from the first arrival of Europeans on the coast in the first half of the 16th century for explorers, traders and missionaries to reach the area.

After the Dutch established their first permanent settlement on the Essequibo, Fort Kyk-Over-Al¹⁹ in 1616, they gradually moved further up the river and set up a number of trading posts. Post Arinda was established close to the mouth of Potaro River in 1734 before it was moved to a location four miles upstream from the mouth of the Siparuni River and then, in the late 1760s, to the mouth of the Rupununi River. The Siparuni and Potaro Rivers lead into the heart of the area occupied today by the Patamona and Makushi settlements of this study and from trading post reports one can infer the historical presence of people up those rivers.²⁰ However, such reports do not provide a complete picture of the surrounding populations as the Dutch apparently only ventured up the Siparuni, not the Potaro.

After the Dutch colonies of Essequibo, Berbice and Demerara were passed to the British in 1803 (confirmed by the Treaty of London of 1814) the first British explorers – like the Dutch – relied on the main waterways such as the Essequibo and Demerara Rivers and eventually the Mazaruni River to gain entry to the interior. Robert Schomburgk was the first to explore the main rivers for the British. He travelled up the Essequibo in 1835-36 but he did not reach the Potaro-Siparuni region.²¹ It appears that Europeans did not visit the North Pakaraima Mountains until the late 1800s when Charles Barrington Brown was one of the first to explore this range. In 1870 he travelled up the Siparuni and across to the Potaro River before descending it.²² The naturalist Carl Ferdinand Appun went up the Potaro River to the Kaieteur Falls shortly afterwards, in 1872.²³ Before these visits, the colonialists made reference to local people who came to trade with them, to settle around missions or to offer their services as guides. It is likely that some of these people came from the mountains or areas close by. Below is a brief review of colonial sources.²⁴

2.2.1 Eighteenth century

The Patamona

The Dutch reported on how the Akawaio settled in great numbers around Post Arinda, at its various locations, but did not mention the Patamona. In fact the Patamona are not clearly mentioned in colonial writings until 1825 (see below). As the Europeans didn't record migration of the Patamona into the area at any later stage either, some later writers suggest that the Patamona are closely related to the Akawaio and were referred to as such by early Europeans.²⁵ This is supported by later explorers such as Barrington Brown and Im Thurn who refer to the Patamona as a 'branch' and a 'sub-tribe' of the Akawaio.²⁶ Some of the Akawaio that settled around Port Arinda could therefore be the foreparents of those who live in and use the area today and who are referred to as Patamona. However, although the Akawaio and Patamona are both Kapong groups with affiliated languages, they confirm that they consider themselves to be distinct peoples with different geographic territories.

19 Various spellings exist for the name of this fort, including 'Kijkoveral' and 'Kykoveral'.

20 Colson, A.B. (1971) *Hallelujah among the Patamona Indians in Antropologica*, No 28 at 26

21 Schomburgk, R.H. (1836) *Report of an Expedition into the Interior of British Guyana in 1835-6* in *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. VI

22 Barrington Brown, C. (1876) *Canoe and Camp Life in British Guiana*, London: Edward Stanford, chapter VIII

23 Appun, C.F. (1872) excerpts from his diary in the *British Guiana Royal Gazette*, 25th and 30th July and 1st, 3rd and 6th August 1872, Georgetown

24 This review does not claim to provide an exhaustive account of the people in and around the North Pakaraimas at the time of European arrival and exploration.

25 Gibson, E. and Gibson, K. (1979) *An Ethnohistory of Amerindians in Guyana* in *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 23, No. 2. Duke University Press at 169; Colson, A.B. (1973) *Inter-tribal trade in the Guiana highlands* in *Antropologica* No 34, Venezuela at 10

26 See Barrington Brown, C. (1876) *Canoe and Camp Life in British Guiana*, London: Edward Stanford at 179. See also Steward, J.H. (1946-1959) *Handbook of South American Indians*, Vol 3 at 810; and Im Thurn, E.F. (1883) *Among the Indians of Guiana*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co at 163

Possible evidence that a branch of the group identified as 'Akawaio' lived up the Siparuni River is found in a Dutch Government Journal from 1778 and Proceedings of the Court of Policy in Essequibo from the same year.²⁷ The people were referred to as Arenakotte, a 'sort of Akuway nation'.²⁸ The first document from Port Arinda reads:

Further the Postholder has shown me three slave children, viz., one boy of the Macoesje nation, and two little girls who are of the Arenakotte nation, which last dwell above in Caroeni, a branch of the Oronoque, there being still other Arenakottes who dwell in Ciperoeni above the Post, and do business under the whites.²⁹

Audrey Butt Colson suggests that the Arenakottes referred to as living in the Siparuni 'are probably the Eremagok, or Eremagoto. The people dwelling (kok, gok, koto, goto) on the Ireng (Eren) River'.³⁰ As she points out, the headwaters of the Siparuni, where the Arenakotte are said to live, 'approach the middle reaches of the Ireng, where the Patamona live today'.³¹

The first instance of a possible reference to the Patamona is found in two Venezuelan Capuchin mission documents from 1770 and 1772. The first document lists nations that the missionaries knew of, but had not yet been in contact with, including 'Parabonas'.³² The second document includes reference to 'Parabenas', which is likely to be an alternative spelling of the same name.

The Makushi

William C. Farabee describes the Dutch traders as the 'first visitors to Macusi country' when travelling up the Essequibo River 'to the plains south of the Pakaraima Mountains early in the eighteenth century'.³³ At that time, the Makushi were observed to mainly occupy areas north of the Kanuku Mountains and Takatu River. The Dutch did indeed report on Makushi people visiting their posts on the Essequibo and encounters with them in the surrounding areas. In a report from October 1753, the Director-General, Essequibo, to the West India Company explains how three inhabitants of his post who had gone up the Essequibo to establish trade with the Portuguese along the Amazon had been killed 'by the nation called Mapissanoë'. He continues that he is planning a counter-attack on the people responsible with the help of the Caribs and notes that 'this will take place much more easily because they have also murdered some Caribs and Macusis, who are their nearest neighbours'.³⁴ In 1769 Storm van's Gravesande³⁵ also mentioned Makushi living further upstream from Post Arinda (when it was located on the Rupununi mouth) along what he referred to as the Maho River. The Maho is likely to be what is called the Ireng River today.³⁶ In his book 'Tribes of the Guianas' (1945), John Gillin records that there were Makushi present on both sides of the Essequibo River by 1778. He also notes Portuguese reports of Makushi around the Ireng River in 1787.³⁷

The above summary suggests that the Makushi were present in the low-lying areas bordering the Pakaraima Mountains to the south and east. Makushi people may however have lived in the mountains as well. Nicholas Horstmann, who was sent by the Dutch to explore the Essequibo in 1739, mentioned a group called the Paraviang living in the Pakaraima Mountains. The Makushi themselves later identified them as a branch of their people.³⁸

27 Colson, A.B. (1971) *Hallelujah among the Patamona Indians* in *Antropologica*, No 28 at 26-27

28 Ibid

29 Ibid

30 Colson, A.B. (2017) personal communication; Colson A.B. (1971) *Hallelujah among the Patamona Indians* in *Antropologica*, No 28 at 27

31 Ibid

32 Buenaventura de Carrocera (1979) *Mision de los Capuchinos en Guyana, Volume II, Documentos (1760-1785)*, Biblioteca de la Academia Nacional de la Historia, Vol 140, Caracas at 123-4 and 164

33 Farabee, W. C. (1924) *The Central Caribs: Anthropological Publications Vol. X*, Philadelphia: Published by the University Museum at 13

34 Foreign office (1898) *British Guiana Boundary. Arbitration with the United States of Venezuela. Appendix to the case on behalf of the government of Her Britannic Majesty*, vol. 2 (1724-1763) London: Harrison and sons at 88-89

35 High ranking official of the Dutch West India Company

36 Harris, C.A. & de Villiers, J.A.J. (1911) *Storm Van's Gravesande. The Rise of British Guiana, Vol.II*, London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society at 616. Also see map on page 166 showing the location on the Maho river.

37 Gillin, J. (1945) 'Tribes of the Guianas' in *Handbook of South American Indians* at 808

38 See Myers, I. (1993) *The Makushi of the Guiana - Brazilian Frontiers in 1944: A study of Culture Contact*, in *Antropologica* No 80 at 13



Stone axe found on community lands, Waipa.

Photo: APA

The literature also suggests that groups of Makushi were fleeing into mountainous and forested areas to escape from colonialist policies. The Dutch, for example, had declared those indigenous groups that they were in contact with (Arawak, Carib, Warrau and Akawaio) to be exempt from slavery. These groups were instead tasked to capture members of other groups and bring them to the Dutch. According to Ryan Schacht, the Makushi retreated into remote areas of the North Pakaraimas as a result.³⁹ Reports also exist of Portuguese colonial policies of displacement against the Makushi in Brazil that led them to flee their traditional lands.⁴⁰ Although these sources don't specify where the Makushi fled to, the Pakaraimas would have been a suitable location to seek safety. The Amerindian Lands Commission report (1969) also suggests that the Makushi in the North Pakaraimas at the time of the Commission's work were 'accepted by the Patamona as refugees.'⁴¹

2.2.2 Nineteenth and twentieth centuries

The Patamona

In the 19th century, the first mention of the Patamona in British Guiana appears to be in 1825 by William Hillhouse, the Quarter-Master General of Indians. He wrote about three tribes, one of them the Paramuni, that were 'mountaineers' and lived so remotely that no white man had ever met them. He said that the only information about them came from the Akawaio, who described them as 'warlike and ferocious':

[...] no European has ventured yet beyond their boundary; and even the accounts given of them by the fathers of the missions, are equally founded on report alone.⁴²

39 Schacht, R. (2013) *Cassava and the Makushi: A Shared History of Resiliency and Transformation* in *Food and Identity in the Caribbean*, ed. H. Garth, London: Bloomsbury

40 Olson, J. S. (1946) *The Indians of Central and South America: An Ethnohistorical Dictionary*, New York: Greenwood Press at 443

41 ALC (1969) *Report by the Amerindian Lands Commission*, August 1969, Georgetown at 65

42 Hillhouse, W. (1825) *Indian Notices* at 37. This was privately printed and not published while waiting for the completion of the full publication.

In 1826 the Protector of Indians in the Essequibo, George Bagot, wrote to Lieutenant-Governor Sir B. D'Urban about the warfare between the 'Carbinee and Paramona tribes' as if the British had known about this warfare for some time:

I have great pleasure in having the honour to acquaint your Excellency that the murderous warfare which has been for some time back carried on between the Carbinee and Paramona tribes of the Akawaye nations of Indians, in the Mazerony river, has been put an end [...]

In conformity with the arrangement made by Mr. Wishropp, the Chiefs of both parties, with several of their followers, arrived at my residence on the 11th instant, and I have the additional satisfaction to lay before your Excellency a copy of a Treaty of Peace and Alliance which has been entered into and ratified by the Chiefs, with the unanimous consent and concurrence of their followers, to whom it has been previously and very fully explained.

I have likewise the gratification of stating, for your Excellency's information, that the visit of those Chiefs has afforded me the means of having the Paramona woman and child who were found in a state of slavery at the residence of Mr. Hillhouse (as reported to your Excellency some time since) conveyed back to their family [...].⁴³

Different authors writing after Hillhouse and Bagot referred to the people who lived in the area around Potaro as either Patamona or Akawaio.

In several of his travel accounts of British Guiana between 1836 and 1850, Schomburgk fails to mention the Patamona, but writes about Akawaios on the Demerara, Mazaruni and Potaro Rivers.⁴⁴ Similarly, George Bennet, writing in 1866, does not name the Patamona in his list of original inhabitants of the territory that had become British Guyana. Instead, he refers to the people living in the Potaro as Akawaio: 'The Acawais or Waccawaios inhabit the Upper Demerara, the Mazaruni, and Potaro and amount probably to six hundred.'⁴⁵ Appun, in his journey up the Essequibo and Potaro to Kaieteur Falls in 1872, describes the people he meets along the Potaro as Akawaio. He even refers to the settlements very close to the Falls itself, in the heart of what today is the land of the Patamona, as Akawaio.⁴⁶ Charles Dance in 1881 also mentions only the Akawaio in his description of a journey up the Potaro and Kuribrong Rivers.⁴⁷

However, in the meantime, Reverend Brett referred to the tribes listed by Mr. M'Clintock⁴⁸ as living by or close to the Mazaruni River and its tributaries east of Roraima as 'the Quatimko; Yaramona; Etoeko; Passonko; Komarani; Koukokinko; and Skamana' (emphasis added).⁴⁹ He stated that most of them were likely to be subdivisions of the Kapong with slightly different dialects. Kapong means 'sky people' or 'the high-up people' and is the designation that both Akawaio and Patamona use to describe themselves today.⁵⁰

A few years later, Brett made the connection between the Akawaio and the Patamona clearer. In a new mission on the Demerara River at Muritaro there was a class of 150 people of which:

[...] there were but thirty Acawaios. The others belonged to the Paramuna branch of that race, who speak that tongue with little difference, and to the Arecuna and Macusi nations, whose dialects vary considerably.⁵¹

43 Foreign Office (1898) *British Guiana Boundary. Arbitration with the United States of Venezuela. Appendix to the case on behalf of the Government of her Britannic Majesty*, Volume VI (1815-1892) London: Harrison and Sons at 38

44 See map in Schomburgk (1836) *Report of an Expedition into the Interior of British Guyana in 1835-6* in *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. VI at 224; and Schomburgk (1848) *Travels in British Guiana 1840-1844*, Vol. II at 363

45 Bennet, G. (1866) *An illustrated history of British Guiana at 86*

46 Appun, C.F. (1872) from his diary in the *British Guiana Royal Gazette*, 25th and 30th July and 1st, 3rd and 6th August 1872, Georgetown

47 See Dance, C. (1881) *Chapters from a Guianese Logbook*, Georgetown: The Royal Gazette Establishment at 231 and 247

48 Postholder and Superintendent of Rivers and Creeks in various locations in British Guiana during the middle of the 19th century – also referred to as a protector of the Indians. See Menezes, M. N. (1977) *British Policy towards the Amerindians in British Guiana 1803-1873*, Oxford: Clarendon Press

49 Brett, W.H. (1868) *The Indian Tribes of Guiana: Their condition and habits*, London: Bell and Daldy at 280

50 Colson, A. B. (2009) *Naming. Identity and structure: The Pemon* in *Antropologica*, Vol III, No. 111-112

51 Brett, W.H. (1873) *Mission Work among the Indian Tribes in the Forest of Guiana*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge at 225

During his journey up the Burro-Burro River (a tributary of the Siparuni) in 1870, Barrington Brown was told by his Makushi guide 'that some Kanaimas of the Partamona tribe, a branch of the Ackawoise, lived far up it, who only came out to kill or *kanaima* members of the other tribes.⁵² He subsequently went up the Siparuni and walked overland to Potaro passing Echilebar River and encountering a few Makushi villages. All the villages he describes subsequently en route to Potaro, and down that river to Kaieteur Falls, were Patamona. With the Patamonas as guides, he experienced many of their traditions, from the drinking of *casserie* and *paiworie* to the collection of frog eggs.⁵³ Barrington Brown is considered to be the European who 'discovered' the Kaieteur Falls and he wrote down the history of the Falls as it was told to him by his guides:

'Once upon a time', there was a large village above the fall, situated on the little savanna, amongst the inhabitants of which was an old Indian, who had arrived at that period of human existence, when his life had become a burden to himself and a trouble to his relatives. Amongst other duties, there devolved upon his near relations the tedious one of extracting the jiggers from his toes, which there accumulated day by day. These duties becoming irksome at last, it was arranged that the old man should be assisted on his way to his long home, that spirit land lying two days' journey beyond the setting sun. He was accordingly transferred, with his pegall of worldly goods, from his house to a woodskin on the river above the head of the great fall, and launched forth upon the stream. The silent flood bore him to its brink, where the rushing waters received him in their deadly grasp, bearing his enfeebled body down to its watery grave in the basin below. Not long after, strange to relate, his woodskin appeared in the form of a pointed rock, which to this day is seen not far from our lower barometer station; while on the sloping mass of talus to the west of the basin, a huge square rock is said to be his petrified pegall or canister. Thus has the fall been named Kaieteur, in memory of the victim of this tragic event.⁵⁴

Barrington Brown's references to Patamona villages around the upper Potaro are supported by C. W. Anderson in relation to the demarcation of the Guyana-Brazil border:

The country around Roraima is inhabited by the Aricunas....In the Kukui valley and country around the Kotinga, Siracuna and Patamonas dwell.... Between the upper Potaro and upper Ireng Akawaios, Patamonas, Encacos and Maiyankong Indians are found and their villages extend as far down as the Echilebar. These tribes are closely related and have become very intermixed.⁵⁵

Finally, historic accounts of the Ingarikó (Inkariko', Ingarigo', Inkarikok) may also refer to the foreparents of the present-day Patamona in the area of this study. Theodor Koch-Grünberg, a German ethnologist and explorer travelling in north-Brazil and Venezuela in 1911-13, described the Ingarikó as people dwelling to the northeast of Roraima.⁵⁶ According to Colson, the term is used by Makushi in Brazil to describe their Akawaio and Patamona (Kapon) neighbours to the east and north in the Pakaraima Mountains and Ireng valley. One meaning of the term is 'the people from the forested heights', and the fact that it is used mainly in Brazil by the people (Makushi) living on the low-lying grasslands around the headwaters of Rio Branco, suggests that the forested heights referred to are the Pakaraimas and that this is where the designated people belong.⁵⁷ Today, Patamona living in Brazil often identify as Ingarikó.⁵⁸

52 Barrington Brown, C. (1876) *Canoe and Camp Life in British Guiana*, London: Edward Stanford at 179

53 Ibid, chapter VIII

54 Barrington Brown, C. (1876) *Canoe and Camp Life in British Guiana*, London: Edward Stanford at 214-215. This legend is confirmed by current inhabitants of Chenapou village.

55 Colson, A.B. (2009) *Land. Its occupation, management, use and conceptualization: the case of the Akawaio and Arekuna of the Upper Mazaruni District, Guyana*. Panborough, Near Wells, UK: Last Refuge at 70

56 Koch-Grünberg, T. (1923) *Vom Roraima zum Orinoco: Ergebnisse einer Reise in Nordbrasilien und Venezuela in den Jahren 1911-1913*, Stuttgart: Verlag Stecker und Schroeder at 12

57 Colson, A.B. (2009) *Land. Its occupation, management, use and conceptualization: the case of the Akawaio and Arekuna of the Upper Mazaruni District, Guyana*. Panborough, Near Wells, UK: Last Refuge at 83-84

58 Instituto Socioambiental (2017) *Ingarikó*, <https://pib.socioambiental.org/pt/povo/ingariko/1858> [last accessed 14th August 2017]



Stone mortar found in Princeville. Photo: APA

The Makushi

By the middle of the 19th century the presence of Makushi in the Pakaraima Mountains was clearly noted. In 'Descriptions of British Guiana', Schomburgk writes 'The Macusis occupy the open country or savannahs of Rupununi, Parima and the mountain chains Pacaraima and Canuku'.⁵⁹ Barrington Brown, who travelled extensively in the interior of British Guiana during the 1870s, records passing and visiting many Makushi villages on his journeys up the Essequibo, Burro-Burro and Siparuni. Many villages were in the lowlands close to the foot of the Pakaraimas (such as Surama and Annai, still known today), but he encountered other settlements in the mountains, such as on his overland trek between Siparuni and Potaro.⁶⁰

Summary

The earliest sources do not mention the Patamona by this name, or record them living in the Pakaraima mountains, but this is more likely to be due to lack of exploration than absence of Patamona in the area at the time of European arrival. It is also possible that the relations between different groups and sub-groups and the names they gave themselves and each other were not properly

understood, such that the foreparents of the Patamona were not identified as a distinct group until quite late on. That said, there are indeed close ties between today's Akawaio and Patamona families and communities, and ways of distinguishing themselves as different groups may have developed only relatively recently. Both Akawaio and Patamona refer to themselves as 'Kapon' and their languages and general culture are very similar.⁶¹

Colson notes that the Kapon and Pemon both have intricate naming practices in which groups and sub-sets of groups may use specific names for themselves while their neighbours call them by different names. Some of these are related to the type of environment in which they live (e.g. forest or savannah) and others refer to their geographic location in the river systems (e.g. people from the Ireng River are called Eremagok). This study found that the Patamona have naming practices similar to those recorded by Colson amongst the Akawaio and the Pemon,⁶² for example, Petalakuk or Petalegok for Potaro River people; people from Arnik Creek are Anekèkuk; and people dwelling along the Ireng River are Ilenmèkuk or Eremagok.

As the Kapon in the Potaro and Ireng area also use distinct names for people living along different rivers, the Arenakotte people of the Siparuni River close to the Ireng River (mentioned by the Dutch

59 Schomburgk, R. (1840) *A Description of British Guiana, geographical and statistical*, London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co at 50.

60 Barrington Brown, C. (1876) *Canoe and Camp Life in British Guiana*, London: Edward Stanford at 192-194

61 Colson, A.B. (1973) *Inter-tribal trade in the Guiana highlands* in *Antropologica* No 34, Venezuela at 10

62 See also Colson, A.B. (2009) *Naming, Identity and structure: The Pemon* in *Antropologica* No 111-112



Stone figure at Soury Hill, Princeville.

Photo: APA

in 1778) may indeed have been Kapon and thus the foreparents of the Patamona who use that area today. The term Ingariko, used by the Pemon in the savannahs south of the Pakaraimas to describe their northern neighbours, is also likely to refer to the foreparents of today's Patamona.

As for the Makushi, colonial records confirm their presence in low-lying areas east and south of the Pakaraimas (where most Makushi villages are also found today) and explorers also noted Makushi occupation of the mountains themselves. Why and exactly when Makushi people moved into the mountains is not clear, but historical sources suggest that colonial policies could have been a factor. As mentioned above, the Amerindian Lands Commission were under the impression in the 1960s that the North Pakaraimas were mainly Patamona territory, but that there were pockets of Makushi who were accepted as 'refugees'.⁶³

⁶³ ALC (1969) *Report by the Amerindian Lands Commission*, August 1969, Georgetown at 65

3 PAST AND PRESENT GUYANESE LAW AND POLICY DEALING WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' LAND RIGHTS

3.1 INDEPENDENCE AND THE AMERINDIAN LANDS COMMISSION (1966-76)

Elders in several of the communities visited by the Land Tenure Assessment teams recall that their grandparents and parents were very proactive in getting their lands legally recognised and secured. Some recount that old Captains of their villages went to Georgetown to meet with the colonial administration before independence. Many point out that their foreparents were strong in their claims because they stood together and many were working to get a joint territory recognised.

In 1962, the *British Guiana Independence Conference* opened to discuss Guyana's eventual independence from the United Kingdom. Steven Campbell⁶⁴ attended the Conference in London and presented an elaborate petition calling for secure land rights, signed by 26 Captains, to the British authorities.⁶⁵ Through these efforts, Campbell and Amerindian community leaders succeeded in inserting text about Amerindian land rights into the report of the Conference. This report was issued in 1965 and its Annex C provided that:

The Government of British Guyana has decided that the Amerindians should be granted legal ownership or rights of occupancy over areas and reservations or parts thereof where any tribe or community of Amerindians is now ordinarily resident or settled and other legal rights, such as rights of passage, in respect of any other lands where they now by tradition or custom de facto enjoy freedoms and permissions corresponding to rights of that nature. In this context it is intended that legal ownership shall comprise all rights normally attaching to such ownership.⁶⁶

Guyana became an independent country on 26th May 1966. To comply with the legal obligation to regularise Amerindian land rights contained in the Independence Order 1966, an Amerindian Lands Commission (ALC) was set up in 1966 and Commission members were appointed by 1967.⁶⁷ In 1967-68, the Commission visited 15 of the villages and settlements in and around the North Pakaraima (in what is now called Region 8) that are included in this present land tenure assessment.⁶⁸ It held public meetings, carried out investigations and documented the areas that Amerindian communities asked to have legally recognised as their own lands. Unfortunately, the Commission did not consult with Amerindian Villages or obtain their agreement to its final recommended areas before completing its report.

Eleven of the 15 Villages visited by the ALC requested specific areas of land that are recorded in the report. The five communities of Itabac, Kanapang, Kaibarupai, Waipa and Kopinang jointly requested 'the area of land extending from the Ireng River to the Essequibo River and from

64 Champion of Amerindian land rights and first indigenous member of Parliament in 1958

65 <http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2016/01/24/the-pioneering-days-of-stephen-campbell/>

66 Annex C of the report was repeated verbatim in the Amerindian Lands commission Act, Sections 2 and 3 of which were entrenched in Section 17 of the Guyana Independence order 1966 and in Section 20 of the 1980 Guyana constitution. Section 20 of the 1980 Guyana constitution reads: 'notwithstanding anything contained in this constitution, Sections 2 and 3 of the Amerindian Lands commission Act as in force immediately before the appointed day may be amended by Parliament only in the same manner as the provisions specified in Article 164(2)(6) of the constitution.' Section 164(2)(6) requires a two-thirds majority of Parliament and submission of the proposed amendment to a vote by the electorate, prior to signature by the President.

67 Amerindian Lands commission ordinance 1966; this ordinance was re-enacted as the Amerindian Lands commission Act (cap. 59:03).

68 Four of the settlements included in this assessment are currently considered to be satellite communities of villages that the ALC did visit.

Karasabai and Muruwa River (on the south) to Mount Ayangana and the Kuribrong (on the north).⁶⁹ This covers a large area and encompasses several villages other than those that made the request. Individual Villages also requested large tracts of land that, in many cases, overlapped with the requests made by others. Elders in several Villages explained to the research team that this was because they did not think in terms of strict boundaries between Villages and many shared the same farming, hunting, fishing and gathering areas. This is clear in the request made by Kurukabaru, which encompasses large parts of what is referred to as Region 8 today:

From Mt. Ayangana, straight across the mouth of the Potaro River; right down to the mouth of the Burro-Burro River, and straight across through Mt. Tawaileng to the border.⁷⁰

In all cases the Commission recommended smaller areas than those applied for, on the grounds that the areas requested were 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully develop and administer.' In the case of the joint request, it recommended individual titles for each of the communities, fragmenting what they perceived as their common land and creating problems that persist between Villages today (see Section 4). In Paramakatoi one elder told the research team that the request made by his Village to the ALC was not recorded in the ALC report at all.

3.2 LAND TITLES ISSUED UNDER THE 1976 AMERINDIAN ACT

In 1976, the 1951 Amerindian Ordinance was amended by the 1976 Amerindian Act, which kept many of the paternalistic provisions adopted in 1951. The Schedule for the 1976 Act set out titles for 62 Villages to receive freehold title with major limitations attached, based on the ALC Commissioners' recommendations. The Region 8 LTA teams visited 12 of these 62 Villages during 2015-2016. In addition, Maikwak, Campbelltown and Maicobie Villages were included in the ALC report with a recommendation for land but were omitted from the 1976 Act.⁷¹

The 12 title areas described in the Schedule are nearly identical to those recommended in the 1969 ALC report (Table 2) except that the provision 'save and except all alienated lands' included at the end of almost all⁷² the ALC recommendations has been removed. Similar restrictions, however, still remain a part of the 1976 titles (see below). Villages were never consulted about the 1976 titles, nor were the titles surveyed on the ground, though the government claims to have surveyed them aerially before issuing them.⁷³ These titles are therefore not based on what the Villages wanted, were issued without their agreement and do not correspond to Amerindian culture, ways of making a living and collective customary land tenure. They were, and remain, inconsistent with indigenous peoples' rights under common law and international law.

The 1976 Act was the first time Amerindian land ownership rights over title areas were legally recognised, but this recognition was partial. Amerindians' freehold ownership was limited by the following major 'save and except' constraints:

- Land with State installations or airstrips, and river corridors 66 feet from the mean high water mark were excluded from their ownership;
- The State had powers to extinguish land titles without consultation (under Section 3 in the 'public interest');
- The State obtained authority to take and occupy Amerindian titled lands up to 10 miles from an

69 ALC (1969) *Report by the Amerindian Lands Commission August 1969*, ALC, Georgetown at 81

70 ALC (1969) *Report by the Amerindian Lands Commission August 1969*, ALC, Georgetown at 87

71 The latter two were included in the ALC report as Mahdia-Kangaruma Amerindian Settlement and Tumatumari Amerindian Settlement

72 Chenapou is the only village of those visited that did not have a recommendation of 'save and except all alienated lands'. This may be because the recommendation for Chenapou was not 'freehold title', like the others, but rather 'beneficial occupation'.

73 National Development Strategy (Guyana 2001-2010) chapter 24

international border 'in the interest of defence, public safety or public order';

- The title could be cancelled if at least two members of an Amerindian community showed themselves to be 'disloyal or disaffected to the state or have done any voluntary act which was incompatible with their loyalty to the state';
- The Minister of Amerindian Affairs had unilateral powers to change title boundaries without consulting with the community or obtaining its agreement.

Table 2: ALC recommendations compared to 1976 titles for Villages in Region 8 visited by the Land Tenure Assessment teams

| Village name | Village request accepted by ALC | ALC recommendation | Title in 1976 Amerindian Act | ALC recommendation compared with 1976 title |
|---------------------|--|---|------------------------------|--|
| Sub-region 1 | | | | |
| Chenapou | ALC says that no request was submitted. | The ALC did not consider area sufficiently settled for 'freehold title'. Recommended area for 'beneficial occupation'. | Yes | Yes, exactly the same. |
| Itabac | No – requested a joint title with Kaibarupai, Kanapang, Waipa and Kopinang | Recommended much smaller area as the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully administer and develop.' | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Kaibarupai | No – requested a joint title with Itabac, Kanapang, Waipa and Kopinang | Recommended much smaller area as the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully administer and develop.' | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Kamana | No - requested area of 28 sq. miles and cross way 25 miles. This is likely to refer to 25x28 miles = 700 sq. miles | Recommended smaller area – about 380 sq. miles (as recorded in Certificate of Title) | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Kanapang | No –requested a joint title with Itabac, Kaibarupai, Waipa and Kopinang | Recommended much smaller area as the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully administer and develop.' | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Karisparu | Village not mentioned in ALC report | N/A | No | N/A |
| Kato | No – requested a large area, even on right bank of Ireng | Recommended a smaller area because the area requested was occupied by people from Kurukabaru and Paramakatoi | Yes | Almost the same except ALC states 'thence south-west to the source of Aquafria' while the 1976 description reads 'thence south-west of the source of Aquafria'. ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title.* |
| Chiung Mouth | Village not mentioned in ALC, but the area is covered under the land requested by Kato | See above | As part of Kato | See above |
| Kopinang | No – requested a joint title with Itabac, Kanapang, Waipa and Kaibarupai | Recommended a smaller area as the area requested was considered excessive. 'It is beyond the ability of the residents to successfully administer and develop the area.' | Yes | The same except Kamana River in ALC report is Makana River in 1976 title. ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Kurukabaru | No | Recommended smaller area since the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully develop and administer.' | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |

* N.B. The 1976 Amerindian Act itself excludes State installations or airstrips, and river corridors 66 feet from the mean high water mark.

| Village name | Village request accepted by ALC | ALC recommendation | Title in 1976 Amerindian Act | ALC recommendation compared with 1976 title |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|--|
| Maikwak | ALC says that no request was received. | Recommended that since people might have settled due to mining opportunities, the residents be given a conditional grant to continue to occupy the area until they had settled or moved to a established community. | No | N/A |
| Monkey Mountain | No | Recommended smaller area as the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully administer and develop.' | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Paramakatoi (Bamboo Creek and Mountain Foot) | The ALC says that no request was submitted, however elders say that they did request title. | Considered that much of the area inhabited was savannah and therefore the area around Chenapou (Chenapan) River must be included as it was the main farming ground. | Yes | ALC refers to Chenapau River while 1976 title refers to Chenapan River. ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Taruka | The ALC says that no request was submitted. | Recommended an area considered adequate for subsistence needs and development | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Waipa (Included as 'Waipa and Sand Hill Village' in ALC) | No – requested a joint title with Itabac, Kaibarupai, Kanapang and Kopinang | Recommended smaller area as the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully administer or develop.' | Yes | The same except ALC includes the 'Save and except all alienated lands' clause, which is not in the 1976 title. |
| Sub-region 2 | | | | |
| Campbelltown (Princeville) Mentioned in the ALC as Mahdia-Kangaruma Amerindian Settlement | No | Recommended a smaller area as the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully develop and administer.' | No | N/A |
| El Paso | Community not mentioned in ALC report | N/A | No | N/A |
| Maicobie Mentioned as Tumatumari Amerindian Settlement | No | Recommended a much smaller area (less than 50% of the requested), as the area requested was considered 'excessive and beyond the ability of the residents to successfully develop and administer.' | No | N/A |
| Moruwa | Village not mentioned in ALC report, but area included in joint request made by Kopinang, Itabac, Kaibarupai, Kanapang and Waipa and the request made by Campbelltown | N/A | No | N/A |

3.3 LAND TITLES ISSUED FROM 1991 ONWARDS

In 1991, responding to Amerindian leaders' persistent complaints about the 1976 titles, President Hoyte gave full documents of title to all the Amerindian communities listed in the Schedule to the 1976 Amerindian Act. Of the 12 Villages in this survey that had been granted a title in 1976, seven were aware that they had received such a title from President Hoyte in 1991. However, most did not have the 1991 title document available in the Village, either because it had been lost or because the LTA team was not able to access the Village office. From the research carried out in Regions 1 and 2, the LTA teams are aware that all of these titles backdated to 1976 state that the community in question 'has from time immemorial been in occupation of [the] tract of State Land' indicated in the description. Although the 1991 titles did not change the written description of the lands granted under Section 20A of the 1976 Amerindian Act, they are significantly different from those titles.

First, the 1991 titles were not issued under the Amerindian Act but under Section 3 of the State Lands Act, which empowers the President 'to make absolute or provisional grants of any State lands of Guyana, subject to such conditions (if any) as he thinks fit...'. These grants, also known as Presidential Grants, were made 'absolutely and forever' and can only be revoked for failure to comply with specific conditions in the grant. The only condition attached was that mineral rights were not given to the grantee but retained by the State. The titles issued in 1991, therefore, are absolute grants, applying forever; not even the President is authorised to revoke or modify them.

Second, the Section 3 titles apply to all of the lands described therein, differing from Section 20A(2) of the 1976 Amerindian Act which excludes rivers, river banks, airstrips, or pre-1976 government buildings. It is unclear whether the Hoyte government meant to grant Amerindians title to the rivers, airstrips and government buildings that were excluded by the earlier 1976 Act.

This land tenure survey has found that the three land titles in the region granted since 1991 are also Presidential Grants made under Section 3 of the State Lands Act, but these and associated maps have re-inserted conditions stating that certain areas are excluded from Village ownership. Examples are the land title documents of Campbelltown and Maicobie from 2006, which contain the 'save and except' clause that excludes all lands privately and legally held and the demarcation maps of the same Villages. Campbelltown's title document excludes 'sections of road reserves' while that of Maicobie states that 'all navigable rivers, creeks and access to right of way' are not part of the title. Karisparu is the most recent visited community to receive a title. Their title document, from 2014, saves and excepts from the Village land '66 feet on either side of all navigable rivers and creeks, all lands privately owned and legally held and existing Airstrip.'

4 RECENT LAND POLICY AND THE CURRENT SITUATION OF AMERINDIAN LAND TENURE

4.1 LAND TITLE DEMARCATION

Over the last 20 years there have been several changes to the policies and laws affecting the land and resource rights of indigenous peoples in Guyana. Since 1995 the government of Guyana has applied a two-phased approach for dealing with undecided Amerindian land claims, defined in official documents as:

Phase 1: Demarcation of the [then] existing 74 legally recognised (titled) Amerindian communities

Phase 2: Addressing extensions of titled communities and the request for title by those communities without legally recognised lands.⁷⁴

Several of the Villages visited for this assessment that are not satisfied with their title descriptions disagree with this sequencing (e.g. Waipa, Chenapou and Kato). They want the full extent of what they know to be their land to be secured before it is demarcated. However, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs told them they must accept demarcation first and can apply for extension for the rest of the land afterwards. Fourteen of the 15 titled Villages visited were subsequently demarcated. The remaining Village is Chenapou where residents refuse demarcation until their extension application is processed to their satisfaction.

For the Villages that have been demarcated, many reported that they were not aware of the plan to carry out the demarcation exercise until the GLSC team appeared in the Village and that they either were not consulted on the area to be surveyed or that they did not consent to it. In two instances, the team did find a memorandum on the demarcation maps stating that the Captain, Village Council and residents had attended at various times during the survey and that no objection had been made (Campbelltown and Maicobie). It is also known that residents have participated in the survey exercises in other Villages, most often as line-cutters, however this does not necessarily amount to any authority to influence the process itself.

The lack of adequate participation has led to a situation where in 12 of the 14 demarcation cases, the line on the ground does not accurately follow the description of the title document. The same number of Villages report that they are not satisfied with the demarcation that has been carried out.⁷⁵

4.2 AMERINDIAN ACT 2006

For many years, indigenous peoples' organisations in Guyana, including the APA, had pointed out the serious shortcomings and discriminatory provisions on land in the 1976 Amerindian Act. In 2002, the government of Guyana finally agreed to review the Act, and carried out major consulta-

⁷⁴ <http://indigenouspeoples.gov.gy/land-tenure/>

⁷⁵ This is often because the demarcation line reveals flawed title descriptions that residents have not always been aware of in advance.

tions with communities between 2002 and 2003. When the Bill was shared in 2005, indigenous peoples welcomed the removal of some of the most offensive provisions of the former 1976 Act, including the powers to extinguish titles without consultation or consent of affected Villages. But they were dismayed that many of their most important recommendations on rights to land and other fundamental rights had not been taken up. Despite the inclusion of some useful elements, the final Amerindian Act 2006 creates or maintains many legal constraints on Amerindian rights. For example, the Act repeals Section 41 of the State Lands Act and replaces it with an amended and shortened savings clause (exemption) on 'traditional rights' on State lands and forests in accordance with Articles 2 and 57 of the Amerindian Act.

Article 57 protects traditional rights in State lands and forests, unless expressly provided otherwise in the Act and subject to the rights of any private leaseholders that were in effect in 2006. But the definition of traditional rights in Article 2 (the first express definition of these rights in Guyanese law) limits those rights to only 'subsistence rights or privileges' that existed in 2006. The 2006 Act adds a novel restriction requiring that those rights be 'exercised sustainably' in accordance with indigenous peoples' 'spiritual relationship' with their lands.

The 2006 Act retains the unjust, discretionary and unilateral powers of the Minister of Amerindian Affairs to reject title boundaries and to interfere in and reject Village rules or decisions (similar to the powers of colonial British authorities). A key problem is that, when deciding the extent of land titles, the Minister of Indigenous Peoples Affairs only has to 'take into account' and 'consider' different sorts of information regarding the applicant's '... physical, traditional, cultural association with or spiritual attachment to the land requested.'⁷⁶ The Act also allows large-scale mining concessions to be imposed on untitled indigenous lands without their consent and so discriminates against untitled communities, which do not enjoy equal protection under the law. The APA and others have criticised the 2006 Amerindian Act for these serious shortcomings on rights to land and the rights of indigenous peoples. In 2006, the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD) urged Guyana:

...in consultation with the indigenous communities concerned, (a) to demarcate or otherwise identify the lands which they traditionally occupy or use, (b) to establish adequate procedures, and to define clear and just criteria to resolve land claims by indigenous communities within the domestic judicial system while taking due account of relevant indigenous customary laws.⁷⁷

While the former administration repeatedly refused to amend the Act to remove the land titling problems and discriminatory conditions identified by UNCERD⁷⁸ the present government elected in May 2015 appears to be committed to revising and renaming the Act.⁷⁹ In September 2015, Minister Trotman of the Ministry of Natural Resources told the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) that:

...Necessary amendments would be made to the Amerindian Act within the context of a review of land distribution and titling procedures to be carried out by a land commission that the Government was planning to establish shortly.⁸⁰

In October 2015, the ICESCR recommended:

...that the State party revise the Amerindian Act 2006 and other relevant laws with a view to ensuring, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

76 Amerindian Act (2006) Article 62(2)

77 UNCERD (2006) Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: GUYANA CERD/C/GUY/CO/14 21 March 2006 at paragraph 16 <http://www.forestpeoples.org/sites/fpp/files/publication/2010/08/guyanacerdconclobsmar06eng.pdf>

78 Comments of the Government of Guyana on the concluding observations of the UNCERD on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. UN Doc. CERD/C/GUY/CO/14/Add.1, 14 May 2008

79 See, for example, 'Urgent reform planned to strengthen land rights under Amerindian Act – Allicock'. *Stabroek News*, 8 November, 2015

80 E/C.12/GUY/Q/2-4/ADD.1



Mined-out areas scar the forest landscape.

Photo: APA

Peoples, that the Amerindian people's rights to their lands, territories and resources are fully recognized and protected and that their free, prior and informed consent is obtained in respect of the adoption of any legislation, policy and/or project affecting their lands or territories and other resources. It also recommends that the State party consider ratifying the International Labour Organization Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).⁸¹

4.3 PROTECTED AREAS IN REGION 8

4.3.1 History

The British colonial government established Kaieteur National Park with the Kaieteur National Park Act in 1929. The Act did not contain any provisions for Amerindian rights or privileges. In 1994, Guyana started a process of extending the park through a GEF- and World Bank-supported National Protected Area System project. Four years later, a project team visited Chenapou, the closest Amerindian Village to the park, as the World Bank had committed to obtaining informed consent from affected Amerindian communities before funding the park extension. The residents of Chenapou, however, reported that members of the project team had pressured them to accept the new proposed boundaries, with threats that if Chenapou refused the Bank would not provide funding, which would in the end be harmful for the community. They were also told that the Government of Guyana had already decided that the park would be extended in any case and that it would be detrimental for the community if they did not cooperate.⁸²

The Kaieteur National Park was extended to cover an area of 62,680 ha. by an order adopted under the Kaieteur National Park Act in March 1999. Residents of Chenapou were not satisfied with the flawed consultation or the restrictions that the park put on their lives and livelihoods. In May 1999, they met with President Janet Jagan to present their concerns. The President agreed that the order constituted an unacceptable restriction on the rights of the people of Chenapou and invited the community to propose amendments to the Act. Chenapou Village did so and the suggested amendments were sent to the General Attorney's Chamber. The Act was consequently amended again in 2000, but residents of Chenapou still found that it was unduly restrictive on their lives and activities.

⁸¹ E/C.12/GUY/CO/2-4, 28 October 2015 at paragraph 15

⁸² APA letter to the World Bank (August 1998) *Re. Guyana National Protected Area System Project (GEF)*

Map 2: Indigenous Peoples' Settlements, Titled Villages and Current Logging Concession Data, Region 8 Guyana

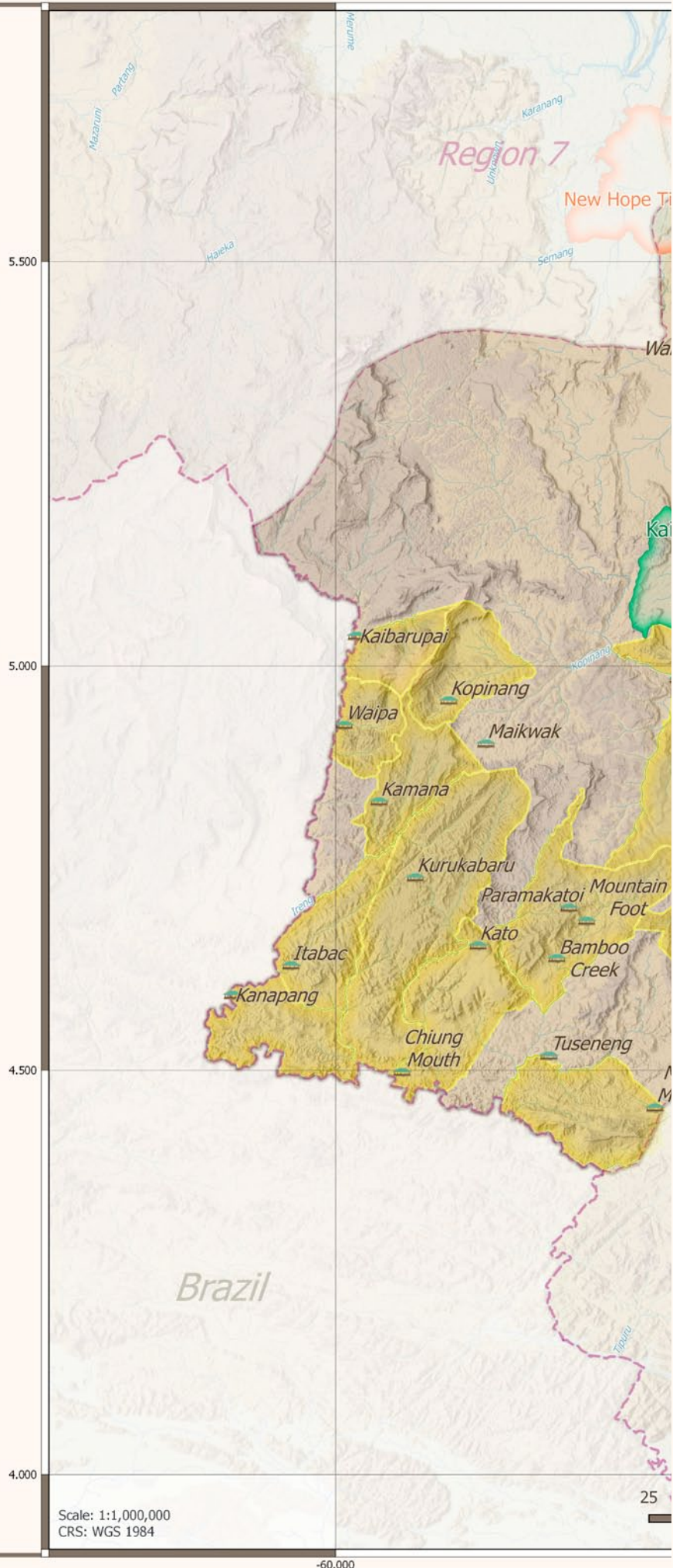


Legend

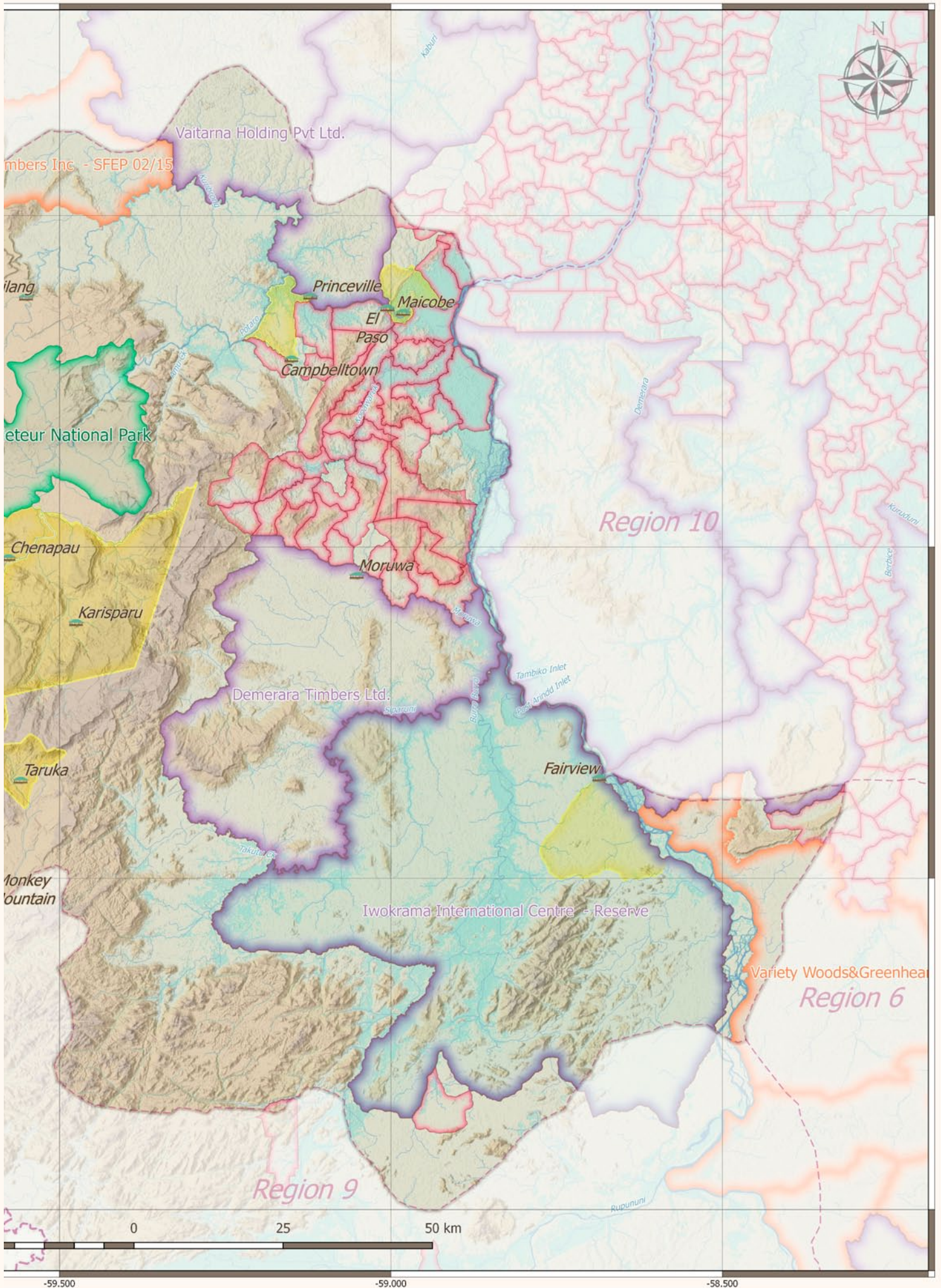
- Village visited in L.T.A. Study
- Amerindian Title
- Reserved Land
- River
- Country Border
- Region Boundary

Current Logging Data from GIM

- SFA
- SFEP
- TSA



Disclaimer: Data sources include Guyana GIM (<http://data.gim.gov.gy/>), Nasa SRTM, Openstreetmap, Google Earth and handheld GPS. This map is for indicative purposes only. Information shown does not purport to be validated and correct information on the title boundaries of titled Amerindian Villages. GIM is known to be inaccurate or incomplete. The map does not show untitled customary lands nor the requested extension areas of communities and villages. Data correct as of 05.03.2018



In 2002, the Amerindian Toshao Area Council of Region 8 met with President Bharrat Jagdeo to address outstanding issues about their rights in the park. A memorandum of understanding was signed at the meeting, agreeing to apply the following four principles to solve the problems:

- I. Amerindian rights, traditions, privileges, customs, and usages are to be protected.
- II. Amerindians are to have meaningful participation in all processes and decision making in any national park or protected area involving Amerindian traditional land.
- III. Amerindians are to be given first priority for jobs and training, not just as cooks, wardens and rangers but also as scientists and managers.
- IV. Amerindians are to be given a fair share of all benefits from protected areas.⁸³

As a result of the agreement, the case brought by Chenapou Village against the government in relation to the Kaieteur National Park was dropped. The current savings clause for Amerindian rights is still the one from 2000 and it reads as follows:

3 (1) (a): Nothing in this Act shall be construed as being in derogation of any right, privilege or freedom hitherto exercised by the Amerindian [sic] people, who shall continue to enjoy such right, privilege or freedom, to fish, hunt and generally to forage, and in so doing to promote sustainable forest and wild life management:

Provided that the aforesaid right, privilege or freedom shall only be exercisable within the additional lands in the extended boundaries of the Kaieteur National Park as defined in the Schedule by Order dated 9th March, 1999.

(b) Within the boundaries of the Kaieteur National Park as defined in the Schedule before 9th March, 1999 the Amerindian [sic] people in that area shall enjoy unrestricted right to travel in and out of the Park.

4.3.2 Recent developments

Conflicts over the park boundaries and activities within it escalated in May 2017 when 20 persons from Chenapou were arrested and brought to Georgetown charged with illegal mining in the park. The residents explained that they respected the no-mining rules of the park and that they had not been working within its boundaries. The 20 persons were released a few days later and charges were dropped. However, since then the Guyana Defence Force has stationed armed officers in the park. Residents were told that they are not allowed to use their trails to conduct their traditional activities, as there was a military operation in progress. They are feeling very fearful and in a news interview the Toshao said that this is *'messing with our custom and with our customary laws.'* He said they are prepared to assert their rights in the park, because *'Kaieteur is a sacred site to the Patamona nation – Chenapou only being one community of that nation.'*⁸⁴ The government made a commitment to conduct an independent investigation into the Kaieteur National Park and its impact on Amerindian Villages, and the Protected Areas Commission (PAC) planned to complete a multi-agency 'ground-truthing' exercise to clarify the park boundaries. However, no investigation has taken place (as of March 2018).

Communities in Region 8 are concerned about information received regarding the creation of a new Protected Area in Orinduik. No communities – on whose land the park would ostensibly be established – have been consulted, let alone involved in discussions. The Village of Kamana is seeking to include the area, which covers its customary lands, in its title extension.

83 Richards, A. (2002) 'Jagdeo and Touchaus agree on principles to solve problems relating to Kaieteur National Park' in Stabroek News, 24th March 2002 at <http://www.landofsixpeoples.com/news02/ns203249.htm>

84 Prime News Guyana ca. May 2017 "A team is to visit Chenapau and the Kaieteur area to have an idea on what took place." <https://www.facebook.com/PrimeNewsGuyana/videos/1705268936442988/>

4.4 LAND CONFLICTS AND OVERLAPPING LAND CLAIMS

This study finds that five of the titled Villages visited by the research teams have problems with mining activities or the movement of unauthorised miners on their legally recognised lands. Maicobie and Campbelltown in particular have had many mining concessions imposed on their titles against their knowledge and consent in the past. Since many of these were issued before the Villages were officially granted titles, the government considers them as legal because the title documents of Campbelltown and Maicobie include a clause excluding 'all privately owned lands legally held'. How many such 'legal' concessions exist on their titles is not clear because the villagers have been shown different maps over the past few years.

When it comes to the customary land of the 18⁸⁵ communities visited, 14 reported some sort of land and resource conflict with external parties. Most of the issues relate to mining and logging, with the rest involving shops, ranching and protected areas on the communities' land. The Moruwa area, which is considered important customary land by a number of communities,⁸⁶ is particularly heavily impacted by mining and logging (see Maps 2, 3, 4 and 5). A family that has lived in Wailang since the 1960s also explained to the research team that since the late 1990s mining by outsiders has increased substantially. GGMC maps now show most of the area covered by mineral licences. The activities increasingly involve large machinery and land and water dredges. The family at Wailang feels threatened as their home is now surrounded by mining concessions and the miners threatened one of the family's sons that he would be killed if the family did not move. The son, who has been doing small-scale mining in the area since long before the companies arrived, was beaten a few years ago and lost all his teeth, but the family decided not to leave their land.

Chenapou is facing escalated conflicts in relation to the Kaieteur National Park, which overlaps their customary land (see Chenapou summary report, Section 5). Since 2009, the people of Chenapou have also been greatly concerned by plans for the Amaila Falls hydropower dam, slated to be funded by the bilateral agreement between Guyana and Norway.⁸⁷ This project would potentially flood an area of 23 square kilometres in the customary territory of the Patamona and Makushi of the North Pakaraimas. Chenapou is the Village closest to the project site. The governments of Norway and Guyana commissioned a feasibility study in 2016, which highlighted a number of technical and financial risks in the design of the project. The current government consequently seems to be reluctant to go ahead with the Amaila project, but has not offered a final public decision on the matter.⁸⁸

Villages also report conflict between themselves, caused by title and demarcation boundary disputes or misunderstandings. Kurukabaru and Kato are in dispute about their common boundary, both claiming that the other has taken parts of their customary land. Itabac and Kanapang also have a disagreement over their boundary. Before the concept of state-issued titles and the physical demarcation thereof, there were rarely any land conflicts between the communities. They report that there were mutually understood and unwritten rules for who could use what land according to customary law and traditional agreements between families and communities. Importantly, much of the collective customary land was considered to be shared with the neighbours.

85 The satellite communities of Bamboo Creek, Mountain Foot, Chiung Mouth and Princeville are counted as part of their main villages in this number. If all settlements visited are counted separately, the number is 22.

86 E.g. Campbelltown, Kurukabaru, Kato, Chenapou, Paramakatoi, Bamboo Creek, Taruka and Karisparu.

87 Concerns have also been expressed by Kamana, Maikwak, Waipa and Kopinang. See, APA and FPP (2014) *Indigenous Peoples' Rights, Forest and Climate policies in Guyana: A Special Report*, <http://www.forestpeoples.org/sites/fpp/files/private/publication/2014/06/guyana-special-report-fpp-2014.pdf> at 100-102

88 Guyana Chronical, January 6th 2017, 'Guyana Decides: Is the Amaila Falls Hydropower Project worth the risk?' <https://guyanachronicle.com/2017/01/06/guyana-decides-is-the-amaila-falls-hydropower-project-worth-the-risk>

Map 3: Indigenous Peoples' Settlements, Titled Villages and Current Mining Concessions Data, Region 8 Guyana

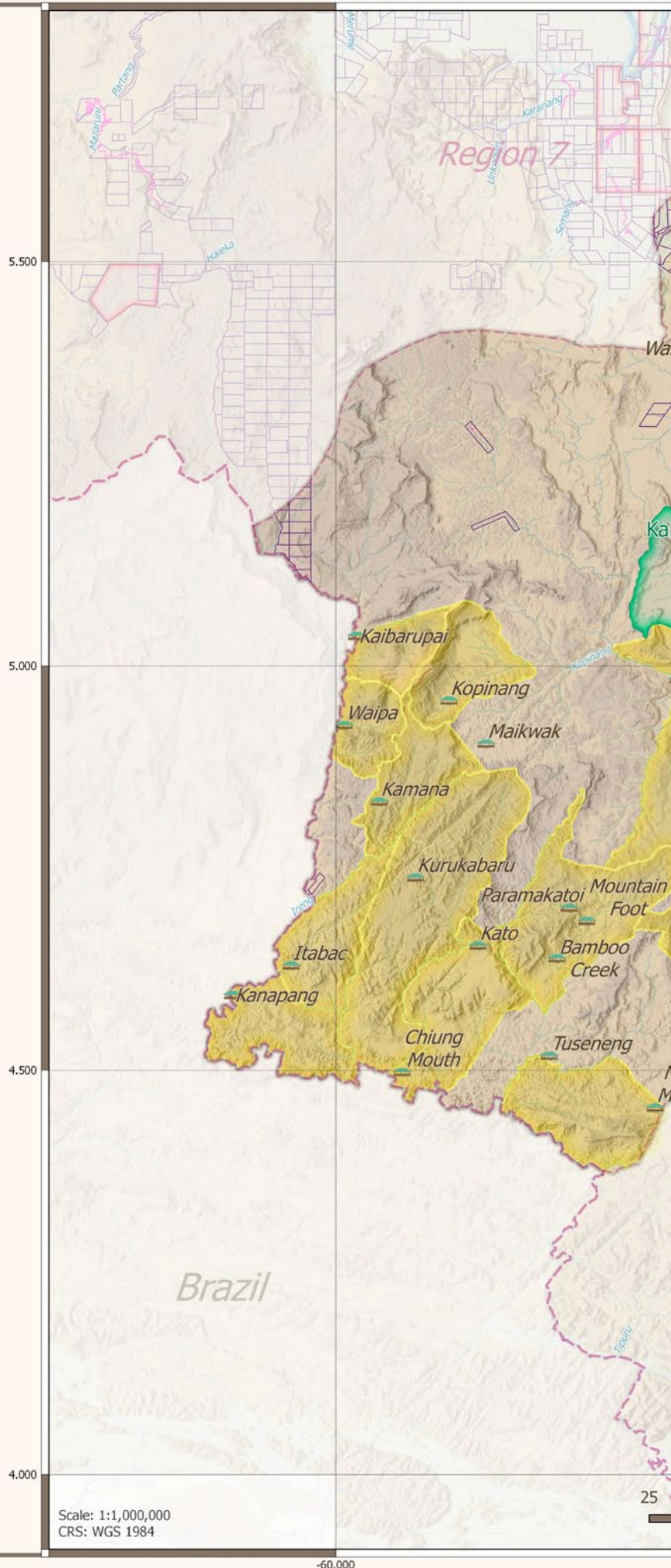


Legend

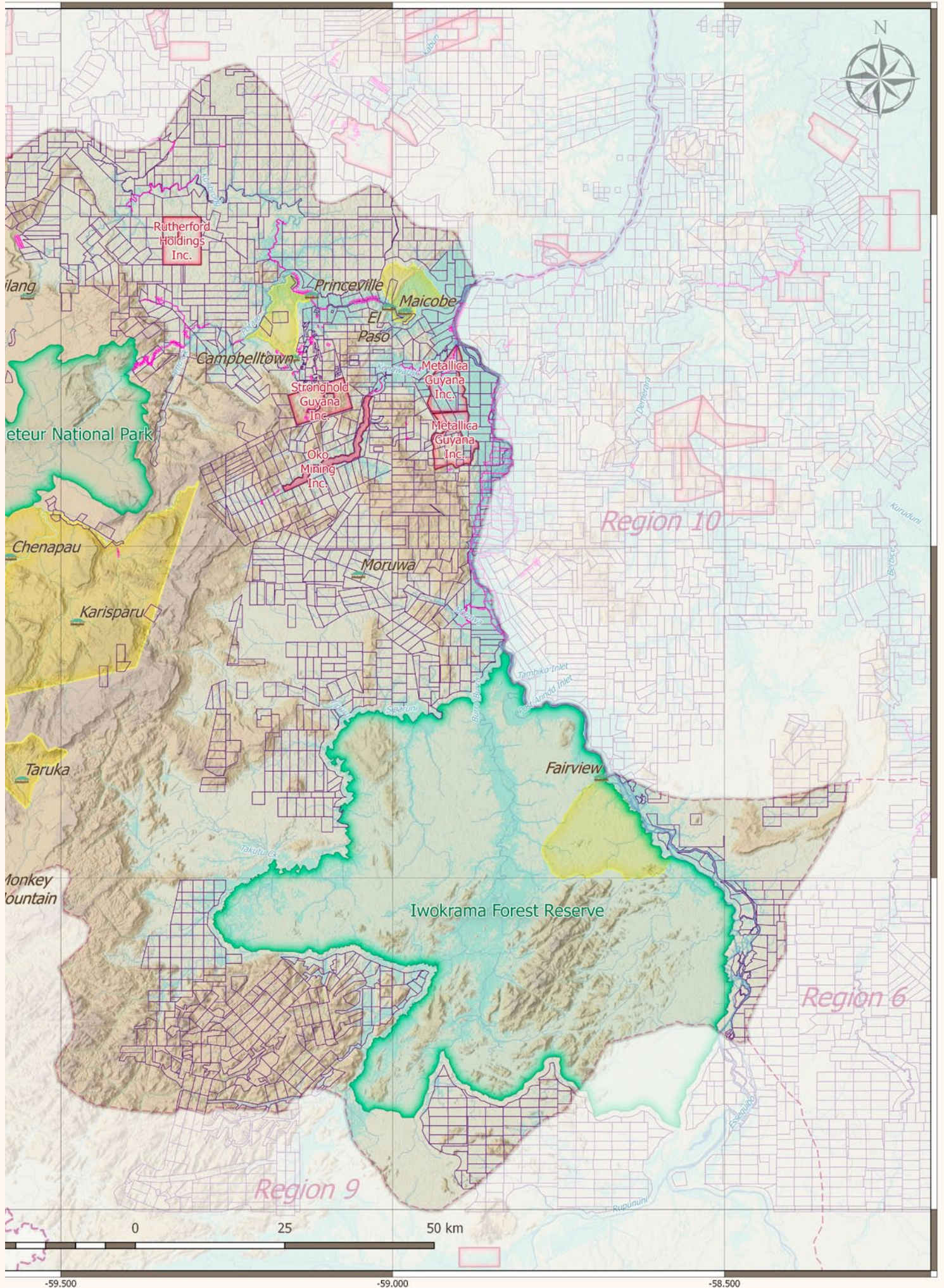
- Village visited in L.T.A. Study
- Amerindian Title
- Reserved Land
- River
- Country Border
- Region Boundary

Current Mining Data from GIM

- Large Scale License
- Mineral License
- Claim License



Disclaimer: Data sources include Guyana GIM (<http://data.gim.gov.gy/>), Nasa SRTM, Openstreetmap, Google Earth and handheld GPS. This map is for indicative purposes only. Information shown does not purport to be validated and correct information on the title boundaries of titled Amerindian Villages. GIM is known to be inaccurate or incomplete. The map does not show untitled customary lands nor the requested extension areas of communities and villages. Data correct as of 05.03.2018



At the time of the LTA research visits to the North Pakaraimas the entire sub-region 1 of Region 8 was registered in the Geonode database as an area reserved by GGMC for the Goldstone mining company. Villagers and Village authorities did not raise this matter because nobody was aware of this information about mining blocks affecting their lands. In June 2017, the GIS layer showing GGMC-reserved areas no longer appeared on the government website for geospatial information.⁸⁹ It is not clear whether this means that the layer has been taken down or if it does not exist any longer.

During 2015-16, when the LTA research team was visiting the area, Geonode data also showed 12 large-scale mining licences held by Prometheus Resources Guyana Inc. covering the southern border of Region 8, including large parts of the lands of Itabac, Kanapang, Kurukabaru, Kato (including Chiung Mouth), Monkey Mountain and Karasabai (the latter in Region 9). Most of these Villages were unaware of the existence of such concessions. The only place where people had heard about Prometheus was some years ago in Kato, where the company had talked to the Village about exploratory activities it was undertaking on their land. Residents did not agree on whether they had given their consent to Prometheus' activities or not (see Kato summary report, Section 5.1). Kato received a copy of a report from the company about its work during 2010 and 2011, which indicated that Prometheus were doing exploration in the Karisparu and Monkey Mountain areas as well and that further exploration was needed. However, the villagers of Kato say that they have not heard anything since from the company. In June 2017, the Prometheus concessions no longer appeared on digital maps available from the updated government website for geospatial information.⁹⁰

4.5 JOINT LAND CLAIM

The foreparents of the indigenous peoples of the region collaborated to secure legal rights to an uninterrupted territory of land, encompassing key farming, hunting, fishing and gathering areas as well as sacred sites. This is an important part of the peoples' collective memory and was emphasised again and again during the research teams' visits to the communities. As mentioned in earlier sections, according to residents, these efforts preceded national independence and the work of the Amerindian Lands Commission and are reflected in several of the requests made to the Commission.

After the conversion of the ALC recommendations into land titles by the 1976 Amerindian Act, Captains of the Region started to hold regular meetings and villagers told the research teams about a self-funded Region 8 Area Council that operated from the 1980s.⁹¹ A key issue on the agenda of the Area Council was how to address the fragmentation of the Patamona/Makushi territory. In 2001/2002 the Amerindian Toshao Area Council (ATAC) replaced the Area Council. This body comprised all the leaders in Region 8. Due to administrative problems and political interference, ATAC dissolved after a few years.

Almost every community told the research teams that residents missed the collaboration that used to take place between all the villages in the region and that they were looking for ways to restart an Area Council. In September 2016, this happened through the establishment of the North Pakaraima District Council (NPDC) at a meeting in Paramakatoi.⁹² Since then, the NPDC has met quarterly and sent a request to the Minister of Indigenous Peoples Affairs to become registered as a District Council under the 2006 Amerindian Act.

One of the main topics addressed in NPDC meetings so far has been that of land. The majority agree

⁸⁹ Guyana Geospatial Information Management Unit: <http://data.gim.gov.gy/>

⁹⁰ Ibid

⁹¹ A variety of names are used today to describe this Council, but 'the area council' is the most common.

⁹² The NPDC does not include the lowland communities of the region such as Campbelltown, Maicobie and Moruwa. However, it is discussing how to work together with these communities as well, so the membership may be extended in the future.

that they want to continue the work of their foreparents in seeking joint legal recognition for their collective customary territory and they have re-started work to identify such an area together. It is clear that, as before, communities use and depend on areas shared with neighbouring communities and in many cases people walk up to a week from their village to reach areas that are important for their livelihoods (as is also pointed out throughout this report, see particularly village summaries in Section 5). Lower-elevation areas around Siparuni, Potaro, Takatu and Tipuru Rivers are particularly important for several communities. Mining and logging concessions now overlap large portions of land in this part of the region. Mining concessions are also increasing around Wailang and Kuribrong, which are important parts of the territory to the north. For the communities in the northwest, the areas around Orinduik and Ayangana Mountain are significant shared places, with the latter also being shared with the Akawaio. Finally, it should also be mentioned that residents of many neighbouring Villages that are now separated by a boundary have a mutual understanding that they can farm and/or hunt and fish on each side of boundary (e.g. between Kato, Paramakatoi and Kurukabaru).

In support of the communal land claim, the NPDC has agreed to build local capacity for mapping and to start collecting evidence of historic and customary use of the land. All the communities represented on the NPDC agree that the process of securing a communal title to their territory is a long-term goal, which does not minimise the importance of having their individual Village titles, demarcation and extension issues resolved urgently.

4.6 AMERINDIAN LAND TITLING (ALT) PROJECT

The ALT Project began in October 2013, funded under the Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund (GRIF). It includes seven of the communities in Region 8 involved in this study (Table 3). During the time of LTA research team visits to the Region, the ALT actions planned in three of the Villages had been carried out, two were pending and one was stopped due to opposition by the Village (see Table 3 below).

Information available indicates that all Villages that had applied for extension were included in the ALT project work programme.⁹³ As this survey shows, however, there are others who are planning to apply for a title or extension, as well as many who wish to have a joint territory recognised. As noted in Section 4.5 the NPDC is now examining options and compiling proposals for a collective territory in the North Pakaraimas.

Table 3: Villages included in the ALT work plan (2013-2018)

| Village | Action | Year | Achieved? |
|-----------------|--|------|---|
| Chenapou | Demarcation | 2 | No – the Village is opposing demarcation. It wants flawed title to be addressed first |
| Kamana | Demarcation | 1 | Yes, year unclear |
| Karisparu | Title grant and demarcation | 1 | Yes, title in 2014 and demarcation in 2015 |
| Kato | Demarcation of extension | 1 | Yes, in December 2015 |
| Monkey Mountain | Extension and demarcation of extension | 3 | Pending |
| Paramakatoi | Demarcation | 1 | Yes, in 2016/17 |
| Taruka | Extension and demarcation of extension | 3 | Pending |

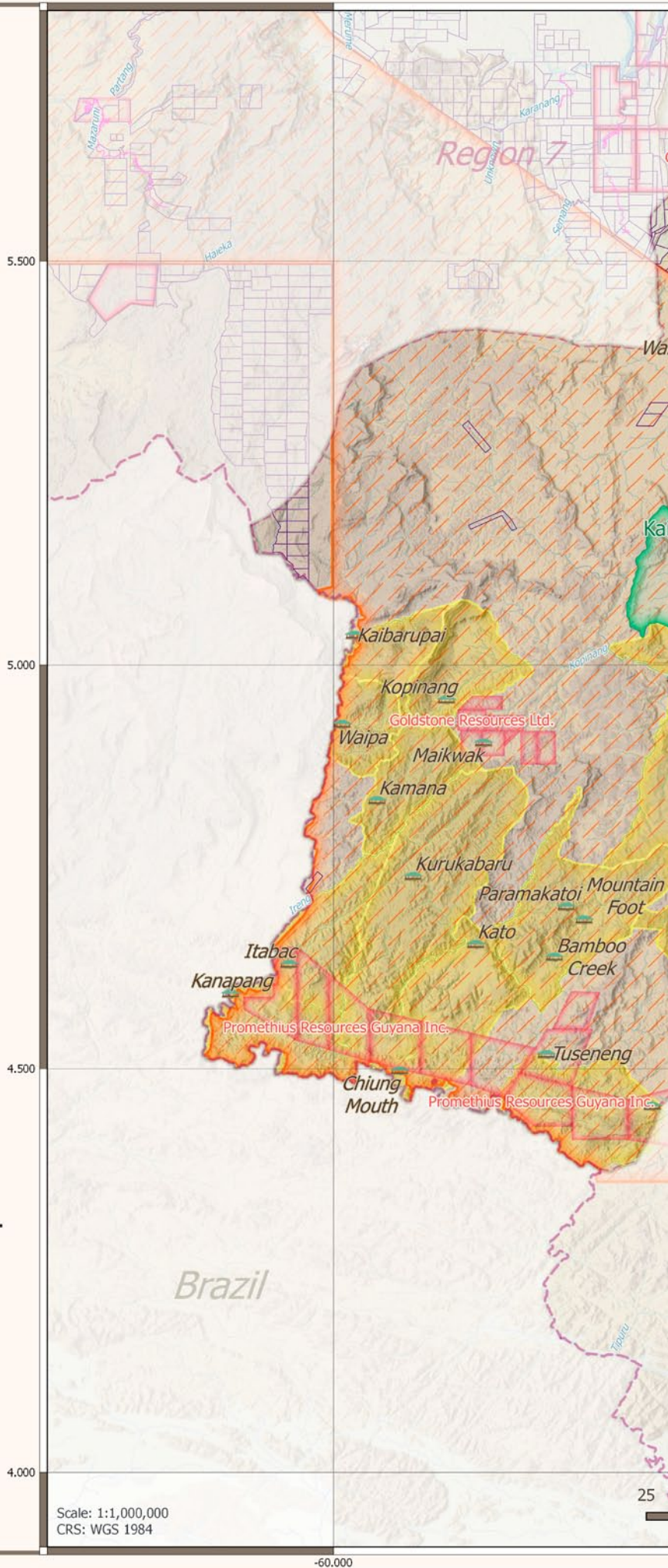
⁹³ Paramakatoi and Kaibarupai (which are not a part of the ALT project schedule) thought their Villages had applied for extension, but it is possible that the application was never submitted or that it was lost somewhere in transit.

Map 4: Indigenous Peoples' Settlements, Titled Villages and Current and Depreciated Mining Concessions Data, Region 8 Guyana



Legend

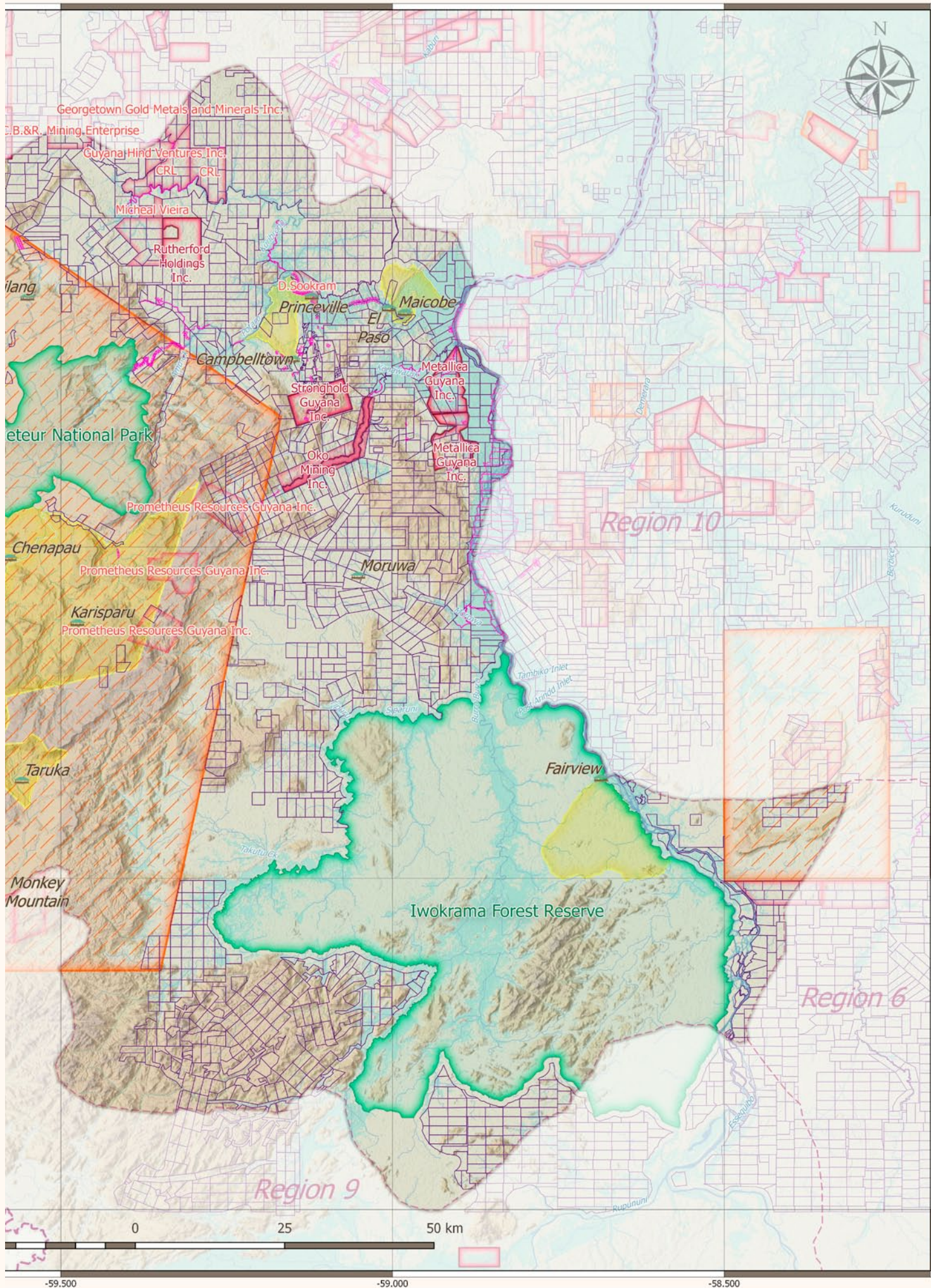
- Village visited in L.T.A. Study
 - Amerindian Title
 - Reserved Land
 - River
 - Country Border
 - Region Boundary
- Current Mining Data from GIM**
- Large Scale License
 - Mineral License
 - Claim License
- Data From Guyana Geonode**
- Large Scale Licence
 - Reserved by GGMC for Goldstone Ltd.



Disclaimer: Data sources include Guyana GIM (<http://data.gim.gov.gy/>), Nasa SRTM, Openstreetmap, Google Earth and handheld GPS. This map is for indicative purposes only. Information shown does not purport to be validated and correct information on the title boundaries of titled Amerindian Villages. GIM is known to be inaccurate or incomplete. The map does not show untitled customary lands nor the requested extension areas of communities and villages. Data correct as of 05.03.2018

Scale: 1:1,000,000
CRS: WGS 1984

-60.000



-59.500

-59.000

-58.500

Map 5: Mineral and Timber Concessions Overlapping Moruwa Customary Land, Region 8

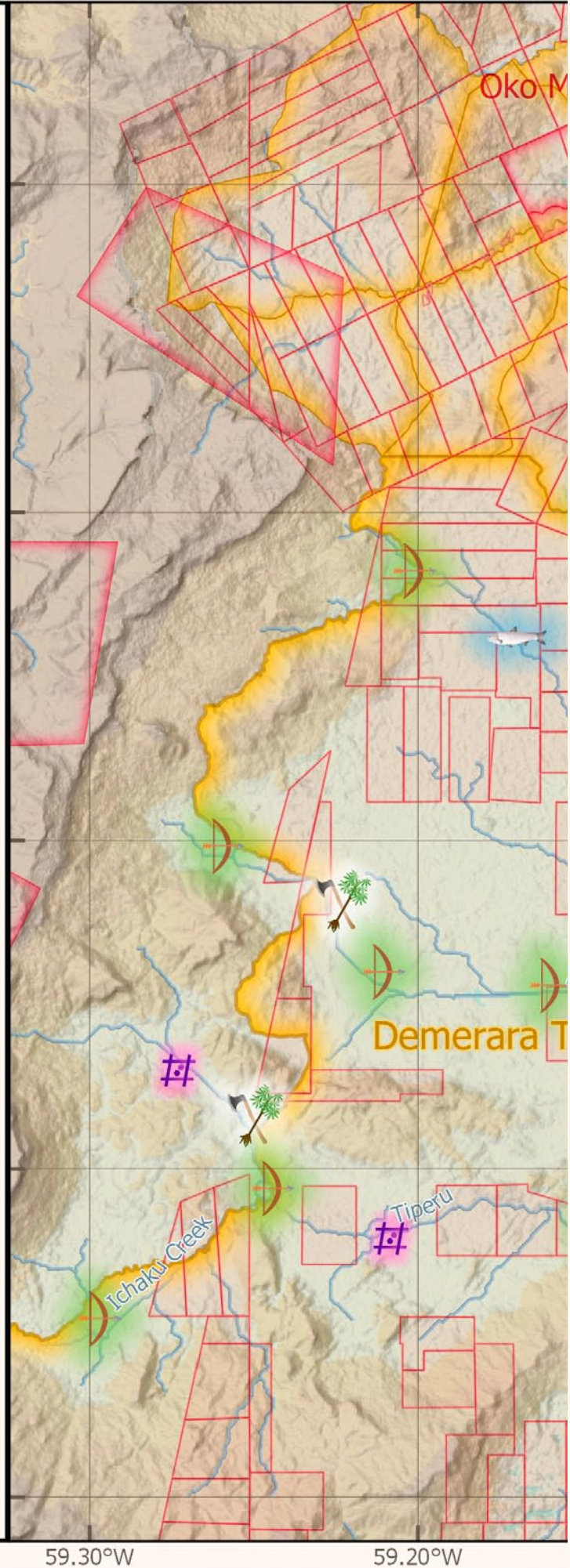
Legend

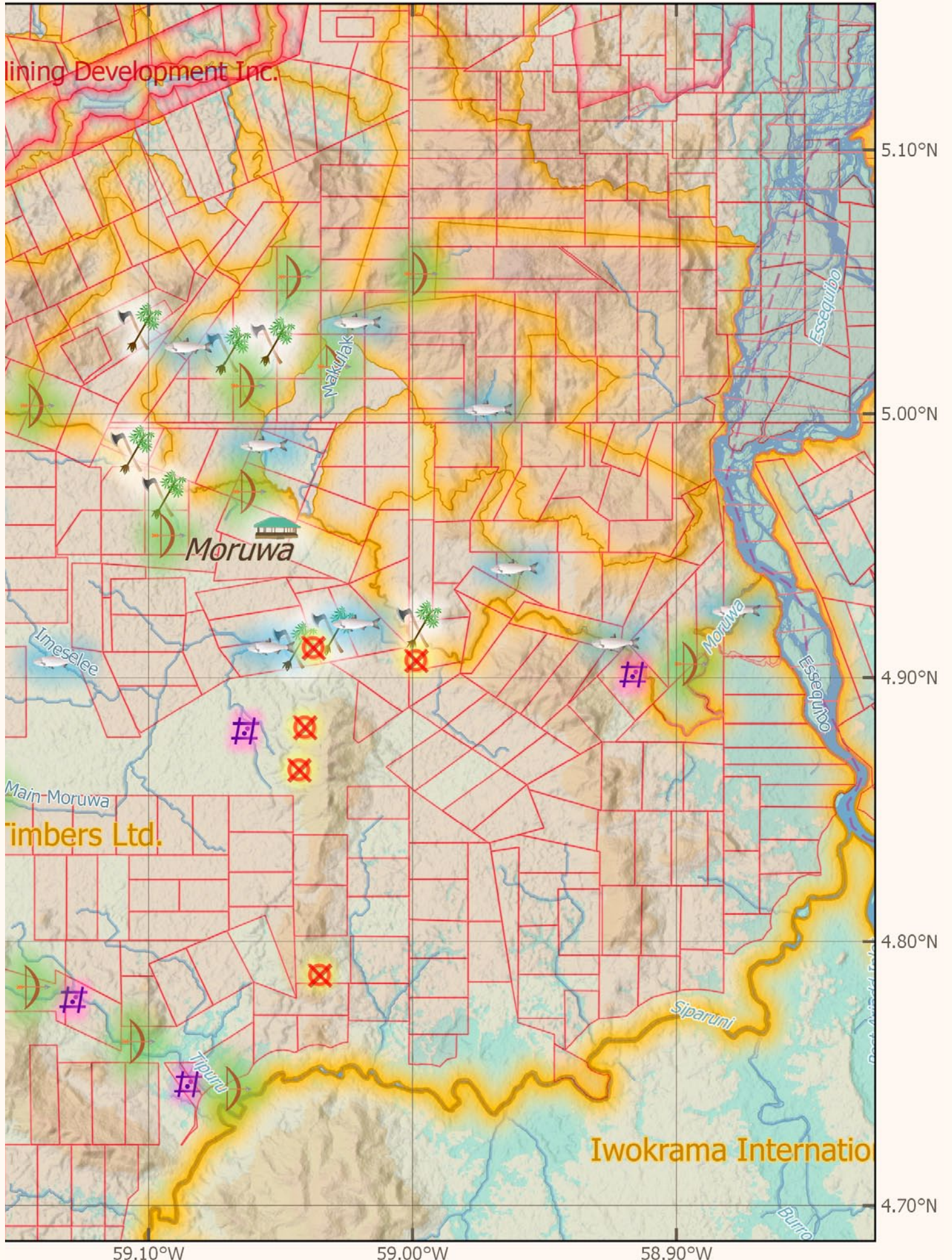


-  River
-  Settlement
- Moruwa Points of Interest**
-  Farming
-  Fishing
-  Gathering
-  Hunting
-  Sacred
- Logging & Mining**
-  Timber Concessions
-  Mineral Licenses

*Date: 22.03.18
 CRS: WGS 1984
 Data sources include NASA SRTM, Guyana Geonode, GIM, handheld GPS and data derived from drainage and terrain models, local knowledge and cross referencing with 1:50,000 topomaps. This map does not purport to present the full extent of customary land usage and is for indicative purposes only.*

Scale 0  10 km





The APA and international organisations have formally raised concerns about the ALT project design since it was presented to GRIF for funding in 2011. While fully welcoming the titling project in principle, the APA repeatedly pointed out to the then Ministry of Amerindian Affairs and the UNDP the need to address serious flaws in national titling procedures. These flaws could cause grievances and delays in carrying out the ALT project, as well as unjust land titling outcomes and land and resource conflicts.

APA thus urged the UNDP and government to amend the project in line with UN CERD recommendations:

It is ... essential that project risk analysis, final design, operational modalities and methodologies for land demarcation and titling under this GRIF project fully address CERD recommendations to ensure that the definition and legal recognition of indigenous peoples' lands and territories are fully in line with international human rights standards.

APA submissions resulted in several draft versions of the ALT design document and some extra annexes on safeguard policies. The final project plan signed by UNDP and the government in October 2013 did commit to apply the standard of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and to '[c]ompliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant UN human rights instruments' as well as 'the safeguards and standards used by UNDP and UN-REDD for any REDD+ related project.' However, the ALT document did not set out how these standards would be applied to the project's titling, demarcation and extension activities and so does not properly address the concerns and recommendations submitted by the APA and international NGOs.

In 2015, the new Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) of the UNDP reviewed the ALT Project and found that the project did not meet past or present UNDP policies. A UNDP-Government of Guyana action plan was therefore drawn up to write a Guideline clarifying the titling procedure, putting in place a protocol for consultation and consent, and setting up a grievance mechanism. To implement the plan, a national stakeholder platform (the 'Representative Platform') was set up to agree steps to make ALT keep to project standards (including UNDP safeguard policies, UNDRIP and other international human rights treaties), improve the way it is carried out, and uphold the FPIC standard. The Platform met in June, September and December 2016 and the Project Board adopted 'A Guideline for Amerindian Land Titling in Guyana' in April 2017. In December 2016, the GRIF Steering Committee approved a two-year no-cost extension of the project.

4.7 NEW LAND POLICIES AND PROMISES

For several years the new administration has pledged to set up a Land Commission of Inquiry (LCOI) to investigate indigenous peoples' land claims. However, at the time of writing in 2017, the terms of reference for the LCOI are vague and do not provide guarantees that indigenous peoples' land rights will be addressed in line with Guyana's international obligations. The process for the LCOI has also been criticised for not properly involving indigenous organisations and communities in its design.

PART 2

LAND TENURE ASSESSMENT IN REGION 8

INA PATA,
KO'MANGNÀTOK
YESELU

5 SUMMARY ASSESSMENT BY VILLAGE/ SETTLEMENT

5.1 SUB-REGION 1

5.1.1 CHENAPOU

Key findings:

- Chenapou's land title only covers a very small part of the traditionally used and occupied land of the Village.
- Chenapou has applied for extension, but the government says that the Village must demarcate the land in the current title before extension can be considered.
- The Village is refusing demarcation of this land.
- There is a dispute with Karisparu after Karisparu was granted a land title in 2015 that overlaps significant parts of land claimed by Chenapou, including a settlement at Kaluk Pudu on the right bank of the Potaro River.
- Chenapou residents feel restricted by Kaieteur National Park, which overlaps large parts of the Village's traditional land. The dispute escalated greatly when the government militarised the park in 2017.
- Although plans to build Amaila hydro dam appear to have been shelved by the current national administration, Villages and communities remain concerned about increasing pressures on their lands and territories from mining, logging and road building.

-
1. **Location:** Upper Potaro River, North Pakaraimas sub-region 1, Region 8.
 2. **History:** Clay pots and Dutch bottles are found in Camo (inside current title), Cheetu and Waiku (outside title). Elders in today's Chenapou remember that their foreparents lived in Camo. The Andachin family was mentioned among the occupants of Camo. The first families to settle where Chenapou Village is located today were John, Benjamin, Kanichio/Andrews.

Numerous important spiritual and cultural heritage sites and old clay pots indicate longstanding occupation and use of the area. Cheetu, Waiku and Kayik Tuwuk (Kaieteur) are examples of former settlements and areas of special significance to Chenapou residents. The legend of the Kaieteur Falls, recounted by Chenapou residents today, was recorded in the 1870s by Barrington Brown, and is likely to stem from long before he visited the area.
 3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Karisparu, Paramakatoi, Kopinang and Maikwak (the latter three are located about 7-10 hours' walk from Chenapou).
 4. **Estimated population:** 524 (100 households).
 5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.

6. Local government: Village Council that is headed by Toshao, Vice-Toshao, treasurer and secretary. Councillors are responsible for different zones in the community. Village councillors are also assigned duties in relation to health, education and the environment as well as other areas.

7. Land use and economy: The main livelihood of the Chenapou residents is subsistence farming. All fertile farming areas are located outside the Village title; Karisparu Landing (Kaluk Pudu) and Acrabanang are within Karisparu's title and Oong (Wang on government maps) on state land. Cassava, plantain, banana, pumpkin and squash are common crops and most households make local drinks such as *cassiri*, *parakari* and fly. Some residents are also involved in mining within their customary lands (e.g. Monkey Head and Cheetu).

Key hunting, fishing and gathering grounds include Ayanganna (northwest), Cheetu head (northeast), Amu River and mountains (northwest), Moruwa (east), Kuribrong (north) and Tipuru (east). All these areas are outside the title and between one day and one week away by foot. Many of these areas, such as Ayanganna, Cheetu, Moruwa and Tipuru are shared with neighbouring communities, as they are part of the larger Patamona territory.



Pottery found in the Camo area.

Photo: APA

8. Community Projects: Plans to start a project to get piped water.

9. Institutions and services: The Village has a nursery and primary school. Older students attend Paramakatoi and Mahdia secondary schools. The Village has a community health worker, radio set, internet services and electricity from solar and private generators.

10. Current land title status: A Village title was issued under the 1976 Amerindian Act. However, the Village is not currently in possession of the title document.

11. Existing title description: 'Area commencing from the mouth of the Orak River, left bank Potaro River, thence up the said Orak River to its source, thence west to the Potaro River opposite the mouth of the Kopinang River thence down the Potaro River to the point of commencement.'

12. Title suitability: Inadequate. Chenapou residents are not satisfied with the current land title as it only covers a very small part of their customary land and excludes homesteads as well as a whole satellite community at Kaluk Pudu (Karisparu Landing). The title follows the recommendation in the ALC report, which did not record Chenapou's request to the Commission. Residents explain that Stanislaus Kanichio, who was Captain at the time of the ALC, did indeed make a request on behalf of the Village for a much larger area than that recommended by the Commission. The residents say that they see themselves as part of a greater Patamona territory, which is bounded by Ayanganna Mountain, Kaieteur National Park, and the Kuribrong, Moruwa and Amu Rivers.

13. Title demarcation: When the GLSC came to Chenapou to inform the Villagers that their land would be demarcated (date unclear), they were confused because they had not asked for this



Kàiyik Tùwùk (Kaieteur Falls), sacred place of the Patamona people.

Photo: APA

and they refused to accept the demarcation. The Village insists on getting an extension, which it has applied for (see 15 below), before accepting demarcation. In November 2016 the Toshao of Chenapou met with the country representative of UNDP and the Minister of Amerindian Affairs in Kamarang (Region 7). Residents from Arau and Kaikan also attended the meeting. The Villages were told that they should accept demarcation, as it would result in benefits and potential funding opportunities. Chenapou however resisted and is now (June 2017) planning to take the matter to the President.

14. Demarcation suitability: NA

15. Extension status: The Village has applied for extension, and has been told by the government that it has to accept demarcation before any extension can be given.

16. Extension description: It is unclear whether the description has been submitted to the Ministry. But the Village has confirmed in a number of meetings with the Ministry that the extension must be granted before it can accept demarcation. The extension description states: 'The area commences the mouth of the Chenapou River right Bank Potaro River, thence up the left bank of the Chenapou River to the mouth of the Salani Creek. Thence in a straight line north west to the Mouth of the Muribang Creek. Thence north west via straight line to the peak of the Ayanganna Mountain. Thence via straight line eastwards to the mouth of the Amu River, thence up the left bank of the Amu River to its source, thence south via straight line to the Echerak River, thence down the right bank of the Echerak River to its mouth, thence up the left bank of the Potaro River to the point of commencement.'

17. Extension justification: As noted above, the current title covers only a very small piece of Chenapou's customary land. All the fertile farm land and all hunting, fishing and gathering grounds lie beyond the boundaries of the current land title. Homesteads in Acrabanang, Alaudaima and Oong (Wang on government maps) are also excluded.

18. Response from government: See 15 above.

19. Land and resource conflict: The Kaieteur National Park was established on Patamona customary land in 1929 without consultation with the customary inhabitants. When the park was extended

in 1999, Chenapou say that they were again not properly consulted. Residents were not satisfied with the new park boundaries, which now cover much of their customary fishing and hunting grounds, or the process for deciding the boundaries. After much opposition from the Village and APA in the early 2000s, the Village reached an agreement with the government at the time (PPP/Jagdeo) that traditional activities in the park should not be stopped. Nonetheless, residents report that some park officials have said that they cannot hunt and fish in the park. As a consequence people feel that

...the Kaieteur National Park is more interested in protecting a species of frog than a people. [Village resident, July, 2016].

In May 2017, conflicts over the park boundaries and activities within it escalated when 20 persons from Chenapou were arrested and brought to Georgetown charged with illegal mining in the park. The residents explain that they respect the no-mining rules of the park and that they had not been working within its boundaries. The 20 were released a few days later and charges were dropped. However, the Guyana Defence Force then stationed armed officers in the park and it is being referred to as a militarised zone. Residents have been told that they are not allowed to use their trails to go to their farms or to hunt and fish. They are feeling very fearful and the Toshao said this is 'messing with our custom and with our customary laws' and that residents are prepared to fight for their rights in the park, because: '*Kaieteur is a sacred site to the Patamona nation – Chenapou only being one community of that nation.*'

Residents have also been concerned for many years about the plans to build Amaila Falls hydro dam on their customary land. The Village was visited in relation to the 2011 Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and a supplementary assessment in 2013, but residents say that these visits did not constitute proper consultations. They opposed the dam then and on several later occasions. The hydro dam plans were shelved in August 2013, when the then opposition voted against a continuation of the project, but Amaila may become a threat again. The new government agreed in 2015 to reconsider its position based on the findings of a Norway-commissioned feasibility study. The study was finalised at the end of 2016 and identified technical and financial risks in the design of the project. The current government consequently seems to be reluctant to go ahead with Amaila, but has not offered a final public decision on the matter.

Chenapou Village, named after the pond in the photo.

Photo: APA





Typical canoe made by the Patamona in Chenapou.

Photo: APA

Another source of conflict is a land title granted to Karisparu (the neighbouring community) just before the national election in May 2015. This title covers land that Chenapou residents know to be theirs and where more than half of Chenapou's population currently lives (Kaluk Pudu). This title allocation has disrupted the longstanding mutual understanding between the two Villages that a bay of the Arnik Creek be recognised as their common boundary. Chenapou residents are distressed that they were never consulted about Karisparu's title and its demarcation. The Village Council sent a letter to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs about the situation in August 2015 and then again in October of the same year, as the first received no reply. In late 2015 or early 2016, Chenapou and Karisparu signed a document drafted by the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs saying that they agree to the situation as it now stands, however the people living in Kaluk Pudu are not happy with this at all. They strongly state that they are residents of Chenapou and not Karisparu.

20. Land security: See 19 above.

21. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Residents feel restricted in the use of their land and resources. The small area of titled land and the existence of Kaieteur National Park restrict hunting, fishing and farming activities and residents are concerned that soon they may not be able to provide for their families.

Residents are also worried about mining in the Ayanganna Mountains affecting water quality in the Potaro River. They report that pollution around the Echerak, another area exposed to outside mining interests, is killing fish that then flow into the Potaro River.

22. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Chenapou Village call for:

- a. The full extent of their customary land to be formally recognised by the state before they will accept demarcation;
- b. The Kaieteur National Park to be reduced to the 1929 boundaries and the authorities to recognise that the park is the customary land of the Patamona people, whose rights to use it must be fully respected and protected, and to end the militarisation of the park immediately;
- c. National laws be revised to fully respect and protect the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands and territories.

Key findings:

- The Village was granted a land title in 1976 but Timenawai, a key area for farming and hunting, was excluded leaving the title with very little suitable farm land.
- The Timenawai area is currently a part of Kanapang's title; Itabac residents want to meet Kanapang to discuss how they can share the area.
- The Village was not aware that three mining concessions overlap the south part of the land title.
- Access to water is a challenge and the Village asks for help to establish a sustainable and reliable water system.
- Surveyors carrying out the demarcation in 2010 left out the area around the head of Puwa River from the title. This has not been rectified, but Itabac residents say that they are happy for Kurukabaru residents to farm in this area.

1. **Location:** Ireng and Itabac Rivers, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8
2. **History:** The present residents of Itabac claim that people have been living in the area for a very long time – since the tribal wars. They were living in Pacau, Shuea, Sharang and Twede Mountains long before the foundation of the current Village. Clay pots can be found on Shuea Mountain and around Nopo, a small hill close to Timenawai. Knowledge has been passed down for generations about how Akawaio, Arekuna and Caribs used to pass through the area and they were called *slegung*, meaning bad people in Makushi.

The exact foundation date of the settlement where Itabac is located today is not entirely clear. The Community Development Plan document states that it was founded in the 1930s, however residents claim that Moses David's father and father-in-law were the first to settle in the current location in 1958 (the Amerindian Lands Commission Report says that the Village was established in 1960). After this, when the Village had established health and education services, many families came from Brazil and Venezuela as these services were not available in the communities across the border at that time. However, during the time of the Rupununi uprising, 1968-69, many of these families moved back over the border again.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kanapang and Kurukabaru.
4. **Estimated population:** 280 (64 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Makushi and Patamona.
6. **Local government:** Village Council with eleven councillors in addition to the Toshao. The councillors do not have specific designations.
7. **Land use and economy:** The villagers of Itabac rely heavily on rotational farming. The local cassava drink *parakari* is found in almost every household in the Village. In addition to individual farms, they have a Village cassava farm in the Timenawai area. Individual farms are found mainly in the same area and in Pacau – both areas are outside the current Village title, in the titled land of Kanapang. Residents also rely on fishing and hunting, which happens in the same areas. People also go to the area around Shuea Mountain for these activities (inside title) as well as up the Ireng River to Ayangana Mountain and over the Ireng to Brazil (outside title).

8. **Community Projects:** Village cassava farm at Timenawai.
9. **Institutions and services:** The Village has a radio, health service, nursery and a primary school. Children go to Paramakatoi for secondary school. Households have electricity from solar panels to power a few light bulbs.
10. **Current land title status:** Itabac has a land title that was granted under the 1976 Amerindian Act. The Village is currently not in possession of the title document.
11. **Existing title description:** 'The area commences at the mouth of the Itabac River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Ireng River to Tumong River, thence up the Tumong River to Arasawa River, thence South to the source of the Puwa River, thence down the Puwa River to the main tributary on its right bank, thence up the said tributary to its source, thence North-West to the point of commencement.'
12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** Itabac residents were not consulted about the title area and are not satisfied with the title description. This is because the title excludes the land between Itabac River and Pacau Creek (referred to as Timenawai), which was included in their foreparents' land and which is one of the most important farming and hunting areas for Itabac today. This mistake also excludes the Shuea area, where their foreparents lived and did hunting and fishing. Villagers did not realise that this area was not included in their title until the surveyors carrying out the demarcation in 2010 left it out. The mistake can be traced back to the Amerindian Lands Commission Report from 1969, which recommended that the area start from the mouth of the Itabac River, not the mouth of the Pacau Creek, where residents claim that it should start. Villagers further explain that the boundary should follow the Pacau Creek to its source and from there to the top of Shuea Mountain. It should be noted that Itabac together with Kaibarupai, Kanapang, Waipa and Kopinang requested a much larger joint area from the Commission

Old clay pots on the left bank of Pacau Creek in the savannah.

Photo: APA



'extending from the Ireng River to the Essequibo River and from Karasabai and the Muruwa River (on the south) to Mount Ayangana and the Kuribrong River (on the north).' (See the ALC report, page 82).

13. Title demarcation: Community members claim that there were two demarcation processes, the first in 1973 and the second in 2010. Moses David and Lewis David were involved in the first demarcation process with Rambally Charlie. It is unclear if this was in fact a demarcation exercise, and if so, under whose auspices, since it happened before the grant of title in 1976. In the second demarcation several villagers were involved: Calisto Martin and Kendel Martin, Ronald Samuel, Moses David, Laurentino Lewis and Muhammed David. There was no consultation with neighbouring Villages before the 2010 demarcation exercise.

14. Demarcation suitability: Surveyors made a mistake in relation to the head of Puwa River. Instead of going all the way to Puwa head from Yawari River, the line was cut from a small tributary on the right bank of Puwa before the source to Arasawa River. Most residents (including the Toshao) report that they do not really mind this mistake and are happy for people from Kurukabaru to farm this land as it is very far from their main settlement and nobody from Itabac is using it. They say they do not want to make a problem of this and want to continue sharing with their neighbours.

The Village supports the process started by the new Region 8 District Toshao Council to pursue legal recognition for a joint territory of land, which they see as a particularly good option given how much trouble the boundaries between the Villages are causing. There were no problems and land was shared before the physical demarcation of borders on the ground started. They do emphasise that even within a shared block they would need to have inter-Village agreements about who is using what, but there should be an overall understanding that they are all part of larger territory.

15. Extension status: The Village has not applied for extension. Residents thought about it but were discouraged by the fact that Itabac lies between Kanapang and Kurukabaru and Kamana has already applied for Orinduik as their extension. Villagers discussed whether they should suggest to Kamana that they could share Orinduik as an extension area. The outcome of the Region 8 District Toshao Council meetings about a joint territory will also affect this.

16. Land and resource conflict: There is currently no conflict, but residents of Itabac are very concerned that their best farming and hunting land lies within Kanapang's titled land (Timenawai area). They report that Kanapang villagers are not happy about them using this area. During the research team's visit, residents did agree that there is a need to organise a meeting with Kanapang Village to discuss the situation before it escalates. They would like to come to a friendly settlement about how both Villages can use the area.

17. Land security: Geonode data from 2015 showed that there were three large-scale mining



Snake carving on rock.

Photo: APA



Elder plaiting a matapee, used for extracting cassava juice.

Photo: APA

blocks on the southern part of Itabac's titled land held by Prometheus Resources Guyana Inc. The same blocks overlap the northern part of Kanapang and are held by the same company that did uranium exploration in Kato. Villagers were not aware of these concessions and were very surprised when they learnt about the map data. Many were asking how the government can give their resources away to other people and voiced strong disagreement with the national legal framework that does not recognise their ownership of their own resources such as the minerals.

After the research team's visit to Itabac, new data accessed in 2017 from the updated GIM website (which took over from Geonode in 2017) showed that these blocks were not a part of the layer for large-scale mining anymore.

18. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Due to the situation described in 16 above, people of Itabac do not feel free to use their traditional land and resources. The exclusion of the Timenawai area from their title has a serious impact because most of their title is savannah, which is unsuitable for farming. Though the lack of farm land is seen as a potential future threat, residents consider that they currently have food security. Water supply, however, is not always sufficient or of satisfactory quality. Itabac River, their main water source, dries out during the dry season and people have to walk about 30 minutes to get water from Ireng River. During the rainy season the water is not clean. The former Ministry of Amerindian Affairs built a well in the Village a few years ago, but unfortunately it was not dug deep enough and is therefore not functioning.

19. Recognition and measures sought: The residents of Itabac Village recommend that:

- a. The government must acknowledge that Timenawai is an important area, where Itabac residents' foreparents lived, farmed and hunted, which must be included in their land title description;
- b. Itabac Village Council should organise a meeting with the Village Council of Kanapang, to discuss how to solve the dispute about the Timenawai area. Itabac residents do not want to fight with their neighbours and prefer to stand strong together and cooperate. The NTC should take part in the inter-Village meeting to help them discuss and resolve the dispute;
- c. In any future demarcation Itabac residents must be properly consulted before the surveyors go into the field and knowledgeable people from the Village must lead the way;
- d. The Amerindian Act must be revised to ensure that Amerindian Villages have full rights to all the resources in and on their land, including water and minerals;
- e. The authorities should help Itabac Village to develop sustainable solutions to the water problem.



Sketch map exercise in Itabac Village.

Photo: APA

Ite leaves being gathered for house construction.

Photo: APA



5.1.3

KAIBARUPAI

Key findings:

- Kaibarupai received a title in 1976 but it excludes half of the population as well as the health centre, church, school and sewing centre.
 - The title also excludes key hunting and fishing areas.
 - The demarcation does not accurately follow the description of the title received.
 - Villagers are concerned that much of their traditional lands are not secured, but they currently don't have conflicts with outsiders when it comes to use of land or resources.
 - Villagers say that the natural resources they need for survival are in a healthy condition.
-

1. **Location:** Right bank Iwarga Creek, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 2, Region 8.
 2. **History:** A Makunaima rock carving at Sukeabi and the spiritual sites close to the current Village location indicate long-standing occupation of the area. Residents say that there is a long history of Patamona living there and others from the region confirm that the Kaibarupai people were the last to stop wearing traditional dress.
 3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Waipa and Kopinang.
 4. **Estimated population:** 470 (in 80 households).
-

A typical house in Kaibarupai.

Photo: APA



5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.
6. **Local government:** Village Council, including Toshao, treasurer, secretary, agriculture section and education section.
7. **Land use and economy:** Residents depend on farming, hunting and fishing within the title area, but key areas are also located outside, such as around Potaro River and its tributaries, around Ireng River, in the area surrounding Ayangana Mountain and Kanaipia.
8. **Community Projects:** No information obtained.
9. **Institutions and services:** The Village has a radio, solar electricity, health post and a primary school. Older children go to Paramakatoi for secondary school.
10. **Current land title status:** The Village received a land title in 1976. The Certificate of Title is for 37 square miles of land in 2014 under Section 71 of the Land Registry Act.
11. **Existing title description:** 'The area commences at Shiliwang Creek, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Shiliwang Creek to the Kopinang Mountain, thence North along the Watershed of the Ireng River to the source of the Iwarga Creek, Left Bank Ireng River, thence down the Iwarga Creek to its mouth, thence down the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'
12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** Residents are not at all satisfied with this title since it excludes about 50% of the population who live on the right bank of Iwarga Creek, as well as the school, church, health centre and sewing centre. The title also fails to cover customary lands northwards to the Potaro River. The title only represents a fragment of the land that their foreparents requested from the ALC, which was a joint area with Itabac, Kanapang, Waipa and Kopinang.
13. **Title demarcation:** Residents do not remember exactly when the demarcation happened, but three persons from the Village were involved as line-cutters.
14. **Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** The source of Iwarga Creek, which is described in the title, is not included in the demarcated area.
15. **Extension status:** The Village wants to apply for extension and has developed a detailed description and a map. It is not clear whether a formal application has been sent to the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs.



Petroglyphs on rocks within titled lands (Makunaima drawings).

Photo: APA

A pall marking the boundary of Kaibarupai's titled land.

Photo: APA



16. Extension description: The lands that Kaibarupai wants to secure through an extension cover an area 'commencing at the mouth of Iwarga Creek left bank Ireng River to its source, thence north east from the source of Iwarga Creek to the source of Elipinang Creek, thence down the Elipinang Creek to its mouth on the right bank of the Potaro River, thence up the Potaro River to Ayangana Mountain, thence south west to Tanwanamun thence down the left bank of the Tanwanamun to its mouth, thence down left bank of the Ireng River to point of commencement.'



Farming ground cleared outside titled land.

Photo: APA

- 17. Extension justification:** The extension would provide security to all the people and Village institutions currently finding themselves on state land in addition to important hunting and fishing areas.
- 18. Land and resource conflict:** The residents report that currently there are no land or resource conflicts.
- 19. Land security:** There are no reported conflicts so far, but many of the residents and institutions are outside the legal title area and, under national law, Kaibarupai does not have any power to decide what happens on these unsecured lands.
- 20. Livelihood security and environmental integrity:** The villagers say that most of the resources they depend on are in good health, but that the soil in and near the Village is less fertile than before due to continual farming.
- 21. Recognition and measures sought:** Residents of Kaibarupai Village call on the government to grant the Village the traditional land that their foreparents applied for through the ALC.

Residents participating in a public meeting with LTA research team.

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- Kamana was first granted title under the 1976 Amerindian Act. In 1991, President Hoyte reissued a title and in 2014 the Village received a document stating that the land had been registered under the Land Registry Act. It is assumed by villagers that the latter two documents refer to the same land as the 1976 title, however this is not known, as they contain no description.
- Important farming, hunting and fishing areas were not included in the title description (e.g. Tumong Valley and Potaro).
- Demarcation has taken place, but residents are not sure whether the demarcation accurately follows the title description.
- Kamana applied for extension a few years ago, but has so far not received any official reply.
- The game population is decreasing. Otherwise, the natural resources that residents depend on for a living are generally healthy.

1. **Location:** Arapatai Creek and Kamana River, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** Remains of clay pots and a number of sacred sites known to the residents of Kamana suggest that people have lived in the area for a long time. One example is a site on the southwest border of the title, which residents describe as a place where fighters surrender their weapons. Another is a place of worship where a man called Warewaru once lived. He was an important man with spiritual gifts.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kurukabaru, Kopinang and Waipa.
4. **Estimated population:** 242 (44 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.
6. **Local government:** In addition to Toshao, the Village Council has a secretary, treasurer and councillors in charge of agriculture and operating the radio.
7. **Land use and economy:** Residents depend largely on subsistence farming, hunting and fishing. They also use local gravel and sand for construction purposes. In addition to areas within their titled land, the Village depends on the Tumong Valley, a crucial farming area four hours' walk to the southwest, and hunting, fishing and gathering grounds around Potaro River, five days' walk to the northwest.



Pottery fragments where Warewaru, a spiritual leader, lived.
Photo: APA



Kamana Village.

Photo: APA



Marker (pall) at the boundary between Kamana and Kopinang Villages.

Photo: APA

8. **Community Projects:** No information obtained.
9. **Institutions and services:** The Village has a radio, electricity (solar), health service and a primary school. Older children go to secondary school in Paramakatoi.
10. **Current land title status:** Kamana was first granted a title under the 1976 Amerindian Act. In 1991 President Hoyte reissued title to what the community assumes is the same area of land. The Village did not receive the Certificate of Title showing that the land is registered under the Land Registry Act until 2014 and again, the residents assume this document also refers to the same area of land as the 1976 title, but the document lacks a description to confirm this.
11. **Existing title description:** The description in the 1976 Schedule is as follows: 'The area commences at the mouth of the Kamana River, Right Bank Tumong River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence along the watershed on the Right Bank Kamana River to the source of Kamana River, thence South-East to the source of Tumong River, thence down the Tumong to the Kamana River to the point of commencement.'
12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** The title does not cover the land traditionally used and occupied by people in Kamana. Hunting and fishing grounds as far away as Potaro have been excluded, and so have farming grounds around Orinduik. Historically, the Orinduik area was an important place for Kamana and neighbouring villages to collect *uling*, a weed from the Ireng River, which they used as salt in their cooking.
13. **Title demarcation:** The Village is listed in the Amerindian Land Titling project for demarcation in year 1 of the project.
14. **Demarcation suitability:** Residents are not sure whether the demarcation follows the title description. However, they note that the demarcated land does not correspond with their full traditional land (see 12 above).
15. **Extension status:** The Village applied for extension a few years ago (residents cannot remember the exact date) to an area that was agreed internally in the Village. More than 50 residents signed the application.
16. **Extension description:** 'The area commencing the mouth of Tumong, left bank Ireng River along the existing demarcated boundary to the Waipa boundary, then to the Ireng River, thence down left bank the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'
17. **Extension justification:** Residents report they need more fertile farming land and areas for cattle ranching than provided by the title.
18. **Response from government:** The government has not given an official response to the application, but some residents said the Village had been told to reapply, without knowing why.

The Villagers are not happy about this lack of response and clarity. The Toshao (in 2015) is in the process of reapplying.

19. Land and resource conflict: Residents report that a Brazilian miner was operating a six-inch dredge in the Tumong River in their untitled customary land without their consent. The dredge is currently inactive. People also voiced their disapproval of indigenous neighbours from Brazil who use the Orinduik area (outside title) for gathering materials.

20. Land security: Although the villagers currently don't face critical threats to their customary land, they are aware that they do not have legal rights to large parts of it and this worries them.

21. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: People currently feel free to use their resources on their titled and untitled customary lands and say that the general health of most resources they depend on is good. The game population is however declining; this is thought to be due to over-population and over-hunting.

22. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Kamana Village call on

- a. The government to grant their extension;
- b. Kamana Village Council and NTC to take steps to speed up this process.

Uling, used as salt for cooking by past generations.

Photo: APA

Orinduik Falls where residents' foreparents gathered **uling** as salt for cooking

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- Kanapang received a land title in 1976.
- Many residents are not happy with the title because they remember their foreparents discussing a collective territory with leaders of other North Pakaraima communities. The titles have fragmented this territory and caused problems between Villages. They want to re-unite with their brothers and sisters to continue the work of their foreparents.
- Brazilian miners approached Kanapang in 2015, claiming to have obtained prospecting rights on Kanapang land from the GGMC. However, the GGMC denied they had given such permission. At the NPDC meeting in August 2017, one of the miners along with some others returned under another company name and presented a proposal to the Villages of Kanapang and Itabac. The general consensus among the Tshaos gathered was that permission should not be granted, while recognising that the laws of Guyana allow the directly affected Village Councils to make their own decision on this matter.

1. **Location:** Ireng River, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.

2. **History:** Longstanding occupation in the area around Kanapang is evident from the frequent discovery of clay pots in all parts of their land. Some of these are very big and, according to residents, contain the remains of Makushi foreparents who were killed by Akawaios during what people refer to as the tribal wars.⁹⁴ Burial grounds are scattered around the land and many landmarks have a mythological significance, such as Haimara Head, Kebaru and the hillside of Penak (Penna).

The residents emphasise that their foreparents moved around their ancestral land as a part of their traditional lifestyle. The residents recall that the first specific settlements in the area were Kangamo and Puwa; both had schools and churches. The name Kangamo comes from *kamo*, which means 'game' in Makushi. People eventually moved from these places to the current Kanapang Village and to Penak (the satellite community). *Penak* means 'old' or 'old story', which refers to a legend about the Makunaima that explains the shape of the hillside to the east of Penak.

At some point in the 1900s or perhaps earlier, probably around the time of the Rupununi uprising, most people in Kanapang moved over to Brazil due to the political situation on the Guyana side of the border. Only the Lewis family stayed behind.

The name Kanapang comes from *kanao pang*, which in Makushi refers to a tree with wood that is good for making canoes. There was a big tree of this kind at the creek mouth.

3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Itabac and Kurukabaru in Guyana and Uiramuta and Kumabai on the Brazil side of the border, on the other side of Ireng River.

⁹⁴ Many villages referred to 'the tribal wars' without giving an exact date for them. The term is likely to refer to intergroup fuds in the 18th and 19th centuries, which form part of villagers' collective memory. These wars were perhaps also caused by the slave-raids in which the Dutch made certain indigenous groups hunt down other groups for their enslavement (see Schacht, R. (2013) *Cassava and the Makushi: A Shared History of Resiliency and Transformation in Food and Identity in the Caribbean*, ed. H. Garth, London: Bloomsbury).

4. Estimated population:

162 (30 households). Uncertain whether this includes the population of the satellite community Penak.

5. Identities of residents: Makushi and Patamona.

6. Local government: The Village Council consists of Toshao, Vice-Toshao and eight councillors.

7. Land use and economy: The main livelihood activities in Kanapang are farming, hunting, fishing and gathering of materials. Only a few residents occasionally engage in artisanal mining.



Claypots at Kebaru with skeletal remains.

Photo: APA

Most of the forest in Kanapang's title is in an area called Kebaru, about one hour walk north of the village centre, where most villagers have their farms. The main hunting and gathering areas are around Penak and Puwa. Penak is a two-hour walk from the main Kanapang settlement to the south and is inside the title. Puwa is in the southeast corner of Kanapang's title, about a day's walk from the central village. People from Kurukabaru also use the Puwa area. Residents report that a part of the Puwa area was cut out of the title during demarcation and now falls in Kurukabaru's land. Ireng River, Puwa River and Yawari Creek are the main sources of fish for Kanapang.

8. Community Projects: Community cattle ranching (both a youth programme & village cattle).

9. Institutions and services: There is mobile phone reception (from Brazil) in the area and the Village has a radio. Households have solar electricity and a few houses have a private generator. Kanapang has a heath hut and primary school. Older children go to secondary school in Paramakatoi.

10. Current land title status: Kanapang was granted a land title under the 1976 Amerindian Act. The villagers said that President Hoyte reissued a title document in 1991. According to the Certificate of Title issued in 2010, this land measures 76 square miles.

11. Existing title description: The area as described in the 1976 Amerindian Act: 'The area commences at the mouth of the Itabac River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence down the Ireng River to the Puwa River, thence up the Puwa River to the main tributary on its Right Bank, thence up the said tributary to its source, thence North-West to the point of commencement.'

12. Title suitability: Inadequate. Several residents remember the days of the Amerindian Lands Commission when Kanapang together with Itabac, Kurukabaru, Kaibarupai, Waipa and Kopinang requested joint land covering the area between the Ireng and Essequibo Rivers and from Karasabai to the Moruwa River on the south to Mount Ayengana and the Kuribrong River in the north. They also remember the time when the Region 8 District Council was operational and discussed an even larger North Pakaraimas land claim. These people are not satisfied with the current land title as it, together with the land titles of the other North Pakaraimas individual village titles, represents a fragmentation of the larger territory. Villagers who are not familiar with the history are quite content with the current title description.

13. Title demarcation: Residents cannot remember when the demarcation was carried out, but they do recall that three villagers were involved.

14. Demarcation suitability: Inadequate. A mistake was made around the head of Puwa River, which cut off a piece of land that now lies in Kurukabaru's title.

15. Extension status: Kanapang residents have not applied for extension, reasoning that they do



Harvesting cotton from a tree close to the home.

Photo: APA

not have anywhere to extend; they are bounded by Itabac in the north, Kurukabaru in the east and Brazil in the west and south. However, there had been some discussion about whether it would be possible to apply for the Orinduik area as shared land between Waipa, Kamana, Itabac and Kanapang. Further, as noted above, many residents are not satisfied with the fragmentation of indigenous land in the North Pakarimas and support the idea of renewing efforts to unite with the sisters and brothers in the district and call for the state to recognise a larger communal territory.

16. Land and resource conflict: Kurukabaru residents now use the area that was cut out of Kanapang's title around Puwa during the demarcation. Another area, between Pacau Creek and Itabac River, which is still inside Kanapang's title and demarcation, is used extensively for farming and hunting by Itabac residents who claim that their foreparents lived and worked there. Quite a few Amerindian farmers also come over from Brazil and farm on Kanapang's land.

Some people find it unfair that the other Villages are using their land, however, others say that instead of thinking of the land as belonging to each individual Village, the land should be understood as a large shared territory, regardless of national borders.

The Village however agrees when it comes to Brazilian miners passing through their land on their way to various mining areas in Guyana, who use the track road passing right through Kanapang. People are not happy about this intrusion, as it has significantly increased the traffic on the otherwise very quiet road.

17. Land security: Maps downloaded from the Geonode website in 2015 showed that three large-scale mining concessions held by Prometheus Resources Guyana Inc. covered a large part of Kanapang's land title to the north. The research team that visited the Village was not aware of these concessions and did not know who they belonged to, but wondered if they could be

related to the mining requests that were made to them a few decades ago. In the 1990s the company Golden Star contacted Kanapang and asked to prospect on their land. After internal meetings the Village decided they did not want any prospecting. The company had already brought machinery and equipment up to the Village by air, so the Village also decided that they do not want anyone using the airstrip other than for health and education purposes.

In August 2015 the Village was again presented with a request from miners, this time coming from Brazil, saying that they had permission from GGMC to prospect on their land. They showed the Village Council a letter from GGMC to this effect. The villagers sent them away and said they could return for another meeting 15 days later, but (as of June 2017) the miners never came back. The Toshao contacted GGMC to verify whether the agency had issued permission to the Brazilian miners. The response was that it had not.

Many residents feel very strongly about their connection to the land and are very concerned about national legislation that gives the right of subsoil resources to the state.

Yam grow deep in the land. We grandfather fight for it and we want to use the earth. We don't only want to use the earth to the skin, we want also the flesh... We will continue living here in peace. We belongs to Kanapang and we still continue to live in Kanapang. The next generation coming will hold the land like we holding the land.
[Kanapang resident]

18. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: The residents describe their land and resources as generally healthy.

19. Recognition and measures sought: The residents of Kanapang Village want to continue to own their mountains, water, forest, rocks, road and grass. To this effect the residents recommend that:

- a. The Village should develop its own rules and regulations that anyone coming to Kanapang has to abide by;
- b. The relevant legislation (e.g. Amerindian Act and the Mining Act) must be revised in order to protect the rights of Amerindians to the full extent of their land and all the resources on and in it. The community wants to be able to say no to all kinds of mining and other projects suggested by non-residents if they are not to their liking;
- c. The Village Council must take the initiative to discuss with other Villages in Region 8 to resuscitate the District Council and enable discussions about a joint land claim.

Typical home in Penak settlement.

Photo: APA



Typical house in Kanapang.

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- Karisparu is included in the ALT document for title grant in year one and demarcation in year two.
- Karisparu received a title in 2014 and was demarcated in 2015.
- Currently there are two miners operating on the titled land without the permission of the Village.
- Villagers say that the demarcation does not adequately follow the title description on the southern border.
- Mining activities in and around Village land are affecting animal life and residents are worried about its impact on the general health of the environment.

1. **Location:** Echerak and Potaro Rivers, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** Residents estimate that the current Village was established in the 1800s. The founding families were Johnsons, Abrams, Jeffrey, Evans and Charlie. The Alleluia church in the Village attracted people from Upper Mazaruni and other parts of the North Pakaraimas. Bones and clay pots in the market place cave and other sites of spiritual importance, such as Wygulla and Tengik, suggest that people have been living in the area for many generations. Acrabanang (inside the existing title) was a former settlement. Until it received its own title, Karisparu was often seen as a satellite of Chenapou.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Chenapou and Paramakatoi.
4. **Estimated population:** 187 (35 households). These numbers exclude the people who live in Karisparu Landing (Kaluk Pudu), which is inside Karisparu's title, but who consider themselves to be residents of Chenapou (see Chenapou report).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.
6. **Local government:** A Village Council consisting of Toshao, Vice-Toshao and six councillors.
7. **Land use and economy:** Residents of Karisparu hunt, fish and gather materials in the Tipuru, Moruwa and Siparuni Rivers. These areas take up to a week to



Broken clay pot in Karisparu.

Photo: APA



Aerial view of destruction caused by mining in Echerak River, on Karisparu lands.

Photo: APA

reach by foot. A large part of the population farms in and near to the Village (inside the title), but some people go to Moruwa to farm. Those going to Moruwa describe it an abundant area, and set up camps for longer periods there. Some residents have started to move towards artisanal mining in the Village land, and some own their own dredges, but they report that the amount of gold is diminishing. These people are increasingly struggling since they have moved away from farming.

- 8. Community Projects:** No information obtained.
 - 9. Institutions and services:** There is a high frequency radio in the health centre that is usually on the 5300 USB medical frequency, but no mobile signal. A few private shops located at the airstrip have access to the internet. Karisparu has a primary school and a health centre with two community health workers. Secondary school children go either to Paramakatoi or Mahdia, but in 2015 six students were returned from Paramakatoi due to the lack of dormitory space. Karisparu primary school has a primary top that can cater for a small number of students that are not able to go to secondary school.
 - 10. Current land title status:** A title was granted to Karisparu on 4th October 2014 under the State Lands Act.
 - 11. Existing title description:** 'The area commencing at the mouth of Echerak River, Right Bank Potaro River and its boundaries extend thence up the Left Bank Echerak River to its source, thence in a southerly direction through the watershed of Siparuni Amik River to a point of the Chenapou River to its mouth, Right Bank Potaro River, thence down the Right Bank Potaro River, back to the point of commencement. Save and except 66 feet on either side of all navigable Rivers and creeks, all lands privately owned and legally held and existing Airstrip.'
- The grant goes on to say that President Donald Ramotar '[grants] unto the Karisparu Village Council absolutely and forever the said tract of State Land hereinfore described, all and singular the appurtenances and privileges thereto belonging and appertaining for and on behalf of the Amerindian Community occupying the said tract.'
- 12. Title suitability:** The villagers say that they are satisfied with the title description, even though there are still areas outside the title that they have long considered to be part of their land.



Typical house in Karisparu Village.

Photo: APA

Karisparu's title has however caused a dispute with Chenapou since it includes an area often referred to as Karisparu Landing, inhabited by a significant number of Chenapou's residents. Karisparu residents say that an agreement was made with those residents to include them in Karisparu's title, but many of the Karisparu Landing residents say they were not consulted. There was no inter-Village consultation or agreement facilitated by the GLSC before the granting of the title to Karisparu.

- 13. Title demarcation:** The title was demarcated in February 2015. It is unclear whether the GLSC carried out a consultation with the Village before the demarcation exercise.
- 14. Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** Some villagers who accompanied the surveyors say that the surveyors did not want to walk over mountains and so they cut out parts of the land described in Karisparu's title. They refer specifically to the demarcation being flawed on the southern boundary in a forested and mountainous area. Villagers are not satisfied with this situation.
- 15. Extension status:** The Village has not applied for extension and is not planning to do so.
- 16. Land and resource conflict:** Two miners are operating on Village titled land without the permission of the Village Council. One of the miners, Remy, was there before the Village was granted title in 2014 and has GGMC documents, while the other miner does not. The Village Council has given two other miners permission to mine within the title. Some of the mining is taking place in the Echerak area (which is the northern border of Karisparu), including in a location referred to as Mamai Landing. An older lady who lives there has to go far for clean water and fish because she is completely surrounded by miners that are polluting the water. Brazilian illegal miners are also present further up Echerak River, outside the title, which makes the pollution even worse.

Loggers and roads built in the Tipuru and Moruwa area, where residents go at times for hunting and fishing trips, have affected the animal life and made hunting more difficult.

Residents also report to having a dispute with shop holders at the airstrip inside the titled land. They refuse to follow Village rules, which has upset many residents.

- 17. Land security:** The then Ministry of Amerindian Affairs reported in 2013 on its investigation and conclusions concerning the verification of the information in the land title application (held

by the Village). The report states that at that time there were small, medium and large-scale mining operations in the land identified by Karisparu. Only the medium-scale concessions were identified in more detail: 10 concessions were issued between 2010 and 2013. It is unclear what action was taken by the state agencies between this report and the issuance of title to Karisparu, but villagers now report four mining operations on their titled land. Mining data from the GIM website shows four medium-scale concessions on the southern and eastern border as well as a number along Echerak River. There are also four claim licences within the title.

Villagers are very worried about the lack of security of their titled land due to the mining within their title that they cannot control. The savings clause in their title document for 'privately owned and legally held' land underpins this insecurity and gives priority to any concession that was already there. This clause may also explain why the shop holders referred to above are refusing to follow Village rules.

18. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Residents report that fish and animals are driven further away by the noise from mining activities near the Village. They are also very concerned about the impact of mining on the health of the environment. The dredges throw the tailings directly into the river, and Echerak River is polluted. Residents suspect that the fish are polluted with mercury.

Logging concessions and roads in the Tipuru and Moruwa areas, outside their title, are affecting animal life and making hunting more difficult.

19. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Karisparu Village call for:

- a. The miners within their title, who are there without the Village's permission, to be removed;
- b. GGMC to carry out more frequent and strict controls on mining in the area to get rid of illegal mining activities;
- c. The government to rectify the flaws of the demarcation exercise, which cut out important parts of Karisparu's title on the southern border.

Village meeting in Karisparu.

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- Kato received a Village title in 1976, which excluded large parts of their customary land, including homesteads, secondary school, farms, hunting and fishing areas.
- The Village has applied for extension to two parcels of land to include the areas left out by the title. One of the areas was granted as extension in 2012, whereas the Village has been told that it must reapply for the second tract of land.
- The extension granted does not correctly cover the area that Kato applied for and excludes homes and farm lands on the left bank of Chiung River.
- Kato and Kurukabaru are currently in disagreement about their common border; both Villages claim that the other is overlapping their land. Kato Village Council has asked the government to intervene and settle the dispute, but so far (June 2017) it remains unresolved.

1. **Location:** Between Kawa and Chiung Rivers, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** An Anglican priest allegedly established a mission in Uruberu, about 20 miles north of the current Kato Village site, in the years before Guyana's independence from Britain. Elders in Kato say that people were living in the Uruberu area long before the mission and there is a saying that the dragon used to live there. Clay pots found in the savannah east of Kato Village centre indicate that people originally occupied a greater area. Along the current airstrip in Kato there is a straight line of rocks for about a mile that people believe stem from the time of tribal wars.

Foreparents of Kato residents told them that a man called Anselaik was buried in a hole in the mountain, about 30 minutes walk from the Village centre to the northeast. People respect this place because if it is disturbed, there will be thunder, lightning and rain. When Philip Duncan carried out research on the remains in the 1980s, he removed the skull and bones and there was indeed a storm.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Paramakatoi and Kurukabaru.
4. **Estimated population:** 418 (105 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.
6. **Local government:** The Village Council consists of Toshao, Vice-Toshao and councillors. The councillors cover the following areas: secretary, education, health, transportation, agriculture, cattle, electricity, and treasurer.
7. **Land use and economy:** The most important livelihood activities in Kato are rotational farming, hunting and fishing. Uruberu, Wawa Pal, Imuk Mouth, Kauyang Creek and Kolume are important areas for fishing, hunting, gathering and farming within the land title (in Uruberu people even grow their own rice). Neighbouring communities Paramakatoi and Kurukabaru also use many of these areas in Kato titled land, with Kato's permission. Kato also has an informal agreement for their own villagers to farm, hunt and fish on the left bank of Kawa River, which is in Paramakatoi's titled land. Residents also go out of the title to Takatu and Siparuni for hunting and fishing and



Burial place, a hole containing skeletal remains.

Photo: APA

at least once a year they make an important trip to Moruwa, in the direction of Mahdia, to catch large fish and game.

Several villagers, especially young men, also depend on mining for a living. They travel to different mining areas in Guyana and bring back some revenue.

8. Community Projects: No information obtained.

9. Institutions and services: The Village has a radio, solar electricity, health centre and a primary school. In 2013, construction of Kato secondary school started, so that children would not have to go to Paramakatoi and Mahdia. However, due to construction defects and lack of furniture the school was still not open in 2017. Some residents in Kato have private internet and generator.

10. Current land title status: Kato was granted a land title to 97 square miles under the 1976 Amerindian Act. President Hoyte reissued a title document to the same land in 1991, under Section 3 of the State Lands Act. In 2007 the Village received a Certificate of Title under Section 71 of the Land Registry Act.

11. Existing title description: The title description in the 1976 Amerindian Act and in the title reissued by Hoyte reads as follows: 'The tract commencing at the mouth of the Chiung River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Chiung River to an unnamed tributary on its left bank thence up the said unnamed tributary to its source, thence South-East to the source of an unnamed tributary, Right Bank Kowa River, thence down the said unnamed tributary to its mouth, thence down the Kowa River to an unnamed tributary on its Right Bank, thence up the said tributary to its source, thence South-West of the source of Aquafria River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence down the Aquafria River to its mouth, thence up the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'

In addition, the extension granted in 2012/13 states: 'The area commences at a point 66 feet from the mean high water of the Left Bank of an unnamed tributary and approximately UTM

coordinates E 187366 N 517556 North of Kato Village, and its boundaries extends down the said unnamed tributary on its left bank to the point on the Western side of Paramakatoi Amerindian Village and with approximately coordinates E 190803 N 518259, thence in a Northerly direction along the Western boundary of Paramakatoi Amerindian Village to the point on the Kowatipu mountain and intersection with the Paramakatoi Amerindian Village boundary and with approximately UTM coordinate E 200197 N 536778 thence North West to the source of an unnamed tributary of the Tappa Creek, 66 feet off the mean high water mark and with approximately UTM coordinates E 200494 N 537908, thence down the source of the unnamed tributary of the Tappa Creek on its Left Bank to a point 66 feet off the mean high water mark of the Tappa Creek on its Right Bank, and with approximately UTM coordinates E 196751 N 542631 thence up the Tappa Creek on its Right Bank, 66 feet off the mean high water mark on its source with UTM coordinates E 192527 N 538289 and thence South West to a point on the Eastern boundary of Kurukabaru Amerindian Village and with approximately UTM coordinates E 192515 N 5338189 thence South along the Eastern boundary of Kurukabaru Amerindian Village to a point along with the Kurukabaru Amerindian Village boundary and with approximately UTM coordinates E 185279 N519334, thence in a south easterly direction to the point of commencement. Save and except 66 feet on either sides of all navigable rivers and creeks or all lands privately owned and legally held as well as the right to access to these lands.'

- 12. Title suitability: Inadequate.** The title received in 1976 excluded two important areas claimed by Kato residents, one area to the north of the title and one to the east. The current title description, however, includes an area to the north as it was received as an extension in 2013 (see below), but this area still excludes important farming lands and about six homesteads on the left bank of Chiung River, e.g. where the secondary school is being built today. Both Kato and Kurukabaru claim this area as theirs. Kato residents are also concerned that the title still excludes the area to the east, such that homesteads and farms around Kawa Mouth are outside the title.

Burial grounds and caves near Kato Village.

Photo: APA



Villagers are not happy about the reference to unnamed creeks in both the title document from 1976 and the extension description. They want the government to know that there are no unnamed creeks in their land.

13. Title demarcation: The title has been demarcated. The surveyors held a meeting with the Village before carrying out the work, but it is unclear whether they explained in detail to the villagers which area would be demarcated, or whether the Village gave its consent to this. Four villagers joined the demarcation team and one was able to stop the demarcation process for a week, realising that the surveyors were not going all the way to the source of the Chiung River, which Kato residents have always claimed as their land. Instead the demarcation followed a different route inland. This was possibly in line with the title description, which does not follow the Chiung River to its source, but villagers may not have been aware that this part of their land was cut out from the title until the demarcation took place. Upon protesting to the surveyors, they were told that if they wanted more land, they had to apply for an extension.



LTA researcher making a presentation at a public meeting in Kato Village, October 2015. Photo: APA

14. Demarcation suitability: Incomplete. The demarcation document states that the land is an area of 93 square miles, while the title document says that it is 97 square miles. It is not clear what part of the land, if any, has been cut out and residents seem, to some extent, to have accepted the government's explanation that a flaw in the aerial survey conducted in 1976 caused the wrong estimation of the land area granted at that time.

The demarcation has not yet been updated to cover the area granted to Kato as extension in 2013. It also excludes the second part of the extension application, which was not granted.

15. Extension status: Incomplete. Kato first applied for extension in 2007 for two areas that had been excluded from the title in 1976. The extension description was agreed in a Village General meeting before it was submitted to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. However it was not discussed with neighbouring Villages. The area to the north (tract 1) was granted as extension in 2012, however the Toshao explained that this extension still does not include the important area along the left bank of Chiung that they realised during demarcation was not part of their title. People still live and farm in this area and the secondary school is located there. It seems that the area that was not granted in the extension is held by Kurukabaru and this has led to a dispute between the two Villages (see 19 below). Residents also still want recognition for the area to the east (tract 2) that they have applied for as extension.

16. Extension description: The description of the area to the east of the Village's current titled land is as follows: The second area of focus (2) lies to the south east of the existing Kato boundary and is comprised of savannah, scrub, dense forest, mountains and water courses. It is identified on Administrative maps of Region 8 as PCU 81115. The said expanse of land is bounded by the following coordinates: From a point designated A - 15.25 statute miles east of 60 degree W and 25.25 miles S of 5 degree N where Kato and Paramakatoi share a common boundary with the northernmost point of PCU 81115, thence in a south westerly direction along the west bank

of the Kawa River to a point designated B - 28.25 miles south of 5 degree N and 15 miles east of 60 degree W where the southernmost part of Paramakatoi neighbours Tusenen land. Then southwards along the west bank of Kawa to where Monkey Mountain and PCU 811115 meet the Ireng River at the Guyana/Brazil border at the point designated C - 15 miles east of 60 degree W and 37 miles south 5 degree N, thence westward along the Ireng to a point designated D - 10.25 miles east of 60 degree W and 37 miles south of 5 degree N where Kato lands have its southernmost ajointment with the PCU 811115 lands. Thence generally northward along the existing eastern boundary of Kato back to the point designated A.

17. Extension justification: The current land title excludes an area known by Kato residents to be their own land and which was included in the request by their foreparents to the Amerindian Lands Commission 1969. Residents currently live and farm there. Elders in Kato explain that most of the village land is savannah, so it is vital to have title over the areas of their land that are suitable for farming.

18. Response from government: The Toshao (in position since 2015) was told by the former Ministry of Amerindian Affairs that Kato must reapply for the second tract of land, which they did in 2016. There has been no reply to this application, however some villagers seem content after the President announced at the NTC conference in August 2015 that he would deal with all outstanding land issues and extensions. Others do not trust that this means they will get their second extension area recognised and they wonder what it means that Kato is listed for extension in the Amerindian Land Titling project. They wonder if the project will cater for 'another' extension since their full area was not recognised in 2013.

19. Land and resource conflict: Maps on the government's Geonode website showed in 2015 that about half of Kato's title was overlapped by a large-scale prospecting licence held by the uranium company Prometheus. This concession also stretched into the eastern extension area. Most Kato villagers knew about this company's interest in their land, but it is unclear whether

Resident showing the disputed boundary between Kato and Kurukabaru.

Photo: APA



it got the Village's consent to carry out prospecting. The Village and the company made an agreement in 2010 for the company's mineral prospecting, but several residents claim that this deal was struck between the then Toshao and the company, without the involvement and consent of the Village. The Toshao at the time claimed that the deal was good for Kato because the company paid GYD100,000 every month for the period they were operating, which is thought to be about two years (currently the company is not present on Kato's land). Prometheus did not express interest in mineral extraction after the initial exploration; villagers think this is because the company did not find sufficient amounts of uranium. New data on the government GIM website no longer shows the Prometheus concessions as part of the layer for large-scale mining.

Kato and Kurukabaru dispute the land along their common boundary (see also 12 above). Kato villagers assert that their elders have always considered the land along the left bank of Chiung River up to its source to be their land. Kurukabaru residents however claim that the land on left bank Chiung belongs to them. Kato Village Council has asked for intervention from the government to resolve the issue but, as of June 2017, an agreement has yet to be made.

20. Land security: Even though Prometheus is not present in the Village anymore, villagers feel insecure about what will happen in the future. Talking about the importance of the land to them, one of the residents said: *'If anyone comes to try to take the land there will be war.'*

21. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: People report most resources are healthy and they feel that they have food and water security. However game that used to be plentiful is becoming scarce, due to population growth.

22. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Kato Village call for

- a. The Amerindian Act to be revised to fully respect indigenous peoples' rights to their traditional lands and resources;

The government should give us the full right to our resources and not give it to anyone. I would like the government to stop foreigners to come and work this land. They don't want we to work on their land [state land], why must we allow them to work our land. [Kato resident]

- b. Kato Village Council, in particular, to push for the second extension to be granted;
- c. The government to recognise that there are no unnamed creeks in their land.

5.1.8

CHIUNG MOUTH

(Satellite community of Kato Village)

Key findings:

- **Chiung Mouth is located in the southern part of Kato Village title.**
 - **A number of people from Chiung Mouth live, farm and hold cattle in the Kawa area to the east of the current title. This is the area that is covered in the current extension application.**
 - **A Brazilian cattle rancher currently occupies parts of this area without the villagers' consent. Residents are uncomfortable about his presence, as he has previously threatened to shoot people.**
-

1. **Location:** Chiung and Ireng Rivers, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** At the start of the 1900s, a Catholic priest founded a church in Chiung Mouth and began teaching in the area. According to today's residents, people had been living there long before the priest arrived, but some had left due to lack of health and education opportunities. With the priest in the area, some started moving back. Residents have long-standing attachment to the land as shown by traditional knowledge, such as the existence of a 'snake hole' in a mountain. If anyone touches this, there will be snakes everywhere.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kurukabaru, Itabac and Kanapang.
4. **Estimated population:** 172 (in 30 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Makushi.
6. **Local government:** Being a satellite of Kato, the community is under the Kato Village Council, represented by a senior councillor. The community also has its own council made up of the senior councillor and six other councillors.
7. **Land use and economy:** As in Kato, key livelihood activities in Chiung Mouth include rotational farming, hunting and fishing. Residents of Chiung Mouth depend especially on the lands around Chiung River, of which the left bank falls within their titled land. They extract clay, loam and gravel from the river, which they use for house construction. People from Kurukabaru, Itabac and Kanapang also use the Chiung Creek area. Chiung Mouth residents also use the Kawa area (in the area applied for as extension), especially for fishing and cattle ranching.
8. **Community Projects:** No information obtained.
9. **Institutions and services:** The community has a radio, electricity (solar), health clinic, a nursery and a primary school. Children go to secondary school in Paramakatoi.
10. **Current land title status:** Kato summary report was granted a land title to 97 square miles in 1976 under the 1976 Amerindian Act. President Hoyte reissued a title document to the same land in 1991 under Section 3 of the State Lands Act.
11. **Existing title description:** The title descriptions in the 1976 Amerindian Act and in the title reissued by Hoyte reads as follows: The tract commencing at the mouth of the Chiung River,



Dredge in Ireng River, close to Chiung Mouth.

Photo: APA

Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Chiung River to an unnamed tributary on its left bank thence up the said unnamed tributary to its source, thence South-East to the source of an unnamed tributary, Right Bank Kowa River, thence down the said unnamed tributary to its mouth, thence down the Kowa River to an unnamed tributary on its Right Bank, thence up the said tributary to its source, thence South-West of the source of Aquafria River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence down the Aquafria River to its mouth, thence up the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'

In addition, the extension granted in 2012/13 states: 'The area commences at a point 66 feet from the mean high water of the Left Bank of an unnamed tributary and approximately UTM coordinates E 187366 N 517556 North of Kato Village, and its boundaries extends down the said unnamed tributary on its left bank to the point on the Western side of Paramakatoi Amerindian Village and with approximately coordinates E 190803 N 518259, thence in a Northerly direction along the Western

boundary of Paramakatoi Amerindian Village to the point on the Kowatipu mountain and intersection with the Paramakatoi Amerindian Village boundary and with approximately UTM coordinate E 200197 N 536778 thence North West to the source of an unnamed tributary of the Tappa Creek, 66 feet off the mean high water mark and with approximately UTM coordinates E 200494 N 537908, thence down the source of the unnamed tributary of the Tappa Creek on its Left Bank to a point 66 feet off the mean high water mark of the Tappa Creek on its Right Bank, and with approximately UTM coordinates E 196751 N 542631 thence up the Tappa Creek on its Right Bank, 66 feet off the mean high water mark on its source with UTM coordinates E 192527 N 538289 and thence South West to a point on the Eastern boundary of Kurukabaru Amerindian Village and with approximately UTM coordinates E 192515 N 5338189 thence South along the Eastern boundary of Kurukabaru Amerindian Village to a point along with the Kurukabaru Amerindian Village boundary and with approximately UTM coordinates E 185279 N519334, thence in a south easterly direction to the point of commencement. Save and except 66 feet on either sides of all navigable rivers and creeks or all lands privately owned and legally held as well as the right to access to these lands.'

12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** Although one of Kato's extension applications was granted (see below), the land to the east is still excluded. This area is important for the residents of Chiung Mouth, who live, farm and hold cattle in the Tocuma and Sukwabi areas.
13. **Title demarcation:** The title has been demarcated. The surveyors held a village meeting in Kato before carrying out the work, but it is unclear whether they explained in detail to the villagers which area would be demarcated, or whether the Village gave its consent to this. Four villagers joined the demarcation team and one was able to stop the demarcation process for a week, realising that the surveyors were not going all the way to the source of the Chiung River, which the people of Kato have always claimed as their land. Instead the demarcation followed a different route inland. This was possibly in line with the title description, which does not follow



A spiritual site in a mountain wall at Chiung Mouth.

Photo: APA

the Chiung River to its source, but villagers may not have been aware that this part of their land was cut out from the title until the demarcation took place. Upon protesting to the surveyors, they were told that if they wanted more land, they had to apply for an extension.

- 14. Demarcation suitability: Incomplete.** The demarcation document states that the land is an area of 93 square miles, while the title document says that it is 97 square miles. It is not clear what part of the land, if any, has been cut out and residents seem, to some extent, to have accepted the government's explanation that a flaw in the aerial survey conducted in 1976 that caused the wrong estimation of the land area granted at that time. However, it could be that the mistake was made in the area where the new secondary school is now located as the villagers are claiming that this area ended up in Kurukabaru's title. It is unclear whether this happened as a part of the demarcation of Kato or of Kurukabaru.

The demarcation does not cover the area that was granted to Kato Village as extension in 2013. It also excludes the second part of the extension application, which was not granted.

- 15. Extension status: Incomplete.** Kato first applied for extension in 2007 for two areas that had been excluded from the title in 1976. The extension description was agreed in a Village General meeting in Kato before it was submitted to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. However it was not discussed with neighbouring villages. The area to the north (tract 1) was granted as extension in 2012. Residents still want an extension for the area to the east (tract 2).

16. Extension description: The description of the area to the east of the Village current titled land is as follows: 'The second area of focus (2) lies to the south east of the existing Kato boundary and is comprised of savannah, scrub, dense forest, mountains and water courses. It is identified on Administrative maps of Region 8 as PCU 81115. The said expanse of land is bounded by the following coordinates: From a point designated A - 15.25 statute miles east of 60 degree W and 25.25 miles S of 5 degree N where Kato and Paramakatoi share a common boundary with the northernmost point of PCU 81115, thence in a south westerly direction along the west bank of the Kawa River to a point designated B - 28.25 miles south of 5 degree N and 15 miles east of 60 degree W where the southernmost part of Paramakatoi neighbours Tusenen land. Then southwards along the west bank of Kawa to where Monkey Mountain and PCU 81115 meet the Ireng River at the Guyana/Brazil border at the point designated C - 15 miles east of 60 degree W and 37 miles south 5 degree N, thence westward along the Ireng to a point designated D - 10.25 miles east of 60 degree W and 37 miles south of 5 degree N where Kato lands have its southernmost ajoinment with the PCU 81115 lands. Thence generally northward along the existing eastern boundary of Kato back to the point designated A.'

17. Extension justification: The current land title excludes an area known by Kato residents to be their own land, requested to the ALC by their foreparents, and people live and farm there. Large areas of Kato Village lands are savannah, so it is vital for residents to have title over the areas of their land that are suitable for farming.

18. Response from government: The Toshao (in position since 2015) was told by the former Ministry of Amerindian Affairs that Kato must reapply for the second tract of land, which they did in 2016. There has been no reply to this application, however some villagers seem content after the President announced at the NTC conference in August 2015 that he would deal with all outstanding land issues and extensions. Others do not trust that this means they will get their second extension area recognised and they wonder what it means that Kato is listed for extension in the Amerindian Land Titling project. They wonder if the project will cater for 'another' extension since the full area was not recognised in 2013.

19. Land and resource conflict: Residents of Chiung Mouth are dissatisfied with the presence of a Brazilian cattle rancher on their customary land that is covered by the extension application (to the east towards Kawa). This person intimidates people and he has threatened to shoot them.

20. Land security:

This land is what we father use to used and we feel very attach to it because it is we land we will take it. [Chiung Mouth resident, 2015]

Especially with the uncertain status of the extension application to the east, residents know that their land is not secured. They want the government to recognise that they are the owners of their land and that they should not have to apply for it since they have been there '*all the time*'. [Chiung Mouth resident, 2015]

21. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Residents explain that fires, caused by people burning savannah grass to encourage new grass to grow for their cattle, threaten forests and forest resources during the dry season. The impact of the fires is particularly serious because there is so little forest on the land in the first place.

22. Recognition and measures sought: The residents of Chiung Mouth call on:

- a. The Village Council to continue pushing for recognition of the second tract of extension (which was not granted in 2012);
- b. The NTC to call on the President to attend to Chiung Mouth's land issues;
- c. The government to recognise that their customary land belongs to them.

Key findings:

- Kopinang was granted a land title under the 1976 Amerindian Act, but only received a title certificate stating that the land is registered under the Land Registry Act in 2007. As the latter document does not contain a title description, villagers wonder if the land is indeed the same as that granted in 1976 or has been altered. This is causing some confusion.
- The 1976 title fails to cover large parts of the customary lands of Kopinang, which the Village had requested, together with five other communities, from the Amerindian Lands Commission in the 1960s.
- The land title has been demarcated, but residents consider that it does not accurately follow the 1976 title, reducing the size of Kopinang's titled land.
- Customary areas in Potaro and Kuribrong are being polluted and destroyed by Brazilian miners.

1. **Location:** Both banks of the Kopinang River, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** The land around Kopinang Village bears witness to a long-term interaction between people and their surroundings. There are rock paintings close by and a cave with two entrances into which, according to local stories, enemies (Akawaio and Arekuna) were lured and killed. The older residents explain that their grandparents told them often about the time of tribal wars in the region and how they had to defend themselves against the neighbouring peoples. The land also features several sacred caves that were used for hunting and fishing rituals and were said to lead to another world. Some shamans (*piaman*) used to lead groups down into one of the caves where they would enter a world where a single arrow would kill many hogs and *haimara* fish.

During the 20th century, there was an influx of coastlanders seeking minerals in the area. Many of these people married local Patamona women and Kopinang Village is today also the home of the descendants of these people.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kamana, Kaibarupai, Maikwak.
4. **Estimated population:** 762 (140 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona (some coast landers, often married with Patamona).
6. **Local government:** Village Council with Toshao, Vice-Toshao, secretary, treasurer, radio operator and persons focusing on public health and education.
7. **Land use and economy:** Subsistence farming, hunting and fishing are still key livelihood activities for people in Kopinang. Important hunting, fishing and gathering areas are Kuribrong, Potaro and Kùwaù, all outside the title. A number of people also carry out artisanal mining close to the Village. Young people often go out to mining areas elsewhere in Guyana to make money that can sustain them for a while before coming back.
8. **Community Projects:** No information obtained.
9. **Institutions and services:** The Village has a radio, electricity, private internet, nursery, health



Entrance to sacred cave at Pàinkà.

Photo: APA

service and a primary school. For secondary school, children go to Paramakatoj, Mahdia, Sand Creek or Georgetown.

10. Current land title status: The Village was granted a title under the 1976 Amerindian Act. However, in 2007, without any consultation, another document was handed to the Village stating that the Village is the 'registered proprietor of under the Land Registry Act of that land registered as No 1 and comprising 39, 930.325 acres.' Residents do not know why this new title document was issued.

11. Existing title description: For the record, the 1976 description is as follows: 'The area commences at the mouth of the Karapopo Creek, Left Bank Kopinang River, Right Bank Potaro River, thence up the Karapopo Creek to its source, thence Southwards along the Watershed of the Kopinang, Chenapowu and Makana Rivers to the source of the Tumong River, thence North-eastwards along the watershed of the Maikwak and Kopinang Rivers to the Right Bank Kopinang River opposite the mouth of the Karapopo Creek, thence across the Kopinang River to the point of commencement.'

The Certificate of Title from 2007 does not contain a description of the land. Without knowing what land this document refers to, villagers believe that it has reduced the land of Kopinang, which is what has happened with the demarcation.

12. Title suitability: Inadequate. Since the Village does not know what the latest title description is, residents' answers about suitability relate to the land that has been demarcated.

Residents report that the land excludes key farm areas, both close by and further away from the Village. Some of these farm lands lie towards Maikwak and on the right bank of Uruberu Creek there are several camps and cassava fields where families stay on a semi-permanent basis. The demarcated land also excludes important hunting and fishing areas to the east of the Village towards Potaro and Kuribrong Rivers.

It should also be noted that the 1976 title covered only a small part of the land requested by Kopinang at the time of the Amerindian Lands Commission which was recorded in the Commission's report: 'A joint request with people of Itabac, Kaibarupai, Kanapang and Waipa

Sacred cave, home of giant butterflies.

Photo: APA

and Sandhill for the area of land extending from the Ireng River to the Essequibo River and from Karasabai and Muruwa River (on the south) to Mount Ayangana and the Kuribrong (on the north).'

13. Title demarcation: The title has been demarcated. Some community members were involved as line-cutters.

14. Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.

Villagers claim that a triangular portion of land was removed from the Village where the title description reaches up to the banks of the Maikwak Creek. The trail of poles marking the boundary was cut through the bush several kilometres to the northwest. Residents also describe an overlap with the title of Kamana in an area used to gather lumber for buildings. Both bridges on the Maikwak and Kamana Creeks used to have boards indicating the Kopinang boundary, but now these are outside the demarcated area.

15. Extension status: The Village has not thought about applying for an extension yet because they are still facing the above-mentioned problems with their title and demarcation.

16. Land and resource conflict: Residents report that they do not currently have issues with outside interests on their titled land. However, Brazilian miners have threatened to poison Kopinang residents who were hunting in the Kuribrong area. In relation to this incident, a resident said: *'If they should keep threatening like that Amerindian man will put arrow in they belly.'*



Public meeting in Kopinang Village.

Photo: APA



17. Land security: Residents are very concerned that all their customary land falling outside the current title (the boundary of which is itself uncertain) is not secure against outside interests such as mining and logging.

18. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Miners are polluting Potaro River and the stretch of Kuribrong downstream from Amaila Falls and game is near depletion close to the Village due to over-hunting. Fish and forest products, such as *mukru*, *hiari* and resins are also scarce near the Village due to heavy use. Residents also report that their crops are affected by changes in the climate.

19. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Kopinang Village call for:

- a. Kopinang's title and demarcation issues to be addressed and the full customary land of the village to be regained. In this process the government must practise complete transparency and listen to residents' concerns and views;
- b. The Amerindian Act must be revised to provide full protection for indigenous peoples' rights;
- c. The NTC to coordinate village issues so that there are no overlaps or conflicts between Villages. Peaceful sharing of resources is a desired outcome;
- d. The IPC to represent Kopinang in Parliament and shed light on the issue of the new title.

Sketch mapping process in Kopinang Village.

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- Kurukabaru received a land title in 1976 to an area much smaller than the customary area used by their foreparents – an area still of great importance to the residents today.
- Most key hunting, fishing and gathering areas are outside the village title, between one and seven days' walk from the Village.
- In one of these areas, Moruwa, logging and mining concessions have been allocated to several companies operating on a large scale, which are causing damage to forest and wildlife.
- The Village has not applied for an extension, but wants to explore opportunities with other Villages in the region to claim a larger territory instead of individual titles that fragment collective indigenous land.

1. **Location:** Left bank Ireng River, North Pakarimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.

2. **History:** Residents explain that their foreparents used to live a nomadic life, dwelling for periods of time in different places in the larger area that they now think of as their customary land.⁹⁵ This is shown by pieces of bone and other remains from their resource use discovered in Katamayek Puyappù, Puwa Puyappù, Pokowa Yen, Pa'yinko Yen, Tolon Pùlopo, Kilikcha Yen and clay pots found in Payenka'patoi, Kuipalutoi, Puwa, Tutuik and Yewaik. There are also several places that today's residents know should not be interfered with to avoid the spread of sickness. Examples of such sites are Katamak Yek, Kamoto Tùpù and Kuwasuk Tùpù.

People only started to settle in the area around 1910, with the presence of a Roman Catholic priest, Father Cary Elwes, and the building of the first chapel where today's Village is located. A school and a medical centre also attracted people to the location.

3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kato, Itabac, Kanapang and Kamana.

4. **Estimated population:** 600 (in 102 households). Including the satellite communities of Chiung Head, Arasawa and Puwa in the count, the total is 999 in 192 households.

5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.

6. **Local government:** The Village Council consists of Toshao and 11 councillors.

7. **Land use and economy:** Farming, hunting, fishing and gathering are the most significant livelihood activities for Kurukabaru's residents. They also use materials such as clay, gravel and loam to build their houses.

Large parts of Kurukabaru's land are savannah, so the forested areas are of key importance for farming. Such areas include the head of Chiung River, the area around the Puwa River and Muleipan (by the foot of Kawa Mountain). For hunting, fishing and gathering, residents regularly travel long distances to areas outside the land title, such as Moruwa (one week's walk), Siparuni (one week's walk), Kuribrong (one week's walk), Takatu (one week's walk), Potaro (four days' walk), Kawa Tupu (two days' walk) and Kawaik Palu (near Kawa Tupu).

⁹⁵ Residents mention Kawa, Tumong, Arasawa, Puwa, Muluipan, Moruwa and Tapa.



Clay pot next to the airstrip, Kurukabaru.

Photo: APA

Residents have strong beliefs about the relationship between certain plants, animals and insects and success in hunting/fishing. Some examples of *bina* (*mulan yamuk*) were shared: Ants (*uyuk*, *wopala*, *mapa* and *ilak*) are used to sting the huntsman. Amphibians (*pakoko*, *kunawa*, *kupi kupi* and *pitalo*) are used in different ways, for example, to apply poison from the frogs to cuts on a man's chest. Different plants are also used: *chiwi* (ginger) is applied on the skin and the *kuwak* plant is soaked in *otowanta* juice from a root and pulled through the nose and out the mouth. Other plants mentioned as hunting *binas* are *ilikawa pip'pa* (a type of bark) and *kusak*.

8. **Community Projects:** Cattle rearing and a village shop.
9. **Institutions and services:** Kurukabaru has a radio, electricity (mostly solar for individual households), health service, nursery and a primary school. Older children go to secondary school in Paramakatoi.
10. **Current land title status:** A land title was granted to Kurukabaru under the 1976 Amerindian Act.

- 11. Existing title description:** 'The area commences at the mouth of the Chiung River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Chiung River to a tributary on its left bank, thence up the said tributary to its source, thence northwards along the watershed of the Kowa and Tumong Rivers to Anandabaru Mountain, thence west to the source of the Tumong River, thence down the Tumong River to Arasawa River, thence South to the source of the Puwa River, thence down the Puwa River to its mouth, thence down the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'
- 12. Title suitability: Inadequate.** The title covers only a very small part of the land that the Village sought recognition for at the time of the Amerindian Lands Commission. The land requested by the Village at that time covered the area 'From Mt. Ayangana; straight across the mouth of Potaro River; right down to the mouth of Burro-Burro River; and straight across through Mt. Tawaileng to the border.' The current title excludes important hunting, fishing and gathering grounds that were customarily used by residents' foreparents.
- 13. Title demarcation:** The title has been demarcated. Some community members were involved as line cutters.
- 14. Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** According to residents, the GLSC officers cut off a part of the title land on the boundary with Kato during the demarcation exercise, resulting in Kurukabaru land being 'given' to Kato. It should be noted that Kato claims that some of their own land has been cut off (unclear when and how) and is now within Kurukabaru's title, for example where the new secondary school is being built.
- 15. Extension status:** The Village has not applied for extension since it is situated between several other Villages. However, the residents are hoping to discuss the issue with neighbouring Villages and potentially make a joint application for extension together with others. This is being discussed as a part of the meetings of the newly established District Council.

Village meeting Kurukabaru, October 2015.

Photo: APA



16. Land and resource conflict: Logging and mining concessions around Moruwa do not have the consent of the people using the area (including those from Kurukabaru). Data from the government GIM website shows that the logging concession is a Timber Sales Agreement (TSA) held by Demerara Timbers Limited (DTL) and there is one large-scale mining block owned by Oko Mining Development Inc. There are also several medium-scale blocks in the Moruwa area.

Kurukabaru and Kato have an unresolved dispute (June 2017) about the border between them. Kurukabaru residents are of the opinion that Kato's extension to the north overlaps their own titled land on the left bank of Chiung River. They are disappointed that the former Minister of Amerindian Affairs did not take into account that they already own this area when issuing the extension to Kato in 2012. Residents say that they would not stop residents from Kato carrying out their cultural activities in this area and that they would be willing to share it between the two Villages. A meeting was held in 2016 or 2017 in Kato to which Kurukabaru Village Council was invited, where the issue was discussed. Nonetheless, no conclusion was reached as to how to deal with it and the two Villages are now waiting for an intervention from the government on the issue.

17. Land security: The Kurukabaru people have been using the areas described in 7 above for many generations without any particular problems. However, the entry of forestry and mining interests into the Moruwa area has made clear that the land outside the formal village title is not secure from outside interests. The residents are not happy with this situation and urge the Region 8 District Council to come together again with the aim of jointly securing a large territory of land between the Villages.

I want the land open...I don't like the demarcation. [Kurukabaru resident]

I don't want to stay like tawa-tawa [a type of finch] in a cage. [Kurukabaru resident]

Maps accessed from the Geonode website in 2015 showed that Kurukabaru was overlapped by two large-scale mining concessions held by the uranium company Prometheus in the southernmost part of the title. However, newer data from the updated Geonode site does not show the Prometheus concessions anymore.

18. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: People in Kurukabaru report that most of their natural resources are healthy. However, in the Moruwa area, forestry and mining activities have started to affect the health of the forest, including the animal populations. Furthermore, residents now have to travel very far to find forest with lumber for house building; there is hardly any left close to the Village.

19. Recognition and measures sought: The residents of Kurukabaru urge:

- a. Leaders of Region 8 to come together to revitalise the regional collaboration that existed at the time of their foreparents;
- b. The leaders to discuss options for getting an indigenous territory recognised as opposed to the individual titles that fragment the land and allow external interests to come in;
- c. Government agencies to stop issuing mining and forest concessions in titled and untitled customary lands of indigenous peoples in Guyana;
- d. **'We must revise the Amerindian Act. We want the Act to coincide with international standards.'** [Kurukabaru elder]

Key findings:

- Maikwak does not have a land title. Not all residents are Amerindian and the village is not unified when it comes to a plan to apply for one.
- The community was mentioned in the ALC report, but is not part of the list of communities to be titled under the Amerindian Land Titling project.
- Currently coastlanders (and their descendants) and Amerindians live more or less in harmony in Maikwak, but residents are worried that large-scale mining could be brought to the area.
- A great number of the male residents engage in artisanal or small-scale mining in and around the village.

1. **Location:** Maikwak Creek, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** Residents estimate that the current community was established around 1915-20. However, archaeological finds at Muribang, a former settlement near Maikwak, indicate that people have been living in the area for a long time. These artefacts include thousands of pieces of thunder bowls, stone axes, coals, jasper arrow heads, spear points and household utensils in clay. David Augustus in Kopinang has collected several of these artefacts. There are also several sites of spiritual importance showing long-standing occupation of the land. For example, people avoid disturbing a rock on the road between Maikwak and Kamana, as it will upset the weather patterns. There are also several places where people usually pray to the spirits for good fortune before hunting and fishing expeditions.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kopinang, Kamana, Kurukabaru, Paramakatoi and Chenapou.
4. **Estimated population:** 138 (26 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona, Afro-Guyanese, East Indian and mixed race.
6. **Local government:** The community currently has a Toshao, a secretary and a treasurer.
7. **Land use and economy:** Residents of Maikwak make their living from subsistence farming, hunting, fishing and artisanal and small-scale mining. The farming area closest to the village centre is Sumbally Creek (one hour's walk to the west). People also fish, hunt and gather *hiari* and other resins here. Koniabaru Mouth (three hours' walk to the southeast) and Suloparu Mouth (four hours' walk north) are also important areas for hunting and fishing. These areas are shared respectively with Chenapou and with Kopinang and Kurukabaru.

Residents sell or barter gold and diamonds obtained from Maikwak Creek, Tapa, and Anandabaru, while gravel and white sand for cement can be found widely in and around creeks.
8. **Community Projects:** Community cabbage farm.
9. **Institutions and services:** Some people have solar electricity. The community has a radio, health service, nursery, and a primary school. Older children go to secondary school in Paramakatoi.

Diamond mining in Pilaqua, Maikwak.

Photo: APA



10. Current land title status: The community does not have a land title. Residents say that an application was sent, but that it was lost on the way to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. Consequently, they have received no reply. Some say that it included a sketch map of their proposed area as well as a cover letter and it might not have met the application guidelines of the Amerindian Act.

Maikwak was mentioned in the ALC as a small settlement of 15 people. The Commission, noting the settlement was located in an area where there were several mining claims, recommended that a conditional grant should be given to the area occupied until it was clear whether people would stay there. Maikwak is not a part of the Amerindian Land Titling project. The residents of Maikwak are not unified as to whether the community should apply for an Amerindian land title.

11. Land and resource conflict: Coastlanders built an airstrip and buildings in the 1930s and currently employ many people from Maikwak in their mining concessions. Things are peaceful so far; there are mutual agreements on occupation and use of land though some tensions exist around the impacts of mining on water and land. These tensions could escalate. Generally the feeling in Maikwak is that as long as nobody brings in large-scale mining and entirely foreign

Maikwak women's group meeting.

Photo: APA



interests then people can live harmoniously. However, the residents are worried about mining by outsiders further up the creeks that they depend on for water. This mining is not likely to be legally sanctioned by the government because there are no mining concessions in or around Maikwak, according to data on the GIM website.

12. Land security: The Amerindian residents of Maikwak are very aware that their land is not secure and this is a constant worry. Even if there are no current major conflicts, as noted above, people are concerned that large-scale mining or logging could be introduced to the area or that the land they depend on could be taken from them for conservation purposes.

13. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Residents have noticed that fish and game populations in the surrounding areas are diminishing. They reason this is due to expansion of mining and an increase in population. Mining is causing forest damage and pollution in Muribang, Sumbari, Waipri and around Maikwak Mouth.

14. Recognition and measures sought: As noted above, residents of Maikwak are not unified on the question of an Amerindian land title. However, a substantial number of residents call for the following actions:

- a. The Village Council to apply for a title that covers the lands customarily occupied and used by residents, which must also secure their rights to subsoil resources;
- b. The government to legally grant the title applied for;
- c. The NTC to help coordinate the title and extension applications between different Villages to reduce the risk of overlaps and gaps.

Small-scale mining at Waiapri, Maikwak.

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- Monkey Mountain was granted a land title in 1976, which was reissued in 1991.
- The title description is not adequate since many homesteads and key farming, hunting and fishing areas are excluded.
- This situation was worsened with the demarcation, which further reduced the title size.
- The Village applied for extension in 2005, but is not sure of its status. However, the Village is included for extension in year 2 of the ALT project.
- Mining threatens game, fish, waterways and forest in and around Echilebar, Siparuni and Mariaparu.

1. **Location:** Left bank Ireng River, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** Residents estimate that the current Village was established early in the 1800s. Physical remnants of earlier inhabitants such as a rock carving in Kaichana toi and clay pots in several locations around the title indicate that people have been living in the area for a long time. Residents' collective memory about the landscape also points to a long relationship between their foreparents and specific places. For example, a rock mountain called Yamata yen (tiger coat place) is known to be a place of the spirits. Anyone who goes there without the knowledge of the elders will get sick. Ate (toothache) Cave is another spiritual place. People who drink water from this cave are likely to get toothache afterwards.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Taruka, Paramakatoi and Kato.
4. **Estimated population:** 840 (135 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Makushi and Patamona.
6. **Local government:** A Village Council that consists of Toshao, deputy Toshao, secretary, treasurer and a number of other councillors.
7. **Land use and economy:** The villagers of Monkey Mountain depend on subsistence farming, hunting, fishing and gathering of materials from the forest. Important areas are outside the land title, such as in Siparuni and Takatu. These areas are shared with other Villages, including Kato, Paramakatoi, Taruka, Tuseneng and people from the Karasabai area. Residents also use subsoil found close to the Village such as clay, gravel and white sand for construction of houses. Many of the men from Monkey Mountain have become involved in mining and are working in their own title and in operations outside.
8. **Community Projects:** No information obtained.
9. **Institutions and services:** The Village has a radio, electricity (solar), health service, nursery, and primary school. Older children go to Paramakatoi or Sand Creek for secondary school. People who have left school were able to start attending the Bina Hill Youth Learning Center in early 2015.



Clay deposits at Malusuwa, Monkey Mountain, used for house construction.

Photo: APA

10. **Current land title status:** The Village was granted title in 1976 under the Amerindian Act. Another document of title was received in 1991.
11. **Existing title description:** The 1991 title document does not contain a description of the land. The 1976 title reads: 'The area commences at the mouth of the Echilebar River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Echilebar River to Mipimah Falls, thence North-West to the source of an unnamed tributary on the Left Bank Tusenen River, thence down the said tributary to its mouth, thence down the Tusenen River to its mouth, thence down the Kowa River to its mouth, Left Bank Ireng River, thence down the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'
12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** Residents are not happy with the title because it excludes homesteads and important lands that they depend on for hunting, fishing and gathering.

We know that it is being owned by the state, but it is time it should be owned and recognise legally by us the Amerindians. [Monkey Mountain resident]

Residents report that outside the title there are homesteads at Wandaik (north of main Village), Rupununi and at Walak Palu (both northeast of main Village). The title only covers a small part of the land that Monkey Mountain requested from the Amerindian Lands Commission.
13. **Title demarcation:** The title has been demarcated, but villagers report that no residents were involved in the exercise.
14. **Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** Residents consider that the demarcation does not accurately follow the title description, because the demarcation exercise mistook the Otowanda

Falls for Maipaima Falls (which are mentioned in the title description). The boundary was therefore cut to take off in a northeasterly direction from Echilebar River approximately five miles below the actual Maipaima Falls. This has apparently left 56 households (256 people) outside the demarcated boundary.

- 15. Extension status:** The Village applied for extension on 21st May 2005.
- 16. Extension description:** The following description was agreed in a Village General Meeting: 'Commencing from the Maipaima Falls better known as Wandaik Falls to the Otomung Mountain, known as the Cowfly Mountain, to the Haimarayeikuru River, thence down on its left bank to its mouth, thence down Takatu River to its mouth, thence up the Siparuni River on right bank up the Waika River to the head of Blackwater Creek and down to its mouth and northwest to Tuseneng River on its left bank down to Saipa Creek'.
- 17. Extension justification:** The Village wants to secure farming, fishing, hunting and gathering grounds that are excluded from the title.
- 18. Response from government:** In response to government advice, the Village Council reapplied in accordance with the requirements of the Amerindian Act of 2006. The research team saw a copy of this application in 2015, and the Village said that they had heard nothing further about the status of their application. Monkey Mountain is however listed for extension and demarcation in the third year of the ALT project.
- 19. Land and resource conflict:** Brazilian gold and diamond miners are working within Monkey Mountain titled land, but there are no concessions within the title according to the latest data on the government's GIM website. According to villagers, they have verbal agreements with the miners about their activities, but nothing written. There are also mining operations on the untitled customary lands of Monkey Mountain in Uwika (to the northeast of the village). Outside cattle ranchers are also operating on customary land between Monkey Mountain and Taruka.
- 20. Land security:** Since so much of their traditional land has been excluded from their title, and even more cut out by the demarcation, villagers are very aware of the lack of security over their land – even if they are not currently facing significant problems with accessing and using this land. The mining in the Echilebar area and the mining and logging in Siparuni are a concern to them.
- 21. Livelihood security and environmental integrity:** Farming areas outside the current title are particularly important, as the farming grounds within the title are very rocky and of poor quality. Mining activities threaten game, fish, waterways and forest in and around Echilebar, Siparuni and Mariaparu. Residents' water security is especially affected during the dry season because the water level drops very low and there is no way of purifying it.
- 22. Recognition and measures sought:** Residents of Monkey Mountain Village call on:



Mining claim board at Maipaima Creek,
Monkey Mountain.

Photo: APA

- a. The Village Council to bring their concerns about the flawed title description and demarcation to the relevant government authorities;
- b. The NTC to meet with the President to address the outstanding land issues. If the issues are not satisfactorily addressed, residents encourage NTC to organise an Amerindian protest. There must be no political ties between NTC and the government;
- c. The government to recognise and secure the community's full customary land and resources, including sub-surface resources, which have been excluded by the title and the demarcation.

Typical house in Monkey Mountain.

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- Paramakatoi received a title in 1976, which only covers a small part of the land traditionally used by residents for their livelihood and which is of historic, cultural and spiritual importance to the residents.
- Homesteads, farming, hunting and fishing grounds are left outside the title.
- The land was demarcated in 2016/2017, but is incomplete in one area, where there is a potential overlap with Taruka. Residents are waiting for GLSC to rectify the problem.
- Data downloaded from the Geonode website in 2015 shows that most of sub-region 1 or Region 8 is reserved by GGMC for Goldstone Resources Ltd. However, there is no data layer for a GGMC-reserved area in the information on the new GIM website, so it is uncertain whether such a category still exists or not.
- Paramakatoi residents are worried about their future access to food, because forestry and mining activities are degrading customary areas of Tipuru and Siparuni (outside the land title), affecting resources that Paramakatoi residents depend on.

1. **Location:** Left bank Kawa River, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** According to the Amerindian Lands Commission report, the Pilgrim Holiness Church established the village around 1950. However, there is evidence that Patamona and Makushi people have been living in the greater Paramakatoi area for much longer. Petroglyphs are found in the Siparuni area and there are legends associated with specific historical sites, such as Kawa Mountain, Bamboo Creek and Kuilyaliyeng. There are former settlements in Tipuru and Siparuni.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kato, Taruka and Tuseneng.
4. **Estimated population:** 2,028.
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona, Makushi and Wapichan.
6. **Local government:** Paramakatoi consists of the central Village and two satellite communities. A Toshao, two senior councillors and 19 other councillors administer Paramakatoi as a whole. The central Village of Paramakatoi is governed by the Toshao and nine councillors who cover the following positions and areas: deputy Toshao, secretary, treasurer, sport, culture, education, agriculture, health and sanitation, and security. The satellite community of Bamboo Creek has a council comprising one senior councillor and seven other councillors. The council of the other satellite community, Mountain Foot, is made up of one senior councillor and three other councillors.
7. **Land use and economy:** Residents of Paramakatoi depend heavily on subsistence farming, hunting and fishing for their livelihood. Some are also involved in cattle rearing, small-scale trade in local crafts and mining. Young men, in particular, leave the community for months at a time to carry out mining, but some mining also occurs within or close to Paramakatoi's customary land, such as in Siparuni, Arnik and Moruwa. Farming grounds are within the title area, but fertile soil around Siparuni, Arnik and Moruwa (outside title) is also very important for



Part of Paramakatoi Village.

Photo: APA

their farming. People go far out of the title to hunt, fish and gather materials. Siparuni is the key area for these activities, and is described by residents as their supermarket. It is rich in game, fish, useful wood species, minerals and medicinal plants. Other important hunting and fishing areas outside the land title are Tipuru, Ireng River and Takatu.

Siparuni and Tipuru are also used by people from Kato, Kurukabaru, Taruka, Tuseneng, and Monkey Mountain. Ireng River is shared with residents from Kato and Tuseneng and Takatu with people from Kato, Tuseneng, Taruka and Kurukabaru.

- 8. Community Projects:** Paramakatoi is in the process of starting Paramakatoi Agriculture Co-op in collaboration with the Ministry of Indigenous People's Affairs, Institute of Applied Science and Technology, the Ministry of Social Protection and the National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI). The co-op will start by planting and drying organic tomatoes that will be transported to Georgetown to be packaged or as an ingredient for salad dressing.
- 9. Institutions and services:** The Village has radio, electricity (solar and private generators), internet (private and now at the school), health service, nursery, primary school and secondary school.
- 10. Current land title status:** A land title was granted in 1976 under the Amerindian Act and then in 1991 under decrees of the State Lands Act.
- 11. Existing title description:** 'The area commences at the mouth of Yawong River, Left Bank Kowa River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Kowa River to its source, thence East and South along the watershed of the Chenapan and Kowa Rivers to the source of the Mariaparu River, thence down the Mariaparu River to its mouth, thence down the Yawong River to the point of commencement.'
- 12. Title suitability: Inadequate.** The Village was not consulted before the title was granted. Residents are not happy with the description because fertile farming lands, homesteads, hunting grounds, gathering grounds, old settlements, sacred sites, and heritage sites are left outside the title. Siparuni, Tipuru, Ireng and Takatu are important areas that are unsecured, and are used traditionally by people in Paramakatoi as well as those from other Patamona and Makushi communities.

13. Title demarcation: Villagers and the Village Council accepted demarcation in 2016 and it was carried out from late 2016 to early 2017.

14. Title suitability. Inadequate. Residents say that in one area the demarcation is still incomplete where there is a potential overlap with Taruka. Residents are waiting for GLSC to rectify the problem.

15. Extension status: The situation of the extension is slightly unclear, but many residents say that an application was sent to the former MOAA a few years ago. They do however think that they still need to send a sketch map and a justification to MIPA for it to be processed.

Although they have applied for an extension to their own immediate land, Paramakatoi residents strongly support on-going discussion between Region 8 Villages to seek recognition for a larger block of land to encompass their whole territory, including the traditional land in Siparuni, Tipuru, Ireng and Takatu.

16. Extension description: The research team did not obtain the description.

17. Land and resource conflict: Mining and logging is taking place without residents' consent on parts of their customary land outside their title. It is believed that forestry activities in the Tipuru area (Butterfly Falls) are connected with Bai Shan Lin, but the villagers don't know who is doing the mining in Siparuni.

18. Land security: Data downloaded from the Geonode website in 2015 showed that nearly the entire sub-region 1 of Region 8 was reserved by GGMC for Goldstone Ltd. However, the data on the new GIM website (website that replaced Geonode in 2017) does not contain a layer for GGMC-reserved areas. It is uncertain whether this is because the designation does not exist anymore or because it has not been uploaded. Goldstone has never visited Paramakatoi, but residents are worried about the potential existence of this large-scale concession on the map.

Residents are also concerned about the state land that separates the villages in the region. Their resource use shows that a much wider area is indigenous customary land, not state land. Furthermore it is clear that many areas cannot be seen to belong to one community alone,

Kawa Tipu (Kawa Mountain) seen from Paramakatoi.

Photo: APA





School complex in Paramakatoi Village.

Photo: APA

but are shared, such as Siparuni, Tipuru, Ireng and Takatu. Residents are therefore very worried about the fragmentation of this land.

The lands mean everything to us; it is our lungs, our heartbeat, our past, present and our future. [Paramakatoi resident, November 2015]

19. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Residents are worried about the potential threat posed by extractive industries in Siparuni and Tipuru to their future food security. This concern is compounded by resident's concerns that, although they can use resources on their untitled land (where most of their food is found), this land is not secure and they have no control over what happens to it in the future. In addition, if extractive industries continue to destroy the land, this will affect the water sources they depend on.

Residents also say that certain good quality timber, leaves, game and fish are becoming scarce, especially in their titled land. They blame this on over-use due to the growing population on land that is not large enough for their needs. Furthermore, people report that fires lit to burn farms occasionally, during the dry season, are spread by the wind and become out of control.

20. Recognition and measures sought: The residents of Paramakatoi Village made the following recommendations:

- a. The government must carry out meaningful consultations with the villagers prior to the titling and demarcation of their lands and should fast track the process for Paramakatoi;
- b. The government must recognise and secure indigenous communities' full rights to all traditional lands and the resources on and in it, including minerals. Relevant legislation (e.g. Amerindian Act and the State Lands Act) must be revised to ensure this;
- c. The NTC should visit communities to become aware of the issues affecting them and make extra efforts to identify actions that can help protect and preserve culture (including heritage sites) so that culture is transferred to the younger generation;
- d. The state should recognise areas shared customarily by many indigenous communities as jointly held lands so that everyone can have access and continue to practise their ways of life.

5.1.14

BAMBOO CREEK

(Satellite community of Paramakatoi)

Key findings:

- See Paramakatoi summary report
 - Residents urge communities of the North Pakaraimas to continue working towards the legal recognition of a communal territory that encompasses many communities – as was discussed by their foreparents.
-

1. **Location:** Approximately 15 miles on foot to the south/southwest from central Paramakatoi, inside the Paramakatoi land title, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** Residents explain that Bamboo Creek was established in the 1950s when families moved there from central Paramakatoi due to the fertile farm lands. Meat was also scarce in Paramakatoi at the time. Then Toshao, Bagot Paul, also wanted to rear cattle on the good fertile land. There is a cave called Dai-Dai between Bamboo and Paramakatoi. Nobody goes there because people think the Dai-Dai spirit may still be there.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Tuseneng, Kato and Taruka.
4. **Estimated population:** 480 (136 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona and Makushi.
6. **Local government:** One senior councillor from the Paramakatoi Village Council administers Bamboo Creek, together with seven other councillors.
7. **Land use and economy:** People in Bamboo Creek rely heavily on subsistence farming, fishing and hunting. Outside the Paramakatoi land title, residents farm in Siparuni, Arnik and Moruwa. These areas are also used for hunting and fishing as well as Tipuru, Takatu and Ireng.
8. **Community Projects:** Bamboo Creek has a women's sewing group and a cattle-rearing project as a part of their Community Development Plan (CDP).
9. **Institutions and services:** The community has radio, electricity (solar), health service, a nursery and a primary school. Older children go to secondary school in Paramakatoi.
10. **Current land title status:** The community is a part of Paramakatoi's title, which was granted in 1976 under the Amerindian Act and then in 1991 under decrees of the State Lands Act.
11. **Existing title description:** 'The area commences at the mouth of Yawong River, Left Bank Kowa River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Kowa River to its source, thence East and South along the watershed of the Chenapan and Kowa Rivers to the source of the Mariaparu River, thence down the Mariaparu River to its mouth, thence down the Yawong River to the point of commencement.'
12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** As in central Paramakatoi, residents are not satisfied with this title description as it leaves out important fishing, hunting and gathering grounds.
13. **Title demarcation:** Villagers and the Village Council accepted demarcation in 2016 and it was carried out from late 2016 to early 2017.



Homestead in Bamboo Creek.

Photo: APA

14. **Title suitability. Inadequate.** Residents say that in one area the demarcation is still incomplete where there is a potential overlap with Taruka. Residents are waiting for GLSC to rectify the problem.
15. **Extension status:** The situation of the extension is slightly unclear, but many residents say that an application was sent to the former MOAA a few years ago. They do however think that they still need to send a sketch map and a justification to MIPA for it to be processed.
16. **Extension description:** The research team did not obtain the description.
17. **Land and resource conflict:** Mining and logging are taking place without their consent on parts of their customary land outside their title. Residents think the forestry activities in the Tipuru area (Butterfly Falls) are connected with Bai Shan Lin, but the villagers do not know who is responsible for the mining in Siparuni.
18. **Land security:** Data downloaded from the Geonode website in 2015 showed that nearly the entire sub-region 1 of Region 8 was reserved by GGMC for Goldstone Ltd. However, the data on the GIM website (website that replaced Geonode in 2017), does not contain a layer for GGMC-reserved areas. It is uncertain whether this is because the designation does not exist anymore or because it has not been uploaded. Goldstone has never visited Paramakatoi, but residents are worried about the potential existence of this large-scale concession on the map.

People are afraid that more of their untitled customary land will also be granted to miners and loggers, as Paramakatoi and Bamboo Creek residents do not have any powers under national law to oppose this.

19. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: In Bamboo Creek the soil is fertile. The water situation for daily household purposes is good. Wild game is scarce, fish in nearby creeks are very small in size and lathes for roof building are not available in titled lands. Seeds for planting are not readily available and insects frequently attack crops. The dry season and severe floods also affect crops.

20. Recognition and measures sought: The residents of Bamboo Creek made the following recommendations:

- a. The government must carry out meaningful consultations with the villagers prior to the titling and demarcation of their lands and should fast track the process for Paramakatoj;
- b. The government must recognise and secure indigenous communities' full rights to all traditional lands and the resources on and in it, including minerals. Relevant legislation (e.g. Amerindian Act and the State Lands Act) must be revised to ensure this;
- c. The NTC should visit communities to become aware of the issues affecting them and make extra efforts to identify actions that can help protect and preserve culture (including heritage sites) so that culture is transferred to the younger generation;
- d. The state should recognise areas shared customarily by many indigenous communities as jointly held lands so that everyone can have access and continue to practise their ways of life.

5.1.15

MOUNTAIN FOOT

(Satellite community of Paramakatoi)

Key findings:

- See Paramakatoi summary report
 - Residents urge their Village Council and other Region 8 Village Councils to actively work to with all North Pakaraima leaders so that they can continue discussing their foreparents' ideas about how to collectively secure their customary territory.
-

- 1. Location:** About three kilometres to the southeast of Paramakatoi at the foot of Paramakatoi Mountain, inside Paramakatoi title, North Pakaraima, sub-region 1, Region 8.
- 2. History:** Patamona and Makushi people have been living in the greater Paramakatoi area for a long time, as shown by petroglyphs found in the Siparuni area and legends associated with specific historical sites such as Kawa Mountain, Bamboo Creek and Kuiyaliyeng. There are former settlements in Tipuru and Siparuni. According to the Amerindian Lands Commission report, the Pilgrim Holiness Church established Paramakatoi Village in the early 1950s. Some villagers moved later in the 1950s to Mountain Foot.
- 3. Main neighbouring communities:** Bamboo Creek (another satellite community of Paramakatoi), Paramakatoi Central village and Taruka.
- 4. Estimated population:** Residents estimate that there are about 150 families in Mountain Foot, but do not guarantee that this number is accurate.
- 5. Identities of residents:** Patamona and Makushi.
- 6. Local government:** One senior councillor from the Paramakatoi Village Council and three local councillors govern the community.
- 7. Land use and economy:** Like residents of central Paramakatoi, the people in Mountain Foot depend heavily on subsistence farming, hunting and fishing for their livelihood. Some also do very small scale mining close by the community. Farming grounds are found within the title area, but the fertile soil around Siparuni and Arnik (outside title) is also very important for their farming. People travel far out of the title to hunt, fish and gather materials. The key area for these activities is Siparuni, which residents described as their supermarket. It is rich in game, fish, useful wood species, minerals and medicinal plants. Another important hunting and fishing area outside the land title is Tipuru, and a few people go to Ireng and Takatu.
- 8. Community Projects:** There is a women's sewing group and a women's shop.
- 9. Institutions and services:** The community has a radio, electricity (solar), a nursery and a primary school. Older children go to Paramakatoi to attend secondary school.
- 10. Current land title status:** A land title was granted in 1976 under the Amerindian Act and then in 1991 under decrees of the State Lands Act.
- 11. Existing title description:** 'The area commences at the mouth of Yawong River, Left Bank Kowa River, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Kowa River to its source, thence East and South along the watershed of the Chenapan and Kowa Rivers to the source of the Mariaparu River,



School compound at Mountain Foot.

Photo: Dwayne Marco



Mountain foot viewed from the top of the mountain.

Photo: Dwayne Marco

thence down the Mariaparu River to its mouth, thence down the Yawong River to the point of commencement.’

- 12. Title suitability: Inadequate.** There was no consultation with the Village before the title was granted. Residents are not happy with the description, because fertile farming lands, homesteads, hunting grounds, gathering grounds, old settlements, sacred sites, heritage sites are left outside the title. Important areas that are left unsecured are Siparuni, Tipuru, Ireng and Takatu, which are used traditionally by people in Paramakatoi as well as those from other Patamona and Makushi communities. Some people from Mountain Foot also live outside the title, for example in Arnik (three families).
- 13. Title demarcation:** Villagers and the Village Council accepted demarcation in 2016 and it was carried out in from late 2016 to early 2017.
- 14. Title suitability. Inadequate.** Residents say that in one area the demarcation is still incomplete where there is a potential overlap with Taruka. Residents are waiting for GLSC to rectify the problem.
- 15. Extension status:** The situation of the extension is slightly unclear, but many residents say that an application was sent to the former MOAA a few years ago. They do however think that they still need to send a sketch map and a justification to MIPA for it to be processed.
- 16. Extension description:** The research team did not obtain the description.
- 17. Land and resource conflict:** Mining and logging are taking place without their consent on parts of their customary land outside their title. It is believed that forestry activities in the Tipuru area (Butterfly Falls) are connected with Bai Shan Lin, but the villagers don't know who is responsible for the mining in Siparuni.
- 18. Land security:** Data downloaded from the Geonode website in 2015 showed that nearly the entire sub-region 1 of Region 8 was reserved by GGMC for Goldstone Ltd. However, the data on the GIM website, which took over from Geonode in 2017, does not contain a layer for GGMC-reserved areas. It is uncertain whether the designation does not exist anymore or whether it has not been uploaded. Goldstone has never visited Paramakatoi, but residents are worried about the potential existence of this large-scale concession on the map.

Residents are concerned about the mining and forestry activities entering the Siparuni and Tipuru areas as they know that without legal recognition to these lands, they have little power to influence the influx of extractive industries.



Trail leading to mountain foot.

Photo: Dwayne Marco



Homestead at Mountain Foot.

Photo: Dwayne Marco

Our lands are our gift from God. We depend on the land to live. We have no salaried jobs, so our farms, fishes and animals God created and gave to us on our lands.
[Mountain Foot resident]

19. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Farm lands in Mountain Foot are still fertile and the water is accessible and good. However, game and birds that people usually hunt and fish for sustenance have become very scarce. Therefore, residents depend heavily on what they can catch in their customary land outside the title, especially in the network of rivers connected to the Siparuni River. Mining has, however, started to pollute some of these waterways and logging (by BSL) is destroying habitat for the animals. Residents are therefore worried about their food security.

20. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Mountain Foot made the following recommendations:

- a. Changes must be made to the Amerindian Act, the State Lands Act and the Forestry Act to fully secure the rights of indigenous peoples;
- b. The Village Council and other Region 8 Village Councils should actively pursue funds to gather all North Pakaraima leaders together so that they can continue discussing how to collectively secure our land, as our foreparents did before and after independence;
- c. Any government activity to grant or demarcate lands in the future must ensure effective consultation with villages to ensure that there are no overlaps and that areas that are shared between many villages are in fact also recognised as shared areas by the state;
- d. The NTC must take a more proactive role in helping to secure indigenous land.

Key findings:

- Taruka received a land title in 1976 to an area much smaller than the area occupied by their foreparents, which they depend on for their livelihood.
- Key farming, hunting and fishing areas and homesteads are located outside the land title.
- The surveyors who carried out the demarcation exercise did not properly follow the title description and villagers claim that the demarcation is still unfinished.
- In collaboration with a number of other Villages, Taruka applied for an extension to include their important customary lands in 1998. The Village was notified in 1999 that it could only have a much smaller area as their extension. No extension has yet been granted.
- Key livelihood areas, such as Siparuni and Tipuru, are threatened by mining and logging activities.

1. Location: On the Upper Echilebar River (tributary to Ireng River), North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.

2. History: Elder Frank Isaacs explains that both his mother and father were born and raised in Taruka, which signifies that the Village was already established in its current place in the late 1800s. Much earlier occupation of the areas close to Taruka to the east is suggested by rock paintings (*tramen*) in the Siparuni area.

3. Main neighbouring communities: Monkey Mountain, Paramakatoi and Tuseneng.

4. Estimated population: 180 (in 32 households).

5. Identities of residents: Makushi, Patamona and Wapichan.

6. Local government: The Village Council consists of Toshao and five councillors of which one is deputy Toshao, one is secretary and one treasurer.

7. Land use and economy: Taruka residents depend heavily on rotational farming, hunting, fishing and gathering of forest materials. Some people also rear cattle and some are engaged in small-scale mining activities in untitled customary land around Siparuni. The soil within the titled land is not well suited for farming, so people go outside the title to farm in Tumuntoi (to the east), Talibaru (to the south) and to the Siparuni (to the east). Siparuni, Tipuru, Moruwa and Takatu are key areas for hunting, fishing and gathering of materials. All these areas are located outside the land title of Taruka and are shared with a number of other Villages, including Paramakatoi, Monkey Mountain, Tuseneng, Kurukabaru, Kato and Kamana.



Village meeting in Taruka.

Photo: APA



Village meeting in Taruka.

Photo: APA

8. **Community Projects:** Cattle-rearing, as a part of the Village's Community Development Plan (CDP).
9. **Institutions and services:** The Village has radio, electricity (solar), a health hut and a primary school. Older children go to secondary school in Paramakatoi and Sand Creek.
10. **Current land title status:** The Village received title in 1976 under the Amerindian Act and in 1991 under the State Lands Act to an area of 95 square miles.
11. **Existing title description:** 'The area commences at the mouth of the Mariaparu River, Left Bank Yawong River, Left Bank Kowa River, thence up the Mariaparu River to its source, thence East and South along the watershed between the Siparuni and Echilebar Rivers, to the source of Black Water Creek, Left Bank Echilebar River, thence down the Black Water Creek to its mouth, thence North-West to the Tusenen River, thence up the Tusenen River to its source, thence North -West to the point of commencement.'
12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** Residents are not satisfied with this area as it fails to include key fishing, hunting, gathering and farming lands as well as camps in Siparuni, Takatu, Tipuru, Moruwa, Talibaru and Tumuntoi. Importantly, homesteads are also located in most of these areas.
13. **Title demarcation:** Residents say that the title was demarcated a few years ago and estimate around 2014. The Toshao at the time, Linchino Bennett, was informed about the exercise and three villagers were employed as line cutters. Despite many of the villagers claiming that the demarcation was not properly completed (see 14 below), the Toshao is reported to have signed and accepted the demarcation.
14. **Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** Residents claim that the demarcation does not accurately follow the description in the title. According to them, the surveyors did not reach the watershed between Siparuni and Echilebar Rivers but took positions on the banks of Echilebar. They also explain that the surveyors did not reach the creek they know to be the Blackwater Creek, but took positions from another creek. The surveyors claimed that their GPS readings told them that the river they used was indeed Blackwater Creek, but the residents say this does not fit with their own knowledge of the area.
15. **Extension status:** The Village applied for extension in 1998. The then leader Frank Isaacs says that the area of land described in 16 below was discussed and agreed between several Region 8 communities in large regional meetings organised by the Villages themselves.
16. **Extension description:** 'The area commencing from the mouth of the Echilebar, to the source of Takatu, thence down the Takatu to its mouth, thence down the Siparuni River to its mouth, thence down the Essequibo, to the mouth of Muruwa and down through Essequibo to the mouth of Potaro, and up through Potaro to Aynakannang, and right up to Tawanamang, and

right up to Ireng River and coming down through Ireng River to the mouth of Echilebar, where the Toshaos did commence their traditional and protected lands. This traditional and protected land shall be recognised and it also shall be gazetted by the government, we the Toshaos do not want to be failed from getting our traditional and protected lands. This Land that we commencing up to now shall be in one Block for all the Toshaos, we know that various Toshaos communities go to Muruwa and to Takatu, Siparuni and Essequibo.'

- 17. Extension justification:** Residents say that it is vital to secure ownership over the land and resources that they have occupied and used for as long as their foreparents can remember. It is of the greatest importance to the residents to ensure that their children and future generations have secure ownership and can enjoy and take care of the land and its resources.
- 18. Response from government:** In 1999 Taruka received a response from the then Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Vibert De Souza, that the Village could only get 13 square miles of the requested land. Nothing further has been heard about the extension application since then. Taruka is, however, listed in the 2013 ALT project document for extension and demarcation in year 3.
- 19. Land and resource conflict:** An outsider, Daram Paul, is ranching on titled land without the permission of the Village Council. Villagers also report Brazilian miners and a Chinese logging company, which is thought to be Bai Shan Lin, operating in the Taruka's important food production areas (Siparuni, Tipuru and Waika). The people using these areas, which include many other Villages (see 7 above), have not given their consent to these activities and are not happy about their presence.

Miners coming into the area do not have respect for the Amerindians. In the backdam they would treat the Amerindians without respect and as if they are not human.
[Taruka resident, November 2015]

- 20. Land security:** People do not feel secure in their land.

Our lands are being taken by others while we wait decades for legal papers for our lands. The miners are polluting the fishing area of Siparuni. We are tired and frustrated just waiting and seeing our lands being occupied by other interests.
[Taruka resident, 2015]

- 21. Livelihood security and environmental integrity:** Residents are worried about their food and water security due to the lack of secure tenure over their most important hunting, fishing and farming areas. The threats from mining, logging and wildlife trade to game, fish, forest and water in the Siparuni and Tipuru add to these worries.

There are trees that we use, like greenheart, and because these plants are very important, we need to preserve them for the future generations. When we cut trees for material for our buildings, we do not overharvest. Even when we make farms we would only clear the area that we need, not more. [Taruka resident, November 2015]

- 22. Recognition and measures sought:** Residents of Taruka Village call on:

- a. The Village Council to send letters and visit relevant ministries to demand that necessary actions are taken to address the issues affecting Taruka's land – this includes the mining and logging in Siparuni and Tipuru as well as the currently incomplete demarcation of their title;
- b. The state to reform national laws that currently make it impossible for communities to hold land collectively, and to issue legal papers to the relevant villages for the lands they have used for generations to sustain their lives and cultures;
- c. The government to stop allocating mining and logging concessions on the land that indigenous peoples customarily occupy and use;
- d. The NTC to visit villages and make representation to the government on the above issues.

Key findings:

- Waipa was granted title under the 1976 Amerindian Act.
- In 1991 the Village received another title document, but this did not have any description of the land area and people are confused whether the 1976 boundary is still valid.
- Key hunting, fishing and farming areas as well as homesteads with 23 people are left out of the title.
- The Village wants to apply for an extension to secure their customary lands, but has not yet done so.

1. **Location:** Ireng River, North Pakaraimas, sub-region 1, Region 8.
2. **History:** People had already been living in Waipa for a long time before the church and school in Kamana were established in 1916. Old clay pots, stone axe heads and sheet rocks used by foreparents to grate cassava are found around the Village. Some residents explained that their foreparents sometimes used the pots to shield their heads during tribal wars. Residents also told of sacred sites in the area. For example, it is believed that a giant-like creature, *adai dai yen*, takes people from the Village to a cave and eats them.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Kamana, Kopinang and Kaibarupai.
4. **Estimated population:** 329 (62 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.
6. **Local government:** The Village Council has councillors in charge of agriculture, education, health and community works, as well as a treasurer.
7. **Land use and economy:** People in Waipa depend to a great extent on subsistence farming, hunting and fishing. They also use natural resources such as gravel and sand for construction purposes. As well as the land in and immediately surrounding the Village, they depend on areas outside the title, such as Awak Tuwuk (three hours' walk south of the Village) and Potaro (three days' walk to the northeast). People also use gravel and sand from around the Village for the foundation of buildings. Some people go over the border to Brazil to make money and some, especially young men, go to other areas of Region 8 to make a living from mining.
8. **Community Projects:** No information obtained.
9. **Institutions and services:** The Village has a radio, solar electricity, health service and a primary school. For secondary school children go to Paramakatoi and Sand Creek.
10. **Current land title status:** Waipa was granted a title in 1976 under the Amerindian Act and in 1991 President Hoyte issued another title document. In 2014, the Village received a Certificate of Title, which states that Waipa Amerindian Village is the registered proprietor under the Land Registry Act of a parcel of land that measures 37.7 square miles.
11. **Existing title description:** The 1976 description is as follows: 'The area commences at the mouth of Makoeriba Creek, Left Bank Ireng River, thence up the Makoeriba Creek to its source,

thence North by the watershed of the Ireng River to the Kopinang Mountain, thence West to the source of the Shiliwang Creek, Left Bank Ireng River, thence down the Shiliwang Creek to its mouth, thence down the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'

- 12. Title suitability: Inadequate.** Hunting, fishing and farming grounds as well as homesteads are excluded from the title. Residents specifically mention the Awak Palu (Catch Cow Creek), on the left bank Ireng River approximately three hours' walk from Waipa. Twenty-three persons live, farm, hunt and fish there. Several Villages used to collect a weed for salting their cooking from Ireng River in the customary area of Orinduik, which is also to the south of the current title.



Stone axe found on community lands, Waipa.

Photo: APA

It should also be noted that the 1976 title only covers a small part of the land requested by Waipa to the Amerindian Lands Commission. Waipa made a joint request with the people of Itabac, Kaibarupai, Kanapang and Kopinang for an area of land extending from the Ireng River to the Essequibo River and from Karasabai and the Moruwa River (in the south) to Mount Ayangana and the Kuribrong (in the north).

- 13. Title demarcation:** Yes.

- 14. Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** It seems like the demarcation started at Aloik Palu (creek) instead of Makoeriba Creek, as is described in the title. As far as the research team understood, Makoeriba Creek lies a little north of Aloik Palu, so this means that the demarcation included a little extra piece of land in Waipa's title.

- 15. Extension status:** Waipa has not applied for an extension because a former Minister of Amerindian Affairs told them that their land had to be demarcated before they could get an extension. The residents do want to submit an application now in order to secure hunting, fishing, farming grounds and homesteads that are currently outside the title. They have identified the following area: 'Commencing at the mouth of Tekleu Palu on the left bank of the Ireng River to the source of Tekleu Palu, thence north to the source of Aloik Palu, thence down Aloik Palu to its mouth, thence down the Ireng River to the point of commencement.'

- 16. Land and resource conflict:** No current conflicts are reported.

- 17. Land security:** The fact that there are no conflicts with outsiders currently does not mean that the customary land outside the title is secure. This is why it is important for villagers to get secure rights to these areas as well, hence the plans for extension.

- 18. Livelihood security and environmental integrity:** Residents are concerned that due to population increase, game is threatened by over-hunting and lands are being continuously farmed, which makes them less fertile.

- 19. Recognition and measures sought:** The residents of Waipa Village call on:

- a. The Village Council to file an application for extension;
- b. The government to consequently recognise the land in question so that residents' hunting, fishing, farm lands and homesteads can be secure.

5.2 SUB-REGION 2

5.2.1

CAMPBELLTOWN

Key findings:

- Campbelltown's land title is significantly smaller than the area the Village requested from the ALC.
 - Villagers hunt, fish and gather materials in an area far exceeding the boundaries of the existing title.
 - The titled land is covered by mining concessions, many of which do not have permission from the Village.
-

1. **Location:** Adjacent to Mahdia town, sub-region 2, Region 8.
2. **History:** Residents record that the current Village was established in the 1940s and that the first captain was Cecil Thomas. He came to Campbelltown from Wakapoa when there was dense forest and only one mining company in Mahdia. During Mr. Thomas's time, officials told residents that they ought to move from the area as its proximity to Mahdia could endanger the indigenous population. Most people, however, did not move. The second Village leader was Angie Williams who took over in the 1970s.

Occupation of the area much earlier than 1940 is evident from the number of former settlements within two to three hours' walking distance from the current village location, such as Manak Palu, Kangaruma, Kalasa Mouth, Kubana, Munuri Hill and Woi Head. Clay pots, beads and old farms are found in these locations. The fact that their foreparents also occupied and used a much larger area than currently covered by their land title is apparent from all the locations of spiritual importance to the residents. These include Manak Palu, Aki Peyapa and One Finger Mountain where there are clay pots or rocks with powers that make it rain if someone points at them. (See also history of Princeville (Section 5.2.2), a satellite Village of Campbelltown located within the title description.)

3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Four satellite communities/homesteads: Princeville, Wai, 108 Tolo Yek and Coop Farm. These are all within the title of Campbelltown. Other neighbouring communities are Moruwa and Maicobie.
4. **Estimated population:** 1,000 (90 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona, Arawak (few), Carib (few).
6. **Local government:** The Village Council has 11 councillors, three from Princeville and one from Moruwa. The councillors do not have specific roles. The VC meets monthly and when needed.
7. **Land use and economy:** Residents say that these days only the elders consistently do subsistence farming. On average people older than 30 years are involved in farming, whereas the younger generation depend on income from mining and buy food in the Mahdia shops. The farming grounds are for the most part within the land title, with the exception of Konuwak Head, about two hours' walk from the Village.



Campbelltown community members identifying places on maps.

Photo: APA

The villagers identify a large number of hunting areas outside the title, many of them up to three days' walk or paddle from the Village. These include Apanagi, Wini Palu, Aimalak Palu (Konawaruk) and Moruwa. Kuribrong Mouth to Wailang is as much as a week's paddle away. Similarly, the villagers depend on a variety of different fishing spots. Salbora, Kubana, Jumbie Creek, Konuwak, Manak and Ilu Creek are used daily, while areas further away are visited a few times a week. More remote areas, such as Obana Blackwater (Qwalatuk) and Apanagy are visited a few times a year. Many residents complained that several of the rivers and the surrounding areas were badly polluted by mining, resulting in low fish stocks. Gathering areas are often the same as the hunting and fishing grounds, but people visit certain areas such as Tumatumari and Minihaha specifically to collect mukru. Potash, Blackwater and Ikulek are important areas for *hiari*.

Mining is an important source of income for individual villagers, many of whom have their own operations within the Village title or work for operators in Mahdia. The Village Council receives royalties from mining on Village lands (7-10% of gross production) and manages these funds. It has purchased a pick-up and tractor for village use, and lends/gives money to residents facing emergencies.

- 8. Community Projects:** No information.
- 9. Institutions and services:** The Village is situated very close to Mahdia and the villagers have access to Mahdia nursery, primary and secondary schools as well as Mahdia District Hospital. The Village has electricity, cell phone connectivity and access to internet (in Mahdia).
- 10. Current land title status:** In 2006 the Village received a title document, signed by Bharrat Jagdeo, to 22 square miles under the State Lands Act.
- 11. Existing title description:** 'The area commencing at the Southern end of the Denham Bridge, Garraway Stream and its boundary extends southwards along the Potaro/Kangaruma road for

approximately 5 ½ miles to the source of an unnamed creek, thence in an approximate South-Southwest direction for approximately 2 ½ miles to the foot of the upper Mahdia Falls, thence along the Right Bank of the Mahdia River to its mouth, thence along the Right Bank of the Potaro River back to the point of commencement. Save and except all privately owned lands legally held:

12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** The elders confirm that they see Campbelltown as being part of a larger Patamona territory that extends far beyond the Village boundaries. They are not happy with the current title and remember the request the Village made to the ALC. This was recorded as that of Mahdia-Kangaruma Amerindian Settlement for an area from the Garraway Stream in the north to Siparuni River in the south and from Bartica-Potaro Road in the east to the Potaro River in the west. The current title is much smaller and leaves out important hunting and fishing grounds.
13. **Title demarcation:** Demarcation was carried out in 2008.
14. **Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** The memorandum of the demarcation map states that 'Captain of Campbelltown Village, members of Campbelltown Village Council and residents of Mahdia Community attended at various times during the survey. No objection was made.' However, when studying the demarcation and title maps the research team found that the stretch between the source of the unnamed creek (where it meets Potaro/Kangaruma Road) and the foot of the upper Mahdia Falls does not match with the title description. As a result five houses were left out of the demarcated area, two of which have demarcation palls inside them.
15. **Extension status:** The Village has not applied, but has held internal discussions about it. Residents say that they want to apply and they are currently formulating a description of the extension.
16. **Response from government:** N/A

Resource use map made by the community.

Photo: APA



17. Land and resource conflict: The latest information from the website of the Geospatial Information Management Unit (GIM) shows that three concessions (held by Frank Taylor, Asiel Marcus and Methel) overlap Campbelltown's titled land. A GLSC map from 2006 however shows that almost all the land is covered with concessions. The residents wonder what the true situation is. Logging concessions adjoin the title to the north, east and south, and cover a lot of Campbelltown's customary land. The Village was never consulted about the logging concessions or the larger mining concessions and has not given its permission. However, many of the smaller scale miners are working on the land with permission and pay royalties to the Village Council. Residents estimated that the Village has agreements with about 50 small-scale miners, many of them residents themselves. The current Toshao has made oral complaints to the government and NTC when he has visited Georgetown about the unauthorised mining on village land.



18. Land security: Important hunting, fishing and gathering areas are left outside the legally secured land. Even the titled land is not fully secure against outside interests due to the clause in the title document excluding 'all privately owned lands legally held'. Data on the GIM website indicates that at least the three mining concessions recorded there were issued before Campbelltown received its title document. The villagers are worried that newer interests are trumping the community's longstanding occupation of the area prior to granting of title.

One resident explained that at one point the villagers had been told by 'an officer' to move the community because it was 'on top of the gold', but they refused:

The ancestors of indigenous peoples were here, no one can tell me to relocate! My land is my life; I don't need to go shopping. That's our way of life. That's why we remained. [Campbelltown resident, July 2016]

19. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Residents report that mining has destroyed land and polluted the waters they use for drinking and fishing. Fish are poisoned by mercury and have largely disappeared from the larger rivers, which are now muddy, forcing people to fish in smaller creeks, go further or buy store food. Hunting grounds have also been destroyed and the soil is poor for farming.

Right now, around here, there's no hunting ground. There are miners all around. Fishing grounds, same thing. Waters are damaged, nasty and muddy. When people go fish there, don't catch anything, just small fish. Mostly go to Kuribrong River area – the river is muddy so we use small creeks. [Campbelltown resident, July 2016]

20. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Campbelltown Village call for:

- a. The government to respect and protect the traditional lands of indigenous communities of Guyana;
- b. The government to remove the clause in certain land titles that 'save and except' lands that are privately held.

5.2.2

PRINCEVILLE

(Satellite community of Campbelltown)

Key findings:

- Princeville is located within the Campbelltown land title.
 - Residents report that mining activities on their titled land are eroding the land and polluting the water.
-

- 1. Location:** Within Campbelltown Village title, Potaro River, sub-region 2, Region 8.
- 2. History:** In the 1960s, people lived at Kangaruma (3 mile junction) before they moved to today's Princeville. Kangaruma means 'black ants', which are common in the area. The people living there included William and Frazer Daniels. Nazu (John) Anthony was a leader and *piaiman* at Kangaruma. Other former settlements, burial grounds and Dutch bottles, such as at Munuri Hill and Potaro Landing (both within Campbelltown title), indicate that people have lived in the area for a long time. There are also several important spiritual sites inside and outside the title. Crappo Rock and Kayasak Palu, both in Potaro, are inside the title. The first refers to a frog rock that makes a specific sound; a person that hears it could die. The other is a stone canister that causes accidents in the river and captures people inside. Kogui is a rock outside the title close to Amatok. The history of origin of this rock involves a mother, a child and a big bird (*kogoi*) that was turned into stone.

Around 1970 Allan Prince (Akawaio from Bartica) started to clear the area around today's Princeville, which is named after him. Some years later, the people living at Kangaruma moved down to Princeville.
- 3. Main neighbouring communities:** Campbelltown.
- 4. Estimated population:** 196 (27 households at 'the front' and 15 at 'the back').
- 5. Identities of residents:** Mainly Patamona.
- 6. Local government:** Princeville falls under Campbelltown Village Council where three councillors represent the community.
- 7. Land use and economy:** Most residents in Princeville depend on a mix of farming, hunting, fishing, gathering and mining (artisanal). Their most important farming lands are within the Campbelltown Village title at Munuri Hill and in an area residents call 'at the back'. Hunting and fishing grounds extend all the way up Potaro to Kaieteur and up Kuribrong to Amaila. Important materials are gathered from Apanagi and upstream along the Kuribrong, at Tumatumari and along Yaima Creek.
- 8. Community Projects:** No information.
- 9. Institutions and services:** The community has a nursery and primary school. There is a health post, but it is not always staffed as the availability of health workers is limited. There is no radio, but cellular connectivity in certain spots and the households have solar electricity.
- 10. Current land title status:** See Campbelltown summary report
- 11. Existing title description:** See Campbelltown summary report
- 12. Title suitability:** **Inadequate.** See Campbelltown summary report



Sukwabi Creek polluted by mining.

Photo: APA

13. **Title demarcation:** See Campbelltown summary report
14. **Demarcation suitability:** **Inadequate.** See Campbelltown summary report
15. **Extension status:** See Campbelltown summary report
16. **Extension description:** See Campbelltown summary report
17. **Extension justification:** See Campbelltown summary report
18. **Response from government:** See Campbelltown summary report
19. **Land and resource conflict:** The latest information from Geonode shows that three concessions (held by Frank Taylor, Asiel Marcus and Methel) overlap Campbelltown's titled land. A GLSC map from 2006, however, shows that almost all the land is covered with concessions. The residents are concerned and wonder what the true situation is. Some concession holders have the permission of Campbelltown Village Council, but several residents say that they are not happy about the mining operations being so close to their farms and homes. People are being stopped from hunting, fishing or gathering in the concession of a named miner.

Residents are also concerned about mining operations in the Potaro River and in their customary lands around Wailang, which is a tributary to Kuribrong. An elder, a relative of one of the elders in Princeville, originally came from Kaibarupai and has lived at Wailang almost all his life. Japarts Mining Company, one of the concession holders at Wailang, has told the elder and his family to move. The company staff threatened that if he refused they will kill him and they lashed his son with a Maglite. The elder remembered the time when they came to settle, around the 1960s: everything was peaceful, forest animals and fish were abundant and there was no mining. Now the family feels very unsafe and the resources are being scared away and polluted.
20. **Land security:** All customary lands are not secured (see above) and even titled land is not fully secure due to the title description clause excepting all 'privately owned lands legally held' by others at the time of granting the title.
21. **Livelihood security and environmental integrity:** Mining is causing forest loss and the pollution of water and fish. The community now depends on rainwater and a few springs for drinking water. Game is scarce close to the Village and greenheart is becoming rare due to overuse for bridge building in the Mahdia area and for construction in the Village.
22. **Recognition and measures sought:** See Campbelltown summary report

5.2.3

EL PASO (Tumatumari)

Key findings:

- The community does not hold title. The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs has told them their population is too small to apply.
 - Without the community's request, GLSC 'blocked off' houses in El Paso so residents could get leases, but nobody in El Paso currently pays lease.
 - Residents claim that Maicobie's title boundary runs straight through their land 'taking' some of El Paso's residents.
-

1. **Location:** Right and left bank Potaro River by Tumatumari Falls, sub-region 2, Region 8.
2. **History:** El Paso consists of the descendants of people who lived in Tumatumari settlement on the left bank of Potaro River and incomers (Amerindians, Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese) who came to the area to find work with BG Consolidated Goldfields and the Tumatumari Hydro (in the 1940s). Before the residents of Tumatumari settlement moved to Maicobie and across the river to El Paso in 1967, three families were already living at the location of the present-day community in a boarding house called El Paso.



Field researcher taking a GPS coordinate.

Photo: APA

Clay pot pieces and small stone figures of animals found in and around the community indicate earlier occupation. Residents explained that in 2004 an Englishman (Douglas) came to El Paso to detect old artefacts. He was not clear about exactly what his mission was and what he was going to do with the pieces he found, but he took them away with him. After he left, the villagers kept looking for these artefacts and when the man came back he paid them GYD 500 per item.

3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Maicobie, Campbelltown, Princeville.
4. **Estimated population:** 135 (35 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona, Makushi, Akawaio, Wapichan, mixed race, East Indian, African descent.
6. **Local government:** At the moment, the community does not have an organisational structure. At some point in the past the community had a councillor in the Maicobie Village Council and at another time it had a Community Development Council chaired by Indra, the head teacher.
7. **Land use and economy:** Most of the residents in El Paso earn an important part of their livelihood from mining and use the income to buy shop food from Mahdia. Some also have

subsistence farms close to the community where they mainly plant cassava. Residents hunt on both sides of Potaro River between Tumatumari Falls and the Garway suspension bridge. Important rivers for fishing are Kuwai Palu, a tributary to Potaro, and the Essequibo. Potaro itself used to be a very important source of fish, but people report that they can hardly use it anymore due the damage caused by mining.

- 8. Community Projects:** The community is currently developing plans to submit to the Amerindian Development Fund. They want to use funds to buy a bus to transport children to school and to set up a small snack shop.
- 9. Institutions and services:** The community has a nursery and primary school (in one building); children go to Mahdia to attend secondary school. The closest health service is in Maicobie. There is mobile connection in certain spots and residents have electricity from solar panel and private generators.
- 10. Current land title status:** No title held. The area where El Paso is located was included in the ALC recommendation for the Tumatumari settlement. The residents have talked internally about applying for a title on several occasions and raised it with staff at the previous MoAA, but were told that the community population is too small. They report that in 2013 or 2014 a surveyor from GLSC came to inform them that he would 'block off' lots for each house, so that each household could get a lease. The residents had not requested this, however, each house in the community was subsequently fenced off. Some of the residents were quite pleased about this, because they

Abandoned hydro power station at El Paso
(Tumatumati Falls on the Potaro River).

Photo: APA



thought that it meant that their land was secure. However, none of the residents are paying lease, so it is unlikely that the fences do represent any real land security. Some residents did also point out that these lots do not secure the full land that they use and were arguing that the Village needs a communal land title.

The extent of the community land was described to the research team as follows:

‘The area commences at 2 mile junction on the Tumatumari branch road, thence north along the Tumatumari branch road to the Potaro River, thence across the Potaro River to a point with GPS coordinates E278461-N593570, thence north along the Maicobie title boundary to the source of Kulunai River, thence in a straight line to a point where the Tumatumari/Bartica Road reaches the Mahdia/Bartica Road, thence west along the Mahdia/Bartica Road to the Garway Stream Bridge, thence down the Potaro River to the Konuwak River Mouth right bank Potaro River, thence up the Konuwak River to a point with GPS coordinates – 59.1210/5.3351, thence east in a straight line to the point of commencement.’

- 11. Land and resource conflict:** Although several people in El Paso and Maicobie share the same forefathers, El Paso residents express clearly that they are distinct from Maicobie. They are not happy that the title boundary of Maicobie runs through their community. Some of their residents now live within Maicobie’s title. The demarcation line even runs through one person’s toilet.

Residents identify five mining concessions (Rambarran, Ramsaran, Vieira, Kalamadeen and Marcus) and one forestry concession (Fiedtkuw) on the land they understand to be theirs. Currently, there are no conflicts with the external interests, but several residents say that they do want their land to be secure so that they can be in control. Some say they would consider entering into agreements with the claim holders if the community were to get its own title.

- 12. Land security:** See 10 and 11 above.

- 13. Livelihood security and environmental integrity:** Where outsiders hold mining concessions the residents are not free to use their resources, including the sub-soil minerals. The mining interests have also made it impossible for residents to use the water and fish in the Potaro close to El Paso, as it is too polluted. The community now relies almost entirely on one creek, northwest of the community, for their drinking water. They would like to have a water pipe so they do not have to carry buckets from the river to the community (about 15 minutes).

- 14. Recognition and measures sought:** Residents of El Paso call for:

- a. A land title to be granted to their community;
- b. All third party blocks (mining/forestry) to be removed from the land covered by that title;
- c. Revision of national laws to give Amerindian communities ownership of sub-soil resources;
- d. A representative in the NTC;
- e. The boundary issues with Maicobie to be resolved.

5.2.4

MAICOBIE

Key findings:

- The Village has held a land title since 2006, but it excludes large parts of Maicobie's customary lands (hunting, fishing and the most fertile farming areas).
 - External miners operating without consent on community lands are causing deforestation, severely contaminating the water and depleting fish populations.
 - Government maps of mining concessions in and around Maicobie's land are not consistent.
 - The Village wants to apply for extension, but has not yet submitted its application.
-

1. **Location:** Right and left bank of the Potaro River, sub-region 2, Region 8.
2. **History:** Many of the forefathers of the present residents of Maicobie used to live on the left bank of the Potaro River, immediately after the Tumatumari Falls. Pieces of clay pots found on both sides of the Potaro River, and on small islands, close to the Falls indicate that the area has been occupied for a long time. Tumatumari means boiling pot in Patamona and there is a rock shaped like a pot at the bottom of the Falls. It is believed that the pot takes lives and it rumbles because it is always hungry.

The ALC report contains a recommendation for Tumatumari Amerindian Settlement, not Maicobie. In 1967, the District Commissioner came to Tumatumari and told residents to identify a suitable area they could move to, with land for permanent crops and development. The elders

An elder of the Maicobie community makes a point.

Photo: APA





Mining destruction on Maicobie titled land.

Photo: APA

report that the community was asked to move because the land they lived on was subject to floods during the rainy seasons. Others say the establishment of the Youth Core at Tumatumari was a contributing factor for the request. The residents identified the land where the current Village is located and moved there. They first referred to it as Cassava Hill, because they cut a big farm. It was also called 'New-Foundout' Later it was referred to as 'Mogobi', which means lizard in Patamona. 'Maicobie' has become the English version of this word.

3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Campbelltown, Princeville, 72 Miles.
4. **Estimated population:** By the health worker's records: 487. By the Toshao's records: 512 (82 households).
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona (predominantly), Wapichan, Makushi, Akawaio, Arawak, Carib and Warrau.
6. **Local government:** Village Council consisting of Toshao and eight councillors.
7. **Land use and economy:** The most fertile and important farming areas, Silver City and Berbice, are outside the Village land title to the east. Farming areas within the title are either less fertile or are affected by mining, such as Sagula Palu and Sugar Hill. Principle crops grown by residents are cassava, eddoe, plantain, pumpkin and pepper.

Important hunting grounds include the tract of the title north of Potaro River and areas east of the Village around Mahdia Road and Sarane Creek (outside the title). People also venture down the Essequibo River to Mupha, Kanaima and Madre Creeks (also outside title). Fishing happens along the Essequibo, from Siparuni Mouth all the way down river to Arasaro Mouth (outside title). People from Mahdia, Campbelltown, Fair View and Linden also fish there since the area offers big fish. Residents also fish in Lake Akenna, 25 miles down river on the Essequibo from Potaro Mouth, and in Kulunai River, which runs along the title boundary. Important gathering grounds include areas along Tiger Creek, Potaro River, Kulunai River (inside and outside the title). People also go to Calaloo Creek (south west of the title) to get *hiari*.

In addition to the farming, hunting, fishing and gathering, mining has for a long time provided an important income for a majority of the households. Traditional mining with spade and shovel used to happen in Mowasi (approximately 18 miles south of the Village). Today, many go out of the Village to mining areas around Mahdia, but some also own small dredges and have permission to work on the Village land.

8. **Community Projects:** No information obtained.
9. **Institutions and services:** Maicobie has a nursery and primary school and a health post. Inhabitants have access to electricity through solar panels and personal generators.
10. **Current land title status:** Land title was granted to the Village over 23.59 square miles on the 21st February 2006 under Section 3 of the State Lands Act.

11. **Existing title description:** 'The tract commences approximately 1 ½ mile from the mouth of the Potaro River, thence along the Left Bank of the Potaro River for approx. 4 ½ miles to a point opposite of the mouth of Tiger River, thence across the Potaro River to the Left Bank of the Tiger River, thence up the Left Bank of the Tiger River to the intersection with the Tumatumari branch road, thence north along the Bartica/Potaro road for approximately 4 ½ miles, thence in a north eastern direction for approx. half of a mile to the source of an unnamed creek passing through the Tumatumari Ridge, its mouth being approx. 1 ½ miles from the mouth of the Potaro River, thence along the said unnamed creek to the point of commencement. Save and except all privately owned lands legally held.'

Note: The research team discovered that part of the title description is very unclear: '...up the Left Bank of the Tiger River to the intersection with the Tumatumari branch road, thence north along the Bartica/Potaro road...' This road is on the other side of Potaro River and there is no mention of the title boundary crossing the river. In addition, the intersection between Tiger River and the Tumatumari branch road is about 2 miles from the Potaro riverbank, and there is no mention of how the line moves between this intersection and the river. The title map however, looks like it is following the Tumatumari branch road to the river.

12. **Title suitability: Inadequate.** The title covers a very small area part (much less than 50%) of that requested from in the Amerindian Lands Commission report. Some residents say that the area requested was even larger than that recorded as their request in the ALC report. In addition to the recorded area it supposedly included the lands to the north of the Potaro River, which is now covered by their title. However, no written records remain to verify this. The current title is almost identical to the recommendation in the ALC report, consequently covering the area to the north of Potaro and leaving out most of the customary land which stretches to the south of the river. By cutting out this land, the title excludes the most fertile farming grounds between Tiger Creek and the 5 Mile-Maicobie Road and some homesteads east of the Village on the right bank of Tiger Creek.
13. **Title demarcation:** The demarcation map is dated 20th October 2008 and signed by surveyor V.V.H Bandon. The demarcation was done in two parcels. Three residents took part as line-cutters. The surveyors or relevant government agencies did not call a meeting with the Village before the demarcation, but the memorandum on the demarcation map states that 'the vice Captain of Maicobie Amerindian Village and members of community attended at various times during the course of the survey. No objection was made.'
14. **Demarcation suitability: Inadequate.** Villagers were not aware of any discrepancies between the demarcation and the title description. However, the LTA team did discover one. The title says that the Tiger River intersects with the Tumatumari Branch Road, however the demarcation line does not reach this intersection. Instead it starts down river from the intersection (440 metres below) and from there a buffer zone is excluded from the land between the road and the demarcation line. The buffer zone goes all the way along the Bartica/Potaro Road for approximately 4 ½ miles, then in a northeasterly direction for approx. half a mile to the source of an unnamed creek (Kurunai). The demarcation line does not keep a consistent distance to the road along this stretch.
15. **Extension status:** The Village has not applied, but residents say that they want to submit an application soon.
16. **Extension description:** The following area was described to the LTA team during a village

meeting, however it has not been officially agreed in a Village General Meeting or discussed with neighbouring communities such as El Paso: 'From Tiger Creek mouth to the mouth of Potaro in the Essequibo, then up the Essequibo to the mouth of Kangaruk left bank Essequibo, then up the Kangaruk to Mahdia Road bridge, then west along the Mahdia Road to the junction with the Kangaruk Road [marked as Kanawaruk on government maps], then north along the Kangaruk Road to where it intersects with Tiger Creek, then down the Tiger Creek to the point of commencement.'

17. Extension justification: The suggested extension covers the traditional land requested by the Tumatumari Amerindian Settlement from the ALC (that was not included in the original land title). The most fertile farm lands are currently outside the land title and clean water is becoming scarce due to mining in and around the title.

18. Response from government: N/A

19. Land and resource conflict: The Village has serious concerns about river mining polluting the water and destroying the river banks, both in titled and untitled customary land. Three members of the Rambarran family (Winston, Harry and Alvin) and Crown Mining are operating in Potaro River without permission from the community. The Rambarrans have three draggers and Crown mining has one dredge. The Village also has problems with another miner whose excavator and dredge have destroyed a large area on both sides of the title boundary from south of the Village centre via Sugar Hill towards the west. His excavators are now (July 2016) getting very close to the Village burial ground. GGMC maps show no mining concession in this miner's name so he is thought to be renting the concession of Michael Vieira, which does show on GGMC maps. The villagers complain that the miner is moving the course of Tiger Creek with his mining operations.

It is unclear how many concessions have been issued by the GGMC inside the Village title and whether these were issued before or after the community received its title. Official maps indicate different things: the information on Geonode only shows three concessions overlapping the title (likely to be Rambarran, Vieira and Kalamadeen), whereas a GLSC map from 2006 shows eight concessions overlapping. A miner showed the Toshao a map with a GGMC logo on it, revealing that the entire title is covered with mining blocks.

Residents have tried to remove outside miners from their customary land for years, since long before the Village received a land title. When they discovered that the issuance of the title did not make the miners move, Toshao Majuna Edwards stepped up efforts in 2006. The Village entered into agreements with a few miners (and still has some today), but sought to remove those that refused to recognise the authority of the Village Council. Mrs. Edwards took the matter to the APA, the Ethnic Relations Commission, the then Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MOAA), and President Jagdao. The Village also filed an injunction against Rambarran in November 2008 and the GGMC sent wardens to remove Rambarran that year.

Rambarran came back after Maicobie got new leadership in 2009, and asked to enter into an agreement with the Village. Villagers suspect that the new Toshao complied without their knowledge and consent, because Rambarran started mining again and has since referred to an agreement. He is claiming to have 'exclusive rights' to the land he is working in now (inside title) and that the Village cannot stop him.

The current Toshao (Mr. Andre) has sought help from the GGMC, the Minister of Natural Resources (Trotman) and the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MIPA) to remove the miner from their land. In a meeting between the Toshao, Trotman and GGMC in July 2016, Trotman promised to look into the matter.

20. Land security: Villagers were very happy when rights to some of their land were finally recognised in 2006, but they despair that in practice miners still claim they have rights to Maicobie's land and waterways.

21. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: The mining activities in the Potaro River have heavily polluted the water and are affecting fishing. The Village's fishing grounds have also diminished because, since 2015, Iwokrama National Protected Area has stopped them from fishing in the area between Siparuni and One Finger (a rock on a mountain), which is a part of their traditional fishing grounds (outside the existing title). They suspect that there has been an extension of the Iwokrama National Protected Area that they have not been informed or consulted about.

Mining activities in and near the Village are also affecting the health of farming grounds (especially in Sugar Hill) and access to game and clean drinking water. Due to scarcity of game people cannot hunt with bow and arrow as they used to and for drinking water they have to depend on smaller creeks that sometimes dry up.

22. Recognition and measures sought: The residents of Maicobie Village demand that:

- a. All miners working on Village land without consent of the Village must be removed;
- b. National legislation must be brought into line with indigenous peoples' rights in international law;
- c. The 'save and except' clause must be removed from Amerindian land titles;
- d. The government must recognise the villagers' ownership of the river that runs through the Village as well as the subsoil resources;
- e. Communities, not political parties, should elect the minister of Indigenous Peoples Affairs;
- f. MIPA should work closely with GGMC with regards to mining issues in Amerindian Villages;
- g. Demarcation of Village land should follow natural boundaries to reduce the money spent each year on line cutting.

Dragger operating on Maicobie titled land.

Photo: APA



Key findings:

- The community does not hold a land title, but is seeking to apply for one.
- The community is interested in joining other North Pakaraima communities in a request to get legal recognition of larger area corresponding to the request made by their forefathers to the ALC.
- The Timber Sales Agreement of Demerara Timbers Ltd. overlaps 56% of the customary land of the community.
- Medium- and large-scale mining concessions cover over 60% of the customary land.
- The community has never been informed or consulted about these concessions, and indeed was completely unaware of them at the time the team visited in July 2016.

1. **Location:** Moruwa River, sub-region 2, Region 8.
2. **History:** Indigenous Peoples from the north Pakaraimas have traditionally recognised and used the lands around the Siparuni and Moruwa Rivers for hunting, fishing and gathering from time immemorial. The Patamona and Makushi people know this area for its richness in biodiversity. Residents' accounts of use of the area go back to the 'tribal wars'. In the late 1960s some families decided to settle permanently in what is currently known as Moruwa and the community grew as people from Paramakatoi, Chenapou, Campbelltown, Karisparu and Kurukabaru, and other villages in the North Pakaraimas, joined them. Residents report that clay pots have been found in Makulak Ken, Imesele and Inamasekpai, showing previous historical use. A stone axe has also been discovered in Inamasekpai.
3. **Main neighbouring communities:** Campbelltown and Maicobie.
4. **Estimated population:** 74.
5. **Identities of residents:** Patamona.
6. **Local government:** The community does not have its own council, but one person from Moruwa is supposedly represented in the Campbelltown Village Council. However, due to the distance it is difficult for the councillor to be in regular contact with Campbelltown.
7. **Land use and economy:** The people of Moruwa depend on subsistence farming, hunting, fishing and gathering for their survival. Important crops are banana, plantains, cassava, yam, sugar cane, corn, and various fruits. All of these are abundant and rich. The farming grounds closest to the community are found around Motoima Palu, Haimara Palu and Imanesek Palu. More distant farming grounds, two to three days' walk away, are in Ichaku, Tipuru and Moruwa head. Hunting, fishing and gathering grounds are also up to three days walk in all directions from the village centre. Important distant areas are Tipuru, Nibbi Creek, Moruwa Head and Imesele Head. Some residents also make an income from mining – mostly artisanal. Some leave the community for periods of time to take work in mining locations further away.
8. **Community Projects:** No information.

- 9. Institutions and services:** Moruwa has a primary school built in 2008, but it took four years to get a teacher. That person left in early 2016 and the school now has no teacher (July 2016). The community has a medicine dispensary, but supplies are expired and there have been no personnel since 2014. Communication with the outside world is via a radio set. There is no phone signal, internet or electricity.
- 10. Current land title status:** No title held. Moruwa was included in the joint area requested by Kopinang, Itabac, Kaibarupai, Kanapang and Waipa from the ALC. It was also included in the request made by Campbelltown. However, the community has not been included in the formal titles granted to these Villages by the government. The community wants to have their customary land recognised under national law and has, since 2015, asked the Toshaos of Campbelltown to help them submit a formal land title application. To date (August 2016), no application had been sent to MIPA. The community has developed a description and a sketch map of their customary land to go with the application, but in reality the residents see their land as a part of a greater Patamona territory. They want to explore the possibility of having their land included in a joint claim for such a larger territory along with the North Pakaraimas communities, as per the ALC request.
- 11. Existing title description:** Description suggested for a land title application (described to LTA team in August 2016): Commencing at the Siparuni mouth, going North on left bank Essequibo to the mouth of Haywa Creek, thence up to its source and northwest to the peak of Mowasi (Mousi) Mountain, thence continuing northwest to the source of Haimara Creek and down to

Community members validating information collected by researchers.

Photo: APA



its mouth in Konawaruk, thence along Konawaruk right bank west to the mouth of Blackwater Creek, thence to its source in Tucan Mountain, thence along Toucan Mountain escarpment, southwest along the escarpment of Gate Mountain, thence straight southwest to Kuyulimen Mountain, following the watershed along Alwadamen Mountain, Taliwayen Mountain, Tipuru Hills, thence from the eastern shoulder of Tipuru Hills due east to the left bank Siparuni, thence along the left bank Siparuni to the point of commencement.

12. Land and resource conflict: There are no active conflicts, but this could change in the near future. In July 2016 residents met GFC officials and miners on the road to Campbelltown and understood that concessions were being granted to logging and mining interests. Data from the government's GIM website shows that the TSA of Demerara Timbers Limited (DTL) overlaps 56% of the customary land of the community. Logging is currently taking place in the Tipuru area, and greenheart and purpleheart are taken out to Mabura. The same website indicates that mining concessions cover over 60% of Moruwa's land. These are mostly medium-scale blocks except for one large-scale block owned by Oko Mining Development Inc. The community has never been informed or consulted about these concessions and people are very concerned about the outsiders intruding on their hunting and fishing grounds.

13. Land security: Without legal recognition for any of their customary territory Moruwa's land security is non-existent. The overlying concessions, described above, make this very clear. Residents are very concerned and do not want their land to become like Mahdia.

Outsiders are occupying our land without our knowledge or permission. What we would like is full rights to the land belonging to the community, because the community knows how to manage it sustainably, and monitor the land to protect it. We are not pleased with mining, because excavators and big machines destroy the land. It disturbs the animals we hunt and depend on. Sustainable logging is not so bad, because forest grows back, and it doesn't destroy the area or water. Mining destroys entire areas, trees and animals are gone. [Moruwa resident, August 2016]

14. Livelihood security and environmental integrity: Hunting, fishing and farming grounds are still rich, but residents are worried about how the mining and logging will affect their land. Pollution from mining is already reported in the head of North Moruwa. When someone offered to dig a well for one resident when the rivers get polluted, the resident said:

I did not accept, because I do not go fishing in a well! I ask a question if they ever fish and catch any *haimara* in the well. My way of life is not to buy meat or fish or other food that I need for my children or grandchildren. These lands and creeks are where my grandfather lived, and I am living here, and this belongs to me too. [Moruwa resident, August 2016]

15. Recognition and measures sought: Residents of Moruwa call for:

- a. The Amerindian Act to be revised to recognise collective territorial rights of indigenous peoples, including waters and sub-soil resources;
- b. The government to recognise the full extent of the community's land as well as the greater territory of the Patamona people;
- c. The authorities to provide trained schoolteachers and health personnel and the road to Mahdia to be improved;
- d. Residents to be allowed to fish on their traditional lands occupied by Tesouro Resources Mining.

6 RESULTS, ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 MAIN FINDINGS

6.1.1 Legal recognition of tenure rights

The majority of the settlements surveyed have land titles, but these are limited

Of the 18 settlements visited, 15 had land titles (including four satellite settlements located within title boundaries of three of the registered Villages). However, the land titles are limited in extent (see below) and Maicobie, Campbelltown and Karisparu, which received grant of title after 1991, find that their land title documents exclude third party lands, 'road reserves' and land '66 feet on either side of all navigable rivers'

Three communities do not have any secure land tenure

Since at least 2015 the Moruwa community has wanted to submit a title application, but has not yet done so because the community did not know how to proceed. Residents of El Paso and Maikwak were divided as to whether they wanted to apply for a land title.

Joint requests for collective title were dismissed

In the 1960s the Amerindian Lands Commission (ALC) did not accept the requests of several Villages to a joint title. Instead of agreeing a communal area for Itabac, Kanapang, Waipa, Kaibarupai and Kopinang the ALC suggested individual titles, which fragmented these Villages' territory. The ALC also rejected large areas requested by other Villages, which would have overlapped to create an area shared by most of the Villages (e.g. Kurukabaru's request). After the ALC, Villages in the North Pakaraimas have sought several times to discuss how to achieve legal recognition for a joint territory, e.g. through the Region 8 Area Council. The latest effort in this regard is the establishment of the North Pakaraimas District Council.

Villages were not consulted and did not give their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) on titled areas

Fourteen of the 15 titled Villages said that they were not consulted about the areas granted as titles. The exception is Karisparu, whose residents recalled a meeting with MIPA to discuss the boundaries. For the Villages titled under the 1976 Amerindian Act, the problem stems from the ALC, because the 1976 descriptions are copies of the recommendations made by the ALC. However, the ALC's recommendations did not correspond to the areas requested by any of the communities. Campbelltown and Maicobie received titles much later, in 2006, but also report that they were not consulted and that the titled land by no means covers the area their foreparents requested from the ALC.

Titles do not cover areas customarily occupied and used by Villages

All the 15 titled Villages (and the four satellite communities within these titles) reported that the title granted by the state fails to cover all the land that they use and know to be theirs, including homesteads, sacred sites and important farming, hunting and fishing areas. All Villages except Karisparu considered this to be a problem.

Nine of the 15 titled Villages have homesteads and, in some cases, small settlements outside the title boundaries. Kaibarupai is particularly affected with half of the population as well as the health centre, church, school and sewing centre outside the title. Thirteen of the 15 Villages have important farming grounds outside the title boundaries and all except one depend on customary land outside the boundaries for hunting and fishing.

Communities feel insecure on their lands

Most Villages said that until quite recently they felt free to access and use resources on their customary untitled land. With the gradual increase of extractive mining and logging activities on such lands, many Villages are now aware that they actually have no say about what happens on this land, which makes them concerned for the future.

Individual Village titles fragment indigenous collective territory

Many communities were dissatisfied with the way individual land titles have fragmented what has historically been seen as one collective territory, extending over the North Pakaraimas, Moruwa, Siparuni and the Potaro regions, which was fought for by their foreparents. They pointed out how boundaries on maps and on the ground are now causing disputes between Villages about ownership, when the land and resources had always been shared between the communities without any problem. The system of titling individual Villages is thereby undermining the traditional Amerindian way of life.

6.1.2 Title demarcation and extensions

Fourteen of the 15 titled Villages have been demarcated

Only Chenapou is not demarcated, and the Village is rejecting demarcation until its title boundary issues have been addressed.

Most of the demarcations are flawed

Of the 14 demarcated Villages, 12 reported differences between the demarcation and the title description. In Waipa demarcation seems to have added a piece of land to the title, but in the 11 other Villages demarcation reduced the area of land that was described in the title. As far as the research team are aware the government has not rectified any of these flawed demarcations. Two Villages, Kato and Kamana, were not able to say whether the demarcation correctly followed the boundary description in their title documents.

Flawed demarcation has caused disputes between neighbouring Villages

In two cases, Itabac/Kanapang and Chenapou/Karisparu, disputes between neighbouring Villages began when they were demarcated. The problems stem from errors in the title descriptions, which did not become evident until lines were drawn on the ground. In the case of Chenapou and Karisparu, the Villages disagreed about their boundaries before titles were issued, but the problems came to the fore when Karisparu was demarcated. In both these cases, the Villages sought help from the government to resolve the issues, but the issues still persist as of June 2017.

There are no official, agreed ways to make sure that Villages consult and agree on their common title extension boundaries

This assessment finds that in most cases Villages did not consult with their neighbours before sending extension applications to the former Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MoAA). But the MoAA



Mother and baby at a public meeting, Maicobie Village.

Photo: APA

also did not appear to have any clear rules requiring such consultation. As a result, the extension area of one Village could overlap with the title description or the extension application of another (e.g. Kato/Kurukabaru). That said, some Villages that were considering developing extension applications said they wanted to discuss with their neighbours about submitting joint requests for areas shared between them (e.g. see summary reports of Kurukabaru, Itabac and Kanapang).

Villages were told that demarcation must happen before extension

Some Villages want to apply for extensions to rectify problems with flawed title descriptions, however, they have been told that they must accept demarcation first and then they can apply for extension (e.g. Waipa and Chenapou).

Government has not dealt promptly with extension applications

Five of the 15 titled Villages have applied for extension and two more think they have, but are not certain if the application was sent in the end.⁹⁶ Of the five applications only Kato has received part of the extension it requested in 2007 for two tracts of land that cover areas of great customary importance to the Village. The government granted one of these tracts in 2012, and Kato was told to reapply for the second area.

The government told three other Villages to reapply for their extension. The former Ministry of Amerindian Affairs rejected Monkey Mountain's 2005 application and the Village was told to reapply in accordance with the 2006 Amerindian Act. The Village reapplied, but never received a formal

⁹⁶ In these two cases, the Villages held extensive discussion about extension and an agreement to send in an application. However, due to a lack of reply from the government, it is thought that the then Village Council did not go through with the application or that villagers thought that a discussion with the minister constituted a formal application in itself.

response. Monkey Mountain is however, included for extension in the ALT project. Taruka, which applied for extension in 1998, was told that the area was too big and that a smaller one would be recommended. Residents received no further information until 2015 when the research team told them that Taruka's extension is included in the ALT project for extension.

Kamana sent its extension application a few years ago and was told to reapply. Villagers do not know why and are very disappointed by this response.

Chenapou was told it must accept demarcation first, and then apply for extension.

Villages are not sure if they can apply for extension

The current individual land titling system does not cater for the fact that much of the customary land of communities has been traditionally shared between neighbouring Villages within a collectively held territory. Many Villages are surrounded by other Villages and have 'nowhere to extend to', so they are confused and uncertain about how to deal with this issue within the current system (e.g. Kanapang and Kurukabaru).

6.1.3 Overlapping land claims and threats to livelihoods

Mining and forestry concessions and activities overlap titled lands

This study finds that five of the 15 titled Villages have problems with mining activities or the movement of unauthorised miners within their legally recognised title. Maicobie, Campbelltown and Karisparu are overlapped by mining concessions. Monkey Mountain reports the presence of illegal miners (who do not have concessions) while Kanapang has miners travelling from Brazil into Guyana on the road that passes right through the Village.

Maicobie and Campbelltown, in particular, have had many mining concessions imposed on their title areas in the past, without their knowledge and consent. Since many of these were issued before the Villages were officially granted titles, the government considers them as legal because the title documents of Campbelltown and Maicobie include a clause excluding 'all privately owned lands legally held'.

Third party interests overlap the customary lands of communities

Of the 18⁹⁷ communities visited, 15 reported some sort of land and resource conflict with external parties on their untitled customary lands. Most of the issues relate to mining and logging, and a few involve shops and cattle ranching.

In addition, two Villages are experiencing increasing conflicts with protected areas that overlap their customary lands: Chenapou with the Kaieteur National Park (see Section 4) and Maicobie with Iwokrama National Protected Area. Plans for Amaila Falls hydropower dam, funded by the bilateral agreement between Guyana and Norway, have also been a great concern for the people of Chenapou, Kamana and other communities over the past few years.

Communities face bullying, violence and human rights abuses from miners

Communities report bullying and physical abuse, particularly around key mining areas such as Mahdia, Echerak and Wailang. This can have grave consequences, for example the son of a family

⁹⁷ The satellite communities of Bamboo Creek, Mountain Foot, Chiung Mouth and Princeville are counted as part of their main villages in this number. If all settlements visited are counted separately, the number is 22.

living in Wailang was beaten so badly by a miner that he lost all his teeth. The family is now fearful of staying, but have nevertheless decided not to leave their home.

Commercial mining and logging are damaging the environment and indigenous livelihoods

Many of the communities that depend on customary areas around Siparuni, Potaro, Tipuru and Moruwa (e.g. Paramakatoi, Monkey Mountain, Karisparu, Taruka, Campbelltown and Moruwa) reported that commercial mining and logging are increasingly affecting game, fish and waterways that have always been healthy and abundant (see Maps 2, 3 and 4 for past and present mining and logging concessions in these areas). Monkey Mountain mentioned heavy pollution from mining in the Echilebar area, Chenapou in Echerak and Campbelltown, Maikwak and Karisparu in the areas just around their Villages. Most of the Villages visited were worried that, with the way things are developing, their food and water security will be at risk in the future.

Resources becoming scarce in title areas

As the populations of most Amerindian communities are growing, there is increasing pressure on resources within the title boundaries (e.g. Waipa, Kopinang, Kamana, Kato and Paramakatoi). This is made worse by the fact that the titles of all the Villages only cover a small part of their customary lands, and exclude areas that are suitable for farming. Pollution caused by mining also compounds this effect in several cases. In Kopinang residents mentioned that changes in climate are also affecting their crops.

Some Villages noted that they should make greater efforts to pursue sustainable use of the resources, for example, they should only take fish, animals or trees that are above a certain size. Many communities have had such customary rules for generations, but some residents think the Villages need to remind themselves of these practices.

6.2 ANALYSIS OF TENURE INSECURITY AND LAND CONFLICTS

6.2.1 Past mistakes and flawed laws

As noted in Section 3 and in many of the Village summaries in Section 5, after Guyana got independence from Britain the Amerindian Lands Commission did not always recognise the customary tenure systems of indigenous peoples. Crucially, the ALC did not consult with villages beforehand and get their agreement to its final recommendations. As a result, the ALC rejected or reduced almost half of the Villages' land claims, but its faulty recommendations then became law under the Schedule to the 1976 Amerindian Act (see Table 2, Section 3.2).

The 1976 Amerindian Act set the scene for land disputes and Village grievances because it did not make sure that Village title boundaries were surveyed, marked on the ground and agreed by the communities in advance. This assessment also finds that the 2006 Amerindian Act does not provide good enough protections for indigenous peoples' collective rights to lands, territories and resources (Box 1).

Box 1: The Amerindian Act 2006

The Amerindian Act 2006 has several problems in relation to indigenous peoples' land rights, including that it:

- Says that all untitled lands are held by the State, which is not legally correct according to international law;
- Does not recognise indigenous peoples' pre-existing inherent rights to their lands, territories and resources;
- Does not have a logical process for land demarcation and titling;
- Does not require that titling is based on customary land tenure systems or customary laws on land and resource ownership. This is against international law;
- Only allows individual Villages to have titles to land and resources and doesn't allow any other type of organisation that could hold title for several Villages jointly;
- Does not protect the land and resource rights of communities that still don't have a legal land title;
- Sets unfair conditions on communities that want to apply for land title;
- Allows mining and logging concessions to be given on untitled customary lands beyond the lands immediately next to the title boundary, without consulting with the community and getting its agreement in advance or, in the case of logging, without even informing the community;
- Gives government too many powers to interfere in the way indigenous peoples' governing bodies work and make decisions;
- Gives leaseholders and other outsiders rights above the customary rights of indigenous peoples in State Lands and State Forests (Article 57);
- Only gives one way to appeal against the Minister's decision on a title i.e. via the High Court.

The 2006 Amerindian Act also introduced legal rules that have made land tenure insecurity worse for Amerindian Villages. In particular, the Act favours the rights of private leaseholders occupying the land before a title is granted. This in turn has apparently led to new 'save and except' clauses found in land titles issued after 2006. This clause places the commercial property rights of miners, loggers and agricultural leaseholds over and above the tenure rights of indigenous peoples' communities.

The Act also lacks clear ways of resolving land disputes and does not set out clear and fair rules for defining and agreeing on land title areas. The law gives too much power to the Minister of Indigenous Peoples Affairs to make his/her own decisions, which (certainly with former Ministers) has resulted in biased and one-sided decisions that didn't recognise and protect all of the community land rights and all of the customary areas defined by customary tenure. The 2006 Amerindian Act therefore does not meet international law standards and legal obligations agreed by Guyana under treaties it has ratified. These standards require Guyana to recognise, delimit, demarcate and title indigenous peoples' lands using clear and un-biased rules in accordance with their traditional occupation and use of the land.⁹⁸

98 Gilbert J (2012) *Indigenous Peoples' Land Rights in International Law: from victims to actors* Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden; see also IACHR (2009) *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights Over Their Ancestral Lands and Natural Resources: Norms and Jurisprudence of the Inter American Human Rights System* OAS/OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 56/09 <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/indigenous/docs/pdf/ancestrallands.pdf>

At the same time, the Amerindian Act and other national laws do not provide proper protections for the untitled customary lands of indigenous peoples, which are designated as 'State land' or State 'forest estate' i.e. public lands that the government can sell or lease to miners, loggers, commercial farmers, infrastructure projects, conservation projects or other investments (including possibly REDD+ projects). In short, the government defines indigenous peoples' lands ('Amerindian lands') only as Village titled lands, and legal protections (including FPIC for new small and medium-scale mining) only apply to these same titled lands and areas immediately next to a title boundary.

Outside the title boundary the government says there is no right to the vital FPIC safeguard for indigenous peoples' lands. This means that state authorities can grant concessions and allocate lands to outsiders on the untitled lands of indigenous peoples without the affected Villages knowing about or agreeing to this. This assessment found that these basic loopholes in Guyanese law are causing many land conflicts affecting indigenous peoples throughout Region 8.

The 2009 Forestry Act repeats the 2006 Amerindian Act's lack of proper protection for Amerindian untitled customary lands. This has meant that the government has routinely given out concessions and permits on untitled community forest lands without the agreement of the affected communities.⁹⁹ Indigenous peoples' organisations and Amerindian Villages are calling on the government of Guyana and the EU to correct these major problems in all Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) and Legality Assurance Systems (LAS) proposed under the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative. But, as of June 2017, they had not received any firm guarantee to protect indigenous peoples' customary tenure rights and FPIC over untitled community forests.

The 1976 State Lands Act (Article 5) is the origin of the rule limiting the property rights of indigenous peoples by excluding their rights to subsoil resources. Section 20(2)(a) of the 1976 State Lands Act Regulations is where the clauses in demarcation maps and title registration documents that exclude lands next to larger rivers and creeks appear to come from.

These 'savings' clauses are apparently meant to protect rights of way and transportation along rivers by non-residents, but it is not clear why the State has to have the ownership rights to these zones, as there are other legal ways of guaranteeing rights of way on rivers.

6.2.2 Lack of consultation and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) from the communities

Government bodies have made decisions about land titling, demarcation and concessions without the communities' participation and without obtaining their agreement in advance. Many residents stressed that this is the main cause of mistakes in boundary demarcations, mining and logging concessions being imposed on traditional lands and the conflicts about land and resources that communities are experiencing.

If a Village disagrees with a decision about its title, the only official way it can appeal is by taking the case to the High Court. But this is not a suitable approach for Villages, as the High Court may take years (or even decades) to make a judgement and the process is often costly. Village Councils can, and do, send written complaints to Ministers or other organisations such as the Indigenous Peoples Commission. However, this assessment found that in many cases Villages have not seen any improvement in their situation after writing to official bodies.

The assessment also found Guyana's laws and administration dealing with land issues don't have

⁹⁹ The 1999 GFC rules of procedure give certain protections for Amerindian land rights, but these are rarely carried out in practice and are not contained in the 2009 Forest Act. See especially, McGarrell, M George, L and Almás O (2016) *Pinpointing Problems – Seeking Solutions: a rapid assessment of the underlying causes of forest conflicts in Guyana* APA and FPP, Georgetown and Moreton in Marsh

clear and consistent ways of resolving disputes where there is more than one claim on the land, either for Amerindian titled lands or for tracts of land requested for extension of titles.

6.3 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Large areas of the customary lands of indigenous communities in Guyana have no legal protection, mostly because of the factors outlined above in Section 6.2. Mining and logging enterprises have therefore been allowed to operate on these lands. In Region 8, the low-lying areas that are easy to access were the first to be exploited. The geographical remoteness and topography of the rest of the mountainous Region may have delayed the arrival of mining and logging. However, with new infrastructure, such as the road built to the (now seemingly suspended) Amaila Falls project site, pristine forest areas have become more accessible. Mining is already taking place along the road.

Nevertheless, since the completion of data collection for this land tenure assessment, some important developments have taken place that may be able to address some of the underlying legal and policy reasons causing the situation described above.

One such development is the endorsement by the Amerindian Land Titling Project Board in April 2017 of the 'Guidelines for Amerindian Land Titling in Guyana'. These Guidelines particularly seek to address the wide concerns raised about the lack of participation and FPIC in the titling, extension and demarcation procedures. They state clearly how communities and Villages should be involved in defining, and giving their consent to, what area of land should be covered under an Absolute Grant and subject to demarcation. They also seek to make sure that neighbouring communities are informed and involved in these processes if they share a common boundary or have an overlapping claim. Another key part of the Guidelines deals with how grievances in relation to the titling of indigenous lands and territories should be addressed. It is hoped that communities will also be able to channel complaints about third party concessions on their lands and territories via the suggested Grievance Redress Mechanism.

A second notable recent development is the initiation of a process to revise the Amerindian Act, which the new government has promised repeatedly since it came into power in 2015.¹⁰⁰ To address the problems of third party concessions being imposed on indigenous customary lands without their agreement in the future, the Act and related laws should be amended to include provisions for FPIC.

The current government proposals for a Land Commission of Inquiry remain unclear in the final quarter of 2017. Existing terms of reference are vague and have been rejected in their current form by all indigenous peoples' organisations in Guyana. The TOR are rejected because they do not contain any solid guarantees regarding the scope and mandate of the inquiry in addressing indigenous land and territorial rights and because they were developed without the effective participation of indigenous peoples in Guyana. The TOR have also been questioned by indigenous organisations for their inclusion of an expanded Lands Commission of Inquiry (LCOI) mandate to explore compensation to Afro-Guyanese for past abuses during the colonial period.

Positive change will require the timely inclusion of Amerindian communities and organisations in the continued revision of the Amerindian Act and related laws. To enable the needed change, it is also critical that processes for issuing mining and logging concessions or establishing protected areas in Guyana are amended to respect the full customary rights of indigenous communities to their lands, territories and resources.

100 'Granger re-commits to revise Amerindian Act' *Kaieteur News*, September 15, 2016 <https://www.kaieteurnews.com/2016/09/15/granger-recommits-to-revise-amerindian-act/>



Researchers training to use laptop and smart phone.

Photo: APA

6.4 PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

Most of the communities visited as part of this land tenure assessment made both general and specific recommendations for changes needed to protect their land rights, encourage good governance and resolve land conflicts. This section summarises the recommendations made.

To the government, national decision-makers and lawmakers

The communities urge the government, national decision-makers and lawmakers to recognise and legally title all lands that Patamona and Makushi people of the North Pakaraimas claim as theirs, which their foreparents depended on and which they continue to occupy and use for farming, hunting, fishing and gathering today. One of their key recommendations is for **the government to recognise and secure their land as a communal territory in 'one block'**. Until this has happened, they call on the government to:

- Revise the relevant laws (e.g. Amerindian Act, Mining Act and Forest Act) to bring them in line with international human rights standards and ensure that they provide for a) recognition of indigenous collective territories, b) the rights of indigenous communities to the natural resources on their land, including waterways and minerals and c) the rights of indigenous communities to say yes or no to any kind of mining on their land, including large scale operations;
- Avoid overlaps between communities' individual titles by ensuring that the revision of the Amerindian Act, and its amended regulations, include requirements to consult with communities on titling, demarcation and extension matters and obtain their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) before any areas are decided upon;

- Cancel logging and mining concessions that have been allocated on titled and untitled customary lands without the communities' FPIC;
- Crack down on illegal mining and forestry activities on titled and untitled customary land;
- Stop allocating new mining and logging concessions on titled land and customary lands (including lands earmarked for extension). No allocation must be done without first obtaining communities' FPIC;
- Title the communities that do not yet have any land security, if they have expressed a wish for this to happen (e.g. Moruwa);
- Correct flaws in Village demarcations and make sure residents are fully involved in this process as they are the ones who best know the land;
- Speed up processing and implementing the Village land title and extension applications that communities have submitted to date, to ensure their land security until a collective Patamona and Makushi territory is legally recognised by the State of Guyana;
- Build capacity of government officials to understand indigenous peoples' rights, including to participation, consultation, FPIC and customary lands and resources;
- Review and revise Guyana national park policies to adopt a human rights-based approach, including through consultation and engagement with Patamona Villages affected by Kaieteur National Park. The communities do not recognise the extended boundaries of the Kaieteur National Park and have called for a reduction to the 1929 boundaries or for the boundaries to be cancelled altogether;
- Recognise and strengthen the North Pakaraimas District Council (NPDC) by gazetting this body and starting formal discussions on land rights matters and proposals from indigenous communities to improve their tenure security;
- Recognise and support the NPDC's right to self-determination in developing their indigenous peoples' action plan for the region.

To the National Tshaos Council (NTC)

The communities call on the NTC to:

- Be strong and unified in its representation of the issues facing Amerindian communities, including taking the lead on pushing for the President to address the outstanding land issues;
- Follow up recommendations from communities to restart a District Tshao Council for Region 8;
- Seek funds to help regional Tshao meetings economically;
- Help coordinate land title and extension applications to reduce the risk of overlaps and gaps between communities;
- Take a role in resolving the conflicts/disputes that already exist between some Villages due to previous land title and demarcation exercises;
- Make regular visits to our communities to become aware of the issues affecting them;
- Push for the revision of laws that do not fully protect the rights of indigenous peoples to land, resources and FPIC;
- Seek to remove the 'save and except' clauses from land title descriptions;
- Organise trainings for Tshaos in leadership and governance;
- Identify actions that can help protect and preserve our culture (including heritage sites) so that traditions and knowledge are passed to younger generations.

To Village Councils

Community members recommend their Village Councils to:

- Unite with other Village Councils to discuss and agree on a strategy to obtain legal recognition for a collective territory;
- Consider and identify ways to help fund the regional meetings of the Village Councils in the Region;
- Take a proactive approach to address the unresolved land title, demarcation and extension issues of the communities – the Village Councils must not sit and wait for government to act;
- Make relevant government agencies aware of the issue of destructive extractive industries on community lands (titled and untitled).

To the Indigenous People's Commission (IPC)

Only two Villages had recommendations for the IPC because most did not know about the existence of the body or its mandate. They called on the IPC to:

- Investigate indigenous land issues according to its mandate and make recommendations for improved land security and good governance of tenure for indigenous peoples in Guyana;
- Become more visible so that indigenous communities can know what the body is doing.

Aerial view of destruction caused by mining in Echerak river (Karisparu Lands).

Photo: APA



ANNEX I: TESTIMONIES

FRANK ISAAC, TARUKA VILLAGE, REGION 8

My name is Frank Issac, I am Patamuna, I speak the Patamuna language. I was born here, I grew here, I am therefore of this place for I have lived here since I was born on May 25, 1937. I am 78 years old, I am an old man, I have many grandchildren and because of that I want to secure lands for them. That is why I am requesting more lands for the younger generation.

The lands we are asking for begin from the mouth of Echilebar River to Takatu source, down the Takatu to its mouth in Siparuni, then down the Siparuni River to the Essequibo, down the Essequibo to Moruwa Mouth, continuing down Essequibo to Potaro Mouth then continuing up to Seman Creek, then up the Seman Creek to its source, then across to Ayangana Mountain, from Ayangana to Tanwanamun Hill to the source of Ireng, then down the Ireng River to the point of commencement.

My main reason for requesting more lands is not only for my grandchildren, but for all the people of Region 8. Right now the lands are limited for farming, fishing, hunting and gathering craft materials and there is not much area for extension for some villages. Therefore, more land is needed in order for us people in Region 8 to have lands to use freely without any interference. Our grandchildren are plenty and there are more coming. Villagers from here and other neighbouring villages go to Essequibo to hunt, fish and gather craft materials. I am one of the persons, as a leader, requesting for this area of land as one block, which we also requested at the time of the Area Council (Region 8). From experience, making this representation, the government does not want to hear about this one block. According to the government the land is too big for the Amerindians to manage, but remember, I am not only thinking about myself or my grandchildren alone, but have sympathy for the rest of my fellow Amerindians in Region 8. That is why I am asking that my request will be considered and that we are given our lands, and that all outside individuals and companies involved in mining and logging are removed from this land. I say this because there are lots of companies intruding in our lands looking for minerals, bauxite etc. We have learned that at Kopinang there is a deposit of uranium and prospectors were working there. They promised the Kopinang villagers that they will give half of the revenue to the Village, but this promise was never fulfilled and nothing was given. These are some examples of how companies would treat us Amerindians.

From my experience, lots of Amerindian miners were killed by outsiders in the mines, especially by the Brazilian miners. This included people from Paramakatoj, Kato and other communities and three persons from here (Taruka). These are some of the reasons why we say no to outsiders. I also learned that Brazilian miners killed Brazilian Indians known as the Yanomami, in the mines. During those days I was Toshao here in Taruka and Brazilian relatives of villagers here came by and told me about the incident. Again, this makes me see that Brazilians do not have respect for Amerindians.

Miners coming into the area do not have respect for the Amerindians. In the backdam they would treat the Amerindians without respect and as if they are not human. When the miners are working the mines, especially areas that the Amerindians know as their traditional lands, the miners would just cut and waste trees that the Amerindians use for building homes. Though the communities may have rules that one is not supposed to cut certain types of trees in that way, they still do. Some miners would sell the logs. That is why as a leader I always let people know that these are things that they should abide by, even if they are not from the community.

Now I am hearing that because of the rules I have in my community even the government and other communities are saying that Frank is very difficult to get by when it comes to land. I have a reason why I have these rules – because this place is for my grandchildren and if these rules are not in place, we would not know if the land will keep as it is for the generations to come. Also, because of the way the miners treat the Amerindians we still say no to outsiders coming into our lands, because we need our lands. This is the place where I go hunting, fishing, gathering and where I do my cultural activities including gathering medicines. There are trees that we use, like greenheart, and because these plants are very important, we need to preserve them for the future generations. When we cut trees for material for our buildings, we do not overharvest. Even when we make farms we would only clear the area that we need, not more. For so long we have been cutting and using from the forest, but there is still lots of forest, and when we say no to outsiders coming in they would be telling us that we have no authority over this land. However that is wrong. To me, outsiders have no authority to come in to any part of the land that I occupy. And this is the place that I was born and brought up. It is the outsiders who should apply before they come in to any part of the land. However, I am not backing down. I am still trying.

As we still try to make representation for the security for this land, the government officials will make no reply to their recommendation. When they send no response back to our recommendations, I see that they do not have any respect for us. But I would like to continue to make recommendations for our lands, because now our neighbouring communities are growing and don't have space for hunting, fishing and farming or for any extension. We need more lands. So it is not only Taruka that needs extension, but also other communities like Kurukabaru, Waipa, Kaibarupai, Kopinang, Kato, Chiung Mouth and Itabac. So we would be united as communities, to avoid bringing envy, jealousy, hatred and murder. We do not want to live as enemies with our neighbouring communities. I remember at an area council meeting we agreed as communities to have one block as Patamona people so that we can go hunting, follow pecari [bush hog]. If the government respects the boundaries that we recommended (the full block), we can go ahead and accept demarcation. As I mentioned earlier, if I go following bush hog or any other animal that I am hunting and enter into a concession area, I am afraid that the rangers there would cause trouble and even lock me up. If the government would listen to our calls for help with regards to our land issue, we would be very grateful. *Tengi kulu.*

[Frank Isaac, 78 years, Taruka Village, Region 8, November 2015. Recorded by Sharon Atkinson, translated from Patamona by Paul Benjamin]

LUCENIA ALPHONSO, KANAPANG VILLAGE, REGION 8

I am indigenous woman, I am Makushi, I am from Kanapang, I am living here for a long time and there is nobody who comes and chases me out from my land, from my Village. This place is my place, my settlement where my father left me, at Kebaru – and where I have my old grandfathers old bones there in the clay pot. And I am the owner, I am their daughter, their grand daughter and I still have children coming behind as their grand daughters...children them. And I am here, I am fighting for my rights as indigenous, as Makushi. I have to fight for my right for my land, for my river, for my forest, for my *hiari*. Everything that I need – fishes, animals that we hunt for food, that we go and put the *hiari* in the creeks and kill the fishes for our children. We have right for that. I am fighting for these things. I have medicines, bushes, which government and ministers don't know about. And I am fighting for my special rock [Lucenia was sitting on a large rock while giving her testimony]. This is my rock. He is my favourite and I love this rock, better than loving government or other people. But my land I have right, because I need everything for my children. And especially for my diamond, gold, which I am sitting on the top, I am living on the top. I need everything for my children who will come behind – and sometimes they will have children and children coming behind again.

I want my demarcation back again. My demarcation through where my father had demarcated the land, I want it for all my children. Because we don't want to be in a small block, we want to be open. We want to go to other villages. Itabac, Kurukabaru, anywhere I want to walk because Amerindians they don't have no stop – only one place. Amerindians are the people who like to go far and far... go to their communities, their friends, their grandchildren, their families – they will go and visit the others. Me, I cannot stop only one place, like government. Government is in a small, in a cage, like. We are not like that. I will go over Brazil, I have family in Brazil, I have family in Guyana, I have family in Venezuela at Santa Helena. [...] I don't only have one family right here, I have many families. God creates me with plenty family. That is what I have to fight for – that is what I am crying for. [...]

I am a Macushi lady. I will not leave this place; I will be here all the time. My father left me here, that's why we are crying out for our land. Where my father went, I will go, that's what I'm telling you people now. I am not giving up my land and I would fight for it for my children and my grand children. I want my rock where I am sitting and my grandfather head [skull in clay pot in Kebaru]. I live with my grandfather up to today and am inviting them to drink *kari* and *kasseri*. Even if they are bones I still invite them – I never leave them, because if I do they can give me sickness. I don't know who they are – it could be a *piaiman* or a high science man, that's why I bring them to me. That's all I am saying – amen.

[Lucenia Alphonso, Kanapang Village, Region 8, October 2015, recorded by Oda Almas, parts in Makushi translated by Ignatius Williams]

MOSES DAVID, FORMER TOSHAO, ITABAC, REGION 8

My name is Moses David. I have been here at the Guyana and Brazil border since 1968 and am still here in 2015. My history is like this. My grandfather belongs to Venezuela and Brazil and is Makushi, my grandmother's father is also Venezuelan and Brazilian and Makushi. We came here during the life of my father Francisco David and his father David Peters and my mother's father was Samuel Pedro and his wife was Marina Peters. My father's mother was Guyanese, her relatives were Moses and Gabriel and Augustus. They lived right at the borders of this village called Cow Teseng and Kolaba Tuwuk also called Iwobalik, three names.

We used to live there however moved to our current location because of the good fishing, hunting and farming. There was also good water and materials for making our houses, *ite* and wood. It was our grandparents who came here first; their names were Janeu and Sebastian Marcello. They built a school and health post eventually. That is how our place started here. In those times we had our own leaders, their names were Francis Moses and Joe Lewis who used to be called Malachi. They maintained the village in a peaceful way, there were no quarrels.

They did not know to read and write and had no reason to demarcate the land however today we see that our grandchildren are facing conflicts because of demarcations. I am here, I want the demarcation to recognise my land; this is our place, we are a people that want to own our land. We are the Makushi. We need our land for farming so that we can be happy.

We have been living here for generations; we have been building up our place through self-help – that's how we build our place. That is why I am happy that we are living together. We use to dance the *parishara* and enjoyed ourselves. Our population is increasing.

I used to be Toshao during the period 1986 to 2003. It is important to have our land; we need our land. I am working to build our home – we need our farms, if you don't have a farm how will you survive? It is our culture. You do not know our way of life, but it is necessary that we know our culture. Some are losing the culture; they do not know how to build their homes like we used to.

We need to maintain our way of life as we do not know how to make shoes, socks, zinc etc. therefore we need to live the Makushi life. We do not need to be ashamed of ourselves; we need to live our lives as we know. We live to support each other

[Moses David, Itabac Village, Region 8, 2015, recorded by Ignatius William, translated by Rebecca Singh in 2018]

ANNEX II: SUMMARY FINDINGS OF LTA SURVEY IN REGION 8

Table 4

| Village/ settlement * | Titled/ applied for | FPIC/ satisfied | Secures all of customary lands | Activities outside title S/H = satellites/ homesteads H = hunting & fishing F = farming G = gathering | Demarcation - date | Demarcation correct/ satisfied | Extension applied for/ issued | Response to extension application | Planning to apply for extension | Land conflicts/ overlaps on customary land I = inside title O = outside title | Included in ALT/ year |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| Sub-region 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chenapou | Yes - 1976 | No/No | No - part | Yes - S/H, H, F, G | No - Village opposes | N/A | Yes - year unclear/No | Need to accept demarcation before extension can be dealt with | N/A | Yes - mining (O), Kaieteur National Park (O) and plans for Amaila Falls hydropower (O) | Yes - demarcation in year 2 |
| Itabac | Yes - 1976 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - H, F, G | Yes - 2010 | No/No | No/No | N/A | Yes - joint territory | Yes - border dispute with Kanapang** | No |
| Kaibarupai | Yes - 1976 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - half of the population as well as the health centre, church, school and sewing centre left out Also F, H, G | Yes - date unknown | No/No | Unclear whether application is sent | | Yes | No | No |
| Kamana | Yes - 1976/ 1991 CoT in 2014*** | No/No | No - small part | Yes - H, G, F | Yes - date unknown | Unclear/No | Yes/No | No official reply; unofficially told to reapply, no reason given | Reapplying | Yes - mining (O) | Yes - demarcation in year 1 |
| Kanapang | Yes - 1976/ 1991 CoT in 2010 | No/No | No - small part | No | Yes - date unknown | No/No | No/No | N/A | Yes - joint territory | Yes - miners on road through Village and border dispute with Itabac (I) | No |
| Karisparu | Yes - 2014 | There was a meeting with MIPA in 2013/ Yes | No - part | Yes - people go H and G in Moruwa, but express content with the title | Yes - 2015 | No/No | No/No | N/A | No | Yes - mining/shop holders (I) Mining/logging (O) | Yes - title grant in year 1 and demarcation in year 1 |
| Kato Chiung Mouth (satellite) | Yes - 1976/ 1991 CoT in 2007 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - S/H, F, H, G and secondary school | Yes - date unknown | Unclear/No | Yes, two tracts/ Yes, one tract | Told to reapply for second tract of extension | Reapplied in 2016 | Disputed area with Kurukabaru on their common boundary Cattle ranching (O) | Yes - demarcation of extension in year 1 |
| Kopinang | Yes - 1976 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - S/H, H, F, G | Yes - date unknown | No/No | No/No | N/A | No - want to correct demarcation first | Yes - mining (O) | No |
| Kurukabaru | Yes - 1976 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - F, H, G | Yes - date unknown | No/No | No/No | N/A | Joint extension/ territory | Disputed area with Kato on common boundary Yes - logging/ mining (O) | No |
| Maikwak | No | N/A | N/A | All activities on so-called state land | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | Potential - a lot of mining not sanctioned by GGMC | No |
| Monkey Mountain | Yes - 1976/ 1991 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - S/H, H, F, G | Yes - date unknown | No/No | Yes/No | Need to apply again according to 2006 Amerindian Act | They reapplied, but no response | Yes - mining (O+I), logging (O), cattle ranching (O) | Yes - extension and demarcation of it in year 3 |

* Research teams visited 22 different settlements. Fifteen of these are titled, three are untitled and four are included as satellites in the areas of titled villages.

** It should be noted that data downloaded from the Geonode in 2015 showed that Itabac, Kanapang, Kurukabaru, Kato (including Chiung Mouth) and Monkey Mountain were overlapped with large-scale mining licences held by Prometheus Resources Guyana Inc. However these concessions did not show in data downloaded in 2017 and are therefore not included in the information in this table.

*** This table only records the Certificate of Title (CoT) for the villages that were in possession of them. Missing information does not necessarily mean that no CoT has been issued.

| Village/ settlement * | Titled/ applied for | FPIC/ satisfied | Secures all of customary lands | Activities outside title S/H=satellites/ homesteads H=hunting & fishing F=farming G=gathering | Demarcation - date | Demarcation correct/ satisfied | Extension applied for/ issued | Response to extension application | Planning to apply for extension | Land conflicts/ overlaps on customary land I=inside title O=outside title | Included in ALT/ year |
|--|--|--|---|---|--------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| Paramakatoi Bamboo Creek (satellite) Mountain Foot (satellite) | Yes - 1976/ 1991 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - S/H, F, H, G | Yes - 2016/17 | No/No | Unclear/ No | No | Joint territory | Yes - logging/ mining (O) | Yes - demarcation in year 1 |
| Taruka | Yes - 1976/ 1991 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - S/H, F, H, G | Yes - around 2014 | No/No | Yes - 1998, joint application with other Villages/No | Can only get 13 sq. miles | N/A | Yes - logging/ mining/ cattle ranching (O) | Yes - extension and demarcation of it in year 3 |
| Waipa | Yes - 1976/ 1991 CoT in 2014 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - S/H, H, F, G | Yes - date unknown | No - included an extra piece of land | No/No | N/A | Wants to apply - has identified area | No | No |
| Sub-region 2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Campbell- town Princeville (satellite) | Yes - 2006 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - H, G, F | Yes - 2008 | No/No | No/No | N/A | Yes | Yes - mining (I +O)/logging (O) | No |
| El Paso | No | N/A | N/A | All activities on so-called state land | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | Want to apply for title, but told that the population is too small | Yes - mining concessions on customary land, but no direct conflict | No |
| Maicobie | Yes - 2006 CoT - 2009 | No/No | No - small part | Yes - S/H, H, G, F | Yes - 2008 | No/residents have not noticed | No/No | N/A | Yes | Yes - mining (I+O) | No |
| Moruwa | No/No | N/A | None at all | All insecure | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | Yes - logging/ mining | No |
| Summary | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Titled 15 | FPIC No: 14 Yes maybe: 1 Satisfied: No: 14 Yes: 1 | Secures all of customary lands No: 15 | Activities outside title (satellites/ homesteads, hunting & fishing, farming, gathering) Yes: 17 No: 1 | Demarcation 14 | Demarcation correct No: 12 Maybe: 2 Satisfied No: 12 Unclear: 2 | Extension applied for 5 have applied and 2 are not sure if application was sent Issued ½ (Kato received one of two tracts applied for) | Response to extension application Reapply: 3 (requested area too large: 1; accord with Amerindian Act: 1; no reason given: 1) Need to demarcate first: 1 | Planning to apply for extension Some Villages were clear at the time of visit that they want to apply for a larger area together with other Villages while many more have expressed such a wish later through NPDC meetings | Land conflicts/ overlaps on customary land Inside title: 5 Outside title: 14 | Included in ALT/ year 7 |

I Research teams visited 22 different settlements. Fifteen of these are titled, three are untitled and four are included as satellites in the areas of titled villages.

INA PATA, KO'MANGNÀTOK YESELU



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